

Chapter 1 : Download [PDF] shakespeare the goddess and modernity

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Louisa Newlin taught high school English for more than 40 years. She wrote "Nice Guys Finish Dead: She leads workshops on sonnets for teachers. Common Core Anchor Standards: Vincent Millay, as an illustrative example. Examining her techniques prepares the way for reading sonnets by writers of the past. A lesson on iambic pentameter. One minute class period Materials: Other modern sonnets as alternatives: Robert Frost, "The Oven Bird": Millay Sonnet Handout What To Do Ask students to free-write in journals for a few minutes on the kinds of emotions lost love evokes. How do they feel about the possibility of loving again after a failed relationship? It can serve as a source book for more formal essays and poems; furthermore, writing before discussion tends to encourage more thoughtful oral responses. Ask students to read the poem aloud, chorally. Is Millay wistful, revengeful, coy or angry? Can they relate to a poem in which the poet seems to be older than they are and thinking back to a time when she had former loves? Ask one student to read the first four lines, another the next four, a third the next three and a fourth student the final three lines. Have one student read the first eight lines and another the final six. Here you illustrate the dialectical nature of a sonnet: As a class, collectively paraphrase the poem. Have students write reactions to the poem for minutes and share responses. How does the poet share her emotions with the reader? What is the role of the rain, tree, and bird imagery? With the class, mark the end rhymes abba, abba, cde, dce and elicit or explain that this uses an Italian, or Petrarchan, rhyme scheme, with a slight variation in the sestet. If so, what effect does this have? Assessment In discussions, did students demonstrate an understanding of the basic sonnet form and how it can vary? Did students respond to the poem? Were they moved by it? Did they participate actively in the choral reading and in the writing? Suggested homework for next lesson: Remind students that the lyrics should be acceptable for a school setting. If time permits, play around with putting some lyrics in sonnet form.

Chapter 2 : Shakespeare and Modernity – Critical Stages/Scenes critiques

Shakespeare and Modernity, edited by Hugh Grady, is part of Routledge's Accents on Shakespeare series. The volume's ten essays, along with an introduction by Grady, offer a wide variety of approaches to its topic.

Richard Eyre, once the director of our National Theatre, was asked by his tutor at Cambridge, Kingsley Amis, whether he found the jokes in *Twelfth Night* very funny and he was forced to admit that they were not. Some topical allusions passed him by and others were the kind of puns that we associate in Britain with Christmas crackers – of all forms of humour the lowest. Scholars make excuses for them and if possible, directors cut the text. But Shakespeare persisted with them. They belonged to his stock-in-trade. Old-style comics often handled his puns better than trained actors, such as the late lamented Frankie Howerd, who could squeeze a laugh from a bad joke simply because it was a bad joke. They played around with words. Why was that so funny? This illustrates the gulf between words for live performance and words to be read as a text, which are separate languages, however closely they may be related. During the 17th century, the use of the English language changed, so that only two generations later, the poet John Dryden, who admired Shakespeare, complained about his archaic and obscure use of words. The transformation of the language reflected a wider change of outlook between those like Shakespeare who were born before the Age of Reason and those who were born after it. The 17th century was an age of terrifying upheaval, in which the reform of the English language played its part. There was a strong drive to make English conform to the spelling and syntax of the classical languages. By the end of the century, the schoolboy ancestors of Richard Eyre were snobbish about puns, because they were thought to mess up meanings of words at a time when clarity of definition was considered all-important. There were other cultural shifts. Astrology, the core academic discipline for centuries, declined until it was little more than a parlour game for the credulous. In the late 17th century, the pre-publication censorship of books fell into decline and the print laws were liberalized, which led to a publishing revolution akin to the arrival of the Internet. The balance of power shifted from the spoken to the written word. By the end of the 17th century, Shakespeare had become a name from the past, revered but linked with Homer. Few critics failed to point out how old-fashioned he was. Classical theory dictated that good should triumph even in tragedy, though the hero might die through some character flaw. As a dramatic principle, this survives today in most murder mysteries; and through classical storytelling, we still confirm or re-set our moral compasses. They wanted to know what Shakespeare really meant. What were his true opinions? It became a rationalist obsession that persisted over generations. Did he believe in ghosts, the Divine Right of kings, astrology or even God? Was he being evasive? Bernard Shaw, another admirer, wanted to dig up his bones so that he could throw stones at them. But from that wreckage, a new classically inspired city was being built, ruled by a new constitutional monarchy with a new parliament with newly-won freedoms, and London was becoming the new trading capital of Europe. It was the start of modern Britain. But Shakespeare was pre-modern. He was living at a time when the hopes and ideas that have shaped our world were being born. He monitored the birth pangs. He paced the corridor. He listened to the gossip in the court, colleges and streets; and left us with a clear reflection of a time when our culture was changing from a medieval to a recognizably modern outlook. Something was lost in this evolutionary process that made him more of a stranger to us, his successors, than we are prepared to admit. His associative logic fell out of fashion during the Age of Reason, because so-called Augustans, like Dryden, wanted words to be precise and to say what they mean. They admired the beauty of his language, but not his mode of reasoning. A pun compresses meanings. Sonnet is an illustration. Shakespeare was far less worried than we or the Augustans might be about ambiguities, non-sequiturs or words with many meanings. In *King Lear*, there is a line: What did she mean? Can this be done today? Rarely in straight theatre, but it can happen in stand-up comedy, when someone like Frankie Howerd leads us on from one bad joke to another. The same word or incident might be received differently by his members of his audiences, some of whom believed in ghosts and others who might not. As with language, so with plots. The parental worries of the Capulets – Is Juliet too young to marry? Will she get a better offer? Who cares about Elizabethan matchmaking? But Shakespeare did and there would be anxious

parents among his audiences. The danger with trying to make Shakespeare topical and more of our contemporary is that we lose his insights into the pre-modern world that was rapidly turning into our own. He was an ironic writer. Another was the German critics. Since one value in Nazi Germany was the hatred of the Jews, Kott, a Jew himself, felt entitled to protest. He did so in a Kott-like way by poking fun at them. Kott brought them down to earth. If Shakespeare was so universal, he had to be our contemporary as well and living through the Jacobean slaughter-house of the twentieth century. Kott was a survivor. The cruelty, treachery and stark contrast between good and evil were much the same. But that did not make Shakespeare our contemporary. Where Kott pointed the way, others followed, until it seemed as if the whole Shakespearian canon was being used as a metaphor for our times. It was a way of getting around the censor. This was broad-brush politics and very broad-brush Shakespeare, but Kott was more subtle. Vysotsky even carried a guitar. Faustus went to the same university in Wittenburg, where Luther pinned his 95 Theses. Although Hamlet did not conspire with the devil like Faustus, he came from what we might call a humanist background, who is confronted by the ghosts in which he has been taught not to believe. What should they do now? God help me, I can do no more! The very existence of the soul and the prospects of a life after death, good or bad, were in doubt. In it, Plato discussed Pythagoras and his theory that the world could be expressed in terms of numbers. It was the start of what became the scientific revolution, although the sciences and the arts were not kept apart, as they are today. Mathematics described the physical world without the intuitive guesswork that characterized popular and clerical opinion alike. It transformed the arts of painting and music. It was useful and practical. It improved maps and predicted the movement of the planets and stars more accurately than astrology. It helped Galileo convincingly to place the sun and not the earth at the centre of our universe and so divided church opinion. He would probably have heard of Galileo himself, perhaps through John Florio, the polymath who translated Montaigne. He reconciled the empirical sciences with a belief in God in a way that was both radical and traditional. It is the key example of T. It is right, wrong or theoretical; and was responsible both for the technical progress and the massacres of the 20th century. Shakespeare would have drawn the line differently between truth and error, truth and fancy, truth and motive, for truth combines the idea of factual accuracy with spiritual probity. We pay Shakespeare no compliment to call him our contemporary, because in his time, the Cartesian split between objectivity and subjectivity was not the fatal flaw that it is today. Shakespeare compressed thought and feeling. His use of language allowed him to do so. He did not escape the complexities. He patrolled the boundaries between the known and the unknown, like a true artist, nothing daunted. But we are not marching with him. In the theatre, as elsewhere, we want to be more in control. His medium, theatre, was a more sophisticated means of communication than our TV screens, because it relied upon the interaction between the performers and their audiences. The aim was a shared understanding, not the tyranny of fact. The dramatic impetus came from the context in which they performed as well as from the plays, whose meanings might vary, because he allowed for flexible interpretations. Was Shylock a villain or a victim? Was Othello a target for white prejudice? Yes, but he still murdered Desdemona. I was taught that it was his farewell to the stage, but there was another more important meaning. Prospero was a magician, a magus like John Dee, the Elizabethan mathematician and astrologer. His power controlled the sea, the waves, the breezes and the minds of his opponents. But he chose not to carry on with a way of life that relied more on conjuring tricks and mass deception than honest governance.

Chapter 3 : Shakespeare and Modernism

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Have the class read each poem aloud, with one student reading the octave and the other the sestet, or, depending on the poem, three students each reading a quatrain and a fourth reading the concluding couplet. Ask students to discuss how these poems are different from those written by Shakespearean and Renaissance writers. Ask them to note how diction and concerns change over the centuries. What is the same and what is altered? Ask students to talk about why these poets might have chosen to write a sonnet and not write in free verse? Ask students to identify these poems as Shakespearean or Petrarchan in form? Ask students to comment on how women change Petrarchan conventions. See our modules on Petrarch and Petrarchan conventions. Have students identify the continuing influence of Shakespeare today. Assessment Do students understand that sonnets are not just a form but a way of thinking? Do they understand the dialectical nature of sonnets and the importance of the volta? Can they attempt a sonnet in completely modern language? Did they enjoy this teaching module, and do they understand why there is so much fuss about Shakespeare? Can they discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a "fixed form" and free verse? Ask students to write a sonnet on a completely modern topic iPods, school lunches, the school dance, sports, etc. They might wish to use the rhyme scheme of one of the sonnets studied to date. This will give them a framework and may seem less daunting than just asking them to give it a go. Or they might jump start their sonnets by "borrowing" a phrase from a published sonnet and using it as a first line. The sonnets can be shared at whatever time in the future seems best. Award style points for the intelligent use of slang and contemporary idiom within a coherent rhyme scheme. Designate a day to celebrate the sonnet and have some students read their own sonnets, others perform sonnets, still others recite them as dramatic monologues.

Chapter 4 : Project MUSE - Shakespeare and Modernity: Early Modern to Millennium (review)

This in-depth collection of essays traces the changing reception of Shakespeare over the past four hundred years, during which time Shakespeare has variously been seen as the last great exponent of pre-modern Western culture, a crucial inaugurator of modernity, and a prophet of postmodernity.

Some time before , a funerary monument was erected in his memory on the north wall, with a half-effigy of him in the act of writing. Its plaque compares him to Nestor , Socrates , and Virgil. Textual evidence also supports the view that several of the plays were revised by other writers after their original composition. The first recorded works of Shakespeare are Richard III and the three parts of Henry VI , written in the early s during a vogue for historical drama. By William Blake , c. His characters become more complex and tender as he switches deftly between comic and serious scenes, prose and poetry, and achieves the narrative variety of his mature work. Henry Fuseli , " According to the critic Frank Kermode, "the play-offers neither its good characters nor its audience any relief from its cruelty". Less bleak than the tragedies, these four plays are graver in tone than the comedies of the s, but they end with reconciliation and the forgiveness of potentially tragic errors. Shakespeare in performance It is not clear for which companies Shakespeare wrote his early plays. The title page of the edition of Titus Andronicus reveals that the play had been acted by three different troupes. In Cymbeline, for example, Jupiter descends "in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle: The ghosts fall on their knees. Copper engraving of Shakespeare by Martin Droeshout. It contained 36 texts, including 18 printed for the first time. In the case of King Lear , however, while most modern editions do conflate them, the folio version is so different from the quarto that the Oxford Shakespeare prints them both, arguing that they cannot be conflated without confusion. He dedicated them to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. Critics consider that its fine qualities are marred by leaden effects. Scholars are not certain when each of the sonnets was composed, but evidence suggests that Shakespeare wrote sonnets throughout his career for a private readership. It remains unclear if these figures represent real individuals, or if the authorial "I" who addresses them represents Shakespeare himself, though Wordsworth believed that with the sonnets "Shakespeare unlocked his heart". Thou art more lovely and more temperate It is not known whether this was written by Shakespeare himself or by the publisher, Thomas Thorpe , whose initials appear at the foot of the dedication page; nor is it known who Mr. He wrote them in a stylised language that does not always spring naturally from the needs of the characters or the drama. The grand speeches in Titus Andronicus , in the view of some critics, often hold up the action, for example; and the verse in The Two Gentlemen of Verona has been described as stilted.

Chapter 5 : Shakespeare's Sisters and Modern Sonnets | Folger Shakespeare Library

In ten essays, Shakespeare and Modernity looks at identity and self, the rise of nationhood, the start of colonialism in the Western world, and other similar topics. In twelve essays, Marxist Shakespeares ponders such themes as the idea of social class in the plays and the effects of literature on nationalism.

We think of Shakespeare as the affirmation of what heights creative genius can achieve in the exploration of human themes, writing in the renaissance, an allegorical concept suggestive of the rebirth of classical antiquity at the beginning of a new historical epoch, modernity. They communicate to us, in slightly antiquated language, their essential modernity, the stage an always self-conscious metaphor for our lived experience. Modernist artworks would seem to communicate an altogether different ethos, a disconnectedness to modernity, an inability to relate to or make sense of the modern experience. A waste land, an end game, modernism occupies the opposite ontological category. Yet modernists, like their Victorian predecessors, read Shakespeare. They wrote copious volumes of literary criticism. They discussed and debated his biographical details and personal character. They produced his plays in the theatre and introduced them to the cinema. They studied his texts and applied current scientific methodologies to help explicate and understand them. They appropriated his life and works in their literature. They also protested against Shakespeare. They disparaged the style of nineteenth-century essay writing characteristic of popular literary appreciation and established academic institutions for literary criticism. They rebelled against the central position of Shakespeare in the English literary canon and even denounced his plays as artistic failures, antiquated relics, and bastions of bourgeois commercialism. In late nineteenth and early twentieth-century English culture, the numerous appropriations, allusions, denunciations and discussions – this engagement with Shakespeare across a range of cultural practices – served to define, mediate and relate the modernist experience. The purpose of this book is to explore the modernist engagement with Shakespeare, the ways in which artists and writers read and interpreted, re-imagined and re-configured Shakespeare as a canon, an author, a literary archetype; and in so doing, the ways in which they read and interpreted, theorized and canonized their own work and that of their contemporaries. On the surface, both Shakespeare and modernism would seem distinct and relatively obvious literary categories – an author and a broadly defined literary period. Shakespeare is Shakespeare and modernism, albeit complicated, is a knowable aesthetic event. My premise here, however, is that neither represents an absolute historical reality, either about authorship or literary period – the man Shakespeare, the moment of modernism – and where we find these two fields intersecting in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century England is precisely in the narratives of their cultural construction. If Shakespeare was central to the modernist project, he was so because, as a cultural formation in conflict with its own self-constituting systems, he was demonstrative of modernity and the subsequent crisis of modernism. What we have instead are, to begin, numerous extant printed texts of the plays in Quarto and Folio versions, ascribed to Shakespeare, but each with varying and still highly debated claims to single authorship. In addition to these are the extant printed narrative poems and sonnets whose authority is generally better, but which are constrained by the conventions of courtly poetry and, as the creative expressions of their author, are mostly undervalued in relation to the plays. Finally, a series of holograph signatures and a final will not in his own hand, as well as some genealogical and financial records, represent in total remarkably little to connect us directly and unproblematically to the man Shakespeare. Perhaps as a result of this relative absence, the majority of Shakespeare commentary through history has been, to greater and lesser extents, concerned with issues of literary, dramatic and textual authority, even up to but not always or unconditionally in our own contemporary critical paradigm. The ever-present heretical theories regarding the authorship of the plays, from the Baconians to the Oxfordians, among numerous others, may seem like pedantic attempts throughout history to exploit this absence, but what they are at least evidence to is the vulnerability to which the unification of these texts as the authentic expressions of Shakespeare has always been subject. These observations are now commonplace as much contemporary criticism has exposed the problematic bias of an authorship which the various disciplines of editing, criticism, biography and performance have imposed on the texts. This is a

totalizing account which necessitates much qualification, but the point has been commonly noted that the search for or representation of an elusive textual meaning is always discreetly related, even when intentional fallacies are denounced, to the always-absent author in any given literary field. Modern textual strategies, developments concomitant with the progressive expansion and diversification of modern industrial society, simultaneously generated and contained the various canonically disintegrating impulses against which they sought to defend the unity of Shakespeare. Moving through history from the early modern to the post-modern, we learn that successive generations have reinvented Shakespeare in the image of their own cultures, a process which suggests the universal adaptability and dynamism of the canon through modernity, but which actually functions to reify the unity of modernity itself in the face of an inexorably forward-moving, diversifying modernization. Given the relatively unstable unity of the canon, is it merely ironic or self-fulfilling that Shakespeare should occupy a central position in this allegory, an exemplary author who embodies the development of humanist ideology within modernity while always containing the possibility for his own de-centring and diversification? If modernism represents a crisis of modernity, a moment containing the distinct possibilities offered by a similar dialectical negotiation between a unifying, collective modernity and its potentially frightening, potentially emancipating, alternative, then Shakespeare, we are surprised to discover, was also a modernist. Of course, like Shakespeare, the concept of an authentic or knowable modernism, based as it is upon the assumption of modernity as a historical situation, is hydra-headed. Modernism has witnessed innumerable differing formalist accounts of its chronological and geographic boundaries, defining characteristics and principal representatives. The constant redefinition and re-conceptualization of modernism is indicative of the telos of modernity itself: The modern generates, on the one hand, a sense of breaking with the past, from a prior order to a modern one. Modernism is thus conceived as a reaction-formation, a rupture in late modernity, a collective expression of angst and futility precipitated by the disenfranchising, dehumanizing forward-movement of modernization. On the other hand, modernism retains the positive ethos of the modern, the sense of continuity with the past combined with the libidinal charge of the new, the utopian possibilities implied by innovation and progress, by the teleology of modernity. Whereas modernity marks the transition from feudal to capitalist society in the Marxist narrative, modernization designates the process of economic development in industrial capitalism. The precedent here is Karl Marx himself who, with Friedrich Engels in *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, described the constant revolutionizing of the means of production inherent in bourgeois society, and the concomitant uncertainty and agitation which it produces, the uninterrupted disturbance of all social relations. As an aesthetic reaction-formation, modernism resists the social forces which would degrade the artwork to a market commodity. At times, therefore, modernism shares the emancipatory potential of Marxism, embracing the liberating spirit of a popular consciousness. Whereas capitalism, we might argue, represents a fairly objective condition of history, the Marxist narrative interprets that condition as the struggle between an enslaving economic system and the utopian future of the proletariat. The modernist narrative produces a similar dialectic of oppression and emancipation through its aestheticization of life. Not simply a reaction-formation, modernism also offers an aesthetic alternative, an emancipatory art which embraces the possibilities of modernity, the future technologies and machineries, and the liberating spirit of revolution echoed in real political movements and revolutions. This alternative would resonate in avant-garde movements such as expressionism and futurism. Both of their writings would reverberate through narratives of literary modernity in the twentieth century. The resistance to bourgeois commercialism, the fear of a mass culture hastened by class dissolution and industrial mechanization, the prescriptive demands for revolutionary forms of theatre and writing, the anticipation and wonder engendered by scientific discoveries, medical technologies and psychological theories, the emancipatory potential of art – these are the issues that were central to the artists, writers, theatre practitioners, literary commentators, biographers, academics and enthusiasts for whom Shakespeare was a subject. Or rather, what we might say is that Shakespeare proved a central and largely inevitable subject for those modernists who, in constructing their cultural narratives, were trying to understand and relate their own contemporary experience. Shakespeare as a cultural category becomes one of the focal points for modernism because he contains all the positive and negative, conflicting possibilities of modernity.

Shakespeare and Modernism is a study of Shakespeare as a narrative system read and written within the meta-narrative of modernism. Rather, my purpose is to explore how artists and writers in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century England engaged with the cultural traditions of Shakespeare as a means of defining and relating what they understood to be their own distinct historical experience. The methodological focus employed here builds upon a critical perspective which has been developed through recent works by Terence Hawkes, Hugh Grady and Richard Halpern in their seminal studies of this field. Modernism is viewed here as a highly plastic narrative trope, an explanatory system rather than an actual historical phenomenon with distinct chronological boundaries, a beginning and end, a formal aesthetic or representative and non-representative figures. The first purpose for my emphasizing narrative, however, is to recognize and make explicit the embeddedness of Marxist cultural critique within modernism as a critical formation, articulated within its anti-bourgeois and utopian dimensions, but also within modernism constructed as a cultural category post modernism. Indeed, the often insurmountable complexities of modernist discussion would seem to result in part from a dialectic, unresolved in Marx, initiated by the central division between base, or mode of production, and superstructure, encompassing, among other things, cultural production. Simply put, culture might be seen either as determined by the base, prescribed by the economic conditions of production, or as an autonomous or semi-autonomous critical sphere capable of fomenting the class revolution which reorders the relations of economic production. In my view, the materialist perspective radically undermines reductive formalist accounts of modernism which underplay or ignore the ideologies of class and gender which are everywhere manifest in modernism. The methodology used here therefore employs a materialist emphasis on class and gender systems and the economic or material dimension of cultural activity, with specific consideration given to the social and political transformations of the period: To echo the Marxist maxim, we make our own destinies, though not in the conditions of our choosing, and the ambiguity about the role of culture in the utopian future of the proletariat, again unresolved in Marx, is precisely what has given rise to diverse Marxist-influenced aesthetic theories in the twentieth century. Whereas discourse analysis enables the historicist reading of modernity from renaissance self-fashioning to contemporary gender studies, Marxist aesthetics engage more explicitly with a critique of industrial capitalism which privileges an aesthetic or critical sphere as the binary opposite of an increasingly commercial, uncritical mass culture, particularly in the later phases of industrial capitalism. Moving from discussions of modernism to post-modernism, the question of an aesthetic sphere functioning in a reified capitalism becomes more dialectic, the post-modern embracing its own commodity status in a process of complex, self-reflexive commentary which would seem otherwise antithetical to modernism. This insistence inevitably privileges modernism as the antithesis to an increasingly degraded bourgeois culture. My purpose here, then, is to adopt a kind of critical distance, however paradoxical, which will allow us to read Marxist debate as, rather than providing an unresolved narrative which explains modernism, a set of narrative strategies endemic within modernism. Narrative, however, allows us to think in terms of the historicity of the concepts and categories themselves which have made our conceptualization and understanding of modernism possible. Working somewhat against the grain of received chronologies of the period, modernism is thus viewed here as a kind of socio-cultural matrix, with important connections to and continuities with pre-modernist figures such as Nietzsche, Freud, Wilde and Shaw.

Chapter 6 : Shakespeare & The Development Of Early Modern English

The premise of this book is simple and direct: Shakespeare makes modern culture and modern culture makes Shakespeare. I could perhaps put the second "Shakespeare" in quotation marks, so as to.

Despite individual differences, the public theatres were three stories high, and built around an open space at the centre. Usually polygonal in plan to give an overall rounded effect, three levels of inward-facing galleries overlooked the open centre into which jutted the stage—essentially a platform surrounded on three sides by the audience, only the rear being restricted for the entrances and exits of the actors and seating for the musicians. The upper level behind the stage could be used as a balcony, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, or as a position for a character to harangue a crowd, as in *Julius Caesar*. Usually built of timber, lath and plaster and with thatched roofs, the early theatres were vulnerable to fire, and gradually were replaced when necessary with stronger structures. When the Globe burned down in June, it was rebuilt with a tile roof. A different model was developed with the Blackfriars Theatre, which came into regular use on a long term basis in 1608. The Blackfriars was small in comparison to the earlier theatres, and roofed rather than open to the sky; it resembled a modern theatre in ways that its predecessors did not. Elizabethan Shakespeare[edit] For Shakespeare as he began to write, both traditions were alive; they were, moreover, filtered through the recent success of the University Wits on the London stage. By the late 16th century, the popularity of morality and academic plays waned as the English Renaissance took hold, and playwrights like Thomas Kyd and Christopher Marlowe revolutionised theatre. Their plays blended the old morality drama with classical theory to produce a new secular form. However, it was more ambiguous and complex in its meanings, and less concerned with simple allegory. Inspired by this new style, Shakespeare continued these artistic strategies, [6] creating plays that not only resonated on an emotional level with audiences but also explored and debated the basic elements of what it means to be human. He takes from Aristotle and Horace the notion of decorum; with few exceptions, he focuses on high-born characters and national affairs as the subject of tragedy. In most other respects, though, the early tragedies are far closer to the spirit and style of moralities. They are episodic, packed with character and incident; they are loosely unified by a theme or character. In comedy, Shakespeare strayed even further from classical models. The *Comedy of Errors*, an adaptation of *Menaechmi*, follows the model of new comedy closely. Like *Lyly*, he often makes romantic intrigue a secondary feature in Latin new comedy the main plot element; [9] even this romantic plot is sometimes given less attention than witty dialogue, deceit, and jests. The "reform of manners," which Horace considered the main function of comedy, [10] survives in such episodes as the gulling of Malvolio. In these years, he responded to a deep shift in popular tastes, both in subject matter and approach. At the turn of the decade, he responded to the vogue for dramatic satire initiated by the boy players at Blackfriars and St. At the end of the decade, he seems to have attempted to capitalise on the new fashion for tragicomedy, [11] even collaborating with John Fletcher, the writer who had popularised the genre in England. The influence of younger dramatists such as John Marston and Ben Jonson is seen not only in the problem plays, which dramatise intractable human problems of greed and lust, but also in the darker tone of the Jacobean tragedies. One play, *Troilus and Cressida*, may even have been inspired by the War of the Theatres. This change is related to the success of tragicomedies such as *Philaster*, although the uncertainty of dates makes the nature and direction of the influence unclear. Style[edit] During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, "drama became the ideal means to capture and convey the diverse interests of the time. His verse style, his choice of subjects, and his stagecraft all bear the marks of both periods. In some of his early works like *Romeo and Juliet*, he even added punctuation at the end of these iambic pentameter lines to make the rhythm even stronger. To end many scenes in his plays he used a rhyming couplet to give a sense of conclusion, or completion. Although a large amount of his comical talent is evident in his comedies, some of the most entertaining scenes and characters are found in tragedies such as *Hamlet* and histories such as *Henry IV, Part 1*. He argues that when a person on the stage speaks to himself or herself, they are characters in a fiction speaking in character; this is an occasion of self-address. Furthermore, Hirsh points out that Shakespearean soliloquies and "asides" are audible in the fiction of the play, bound to be overheard by any

other character in the scene unless certain elements confirm that the speech is protected. Saying that addressing the audience was outmoded by the time Shakespeare was alive, he "acknowledges few occasions when a Shakespearean speech might involve the audience in recognising the simultaneous reality of the stage and the world the stage is representing. As was common in the period, Shakespeare based many of his plays on the work of other playwrights and recycled older stories and historical material. His dependence on earlier sources was a natural consequence of the speed at which playwrights of his era wrote; in addition, plays based on already popular stories appear to have been seen as more likely to draw large crowds. There were also aesthetic reasons: Renaissance aesthetic theory took seriously the dictum that tragic plots should be grounded in history. Even these plays, however, rely heavily on generic commonplaces. While there is much dispute about the exact Chronology of Shakespeare plays, as well as the Shakespeare Authorship Question, the plays tend to fall into three main stylistic groupings. The first major grouping of his plays begins with his histories and comedies of the s. However, after the plague forced Shakespeare and his company of actors to leave London for periods between and , Shakespeare began to use rhymed couplets in his plays, along with more dramatic dialogue. For the next few years, Shakespeare would produce his most famous dramas, including Macbeth, Hamlet, and King Lear. The romances are so called because they bear similarities to medieval romance literature. Among the features of these plays are a redemptive plotline with a happy ending, and magic and other fantastic elements. Canonical plays[edit] Except where noted, the plays below are listed, for the thirty-six plays included in the First Folio of, according to the order in which they appear there, with two plays that were not included Pericles, Prince of Tyre and The Two Noble Kinsmen being added at the end of the list of comedies and Edward III at the end of the list of histories.

Chapter 7 : Modern English Shakespeare Translations | Shakescleare, by LitCharts

The Modernity of Shakespeare by Ismail Serageldin with a foreword by Wole Soyinka Winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature Cairo University, Egypt.

The terrible beauty of some these plays is consistent with the presence of a tough, reasonable mind asking tough, reasonable questions about the kind of world that western Europe was swiftly becoming. The answers are so strikingly original, so strange and compelling in themselves, that the questions may have largely gone unnoticed. Goethe and William Empson noticed, gives the illusion of not being a play so much as a representation on the stage of the haphazard way things happen in life. Since the play is not conventionally theatrical, Hamlet himself must seem not to be acted but presented. This absence of acting, on his part, is a sort of pun: Hamlet does not act politically any more than he does theatrically. Since Hamlet does not or cannot act, someone else must do so if there is to be a play at all. So the shallow, hypocritical Polonius becomes the comically unwitting dramaturge who sets up one key scene after another, including the one that gets him killed, thereby moving the play along to its final catastrophe. We can think of Hamlet as an answer to a question: In other words, is authenticity compatible with effective political action? How is such a man to be persuaded to settle down as a useful and productive member of his community? Only with great difficulty. Shakespeare, I imagine, was wondering how a future king would approach a problem that Queen Elizabeth had not solved but only contained: How to transform a warrior aristocracy into the useful citizens—squires, magistrates, civil-servants, members of Parliament, etc. It had a deeper and more disturbing sequel: The hero of that play, the overgrown boy and soldier, Coriolanus, resembles Bertram in the prejudices that unfit him for life in a modern civil society but there the resemblance ends. Bertram has many vices and no virtues; Coriolanus, like Hamlet, is the victim of his virtues. Coriolanus, takes us back to the early years of the Roman Republic. The anonymous, laboring masses are to be given a voice, through their representatives, the Tribunes, in the political affairs of Rome. The aristocracy, which has been running Rome to suit itself, bitterly resents this limitation on its power. Into this explosive atmosphere steps Coriolanus, as the aristocratic candidate for Consul. This surprisingly funny story has a moral, of sorts: Keep your real thoughts and feelings out of sight if you wish to have any sort of success in the political arena. So, once more the question is being raised: Is there no place in our politics for a man who insists, at whatever cost to himself or the state, on being like Hamlet true to himself? Probably not, concludes Shakespeare once more, with deep regret. We can also think of the play as an oblique response to the moral perfectionism that Christianity demands, especially in Matthew 7: Troilus and Cressida offers us an answer to the question: The answer is plain: Troilus and Cressida, devoid of coherent moral ideals, is about the irrelevance of the Homeric moral and literary tradition to present-day political morality and practice, except as an implicit indicator of how low the politics and morality of Europe had fallen. Europe was becoming decadent, or modern—take your pick: This play has a modern analogue: Suppose a man might still exist whose identity is defined by the ancient Homeric code of honor and courage; a naturally noble man not that social artifact, a nobleman in whom the Homeric world lives on, uncorrupted by rationalism or the skeptical impulses of the meddling intellect. Where might you find such a man in ? Othello and Desdemona live by and for the ancient aristocratic ideals. They are rare, exquisitely vulnerable birds. With a purity and nobility of soul that is no longer recognizable, they cannot survive under conditions of modernity. Were they, by some stroke of supernatural bad luck, to become incarnate in some modern city, we would manage to destroy them, out of misunderstanding or cynical disbelief, perhaps; or mischievously, because it would be so easy; and so much fun; or for all of these reasons and one more: Only the man we know of as Shakespeare could have imagined a man who believes in nothing but himself and torments others for the fun of it; a mean man, a spiteful man, who knows his betters better than they know themselves, having studied them from the shadows all his life; a profoundly intelligent, cynical man, a modern man: A few words of explanation may be necessary here. It is almost certain, however, that the modern meaning of the word had become well established by Stendhal, for instance, uses it confidently in its modern sense in his novel, *The Red and The Black* When King Lear in a fit of mindless outrage sets off the little bomb that has been ticking

away at the heart of his dysfunctional family, that explosion sets off another and then another until, with terrible speed, the entire moral and political order of England is in ruins. Macbeth brings them back. Like Edmund in King Lear, Lord and Lady Macbeth take it for granted that they are moral and social individuals, free to do as they please. Like Troilus and Cressida, Macbeth has a modern analogue: Antony and Cleopatra have qualities that poets and artists love—wit, passion, imagination—and politicians like Caesar not only lack but despise. In the great game of power and politics, however, Caesar has the qualities that count: So Caesar wins the great struggle for power that, as Shakespeare saw it, settled the fate of Europe well before the birth of Jesus. Cleopatra, nevertheless, has the last word, or words, and they are by no means trivial: And would a world strictly according to Caesar, therefore a world without poetry, be worth living in? Shakespeare had a sense of history that was unique in , or at anytime: A realist, like Machiavelli, Shakespeare had no illusions about the future. Finally, we must include the deep premise of King Lear, which is also the premise of all scientific inquiry:

Chapter 8 : Shakespeare and Modernity : Hugh Grady :

This unit explores selected works of Shakespeare in the historical context of the 20th and 21st centuries. It provides an introduction to the modern Shakespeare industry with particular focus on recent developments in theatrical performance, film, and other adaptations, and theoretical approaches.

Chapter 9 : Shakespeare and Modernity: Early Modern to Millennium - Google Books

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