

***Transitions between the Middle Ages and the Modern Age***

6 DE OCTUBRE- 6 DE NOVIEMBRE (horario: 9-11)

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**Credits: 3 + 3**

**Course aims and objectives:**

This course traces the history of English theatre from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the eighteenth century. It includes brief background notes on the significance of the plays in the context of Western theatre. It surveys the common elements of drama from ritualistic and ceremonial dance, through the liturgical drama of the Middle Ages, English Renaissance comedy, and the social comedy of the Restoration. It also shows the development of the theatre as a physical structure, from the early open air theatres to the modified tennis courts in London, investigating the relationship of the physical theatre and the structure and style of the drama.

This course also seeks to promote the enjoyment of drama and theatre, to help students make informed literary responses to dramatic texts, and to stimulate thesis research. It will provide students with a critical understanding of the dramatic tradition and increase their familiarity with dramatists of the past. It also seeks to enhance their knowledge of the English historical and cultural contexts of the dramatic expression. The purpose of the course is to increase students' understanding, appreciation, and critical perceptions of the theatrical event.

When students have successfully completed this course, they will be able to:

- Learn to recognize theatrical forms and styles of production across cultures and centuries
- Understand dramatic conventions, techniques and resources
- Distinguish between theatre and drama
- Develop skills necessary to think and write critically and clearly about theatre
- Analyze the various ways of writing and producing a play (drama and theatre) in the period studied
- Read dramatic texts with confidence and enjoy them
- Generate frames for the analysis medieval and modern society
- Identify the characteristics of the theatre architecture for the periods studied.

Students will also:

- Become familiar with theories and terminology applicable to discussions on theatre
- Become familiar with the historical and social contexts, literary and theoretical analysis, as well as the practical stagecraft and production, of this drama.
- Possess a greater creative, critical, and aesthetic understanding of dramatic disciplines
- Learn to appreciate plays and rely on them later in life

### **Course contents:**

1. The Middle Ages: Historical and social background.  
Miracle and Mystery Plays, Morality plays.
2. The Tudor period: Historical and social background.  
Dramaturgy and production. Interlude + Classical influence:  
*Ralph Roister Doister*.
3. The Restoration period: Historical and social background.  
Dramaturgy and production: Conventions of the Restoration  
Comedy.
4. The comic vision of the New World:  
*The Country Wife*.
5. Staging drama from the Middle Ages to the Restoration.

### **Methodology:**

Class meetings will consist of lectures, group discussions, and oral presentations. The course will place a strong emphasis on oral discussions. Students are expected to present their own interpretations of dramatic texts. There will be opportunities for participants to share their ideas and experiences.

Our study is keyed to the following dimensions in which any play, ancient or modern, must exist:

1. Historical: What historical conditions help explain the development of this drama? What institutions, ideas or social values did this drama grow out of, work with, or possibly threaten?
2. Cultural: What role did this kind of drama play in the life of the country? What are the origins and social functions of the theatre it was written for? How does this kind of drama engage the audience in the basic aesthetic dimensions of theatre (space, time, sight, sound and sense)?
3. Literary-Stylistic: What dramatic forms, themes, linguistic devices dominated this kind of drama? What stamp does this play bear of the style of the playwright, and how did this style influence the work of others?
4. Theatrical: How was this kind of drama produced and performed? What were the respective roles of the audience, actors, playwright, and sponsor-producers?

### **Assessment:**

A selection of texts will be specified at the beginning of the course for class discussion on given dates. Students are required to read each assigned text before class and come prepared to discuss it. In addition, each student will have to prepare an oral presentation. Assessment on this course is based on class work, participation to discussions, oral presentations, and written qualifying assignments. There will be a final paper or project, which forms the basis for a seminar presentation.

## Recommended Readings and Resources

### *Bibliography*

#### General:

- *The Revels History of Drama in English*. Vols. 1- 5, London: Methuen, 1976.

#### Middle Ages:

BEADLE, R., *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*. CUP, 1986.  
CHAMBERS, E.K. *The Medieval Stage*. 2 vols. Dover, N.Y. 1996.  
DAVIDSON, C. & J.H. Stroupe, eds. *Drama in the Middle Ages*. N.Y., 1991.  
DILLON, J., *Language and Stage in Medieval and Renaissance England*. CUP, 1998.  
FOREST-HILL, L., *Transgressive Language in Medieval Drama*, Ashgate Pub. 2000.  
HARRIS, J.N. *Medieval Theatre in Context*. Routledge, London, 1992.  
WICKHAM, G. *Early English Stages*. 3 vols. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963-1981.

#### Renaissance:

BOAS, F.S., *An Introduction to Tudor Drama*, Ams Press, 1978.  
BRAUNMULLER, A. R. & Hattaway, A., *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*, C.U.P., 1990.  
CHAMBERS, E.K. *The Elizabethan Stage*. 4 vols. O.U.P., 1951.  
CRAIK, T.V. *The Tudor Interlude*. Leicester U.P., 1958.  
LÓPEZ, A. & Tostado, eds., *Interludio de Calisto y Melibea*, U. Salamanca, 2001.  
McRAE, A. *Renaissance Drama*. Hodder Arnold, 2003.  
NORLAND, H. B. *Drama in Early Tudor Britain, 1485-1558*. U. Nebraska, 1995.

#### Restoration:

BEVIS, Richard W. *English Drama: Restoration and Eighteenth Century, 1660-1789*. Harlow: Longman, 1988.  
DOBRÉE, Bonamy. *Restoration Comedy 1660-1720*. West Port, Conn.: Greenwood, 1981.  
HUME, Robert D. *The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1976.  
JEFFARES, Norman A. ed. *Restoration Comedy*, The Folio Press, 1974.  
NICOLL, Allardyce. *A History of Restoration Drama, 1660-1700*. 4th ed. Cambridge, 1952.  
FISK, Deborah Payne, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre* , Cambridge University Press, 2000.  
SCHNEIDER, Ben Ross. *The Ethos of Restoration Comedy*. Urbana, Univ. of Illinois Press, cop. 1971.