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" Survey of Literatures in English I: From Chaucer to 1700" (VO 302)

Reader

Obligatory Texts

To be bought

W. Shakespeare	*Richard II* *Hamlet* *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
C. Marlowe	*D. Faustus*
W. Wycherley	*The Country Wife*

From the reader

G. Chaucer	General Prologue (source: www.librarius.com) The Miller's Tale (source: www.librarius.com)
E. Spenser	*The Faerie Queene*, Book Two: The Bower of Bliss
W. Shakespeare	Sonnets XII, XVIII
Metaphysical Poetry:	
J. Donne	"The Flea" "The Bait"
A. Marvell	"To His Coy Mistress"
G. Herbert	"Easter Wings"
J. Milton	*Paradise Lost* (excerpt)

Old English/Anglo-Saxon period (~450-1066)

C5-6: Angles, Saxons and Jutes emigrate from the Continent and invade England

Earliest longer literary document: OE *Beowulf*, heroic epic of 3182 long lines - from C8, but only later manuscripts esp from C10

Latin literature: saints' legends, chronicles, prayers etc.

Middle English period (1066-1485)

1066: Battle of Hastings, Norman Conquest – Norman rule for 300 years

C14: change from Latin and Norman French to English in terms of status and use

William Langland: ME allegory *Piers Plowman*, written 1360-1399

Geoffrey Chaucer (~1340-1400)

Married to the sister of the 3rd wife of John of Gaunt, son of Edward III

King's envoy in Italy (meets Petrarca and Bocaccio); secret mission in France, tax-collector in the port of London

Important French and Italian sources:
- *Roman de la Rose*, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, written 1225/1265-70 – characteristic split in medieval thought: idealising, romantic vs. realistic, satiric
- Latin epics in the original
- French translations esp of Greek epics – transformed into long courtly romances: romanticised and translated into a Christian medieval context
- Ovid

Works:

French influence esp on early works – *The Book of the Duchess*, *The Parliament of Fowles*, *The House of Fame* and *The Legend of Good Women* have the form of the *Roman de la Rose*: dream vision beginning, conventions of courtly love, May atmosphere, birds, songs and allegory

The Book of the Duchess:

Memorises the death of Duchess Blanche, wife of John of Gaunt
→ consolation (rhetorical forms of *planctus* and *consolatio*)

Source of all human suffering is “false Fortune”
→ the pagan episteme translated into a Christian medieval context: accident, *fatum*, *aventure* are enforced by the growing distance from the centre of God (at the hub of fortune’s wheel)

The Canterbury Tales:

Mixture of knightly romances, saints’ legends, French fabliaux, prayers, animals’ allegories and other forms of narrative

Frame narrative (pilgrimage to Canterbury, Harry Bailey), 23 embedded tales by different narrators (The Knight’s Tale, The Miller’s Tale etc.; a man called Chaucer tells a tale too)
→ tales interrupted and also motivated dramatically by frame action
→ pilgrimage as a social event: impression of all social classes of English C14 society

Quotation 1: Geoffrey Chaucer (1342-1400), from: *The Canterbury Tales*

General Prologue

lines 1-42: Introduction

Here bygynneth the Book of the Tales of Caunterbury

Whan that Aprill, with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye-
(So priketh hem Nature in hir corages);
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
And specially from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seeke.
Bifil that in that seson, on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At nyght was come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste;
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,

When in April the sweet showers fall
That pierce March's drought to the root and all
And bathed every vein in liquor that has power
To generate therein and sire the flower;
When Zephyr also has with his sweet breath,
Filled again, in every holt and heath,
The tender shoots and leaves, and the young sun
His half-course in the sign of the Ram has run,
And many little birds make melody
That sleep through all the night with open eye
(So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)
Then folk do long to go on pilgrimage,
And palmers to go seeking out strange strands,
To distant shrines well known in distant lands.
And specially from every shire's end
Of England they to Canterbury went,
The holy blessed martyr there to seek
Who helped them when they lay so ill and weak.
It happened that, in that season, on a day
In Southwark, at the Tabard, as I lay
Ready to go on pilgrimage and start
To Canterbury, full devout at heart,
There came at nightfall to that hostelry
Some nine and twenty in a company
Of sundry persons who had chanced to fall
In fellowship, and pilgrims were they all
That toward Canterbury town would ride.
The rooms and stables spacious were and wide,
And well we there were eased, and of the best.
And briefly, when the sun had gone to rest,

So hadde I spoken with hem everichon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.
But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne;
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

So had I spoken with them, every one,
That I was of their fellowship anon,
And made agreement that we'd early rise
To take the road, as I will to you apprise.
But none the less, whilst I have time and space,
Before yet further in this tale I pace,
It seems to me in accord with reason
To describe to you the state of every one
Of each of them, as it appeared to me,
And who they were, and what was their degree,
And even what clothes they were dressed in;
And with a knight thus will I first begin.

lines 43-78: The Knight

A KNYGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,
And evere honoured for his worthynesse.
At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne.
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle nacions in Pruce;
In Lettow hadde he reysed, and in Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
At Lyeys was he and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble armee hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for oure feith at Tramyssene
In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye
Agayn another hethen in Turkye.
And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys;
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.
He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde
In al his lyf unto no maner wight.
He was a verray, parfit gentil knyght.
But, for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were goode, but he was nat gay.
Of fustian he wered a gypon
Al bismotered with his habergeoun,
For he was late ycome from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.

A KNIGHT there was, and what a gentleman,
Who, from the moment that he first began
To ride about the world, loved chivalry,
Truth, honour, freedom and all courtesy.
Full worthy was he in his sovereign's war,
And therein had he ridden, no man more,
As well in Christendom as heathenesse,
And honoured everywhere for worthiness.
At Alexandria, in the winning battle he was there;
Often put in the place of honour, a chair.
Above all nations' knights in Prussia.
In Latvia raided he, and Russia,
No christened man so oft of his degree.
In far Granada at the siege was he
Of Algeciras, and in Belmarie.
At Ayas was he and at Satalye
When they were won; and on the Middle Sea
At many a noble meeting chanced to be.
Of mortal battles he had fought fifteen,
And he'd fought for our faith at Tramissene
Three times in duels, always killed his foe.
This self-same worthy knight had been also
At one time with the lord of Palatye
Against another heathen in Turkey:
And always won he widespread fame for prize.
Though so strong and brave, he was very wise
And of temper as meekly as a maid.
He never yet had any vileness said,
In all his life, to whatsoever wight.
He was a truly perfect, noble knight.
But now, to tell you all of his array,
His steeds were good, but he was not gaily dressed.
A tunic of simple cloth he possessed
Discoloured and stained by his habergeon;
For he had lately returned from his voyage
And now was going on this pilgrimage.

lines 79-100: The Squire

With hym ther was his sone, a yong SQUIER,
A lovyere and a lusty bacheler;
With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe.
And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,
And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a meede,
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede;
Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day,
He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.
Short was his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel koude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde.
He koude songes make, and wel endite,
Juste, and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.
So hoote he lovede, that by nyghtertale
He slepte namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.
Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
And carf biforn his fader at the table.

With him there was his son, a young SQUIRE,
A lover and a lively bachelor,
With locks well curled, as if they'd laid in press.
Some twenty years of age he was, I guess.
In stature he was of average length,
Wondrously active, agile, and great of strength.
He'd ridden sometime with the cavalry
In Flanders, in Artois, and Picardy,
And conducted well within that little space
In hope to win thereby his lady's grace.
Embroidered he was, as if he were a meadow bright,
All full of fresh-cut flowers red and white.
Singing he was, or whistling, all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his gown, with sleeves both long and wide.
Well could he sit on horse, and fairly ride.
He could make songs and words thereto indite,
Joust, and dance too, as well as sketch and write.
So hot he loved that, while night told her tale,
He slept no more than does a nightingale.
Courteous he, and humble, willing and able,
And carved before his father at the table.

lines 101-117: The Yeoman

A YEMAN hadde he and servantz namo
At that tyme, for hym liste ride soo;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.
A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily,
(Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly:
Hise arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe)
And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.
A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage,
Of woodecraft wel koude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that oother syde a gay daggere
Harneised wel and sharpe as point of spere.
A Cristopher on his brest of silver sheene.
An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene;
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

A YEOMAN had he at his side,
No more servants, for he chose so to ride;
And he was clothed in coat and hood of green.
A sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen
Under his belt he bore very carefully
(Well could he keep his gear yeomanly:
His arrows had no drooped feathers low),
And in his hand he bore a mighty bow.
A cropped head had he and a sun-browned face.
Of woodcraft he knew all the useful ways.
Upon his arm he bore a bright bracer,
And at one side a sword and a buckler,
And at the other side a dagger bright,
Well sheathed and sharp as a spear's point in the light;
A Christopher medal on his breast of silver sheen.
He bore a horn, the baldric all of green;
A forester he truly was, I guess.

lines 118-162: The Prioress

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;
Hir gretteste ooth was but by Seinte Loy;
And she was cleped Madame Eglentyne.
Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely,
And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly,

There was also a nun, a PRIORESS,
Who, in her smiling, modest was and coy;
Her greatest oath was but "By Saint Eloy!"
And she was called Madam Eglantine.
Very well she sang the service divine,
Intoning through her nose, becomingly;
And she spoke French fairly and fluently,

After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe,
For Frenssh of Parys was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel ytaught was she with alle:
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe;
Wel koude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe
That no drope ne fille upon hir brist.
In curteisie was set ful muche hir list.
Hire over-lippe wyped she so clene
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte.
And sikerly, she was of greet desport,
And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete cheere
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
With rosted flessh, or milk and wastel-breed.
But soore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;
And al was conscience, and tendre herte.
Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was,
Hire nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,
Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war;
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,
An theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after *Amor vincit omnia*.

After the school of Stratford-at-the-Bow,
For French of Paris style she didn't know.
At table her manners were well taught withall,
And never let morsels from her lips fall,
Nor dipped her fingers deep in sauce, but ate
With so much care the food upon her plate
That no drop could fall upon her breast.
In courtesy she had delight and zest.
Her upper lip was always wiped so clean
That on her cup no speck or spot was seen
Of grease, when she had drunk her draught of wine.
Graciously she reached for food to dine.
And certainly delighting in good sport,
She was very pleasant, amiable - in short.
She was in pains to imitate the cheer
Of courtliness, and stately manners here,
And would be held worthy of reverence.
But, to speak about her moral sense,
She was so charitable and solicitous
That she would weep if she but saw a mouse
Caught in a trap, whether it were dead or bled.
She had some little dogs, that she fed
On roasted flesh, or milk and fine white bread.
But sorely she wept if one of them were dead,
Or if men smote it with a stick to smart:
Then pity ruled her, and her tender heart.
Very seemly her pleated wimple was;
Her nose was fine; her eyes were grey as glass;
Her mouth was small and therewith soft and red;
But certainly her forehead was fairly spread;
It was almost a full span broad, I own,
To tell the truth, she was not undergrown.
Her cloak, as I was well aware, had a graceful charm
She wore a small coral trinket on her arm
A string of beads and gauded all with green;
And therefrom hung a brooch of golden sheen
Whereon there was engraved a crowned "A,"
And under, *Amor vincit omnia*.

lines 447-478: The Wife of Bath

A good WIF was ther, OF biside BATHE,
But she was somdel deef, and that was scathe.
Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt,
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge bifore hire sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of ground;
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,

There was a WIFE of BATH, or a near city,
Who was somewhat deaf, it is a pity.
At making clothes she had a skillful hand
She bettered those of Ypres and of Ghent.
In all the parish there was no wife to go
And proceed her in offering, it is so;
And if one did, indeed, so angry was she
It put her out of all her charity.
Her head-dresses were of finest weave and ground;
I dare swear that they weighed about ten pound
Which, on a Sunday, she wore on her head.
Her stockings were of the finest scarlet red,

Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.
Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve:
Housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve,
Withouthen oother compaignye in youthe, -
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.
And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge strem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seint-Jame, and at Coloigne.
She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye.
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere esily she sat,
Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe.
Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,
For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

Tightly fastened, and her shoes were soft and new.
Bold was her face, and fair, and red of hue.
She'd been respectable throughout her life,
Married in church, husbands she had five,
Not counting other company in youth;
But thereof there's no need to speak, in truth.
Three times she'd travelled to Jerusalem;
And many a foreign stream she'd had to stem;
At Rome she'd been, and she'd been in Boulogne,
In Spain at Santiago, and at Cologne.
She could tell much of wandering by the way:
Gap-toothed was she, it is the truth I say.
Upon a pacing horse easily she sat,
Wearing a large wimple, and over all a hat
As broad as is a buckler or a targe;
An overskirt was tucked around her buttocks large,
And her feet spurred sharply under that.
In company well could she laugh and chat.
The remedies of love she knew, perchance,
For of that art she'd learned the old, old dance.

lines 544-568: The Miller

Ther was also a REVE and a MILLERE,
A SOMNOUR and a PARDONER also,
A MAUNCIPLE, and myself - ther were namo.
The MILLERE was a stout carl for the nones;
Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones-
That proved wel, for over al ther he cam
At wrastlynge he wolde have alwey the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,
Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre,
Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and thereon stood a toft of herys,
Reed as the brustles of a sowes erys;
Hise nosethirles blake were and wyde.
A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde.
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.
He was a janglere and a goliardeys,
And that was moost of synne and harlotries.
Wel koude he stelen corn, and tollen thries;
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne,
And therwithal he broghte us out of towne.

A REEVE and a MILLER were also there;
A SUMMONER, MANCIPLE and PARDONER,
All these, beside myself, there were no more.
The MILLER was a strong fellow, be it known,
Hardy, big of brawn and big of bone;
Which was well proved, for wherever a festive day
At wrestling, he always took the prize away.
He was stoutly built, broad and heavy;
He lifted each door from its hinges, that easy,
Or break it through, by running, with his head.
His beard, as any sow or fox, was red,
And broad it was as if it were a spade.
Upon his nose right on the top he had
A wart, and thereon stood a tuft of hairs,
Red as the bristles in an old sow's ears;
His nostrils they were black and wide.
A sword and buckler he carried by his side.
His mouth was like a furnace door for size.
He was a jester and knew some poetry,
But mostly all of sin and obscenity.
He could steal corn and three times charge his fee;
And yet indeed he had a thumb of gold.
A blue hood he wore and a white coat;
A bagpipe he could blow well, up and down,
And with that same he brought us out of town.

The Miller's Tale

lines 79-112: John the carpenter and his lodger Nicholas

Heere bigynneth the Millere his Tale

Whilom ther was dwellynge at Oxenford
A riche gnof, that gestes heeld to bord,
And of his craft he was a carpenter.
With hym ther was dwellynge a poure scoler,
Hadde lerned art, but al his fantasye
Was turned for to lerne astrologye,
And koude a certeyn of conclusiouns,
To demen by interrogaciouns,
If that men asked hym in certain houres
Whan that men sholde have droghte or elles shoures,
Or if men asked hym what sholde bifalle
Of every thyng; I may nat rekene hem alle.
This clerk was cleped hende Nicholas.
Of deerne love he koude and of solas;
And therto he was sleigh and ful privee,
And lyk a mayden meke for to see.
A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
Allone, withouten any compaignye,
Ful fetisly ydight with herbes swoote;
And he hymself as sweete as is the roote
Of lycorys, or any cetewale.
His Almageste, and bookes grete and smale,
His astrelabie, longynge for his art,
His augrym stones layen faire apart,
On shelves couched at his beddes heed;
His presse ycovered with a faldyng reed
And al above ther lay a gay sautrie,
On which he made a-nyghtes melodie
So swetely that all the chambre rong;
And *Angelus ad virginem* he song;
And after that he song the Kynges Noote.
Ful often blessed was his myrie throte.
And thus this sweete clerk his tyme spente
After his freendes fyndyng and his rente.

Once on a time was dwelling in Oxford
A wealthy man who took in guests to board,
And of his craft he was a carpenter.
A poor scholar was lodging with him there,
Who'd learned the arts, but all his phantasy
Was turned to study of astrology;
And knew a certain set of theorems
And could find out by various stratagems,
If men but asked of him in certain hours
When they should have a drought or else have showers,
Or if men asked of him what should befall
To anything; I cannot reckon them all.
This clerk was called the clever Nicholas;
Of secret loves he knew and their solace;
And he kept counsel, too, for he was sly
And meek as any virgin passing by.
He had a chamber in that hostelry,
And lived alone there, without company,
All garnished with sweet herbs of good repute;
And he himself sweet-smelling as the root
Of licorice, valerian, or setwall.
His Almagest, and books both great and small,
His astrolabe, belonging to his art,
His algorism stones - all laid apart
On shelves that ranged beside his lone bed's head;
His press was covered with a cloth of red.
And over all there lay a psaltery
Whereon he made an evening's melody,
Playing so sweetly that the chamber rang;
And *Angelus ad virginem* he sang;
And after that he warbled the King's Note:
Often in good voice was his merry throat.
And thus this gentle clerk his leisure spends
Supported by some income and his friends.

lines 113-124: The carpenter's marriage

This carpenter hadde newe a wyf,
Which that he lovede moore than his lyf;
Of eighteteene yeer she was of age.
Jalous he was, and heeld hire narwe in cage,
For she was wylde and yong, and he was old,
And demed hymself, been lik a cokewold.
He knew nat Catoun, for his wit was rude,
That bad man sholde wedde his simylitude.
Men sholde wedden after hire estaat,

This carpenter had recently married a wife
Whom he loved more than he loved his life;
And she had become eighteen years of age.
Jealous he was and held her close in cage.
For she was wild and young, and he was old,
And deemed himself as like to be cuckold.
He knew not Cato, for his lore was rude:
That vulgar man should wed similitude.
A man should wed according to estate,

For youth and elde is often at debaat.
But sith that he was fallen in the snare,
Her moste endure, as oother folk, his care.

For youth and age are often in debate.
But now, since he had fallen in the snare,
He must endure, like other folk, his care.

Natureingang: convention of medieval poetry

The narrator wants to describe the pilgrims "acordaunt to resoun" (reason) in terms of:
- "al the condicioun" (their physical appearances)
- "whiche they weren" (character qualities)
- "degree" (social standing and class)
- "array" (clothes)

Characterisation by means of:
- medieval psychology, based on the teaching of the temperaments (e.g., the choleric Reeve)
- philosophy (e.g., the Epicurean Franklin)
- physiognomy (e.g., the ugly Summoner)
- profession (corn-stealing millers, corrupt merchants etc.), satire of the estates
- astrology (the Wife of Bath)
- women's satire (the Wife of Bath) vs. saints' legends (Patient Griselda)
- individual and realistic elements (e.g., the Cook's open sore)

→ Variation and conflict between idealising and realistic traditions – e.g., Miller's Tale:
combines two French fabliaux: misdirected kiss, second flood;
subverts the traditions of *descriptio* (describing somebody from head to foot)
and of *amour courtois* (knightly service to a married lady without consummating this love):

Quotation 2

lines 125-162: Alison, the carpenter's wife

Fair was this yonge wyf, and therwithal
As any wezele hir body gent and smal.
A ceynt she werede, barred al of silk,
A barmclooth as whit as morne milk
Upon her lendes, ful of many a goore.
Whit was hir smok, and broyden al bifoore
And eek bihynde, on hir coler aboute,
Of col-blak silk, withinne and eek withoute.
The tapes of hir white voluper
Were of the same suyte of his coler;
Hir filet brood of silk, and set ful hye.
And sikerly she hadde a likerous ye;
Ful smale ypulled were hire browes two,
And tho were bent and blake as any sloo.
She was ful moore blisful on to see
Than is the newe pere-jonette tree,
And softer than the wolle is of a wether.
And by hir girdel heeng a purs of lether,
Tasseled with silk, and perled with latoun.
In al this world, to seken up and doun,
There nys no man so wys that koude thenche

Fair was this youthful wife, and therewithal
As weasel's was her body slim and small.
A girdle wore she, barred and striped, of silk.
An apron, too, as white as morning milk
About her loins, and full of many a gore;
White was her smock, embroidered all before
And even behind, her collar round about,
Of coal-black silk, on both sides, in and out;
The strings of the white cap upon her head
Were, like her collar, black silk worked with thread,
Her fillet was of wide silk worn full high:
And certainly she had a lickerish eye.
She'd thinned out carefully her eyebrows two,
And they were arched and black as any sloe.
She was a far more pleasant thing to see
Than is the newly budded young pear-tree;
And softer than the wool is on a wether.
Down from her girdle hung a purse of leather,
Tasselled with silk, with latten beading sown.
In all this world, searching it up and down,
So gay a little doll, I well believe,

So gay a popelote or swich a wenche.
Ful brighter was the shynyng of hir hewe
Than in the Tour the noble yforged newe.
But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe sittynge on a berne.
Therto she koude skippe and make game,
As any kyde or calf folwynge his dame.
Hir mouth was sweete as bragot or the meeth,
Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.
Wynsynge she was, as is a joly colt,
Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.
A brooch she baar upon hir lowe coler,
As brood as is the boos of a bokeler.
Hir shoes were laced on hir legges hye.
She was a prymerole, a piggesnye,
For any lord to leggen in his bedde,
Or yet for any good yeman to wedde.

Or such a wench, there's no man can conceive.
Far brighter was the brilliance of her hue
Than in the Tower the gold coins minted new.
And songs came shrilling from her pretty head
As from a swallow's sitting on a shed.
Therewith she'd dance too, and could play and sham
Like any kid or calf about its dam.
Her mouth was sweet as bragget or as mead
Or hoard of apples laid in hay or weed.
Skittish she was as is a pretty colt,
Tall as a staff and straight as cross-bow bolt.
A brooch she wore upon her collar low,
As broad as boss of buckler did it show;
Her shoes laced up to where a girl's legs thicken.
She was a primrose, and a tender chicken
For any lord to lay upon his bed,
Or yet for any good yeoman to wed.

lines 163-198: Nicholas courts Alison

Now, sire, and eft, sire, so bifel the cas,
That on a day this hende Nicholas
Fil with this yonge wyf to rage and pleye,
Whil that her housbonde was at Oseneye,
As clerkes ben ful subtile and ful queynte;
And prively he caughte hire by the queynte,
And seyde, "Ywis, but if ich have my wille,
For deerne love of thee, lemman, I spille."
And heeld hire harde by the haunchebones,
And seyde, "Lemman, love me al atones,
Or I wol dyen, also God me save!"
And she sproong as a colt dooth in the trave,
And with hir heed she wryed faste awey,
And seyde, "I wol nat kisse thee, by my fey!
Why, lat be," quod she, "lat be, Nicholas,
Or I wol crie 'out harrow' and 'allas!'
Do wey youre handes, for youre curteisye!"
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye,
And spak so faire, and profred him so faste,
That she hir love hym graunted atte laste,
And swoor hir ooth, by seint Thomas of Kent,
That she wol been at his comandement,
Whan that she may hir leyser wel espie.
"Myn housbonde is so ful of jalousie
That but ye wayte wel and been privee,
I woot right wel I nam but deed," quod she.
"Ye moste been ful deerne, as in this cas."
"Nay, therof care thee noght," quod Nicholas.
"A clerk hadde litherly biset his whyle,
But if he koude a carpenter bigyle."
And thus they been accorded and ysworn
To wayte a tyme, as I have told biforn.
Whan Nicholas had doon thus everideel,

Now, sir, and then, sir, so befell the case,
That on a day this clever Nicholas
Fell in with this young wife to toy and play,
The while her husband was down Osney way,
Clerks being as crafty as the best of us;
And unperceived he caught her by the puss,
Saying: "Indeed, unless I have my will,
For secret love of you, sweetheart, I'll spill."
And held her hard about the hips, and how!
And said: "O darling, love me, love me now,
Or I shall die, and pray you God may save!"
And she leaped as a colt does in the trave,
And with her head she twisted fast away,
And said: "I will not kiss you, by my fay!
Why, let go," cried she, "let go, Nicholas!
Or I will call for help and cry 'alas!'
Do take your hands away, for courtesy!"
This Nicholas for mercy then did cry,
And spoke so well, importuned her so fast
That she her love did grant him at the last,
And swore her oath, by Saint Thomas of Kent,
That she would be at his command, content,
As soon as opportunity she could spy.
"My husband is so full of jealousy,
Unless you will await me secretly,
I know I'm just as good as dead," said she.
"You must keep all quite hidden in this case."
"Nay, thereof worry not," said Nicholas,
"A clerk has lazily employed his while
If he cannot a carpenter beguile."
And thus they were agreed, and then they swore
To wait a while, as I have said before.
When Nicholas had done thus every whit

And thakked hire aboute the lendes weel,
He kiste hire sweete and taketh his sawtrie,
And pleyeth faste, and maketh melodie.

And patted her about the loins a bit,
He kissed her sweetly, took his psaltery,
And played it fast and made a melody.

lines 199-230: Absalom, the parish clerk

Thanne fil it thus, that to the paryssh chirche,
Cristes owene werkes for to wirche,
This goode wyf went on a haliday.
Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,
So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk.
Now was ther of that chirche a parissh clerk,
The which that was ycleped Absolon.
Crul was his heer, and as the gold it shoon,
And strouted as a fanne large and brode;
Ful streight and evene lay his joly shode;
His rode was reed, his eyen greye as goos.
With Poules wyndow corven on his shoos,
In hoses rede he wente fetisly.
Yclad he was ful smal and proprely
Al in a kirtel of a lyght waget;
Ful faire and thikke been the poyntes set.
And therupon he hadde a gay surplys
As whit as is the blosme upon the rys.
A myrie child he was, so God me save.
Wel koude he laten blood and clippe and shave,
And maken a chartre of lond or acquitaunce.
In twenty manere koude he trippe and daunce
After the scole of Oxenforde tho,
And with his legges casten to and fro,
And pleyen songes on a smal rubible;
Therto he song som tyme a loud quynyble;
And as wel koude he pleye on a giterne.
In al the toun nas brewhous ne taverne
That he ne visited with his solas,
Ther any gaylard tappestere was.
But sooth to seyn, he was somdeel squaymous
Of fartyng, and of speche daungerous.

Then fell it thus, that to the parish church,
The Lord Christ Jesus' own works for to work,
This good wife went, upon a holy day;
Her forehead shone as bright as does the May,
So well she'd washed it when she left off work.
Now there was of that church a parish clerk
Whose name was (as folk called him) Absalom.
Curled was his hair, shining like gold, and from
His head spread fanwise in a thick bright mop;
'Twas parted straight and even on the top;
His cheek was red, his eyes grey as a goose;
With Saint Paul's windows cut upon his shoes,
He stood in red hose fitting famously.
And he was clothed full well and properly
All in a coat of blue, in which were let
Holes for the lacings, which were fairly set.
And over all he wore a fine surplice
As white as ever hawthorn spray, and nice.
A merry lad he was, so God me save,
And well could he let blood, cut hair, and shave,
And draw a deed or quitclaim, as might chance.
In twenty manners could he trip and dance,
After the school that reigned in Oxford, though,
And with his two legs swinging to and fro;
And he could play upon a violin;
Thereto he sang in treble voice and thin;
And as well could he play on his guitar.
In all the town no inn was, and no bar,
That he'd not visited to make good cheer,
Especially were lively barmaids there.
But, truth to tell, he was a bit squeamish
Of farting and of arrogant language.

lines 231-288: Absalom's affection for Alison

This Absolon, that jolif was and gay,
Gooth with a sencer on the haliday,
Sensynge the wyves of the parisshe faste;
And many a lovely look on hem caste,
And namely on this carpenteris wyf.
To looke on hire hym thoughte a myrie lyf,
She was so propre and sweete and likerous.
I dar wel seyn, if she hadde been a mous,
And he the cat, he wolde hire hente anon.
This parissh clerk, this joly Absolon,
Hath in his herte swich a love-longynge
That of no wyf took he noon offrynge;

This Absalom, who was so light and gay,
Went with a censer on the holy day,
Censing the wives like an enthusiast;
And on them many a loving look he cast,
Especially on this carpenter's goodwife.
To look at her he thought a merry life,
She was so pretty, sweet, and lickerous.
I dare well say, if she had been a mouse
And he a cat, he would have mauled her some.
This parish clerk, this lively Absalom
Had in his heart, now, such a love-longing
That from no wife took he an offering;

For curteisie, he seyde, he wolde noon.
The moone, whan it was nyght, ful brighte shoon,
And Absolon his gyterne hath ytake,
For paramours he thoghte for to wake.
And forth he gooth, jolif and amorous,
Til he cam to the carpenters hous
A litel after cokkes hadde ycrowe,
And dressed hym up by a shot-wyndowe
That was upon the carpenteris wall.
He syngeth in his voys gentil and smal,
'Now, deere lady, if thy wille be,
I praye yow that ye wole rewe on me,'
Ful wel acordaunt to his gyternynge.
This carpenter awook, and herde him synge,
And spak unto his wyf, and seyde anon,
"What! Alison! Herestow nat Absolon,
That chaunteth thus under oure boures wal?"
Ans she answerde hir housbonde therwithal,
"Yis, God woot, John, I heere it every deel."
This passeth forth; what wol ye bet than weel?
Fro day to day this joly Absolon
So woweth hire that hym is wo bigon.
He waketh al the nyght and al the day;
He kembeth his lokkes brode, and made hym gay;
He woweth hire by meenes and brocage,
And swoor he wolde been hir owene page;
He syngeth, brokkynge as a nyghtyngale;
He sente hire pyment, meeth, and spiced ale,
And wafres, pipyng hoot out of the gleede;
And, for she was of towne, he profred meede.
For som folk wol ben wonnen for richesse,
And somme for strokes, and somme for gentillesse.
Somtyme, to shewe his lightnesse and maistrye,
He pleyeth Herodes upon a scaffold hye.
But what availleth hym as in the cas?
She loveth so this hende Nicholas
That Absolon may blowe the bukkes horn;
He ne hadde for his labour but a scorn.
And thus she maketh Absolon hire ape,
And al his ernest turneth til a jape.
Ful sooth is this proverbe, it is no lye,
Men seyn right thus, 'Alwey the nye slye
Maketh the ferre leeve to be looth.'
For though that Absolon be wood or wrooth,
By cause that he fer was from hire sight,
This nye Nicholas stood in his light.

For courtesy, he said, he would take none.
The moon, when it was night, full brightly shone,
And his guitar did Absalom then take,
For in love-watching he'd intent to wake.
And forth he went, jolly and amorous,
Until he came unto the carpenter's house
A little after cocks began to crow;
And took his stand beneath a shot-window
That was let into the good wood-wright's wall.
He sang then, in his pleasant voice and small,
"Oh now, dear lady, if your will it be,
I pray that you will have some ruth on me,"
The words in harmony with his string-plucking.
This carpenter awoke and heard him sing,
And called unto his wife and said, in sum:
"What, Alison! Do you hear Absalom,
Who plays and sings beneath our bedroom wall?"
And she said to her husband, therewithal:
"Yes, God knows, John, I hear it, truth to tell."
So this went on; what is there better than well?
From day to day this pretty Absalom
So wooed her he was woebegone therefrom.
He lay awake all night and all the day;
He combed his spreading hair and dressed him gay;
By go-betweens and agents, too, wooed he,
And swore her loyal page he'd ever be.
He sang as tremulously as nightingale;
He sent her sweetened wine and well-spiced ale
And waffles piping hot out of the fire,
And, she being town-bred, mead for her desire.
For some are won by means of money spent,
And some by tricks, and some by long descent.
Once, to display his versatility,
He acted Herod on a scaffold high.
But what availed it him in any case?
She was enamoured so of Nicholas
That Absalom might go and blow his horn;
He got naught for his labour but her scorn.
And thus she made of Absalom her ape,
And all his earnestness she made a jape.
For truth is in this proverb, and no lie,
Men say well thus: It's always he that's nigh
That makes the absent lover seem a sloth.'
For now, though Absalom be wildly wroth,
Because he is so far out of her sight,
This handy Nicholas stands in his light.

lines 289-330: Nicholas locks himself up

Now ber thee wel, thou hende Nicholas,
For Absolon may waille and synge 'allas.'
And so bifel it on a Saturday,
This carpenter was goon til Osenay;

Now bear you well, you clever Nicholas!
For Absalom may wail and sing 'Alas!'
And so it chanced that on a Saturday
This carpenter departed to Osney;

And hende Nicholas and Alison
Acorded been to this conclusioun,
That Nicholas shal shapen hym a wyle
This sely jalous housbonde to bigyle;
And if so be the game wente aright,
She sholde slepen in his arm al nyght,
For this was his desir and hire also.
And right anon, withouten wordes mo,
This Nicholas no lenger wolde tarie,
But dooth ful softe unto his chambre carie
Bothe mete and drynke for a day or tweye,
And to hire housbonde bad hire for to seye,
If that he axed after Nicholas,
She sholde seye she nyste where he was,
Of al that day she saugh hym nat with ye;
She trowed that he was in maladye,
For for no cry hir mayde koude hym calle,
He nolde answere for thyng that myghte falle.
This passeth forth al thilke Saterday,
That Nicholas stille in his chambre lay,
And eet and sleep, or dide what hym leste,
Til Sonday, that the sonne gooth to reste.
This sely carpenter hath greet merveyle
Of Nicholas, or what thyng myghte hym eyle,
And seyde, "I am adrad, by Seint Thomas,
It stondeth nat aright with Nicholas.
God shilde that he deyde sodeynly!
This world is now ful tikel, sikerly.
I saugh today a cors yborn to chirche
That now, on Monday last, I saugh hym wirche.
"Go up," quod he unto his knave anoon,
"Clepe at his dore, or knokke with a stoon.
Looke how it is, and tel me boldely."
This knave gooth hym up ful sturdily,
And at the chambre dore whil that he stood,
He cride and knokked as that he were wood,
"What! how! what do ye, maister Nicholay?
How may ye slepen al the longe day?"

And clever Nicholas and Alison
Were well agreed to this effect: anon
This Nicholas should put in play a while
The simple, jealous husband to beguile;
And if it chanced the game should go a-right,
She was to sleep within his arms all night,
For this was his desire, and hers also.
Presently then, and without more ado,
This Nicholas, no longer did he tarry,
But softly to his chamber did he carry
Both food and drink to last at least a day,
Saying that to her husband she should say -
If he should come to ask for Nicholas -
Why, she should say she knew not where he was,
For all day she'd not seen him, far or nigh;
She thought he must have got some malady,
Because in vain her maid would knock and call;
He'd answer not, whatever might befall.
And so it was that all that Saturday
This Nicholas quietly in chamber lay,
And ate and slept, or did what pleased him best,
Till Sunday when the sun had gone to rest.
This simple man with wonder heard the tale,
And marvelled what their Nicholas might ail,
And said: "I am afraid, by Saint Thomas,
That everything's not well with Nicholas.
God send he be not dead so suddenly!
This world is most unstable, certainly;
I saw, today, the corpse being carried to church
Of one who, but last Monday, was at work.
"Go up," said he unto his boy anon,
"Call at his door, or knock there with a stone,
Learn how it is and boldly come tell me."
The servant went up, then, right sturdily,
And at the chamber door, the while he stood,
He cried and knocked as any madman would -
"What! How! What do you, Master Nicholay?
How can you sleep through all the livelong day?"

lines 331-387: John the carpenter finds Nicholas and questions him

But al for noghte, he herde nat a word.
An hole he foond, ful lowe upon a bord,
Ther as the cat was wont in for to crepe,
And at that hole he looked in ful depe,
And at the laste he hadde of hym a sight.
This Nicholas sat evere capyng upright,
As he had kiked on the newe moone.
Adoun he gooth, and tolde his maister soone
In what array he saugh this ilke man.
This carpenter to blessen hym bigan,
And seyde, "Help us, seinte Frydeswyde!
A man woot litel what hym shal bityde.
This man is falle, with his astromye,
In som woodnesse or in som agonye,

But all for naught, he never heard a word;
A hole he found, low down upon a board,
Through which the house cat had been wont to creep;
And to that hole he stooped, and through did peep,
And finally he ranged him in his sight.
This Nicholas sat gaping there, upright,
As if he'd looked too long at the new moon.
Downstairs he went and told his master soon
In what array he'd found this self-same man.
This carpenter to cross himself began,
And said: "Now help us, holy Frideswide!
Little a man can know what shall betide.
This man is fallen, with his astromy,
Into some madness or some agony;

I thoghte ay wel how that it sholde be!
Men sholde nat knowe of Goddes pryvetee.
Ye, blessed be alwey a lewed man
That noght but oonly his bileve kan!
So ferde another clerk with astromye;
He walked in the feeldes, for to prye
Upon the sterres, what ther sholde bifalle,
Til he was in a marle-pit yfalle;
He saugh nat that. But yet, by seint Thomas,
Me reweth soore of hende Nicholas.
He shal be rated of his studiyng,
If that I may, Jhesus, hevene kyng!
Get me a staf, that I may underspore,
Whil that thou, Robyn, hevest up the dore.
He shal out of his studiyng, as I gesse."
And to the chambre dore he gan hym dresse.
His knave was a strong carl for the nones,
And by the haspe he haaf it of atones;
Into the floor the dore fil anon.
This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon,
And evere caped upward into the eir.
This carpenter wende he were in despeir,
And hente hym by the sholdres myghtily
And shook him harde, and cride spitously,
"What! Nicholay! what, how! what, looke adoun!
Awak, and thenk on Christes passioun!
I crouche thee from elves and fro wightes."
Therwith the nyght-spel seyde he anon-rightes
On foure halves of the hous aboute,
And on the tresshfold of the dore withoute:
"Jhesu Crist and seinte Benedight,
Blesse this hous from every wikked wight,
For nyghtes verye, the white pater-noster!
Where wentestow, seinte Petres soster?"
And atte laste this hende Nicholas
Gan for to sike soore, and seyde, "Allas!
Shal al the world be lost eftsoones now?"
This carpenter answerde, "What seystow?
What! Thynk on God, as we doon, men that swynke."
This Nicholas answerde, "Fecche me drynke,
And after wol I speke in pryvetee
Of certeyn thyng that toucheth me and thee.
I wol telle it noon oother man, certeyn."

I always feared that somehow this would be!
Men should not meddle in God's privity.
Aye, blessed always be the ignorant man,
Whose creed is all he ever has to scan!
So fared another clerk with astromy;
He walked into the meadows for to pry
Into the stars, to learn what should befall,
Until into a clay-pit he did fall;
He saw not that. But yet, by Saint Thomas,
I'm sorry for this clever Nicholas.
He shall be scolded for his studying,
If not too late, by Jesus, Heaven's King!
Get me a staff, that I may pry before,
The while you, Robin, heave against the door.
We'll take him from this studying, I guess."
And on the chamber door, then, he did press.
His servant was a stout lad, if a dunce,
And by the hasp he heaved it up at once;
Upon the floor that portal fell anon.
This Nicholas sat there as still as stone,
Gazing, with gaping mouth, straight up in air.
This carpenter thought he was in despair,
And took him by the shoulders, mightily,
And shook him hard, and cried out, vigorously:
"What! Nicholay! Why how now! Come, look down!
Awake, and think on Jesus' death and crown!
I cross you from all elves and magic wights!"
And then the night-spell said he out, by rights,
At the four corners of the house about,
And at the threshold of the door, without: -
"O Jesus Christ and good Saint Benedict,
Protect this house from all that may afflict,
For the night hag the white Paternoster! -
Where hast thou gone, Saint Peter's sister?"
And at the last this clever Nicholas
Began to sigh full sore, and said: "Alas!
Shall all the world be lost so soon again?"
This carpenter replied: "What say you, then?
What! Think on God, as we do, men that swink."
This Nicholas replied: "Go fetch me drink;
And afterward I'll tell you privately
A certain thing concerning you and me;
I'll tell it to no other man or men."

lines 388-438: Nicholas' story about Noah's flood

This carpenter gooth doun, and comth ageyn,
And broghte of myghty ale a large quart;
And whan that ech of hem had dronke his part,
This Nicholas his dore faste shette,
And doun the carpenter by hym he sette.
He seyde "John, myn hooste, lief and deere,
Thou shalt upon thy trouthe swere me heere
That to no wight thou shalt this conseil wreye;
For it is Cristes conseil that I seye,
And if thou telle it man, thou art forlore;
For this vengeaunce thou shalt han therfore,

This carpenter went down and came again,
And brought of potent ale a brimming quart;
And when each one of them had drunk his part,
Nicholas shut the door fast, and with that
He drew a seat and near the carpenter sat.
He said: "Now, John, my good host, lief and dear,
You must upon your true faith swear, right here,
That to no man will you this word betray;
For it is Christ's own word that I will say,
And if you tell a man, you're ruined quite;
This punishment shall come to you, of right,

That if thou wreye me, thou shalt be wood."
"Nay, Crist forbede it, for his hooly blood!"
Quod tho this sely man, "I nam no labbe;
Ne, though I seye, I nam nat lief to gabbe.
Sey what thou wolt, I shal it nevere telle
To child ne wyf, by hym that harwed helle!"
"Now John," quod Nicholas, "I wol nat lye;
I have yfounde in myn astrologye,
As I have looked in the moone bright,
That now a Monday next, at quarter nyght,
Shal falle a reyn, and that so wilde and wood,
That half so greet was nevere Noes flood.
This world," he seyde, "in lasse than an hour
Shal al be dreynt, so hidous is the shour.
Thus shal mankynde drenche, and lese hir lyf."
This carpenter answerde, "Allas, my wif!
And shal she drenche? Allas, myn Alisoun!"
For sorwe of this fil almoost adoun,
And seyde, "Is ther no remedie in this cas?"
"Why, yis, for Gode," quod hende Nicholas,
"If thou wolt werken after loore and reed.
Thou mayst nat werken after thyn owene heed;
For thus seith Salomon, that was ful trewe,
'Werk al by conseil, and thou shalt not rewe.'
And if thou werken wolt by good conseil,
I undertake, withouten mast and seyl,
Yet shal I saven hire and thee and me.
Hastow nat herd hou saved was Noe,
Whan that oure Lord hadde warned hym biforn
That al the world with water sholde be lorn?"
"Yis," quod this Carpenter, "ful yoore ago."
"Hastou nat herd," quod Nicholas, "also
The sorwe of Noe with his felawshipe,
Er that he myghte gete his wyf to shipe?
Hym hadde be levere, I dar wel undertake,
At thilke tyme, than alle wetheres blake
That she hadde had a ship hirself allone.
And therfore, woostou what is best to doone?
This asketh haste, and of an hastif thyng
Men may nat preche or maken tariyng.

That if you're traitor you'll go mad- and should!"
"Nay, Christ forbid it, for His holy blood!"
Said then this simple man: "I am no blab,
Nor, though I say it, am I fond of gab.
Say what you will, I never will it tell
To child or wife, by Him that harried Hell!"
"Now, John," said Nicholas, "I will not lie;
But I've found out, from my astrology,
As I have looked upon the moon so bright,
That now, come Monday next, at nine of night,
Shall fall a rain so wildly mad as would
Have been, by half, greater than Noah's flood.
This world," he said, "in less time than an hour,
Shall all be drowned, so terrible is this shower;
Thus shall all mankind drown and lose all life."
This carpenter replied: "Alas, my wife!
And shall she drown? Alas, my Alison!"
For grief of this he almost fell. Anon
He said: "Is there no remedy in this case?"
"Why yes, good luck," said clever Nicholas,
"If you will work by counsel of the wise;
You must not act on what your wits advise.
For so says Solomon, and it's all true,
'Work by advice and thou shalt never rue.'
And if you'll act as counselled and not fail,
I undertake, without a mast or sail,
To save us all, aye you and her and me.
Haven't you heard of, Noah, how saved was he,
Because Our Lord had warned him how to keep
Out of the flood that covered earth so deep?"
"Yes," said this carpenter, "long years ago."
"Have you not heard," asked Nicholas, "also
The sorrows of Noah and his fellowship
In getting his wife to go aboard the ship?
He would have rather, I dare undertake,
At that time, and for all the weather black,
That she had one ship for herself alone.
Therefore, do you know what would best be done?
This thing needs haste, and of a hasty thing
Men must not preach nor do long tarrying.

lines 439-492: Nicholas advises the carpenter to prepare for the flood

"Anon go gete us faste into this in
A knedyng-trogh, or ellis a kymelyn,
For ech of us, but looke that they be large,
In which we mowe swymme as in a barge,
And han therinne vitaille suffisant
But for a day - fy on the remenant!
The water shal aslake and goon away
Aboute pryme upon the nexte day.
But Robyn may nat wite of this, thy knave,
Ne eek thy mayde Gille I may nat save;

"Presently go, and fetch here to this inn
A kneading-tub, or brewing vat, and win
One each for us, but see that they are large,
Wherein we may swim out as in a barge,
And have therein sufficient food and drink
For one day only; that's enough, I think.
The water will dry up and flow away
About the prime of the succeeding day.
But Robin must not know of this, your knave,
And even Jill, your maid, I may not save;

Axe nat why, for though thou aske me,
I wol nat tellen Goddes pryvetee.
Suffiseth thee, but if thy wittes madde,
To han as greet a grace as Noe hadde.
Thy wyf shal I wel saven, out of doute.
Go now thy wey, and speed thee heer-aboute.
"But whan thou hast, for hire and thee and me,
Ygeten us thise knedyng-tubbes three,
Thanne shaltow hange hem in the roof ful hye,
That no man of oure purveiaunce espye.
And whan thou thus hast doon, as I have seyd,
And hast oure vitaille faire in hem yleyd
And eek an ax, to smyte the corde atwo,
Whan that the water comth, that we may go,
And breke an hole an heigh, upon the gable,
Unto the gardyn-ward, over the stable,
That we may frely passen forth oure way,
Whan that the grete shour is goon away,
Thanne shaltou swymme as myrie, I undertake,
As dooth the white doke after hire drake.
Thanne wol I clepe, 'How, Alison! how, John
Be myrie, for the flood wol passe anon.'
And thou wolt seyn, 'Hayl, maister Nicholay!
Good morwe, I see thee wel, for it is day.'
And thanne shul we be lordes al oure lyf
Of al the world, as Noe and his wyf.
"But of o thyng I warne thee ful right:
Be wel avysed on that ilke nyght
That we ben entred into shippes bord,
That noon of us ne speke nat a word,
Ne clepe, ne crie, but be in his preyere;
For it is Goddes owene heeste deere.
"Thy wyf and thou moote hange fer atwynne;
For that bitwixe yow shal be no synne,
Namoore in lookyng than ther shal in deede,
This ordinance is seyd. Go, God thee speede!
Tomorwe at nyght, whan men ben alle aslepe,
Into oure knedyng-tubbes wol we crepe,
And sitten there, abidyng Goddes grace.
Go now thy wey, I have no lenger space
To make of this no lenger sermonyng.
Men seyn thus, 'sende the wise, and sey no thyng:'
Thou art so wys, it needeth thee nat teche.
Go, save oure lyf, and that I the biseche."

Ask me not why, for though you do ask me,
I will not tell you of God's privity.
Suffice you, then, unless your wits are mad,
To have as great a grace as Noah had.
Your wife I shall not lose, there is no doubt,
Go, now, your way, and speedily about,
But when you have, for you and her and me,
Procured these kneading-tubs, or beer-vats, three,
Then you shall hang them near the roof-tree high,
That no man our purveyance may espy.
And when you thus have done, as I have said,
And have put in our drink and meat and bread,
Also an axe to cut the ropes in two
When the flood comes, that we may float and go,
And cut a hole, high up, upon the gable,
Upon the garden side, over the stable,
That we may freely pass forth on our way
When the great rain and flood are gone that day -
Then shall you float as merrily, I'll stake,
As does the white duck after the white drake.
Then I will call, 'Ho, Alison! Ho, John!
Be cheery, for the flood will pass anon.'
And you will say, 'Hail. Master Nicholay!
Good morrow, I see you well, for it is day!'
And then shall we be barons all our life
Of all the world, like Noah and his wife.
"But of one thing I warn you now, outright.
Be well advised, that on that very night
When we have reached our ships and got aboard,
Not one of us must speak or whisper word,
Nor call, nor cry, but sit in silent prayer;
For this is God's own bidding, hence- don't dare!
"Your wife and you must hang apart, that in
The night shall come no chance for you to sin
Either in looking or in carnal deed.
These orders I have told you, go, God speed!
Tomorrow night, when all men are asleep,
Into our kneading-tubs will we three creep
And sit there, still, awaiting God's high grace.
Go, now, your way, I have no longer space
Of time to make a longer sermoning.
Men say thus: 'Send the wise and say no thing.'
You are so wise it needs not that I teach;
Go, save our lives, and that I do beseech."

lines 493-529: The carpenter prepares for the flood

This sely carpenter goth forth his wey.
Ful ofte he seide "Allas" and "weylawey,"
And to his wyf he tolde his pryvetee,
And she was war, and knew it bet than he,
What als his queynte cast was for to seye.
But natheless she ferde as she wolde deye,

This foolish carpenter went on his way.
Often he cried "Alas!" and "Welaway!"
And to his wife he told all, privately;
But she was better taught thereof than he
How all this rigmarole was to apply.
Nevertheless she acted as she'd die,

And seyde, "Allas! go forth thy wey anon,
Help us to scape, or we been dede echon!
I am thy trewe, verray wedded wyf;
Go, deere spouse, and help to save oure lyf."
Lo, with a greet thyng is affeccioun!
Men may dyen of ymaginacioun,
So depe may impressioun be take.
This sely carpenter bigynneth quake;
Hym thynketh verraily that he may see
Noees flood come walwynge as the see
To drenchen Alisoun, his hony deere.
He wepeth, weyleth, maketh sory cheere;
He siketh with ful many a sory swogh;
He gooth and geteth hym a knedyng-trogh,
And after that a tubbe and a kymelyn,
And pryvely he sente hem to his in,
And heng hem in the roof in pryvetee.
His owene hand he made laddres thre,
To clymben by the ronges and the stalkes
Unto the tubbes hangynge in the balkes,
And hem vitailled, bothe trogh and tubbe,
With breed and chese, and good ale in a jubbe,
Suffisynge right ynogh as for a day.
But er that he hadde maad al this array,
He sente his knave, and eek his wenche also,
Upon his nede to London for to go.
And on the Monday, whan it drow to nyght,
He shette his dore withoute candel-lyght,
And dressed alle thyng as it sholde be.
And shortly, up they clomben alle thre;
They seten stille wel a furlong way.

And said: "Alas! Go on your way anon,
Help us escape, or we are lost, each one;
I am your true and lawfully wedded wife;
Go, my dear spouse, and help to save our life."
Lo, what a great thing is affection found!
Men die of imagination, I'll be bound,
So deep an imprint may the spirit take.
This hapless carpenter began to quake;
He thought now, verily, that he could see
Old Noah's flood come wallowing like the sea
To drown his Alison, his honey dear.
He wept, he wailed, he made but sorry cheer,
He sighed and made full many a sob and sough.
He went and got himself a kneading-trough
And, after that, two tubs he somewhere found
And to his dwelling privately sent round,
And hung them near the roof, all secretly.
With his own hand, then, made he ladders three,
To climb up by the rungs thereof, it seems,
And reach the tubs left hanging to the beams;
And those he victualled, tubs and kneading-trough,
With bread and cheese and good jugged ale, enough
To satisfy the needs of one full day.
But ere he'd put all this in such array,
He sent his servants, boy and maid, right down
Upon some errand into London town.
And on the Monday, when it came on night,
He shut his door, without a candle-light,
And ordered everything as it should be.
And shortly after up they climbed, all three;
They sat while one might plow a furlong-way.

lines 530-548: Nicholas and Alison go to bed

"Now, *Pater-noster*, clom!" seyde Nicholay,
And "Clom," quod John, and "clom," seyde Alisoun.
This carpenter seyde his devocioun,
And stille he sit, and biddeth his preyere,
Awaitynge on the reyn, if he it heere.
The dede sleep, for wery bisynesse,
Fil on this carpenter right, as I gesse,
Aboute corfew-tyme, or litel moore;
For travaille of his goost he groneth soore
And eft he routeth, for his heed myslay.
Doun of the laddre stalketh Nicholay,
And Alisoun ful softe adoun she spedde;
Withouten wordes mo they goon to bedde,
Ther as the carpenter is wont to lye.
Ther was the revel and the melodye;
And thus lith Alison and Nicholas,
In bisynesse of myrthe and of solas,
Til that the belle of laudes gan to rynge,
And freres in the chauncel gonne synge.

"Now, by Our Father, hush!" said Nicholay,
And "Hush!" said John, and "Hush!" said Alison.
This carpenter, his loud devotions done,
Sat silent, saying mentally a prayer,
And waiting for the rain, to hear it there.
The deathlike sleep of utter weariness
Fell on this wood-wright even, as I guess
About the curfew time, or little more;
For travail of his spirit he groaned sore,
And soon he snored, for badly his head lay.
Down by the ladder crept this Nicholay,
And Alison, right softly down she sped.
Without more words they went and got in bed
Even where the carpenter was wont to lie.
There was the revel and the melody!
And thus lie Alison and Nicholas,
In joy that goes by many an alias,
Until the bells for lauds began to ring
And friars to the chancel went to sing.

lines 549-578: Absalom's plan to court Alison

This parissh clerk, this amorous Absolon,
That is for love alwey so wo bigon,
Upon the Monday was at Oseneye
With compaignye, hym to disporte and pleye,
And axed upon cas a cloisterer
Ful prively after John the carpenter;
And he drough hym apart out of the chirche,
And seyde, "I noot, I saugh hym heere nat wirche
Syn Saterday; I trowe that he be went
For tymber, ther oure abott hath hym sent;
For he is wont for tymber for to go,
And dwellen at the grange a day or two;
Or elles he is at his hous, certeyn.
Where that he be, I kan nat soothly seyn."
This Absolon ful joly was and light,
And thoghte, "Now is tyme to wake al nyght;
For sikirly I saugh hym nat stirynge
Aboute his dore, syn day bigan to sprynge.
So moot I thryve, I shal, at cokkes crowe,
Ful pryvely knokken at his wyndowe
That stant ful lowe upon his boures wal.
To Alison now wol I tellen al
My love-longynge, for yet I shal nat mysse
That at the leeste wey I shal hire kisse.
Som maner confort shal I have, parfay.
My mouth hath icched al this longe day;
That is a signe of kissyng atte leeste.
Al nyght me mette eek I was at a feeste.
Therfore I wol go slepe an houre or tweye,
And al the nyght thanne wol I wake and pleye."

This parish clerk, this amorous Absalom,
Whom love has made so woebegone and dumb,
Upon the Monday was down Osney way,
With company, to find some sport and play;
And there he chanced to ask a cloisterer,
Privately, after John the carpenter.
This monk drew him apart, out of the kirk,
And said: "I have not seen him here at work.
Since Saturday; I think well that he went
For timber, that the abbot has him sent;
For he is wont for timber thus to go,
Remaining at the grange a day or so;
Or else he's surely at his house today;
But which it is I cannot truly say."
This Absalom right happy was and light,
And thought: "Now is the time to wake all night;
For certainly I saw him not stirring
About his door since day began to spring.
So may I thrive, as I shall, at cock's crow,
Knock cautiously upon that window low
Which is so placed upon his bedroom wall.
To Alison then will I tell of all
My love-longing, and thus I shall not miss
That at the least I'll have her lips to kiss.
Some sort of comfort shall I have, I say,
My mouth's been itching all this livelong day;
That is a sign of kissing at the least.
All night I dreamed, too, I was at a feast.
Therefore I'll go and sleep two hours away
And all this night then will I wake and play."

lines 579-599: Absalom attracts Alison's attention

Whan that the firste cok hathe crowe, anon
Up rist this joly lovere Absolon,
And hym arraieth gay, at poynt-devys.
But first he cheweth greyn and lycorys,
To smellen sweete, er he hadde kembd his heer.
Under his tonge a trewe-love he beer,
For therby wende he to ben gracious.
He rometh to the carpenteres hous,
And stille he stant under the shot-wyndowe -
Unto his brest it raughte, it was so lowe -
And softe he cougheth with a semy soun:
"What do ye, hony-comb, sweete Alisoun,
My faire bryd, my sweete cynamome?
Awaketh, lemman myn, and speketh to me!
Wel lithel thynken ye upon me wo,
That for youre love I swete ther I go.
No wonder is thogh that I swelte and swete;
I moorne as dooth a lamb after the tete.
Ywis, lemman, I have swich love-longynge,

And so when time of first cock-crow was come,
Up rose this merry lover, Absalom,
And dressed him gay and all at point-device,
But first he chewed some licorice and spice
So he'd smell sweet, ere he had combed his hair.
Under his tongue some bits of true-love rare,
For thereby thought he to be more gracious.
He went, then, to the carpenter's dark house.
And silent stood beneath the shot-window;
Unto his breast it reached, it was so low;
And he coughed softly, in a low half tone:
"What do you, honeycomb, sweet Alison?
My cinnamon, my fair bird, my sweetie,
Awake, O darling mine, and speak to me!
It's little thought you give me and my woe,
Who for your love do sweat where'er I go.
Yet it's no wonder that I faint and sweat;
I long as does the lamb for mother's teat.
Truly, sweetheart, I have such love-longing

That lik a turtel trewe is my moornynge.	That like a turtle-dove's my true yearning;
I may nat ete na moore than a mayde."	And I can eat no more than can a maid."

Parson, Knight and Plowman: idealised characters, close to medieval allegory – norm of satire:
- Parson: unity of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*
- Plowman: "parfit charité" (perfect charity)
- Knight: Christian crusader, Christian virtues

Narrator Chaucer: naïve, unreliable – involves, activates us: we have to form our own opinion
→ anti-didactic: we have to judge the reality presented ourselves (untypical of medieval writing)

Value system as the groundwork of Chaucer's tales:
- some middle-class values (e.g., bourgeois perspective on the world of knights)
- the aristocratic world
- the Christian world
- some antique pagan values (e.g., Stoic philosophy)

Quotation 3

lines 600-614: Absalom asks for a goodbye kiss

"Go fro the wyndow, Jakke fool," she sayde;
"As help me God, it wol not be 'com pa me.'
I love another - and elles I were to blame -
Wel bet than thee, by Jhesu, Absolon.
Go forth thy wey, or I wol caste a ston,
And lat me slepe, a twenty devel wey!"
"Allas," quod Absolon, "and weylawey,
That trewe love was evere so yvel biset!
Thanne kysse me, syn it may be no bet,
For Jhesus love, and for the love of me."
"Wiltow thanne go thy wey therwith?" quod she.
"Ye, certes, lemman," quod Absolon.
"Thanne make thee redy," quod she, "I come anon."
And unto Nicholas she seyde stille,
"Now hust, and thou shalt laughen al thy fille."

"Go from the window, Jack-a-napes," she said,
"For, s'help me God, it is not 'come kiss me.'
I love another, or to blame I'd be,
Better than you, by Jesus, Absalom!
Go on your way, or I'll stone you therefrom,
And let me sleep, the fiends take you away!"
"Alas," quoth Absalom, "and welaway!
That true love ever was so ill beset!
But kiss me, since you'll do no more, my pet,
For Jesus' love and for the love of me."
"And will you go, then, on your way?" asked she,
"Yes truly, darling," said this Absalom.
"Then make you ready," said she, "and I'll come!"
And unto Nicholas said she, low and still:
"Be silent now, and you shall laugh your fill."

lines 615-635: The kissing of bare arse

This Absolon doun sette hym on his knees
And seyde, "I am a lord at alle degrees;
For after this I hope ther cometh moore.
Lemman, thy grace, and sweete bryd, thyn oore!"
The wyndow she undoth, and that in haste.
"Have do," quod she, "com of, and speed the faste,
Lest that oure neighebores thee espie."
This Absolon gan wype his mouth ful drie.
Derk was the nyght as pich, or as a cole,
And at the wyndow out she putte hir hole,
And Absolon, hym fil no bet ne wers,
But with his mouth he kiste hir naked ers
Ful savorly, er he were war of this.
Abak he stirte, and thoughte it was amys,
For wel he wiste a womman hath no berd.
He felte a thyng al rough and long yherd,
And seyde, "Fy! allas! what have I do?"
"Tehee!" quod she, and clapte the wyndow to,
And Absolon gooth forth a sory pas.
"A berd! a berd!" quod hende Nicholas,
"By Goddes corpus, this goth faire and weel."

This Absalom plumped down upon his knees,
And said: "I am a lord in all degrees;
For after this there may be better still
Darling, my sweetest bird, I wait your will."
The window she unbarred, and that in haste.
"Have done," said she, "come on, and do it fast,
Before we're seen by any neighbour's eye."
This Absalom did wipe his mouth all dry;
Dark was the night as pitch, aye dark as coal,
And through the window she put out her hole.
And Absalom no better felt nor worse,
But with his mouth he kissed her naked arse
Right greedily, before he knew of this.
Aback he leapt- it seemed somehow amiss,
For well he knew a woman has no beard;
He'd felt a thing all rough and longish haired,
And said, "Oh fie, alas! What did I do?"
"Teehee!" she laughed, and clapped the, window to;
And Absalom went forth a sorry pace.
"A beard! A beard!" cried clever Nicholas,
"Now by God's corpus, this goes fair and well!"

lines 636-681: Absalom searches for revenge

This sely Absolon herde every deel,
And on his lippe he gan for anger byte,
And to hymself he seyde, "I shall thee quyte."
Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lippes
With dust, with sond, with straw, with clooth, with chippes,
But Absolon, that seith ful ofte, "Allas!"
My soule bitake I unto Sathanas,

This hapless Absalom, he heard that yell,
And on his lip, for anger, he did bite;
And to himself he said, "I will requite!"
Who vigorously rubbed and scrubbed his lips
With dust, with sand, with straw, with cloth, with chips,
But Absalom, and often cried "Alas!
My soul I give now unto Sathanas,

But me were levere than al this toun," quod he,
"Of this despit awroken for to be.
Allas," quod he, "allas, I ne hadde ybleynt!"
His hoote love was coold and al yqueynt;
For fro that tyme that he hadde kist her ers,
Of paramours he sette nat a kers;
For he was heeled of his maladie.
Ful ofte paramours he gan deffie,
And weep as dooth a child that is ybete.
A softe paas he wente over the strete
Until a smyth men cleped daun Gerveys,
That in his forge smythed plough harneys;
He sharpeth shaar and kultour bisily.
This Absolon knokketh al esily,
And seyde, "Undo, Gerveys, and that anon."
"What, who artow?" "It am I, Absolon."
"What, Absolon! For Cristes sweete tree,
Why rise ye so rathe? Ey, benedicitee!
What eyleth yow? Som gay gerl, God it woot,
Hath broght yow thus upon the viritoot.
By seinte Note, ye woot wel what I mene."
This Absolon ne roghte nat a bene
Of all his pley; no word agayn he yaf;
He hadde moore tow on his distaf
Than Gerveys knew, and seyde, "Freend so deere,
That hoote kultour in the chymenee heere,
As lene it me, I have therwith to doone,
And I wol brynge it thee agayn ful soone."
Gerveys answerde, "Certes, were it gold,
Or in a poke nobles alle untold,
Thou sholdest have, as I am trewe smyth.
Ey, Cristes foo! What wol ye do therwith?"
"Therof," quod Absolon, "be as be may.
I shal wel telle it thee to-morwe day" -
And caughte the kultour by the colde stele,
Ful softe out at the dore he gan to stele,
And wente unto the carpenteris wal.
He cogheth first, and knokketh therwithal
Upon the wyndowe, right as he dide er.

For rather far than own this town," said he,
"For this despite, it's well revenged I'd be.
Alas," said he, "from her I never blenched!"
His hot love was grown cold, aye and all quenched;
For, from the moment that he'd kissed her arse,
For paramours he didn't care a curse,
For he was healed of all his malady;
Indeed all paramours he did defy,
And wept as does a child that has been beat.
With silent step he went across the street
Unto a smith whom men called Dan Jarvis,
Who in his smithy forged plow parts, that is
He sharpened shares and coulters busily.
This Absalom he knocked all easily,
And said: "Unbar here, Jarvis, for I come."
"What! Who are you?" "It's I, it's Absalom."
"What! Absalom! For Jesus Christ's sweet tree,
Why are you up so early? Ben'cite!
What ails you now, man? Some gay girl, God knows,
Has brought you on the jump to my bellows;
By Saint Neot, you know well what I mean."
This Absalom cared not a single bean
For all this play, nor one word back he gave;
He'd more tow on his distaff, had this knave,
Than Jarvis knew, and said he: "Friend so dear,
This red-hot coulter in the fireplace here,
Lend it to me, I have a need for it,
And I'll return it after just a bit."
Jarvis replied: "Certainly, were it gold
Or a purse filled with yellow coins untold,
Yet should you have it, as I am true smith;
But eh, Christ's foe! What will you do therewith?"
"Let that," said Absalom, "be as it may;
I'll tell you all tomorrow, when it's day"-
And caught the coulter then by the cold steel
And softly from the smithy door did steal
And went again up to the wood-wright's wall.
He coughed at first, and then he knocked withal
Upon the window, as before, with care.

lines 682-697: Absalom returns to Alison's house

This Alison answerde, "Who is ther
That knokketh so? I warante it a theef."
"Why, nay," quod he, "God woot, my sweete leef,
I am thyn Absolon, my deerelyng.
Of gold," quod he, "I have thee broght a ryng.
My mooder yaf it me, so God me save;
Ful fyn it is, and therto wel ygrave.
This wol I yeve thee, if thou me kisse."
This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,
And thoughte he wolde amenden al the jape;

This Alison replied: "Now who is there?
And who knocks so? I'll warrant it's a thief."
"Why no," quoth he, "God knows, my sweet roseleaf,
I am your Absalom, my own darling!
Of gold," quoth he, "I have brought you a ring;
My mother gave it me, as I'll be saved;
Fine gold it is, and it is well engraved;
This will I give you for another kiss."
This Nicholas had risen for a piss,
And thought that it would carry on the jape

He sholde kisse his ers er that he scape.
And up the wyndowe dide he hastily,
And out his ers he putteth pryvely
Over the buttok, to the haunche-bon;
And therwith spak this clerk, this Absolon,
"Spek, sweete bryd, I noot nat where thou art."

To have his arse kissed by this jack-a-nape.
And so he opened window hastily,
And put his arse out thereat, quietly,
Over the buttocks, showing the whole bum;
And thereto said this clerk, this Absalom,
"O speak, sweet bird, I know not where thou art."

lines 698-707: Absalom's revenge

This Nicholas anon leet fle a fart,
As greet as it had been a thonder-dent,
That with the strook he was almoost yblent;
And he was redy with his iren hoot,
And Nicholas amydde the ers he smoot,
Of gooth the skyn an hande brede aboute,
The hoote kultour brende so his toute,
And for the smert he wende for to dye.
As he were wood, for wo he gan to crye,
"Help! Water! Water! Help for Goddes herte!"

This Nicholas just then let fly a fart
As loud as it had been a thunder-clap,
And well-nigh blinded Absalom, poor chap;
But he was ready with his iron hot
And Nicholas right in the arse he got.
Off went the skin a hand's-breadth broad, about,
The coulter burned his bottom so, throughout,
That for the pain he thought that he should die.
And like one mad he started in to cry,
"Help! Water! Water! For God's dear heart!"

lines 708-746: The awakening of the carpenter

This carpenter out of his slomber sterte,
And herde oon crien 'water' as he were wood,
And thoughte, "Allas, now comth Nowelis flood!"
He sit hym up withouten wordes mo,
And with his ax he smoot the corde atwo,
And doun gooth al; he foond neither to selle,
Ne breed ne ale, til he cam to the celle
Upon the floor, and ther aswowne he lay.
Up stirte hire Alison and Nicholay,
And criden "Out" and "Harrow" in the strete.
The neighebores, bothe smale and grete,
In ronnen for to gauren on this man,
That yet aswowne lay, bothe pale and wan,
For with the fal he brosten hadde his arm.
But stonde he moste unto his owene harm;
For whan he spak, he was anon bore doun
With hende Nicholas and Alisoun.
They tolden every man that he was wood,
He was agast so of Nowelis flood
Thurgh fantasie, that of his vanytee
He hadde yboght hym knedyng-tubbes thre,
And hadde hem hanged in the roof above;
And that he preyed hem, for Goddes love,
To sitten in the roof, par compaignye.
The folk gan laughen at his fantasye;
Into the roof they kiken and they cape;
And turned al his harm unto a jape.
For what so that this carpenter answerde,
It was for noght, no man his reson herde.
With othes grete he was so sworn adoun
That he was holde wood in al the toun;

This carpenter out of his sleep did start,
Hearing that 'Water!' cried as madman would,
And thought, "Alas, now comes down Noel's flood!"
He struggled up without another word
And with his axe he cut in two the cord,
And down went all; he did not stop to trade
In bread or ale till he'd the journey made,
And there upon the floor he swooning lay.
Up started Alison and Nicholay
And shouted "Help!" and "Hello!" down the street.
The neighbours, great and small, with hastening feet
Swarmed in the house to stare upon this man,
Who lay yet swooning, and all pale and wan;
For in the falling he had smashed his arm.
He had to suffer, too, another harm,
For when he spoke he was at once borne down
By clever Nicholas and Alison.
For they told everyone that he was odd;
He was so much afraid of "Noel's" flood,
Through fantasy, that out of vanity
He'd gone and bought these kneading-tubs, all three,
And that he'd hung them near the roof above;
And that he had prayed them, for God's dear love,
To sit with him and bear him company.
The people laughed at all this fantasy;
Up to the roof they looked, and there did gape,
And so turned all his injury to a jape.
For when this carpenter got in a word,
'Twas all in vain, no man his reasons heard;
With oaths imprenive he was so sworn down,
That he was held for mad by all the town;

For every clerk anonright heeld with oother.
They seyde, "The man is wood, my leeve brother";
And every wight gan laughen at this stryf.
Thus swyved was this carpenteris wyf,
For al his kepyng and his jalousye;
And Absolon hath kist hir nether ye;
And Nicholas is scalded in the towte.
This tale is doon, and God save al the rowte!

For every clerk did side with every other.
They said: "The man is crazy, my dear brother."
And everyone did laugh at all this strife.
Thus screwed was the carpenter's goodwife,
For all his watching and his jealousy;
And Absalom has kissed her lower eye;
And Nicholas has burned his butt painfully.
This tale is done, and God save all the company!

Heere endeth the Millere his Tale.

Narrative art:
- conventions from different traditions
- dramatic plot with a lot of dramatic action: speed and precipitation
- 'double surprise ending'
- smoothly flowing verse

End of *Canterbury Tales*: *retractio* revokes fabliau parts – characteristically ambivalent

English drama from its beginnings to Shakespeare

C15: War of the Roses – House of York (White Rose) vs. Lancaster (Red Rose)
→ Shakespeare's Lancaster and York Tetralogies

C16: Henry VIII separates Church of England from Roman Catholic Church

C16: Humanism/Renaissance – Thomas Morus, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Nicolaus Kopernikus a.o.

Medieval beginnings of English theatre

Sources:
- liturgy of Catholic Church
- folklore customs – Christian/pagan origin: e.g., carnivalesque Feast of Fools:

Easter trope *Quem queritis* – belongs to the oldest liturgical tropes (parts of church service):
"Quem queritis in sepulchro, o Christicolae?" (Whom are you looking for, Christians?)
"Jesum Nazarenum crucifixum, o coelicolae." (The crucified Jesus from Nazareth, angels.)
"Non est hic." (He is not here.)
"Surrexit sicut praedixerat; ite, nuntiate quia surrexit." (He has risen as he predicted; therefore, go and announce that he has risen.)
"Halleluja"

Mime play:
- Roman legacy
- farce-like, simple pantomime
- exaggerating representation of certain character types

Mummer's play:
- developed from wide-spread sword dance
- formed on old fertility rites celebrating death of winter and rebirth of nature
- stock characters: fool clad in animals' hides, man wearing women's clothes ('Bessie'/'Molly')

Quotation 4: The mummer's play (see next pages)

Wantage Mummers Play

Performance of 26th December 2002

The Mummers Play was performed at Farringdon, Wantage and Childrey.
Money was donated to Dr Barnado's.

THE PLAYERS

King Alfred
(Bob Hart)

Beau Slasher
(Len Ash)

Molly
(Martin Foster)

The Noble Dr Good
(Ian Weeden)

Jack Vinny
(Phil Carmichael)

Happy Jack
(Graham Hubbard)

Old Beelzebub
(Sem Seaborne)

Video Clips of the Day

- Introductory Music (368kB)
- Molly sweeps the stage (200kB)
- King Alfred's speech (544kB)
- Beau Slasher's speech (168kB)
- Beau Slasher is revived by the players (480kB)
- Old Beelzebub's speech (496kB)
- The Mummers Dance (408kB)

THE SCENES

Molly clears the stage, to make way for the players

Beau Slasher challenges King Alfred ...

... who alas is slain.

The Noble Dr Good (Squires) restores him to life to fight ...

Beau Slasher. He is now slain but restored to life by Jack Vinney.

Old Beelzebub completes the performance with a topical speech

POST-PLAY ENTERTAINMENT

Some entertainment in the pub from both players and locals

Video Clips of the Day

A fiddle tune (368kB)

source: www.icknieldwaymorrismen.org.uk/mummers_album_2002.html

Other popular/folkloric roots of drama:
- Fertility rites in general, ritual country walks, processions etc: interesting dramatic potential
- Morris dance since early C15: includes characters such as Maid Marian, Friar Tuck etc.
- Carnivalesque processions/practices: e.g., that of the Boy Bishop (choir boys elect a Boy Bishop from their rows for a certain time) or the Feast of Fools (lower clergy satirises rituals and customs of the church)

Mystery/miracle play

First important dramatic subgenre developed from liturgical tropes; authors presumably clerics

'Miracle play': esp plays dealing with saints' miraculous lives

'Mystery play': from Lat. *ministere* (holding divine service) – dramatising biblical episodes, esp Adam and Eve, the Fall, Kain and Abel, Noah's Flood, Abraham and Isaac, King Herod, Crucifixion, Ascension, Last Judgement
→ arranged in cycles (e.g., Chester cycle: 25 plays from creation of mankind to Judgement Day)
→ since 1311 staged together on Corpus Christi Day or Whitsunday

Plays move out of church:
- no longer part of divine service; still: religious instruction
- adopt popular vernacular of English
- staged by workers' guilds on two-storey 'pageants' (i.e. wagons, but also the plays themselves)

Quotation 5

II. CONTENTS OF THE CYCLES

The following names of pageants comprising the Chester, York, and Towneley cycles are listed below for the purpose of showing the full range and content of the three cycles from which most of the pageants in this volume have been taken. The pageants included in this volume are marked with an asterisk..

Chester

Banns.
1. Fall of Lucifer (Tanners).
2. Creation and Fall; Death of Abel (Drapers).
3. *Noah's Flood (Water-leaders and Drawers in Dee).
4. Lot; Abraham and Isaac (Barbers and Wax-chandlers).
5. Balaam and his Ass (Cappers and Linen-drapers).
6. Salutation and Nativity (Wrights and Slaters).
7. Shepherds (Painters and Glaziers).
8. Coming of the Three Kings (Vintners).
9. Offering; Return of the Kings (Mercers).
10. Slaughter of the Innocents (Goldsmiths).
11. Purification (Blacksmiths).
12. Temptation; Woman Taken in Adultery (Butchers).
13. Lazarus (Glovers).
14. Christ's Entry into Jerusalem (Corvisors).
15. Betrayal of Christ (Bakers).
16. Passion (Fletchers, Bowyers, Coopers, Stringers).
17. Crucifixion (Ironmongers).
18. *Harrowing of Hell (Cooks and Innkeepers).
19. Resurrection (Skinners).
20. Pilgrims to Emmaus (Saddlers).
21. Ascension (Tailors).
22. Descent of the Holy Spirit (Fishmongers).
23. Ezechiel (Cloth-workers).
24. Antichrist (Dyers).
25. Judgment (Websters).

York

1. *Creation; Fall of Lucifer (Barkers).
2. Creation, to the Fifth Day (Plasterers).
3. *Creation of Adam and Eve (Cardmakers).
4. Adam and Eve in Eden (Fullers).
5. *Fall of Man (Coopers).
6. Expulsion from Eden (Armourers).
7. Sacrifice of Cain and Abel (Glovers).
8. Building of the Ark (Shipwrights).
9. Noah and his Wife; Flood (Fishers and Mariners).
10. Abraham and Isaac (Parchmenters and Bookbinders).

11. Departure of the Israelites from Egypt; Ten Plagues;
    Crossing of the Red Sea (Hosiers).
12. Annunciation and Visitation (Spicers).
13. Joseph's Trouble about Mary (Pewterers and Founders).
14. Journey to Bethlehem; Birth of Jesus (Tile-thatchers).
15. Shepherds (Chandlers).
16. Coming of the Three Kings to Herod (Masons).
17. Coming of the Kings; Adoration (Goldsmiths).
18. Flight into Egypt (Marshals).
19. Slaughter of the Innocents (Girdlers and Nailers).
20. Christ with the Doctors (Spurriers and Lorimers).
21. Baptism of Jesus (Barbers).
22. Temptation (Smiths).
23. Transfiguration (Curriers).
24. Woman Taken in Adultery; Lazarus (Capmakers).
25. Christ's Entry into Jerusalem (Skinners).
26. Conspiracy (Cutlers).
27. Last Supper (Bakers).
28. Agony and Betrayal (Cordwainers).
29. Peter's Denial; Jesus before Caiaphas (Bowyers
    and Fletchers).
30. Dream of Pilate's Wife; Jesus before Pilate (Tapiters and Couchers).
31. Trial before Herod (Listers).
32. Second Accusation before Pilate; Remorse of Judas; Purchase of the Field of Blood (Cooks and Water-leaders).
33. Second Trial before Pilate (Tilemakers).
34. Christ Led to Cavalry (Shearmen).
35. *Crucifixion (Pinners and Painters).
36. Mortification of Christ; Burial (Butchers).
37. Harrowing of Hell (Saddlers).
38. *Resurrection (Carpenters).
39. Christ's Appearance to Mary Magdalene (Winedrawers).
40. Travellers to Emmaus (Sledmen).
41. Purification of Mary; Simeon and Anna (Hatmakers, Masons, Labourers).
42. Incredulity of Thomas (Scriveners).
43. Ascension (Tailors).
44. Descent of the Holy Spirit (Potters).
45. Death of Mary (Drapers).
46. Appearance of Mary to Thomas (Weavers).
47. Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin (Hostlers).
48. *Judgment (Mercers).

Towneley

1. Creation (Barkers of Wakefield).
2. Murder of Abel (Glovers).
3. Noah and his Sons (Wakefield).
4. Abraham and Isaac.
5. Isaac.
6. Jacob.
7. Prophets.
8. Pharaoh (Listers).
9. Caesar Augustus.
10. Annunciation.
11. Salutation of Elizabeth.
12. First Shepherds' Pageant.
13. *Second Shepherds' Pageant.
14. Offering of the Magi.
15. Flight of Joseph and Mary into Egypt.
16. *Herod the Great.
17. Purification of Mary.
18. Pageant of the Doctors.
19. John the Baptist.
20. Conspiracy.
21. Buffeting.
22. Scourging.
23. Crucifixion.
24. Talents.
25. Harrowing of Hell.
26. Resurrection.
27. Pilgrims to Emmaus (Fishers).
28. Thomas of India.
29. Ascension.
30. Judgment.
31. Lazarus.
32. Hanging of Judas.

(A.C. Cawley [ed.]. *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays*. J.M. Dent & Sons. London 1979)

Quotation 6

NOAH'S FLOOD

And first in some high place, or in the clouds if it may be, God speaketh unto Noah standing without the Ark with all his family.

God. I, God, that all the world have wrought,
Heaven and earth, and all of nought *from nothing*
I see my people, in deed and thought,
Are set foully in sin.

My ghost shall not leng in man,
That through fleshly liking is my fone,
But till six score years be gone,
To look if they will blin.

Man that I made I will destroy,
Beast, worm, and fowl to fly;
For on earth they do me noy, *harm*
The folk that are thereon.
It harms me so heartfully, […]

Quotation 7

Noah. Wife, come in! Why stands thou there?
Thou art ever froward, that dare I swear.
Come in, on God's half! Time it were,
For fear lest that we drown.
N's Wife. Yea, sir, set up your sail,
And row forth with evil hail,
For, without any fail,
I will not out of this town.
But I have my gossips every one, *unless; friends*
One foot further I will not gone; *go*
They shall not drown, by St John,
And I may save their life. *if*
They loved me full well, by Christ;
But thou wilt let them in thy chest,
Else row forth, Noah, whither thou list,
And get thee a new wife.

Noah. Shem, son, lo! thy mother is wrow: *angry*
Forsooth, such another I do not know.
Shem. Father, I shall fetch her in, I trow, *think*
Without any fail. [*He goes to his mother.*
Mother, my father after thee sent,
And bids thee into yonder ship wend. *go*
Look up and see the wind,
For we be ready to sail.

N's Wife. Son, go again to him, and say
I will not come therein to-day.
Noah. Come in, wife, in twenty devils way,
Or else stand there without.
Ham. Shall we all fetch her in?

Noah. Yea, sons, in Christ's blessing and mine; *with*
I would you hied you betime,
For of this flood I am in doubt. *afraid*

Gossip. [*To Wife*] The flood comes
fleeting in full and fast, *flowing*
On every side it spreads full far;
For fear of drowning I am aghast;
Good gossip, let us draw near.
And let us drink ere we depart,
For oft-times we have done so;
For at a draught thou drink'st a quart,
And so will I do ere I go.
N's Wife. Here is a pottle of Malmsey, good and strong;
It will rejoice both heart and tongue;
Though Noah thinks us never so long,
Yet we will drink alike.

Japh. Mother, we pray you altogether—
For we are here your own childer—
Come into the ship for fear of the weather,
For his love that you bought!
N's Wife. That will I not, for all your call, *bidding*
But I have my gossips all.
Shem. In faith, mother, yet you shall,
Whether you will or nought.

Then she shall go.

Noah. Welcome, wife, into this boat.
N's Wife. And have thou that for thy note!
She boxes him on the ear.

(Quot. 6 & 7: A.C. Cawley [ed.]. *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays*, pp. 37, 43 f.)

Quotation 8: The Second Shepherds' Pageant (Wakefield cycle)

[SCENE VIII. *The stable in Bethlehem*]

1 Shep. Hail, comely and clean; hail, young child! *pure*
Hail, maker, as I mean, of a maiden so mild! *born of*
Thou hast waried, I ween, the warlock so wild: *cursed*
The false guiler of teen, now goes he beguiled.
Lo, he merries, *is merry*
Lo, he laughs, my sweeting!
A well fare meeting! *very fortunate*
I have holden my heting:
Have a bob of cherries. *bunch*

2 Shep. Hail, sovereign saviour, for thou hast us sought!
Hail, freely food and flower, that all thing hast wrought! *noble child*
Hail, full of favour, that made all of nought!
Hail! I kneel and I cower. A bird have I brought
To my bairn.
Hail, little tiny mop! *moppet*
Of our creed thou art crop;
I would drink on thy cop,
Little day-starn.

3 Shep. Hail, darling dear, full of Godhead!
I pray thee be near when that I have need.
Hail, sweet is thy cheer! My heart would bleed
To see thee sit here in so poor weed, *clothing*
With no pennies.
Hail! Put forth thy dall! *hand*
I bring thee but a ball:
Have and play thee withal,
And go to the tennis.

(A.C. Cawley [ed.]. *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays*, pp. 102 ff.)

Mystery/miracle play: ceased in second half of C16 after English Reformation;
new kind of play had announced itself already before:

Morality play

Focus on the fate of individual human soul

Vices and Virtues allegorically fighting for the possession/salvation of the Soul, typically:
Everyman/Mankind/Humanum Genus etc. tempted by Vice,
Virtues intervene → regret, conversion, penitence, mercy, salvation

Staged by professional and paid actors in theatres-in-the-round (see next page) or pubs;
no longer dependent on church holidays

(Only in the last two decades of C16: social status of actors increased
→ part of aristocratic households, wearing their colours [Chamberlains Men, King's Men etc.])

Quotation 9: *The Castle of Perseverance*

REFERENCES TO THE 'PLACE' ON THE PLAN

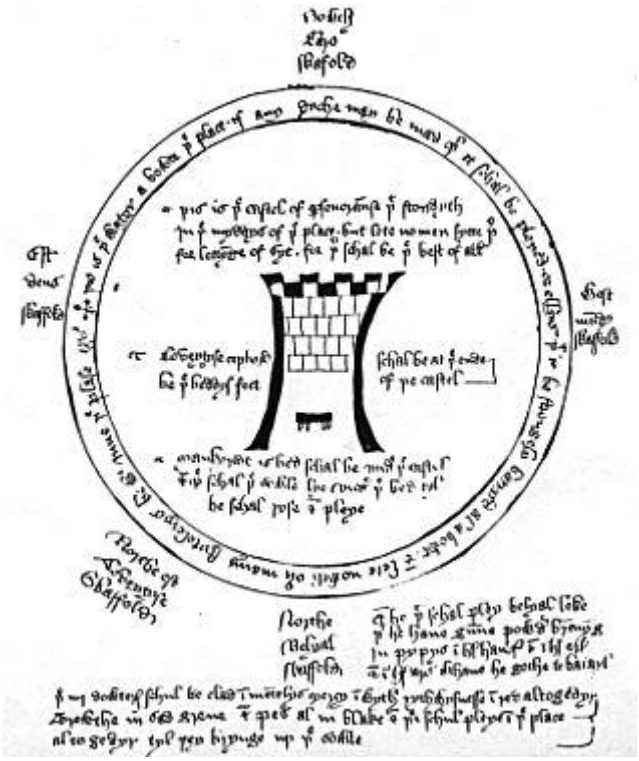


FIG. 1. The plan of the theatre for *The Castle of Perseverance*, about 1425, from the manuscript. In this plan the South is at the top. Reproduced by courtesy of the Council of the Early English Text Society.

There are various legends, as follows:

Written round between the two circles: þis is þe watyr a-bowte þe place if any dyche may be mad þ*er* it schal be pleyed; or ellys þ*a*t it be strongely barryd al a-bowt; & lete noth ou*er* many stytelerys be w*i*t*h*-Inne þe plase.

Above the tower: þis is þe Castle of P*er*seueraun*n*se þ*a*t stondyth In þe myddys of þe place; but lete no men sytte þ*er*, for letty*n*ge of syt; for þ*er* schal be þe best of all.

Either side of the tower: (*left*) Coveytyse cepbord / be þe beddys feet. (*right*) schal be at þe ende / of þe Castel.

Below tower: Mankynde is bed schal be vnd*er* þe Castel & þ*er* schal þe sowle lye vnd*er* þe bed tyl he schal ryse & pleye.

Outside the circles: (*above*) Sowth Caro skafold.
(*right*) Wes[t] Mund[us] skaffo[ld].
(*below*) Northe Belyal skaffold.
(*below left*) Northe-est Coveytyse Skaffold.
(*left*) Est Deus [s]kafold.

Below right: he þ*a*t schal pleye Belyal loke þ*a*t he haue gu*n*me-powd*er* bre*n*myn[ge] In pypys in his hand*is* & i*n* h*is* eris & i*n* his ars wha*n*ne he gothe to bat[tel].

Below: þe iiij dowter*is* schul be clad i*n* me*n*telys; Merci in wyth, Rythwysnesse i*n* red al togedyr; Trewthe in sad grene & Pes al in blake; & þei schal playe i*n* þe place alto gedyr tyl þey brynge up þe sowle.

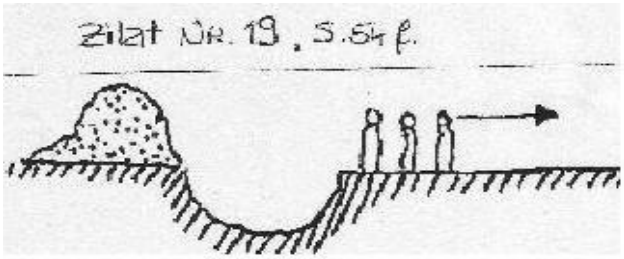


FIG. 6. Showing the Hill outside the ditch and the audience inside. The audience cannot now sit on the hill.

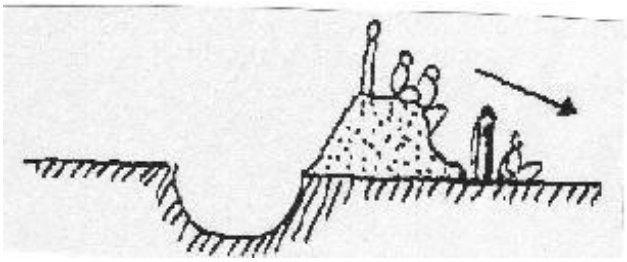


FIG. 7. Showing both Hill and audience inside the ditch. This is the arrangement which conforms with the evidence.

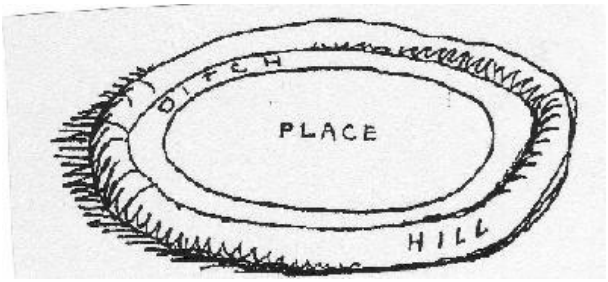


FIG. 8. Bird's-eye view of Place with the Hill outside the ditch according to the arrangement in Figs. 5 and 6. An inconsistent arrangement.

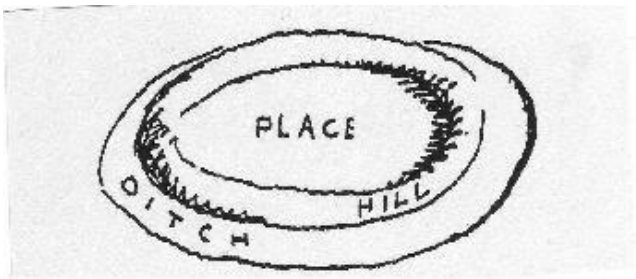


FIG. 9. Bird's-eye view of theatre the same size as Fig. 8 but with the Hill inside the ditch, corresponding with Fig. 7. A consistent arrangement.

(Richard Southern. *The Medieval Theatre in the Round: A Study of the Staging of 'The Castle of Perseverance' and related matters*. Faber & Faber. London 1975, pp. 54 f.)

Underneath the castle tower: bed of Mankind, resting place of his soul;
adjacent to the theatre round: playing scaffoldings ("sedes", i.e. seats):
"Caro" (Flesh) in the south, "Mund[us]" (World) in the west, "Belyal" (Devil) in the north,
"Coveytyse" (Covetousness) in the north-east, "Deus" (God) in the east

Medieval theatre-in-the-round (calculated for *The Castle of Perseverance*):
outer circle diameter of c 130 ft/43 m, playing area 94 ft/31 m; 600/700-4000 people;
later morality plays and interludes: esp played at inns

('Interlude': from Lat. *interludium* [play in-between, esp between two courses of a banquet]; played esp by students of Latin in banquet halls of aristocratic houses, universities etc.)

'Closed' plot structure: form/content of morality plays 'pre-scribed' by Christian dogmas – characters, plot, space, time, language follow authority-related theocratic world image, e.g.:

Everyman (late C15, best-known medieval morality play): Everyman accounts for his life before God, accompanied only by Good Deeds, strengthened by Confession, Regret, Penitence, Charity
→ he is forgiven his sins through God's grace

C16: 'closed' form/content slowly opened up → reality, sensory experience, individuality, e.g.:

The Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements (John Rastell):

Natura Naturata, Studious Desire, Experience instruct Humanity (spherical shape of Earth, elements and bodily fluids, Americas etc.);
Sensual Appetite, Ignorance tempt him: Natura Naturata accepts that Humanity could not survive completely without Sensual Appetite, but this must not become his sole purpose in life

Inner conflict: empirical/inductive/scientific world image coexisting with and complementing the dogmatic/deductive/theocratic *scientia dei*
→ late C15/early C16: world *er-fahren* by Columbus, Vespucci, Magellan, Cortez, Pizarro: world represented in drama becomes more colourful and complex

Quotation 10

HU. Why, sir, I say, what man be ye?
SEN. I am called Sensual Appetite,
All creatures in me delight;
I comfort the wits five,
The tasting, smelling, and hearing;
I refresh the sight and feeling
To all creatures alive.
For when the body waxeth hungry
For lack of food, or else thirsty,
Then with drinks pleasant
I restore him out of pain,
And oft refresh nature again
With delicate viand.
With pleasant sound of harmony
The hearing alway I satisfy,
I dare this well report;
The smelling with sweet odour,
And the sight with pleasant figure
And colours, I comfort;
The feeling, that is so pleasant,
Of every member, foot, or hand,
What pleasure therein can be
By the touching of soft and hard,
Of hot or cold, nought in regard,
Except it come by me.
HU. Then I cannot see the contrary,
But ye are for me full necessary,
And right convenient.
STU. Yea, sir, beware yet what ye do,
For if you forsake my company so,
Lord Nature will not be content.
Of him ye shall never learn good thing,
Nother virtue nor no other cunning,
This dare I well say.
SEN. Marry, avaunt, knave! I thee defy!
Did Nature forbid him my company?
What sayest thou thereto? Speak openly.
HU. As for that I know well nay.
SEN. No, by God! I am right sure;
For he knoweth well no creature
Without me can live one day.
HU. Sir, I pray you be content,
It is not utterly mine intent
Your company to exile;
But only to have communication,
And a pastime of recreation
With this man for a while.
STU. Well for your pleasure I will depart.
HU. Now go, knave, go! I beshrew thy heart!
The devil send thee forward!

(John Rastell. *The Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements*, pp. 21 ff.)

So far, the plot structure resembles more conservative medieval morality plays:
in Christian/ascetic understanding, Humanity falls prey to deadly sins and loses his soul
→ dialogue gets livelier as soon as Humanity takes the wrong path – to the tavern:

Quotation 11

HU. What thing is that, I thee pray?
SEN. Marry thus, canst thou tell us yet,
Wehre is any rose water to get?
TA. Yea, that I can well purvey,
As good as ever you put to your nose,
For there is a false wench called Rose
Distilleth a quart every day.
SEN. By God! I would a pint of that
Were poured even upon thy pate
Before all this presence.
TA. Yet I had liever she and I
Were both together secretly
In some corner in the spence;
For, by God, it is a pretty girl!
It is a world to see her whirl,
Dancing in a round;
O Lord God! how she will trip!
She will bounce it, she will whip,
Yet, clean above the ground!

(John Rastell. *The Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements*, p. 35)

Taverner: wit especially versed in innuendo and word play
→ carnivalesque/folkloristic element in mystery plays of C14 and morality plays of C15:
the serious and comical, the sublime and farcical closely entwined

Text deviates from the common structure of moralities – no question of sin or repentance;
instead discussion of empirical knowledge:

Quotation 12

EX. Yes, that I can well prove,
For this ye know as well as I,
Ye see the North Star in the sky,
Mark well, ye shall unneth it spy,
That ever it doth remove.
But this I assure you, if you go
Northward an hundreth mile or two,
Ye shall think it riseth,
And how that it is near approached
The point over the top of your head,
Which is called your zenith.
Yet if ye go the other way,
Southward ten or twelve days' journey,
Ye shall then think anon
It descended, and come more nigh
The circle parting the earth and sky,
As ye look straight with your eye,
Which is called your horizon;
But ye may go southward so far,
That at the last that same star
Will seem so far down right,
Clear underneath your horizon,
That sight thereof can you have none,
The earth will stop your sight.
This proveth of necessity
That the earth must needs round be:
This conclusion doth it try.

HU. Now that is the properest conclusion
That ever I heard, for by reason
No man may it deny.
But, sir, if that a man sail far
Upon the sea, will then that star
Do there as on the ground?
EX. Yea, doubtless, sail northward, rise it will,
And sail southward, it falleth still,
And that proveth the sea round.

(John Rastell. *The Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements*, pp. 38 f.)

Experience's arguments are based on sensory perception: empirical and inductive
→ indications of paradigm shift in thinking: old structures are still there,
but challenged by new ones
(cf. R. Williams' model of cultural change: emergent, dominant, residual cultural tendencies)
→ literary discourse reflects these shifts in exemplary ways)

In the end, Humanity jollily faces Natura Naturata without any sign of guilt or regret:

Quotation 13

NATURE

Well, Humanity, now I see plainly
That thou hast used much folly,
the while I have been absent.
HU. Sir, I trust I have done nothing
That should be contrary to your pleasing,
Nor never was mine intent;
For I have followed the consel clear,
As ye me bade, of Studious Desire,
And for necessity among
Sometime Sensual Appetite's counsel,
For without him, ye know right well,
My life cannot endure long.

NATURE

Though it be for thee ful necessary
For thy comfort sometime to satisfy
Thy sensual appetite,
Yet it is not convenient for thee
To put therein thy felicity
And all thy whole delight;
For if thou wilt learn no science,
Nother by study nor experience,
I shall thee never advance;
But in the world thou shalt dure then,
Despised of every wise man,
Like this rude beast Ignorance.

[*The original here ends imperfectly.*]

(John Rastell. *The Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements*, p. 50)

Nature: defensive tone – admits "necessity" of Sensual Appetite
→ Christian morality and dogmas seem to have lost their absolute claim
→ physical/sensual human needs are recognised (as opposed to *The Castle of Perseverance*)

Early English comedy: *Gammer Gurton's Needle* and *Ralph Roister Doister*

Gammer Gurton's Needle:

C 1550/60 by a certain Mr S, resident of Christ's College, Cambridge – university play

"Plot": searching the needle lost by Grandma Gurton; after many comical incidents and complications, happily found in the end – proves/disproves proverb "not worth a needle"
→ shows no influence of antique comedy; fuelled by local comic (esp carnivalesque) tradition
→ comedy for comedy's sake: no didactic aim

Characters: from middle class and servants' estate; realistic (Gammer Gurton, Diccon, Hodge, Master Bailey) and satirical names (Doctor Rat, Dame Chat, Cock)

Popular and realistic style:
- spoken in the vernacular
- lower comedy, concentrating on farce-like scenes with anal and excremental eroticism

Quotation 13b

Act I, Scene iii

TIB
Gog's bread, Hodge, thou had a good turn thou wert not here this while!
It had been better for some of us to have been hence a mile
My gammer is so out of course and frantic all at once,
That Cock, our boy, and I, poor wench, have felt it on our bones.

HODGE
What is the matter, say on, Tib, whereat she taketh so on?

TIB
She is undone, she saith, alas, her joy and life is gone.
If she hear not of some comfort, she is, faith, but dead;
Shall never come within her lips one inch of meat ne bread.

HODGE
By'r Lady, cham not very glad to see her in this dump—
Chold a noble her stool hath fallen and she hath broke her rump!

TIB
Nay, and that were the worst, we would not greatly care,
For bursting of her huckle-bone or breaking of her chair;
But greater, greater is her grief, as, Hodge, we shall all feel.

HODGE
Gog's wounds, Tib, my gammer has never lost her nee'le?

TIB
Her nee'le!

HODGE Her nee'le?

TIB
Her nee'le, by him that made me! It is true, Hodge, I tell thee!

HODGE
Gog's sacrament, I would she had lost th'heart out of her belly!
The devil or else his dam, they ought her sure a shame!
How a murrain came this chance, say, Tib, unto our dame?

TIB
My gammer sat her downe on her pess and bad me reach thy breeches,
And by and by—a vengeance on it!—or she had take two stitches
To clap a clout upon thine arse, by chance aside she leers,
And Gib, our cat, in the milk pan she spied, over head and ears.
'Ah, whore! Out, thief!' she cried aloud, and swapped the breeches down;
Up went her staff and out leapt Gib at doors into the town,
And since that time was never wight could set their eyes upon it.
Gog's malison chave, Cock and I, bid twenty times light on it!

HODGE
And is not then my breeches sewed up, tomorow that I should wear?
TIB
No, in faith, Hodge, thy breeches lie for all this never the near.

HODGE
Now a vengeance light on all the sort, that better should have kept it, […]

(William Stevenson [ed.]. *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, pp. 9-11)

Quotation 14

Act II

First a Song

Back and side, go bare, go bare,
Both foot and hand go cold;
But Belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

I can not eat but little meat,
My stomach is not good;
But sure I think that I can drink
With him that wears a hood.

Though I go bare take ye no care,
I am nothing a-cold:
I stuff my skin so full within,
Of jolly good ale and old.

Back and side, go bare, go bare,
Both foot and hand go cold;
But Belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast
And a crab laid in the fire;
A little bread shall do me stead,
Much bread I not desire.
No frost nor snow, no wind I trow
Can hurt me if I would;
I am so wrapped and throughly lapped
Of jolly good ale and old.

Back and side, go bare, etc.

And Tib my wife, that as her life
Loveth well good ale to seek,
Full oft drinks she till ye may see
The tears run down her cheeks.
Then doth she troll to me the bowl,
Even as a malt-worm should;
And saith, 'Sweetheart, I took my part
Of this jolly good ale and old'.

Back and side, go bare, etc.

Now let them drink till they nod and wink
Even as good fellows should do;
They shall not miss to have the bliss
Good ale doth bring men to.
And all poor souls that have scoured bowls,
Or have them lustily trolled,
God save the lives of them and their wives,
Whether they be young or old.

Back and side, go bare, etc.

(William Stevenson [ed.]. *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, pp. 18 f.)

Ralph Roister Doister (Nicholas Udall):

Written c 1552, first printed edition from 1566/67

Udall: lecturer in Greek and Philosophy at Corpus Christi College, Oxford; Eaton headmaster
→ Influences:
- Terence's *Eunuchus* (unsuccessful wooing) and Plautus' *Miles gloriosus* (cowardly soldier)
- local dramatic tradition, esp of morality plays and interludes

Characters:
- virtuous lady Christian Custance (Constance) instead of the Roman play's tolerant prostitute
- 'Christian Custance' and 'Gavin Goodluck' point to the morality tradition, 'Merrygreek' to the Greek figure of the parasite and to the role as jester
- 'Tristram Trusty', 'Sim Suresby', 'Tibet Talkapace', 'Madge Mumblecrust', 'Annot Alyface': telling names foregrounding individual character traits → individualisation

Early English tragedy: *The Spanish Tragedy* and *D. Faustus*

The Spanish Tragedy (Thomas Kyd):

Kyd: 1558-1594; only *The Spanish Tragedy* (written sometime between 1583/84 and 1590/91) and his translation of Tasso's *Padre di famiglia* have survived

Revenge plot (contemporary predilection for Senecan revenge motif):
- villainous deed (esp murder) set before the dramatic action
- ghost of the murdered demanding revenge
- protagonist delays revenge – retarding moment
- play within the play as part of the revenge plan

- death of the guilty party – climax of the action towards the end of the play
- death of close relatives out of grief, or as a retribution for the committed murders

Horatio, Bel-Imperia, and Hieronimo are drawn into a maelstrom of evil and corruption:

Quotation 15

Those garments that he wears I oft have seen –
Alas, it is Horatio, my sweet son!
Oh no, but he that whilom was my son.
O was it thou that calledst me from my bed?
O speak, if any spark of life remain:
I am thy father. Who hath slain my son?
What savage monster, not of human kind,
Hath here been glutted with thy harmless blood,
And left thy bloody corpse dishonoured here,
For me, amidst this dark and deathful shades,
To drown thee with an ocean of my tears?
O heavens, why made you night to cover sin?
By day this deed of darkness had not been.
O earth, why didst thou not in time devour
The vild profaner of this sacred bower?
O poor Horatio, what hadst thou misdone,
To leese thy life ere life was new begun?
O wicked butcher, whatsoe'er thou wert,
How could thou strangle virtue and desert?
Ay me most wretched, that have lost my joy,
In leesing my Horatio, my sweet boy!

Enter ISABELLA

ISABELLA
My husband's absence makes my heart to throb –
Hieronimo!

HIERONIMO
Here Isabella, help me to lament,
For sighs are stopped and all my tears are spent.

ISABELLA
What world of grief! My son Horatio!
O where's the author of this endless woe?

HIERONIMO
To know the author were some ease of grief,
For in revenge my heart would find relief.

ISABELLA
Then is he gone? and is my son gone too?
O, gush out, tears, fountains and floods of tears;
Blow, sighs, and raise an everlasting storm:
For outrage fits our cursed wretchedness.

HIERONIMO
Sweet lovely rose, ill plucked before thy time,
Fair worthy son, not conquered, but betrayed:
I'll kiss thee now, for words with tears are stayed.

ISABELLA
And I'll close up the glasses of his sight,
For once these eyes were only my delight.

HIERONIMO
See'st thou this handkercher besmeared with blood?
It shall not from me till I take revenge.
See'st thou those wounds that yet are bleeding fresh?
I'll not entomb them till I have revenged.
Then will I joy amidst my discontent,
Till then my sorrow never shall be spent.

ISABELLA
The heavens are just, murder cannot be hid:
Time is the author both of truth and right,
And time will bring this treachery to light.

(Thomas Kyd. *The Spanish Tragedy*, pp. 44 f.)

Pain expressed in a highly rhetorical and stylised way – Senacan convention acceptable to Elizabethan audience;
quot. 15 & 16: various rhetorical devices (parallelism, anaphora, interior rhyme, word play etc.)
→ C16: classical literature becomes most important stylistic model, cf. esp John Lyly (*Euphues*, 1578/1580) and Sir Philip Sidney (*Arcadia*, 1590)

Hieronimo on the brink of insanity, a predecessor of Hamlet: overwhelming power of feelings
→ last possible stage of revaluation of individual human motivations in C16 English drama:

Quotation 16

Act III, Scene ii

Enter HIERONIMO

HIERONIMO
O eyes, no eyes, but fountains fraught with tears;
O life, no life, but lively form of death;
O world, no world, but mass of public wrongs,
Confused and filled with murder and misdeeds!
O sacred heavens! if this unhallowed deed,
If this inhuman and barbarous attempt,
If this incomparable murder thus
Of mine, but now no more my son,
Shall unrevealed and unrevengéd pass,
How should we term your dealings to be just,
If you unjustly deal with those that in your justice trust?

(Thomas Kyd. *The Spanish Tragedy*, pp. 52 f.)

"And princes, now behold Hieronimo,/Author and actor in this tragedy":
Man becomes author of his own fate (instead of acting out Providence's script) –
changed relation of the individual to universe/Creation, recognition of human responsibility
→ human plans/intrigues at the centre of history and drama: chaotically unordered reality,
no longer supervised by an absolute subject

Gruesome details: characteristic of revenge tragedy; great demand for spectacular action,
cf. also Shakespeare's *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and esp *Titus Andronicus*

Dramatic representation of primeval psychological forces: for the first time in English drama taken seriously as part of human existence

D. Faustus (Christopher Marlowe):

Marlowe: 1564-1593; astonishing literary achievement: esp *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587/88), *The Jew of Malta* (1590), *Edward II* (1592), *D. Faustus* (1588 or 1593)

Renaissance individual's curiosity/thirst for knowledge dramatised for the first time;
still: influenced by medieval morality play (good and evil angel, seven deadly vices),
antagonists Lucifer and his disciple Mephostophilis;
realistic (Wagner, Valdes, Cornelius etc.) as well as comic characters from the lower classes

Quotation 17

Scene 1

Enter FAUSTUS *in his Study*

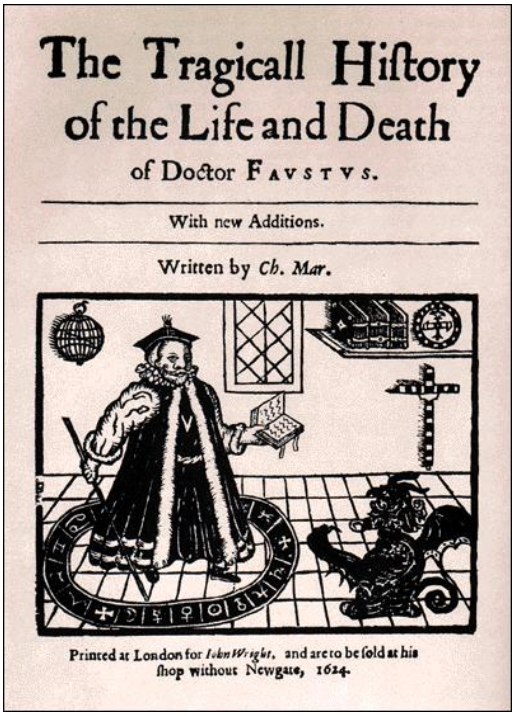
FAUSTUS
Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin
To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess:
Having commenced, be a divine in show,
Yet level at the end of every art,
And live and die in Aristotle's works.
Sweet *Analytics*, 'tis thou hast ravished me:
Bene disserere est finis logices.
Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end?
Affords this art no greater miracle?
Then read no more, thou hast attained the end;
A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit.

Bid *on kai me on* farewell; Galen come:
Seeing, *ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus.*
Be a physician, Faustus, heap up gold,
And be eternized for some wondrous cure.
Summum bonum medicinae sanitas:
The end of physic is our body's health.
Why Faustus, hast thou not attained that end?
Is not thy common talk found aphorisms?
Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
Whereby whole cities have escaped the plague,
And thousand desperate maladies been eased?
Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
Then this profession were to be esteemed.
Physic farewell! Where is Justinian?
Si una eademque res legatur duobus,
Alter rem alter valorem rei, etc.
A pretty case of paltry legacies:
Exhereditare filium non potest pater nisi…
Such is the subject of the Institute,
And universal body of the law:
This study fits a mercenary drudge
Who aims at nothing but external trash!
Too servile and illiberal for me.
When all is done, divinity is best:
Jerome's Bible, Faustus, view it well:
Stipendium peccati mors est: ha! *Stipendium, etc.*
The reward of sin is death? That's hard.
Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas.
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 sara, sara:*
What will be, shall be! Divinity adieu!
These metaphysics of magicians,
And necromantic books are heavenly!
Lines, circles, schemes, letters and characters!
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence
Is promised to the studious artisan!
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,
Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;
But his dominion that exceeds in this
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man:
A sound magician is a mighty god.
Here Faustus, try thy brains to gain a deity.

(Christopher Marlowe. *D. Faustus*, pp. 6-9)

→ *superbia* (pride) and hubris; Faustus turns his back on God and conjures up the Devil:

Quotation 18


The Tragicall Hiſtory
of the Life and Death
of Doctor FAVSTVS.
With new Additions.
Written by Ch. Mar.
Printed at London for Iohn Wright, and are to be ſold at his ſhop without Newgate, 1624.

(from: Christopher Marlowe. *D. Faustus*. 2nd ed. London: The New Mermaids, 1989)

He evokes Mephostophilis, who serves Lucifer (once one of the archangels – damned for *superbia*); still there are moments in which Faustus begins to doubt:

Quotation 19

Scene 5

Enter FAUSTUS *in his Study*

FAUSTUS
Now Faustus, must thou needs be damned,
And canst thou not be saved.
What boots it then to think of God or heaven?
Away with such vain fancies and despair,
Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub.
Now go not backward: no, Faustus, be resolute;
Why waverest thou? O, something soundeth in mine ears:
Abjure this magic, turn to God again'.
Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again.
To God? He loves thee not:
The god thou servest is thine own appetite
Wherein is fixed the love of Belzebub.
To him I'll build an altar and a church,
And offer luke-warme bloud of new-born babes.

Enter GOOD ANGEL *and* EVIL [ANGEL]

GOOD ANGEL
Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.

FAUSTUS
Contrition, prayer, repentance: what of them?

GOOD ANGEL
O they are means to bring thee unto heaven.

EVIL ANGEL
Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy,
That makes men foolish that do trust them most.

GOOD ANGEL
Sweet Faustus, think of heaven, and heavenly things.

EVIL ANGEL
No Faustus, think of honour and of wealth.

Exeunt [ANGELS]

(Christopher Marlowe. *D. Faustus*, pp. 25 f.)

→ two different voices inside Faustus' mind (in the morality play called ‚psychomachia')
allegorical representation is strongly psychological

The real tragedy: Faustus has pawned his soul for cheap jugglers' tricks and hollow values;
his regrets come too late – at the end, the old authority-centred world picture is restored:

Quotation 20

Faustus is gone. Regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise
Only to wonder at unlawful things:
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits,
to practice more than heavenly power permits.

(Christopher Marlowe. *D. Faustus*, p. 68)

→ confirms conservative attitude against which Faustus rebelled; different world pictures clash:
- absolute striving for self-realisation and criticism of traditional concepts of knowledge
- vs. straying from the right path (analogous to Mankind etc. in the morality play);
still: tragedy takes the individual's attempt to establish himself as subject of reality seriously

In psychological terms: Devil/hell as symbolic projections of feelings of guilt, caused by Faustus' rebellion against the divine law
→ older dominant interpretative model of reality remains valid far into C18

Renaissance literature outside drama

1485: War of the Roses ends, reign of Henry VII Tudor (ruling 1485-1509) –
Tudor myth of Arthurian descent vs. shaky relationship to House of Lancaster

From late C15 on: revaluation and reconsideration of classical literature –
first public lectures on Greek language and literature in Oxford under the reign of Henry VII

Under Henry VIII (reign 1509-47): northern Renaissance, esp Thomas More and Thomas Wyatt;
under Elizabeth I (reign 1558-1603): first principles of empirical science formulated

Poetry

John Skelton (1460-1529): most impressive literary personality at the time of Henry VIII –
fast-moving metrical rhythm; moral and political satire in the manner of Juvenal

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-42): takes over Petrarcan sonnet form;
→ later C16: extensive sonnet tradition, combining courtly love with Neoplatonic idealism

Until C18: poetry determined by *imitatio*, poets as 'makers' (*poietes*) and teachers –
vs. "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth) of Romanticism

Narrative

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535): one of the most famous humanists of the time, best known for his Neo-Latin *Utopia* (1516): political sci-fi and utopian satire, but also severe social criticism; beheaded 1535, canonised as martyr of Catholic faith in 1935

Last two decades of C16: Elizabethan literature:
- printed books more easily available
- education in classical rhetoric (esp *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*; ideal of *copia*)

→ Mannerist rhetoric: stylish and self-conscious, preferring ornate and artistically arranged words;
e.g., John Lyly's *Euphues. The Anatomy of Wit* (1578) – rich in both schemes and tropes:

Quotation 21

Aye, but Euphues, hath she not heard also that the dry touchwood is kindled with lime, that the greatest mushroom growth in one night? That the fire quickly burneth the flax? That love easily entreth into the sharp wit without resistance, and is harbored there without repentance?

Quotation 22

To love and to live well is not granted to Jupiter. Who so is blinded with the caul of beauty discerneth no colour of honesty. Did not Gyges cut Candaules a coat by his own measure? Did not Paris, though he were a welcome guest to Menelaus, serve his host a slippery prank?

(John Lyly. *Euphues. The Anatomy of Wit*)

→ 'Euphuistic style': excess of multiplied variation – *en vogue* for several years;
striking feature of Elizabethan rhetoric: amplification (exaggerated, persuasive emphasis), esp:

Arcadia (Sir Philip Sidney):

Older, complete version c 1577-80, incomplete revision ('*New Arcadia*') 1582-84;
new literary form: blending pastoral romance and Heliodor's heroic romance –
often described as forerunner of the modern novel (esp Richardson and Fielding)

Five books/'acts': Pyrocles (Macedonian king's son) and Musidorus (son of Thessalian Duchess) are shipwrecked and land in Arcadia; they fall in love with King Basilius' daughters Pamela and Philoclea, who are in a shepherd's custody because of an oracle.
The people rise against their king; Pyrocles and Musidorus can stop the rebellion. Before the couples can elope, Basilius drinks a potion intended for Pyrocles and is taken for dead.
The Macedonian king sentences his son and nephew to death; Basilius awakes in time, and the narration ends with reconciliation and double marriage

King Basilius' abdication: reflects contemporary nightmare scenario –
Elizabeth I has not made arrangements for a successor (motif still engages Shakespeare)

The Faerie Queene (Edmund Spenser):

Allegorical epic, 1590-96 – together with *Arcadia* supreme creative achievement outside drama;
one of the most influential texts within English literature

Each book consists of twelve Italian-style *cantos* made up by (a new form of) nine-line stanzas –
breaks off after six monumental books and a fragment (i.e. more than 3,800 stanzas):
each book organised around the quest of a protagonist sent out by the fairy queen Gloriana
(cf. quest motif in medieval epics)

Original purpose subverted: glorification of queen and court turns into disillusion and criticism;
didactic aim: to educate the ruling class in public service –
ideology of chivalric revival, militant feudalist autonomy against absolutist claims of the Crown

Romantic epic: for Spenser a vehicle on which he builds his "continued allegory, or dark conceit"
→ allegorical: representation of internal/mental experience, and of political/historical strategies:

E.g., Book I: Together with Una (Protestantism), Knight of the Red Cross sets out to kill a dragon (Sin) breeding terrible offspring (dissenters from Protestantism) – the knight blinds the dragon and cuts off his head, but is deceived in the following by Archimago (Hypocrisy), Sansfoy ('without faith') and Duessa (Falseness, Catholic Church).
After various adventures in magical/allegorical places, the knight is led to Dame Humility, Faithfulness and Hope; supported by Obedience, Penance, Regret and Contemplation, he purifies his spirit, kills the dragon and marries Una

Lengthy descriptions of symbolic places – create atmospheres full of sensuality,
e.g., the Bower of Bliss (2.12): Sir Guyon, Knight of Moderation, has to fight Pyrochles (Rage), Chymochles (Greed) and finally Acrasia (Gluttony) living in the Bower of Bliss:

Quotation 24

Edmund Spenser (1552-1599)
The Faerie Queene

Book II, Canto 12
(excerpt)

THE SECOND BOOKE OF THE FAERIE QUEENE
Contayning
THE LEGEND OF SIR GUYON,
OR OF TEMPERAUNCE

CANTO XII

xliii

379· Thence passing forth, they shortly do arrive,
380 Whereas the Bowre of Blisse was situate;
381 A place pickt out by choice of best alive,
382 That natures worke by art can imitate:
383 In which what ever in this worldly state
384 Is sweet, and pleasing unto living sense,
385· Or that may dayntiest fantasie aggrate,
386 Was poured forth with plentifull dispence,
387 And made there to abound with lavish affluence.

xliv

388 Goodly it was enclosed round about,
389 Aswell their entred guests to keepe within,
390 As those unruly beasts to hold without;
391 Yet was the fence thereof but weake and thin;
392· Nought feard their force, that fortilage to win,
393 But wisdomes powre, and temperaunces might,
394 By which the mightiest things efforced bin:
395 And eke the gate was wrought of substaunce light,
396 Rather for pleasure, then for battery or fight.

· **379**] "The second day ther came in a Palmer bearing an Infant with bloody hands, whose Parents he complained to have bene slayne by an Enchaunteresse called Acrasia: and therfore craved of the Faery Queene to appoint him some knight, to performe that adventure, which being assigned to Sir Guyon, he presently went forth with that same Palmer: which is the beginning of the second booke and the whole subject thereof" ("Letter to Ralegh"). Having successfully resisted the assaults of ire and concupiscence, passed through the temptations of the Cave of Mammon, sojourned for a time in the House of Alma, and passed over dangerous seas, Guyon, with his Palmer (who represents reason and providential care), arrives in the realm of Acrasia, whose Bower is surrounded by wild beasts, her transformed victims. Spenser's description of the Bower owes a good deal to Tasso's description of the abode of the enchantress Armida in *Gerusalemne Liberata*, XIV-XVI. Both Armida and Acrasia are derived from the allegorical interpretations of Homer's Circe, *Odyssey*, X.

· **385**] aggrate: please.

· **392**] fortilage: fortress.

xlv

Yt framed was of precious yvory,
That seemd a worke of admirable wit;
And therein all the famous history
Of Jason and Medaea was ywrit;
Her mighty charmes, her furious loving fit,
His goodly conquest of the golden fleece,
His falsed faith, and love too lightly flit,
The wondred Argo, which in venturous peece
First through the Euxine seas bore all the flowr of Greece.

xlvi

Ye might have seene the frothy billowes fry
Under the ship, as thorough them she went,
That seemd the waves were into yvory,
Or yvory into the waves were sent;
And other where the snowy substaunce sprent
With vermell, like the boyes bloud therein shed,
A piteous spectacle did represent,
And otherwhiles with gold besprinkeled;
Yt seemd th'enchaunted flame, which did Cre{:u}sa wed.

xlvii

All this, and more might in that goodly gate
Be red; that ever open stood to all,
Which thither came: but in the Porch there sate
A comely personage of stature tall,
And semblaunce pleasing, more then naturall,
That travellers to him seemd to entize;
His looser garment to the ground did fall,
And flew about his heeles in wanton wize,
Not fit for speedy pace, or manly exercize.

xlviii

They in that place him Genius did call:
Not that celestiall powre, to whom the care
Of life, and generation of all
That lives, pertaines in charge particulare,
Who wondrous things concerning our welfare,
And straunge phantomes doth let us oft forsee,
And oft of secret ill bids us beware:
That is our Selfe, whom though we do not see,
Yet each doth in him selfe it well perceive to bee.

· **400**] Jason was the captain of the Argonauts, who captured the Golden Fleece from Colchis, east of the Black (Euxine) Sea. Medea, daughter of the king of Colchis and (like Acrasia) an enchantress, fell in love with Jason and aided him; in order to delay her father's pursuit of the Argonauts, she slew her brother Absyrtes and strewed his limbs behind them (xlv.6). Jason abandoned her for the daughter of the king of Corinth (Spenser's "Creusa"), and in her rage Medea murdered her rival with a poisoned garment, which caught fire when worn, and destroyed her own children. See Euripides' *Medea*, xlvii.l.

· **424**] Genius: Spenser's account of the true Genius is based on Natalis Comes, *Mythologiae*, where he is described as presiding over generation and the care of all life.

· **429**] phantomes. According to Natalis Comes, Genius guides men by "spectra et imagines."

· **431**] our Selfe. Genius is born "with us" (Comes); Virgil's name for a man's attendant spirit is Manes.

xlix

Therefore a God him sage Antiquity
Did wisely make, and good Agdistes call:
But this same was to that quite contrary,
The foe of life, that good envyes to all,
That secretly doth us procure to fall,
Through guilefull semblaunts, which he make us see.
He of this Gardin had the governall,
And Pleasures porter was devizd to bee,
Holding a staffe in hand for more formalitee.

l

With diverse flowres he daintily was deckt,
And strowed round about, and by his side
A mighty Mazer bowle of wine was set,
As if it had to him bene sacrifide;
Wherewith all new-come guests he gratifide:
So did he eke Sir Guyon passing by:
But he his idle curtesie defide,
And overthrew his bowle disdainfully;
And broke his staffe, with which he charmed semblants sly.

li

Thus being entred, they behold around
A large and spacious plaine, on every side
Strowed with pleasauns, whose faire grassy ground
Mantled with greene, and goodly beautifide
With all the ornaments of Floraes pride,
Wherewith her mother Art, as halfe in scorne
Of niggard Nature, like a pompous bride
Did decke her, and too lavishly adorne,
When forth from virgin bowre she comes in th'early morne.

lii

Thereto the Heavens alwayes Joviall,
Lookt on them lovely, still in stedfast state,
Ne suffred storme nor frost on them to fall,
Their tender buds or leaves to violate,
Nor scorching heat, nor cold intemperate
T'afflict the creatures, which therein did dwelle
But the milde aire with season moderate
Gently attempred, and disposd so well,
That still it breathed forth sweet spirit and holesome smell.

liii

More sweet and holesome, then the pleasaunt hill

· **434**] Agdistes: the name comes through Natalis Comes, from other sources; “Agdistis” was originally a Phrygian Mother-goddess.
· **442**] Genius was worshipped with gardens of flowers and libations of wine (Natalis Comes).
· **444**] mazer: hardwood.
· **453**] plesauns: gardens.

Of Rhodope, on which the Nimphe, that bore
A gyaunt babe, her selfe for griefe did kill;
Or the Thessalian Tempe, where of yore
Faire Daphne Phoebus hart with love did gore;
Or Ida, where the Gods lov'd to repaire,
When ever they their heavenly bowres forlore;
Or sweet Parnasse, the haunt of Muses faire;
Or Eden selfe, if ought with Eden mote compaire.

liv

Much wondred Guyon at the faire aspect
Of that sweet place, yet suffred no delight
To sincke into his sence, nor mind affect,
But passed forth, and lookt still forward right,
Bridling his will, and maistering his might:
Till that he came unto another gate,
No gate, but like one, being goodly dight
With boughes and braunches, which did broad dilate
Their clasping armes, in wanton wreathings intricate.

lv

So fashioned a Porch with rare device,
Archt over head with an embracing vine,
Whose bounches hanging downe, seemed to entice
All passers by, to tast their lushious wine,
And did themselves into their hands incline,
As freely offering to be gathered:
Some deepe empurpled as the Hyacine,
Some as the Rubine, laughing sweetly red,
Some like faire Emeraudes, not yet well ripened.

lvi

And them amongst, some were of burnisht gold,
So made by art, to beautifie the rest,
Which did themselves emongst the leaves enfold,
As lurking from the vew of covetous guest,
That the weake bowes, with so rich load opprest,
Did bow adowne, as over-burdened.
Under that Porch a comely dame did rest,
Clad in faire weedes, but fowle disordered,
And garments loose, that seemd unmeet for womanhed.

lvii

In her left hand a Cup of gold she held,
And with her right the riper fruit did reach,
Whose sappy liquor, that with fulnesse sweld,

· **470**] Rhodope: an allusion to an obscure myth, referred to by Ovid and Plutarch, of a nymph of Thrace who, having borne a giant to Neptune, compared herself to Juno and was for her presumption turned unto a mountain.
· **473**] Daphne: a nymph, daughter of the river Peneus in the Vale of Tempe, who, pursued by Apollo, was turned unto a laurel. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I, 452-567.
· **474**] Ida: a mountain near Troy, from which, in the *Iliad*, Zeus watches the Trojan war.
· **493**] Hyacine: jacinth.

Into her cup she scruzd, with daintie breach
Of her fine fingers, without fowle empeach,
That so faire wine-presse made the wine more sweet:
Thereof she usd to give to drinke to each,
Whom passing by she happened to meet:
It was her guise, all Straungers goodly so to greet.

lviii

So she to Guyon offred it to tast;
Who taking it out of her tender hond,
The cup to ground did violently cast,
That all in peeces it was broken fond,
And with the liquor stained all the lond:
Whereat Excesse exceedingly was wroth,
Yet no'te the same amend, ne yet withstond,
But suffered him to passe, all were she loth.
Who nought regarding her displeasure forward goth.

lix

There the most daintie Paradise on ground,
It selfe doth offer to his sober eye,
In which all pleasures plenteously abound,
And none does others happinesse envye;
The painted flowres, the trees upshooting hye,
The dales for shade, the hilles for breathing space,
The trembling groves, the Christall running by;
And that, which all faire workes doth most aggrace,
The art, which all that wrought, appeared in no place.

lx

One would have thought, (so cunningly, the rude,
And scorned parts were mingled with the fine,)
That nature had for wantonesse ensude
Art, and that Art at nature did repine;
So striving each th'other to undermine,
Each did the others worke more beautifie;
So diff'ring both in willes, agreed in fine:
So all agreed through sweete diversitie,
This Gardin to adorne with all varietie.

lxi

And in the midst of all, a fountaine stood,
Of richest substaunce, that on earth might bee,
So pure and shiny, that the silver flood
Through every channell running one might see;
Most goodly it with curious imageree
Was over-wrought, and shapes of naked boyes,
Of which some seemd with lively jollitee,

508] scruzd: squeezed. breach: crushing.
509] empeach: injury.
534] ensude: imitated.
538] in fine: in the end.

To fly about, playing their wanton toyes,
Whilest others did them selves embay in liquid joyes.

lxii

And over all, of purest gold was spred,
A trayle of yvie in his native hew:
For the rich mettall was so coloured,
That wight, who did not well avis'd it vew,
Would surely deeme it to be yvie trew:
Low his lascivious armes adown did creepe,
That themselves dipping in the silver dew,
Their fleecy flowres they tenderly did steepe,
Which drops of Christall seemd for wantones to weepe.

lxiii

Infinit streames continually did well
Out of this fountaine, sweet and faire to see,
The which into an ample laver fell,
And shortly grew to so great quantitie,
That like a little lake it seemd to bee:
Whose depth exceeded not three cubits hight,
That through the waves one might the bottom see,
All pav'd beneath with Jaspar shining bright,
That seemd the fountaine in that sea did sayle upright.

lxiv

And all the margent round about was set,
With shady Laurell trees, thence to defend
The sunny beames, which on the billowes bet,
And those which therein bathed, mote offend.
As Guyon hapned by the same to wend,
Two naked Damzelles he therein espyde,
Which therein bathing, seemed to contend,
And wrestle wantonly, ne car'd to hyde,
Their dainty parts from vew of any, which them eyde.

lxv

Sometimes the one would lift the other quight
Above the waters, and then downe againe
Her plong, as over maistered by might,
Where both awhile would covered remaine,
And each the other from to rise restraine;
The whiles their snowy limbes, as through a vele,
So through the Christall waves appeared plaine:
Then suddeinly both would themselves unhele,
And th'amarous sweet spoiles to greedy eyes revele.

lxvi

As that faire Starre, the messenger of morne,

561] laver: basin.
584] unhele: disclose.

His deawy face out of the sea doth reare:
Or as the Cyprian goddesse, newly borne
Of th'Oceans fruitfull froth, did first appeare:
Such seemed they, and so their yellow heare
Christalline humour dropped downe apace.
Whom such when Guyon saw, he drew him neare,
And somewhat gan relent his earnest pace,
His stubborne brest gan secret pleasaunce to embrace.

lxvii

The wanton Maidens him espying, stood
Gazing a while at his unwonted guise;
Then th'one her selfe low ducked in the flood,
Abasht, that her a straunger did a vise:
But th'other rather higher did arise,
And her two lilly paps aloft displayd,
And all, that might his melting hart entise
To her delights, she unto him bewrayd:
The rest hid underneath, him more desirous made.

lxviii

With that, the other likewise up arose,
And her faire lockes, which formerly were bownd
Up in one knot, she low adowne did lose:
Which flowing long and thick, her cloth'd arownd,
And th'yvorie in golden mantle gownd:
So that faire spectacle from him was reft,
Yet that, which reft it, no lesse faire was fownd:
So hid in lockes and waves from lookers theft,
Nought but her lovely face she for his looking left.

lxix

Withall she laughed, and she blusht withall,
That blushing to her laughter gave more grace,
And laughter to her blushing, as did fall:
Now when they spide the knight to slacke his pace,
Them to behold, and in his sparkling face
The secret signes of kindled lust appeare,
Their wanton meriments they did encreace,
And to him beckned, to approch more neare,
And shewd him many sights, that courage cold could reare.

lxx

On which when gazing him the Palmer saw,
He much rebukt those wandring eyes of his,
And counseld well, him forward thence did draw.
Now are they come nigh to the Bowre of blis
Of her fond favorites so nam'd amis:
When thus the Palmer; Now Sir, well avise;
For here the end of all our travell is:

588] the Cyprian goddess: Venus.

Here wonnes Acrasia, whom we must surprise,
Else she will slip away, and all our drift despise.

lxxi

Eftsoones they heard a most melodious sound,
Of all that mote delight a daintie eare,
Such as attonce might not on living ground,
Save in this Paradise, be heard elswhere:
Right hard it was, for wight, which did it heare,
To read, what manner musicke that mote bee:
For all that pleasing is to living eare,
Was there consorted in one harmonee,
Birdes, voyces, instruments, windes, waters, all agree.

lxxii

The joyous birdes shrouded in chearefull shade,
Their notes unto the voyce attempred sweet;
Th'Angelicall soft trembling voyces made
To th'instruments divine respondence meet:
The silver sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmure of the waters fall:
The waters fall with difference discreet,
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call:
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

lxxiii

There, whence that Musick seemed heard to bee,
Was the faire Witch her selfe now solacing,
With a new Lover, whom through sorceree
And witchcraft, she from farre did thither bring:
There she had him now layd a slombering,
In secret shade, after long wanton joyes:
Whilst round about them pleasauntly did sing
Many faire Ladies, and lascivious boyes,
That ever mixt their song with light licentious toyes.

lxxiv

And all that while, right over him she hong,
With her false eyes fast fixed in his sight,
As seeking medicine, whence she was stong,
Or greedily depasturing delight:
And oft inclining downe with kisses light,
For feare of waking him, his lips bedewd,
And through his humid eyes did sucke his spright,
Quite molten into lust and pleasure lewd;
Wherewith she sighed soft, as if his case she rewd.

lxxv

The whiles some one did chaunt this lovely lay;

661] depasturing: feeding on.

667] The rose-song is paraphrased from Tasso, *Cer. Lib.*, XVI, 14-15.

Ah see, who so faire thing doest faine to see,
In springing flowre the image of thy day;
Ah see the Virgin Rose, how sweetly shee
Doth first peepe forth with bashfull modestee,
That fairer seemes, the lesse ye see her may;
So see soone after, how more bold and free
Her bared bosome she doth broad display;
Loe see soone after, how she fades, and falles away.

lxxvi

So passeth, in the passing of a day,
Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre,
Ne more doth flourish after first decay,
That earst was sought to decke both bed and bowre,
Of many a Ladie, and many a Paramowre:
Gather therefore the Rose, whilest yet is prime,
For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre:
Gather the Rose of love, whilest yet is time,
Whilest loving thou mayst loved be with equall crime.

lxxvii

He ceast, and then gan all the quire of birdes
Their diverse notes t'attune unto his lay,
As in approvance of his pleasing words.
The constant paire heard all, that he did say,
Yet swarved not, but kept their forward way,
Through many covert groves, and thickets close,
In which they creeping did at last display
That wanton Ladie, with her lover lose,
Whose sleepie head she in her lap did soft dispose.

lxxviii

Upon a bed of Roses she was layd,
As faint through heat, or dight to pleasant sin,
And was arayd, or rather disarayd,
All in a vele of silke and silver thin,
That hid no whit her alablaster skin,
But rather shewd more white, if more might bee:
More subtile web Arachne can not spin,
Nor the fine nets, which oft we woven see
Of scorched deaw, do not in th'aire more lightly flee.

lxxix

Her snowy brest was bare to readie spoyle,
Of hungry eies, which n'ote therewith be fild,
And yet through languour of her late sweet toyle,
Few drops, more cleare then Nectar, forth distild,
That like pure Orient perles adowne it trild,
And her faire eyes sweet smyling in delight,
Moystened their fierie beames, with which she thrild

700 Arachne: the Lydian maiden who challenged Athena to a contest in weaving.

Fraile harts, yet quenched not; like starry light
Which sparckling on the silent waves, does seeme more bright.

lxxx

The young man sleeping by her, seemd to bee
Some goodly swayne of honorable place,
That certes it great pittie was to see
Him his nobilitie so foule deface;
A sweet regard, and amiable grace,
Mixed with manly sternnesse did appeare
Yet sleeping, in his well proportiond face,
And on his tender lips the downy heare
Did now but freshly spring, and silken blossomes beare.

lxxxi

His warlike armes, the idle instruments
Of sleeping praise, were hong upon a tree,
723· And his brave shield, full of old moniments,
Was fowly ra'st, that none the signes might see;
Ne for them, ne for honour cared hee,
Ne ought, that did to his advauncement tend,
But in lewd loves, and wastfull luxuree,
His dayes, his goods, his bodie he did spend:
729· O horrible enchantment, that him so did blend.

lxxxii

The noble Elfe, and carefull Palmer drew
So nigh them, minding nought, but lustfull game,
That suddein forth they on them rusht, and threw
733· A subtile net, which onely for the same
734· The skilfull Palmer formally did frame.
So held them under fast, the whiles the rest
Fled all away for feare of fowler shame.
The faire Enchauntresse, so unwares opprest,
Tryde all her arts, and all her sleights, thence out to wrest.

lxxxiii

And eke her lover strove: but all in vaine;
For that same net so cunningly was wound,
That neither guile, nor force might it distraine.
They tooke them both, and both them strongly bound
In captive bandes, which there they readie found:
But her in chaines of adamant he tyde;
For nothing else might keepe her safe and sound;
But Verdant (so he hight) he soone untyde,
And counsell sage in steed thereof to him applyde.

· 723] old moniments: the achievements of his family inscribed on his coat of arms.
· 729] blend: blind.
· 733] A subtile net: like the net in which Vulcan caught Venus and Mars. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses* IV,171-84.
· 734] formally: expressly, especially.

lxxxiv

But all those pleasant bowres and Pallace brave,
Guyon broke downe, with rigour pittilesse;
Ne ought their goodly workmanship might save
Them from the tempest of his wrathfulnesse,
But that their blisse he turn'd to balefulnesse:
Their groves he feld, their gardins did deface,
Their arbers spoyle, their Cabinets suppresse,
Their banket houses burne, their buildings race,
And of the fairest late, now made the fowlest place.

lxxxv

Then led they her away, and eke that knight
They with them led, both sorrowfull and sad:
The way they came, the same retourn'd they right,
Till they arrived, where they lately had
Charm'd those wild-beasts, that rag'd with furie mad.
Which now awaking, fierce at them gan fly,
As in their mistresse reskew, whom they lad;
But them the Palmer soone did pacify.
Then Guyon askt, what meant those beastes, which there did ly.

lxxxvi

Said he, These seeming beasts are men indeed,
Whom this Enchauntresse hath transformed thus,
Whylome her lovers, which her lusts did feed,
Now turned into figures hideous,
According to their mindes like monstruous.
Sad end (quoth he) of life intemperate,
And mournefull meed of joyes delicious:
But Palmer, if it mote thee so aggrate,
Let them returned be unto their former state.

lxxxvii

Streight way he with his vertuous staffe them strooke,
And streight of beasts they comely men became;
Yet being men they did unmanly looke,
And stared ghastly, some for inward shame,
And some for wrath, to see their captive Dame:
But one above the rest in speciall,
That had an hog beene late, hight Grille by name,
Repined greatly, and did him miscall,
That had from hoggish forme him brought to naturall.

lxxxviii

Said Guyon, See the mind of beastly man,
That hath so soone forgot the excellence
Of his creation, when he life began,
That now he chooseth, with vile difference,
To be a beast, and lacke intelligence.
To whom the Palmer thus, The donghill kind
Delights in filth and foule incontinence:

791 Let Grill be Grill, and have his hoggish mind,
792 But let us hence depart, whilest wether serves and wind.

781] Grille. In Plutarch's dialogue concerning reason in brutes, Gryllus, one of the companions of Ulysses, transformed into a hog by Circe, refuses to be restored to human shape.

Sexual imagery: already Sir Guyon's visit to the Bower symbolically resembles male penetration;
seduction is female in nature – corresponding to biblical teachings and Puritan belief
(→ intertext: David Lodge's postmodern *Small World* [1984] – hero Percy McGarrigle's quest)

Spenser refashions medieval traditions (e.g., of older romance) for his more individualistic age:
densely significant narratives symbolic of spiritual/moral/psychological conflict

Shakespearean Drama

Unique position in culture and literary history – "Not of an age, but for all time" (Ben Jonson):
constantly re-edited, commented upon and translated into virtually all languages of the world

Born 1564 at Stratford-upon-Avon (Warwickshire), buried there 1616;
eldest son of John S. and Mary Arden, Stratford Grammar School until
→ 1582: hastily marries Anne Hathaway, three children born within the next three years

Half-dozen years later, S. moves to London:
before 1594, two long poems and the bulk of his sonnets addressed to Earl of Southampton;
later esp theatre: one of the principal actors in Lord Chamberlain's Company (after 1603 under personal patronage of James I: The King's Men),
one of seven partners in building the Globe Theatre in 1598-99 – outside the city's legal control on the south bank of the Thames (see below)

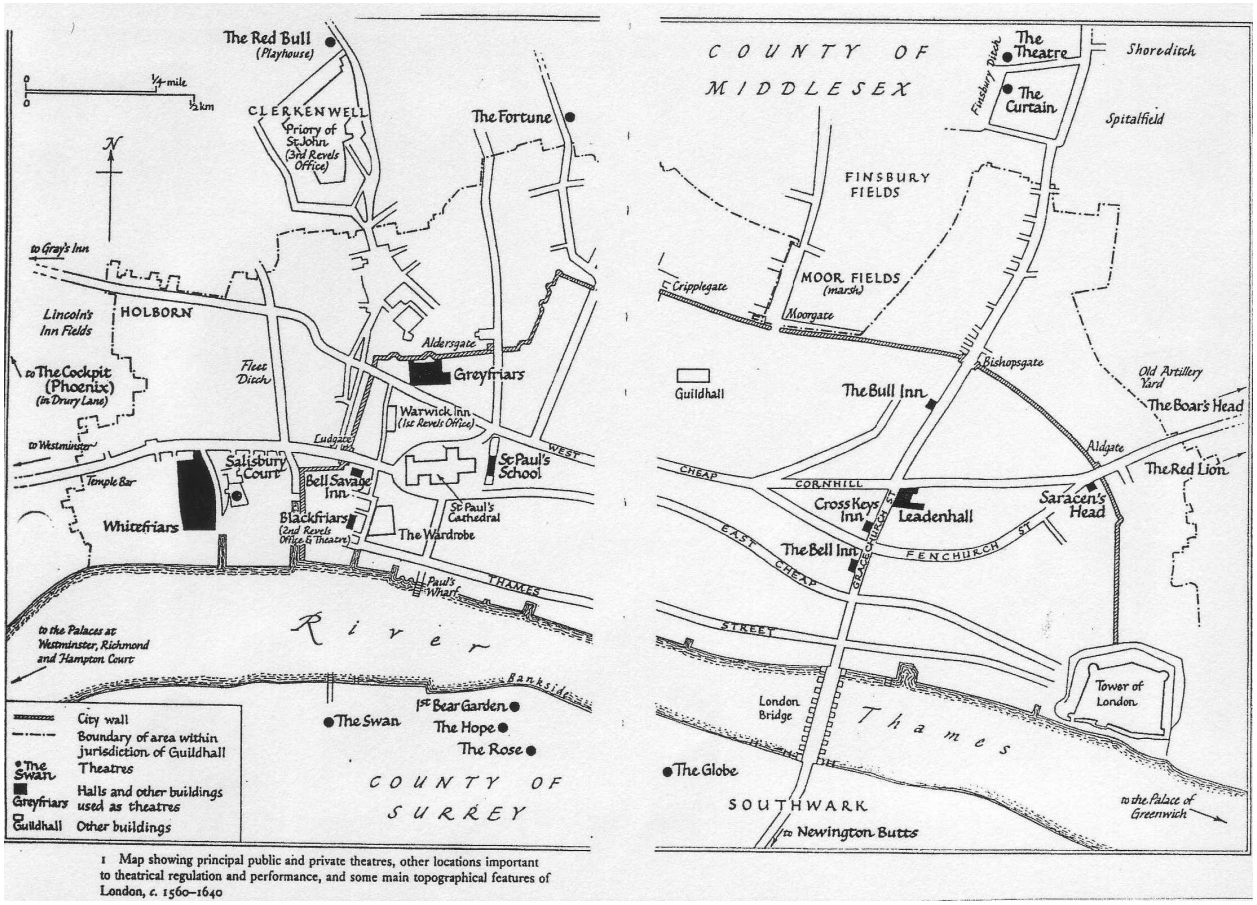
1594: *Titus Andronicus* and unauthorised text from *Henry VI 2* printed anonymously;
during lifetime, 16 other plays are published in separate quarto form –
from 1598 on: S.'s name usually printed on title pages and in stationers' entries → sales value

(1623: John Heminge and Henry Condell [backed by Ben Jonson] undertake First Folio edition –
our only source for 18 of 38 known plays)

Quotation 25 a

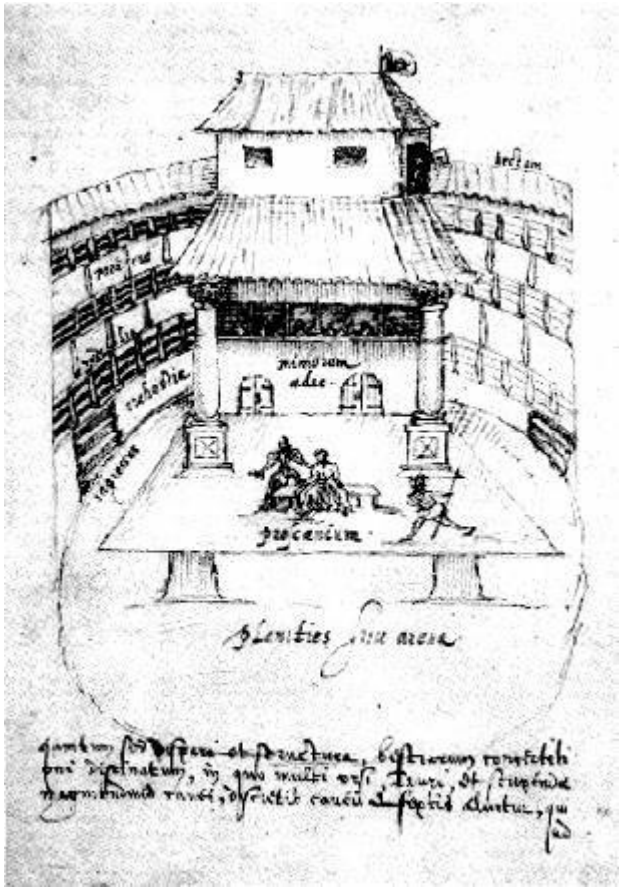
…sundry great disorders and inconveniences have been found to ensue to this City by the inordinate haunting of great multitudes of people, specially youth, to plays, interludes, and shows; namely occasion of frays and quarrels, evil practices of incontinency in great Inns, having chambers and secret places adjoining to their open stages and galleries, inveigling and alluring of maids, especially orphans and good citizens' children under age to privy and unmeet contracts, the publishing of unchaste, uncomely and unshamefast speeches and doings, withdrawing of the Queen Majesty's subjects from divine service on Sundays and holidays, at which times such plays were chiefly used, unthrifty waste of money of the poor and fond [i.e. foolish] persons, sundry robberies by picking and cutting of purses, uttering of popular, busy, and seditious matters, and many other corruptions of youth and other enormities.

(Murray Roston. *Sixteenth-Century English Literature*. London: Macmillan, 1982, p. 415)



1 Map showing principal public and private theatres, other locations important to theatrical regulation and performance, and some main topographical features of London, c. 1560–1640

Quotation 25 b



← Johannes de Witt's sketch of the interior of the Swan Theatre about 1596, as copied by Aernout van Buchell

Hollar's 'Long View of London from Bankside', 1647; section showing the Globe and Beargarden – Hollar has reversed their designations ↓

(A.R. Braunmüller & M. Hattaway. *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*. Cambridge 1990)

A form of theatre that exposes its theatrical nature to the audience:
prologue, epilogue, soliloquy, aside, anachronistic allusion, actor's stepping out of role etc., e.g., the prologue to *Henry V*.

Quotation 26

Can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France?
Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! since a crooked figure may
Attest in little place a million,
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.
...Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts;
Into a thousand parts divide one man,
And make imaginary puissance.

Serious Elizabethan drama always historical – protagonists act in historical situations:
esp S.'s Lancaster (*Richard II*, *Henry IV 1-2*, *Henry V*) and York tetralogies (*Henry VI 1-3*, *Richard III*), *King John* and *Henry VIII* as prologue and epilogue to the series
→ human failure studied for its political causes and effects

(Early chronicle plays, esp *Henry VI*: dilemma of weak king, little interest in personal tragedy;
Richard II: strongly psychological, considerable tragic potential;
Henry IV: features of *bildungsroman*, focusing on the qualifications of an ideal ruler;
Richard III: villain in the morality tradition of the Vice)

Lancaster Tetralogy

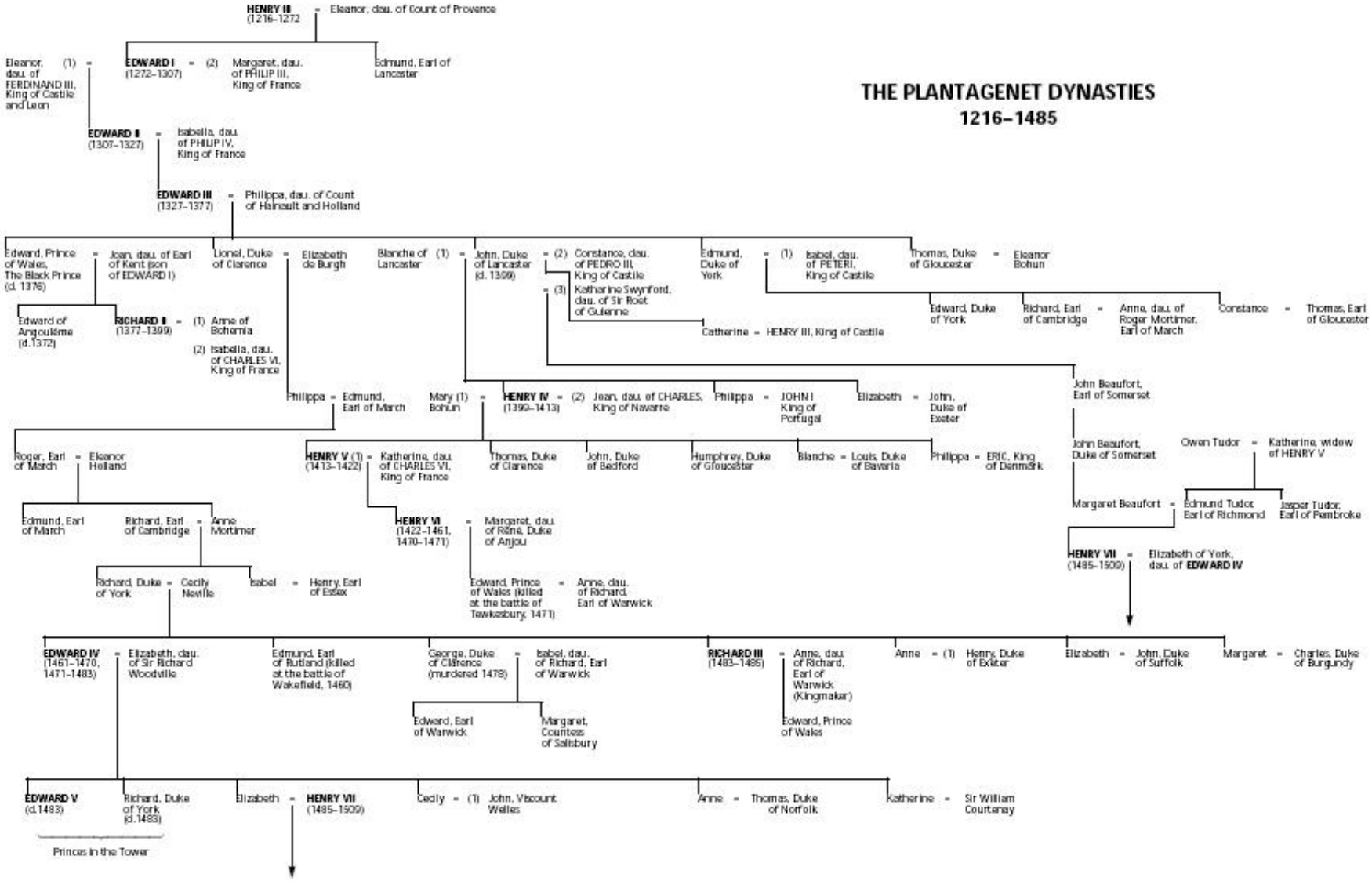
Critical opinion divided: conservative or subversive attitude of S.'s plays?
(analogous: rulers represented on stage maintaining or undermining institutional power?)

Father/son relationships: compare old/new concepts of power –
esp transition from authority- to experience-centred world picture
→ king deprived of divine aura/omnipotence and symbolically subjected to common law;
at the same time: idea of divine kingship continues (Prince Hal in *Henry IV 2*, Henry V)

→ apparent contradiction – but (intended) audience was able to realise ideological character:
'self-revealing/-exposing' quality, leaves no doubt that political realities have changed
(literature as an "elaborated inter-discourse" [Jürgen Link] within the discourses of a time)

Literary predilection for father/son relationships: dramatic potential, symbolic complexity
(biological, sociological, psychological, moral, legal, political, theological relevance);
enormously politically/historically important at S.'s time:

Quotation 27



(Crown prince: eldest son, or eldest son's eldest son, e.g.,
Edward III has seven sons → Edward, 'The Black Prince' dies before coronation
→ Richard II crowned at the age of ten, actual power in the hands of his uncle John of Gaunt)

Highest symbolic father figure: 'Heavenly Father' – king is 'son' and God's representative,
at the same time royal 'father' to his people (cf. Erasmus of Rotterdam);
king's son is potential future king, i.e. royal 'father' himself

Richard II:

Quotation 28

KING RICHARD
Discomfortable cousin, knowest thou not
That when the searching eye of heaven is hid
Behind the globe, that lights the lower world,
Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen
In murders and in outrage boldly here;
But when from under this terrestrial ball
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines,
And darts his light through every guilty hole,
Then murders, treasons, and detested sins –
The cloak of night being plucked from off their backs –
Stand bare and naked, trembling at themselves?
So when this thief, this traitor Bolingbroke,
Who all this while hath revelled in the night
Whilst we were wandering with the Antipodes,
Shall see us rising in our throne, the east,
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,
Not able to endure the sight of day,
But self-affrighted, tremble at his sin.
Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king.
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord,
For every man that Bolingbroke hath pressed
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,
God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay
A glorious angel. Then if angels fight,
Weak men must fall; for heaven still guards the right.

(William Shakespeare. *Richard II*. Stanley Wells [ed.]. Penguin 1969)

"searching eye of heaven" – medieval preference for thinking in analogies:
homophones 'sun/son', 'eye/I' point to the symbolic relationship between God and king –
medieval concept of reality: authority-centred, all power descending from God

→ no longer valid: Machiavellian power politician Bolingbroke seizes Richard II's crown –
subject/symbolic son rebels against king/symbolic father and prevails
→ S.'s recurring symbol of the new age: both loss of order and opportunity for change

Quotation 29

Enter Gardeners, one the master, the other two his men

But stay, here come the gardeners.
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.
My wretchedness unto a row of pins
They will talk of state; for everyone doth so
Against a change. Woe is forerun with woe.

The Queen and her Ladies stand apart.

GARDENER (*to one man*)
Go, bind thou up young dangling apricocks
Which, like unruly children, make their sire
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight.
Give some supportance to the bending twigs.

(*To the other*)
Go thou, and like an executioner
Cut off the heads of too fast-growing sprays

That look too lofty in our commonwealth.
All must be even in our government.
You thus employed, I will go root away
The noisome weeds which without profit suck
The soils fertility from wholesome flowers.

FIRST MAN
Why should we, in the compass of a pale,
Keep law and form and due proportion,
Showing as in a model our firm estate,
When our sea-wallèd garden, the whole land,
Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers choked up,
Her fruit trees all unpruned, her hedges ruined,
Her knots disordered, and her wholesome herbs
Swarming with caterpillars?

GARDENER Hold thy peace.
He that hath suffered this disordered spring
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf.
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter,
That seemed in eating him to hold him up,
Are plucked up, root and all, by Bolingbroke –
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.

SECOND MAN
What, are they dead?

GARDENER They are; and Bolingbroke
Hath seized the wasteful King. O, what pity is it
That he had not so trimmed and dressed his land
As we this garden! We at time of year
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit trees,
Lest being overproud in sap and blood
With too much riches it confound itself.
Had he done so to great and growing men
They might have lived to bear, and he to taste
Their fruits of duty. Superfluous branches
We lop away that bearing boughs may live.
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.

FIRST MAN
What, think you the King shall be deposed?

GARDENER
Depressed he is already, and deposed
'Tis doubt he will be. Letters came last night
To a dear friend of the good Duke of York's
That tell black tidings.

(William Shakespeare. *Richard II.* Stanley Wells [ed.]. Penguin 1969, pp. 21 f.)

Gardener: exemplary father figure and foil to King Richard –
welcomes Bolingbroke's "weeding", from which "our sea-wallèd garden" will benefit

→ idea of divine kingship disappears, but also the stability of political order:
to safeguard his position, Henry IV (Bolingbroke) does not prevent the murder of Richard II

Henry IV:

Quotation 29b

PRINCE
I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyoked humour of your idleness.
Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted he may be more wond'red at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work;
But when they seldom come, they wished for come,
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents:
So, when this loose behaviour I throw off,
And pay the debt I never promiséd,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes,
And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glitt'ring o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly, and attract more eyes,
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend, to make offence a skill,
Redeeming time, when men think least I will.

(William Shakespeare. *Henry IV, 1.* John Dover Wilson [ed.]. Cambridge 1980, p. 12)

King oppressed by the duties of his office, frustrated with his son Hal's roaming the London taverns

What Henry IV does not recognise: Prince Hal's invaluable experience of the underworld,
playing the docile 'son' to 'Father of Vice' Falstaff
(→ image of the pub in medieval morality play vs. part of educational process)

'Prodigal son' Hal rescues his father from the rebels' hands and defeats the exemplary son Hotspur
→ transition of power from father to son, based on experience and efficiency; cf. however:

Quotation 30

PRINCE
No, I will sit and watch here by the king.
[*Exeunt all but the Prince*]
Why doth the crown lie there upon his pillow
Being so troublesome a bedfellow?
O polished perturbation! Golden care!
That keep'st the ports of slumber open wide
To many a watchful night – sleep with it now!
Yet not so sound, and half so deeply sweet
As he whose brow, with homely biggen bound,
Snores out the watch of night. O majesty!
When thou dost pinch thy bearer, thou dost sit
Like a rich armour worn in heat of day,
That scald'st with safety; by his gates of breath
There lies a downy feather which stirs not:
Did he suspire, that light and weightless down
Perforce must move. My gracious lord, my father!
This sleep is sound indeed, this is a sleep
That from this golden rigol hath divorced
So many English kings. Thy due from me
Is tears and heavy sorrows of the blood,
Which nature, love, and filial tenderness
Shall, O dear father, pay thee plenteously.
My due from thee is this imperial crown
Which, as immediate from thy place and blood,
Derives itself to me. Lo where it sits,
[*Putting it on his head*]
Which God shall guard; and, put the world's whole strength
Into one giant arm, it shall not force
This lineal honour from me: this from thee
Will I to mine leave, as 'tis left to me.
[*Exit*]

KING
Warwick, Gloucester, Clarence!

Enter WARWICK, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE

CLARENCE
Doth the king call?

WARWICK What would your majesty?

KING
Why did you leave me here alone, my lords?

CLARENCE
We left the prince my brother here, my liege,
Who undertook to sit and watch by you.

KING
The Prince of Wales? Where is he? Let me see him.
He is not here.

WARWICK
This door is open: he is gone this way.

GLOUCESTER
He came not through the chamber where we stayed.

KING
Where is the crown? Who took it from my pillow?

WARWICK
When we withdrew, my liege, we left it there.

KING
The prince hath ta'en it hence. Go seek him out.
Is he so hasty, that he doth suppose
My sleep my death?
Find him, my Lord of Warwick, chide him hither.

(William Shakespeare. *Henry IV, 2*. Giorgio Melchiori [ed.]. Cambridge 1989)

"Will I to mine leave, as 'tis left to me": entirely relapses into the old discourse/explanatory model
(soliloquy: according to dramatic convention [a] true and [b] aimed at the audience);
at the same time: Hal seizes the crown and symbolically repeats Bolingbroke's usurpation

→ discrepancy between old explanatory model and new political realities, between word and deed: traditional/obsolete explanation of royal power turned into ideology, cf. also:

Hal finally rejects Falstaff; another father figure: Lord Chief Justice symbolising 'common law', to which also the king is subjected (vs. idea of divine kingship):

Quotation 31

BROTHERS
We hope no otherwise from your majesty.

PRINCE
You all look strangely on me. – And you most:
You are, I think, assured I love you not.

JUSTICE
I am assured, if I be measured rightly,
Your majesty hath no just cause to hate me.

PRINCE
No? How might a prince of my great hopes forget
So great indignities you laid upon me?
What! Rate, rebuke, and roughly send to prison
Th'immediate heir of England? Was this easy?
May this be washed in Lethe and forgotten?

JUSTICE
I then did use the person of your father:
The image of his power lay then in me;
And in th'administration of his law,
Whiles I was busy for the commonwealth,
Your highness pleasèd to forget my place,
The majesty and power of law and justice,
The image of the king whom I presented,
And struck me in my very seat of judgement;
Whereon, as an offender to your father,
I gave bold way to my authority
And did commit you. If the deed were ill,
Be you contented, wearing now the garland,
To have a son set your decrees at nought?
To pluck down justice from your aweful bench?
To trip the course of law, and blunt the sword
That guards the peace and safety of your person?
Nay, more, to spurn at your most royal image,
And mock your workings in a second body?
Question your royal thoughts, make the case yours,
Be now the father and propose a son,
Hear your own dignity so much profaned,
See your most dreadful laws so loosely slighted,
Behold yourself so by a son disdained;
And then imagine me taking you part,
And in your power soft silencing your son.
After this cold considerance, sentence me,
And, as you are a king, speak in your state
What I have done that misbecame my place,
My person, or my liege's sovereignty.

PRINCE
You are right Justice, and you weigh this well.
Therefore still bear the balance and the sword,
And I do wish your honours may increase
Till you do live to see a son of mine
Offend you and obey you as I did.
So shall I live to speak my father's words:
'Happy am I that have a man so bold
That dares do justice on my proper son;
And not less happy, having such a son
That would deliver up his greatness so.'
Into the hands of justice you did commit me –
For which I do commit into your hands
Th'unstainèd sword that you have used to bear,
With this remembrance: that you use the same
With the like bold, just, and impartial spirit
As you have done 'gainst me. There is my hand:
You shall be as a father to my youth,
My voice shall sound as you do prompt mine ear,
And I will stoop and humble my intents
To your well-practised wise directions.

(William Shakespeare. *Henry IV, 2*)

Henry V:

Henry (Hal) V falls short of the ideal too: as king/'father', he sounds astonishingly conservative, e.g., Exeter's lines dedicated to the ideas of lineage/primogeniture/divine kingship,
at the same time preventative and self-conscious – exposing claim to French crown as doubtful:

Quotation 32

Enter EXETER

FRENCH KING From our brother of England?

EXETER
From him, and thus he greets your majesty:
He wills you in the name of God almighty
That you divest yourself, and lay apart
The borrowed glories that by gift of heaven,
By law of nature and of nations, 'longs
To him and to his heirs, namely, the crown,
And all wide-stretchèd honours that pertain
By custom and the ordinance of times
Unto the crown of France. That you may know
'Tis no sinister nor no awkward claim
Picked from the wormholes of long-vanished days,
Nor from the dust of old oblivion raked,
He sends you this most memorable line
[*Delivers scroll*]
In every branch truly demonstrative,
Willing you overlook this pedigree,
And when you find him evenly derived
From his most famed of famous ancestors,
Edward the Third, he bids you then resign
Your crown and kingdom, indirectly held
From him, the native and true challenger.

FRENCH KING
Or else what follows?

EXETER
Bloody constraint, for if you hide the crown
Even in your hearts, there will he rake for it.

(William Shakespeare. *Henry V*, pp. 111 ff.)

→ S.'s Lancaster plays: do certainly not campaign on behalf of Tudor myth of history,
but draw a complex/critical picture of royal authority: concept of divine power undermined,
exposed as ideology

Julius Caesar (c 1599), *Antony and Cleopatra* (c 1606), *Coriolanus* (c 1607) –
powerful individuals studied in terms of their public conflicts
(staging Roman history: another way of commenting on Elizabethan problems)

→ in Kyd, Marlowe, Shakespeare, growing emphasis on characters' involvement in their fates:
subjective autonomy interwoven with control by higher forces → dramatic tension

Development of the tragic in Shakespeare

Early tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* (1594-96): no real tragic flaw (character defect/inner guilt)
→ changes radically in *Hamlet* (1599-1601) – prince being incapable of action:
until his return from England, by turns rational, tinged by madness, determined, paralysed;
in the fifth act, a different Hamlet is convinced that "readiness is all"

King Lear (about 1605): bleak world with no matrimonial or sexual fulfilment (unlike *Othello*);
Macbeth (1606-07): crime centred in the marital relationship – Lady Macbeth's ambition exercised
on behalf also of her husband

→ S.'s great tragedies: world clearly out of joint, rotten to the core –
tragic heroes violate divine/cosmic order as invoked by Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida*
(still: restoration of order in the end, even if protagonists have to pay with their lives):

Quotation 33

The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office, and custom, in all line of order;
...Take but degree away, untune that string,
And hark what discord follows. (1.3)

S. takes the human individual and the struggle for self-realisation seriously –
heroes suffer because of a greatness ambivalently grounded in their capacity for passion
→ ironic tone, cf. Macbeth's comparing human identity to:

Quotation 34

…a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. (5.5)

Shakespearean comedy

Early 1590s: S. picks up plot structure of classical New Comedy –
love's errors overcome in lovers' union and reconciliation between parents and children;
comic characters morally balanced and attractive (marked by euphonious names)
→ audience laughs not about but with the characters

More philosophical vision in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (1594-95):
contrasts urban civilization with unpredictable nature;
dream-like unreality – dreaming and love as resembling artist's imaginative vision

S.'s festive comedies: esp wooing, but also married life (*Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*);
focus not on sexuality (as in classical comedy), but on love in its romantic form (Petrarca)

Twelfth Night (1600-1602) explores festive style most fully:
Viola in male disguise and her twin brother Sebastian arrive in Illyria – farcical complications
→ exploring identity through difference: self-knowledge leads to celebration

Female characters (e.g., Rosalind, Viola): intelligent/witty/sensible young women,
determine course of action: esp role playing, masquerading, cross-dressing,
e.g., Rosalind (male actor) pretends to be Ganemede, who himself plays part of Rosalind
→ undermining gender identities (and heterosexual normality) – both liberating and frightening:

Quotation 39

ACT FOUR

Scene I. *The forest.*

Enter ROSALIND, CELIA, *and* JAQUES.

JAQUES
I prithee, pretty youth, let me be better acquainted with thee.

ROSALIND
They say you are a melancholy fellow.

JAQUES
I am so: I do love it better than laughing.

ROSALIND
Those that are in extremity of either are abominable fellows, and betray themselves to every modern censure worse than drunkards.

JAQUES
Why, 'tis good to be sad and say nothing.

ROSALIND
Why then, 'tis good to be a post.

JAQUES
I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation; nor the musician's, which is fantastical; nor the courtier's, which is proud: nor the soldier's, which is ambitious; nor the lawyer's, which is politic; nor the lady's, which is nice; nor the lover's, which is all these; but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and, indeed, the sundry contemplation of my travels; in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness.

ROSALIND
A traveller! By my faith, you have great reason to be sad. I fear you have sold your own lands to see other men's; then to have seen much and to have nothing is to have rich eyes and poor hands.

JAQUES
Yes, I have gain'd my experience.

Enter ORLANDO.

ROSALIND
And your experience makes you sad. I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad – and to travel for it too.

ORLANDO
Good day, and happiness, dear Rosalind!

JAQUES
Nay, then, God be wi' you, an you talk in blank verse.

ROSALIND
Farewell, Monsieur Traveller; look you lisp and wear strange suits, disable all the benefits of your own country, be out of love with your nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are; or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola. [*Exit* JAQUES] Why, how now, Orlando! where have you been all this while? You a lover! An you serve me such another trick, never come in my sight more.

ORLANDO
My fair Rosalind, I come within an hour of my promise.

ROSALIND
Break an hour's promise in love! He that will divide a minute into a thousand parts, and break but a part of the thousand part of a minute in the affairs of love, it may be said of him that Cupid hath clapp'd him o' th' shoulder, but I'll warrant him heart-whole.

ORLANDO
Pardon me, dear Rosalind.

ROSALIND
Nay, an you be so tardy, come no more in my sight. I had as lief be woo'd of a snail.

ORLANDO
Of a snail?

ROSALIND
Ay, of a snail: for though he comes slowly, he carries his house on his head; a better jointure I think than you make a woman; besides, he brings his destiny with him.

ORLANDO
What's that?

ROSALIND
Why, horns; which such as you are fain to be beholding to your wives for; but he comes armed in his fortune, and prevents the slander of his wife.

ORLANDO
Virtue is no horn-maker; and my Rosalind is virtuous.

ROSALIND
And I am your Rosalind.

CELIA
It pleases him to call you so; but he hath a Rosalind of a better leer than you.

ROSALIND
Come, woo me, woo me; for now I am in a holiday humour, and like enough to consent. What would you say to me now, an I were your very very Rosalind?

ORLANDO
I would kiss before I spoke.

ROSALIND
Nay, you were better speak first; and when you were gravell'd for lack of matter, you might take occasion to kiss. Very good orators, when they are out, they will spit; and for lovers, lacking—God warn us!—matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss.

ORLANDO
How if the kiss be denied?

ROSALIND
Then she puts you to entreaty, and there begins new matter.

ORLANDO
Who could be out, being before his beloved mistress?

ROSALIND
Marry, that should you, if I were your mistress; or I should think my honesty ranker than my wit.

ORLANDO
What, of my suit?

ROSALIND
Not out of your apparel, and yet out of your suit. Am not I your Rosalind?

ORLANDO
I take some joy to say you are, because I would be talking of her.

ROSALIND
Well, in her person, I say I will not have you.

ORLANDO
Then, in mine own person, I die.

ROSALIND
No, faith, die by attorney. The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person, videlicet, in a love cause. Troilus had his brains dash'd out with a Grecian club; yet he did what he could to die before, and he is one of the patterns of love. Leander, he would have liv'd many a fair year, though Hero had turn'd nun, if it had not been for a hot midsummer-night; for, good youth, he went but forth to wash him in the Hellespont, and, being taken with the cramp, was drown'd; and the foolish chroniclers of that age found it was —Hero of Sestos. But these are all lies: men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them, but not for love.

ORLANDO
I would not have my right Rosalind of this mind; for, I protest, her frown might kill me.

ROSALIND
By this hand, it will not kill a fly. But come, now I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition, and ask me what you will. I will grant it.

ORLANDO
Then love me, Rosalind.

ROSALIND
Yes, faith, will I, Fridays and Saturdays, and all.

ORLANDO
And wilt thou have me?

ROSALIND
Ay, and twenty such.

ORLANDO
What sayest thou?

ROSALIND
Are you not good?

ORLANDO
I hope so.

ROSALIND
Why then, can one desire too much of a good thing? Come, sister, you shall be the priest, and marry us. Give me your hand, Orlando. What do you say, sister?

ORLANDO
Pray thee, marry us.

CELIA
I cannot say the words.

ROSALIND
You must begin 'Will you, Orlando '—

CELIA
Go to. Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?

ORLANDO
I will.

ROSALIND
Ay, but when?

ORLANDO
Why now; as fast as she can marry us.

ROSALIND
Then you must say 'I take thee, Rosalind, for wife'.

ORLANDO
I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.

ROSALIND
I might ask you for your commission; but—I do take thee, Orlando, for my husband. There's a girl goes before the priest; and certainly, a woman's thought runs before her actions.

ORLANDO
So do all thoughts; they are wing'd.

ROSALIND
Now tell me how long you would have her, after you have possess'd her?

ORLANDO
For ever and a day.

ROSALIND
Say 'a day', without the 'ever'. No, no, Orlando; men are Aprill when they woo, December when they wed: maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives. I will be more jealous of thee than a Barbary cock-pidgeon over his hen, more clamorous than a parrot against rain, more new-fangled than an ape, more giddy in my desires than a monkey. I will weep for nothing, like Diana in the fountain, and I will do that when you are dispos'd to be merry; I will laugh like a hyen, and that when thou art inclin'd to sleep.

ORLANDO
But will my Rosalind do so?

ROSALIND
By my life, she will do as I do.

ORLANDO
O, but she is wise.

ROSALIND
Or else she could not have the wit to do this. The wiser, the waywarder. Make the doors upon a woman's wit, and it will out at the casement; shut that, and 'twill out at the key-hole; stop that, 'twill fly with the smoke out at the chimney.

ORLANDO
A man that had a wife with such a wit, he might say 'Wit, whither wilt?'

ROSALIND
Nay, you might keep that check for it, till you met your wife's wit going to your neighbour's bed.

(William Shakespeare. *As You Like It*)

Also play-within-the-play, theatre-metaphors: add to artificial/playful character
→ meta-theatrical reflections, leitmotif of appearance/role playing vs. reality

At the end of S.'s comedies of love: lovers united, misunderstandings/conflicts solved –
restoration of cosmic harmony underlined by music and dance;
S.'s comedies and late romances (e.g., *The Winter's Tale* [1610-11], *The Tempest* [1611-12]):
utopian vision of equality in social relations

Drama apart from Shakespeare

Jonsonian comedy: more conservative, punishes deviation from social norm –
in the early comedies (*Every Man In His Humour*, *Every Man Out Of His Humour* [late 1590s]), ridicule can cure folly;
in later comedies (esp *Volpone* [1605-6], *The Alchemist* [1610]), folly/vice are strengthened by criminal intrigue (→ bitter social climate of early capitalist Jacobean society)

Citizen comedy – created by Thomas Middleton and Philip Massinger:
places erotic plots within the economic interests of the rising gentry/declining aristocracy

John Webster (1580-c 1632): city comedies, esp tragedies, e.g. *The White Devil* (1612) –
ghosts, nervous horror, torture, gruesome stage deaths → validity of moral values queried

George Chapman (1559-1634): tightly and intricately plotted comedies, but esp tragedies –
conflicts between great men and society, with material esp from recent French history, e.g., *Bussy D'Ambois* (c 1604) resembling Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*

John Ford (1586-c 1655): less sensational and quieter than Webster, esp *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (romantic incest), *Love's Sacrifice* (moral adultery), *The Broken Heart* (erotic frustration)

Francis Beaumont (1585-1616) and John Fletcher (1579-1625):

Follow Shakespeare as principal writers for King's Men:
romantic tragedies and tragicomedies, which develop into heroic drama in Restoration

Esp *Philaster* (c 1609) and *A King and No King* (1611):
- high-flown language of courtly compliments; tone of flattery towards audience
- Cavalier gallants as protagonists
- chivalric adventures and love dilemmas of Sidney's *Arcadia* transposed into Stuart gallantry
- uncertain treatment of sexual love between idealisation and boisterous laughter

→ decisive change in the social outlook of theatre from the second decade of C17 on:
drama becomes entertainment for Stuart court aristocracy – little remains of the national/historical consciousness Shakespeare brought to tragedy

English sonnet tradition

Sonnet cycle: major achievement of later Elizabethan period after Wyatt and Surrey,
remains important also during/after C17

Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (c 1582): adheres to the convention of self-dramatising/ecstatic lover, while overturning the Petrarcan pattern of submissive lover and cruel fair woman

Among Sidney's successors: Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, Edmund Spenser (celebrating married love), George Chapman (more philosophical subject matters) and esp:

Shakespeare's sonnets: celebrate the affection of an older man for a noble and wayward youth,
25 sonnets address a mysterious dark lady → endless biographical speculation;
three quatrains of four lines, plus a concluding heroic couplet – rhymed ababcdcdefefgg:

Quotation 40b

Sonnet 12

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
And die as fast as they see others grow;
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

Sonnet 76

Why is my verse so barren of new pride,
So far from variation or quick change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keep invention in a noted weed,
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth and where they did proceed?
O, know, sweet love, I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:
For as the sun is daily new and old,
So is my love still telling what is told.

Sonnet 18: poetological self-reflection – art as the realm of timelessness/eternal beauty
→ prevailing concept of art up to C20

Main literary developments from C17 to Restoration

C 1600: new literary movements set in, esp through Ben Jonson (satirical comedy) and John Donne;
poetry: from flowing Elizabethan (copious, amplified etc.) rhetoric to a more concise style,
esp epigram/epigrammatic genres →

Metaphysical poets: John Donne (1572-1631)

Satires, love elegies (short, philosophically charged love poems), divine poems

Donne adopts Sidney's passionate speaker and Horace's satirical narrator;
subject matters vary, erotic poems stress colonialist domination of the female body, cf.:
"My kingdom, safeliest when with one man manned" (Elegy 19, To his Mistress Going to Bed)

Metaphysical school of poetry (also George Herbert, Henry King, Henry Vaughan):
dramatic voice intellectually acute and quick to involve the listener in intimate thoughts –
entails a rhetorically plain diction;
at the same time: highly compressed meaning organised around one dominating conceit, cf.:

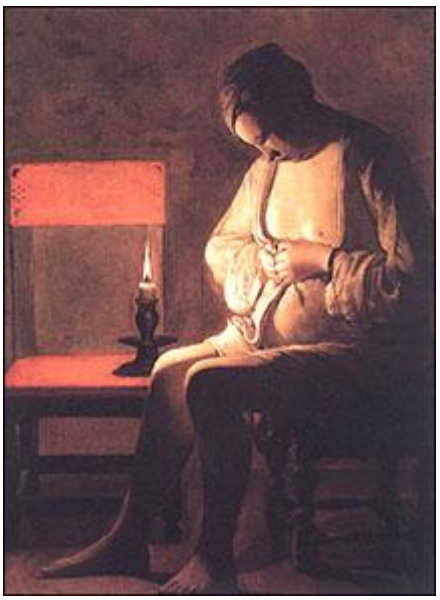
Quotation 41

THE FLEA.
by John Donne

MARK but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It suck'd me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be.
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead;
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two;
And this, alas! is more than we would do.

O stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, yea, more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is.
Though parents grudge, and you, we're met,
And cloister'd in these living walls of jet.
Though use make you apt to kill me,
Let not to that self-murder added be,
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it suck'd from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou
Find'st not thyself nor me the weaker now.
'Tis true; then learn how false fears be;
Just so much honour, when thou yield'st to me,
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.



Woman Catching Fleas, c.1630.
Georges de la Tour.
Musée Historique, Nancy

(John Donne: *Poems of John Donne*, vol.I E.K. Chambers [ed.]. London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896, pp. 1 f.)

Conceit (i.e. far-fetched comparison) starts with single image of the flea, which the speaker elaborates:
lovers are already united, their blood mingled in the flea's stomach –
so why hesitate with premarital intercourse?

→ belittles grave offence against the woman's social status; however: comic quality, exercise in metaphysical wit

Dramatic monologue: monologue rather than soliloquy, lyrical speaker in the role of cavalier;
stage props (flea) and dramatic action (flea squashed)

Quotation 42

THE BAIT.
by John Donne

COME live with me, and be my love,
And we will some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines and silver hooks.

There will the river whisp'ring run
Warm'd by thy eyes, more than the sun;
And there th' enamour'd fish will stay,
Begging themselves they may betray.

When thou wilt swim in that live bath,
Each fish, which every channel hath,
Will amorously to thee swim,
Gladder to catch thee, than thou him.

If thou, to be so seen, be'st loth,
By sun or moon, thou dark'nest both,
And if myself have leave to see,
I need not their light, having thee.

Let others freeze with angling reeds,
And cut their legs with shells and weeds,
Or treacherously poor fish beset,
With strangling snare, or windowy net.

Let coarse bold hands from slimy nest
The bedded fish in banks out-wrest;
Or curious traitors, sleeve-silk flies,
Bewitch poor fishes' wand'ring eyes.

For thee, thou need'st no such deceit,
For thou thyself art thine own bait:
That fish, that is not catch'd thereby,
Alas ! is wiser far than I.

(John Donne. *Poems of John Donne*. vol I. E.K. Chambers [ed.]. London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896, pp. 47-49)

Again: image of the bait/imagery of fishing is elaborated/applied to human realm;
request and paradise-like picture of the first stanzas themselves: some sort of second bait

First three stanzas are astonishingly sensual, the following ones realistic;
flattering comparison of mistress' eyes with the sun: old literary *topos* and rhetorical device

Other poets vary this style: Richard Crashaw devises sensuous, emblematic, 'baroque' conceits;
George Herbert bases comparisons on liturgy/Bible and on homely/familiar objects, e.g.
"You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat" – sensual, spiritual, eucharistic word play

Quotation 43

George Herbert (1593-1633)
Easter Wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With Thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

Notes

1] store: ample goods, abundance.

5] The length of the lines decreases to reflect their content, diminished man.

10] Herbert alludes to the paradox of the "fortunate fall" or *félix culpa*. Only by sinning with Eve, and being cast out of the Garden of Eden into a world of labour, pain, and death, did Adam enable the second Adam, Christ, to redeem man and show a love and forgiveness that otherwise could never have been.

18] feel: "feel this day" in 1633. The two added words disturb the clear metrical scheme (which has six syllables in lines 3, 8, and 13) and are not found in the manuscript of the poem.

19] imp: Herbert suggests that if he adds his feathers to God's wings, he will fly the higher because of God's might. Sometimes feathers were grafted or imped into a falcon's wing to increase the power of its flight. Note that this metaphor suggests that the wing-like stanza on one page represents Herbert's wings, and the wing-stanza on the facing page represents God's.

(George Herbert. *The Temple. Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations*. Cambridge: Thomas Buck & Roger Daniel, 1633, pp. 34 f.)

Interplay form – content: length of lines decreases/increases to reflect their content;
hourglass shape points to time/evanescence, life's rhythm, beating of wings etc.
→ early example of concrete poetry

Andrew Marvell: Puritan, renowned esp for his evocative treatment of the *carpe-diem* motif:

Quotation 44

Andrew Marvell (1621-1678)
To his Coy Mistress

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day;
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood;
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long preserv'd virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust.
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none I think do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapp'd power.
Let us roll all our strength, and all
Our sweetness, up into one ball;
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life.
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Notes

7] Humber: Hull, where Marvell lived as a boy, and which he represented as an M.P. for nearly twenty years from 1659, is on the river Humber.
10] The conversion of the Jews was to take place just before the end of the world.
11] vegetable love: that of his "vegetable" soul.
29] quaint: elegant, artificial.
34] dew. The original reading is "glew," which has been justified as meaning "glow."
36] instant: immediate and urgent.
40] slow-chapp'd: i.e., with slow-devouring jaws.

(Andrew Marvell. *Miscellaneous Poems*. Mary Marvell [ed.]. [1681]. Scolar Press, 1969)

Lines 13 ff.: *descriptio* tradition satirically exaggerated → "For, lady, you deserve this state": ambivalent compliment – because of her coyness, she deserves to remain without lover

21 ff.: "Time's winged chariot" flies – everything is evanescent, transitory;
at the same time: sexual allusions "quaint" (Chaucer's English), "skin", "transpires", "fires", "sport", "am'rous", "devour", "Let us roll […]/[…] up into one ball", "pleasures"

→ 45 f.: the intended "sport" will accelerate time (towards death) rather than make it stand still

C17 prose

Francis Bacon (1561-1626)

Essays: in Montaigne's sense more economical/less dogmatic than the Platonic dialogue or formal discourse – aphoristic style; at the same time avoiding Montaigne's personal tone

The Advancement of Learning (1605): critique of humanism, programme of empirical and experimental methodology – clad in vigorous style;
New Atlantis (unfinished): utopian description of a research academy with a narrowly technological bent – strangely agrees with neo-feudal social structure

Esp *Novum Organum* (1620): advocates sense perception, experiment, experience
→ indicates paradigm shift from authority-centred to experience-related models of reality

Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* (1651)

Contradictory sources of human action: elementary condition of war (*bellum omnium contra omnes*); on the other hand, fear of violent death
→ people surrender their freedom to sovereign power – societal contract (vs. divine kingship)

John Milton (1608-74)

One of the most eminent English literary figures: poetry, prose, drama

Areopagitica (1644): classical oration/speech addressed to Commons and Lords – glowing plea for liberty of speech, thought, expression:

Quotation 45

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant (mighty) nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about..."

→ lofty hopes of the English revolution's idealistic phase;
The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates (1650) develops a reasoned defence of the killing of tyrants: "…the power of kings and magistrates is nothing else but what is only derivative, transferred and committed to them in trust from the people, to the common good of them all…"

Famous elegy *Lycidas* (1637) laments the death of Milton's friend Edward King – dwelling on the theme of *vita brevis ars longa*:

Quotation 46

John Milton (1608-1674)
Lycidas

In this Monody the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637; and by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height

1· Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
2 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
3· I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
4 And with forc'd fingers rude
5· Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
6· Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
7 Compels me to disturb your season due;
8 For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
9 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
10· Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
11 Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
12 He must not float upon his wat'ry bier
13· Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
14· Without the meed of some melodious tear.

15· Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
16 That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
17 Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
18 Hence with denial vain and coy excuse!
19 So may some gentle muse
20· With lucky words favour my destin'd urn,
21 And as he passes turn
22· And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!

23 For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
24 Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;

· 1] First printed in 1638, in *Obsequies to the memorie of Mr. Edward King*. Present text, that of *Poems*, 1645. Edward King, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, was drowned on a voyage to Ireland, and his Cambridge friends issued a volume of verse in his memory, consisting, first, of poems in Latin and Greek, under the title *Justa Eduardo King*, and, secondly, with separate title-page (as above), English poems. *Lycidas*, signed I.M., is the last poem in the volume. The name "Lycidas" is fairly common in pastoral poetry (e.g., in Theocritus, *Idyl* I, Virgil, *Eclogues* VII and IX). The note under the title was added in *Poems*, 1645.
By plucking laurel, myrtle, and ivy, constituents of the poet's crowning, is symbolized Milton's return to the writing of verse (after the interval of four years since *Comus*); the reference to this enforced and premature action indicates Milton's unwillingness to write poetry at this time while still preparing himself for his *magnum opus*.
· 3] crude: unripe.
· 5] shatter: scatter.
· 6] dear: grievous, but with overtones from other meanings of the word.
· 10] Milton treats Edward King as at once priest and poet. Like others with a humanistic education, King could, and on occasion did, write Latin verses.
· 13] welter: roll about.
· 14] meed: token of honour; tear: commonly used as a poetic synonym for elegy (as in Spenser's *Teares of the Muses*).
· 15] One of the haunts sacred to the Muses was the spring Aganippe on Mount Helicon, near which was a temple to Zeus. See *P.L.* I, 10-12.
· 20] my destin'd urn. The urn, used by the ancients for burial (cf. Sir Thomas Brown, *Urn Burial*), here stands for the poet's death.
· 22] Say, *Requiescat in pace*; shroud (burial cloth) here stands for the dead.

Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at ev'ning bright
Toward heav'n's descent had slop'd his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th'oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with clov'n heel,
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.

But O the heavy change now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The willows and the hazel copses green
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear
When first the white thorn blows:
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.

· **25**] lawns: grass lands.
· **28**] gray-fly: so called from its colour, and also the trumpet-cry from the noise it makes.
· **29**] battening: making fat.
· **30**] Though some inexactness in the description has been noticed, Milton probably intends the Evening Star (Hesperus).
· **34**] Satyrs in Greek myth were human figures, but with pointed ears and clad in skins' beasts. By the Romans they were identified with their fauns and represented with goat's horn, tail, and cloven hoof (hence cloven heel). Here they stand for Milton and King's fellow students.
· **36**] Damœtas: presumably standing for some fellow of the college.
· **40**] gadding: wandering, that is, growing naturally, not subjected to control.
· **45**] canker: canker-worm, which by feeding on it produces canker in the blossom.
· **46**] taint-worm: a worm thought to taint or infect cattle.
· **48**] white thorn: the common hawthorn.
· **50**] An appeal to the nymphs was one of the conventions of pastoral elegy. The places named in Greek and Latin pastoral belonged to the ancient world and were selected with some reference to the subject. As is appropriate in *Eclogue* X, the lament for Gallus, a poet, Virgil appeals to the Naiads in association with places sacred to the Muses, and may suggest that by Naiads he really means the Muses. Milton appropriately substitutes British places in the vicinity of King's fatal journey; and by Nymphs he probably means the Muses, since he associates them with bards, and the Bards formed a division of the Druids, the priests of the Britons, while traditions accessible to Milton traced a connection between ancient Greek and ancient British religion and culture. His first allusion refers vaguely to some burial place of the Druids in the Welsh mountains (the steep); the second, and more specific, is to the island of Anglesey, which the Romans called Mona; the third is to the river Dee, marking the border of England and Wales and supposed to possess magic powers by which it predicted the fortunes of the hostile nations; over the Dee stood Chester, whence travellers took ship for Ireland.

Ay me! I fondly dream
`Had ye bin there'--for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th'abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phoebus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to th'world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,

58] Orpheus, the mythical originator of poetry and song, was reputed to be the son of the Muse Calliope, and gifted with the power of charming by his music all animate and inanimate things, which subsequently united in lamenting his death. After his final loss of his wife, Eurydice, he wandered through Thrace mourning for her, where he was encountered by the wild female worshippers of Bacchus. Enraged by his repelling of their advances, they hurled their spears at him, but these, charmed by his music, fell harmless to the ground, whereupon the women set up a loud cry, drowning the music, and the spears took effect. They cast the head of Orpheus and his lyre into the river Hebrus which bore them out to sea and cast them up on the island of Lesbos.

68] Amaryllis and Neaera are names which occur in erotic pastoral poetry. Milton is perhaps thinking of the amatory court poets of his own day.

70] clear: noble (Lat. *clarus*).

71] Alluding to the saying of Tacitus, *Histories*, IV, VI, that “for even the wise man the desire of glory is the last to be put aside.”

75] Milton alludes to Atropos, the one of the three Fates who cut the thread of life. Thinking of her inexorable character and the fear she inspires, Milton deliberately calls her not a Fate, but a Fury.

76] Phoebus, god of poetry, intervenes with the counterstatement that praise is not ended by death. It can be shown from the Latin poets that touching the ear was a way of reminding one of something forgotten (Virgil, *Eclogue*, VI, 3); trembling here is a transferred epithet, signifying: “touch'd my ears, I trembling the while.”

77] foil: a thin leaf of metal placed behind a gem to enhance its brightness.

81] True fame depends on merit in the sight of God and will be enjoyed in heaven. (Jove here stands for God, as often in Christian humanist poetry.)

85] Arethusa, the spring Arethusa, in the island of Ortygia, off the coast of Sicily, here symbolizes Greek pastoral poetry, and especially the Idyls of Theocritus, born in nearby Syracuse. Mincius, the river flowing roumd Mantua, claimed by Virgil as his birth, symbolizes Latin pastoral poetry, and especially the *Eclogues* of Virgil. The vocal reeds are the stems

Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
· And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
· That came in Neptune's plea.
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
"What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?"
And question'd every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory.
They knew not of his story;
· And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
· Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
· Built in th'eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

· Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.
· "Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
· The Pilot of the Galilean lake;
· Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
· He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
· "How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?

---

used for making the shepherd's pipes. The words of the preceding paragraph were of a higher order and transcended the pastoral mood, to which the poet returns, as suggested in *Now my oat* [another synonym for the shepherd's pipes] *proceeds*.

· **89**] herald of the sea: Triton.

· **90**] in Neptune's plea: that is, to exonerate Neptune (the sea) from blame for the death of Lycidas, by calling witnesses to the calm weather.

· **96**] Hippotades: Aeolus, son of Hippotes and guardian of the winds.

· **99**] Panope: one of the Nereids or sea-nymphs, who was associated with calm weather and invoked by Roman sailors.

· **101**] An eclipse was proverbially of evil omen.

· **103**] Camus, thought of as the genius of the Cam, and the representative here of Cambridge University, built on its banks. His appearance suggests the slow-flowing, weed-grown river. The *sanguine flower inscribed with woe* is the hyacinth as it is accounted for in the myth of Hyacinthus (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X, 174-217) accidentally slain while at play with Apollo: his blood fell on a lily, staining it purple, and on the petals the god wrote ai, ai (ahs, ahs). The implication is that the sedge of the Cam bears a like sign of woe.

· **107**] pledge: child (Lat. *pignus*).

· **109**] As a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, and leader of the Disciples, St. Peter is here called the Pilot of the Galilean lake.

· **110**] The starting point of these lines is Christ's words to St. Peter, "And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:19), read perhaps in the light of, "he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open" (Isaiah 22:22).

· **112**] mitred, referring to the crown of the bishop, St. Peter being presented in the role of ideal bishop.

· **113**] Commencing with an indictment of the clergy as entering the ministry from worldly motives and excluding those with a true vocation, Milton describes their neglect of their duties and the consequences to the flock. Lines 123-25 are usually explained as an allusion to their infrequent and valueless sermons which do nothing to nourish the flock; but quite possibly it is a reference (couched in the language of shepherd life) to their neglect of their duty while they give themselves to song and other secular recreations.

Of other care they little reck'ning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And when they list their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw,
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoll'n with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said,
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more".

Return, Alpheus: the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamel'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well attir'd woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,

· 122] sped: provided for.
· 123] flashy: destitute of meaning, trifling.
· 124] scrannel pipes. Virgil has the phrase *stridenti stipula* (*Eclogues*, III, 27). Milton's scrannel appears to be his invention, though possibly based on some dialect word meaning thin; its sound suits well with his verb *Grate*.
· 126] allude to the corrupting effect of the false doctrines taught them.
· 128] allude to conversions to the Roman Catholic Church (here symbolized by the wolf), at which, as the Puritans erroneously believed, Archbishop Laud connived.
· 130] This is the most disputed passage in Milton's poetry. It seems evident from the context that the two-handed engine is some heavy weapon, ready at the door of the sheepfold, to be used against the wolf. This must be the starting point for any interpretation of meaning.
· 132] Alpheus, a river god in Arcadia, pursued the nymph Arethusa (see above, lines 85-87 n.) and when she, to escape his pursuit, was transformed to a spring by Diana and passed beneath the sea to Ortygia, the river Alpheus followed her and reached the same island. Here the association with Arethusa makes Alpheus likewise a symbol for Sicily and pastoral poetry. To ensure that the meaning is not missed, Milton adds an invocation to the muse of pastoral verse, “Return Sicilian Muse.”
· 136] use: are accustomed (to dwell).
· 138] swart star: Sirius, the star whose rising in August was said to burn the fields swart or dark.
· 142] rathe: early.
· 144] freakt: spotted or streaked.
· 149] amaranthus: an imaginary everlasting flower.

And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world,
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold:
Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth;
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,

And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high
Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more:

· 151] laureate hearse. The hearse, or frame supporting the bier, here stands for the bier itself; laureate (by its association with the laurel of the poet's crown) signifies that the bier is a poet's.
· 156] stormy Hebrides: islands off the northwest coast of Scotland subject to Atlantic storms.
· 158] Reference is to the monsters of the deep.
· 159] moist vows: tearful prayers.
· 160] Bellerus old. Milton appears to have invented the person from *Bellerium*, the Roman name for Cornwall.
· 161] Milton appears to refer to a tradition that on St. Michael's Mount, a rock off the south coast of Cornwall, the archangel Michael, one of England's two patron saints, had been seen standing on guard against the traditional enemy Spain, here represented by the district of Namancos and the castle of Bayona.
· 163] Angel: i.e., St. Michael.
· 164] A reference either to the rescue of the poet Arion by a dolphin, which bore him safely ashore, or to Melicertes, whose body was brought to shore by a dolphin, and who was deified as the god of harbours (as Lycidas was to become "the Genius of the shore" below line 183).
· 168] day-star: probably the sun.
· 170] ore: i.e., gold.
· 173] "And ... Jesus went unto them walking on the sea" (Matthew 14:25).
· 175] nectar: in classical mythology, the drink of the gods.
· 176] The saints may refer either to the blessed dead in heaven, and *entertain* mean receive into their company, or to the angelic host, and *entertain* mean receive as a guest. The unexpressive (i.e., inexpressible) nuptial song may refer either to the song of rejoicing of the former group (Revelation 14:1-4) or to that of the latter group (Revelation 19:6 7).

183· Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
184 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
185 To all that wander in that perilous flood.

186· Thus sang the uncouth swain to th'oaks and rills,
187 While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
188 He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
189 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;
190 And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
191 And now was dropp'd into the western bay;
192 At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
193 To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

(John Milton. *Poems 1645*. Facs. ed. Menston: Scolar Press, 1970)

→ assured diction, free syntax/metre: powerfully elevated tone – Milton's "organ voice" (Tennyson)

Paradise Lost (1667):

Vastly influential: first epic of modern times to rival ancient classics in style

Follows conventions of classical epic scrupulously; instead of the mythical history of a people, the biblical history of salvation – Creation, the fall of corrupted angels, the Fall of Man

Quotation 47

John Milton (1608-1674)
Paradise Lost: Book I

1· Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit

· 183] Genius of the shore. Among its various meanings in Latin, genius betokened a local deity or guardian spirit.
· 186] The song proper ends at 185, and is followed by this brief narrative passage. The uncouth swain is Milton in his guise of shepherd poet. The quills are the shepherd's pipe. Doric, the dialect used by Theocritus, hence denotes the simple language of pastoral poetry.

· 1] A drama on the Fall, entitled "Paradise Lost,"' was planned by Milton in 1640-42. Lines 32-41 of Book IV were composed about 1642, and were intended for the opening speech of this drama. After a long interruption he re-commenced the poem in epic form, perhaps about 1657, and completed it by 1663 or 1665. It was published in ten books in 1667; it was subsequently revised and redivided into twelve books for the "Second Edition" published in 1674. A note on "The Verse" explains: "The measure is English heroic verse without rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin,--rime being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre; graced indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause therefore some both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note have rejected rime both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings,--a fault avoided by the learned ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rime so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of riming." 1-26. The classical epic commences with a statement of the subject and invocation to the Muse. Homer's *Iliad* begins: "Sing, goddess, the wrath of

Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heav'ns and earth
Rose out of Chaos; or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support,
That to the highth of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first--for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell--say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents in that happy state,
Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd

Achilles, Peleus, son, the ruinous wrath that brought on the Achaians woes innumerable and hurled down into Hades many strong souls of heroes, and gave their bodies to be a prey to dogs and all winged fowls; and so the counsel of Zeus wrought out its accomplishment....” Virgil's *Aeneid* begins: “Arms I sing and the man who first from the coasts of Troy, exiled by fate, came to Italy and the Lavinian shores; much buffeted on sea and land by violence from above, through cruel Juno's unforgiving wrath, and much enduring in war also, till he should build a city and bring his gods to Latium; whence came the Latin race, the lords of Alba, and the walls of lofty Rome. Tell me, O Muse, the cause ....”

· **4**] one greater Man: Christ; see Romans 5:19.
· **6**] Heav'nly Muse: the Muse of Christian poetry, first invoked by Milton in *Nativity Ode*, 15; also called Urania (*P.L.*, VII, 1), the name belonging to the Greek muse of heavenly studies but distinguished from that muse (cf. ibid., 5-6).
· **7**] Sinai, where God appeared to Moses and gave him the tables of the Law, was a mountain in the range Oreb; Milton speaks of them rather as if they were two peaks, perhaps to parallel the cloven peak of Parnassus, one dwelling of the Greek muses (see below lines 10-12 n.).
· **8**] that Shepherd: Moses. Milton devoted Book VII to an account of the Creation.
· **15**] Aonian: Boeotian; referring to Mount Helicon.
· **17**] Refers to the Spirit of God moving (or brooding) upon the waters at the Creation (Genesis 1:2) and appearing at Christ's baptism in the shape of a dove (Matthew 3:16).
· **24**] argument: story or theme (not piece of argumentation).
· **26**] justify: declare (not plead) the justice of.
· **31**] For one restraint: on account of one prohibition (to eat of the tree of Knowledge--Genesis 2:17).

The Mother of Mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the Most High,
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Rais'd impious war in Heav'n and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal. But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
Mix'd with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flam'd; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd.
Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd
For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set,
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.
Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and welt'ring by his side

46] ruin: falling (Lat. *ruina*); combustion: burning (cf. line 45).
52] fiery gulf: the burning lake.
56] baleful: full of woe (not malignancy, which is reserved for line 58).
57] witness'd: bore witness to.
59] angels ken: angels can (see and) know.
68] urges: afflicts (Lat. *urgere*).
72] utter: outer.
74] centre: the centre of the earth the utmost pole: the pole of the outermost sphere according to the Ptolemaic System (see *Nativity Ode*, 125 n.).
78] weltering: rolling about.

One next himself in power and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine and nam'd
· Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
· And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:

"If thou beest he--but oh how fall'n! how chang'd
From him who, in the happy realms of light,
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst outshine
Myriads though bright!--if he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin, into what pit thou seest
From what highth fall'n. So much the stronger prov'd
· He with his thunder--and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
· And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign and, me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd
In dubious battle on the plains of Heav'n,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost--the unconquerable will,
· And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire, that were low indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall: since by fate the strength of Gods
· And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
Since through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,

· 81] Beëlzebub: Baal-zebub, the "Lord of Flies", a manifestation of Baal, worshipped by the Philistines at Ekron.
· 82] Satan signifies "The Adversary".
· 93] He: i.e., God.
· 98] sense of injur'd merit: sense of injury from God's undervaluing of his merit. The cause and course of Satan's revolt are narrated in Books V and VI (see synopsis linking IV and IX).
· 107] study: zealous pursuit (Lat. *studium*).
· 117] Satan refuses to admit that he owes his being to God (though he knows better--see below, IV, 42-44), but asserts that the angels have their being from their empyreal, celestial (literally fiery) substance, which is indestructible.

Who now triumphs and, in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of Heav'n."

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair.
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:

"O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
That led th' embattl'd Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,
Too well I see and rue the dire event
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and heav'nly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpow'r'd such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep:
What can it then avail though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend replied:
"Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which ofttimes may succeed so as perhaps

124] tyranny. It is Satan's contention that God rules as a tyrant.
138] essences: beings.
144] Of force: perforce.
157] Cherub: one of the second order of angels. Milton makes some use of the symbolic values attached to the hierarchy of the angels (see *Nativity Ode*, 28 n.), but not in the case of fallen angels, since place in the hierarchy is given by the special virtue possessed.

Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see! the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge that from the precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there,
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd; his other parts besides,
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean-stream:
Him haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam

· 167] if I fail not: if I mistake not (Lat. *ni fallor*).
· 186] afflicted: struck down (Lat. *afflictus*).
· 187] offend: strike at (Lat. *offendere*).
· 195] large: wide.
· 198] The Titans fought against their father Uranus (Heaven). Later they themselves were overthrown by Zeus (Jove). Finally the Giants, sons of Earth (Earth-born), fought unsuccessfully against Zeus and his fellow Olympians. Titans and Giants are sometimes confused.
· 199] Briareos: a hundred-handed monster, son of Uranus, and thus Titanian; in one legend, the defender of Zeus, which cannot be intended here, in another, the enemy of the gods. Typhon: a hundred-headed serpent monster, in one legend, imprisoned in a den in Cilicia, whose capital was Tarsus; he stands for the Giants. It is noteworthy that in addition to their size all the monsters resemble Satan in being enemies to the divine power and subject to its punishment.
· 201] Leviathan: name applied to various water beasts in Old Testament: described by Isaiah as the dragon that is in the sea and said to be reserved for God's special vengeance; in Milton's day, and by him, identified with the whale. A similar episode to Milton's of the skiff, night-founder'd (benighted, literally sunk in the darkness of night) and anchored to a whale mistaken by its crew for an island, is recounted by the Swedish writer Olaus Magnus in his *History of the Northern Nations*, translated into English in 1658. Here the secondary suggestion is Satan's deceptiveness and his betrayal of those that trust him to their destruction.

The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.
So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay
· Chain'd on the burning lake; nor ever thence
Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shewn
On Man by him seduc'd, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires and, roll'd
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
· Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights--if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
· And such appear'd in hue as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
· Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
· Of thund'ring Ætna, whose combustible
And fuell'd entrails, thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds,
· And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
· Both glorying to have scap'd the Stygian flood
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of Supernal Power.

· "Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat

· **210**] References to the lake of fire occur in Revelation 19 and 20. Milton makes the four rivers of Hell flow into the burning lake (*P.L.*, II, 576-77). 210-13. It was theologically necessary to indicate that whatever Satan did was not in spite of God, but by his permissive will (see line 239 and note).
· **226**] incumbent: leaning (Lat. *incumbens*).
· **230**] According to a theory still current in Milton's day, earthquakes were explained as due to winds imprisoned below the earth's surface.
· **232**] Pelorus: the northeast point of Sicily.
· **233**] Ætna: the great volcano near Pelorus. The alchemists thought that all minerals contained sulphur and mercury, making them combustible. “Sublimed” is an alchemical term, meaning `raised to pure flame.'
· **236**] bottom: valley; involv'd: wrapped in (Lat. *involvere*).
· **239**] Ironically, Satan and Beelzebub are ignorant that they are by God's permissive will (see lines 210-13 and n.).
· **242**] clime: climate.

That we must change for Heav'n?--this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields
Where joy for ever dwells! hail horrors, hail
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor: one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.
What matter where, if I be still the same
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heav'n.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
Th' associates and co-partners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?"

So Satan spake; and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd: "Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd--
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth!"

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views

244] change for: take in exchange for.
257] all but less than he: all but equal to him.
259] hath not built for himself, begrudging possession to anyone else.
266] astonish'd: stunned literally, thunder-struck; oblivious: causing forgetfulness.
281] amaz'd: in a maze, stupefied.
282] pernicious: utterly destructive (Lat. *perniciosus*).

289· At ev'ning from the top of Fesole,
290· Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
291 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
292 His spear--to equal which the tallest pine
293 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
294· Of some great ammiral, were but a wand--
295 He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
296· Over the burning marle, not like those steps
297 On Heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
298 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
299 Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
300 Of that inflamed sea, he stood and call'd
301· His legions--angel forms, who lay entranc'd
302 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
303· In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
304· High over-arch'd embow'r; or scatter'd sedge
305· Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
306 Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
307· Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
308· While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
309 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
310 From the safe shore their floating carcases
311 And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
312 Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
313 Under amazement of their hideous change.
314 He call'd so loud that all the hollow deep
315 Of Hell resounded: "Princes, Potentates,
316 Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once yours, now lost
317 If such astonishment as this can seize
318 Eternal spirits--or have ye chos'n this place
319 After the toil of battle to repose
320· Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
321 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n?

· 288] During his visit to Florence in 1638 Milton met Galileo, the perfecter of the telescope, and defender of the Copernican theory. artist: here used in the sense of an expert in science.
· 289] Fesole: Fiesole, a hill-town three miles north of Florence.
· 290] Valdarno: Val d'Arno, the valley of the river Arno, which runs through Florence.
· 294] ammiral: flagship, from the Arabic "amir al bahr," prince (emir) of the sea.
· 296] marle: soil.
· 301] entranc'd: as if thrown into a trance.
· 303] Vallombrosa: “Shady Valley”, a beautiful valley eighteen miles from Florence. Etrurian: the ancient state of Etruria included Tuscany.
· 304] The Red Sea was called in Hebrew the Sea of Sedge on account of the weed growing at its margin. This affords Milton his second comparison: thick as the sedge floating (like the fallen angels) as it is scattered by the storms.
· 305] Orion, a giant transformed to the constellation of that name, whose rising and setting coincided with storms (so that Virgil spoke of "stormy Orion"); Milton thinks of the giant as armed with fierce winds, by which the (waters along the) coast are vex'd, violently disturbed (Lat. *vexare*).
· 307] Milton applies Busiris, the name of a legendary king of Egypt (met in Ralegh's *History of the World*) to Pharaoh. his chivalry: his mounted soldiers (chivalry and cavalry having a common derivation). Memphian: used for Egyptian, since Memphis was the ancient capital of Egypt.
· 308] perfidious because Pharaoh had given the Israelites, whom he now pursued, permission to go. See Exodus 14, where we read that after opening to allow the passage of the Children of Israel, the waters of the Red Sea engulfed the Egyptians and God “took off the wheels of their chariots”. Thence Milton draws a third (implied) comparison, thick as the carcasses and broken chariot wheels of Pharaoh's engulfed army, which brings in the secondary suggestion of enemies of God overtaken by his vengeance.
· 320] virtue: valour (Lat. *virtus*).

Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the conqueror, who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from Heav'n-gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?--
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n!"

They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch,
On duty sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
· Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
· Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
· Wav'd round the coast, up-call'd a pitchy cloud
· Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
· Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:
· A multitude like which the populous North
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great Commander: godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones,
· Though of their names in heav'nly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd
By their rebellion from the Books of Life.

· **335**] Nor did they not: i.e., and they did (cf. Lat. *neque non*).
· **339**] See Exodus 10: 12-1 5; Amram's son: Moses (see Exodus 6:20).
· **340**] pitchy: dark as pitch (cf. lines 342-43).
· **341**] warping: working themselves around (like a ship).
· **345**] cope: roof.
· **351**] Milton draws his comparison from the series of barbarian invasions (lines 240-440), spreading from the north to and across Rhene (the Rhine) and Danaw (the Danube), and from Spain, by the Straits of Gibraltar, to the Lybian sands (North Africa).
· **361**] Preparatory to the catalogue of the leaders, since the names of the rebel angels are unknown, blotted out of the Book of Life, Milton adopts the tradition, found recorded, for example, in Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* and Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, that they became the gods of the heathen world, and calls them by these, their second names.

Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and th' invisible
· Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
· With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
· And devils to adore for deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.

· Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Rous'd from the slumber on that fiery couch,
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
· While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.

The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats, long after, next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, Gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide
· Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
· First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice and parents' tears--
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
· To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
· Worshipp'd in Rabba and her wat'ry plain,
· In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
· On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove

· 370] Cf. Romans 1:23.
· 372] gay religions: showy religious rites.
· 373] Cf. I Corinthians 10:20.
· 376] Homer and Virgil, on occasion, thus appeal to the Muse (e.g., *Iliad*, II, 484, *Aeneid*, VII, 641).
· 380] promiscuous: mixed, undiscriminated.
· 386] Milton combines God's thundering when giving the Law to Moses (Exodus 20) with the promise to commune with him from between the cherubim above the mercy seat in the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:22; cf. Psalm 80:1).
· 392] On Moloch see *Nativity Ode*, 205-10 and note.
· 396] The Ammonites dwelt east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, the Arnon forming their southern boundary (see Judges 11:13).
· 397] Rabba (the city of waters) was their capital (II Samuel 12:27).
· 398] Argob, a district of the mountain range Basan (Bashan).

The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim, in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Elealè to th' Asphaltic pool:
Peor his other name, when he entic'd
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe;
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they who, from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baälim and Ashtaroth--those male,
These feminine. (For spirits when they please
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacl'd with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
Can execute their aery purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.)
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial Gods; for which their heads, as low
Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd

· **403**] Solomon "beguil'd by fair idolatrestes" (below, line 445) built temples to Moloch, Cheinos and Astarte on the Mount of Olives (I Kings 11:4-8), hence called "the mount of corruption" (II Kings 23:13) and by Milton "that opprobrious hill".

· **405**] The narrow wooded valley of *Hinnom*, dividing the Mount of Olives from Sion where stood the Temple of God, was also used for pagan worship (cf. II Chronicles 28:3; 33:6; Jeremiah 10:2; 38:35). It came to be called Gehenna (the Greek form of Hinnom); in it also was *Tophet* (II Kings 23:l0), and each became the type, symbol and synonym, of Hell. 392-521. Cf. *Nativity Ode*, 173-228, and see notes.

· **406**] Chemos was called "the abomination of Moab" (I Kings 11:7). The places mentioned by Milton are in the territory occupied by the Moabites till taken from them by the Amorites (Numbers 21:26), and hints for their descnption he takes from O.T., as for Sibma clad with vines from "the vine of Sibmah" (Isaiah 16:8). The Asphaltic pool is the Dead Sea. Chemos was associated with, and was indeed a variant of Moloch, and was often identified, as here by Milton, with Baal-Peor (on whom see *Nativity Ode*, 197-98 and n.); on the apostasy of the Children of Israel and its dire consequences, see Numbers 25:1-11. Later Solomon built temples to Chemos and Moloch on the Mount of Olives, *lust hard by hate*; but Josiah in his general eradication of pagan worship (II Kings 23) destroyed them and "defiled Topheth ... in the valley of ... Hinnom", which became the refuse place of Jerusalem, and the "type of Hell" (see above lines 392-405 n.).

· **420**] the brook that parts: Shihor, "the River of Egypt".

· **422**] Baälim and Ashtaroth: plural forms of Baal and Ashtoreth, hence including all their manifestations.

· **438**] see *Nativity Ode*, 200-4 and notes. Astoreth or Astarte was called by the Greeks Aphrodite and the Romans Venus. When associated with the moon rather than the planet Venus, she was represented with crescent horns and worshipped as queen of Heav'n (cf. Jeremiah 7:18) at Sidon, as at other cities of Phoenicia, and also in Israel (Jeremiah, as above), where

Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king whose heart, though large,
Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell
446· To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopp'd off
In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge,
Where he fell flat and sham'd his worshippers:
462· Dagon his name, sea monster, upward man
And downward fish, yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
467· Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams;
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost and gain'd a king,
Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious off'rings, and adore the Gods
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd

Solomon built a temple to her as to other pagan deities (see above, lines 392-405 n.). Though "God gave Solomon wisdom ... and largeness of heart" (I Kings 4:29), he proved uxorious and was led into idolatry by his women.

· 446] According to the season, in Phoenician myth and ritual, Thammuz (the original of the Greek Adonis) was annually slain in Lebanon by the wild boar, when the river Adonis ran red, supposedly with his blood, and annually revived. (The word "purple" was quite commonly used to designate the colour of blood.) Ezekiel (8:14) found "women weeping for Thammuz" even at the door of the Temple of God.

· 462] Dagon, the national god of the Philistines, had cause to mourn, for when the ark of the covenant was brought into his temple, the idol fell from its place and, set up again, fell once more on the threshold (*grundsel*), so that the head and hands were knocked off (I Samuel 1-4); hence the "twice-batter'd god" of *Nativity Ode*, 199. The suggested derivation of the name Dagon from the Hebrew *dag*, a fish, which would make him a sea-deity, Milton evidently accepts, and proceeds to name five principal seats of his worship.

· 467] In connection with Rimmon, the Syrian god worshipped at Damascus, Milton alludes to two otherwise unconnected episodes: (i) how Naaman, the Syrian captain of the host, was cured of his leprosy, by Elisha, the prophet of God, and abandoned Rimmon's worship for God's (II Kings 5), and (ii) how Ahaz, king of Judah, having entered Damascus as a conqueror, imitated the altar and worship of his vanquished enemy (II Kings 16): hence Rimmon a leper ... lost and gain'd a king (which Milton evidently considered a bad bargain!)

A crew who, under names of old renown,
· Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek
Their wand'ring Gods disguis'd in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
Th' infection when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb, and the rebel king
Doubl'd that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Lik'ning his Maker to the grazed ox--
Jehovah, who, in one night, when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
Both her first born and all her bleating Gods.
· Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself; to him no temple stood
Or altar smok'd, yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest tow'rs,
And injury and outrage; and, when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine:
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might.
The rest were long to tell. Though far renown'd,
· Th' Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue held

· **478**] On Osiris, Isis, Orus, "the brutish gods of Nile", see *Nativity Ode*, 211-20 (where for once the treatment is fuller) and notes. Milton attributes the Israelites, setting up of a golden calf for worship (Exodus 32) to imitation of the worship of Apis, learned from the Egyptians whom they had spoiled by taking their possessions (Exodus 12:35-36). The rebel king is Jeroboam, rebel against Rehoboam. He doubled the earlier sin of the Israelites by setting up two golden calves in Bethel and Dan respectively (I Kings 12:20, 28-29). To do so was to change "their glory [God] into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass" and to forget "God their saviour which had done great things in Egypt" (Psalm 106:20-21), how in a single night he slew the first-born of the Egyptians and of their cattle and flocks, but *pass'd* over the Israelites (Exodus 12:29, 42-43).

· **490**] Belial: not a god but an abstraction, meaning "worthlessness", as in the phrase "man of Belial" (II Samuel 20:1); Milton, however, personifies the quality as a god here, adding him to the roll as given in the *Nativity Ode*. For Elia's sons and their misconduct see II Samuel 2:12-17, 22-25. In referring to luxurious (i.e., voluptuous, lascivious) cities and the Sons of Belial, flown (i.e., flushed) with insolence and wine, Milton is perhaps glancing at Restoration London and the courtiers of Charles II, before specifying the yet worse outrages of Sodom and of members of the tribe of Benjamin in Gibeah (Genesis 19:1-29; Judges 19:14-20:13).

· **508**] The Ionian gods are the Olympian deities worshipped by the Ionians, who stand for the ancient Greeks, descendants of Javan, the son of Japheth (Genesis 10:2), one of the sons of Noah. Though held to be gods, these deities are confess'd to be later than Heaven (Uranus) and Earth (Ge), whose descendants they were. The first offspring were the Titans (see above, lines 198-200 n.); the youngest of them, Saturn, seized power from Titan (his eldest brother), only to lose it finally to Jove, his own son and Rhea's. These gods were first known on the mount Ida in Crete, and later dwelt on Olympus, high in the middle (of the three strata of the) air, but also spread through the Doric land (i.e., Greece), frequenting such places as Delphi (an oracle of Apollo) and Dodona (an oracle of Zeus), while the deposed Saturn fled over the Adriatic to the Hesperian (i.e., western) fields (and principally Italy); Milton imagines his having companions who roamed through the Celtic (fields--i.e., Gaul) and to the utmost (i.e., the British) isles.

Gods, yet confess'd later than Heav'n and Earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan, Heav'n's first born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found:
So Jove usurping reign'd. These, first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
Their highest heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue. But he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears;
Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be uprear'd
His mighty standard. That proud honour claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall,
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd
Th' imperial ensign, which full high advanc'd
Shone like a meteor, streaming to the wind
With gems and golden lustre rich emblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colours waving; with them rose
A forest huge of spears, and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood

534] Azazel occurs in Leviticus 16:8 (A.V.) as the marginal reading for "scapegoat" in the text. Possibly some evil spirit is meant, for whom Milton accounts by making him a fallen Cherub (see above, line 157n.).
536] advanc'd: to "advance" is the technical term for to "raise" a standard.
539] arms and trophies: armorial bearings and memorials of victories.
542] Above Hell's concave (arched roof) extended the reign of (region ruled over by) Chaos and Night, described in detail in Book II, 890-1009.
546] orient: bright.
548] serried: locked together (the shields being so borne by infantry formed in a phalanx for battle).
550] phalanx: see 548 n. Dorian mood. Of the three modes of Greek music, Dorian, Phrygian and Lydian, the first inspired "a moderate and settled temper" (Aristotle *Politics* 8.5); elaborated below, lines 551-59.

Of flutes and soft recorders--such as rais'd
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage
With solemn touches troubl'd thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force with fixed thought,
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanc'd in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
Had to impose. He through the armed files
Darts his experienc'd eye and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature as of Gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride and, hard'ning in his strength,
Glories: for never, since created man,
Met such embodied force as, nam'd with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes--though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar Gods, and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son
Begirt with British and Armoric knights,
And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco or Marocco or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell

551] recorders: the recorder is a kind of flute.
560] Breathing: expressing.
563] horrid: bristling (Lat. *horridus*) with spears.
568] traverse: across.
573] since created man: a Latinism: since man was created.
575] that small infantry: the Pygmies; said by Homer to be attacked yearly by cranes. See *Iliad*, III.5.
577] Phlegra: a peninsula in Macedonia, scene of the fight between the Giants and the Gods. To these were joined: (i) the heroic race who fought (in Greek legend) in the siege of Troy (Ilium) in which gods lent aid on both sides, and in the war of the Seven against Thebes; (ii) what is told of King Arthur and the heroes of British and Breton romance; (iii) all who fought on both sides in the wars of Christian and Saracen.
580] Uther's son: King Arthur.
581] Armoric: Breton.
583] Aspramont: town and castle near Nice, mentioned in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*; Montalban: Castle of Renaud, or Reynaldo, a hero of Old French romance.
584] Trebisond. This city on the Black Sea was the seat of a splendid court from 1204 to 1461, when it was captured by the Turks.
585] Biserta: the ancient Utica on the North African coast; in Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*, the port from which the Saracens invade Spain.

By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Their dread Commander. He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than Archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun new-ris'n
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Dark'n'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' Archangel; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge; cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain--
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt--yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as, when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak; whereat their doubl'd ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears such as Angels weep burst forth; at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way:

"O myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers,
Matchless but with th' Almighty!--and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd

· **586**] The scene of this famous battle (778) was not Fontarabbia, but Roncesvalles, forty miles away. Charlemagne was not killed, but his nephew Roland.
· **597**] An eclipse (of sun or moon) was held to be disastrous (i.e., to bode disaster).
· **603**] considerate: thoughtful (i.e., his expression betokened not only pride, but reflection).
· **605**] remorse and passion: pity and suffering.
· **609**] amerc'd of: deprived of.
· **618**] With all his peers. Standing with Satan, and half enclosed by the army, are the leaders (described above, lines 392-**605**] "the prime in order and in might", here called his peers, not as his equals (as in line 39 above) but as the nobles of his court.
· **624**] event: outcome (Latin *eventus*).

How such united force of Gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
· Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend
Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of Heav'n,
· If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heav'n till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent, or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd;
Which tempted our attempt and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke or dread
New war provok'd; our better part remains
To work, in close design, by fraud or guile
What force effected not: that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife
· There went a fame in Heav'n that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven.
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor th' Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
· Full counsel must mature. Peace is despair'd,
For who can think submission? War then, war
· Open or understood, must be resolv'd."

He spake; and, to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd Hell. Highly they rag'd
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of heav'n.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire

· **633**] emptied Heav'n: a typical Satanic boast; that the rebels numbered one third of the angels is the inference from Revelation 12:4.

· **636**] Satan seeks to explain their defeat as due neither to divided counsels nor failure of his courage, but only to their ignorance of God's power, who exercised his rule to the full, upheld by custom, by his reputation, and by the acquiescence of the ruled, but concealed his strength.

· **651**] fame: rumour.

· **660**] Peace is despair'd: a Latinism: there is no hope of peace (since it could be had only by submission).

· **662**] understood, among themselves only, and so secret.

672· Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
673· That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
674 The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,
675 A num'rous brigad hasten'd; as when bands
676· Of pioneers with spade and pickaxe arm'd,
677 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
678· Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
679· Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
680 From Heav'n; for ev'n in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
681 Were always downward bent, admiring more
682· The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodd'n gold,
683 Than aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
684 In vision beatific; by him first
685 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
686· Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands
687 Rifl'd the bowels of their mother Earth
688 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
689 Op'n'd into the hill a spacious wound
690· And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
691 That riches grow in Hell: that soil may best
692 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
693 Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
694· Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
695 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
696 And strength, and art, are easily outdone
697 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
698 What in an age they, with incessant toil
699 And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
700· Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepar'd,
701 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
702· Sluic'd from the lake, a second multitude
703· With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
704· Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion-dross.
705 A third as soon had form'd within the ground
706 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
707 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,
708 As in an organ from one blast of wind
709 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
710 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
711· Rose like an exhalation, with the sound

· 672] scurf: scales.
· 673] All metals were believed to contain sulphur.
· 676] pioneers: troops (now called engineers): so named formerly because they went before to prepare the road.
· 678] Mammon: like Belial (above, lines 490-505 n.) not a god, but an abstract noun signifying riches, added, however, by Milton to his list of fallen angels.
· 679] erected: elevated, noble (Lat. *erectus*).
· 682] Heav'n's pavement, trodd'n gold: cf. Revelation 21:21.
· 686] the centre: i.e., the earth, the centre of the Ptolemaic universe.
· 690] admire: wonder (Lat. *admirari*).
· 694] Memphian: Egyptian; see above, line 307 n.
· 700] cells: cavities.
· 702] Sluic'd: carried in sluices (from the burning lake; see above, line 52 n.).
· 703] founded (reading of 1667): meld; reading of 1674, found out, is evidently a printer's error.
· 704] scumm'd the bullion-dross: skimmed off the scum rising from the liquified metal.

712 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
713· Built like a temple, where pilasters round
714· Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
715· With golden architrave; nor did there want
716· Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures grav'n;
717· The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
718 Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
719 Equall'd in all their glories, to enshrine
720 Belus or Serapis their Gods, or seat
721 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
722 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
723 Stood fix'd her stately highth; and straight the doors,
724· Op'ning their brazen folds, discover wide
725 Within her ample spaces o'er the smooth
726 And level pavement; from the arched roof,
727 Pendant by subtle magic, many a row
728· Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
729 With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
730· As from a sky. The hasty multitude
731 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
732· And some the architect. His hand was known
733 In Heav'n by many a tower'd structure high,
734 Where sceptred Angels held their residence,
735 And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King
736 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
737· Each in his hierarchy, the Orders bright.
738 Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
739 In ancient Greece, and in Ausonian land
740 Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
741 From Heav'n they fabl'd, thrown by angry Jove
742 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
743 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
744 A summer's day, and with the setting sun

· 711] As Troy rose to the music of Apollo's lyre.
· 713] pilasters: rectangular columns set within a wall.
· 714] Doric pillars: the simplest of the three types of Greek column.
· 715] architrave: main beam resting on the row of pillars, with the frieze coming just above and the cornice projecting above this again.
· 716] bossy: done in relief.
· 717] fretted: covered with designs. The capital cities of the two great empires, the Assyrian (Babylon) and the Egyptian (Alcairo), could not compare with “Pandemonium, the high capital/Of Satan and his peers” (lines 756-57). By Alcairo Milton intends Memphis, the ancient capital of Egypt, replaced by the new city in the tenth century A.D. Memphis was the seat of a shrine to *Serapis*, the Greek Hades. *Belus*, called by the Hebrews Baal, was the god of the Assyrians, with a famous temple in their capital, Babylon.
· 724] discover: reveal.
· 728] cressets: iron vessels for holding burning oil or other inflammable matter and hung aloft to give light.
· 730] hasty: i.e., in haste to enter.
· 732] The architect was the Greek Hephaestus, Roman Vulcan, also called Mulciber (the softener or welder of metals, from Lat. *mulcae*, `to soften'). Milton places him among the fallen angels and adapts the classical story to his own purposes. Having built the palaces of the gods on Olympus (the Greek heaven), Hephaestus enraged Zeus by taking the part of Here against him, whereupon Zeus threw the rebel from Olympus. Milton paraphrases the story from Homer (*Iliad*, I, 590 ff.), but suggests that it is really a false account based on his earlier building in Heaven and his fall with the other rebel angels, when his former activities and his engines, invented contrivances, availed him nothing.
· 737] the Orders bright: the nine orders of angels, which were grouped into three hierarchies thus: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones; Dominations, Virtues, Powers; Principalities, Archangels, Angels. These were first formulated in a treatise attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, really written about A.D. 500.

Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,
On Lemnos, th' Ægæan isle. Thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now
To have built in Heav'n high tow'rs; nor did he scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Meanwhile the winged haralds, by command
Of sovran power, with awful ceremony
And trumpets' sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons call'd
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was throng'd; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair
Defied the best of Paynim chivalry
To mortal combat or career with lance)
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state-affairs: so thick the aery crowd
Swarm'd and were strait'n'd; till, the signal giv'n,--
Behold a wonder!--they but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass Earth's Giant sons
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that Pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount, or faery elves,

753] awful: awe-inspiring.
756] Pandemonium: place of all the daemons.
758] The worthiest representatives were to be sent (whether duly elected or by virtue of their office) from each squared regiment (i.e., "perfect phalanx"--cf. above, line 550). These came attended by so vast a company that all the approaches were thronged.
762] the spacious hall: so huge that it resembled the covered field into which Christian knights were wont to ride and, at the Sultan's throne, challenge the paynim chivalry (pagan knights), one mode of battle being mortal combat (a fight to the death), the other, the joust, where the opponents rode at full *career* (short fast gallop) with poised lances, and to unseat your man was sufficient.
768] The epic simile of swarming bees had precedent in Homer (*Iliad*, II, 87 ff.) and Virgil (*Aeneid* I, 430 ff; VI, 707 ff.). The sun is in Taurus (the bull), the second division of the Zodiac, from April 19 to May 20. The bees expatiate, wander about, on the plank on which the straw hive is placed and which has been rubbed with balm (an aromatic herb) to attract them.
776] strait'n'd: crowded together.
778] Earth's Giant sons: cf. above, lines 198-200 and note.
780] that Pigmean race, as described by Pliny (*Natural History*, VII, II, 26).

Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
· And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
· Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK

(John Milton. *Paradise Lost*. 2nd edn. 1674 [1667])

"Of Man's first disobedience [..]/Sing, Heav'nly Muse": names topic and invokes Muse – like Virgil; secular history replaced by spiritual history, Virgil's Aeneas superseded by Adam and Christ

Meta-epic: highlights/turns against conventions of the pagan paradigm; brings in the narrator's situation as the blind poet of a lost cause

Twelve books: the fallen angels' awakening in their new abode; Satan's journey to the world; Paradise; the prehistory of the angels' revolt and their defeat; Creation; Fall of Man and a preview of the history of fallen humankind: "thou shalt possess/A paradise within thee" (Book 12) – Adam and Eve set out to reshape themselves and the world, preparing for a divine realm on earth

Genre variants: classical epic (Books 1/2), Christian epic (3 ff.), Raphael's martial epic, Books 9/10 modulate to tragedy, Michael's prophetic account of history (11/12) approaches biblical epic form; likewise, varying scales of moral strength

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· 781] Here Milton combines with a look at the fairy world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a hint from Virgil (*Aeneid*, VI, 454), where Aeneas encountering Dido among the shades is filled with uncertainty as "one who sees or dreams he sees the moon just visible through clouds".

· 793] The peers (above, line 618 and note), in their own dimension, not reduced in size, form as it were a second chamber or privy council.

· 797] frequent: crowded (Lat. *frequens*).

Quotation 48

Farewell happy fields,
Where joy forever dwells: hail horrors, hail
Infernal world, and thou profoundest hell
Receive thy new possessor: one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free. (lines 1.249 ff.)

Satan: both heroic/courageous and self-deceiving – his confused "all but less" betrays his uncertainty;
cf. the account of the Pandemonium's architect:

Quotation 49

…how he fell
From heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o're the crystal battlements; from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos th'Aegean isle: thus they relate,
Erring. (lines 1.740 ff.)

Diction: generally lofty, combines Latinate phrasing with colloquial vigour

Description of paradise: new epic mixture, georgic rather than pastoral – draws on Virgil and Hesiod
(georgic: non-escapist, written in middle style, contrasts authentic country life with city life)
→ multi-generic form: opens modes within which writers from Pope to Joyce will be writing

Political relevance: allusions to civil war, monarchic Satan alluding to hapless king? –
subject of rebellion against established authority is inscribed in Milton's epic

→ at any rate: new Puritan myth – morality of individual responsibility to Creator,
which exceeds the aristocratic/hierarchic code of honour of the Cavaliers (and Satan)

Sequel *Paradise Regained* (1671): Christ tempted/not succumbing to reconcile humanity with God

Samson Agonistes (1671): recreates Athenian tragedy in the Aristotelian sense with great precision

Restoration period

James I/Charles I (Scottish house of Stuart): strong absolutist tendencies –
continuous struggle for power between King and self-confident, Puritan-dominated parliament
(Puritan: esp radical Protestant idea of Independentism)

→ 1642-46: 1st Civil War – Puritan parliamentary party/Roundheads defeat royalist Cavaliers;
1648: 2nd Civil War – Charles I decapitated 1649 by order of Cromwell, leader of Puritan party

→ Puritan Interregnum (1649-60): monarchy abolished – royalists/Presbyterians excluded from power;
1654: new constitution, Cromwell 'Lord Protector' (in C14/15: a young king's reigning uncle);
theatres closed as places of vice, entertainment as such rejected

England split up into petty political factions, increasing parliamentary opposition –
1658: Cromwell dissolves parliament and reigns as dictator; he dies in the same year
→ succeeded by his weak son – ignored by military leaders, abdicates 1659

→ 1660: Stuart monarchy restored – Charles II has to cede power to parliament

Charles II: Catholic tendencies – heated political discussion:
'Tories' support succession of Charles II's brother James – opposed by 'Whigs'

1685: Catholic James II becomes king/head of Protestant C of E (!) –
opposition grows, parliament calls Protestant Stadtholder of the Netherlands, William of Orange
→ 1688/89: 'Glorious Revolution' – coup d'état, William invades without much resistance;
James II flees to France: Restoration period ends

1689: after signing Bill of Rights, William III King of England, Ireland, Scotland –
Protestantism and parliament strengthened, absolutist tendencies abolished

Restoration comedy

One of the dominant genres in the second half of C17

After Puritan Interregnum, mental climate changes completely: theatres reopened,
liberal tone in drama (sexual innuendo, double entendre, pun etc.), love most important theme
→ Restoration theatre follows great tradition of English drama

Restoration playwrights: e.g., George Etherege, William Wycherley (older generation)
as well as William Congreve, John Vanbrugh, George Farquhar (younger generation):

Etherege: most famous comedy *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*, first performed 1676;
Wycherley: like Etherege, very close to the king –
famous plays *Love in a Wood* (1671), *The Country Wife* (1674), *The Plain-Dealer* (1676)

Congreve (1670-1729): *The Old Batchelour* (1693), *Love for Love* (1695) instantly successful –
latter provokes Collier's "A short view of the immorality and profaneness of the English stage";
most famous play *The Way of the World* (1700)
→ literary period exceeds political Restoration: 'Long 18th Century'

Vanbrugh: important English architect (esp Blenheim Palace), famous play *The Provok'd Wife* (1697);
Farquhar: less successful, more widely known by his comedy *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707)

The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter (George Etherege):

Restoration comedy: closer to Jonson's and Middleton's/Massinger's plays than to Shakespeare's –
focuses on the manners of affluent social class: 'comedy of manners', 'drawing room comedy'
→ French model of aristocratic culture – theatre on/for the social elites

'Domestic': set in the drawing/dressing/bedrooms of aristocratic households
→ intimacy of gentle(wo)men spending their days calling on each other – also without announcing: characters appear when dramatic action requires it – suspense, comedy

(Oscar Wilde: adopts this tradition of Restoration/drawing room comedy towards the end of C19)

Displays society and its manners (dress, conversation, mentality etc.):
Sir Fopling Flutter is a fop/would-be rake → author develops 'playing (i.e. exposing) the fool':

Quotation 52

SIR FOPLING: A slight suit made to appear in at my first arrival, not worthy your consideration, ladies.

DORIMANT: The pantaloon is very well mounted.

SIR FOPLING: The tassels are new and pretty.

MEDLEY: I never saw a coat better cut.

SIR FOPLING: It makes me show long-waisted, and I think slender.

DORIMANT: That's the shape our ladies dote on.

MEDLEY: Your breech though is a handful too high in my eye, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: Peace, Medley, I have wished it lower a thousand times, but a pox on't, 'twill not be.

LADY TOWNLEY: His gloves are well fringed, large and graceful.

SIR FOPLING: I was always eminent for being bien ganté.

EMILIA: He wears nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris.

SIR FOPLING: You are in the right, madam.

LADY TOWNLEY: The suit.

SIR FOPLING: Barroy.

EMILIA: The garniture.

SIR FOPLING: Le Gras –

MEDLEY: The shoes.

SIR FOPLING: Piccard.

DORIMANT: The periwig.

SIR FOPLING: Chedreux.

LADY TOWNLEY and EMILIA: The gloves.

SIR FOPLING: Orangerie. You know the smell, ladies. Dorimant, I could find in my heart for an amusement to have a gallantry with some of our English ladies.

DORIMANT: *'Tis* a thing no less necessary to confirm the reputation of your wit than a duel will be to satisfy the town of your courage.

SIR FOPLING: Here was a woman yesterday-

DORIMANT: Mistress Loveit.

SIR FOPLING: You have named her!

DORIMANT: You cannot pitch on a better for your purpose.

SIR FOPLING: Prithee, what is she?

DORIMANT: A person of quality, and one who has a rest of reputation enough to make the conquest considerable. Besides, I hear she likes you too!

SIR FOPLING: Methoughts she seemed, though, very reserved and uneasy all the time I entertained her.

DORIMANT: Grimace and affectation; you will see her i'th' Mall tonight.

SIR FOPLING: Prithee, let thee and I take the air together.

DORIMANT: I am engaged to Medley, but I'll meet you at Saint James', and give you some information upon the which you may regulate your proceedings.

SIR FOPLING: All the world will be in the Park tonight. Ladies, 'twere pity to keep so much beauty longer within.

(George Etherege. *The Man of Mode*, pp. 89 f.)

"a rest of reputation": puns on Mrs Loveit's questionable reputation, exposes Sir Fopling

Central characters: Dorimant, a wit/man-about-town/'man with a past', and innocent young Harriet – feel secretly drawn to each other, but are suspicious of love
→ two Restoration wits engaged in 'battle of wit', with witwould characters grouped around them

Straightforward plot: Restoration-comedy heroine and hero usually find together after some confusion (or after a great deal of confusion as in Congreve's *Love for Love*)
→ after many misunderstandings/intrigues, Dorimant and Harriet confess their love and marry

Other typical characters in Restoration comedy: country bumpkin, cuckold etc.;
telling names, e.g., Dorimant ("d'or amant" – 'golden lover' or 'lover of gold'?), Mrs Loveit, Lady Townley vs. Lady Woodville (opposition town – country), servants Pert and Waitwell

High register, witty dialogue: repartee, puns, aphorisms, sexual innuendo, cf.:

Quotation 53

LADY FIDGET: Hah, hah, hah! Faith, I can't but laugh however. Why d'ye think the unmannerly toad would not come down to me to the coach? I was fain to come up to fetch him, or go without him, which I was resolved not to do; for he knows china very well, and has himself very good, but will not let me see it lest I should beg some. But I will find it out, and have what I came for yet.

Exit LADY FIDGET*, and locks the door, followed by* HORNER *to the door.*

HORNER [*apart to* LADY FIDGET]: Lock the door, madam. (*Aloud*) So, she has got into my chamber, and locked me out. Oh, the impertinency of woman-kind! Well, Sir Jasper, plain dealing is a jewel; if ever you suffer your wife to trouble me again here, she shall carry you home a pair of horns, by my Lord Mayor she shall; though I cannot furnish you myself, you are sure, yet I'll find a way.

SIR JASPER [*aside*]: Hah, ha, he! At my first coming in, and finding her arms about him, tickling him it seems, I was half jealous, but now I see my folly. – Heh, he, he! Poor Horner.

HORNER: Nay, though you laugh now, 'twill be my turn ere long. Oh women, more impertinent, more cunning, and more mischievous than their monkeys, and to me almost as ugly! Now is she throwing my things about, and rifling all I have, but I'll get into her the back way, and so rifle her for it –

SIR JASPER: Hah, ha, ha! Poor angry Horner.

HORNER: Stay here a little, I'll ferret her out to you presently, I warrant.

Exit HORNER *at t'other door.*

SIR JASPER [SIR JASPER *calls through to door to his wife, she answers from within*]: Wife! My Lady Fidget! Wife! He is coming into you the back way.

LADY FIDGET: Let him come, and welcome, which way he will.

SIR JASPER: He'll catch you, and use you roughly, and be too strong for you.

LADY FIDGET: Don't you trouble yourself, let him if he can.

QUACK [*behind*]: This indeed, I could not have believed from him, nor any but my own eyes.

Enter MRS SQUEAMISH.

MRS SQUEAMISH: Where's this woman-hater, this toad, this ugly, greasy, dirty sloven?

SIR JASPER [*aside*]: So, the women all will have him ugly. Methinks he is a comely person, but his wants make his form contemptible to 'em. And 'tis e'en as my wife said yesterday, talking of him, that a proper handsome eunuch was as ridiculous a thing as a gigantic coward.

MRS SQUEAMISH: Sir Jasper, your servant. Where is the odious beast?

SIR JASPER: He's within in his chamber, with my wife. She's playing the wag with him.

MRS SQUEAMISH: Is she so? And he's a clownish beast, he'll give her no quarter, he'll play the wag with her again, let me tell you. Come, let's go help her. – What, the door's locked?

SIR JASPER: Ay, my wife locked it –

MRS SQUEAMISH: Did she so? Let us break it open then.

SIR JASPER: No, no, he'll do her no hurt.

MRS SQUEAMISH: No.– [*Aside*] But is there no other way to get into 'em? Whither goes this? I will disturb 'em.

Exit MRS SQUEAMISH *at another door.*
Enter OLD LADY SQUEAMISH.

OLD LADY SQUEAMISH: Where is this harlotry, this impudent baggage, this rambling tomrigg? O Sir Jasper, I'm glad to see you here. Did you not see my vild grandchild come in hither just now?

SIR JASPER: Yes.

OLD LADY SQUEAMISH: Ay, but where is she then? Where is she? Lord, Sir Jasper, I have e'en rattled myself to pieces in pursuit of her. But can you tell what she makes here? They say below, no woman lodges here.

SIR JASPER: No.

OLD LADY SQUEAMISH: No! What does she here then? Say if it be not a woman's lodging, what makes she here? But are you sure no woman lodges here?

SIR JASPER: No, nor no man neither. This is Mr Horner's lodging.

OLD LADY SQUEAMISH: Is it so? Are you sure?

SIR JASPER: Yes, yes.

OLD LADY SQUEAMISH: So; then there's no hurt in't, I hope. But where is he?

SIR JASPER: He's in the next room with my wife.

OLD LADY SQUEAMISH: Nay, if you trust him with your wife, I may with my Biddy. They say he's a merry harmless man now, e'en as harmless a man as

ever came out of Italy with a good voice, and as pretty harmless company for a lady, as a snake without his teeth.

SIR JASPER: Ay, ay, poor man.

Enter MRS SQUEAMISH.

MRS SQUEAMISH: I can't find 'em. – Oh, are you here, grandmother? I follow'd, you must know, My Lady Fidget hither; 'tis the prettiest lodging, and I have been staring on the prettiest pictures.

Enter LADY FIDGET *with a piece of china in her hand, and* HORNER *following.*

LADY FIDGET: And I have been toiling and moiling, for the prettiest piece of china, my dear.

HORNER: Nay, she has been too hard for me, do what I could.

MRS SQUEAMISH: Oh Lord, I'll have some china too, good Mr Horner. Don't think to give other people china, and me none. Come in with me too.

HORNER: Upon my honour, I have none left now.

MRS SQUEAMISH: Nay, nay, I have known you deny your china before now, but you shan't put me off so. Come –

HORNER: This lady had the last there.

LADY FIDGET: Yes indeed, madam, to my certain knowledge he has no more left.

MRS SQUEAMISH: Oh, but it may be he may have some you could not find.

LADY FIDGET: What? D'ye think if he had had any left, I would not have had it too? For we women of quality never think we have china enough.

HORNER: Do not take it ill, I cannot make china for you all, but I will have a roll-wagon for you too another time.

MRS SQUEAMISH: Thank you, dear toad.

LADY FIDGET [*to* HORNER*, aside*]: What do you mean by that promise?

HORNER [*apart to* LADY FIDGET]: Alas, she has an innocent, literal understanding.

OLD LADY SQUEAMISH: Poor Mr Horner, he has enough to do to please you all, I see.

HORNER: Ay, madam, you see how they use me.

(William Wycherley. *The Country Wife*, pp. 221 ff.)

Information unequally distributed between Horner/Lady Fidget and Sir Jasper/Mrs Squeamish
→ double entendre: sexual level of meaning understood only by insiders (including audience)
(farcical: circumstances grossly exaggerated – similar situation in Chaucer's Franklin's Tale)

Raillery: high-spirited, witty teasing – part of the 'battle of wit', e.g.:

Quotation 54

Angelica: Will you lend me your coach, or I'll go on. Nay, I'll declare how you prophesied popery was coming, only because the butler had mislaid some of the Apostle spoons, and thought they were lost. Away went religion and spoon-meat together.- Indeed, uncle, I'll indite you for a wizard.

Foresight: How, hussy? Was there ever such a provoking minx?

Nurse: O merciful father how she talks!

Angelica: Yes, I can make oath of your unlawful midnight practices; you and the old nurse there.

Nurse: Marry, Heaven defend – I at midnight practices! O Lord what's here to do? I in unlawful doings with my master's worship! Why, did you ever hear the like now? Sir, did I ever do any thing of

your midnight concerns but warm your bed and tuck you up, and set the candle and your tobacco box and your urinal by you, and now and then rub the soles of your feet? – O Lord, I!

Angelica: Yes, I saw you together, through the key hole of the closet one night, like Saul and the Witch of Endor, turning the sieve and shears, and pricking your thumbs to write poor innocent servants' names in blood about a little nutmeg grater which she had forgot in the caudle cup. Nay, I know something worse, if I would speak of it.

Foresight: I defy you, hussy; but I'll remember this, I'll be revenged on you, cockatrice; I'll hamper you. You have your fortune in your own hands, but I'll find a way to make your lover, your prodigal spendthrift gallant, Valentine, pay for all, I will.

Angelica: Will you? I care not, but all shall out then. Look to it, nurse. I can bring witness that you have a great unnatural teat under your left arm, and he another, and that you suckle a young devil in the shape of a tabby cat by turns, I can.

(William Congreve. *Love for Love*, pp. 288 ff.)

Restoration-comedy heroines resemble the heroines in Shakespeare's festive comedies:
intelligent – esp engaging in 'battles of wit' with the men, who often appear inferior

→ unlike Shakespeare: harsh reality of a decadent London society ignorant of moral values – choice of partner necessarily becomes precarious/a game of hide-and-seek until marriage (parallel to Jane Austen's 'novels of manners')

→ Restoration comedy: only farce or social satire? – ambivalent:
- plays mirror a politically/religiously/socially/morally torn, decadent society; at the same time
- emphasise decadence, but also positive values in the relationships between heroes and heroines