



Twelfth Night Dramaturgy

{Or What You Will

By Sylvia Kramer and Benjamin
Burton



Shakespeare and His World

Introduction

“Shakespeare – The nearest thing in incarnation to the eye of **God**.

- Laurence Olivier

“He was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the **largest** and most **comprehensive soul**.”

- John Dryden

“He was not of an age, but for **all time**.”

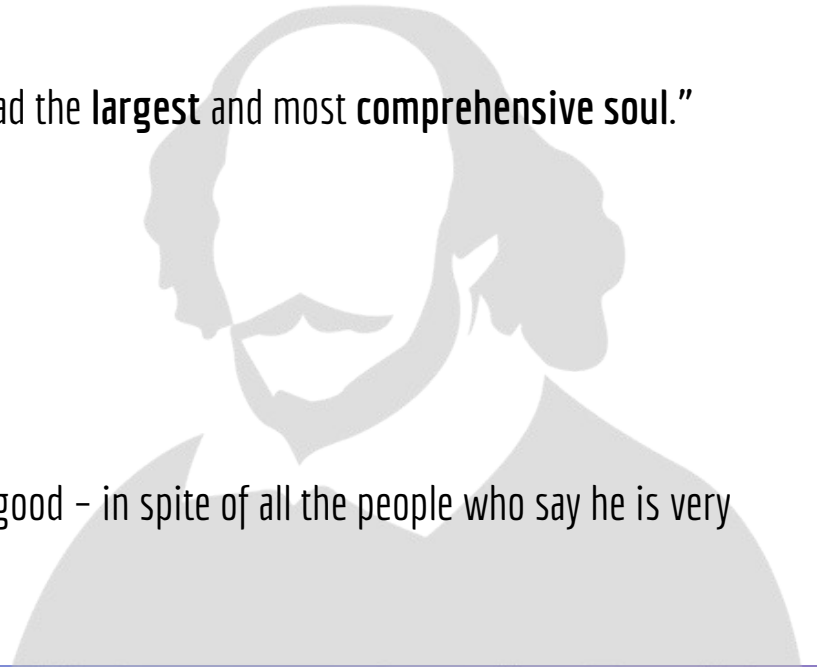
- Ben Jonson

“Why should anyone else attempt to write?”

- Virginia Woolf

“The remarkable thing about Shakespeare is that he is really very good – in spite of all the people who say he is very good”

- Robert Graves



Shakespeare and His World

Relevant Biographical Highlights



1564-1616

Shakespeare and His World

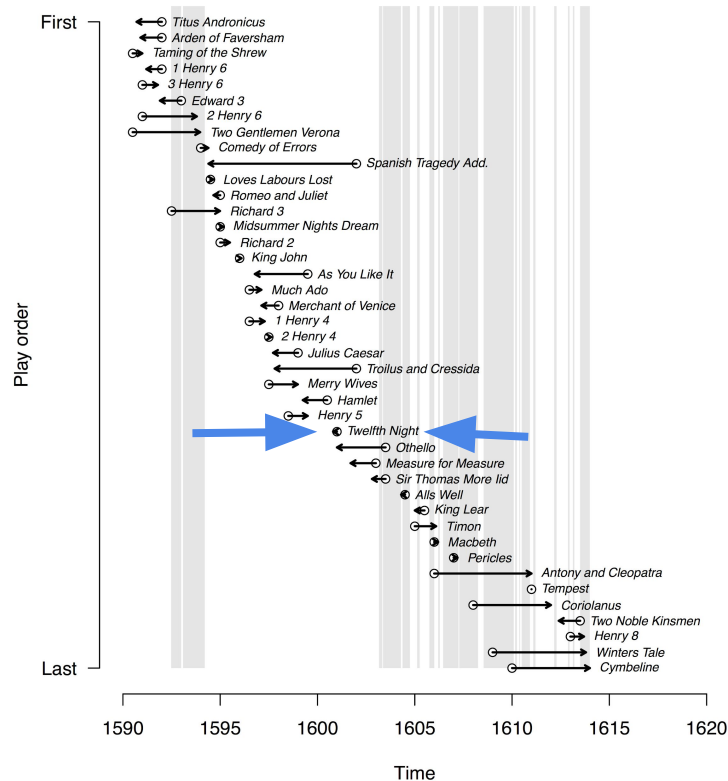
Writing *Twelfth Night*

Where does *Twelfth Night* fit into Shakespeare's career?

- First performance record: **1602**, which was **420** years ago

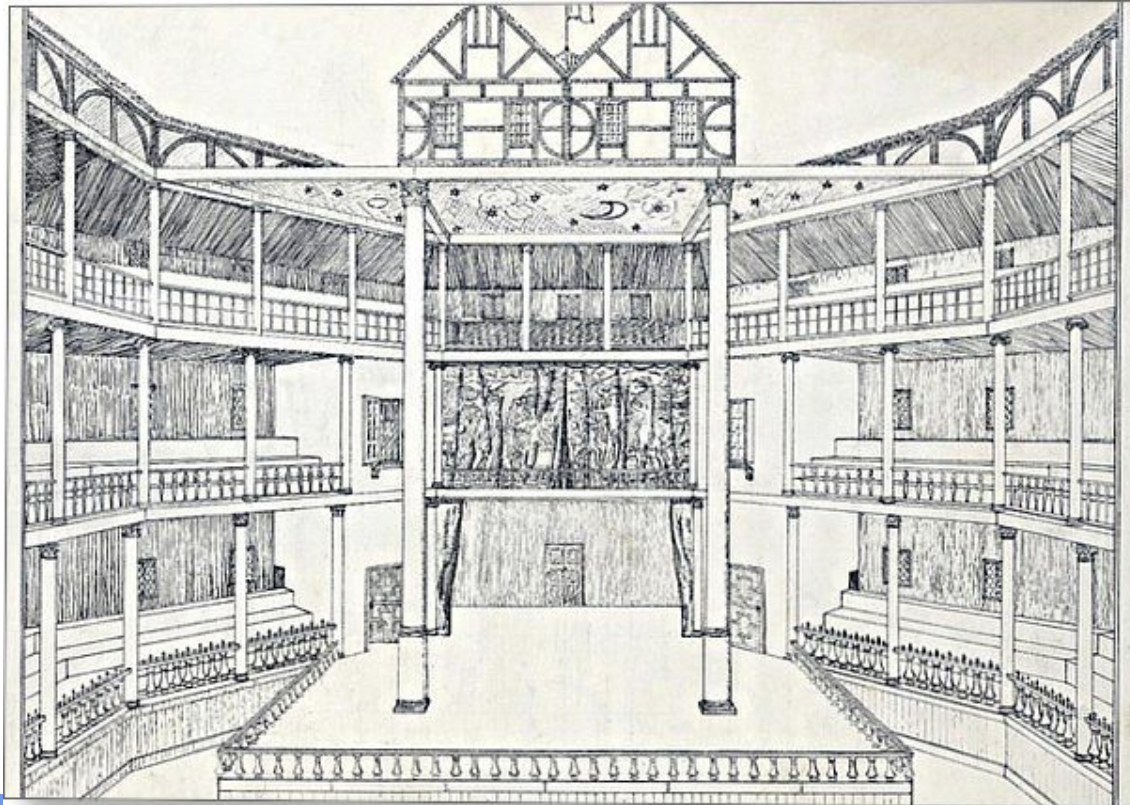
Possible Sources

- *Menaechmi*, a play by Plautus (also a source for *Comedy of Errors*)
- *Gl'Ingannati*, an Italian play
- "Apolonius and Silla", a short story by Barnaby Rich



Shakespeare and His World

The Elizabethan Theatre





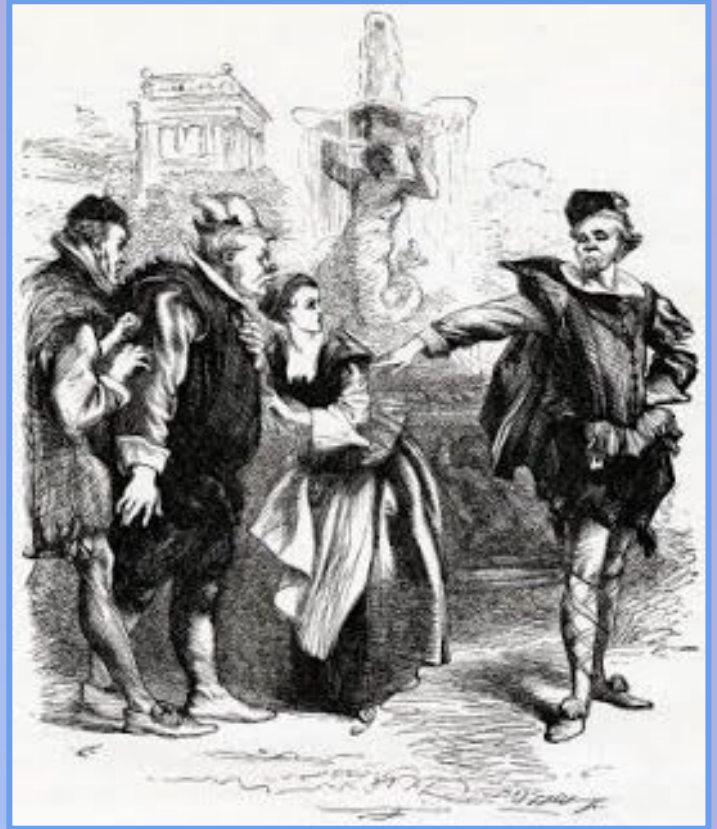
Shakespeare and His World

A note on humours...

	Blood	Phlegm	Black Bile	Yellow Bile
Body Part	Heart	Brain	Spleen	Liver
Temperament	Sanguine	Phlegmatic	Melancholic	Choleric
Associated Traits	Warm, energized, sensual	Sluggish, calm, peaceful	Despondent, quiet, analytical, serious.	Angry, irritable

Elizabethan Etiquette: “What Manner of Man?”

“Of very ill-manner; he’ll speak with you,
will you or no.” - Malvolio, I.v



Elizabethan Etiquette

A Perilous Practice of Perfect Politeness: ***The Reverence***



Elizabethan Etiquette

Gentlemen

- **Remove your hat** in the presence of social superior
- **Kissing the hand** - no contact, don't overdo it
- **Stay to the left** of Monarchs (social superiors)
- **Never turn your back** until you're out of official range

Ladies

- **Greeting order:**
Half-reverence, kiss right hand, grave reverence
- **Keep steady eye-contact** to prevent confusion
- **Adjust your dress** to stall (men need time to take off their glove)

“O, the twelfth day of December...”

Twelfth Night, Epiphany, or the Feast of Fools



“O, the twelfth day of December...”

The Twelfth Night Festival

Origins

- In the Christian tradition, **Epiphany** was a celebration of the magi visiting Jesus. **Twelfth Night** was the night before Epiphany.
- Festivities sometimes blended into traditions left over from the Roman **Saturnalia**.
- Saturnalia was a solstice festival that celebrated **misrule** and the **carnavalesque**



“O, the twelfth day of December...”

The Twelfth Night Festival



Traditions

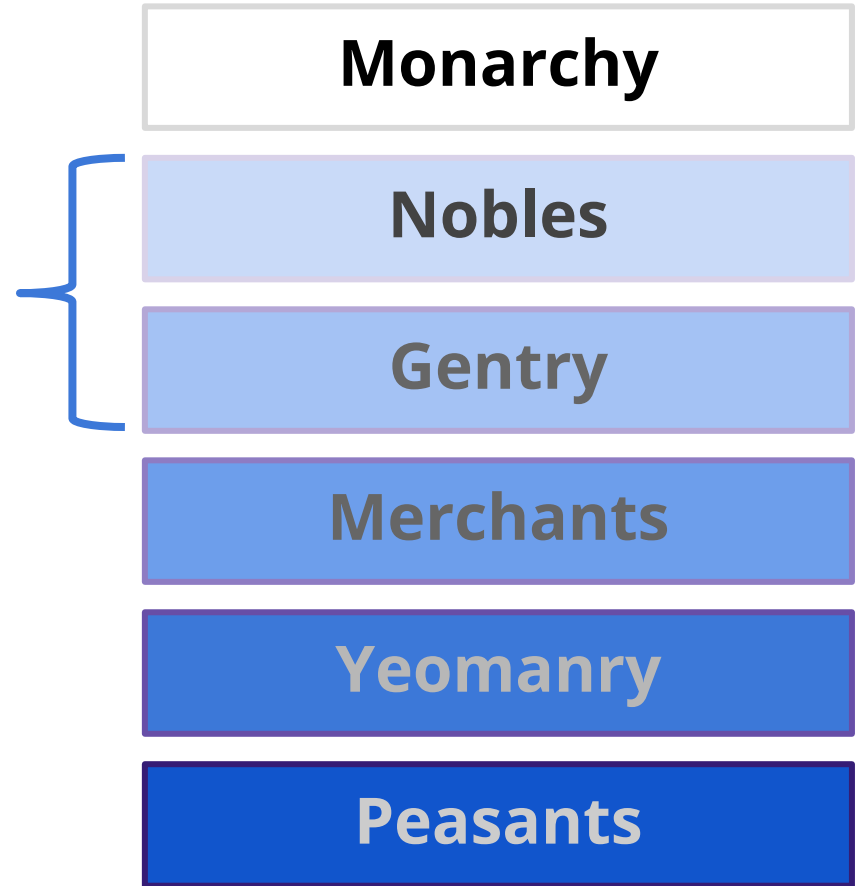
- A **Lord of Misrule** presided over the festivities, which included:
 - Topsy-turvy inversion of social structures and hierarchical complementarity
 - Disguises and masques
 - Gifts, cakes and ales
- Puritans and other devout people were strongly opposed



Keep It Classy: Social Structure in Elizabethan England

Social Class and Structure

- “Never can there have been more class consciousness, one feels, in any age.” - A.L. Rowse
- Overlap of servitude and romance
 - Service as an act of devotion
 - Marriage as an antidote for social inferiority



Monarchy

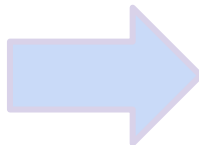
Nobles

Gentry

Merchants

Yeomanry

Peasants



Dukes

Marquis

Earls/Counts

Viscounts

Barons



“Where there is no illusion, there is no Illyria”

- Oscar Wilde

- The real Illyria was an ancient region of the Balkan peninsula, part of the Adriatic coast, where Croatia is today.
- Shakespeare’s Illyria seems to be something entirely different

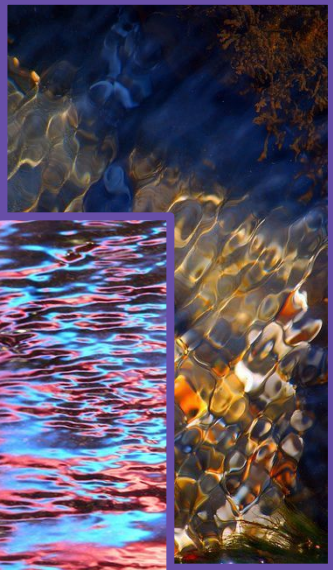
“Illyria was scarcely familiar territory, more significant, perhaps, for its evocation of like-sounding exotics - **Elysium, delirium** - than for concrete geopolitics” - Leah Marcus

“Illyria is a **utopia**, a no-place that could be anyplace” - Keir Elam

Water We Talking About??

“I am for all waters” - Feste, IV.ii

- Duality & Fluidity
- Reflection and Refraction
- Destructive, Emotional, Comical
- Visual, not as actionable



When that I was a Little Tiny Boy.

Allegretto.

1. When that I was a lit-tle ti-ny boy, With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain, A
 2. But when I came to man's e-state, With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain, Gainst
 3. But when I came, a las! to wife, With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain, By
 4. Long, long a-go the world be-gun, With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain, But



1. fool-ish thing was but a toy, For the rain it rain-eth ev-'ry day, With a
 2. knave and thief men shut their gate, For the rain it rain-eth ev-'ry day, With a
 3. swag-g'ring I could nev-er thrive, For the rain it rain-eth ev-'ry day, With a
 4. that's all one, our play is done, And we'll strive to please you ev-'ry day, With a



1. hey, ho, the wind and the rain, And the rain it rain-eth ev-'ry day.
 2. hey, ho, the wind and the rain, And the rain it rain-eth ev-'ry day.
 3. hey, ho, the wind and the rain, And the rain it rain-eth ev-'ry day.
 4. hey, ho, the wind and the rain, And the rain it rain-eth ev-'ry day.

The song is in the epilogue to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Clappell who prints the tune, says that it had passed down on the stage traditionally, and that it was generally considered as the composition of a person named Fielding. This is not likely to be correct, for the air has every appearance of being a melody coeval with the words. I have in my own library a folio publication of *Five Songs in the Entertainment of His Majesty, The celebrated Epilogue in the Comedy of Twelfth Night*, &c. &c. &c. composed by J. Vernon, published by John Johnston, circa 1769. This contains the words and air as sung by Vernon himself at Vauxhall, who appears to have rightly, (or more probably wrongly) claimed the composition of the air himself.

"If music be the
food of love, play
on"

Gender and Sexuality in Twelfth Night



SexualiTea: What's Up With These Relationships?

- Identity vs. Action
- Social structures
- Male-male friendship
- "I do adore thee so" - **Antonio**, II.i
- "Antonio, O my dear Antonio! How have the hours rack'd and tortured me since I have lost thee." - **Sebastian**, V.i

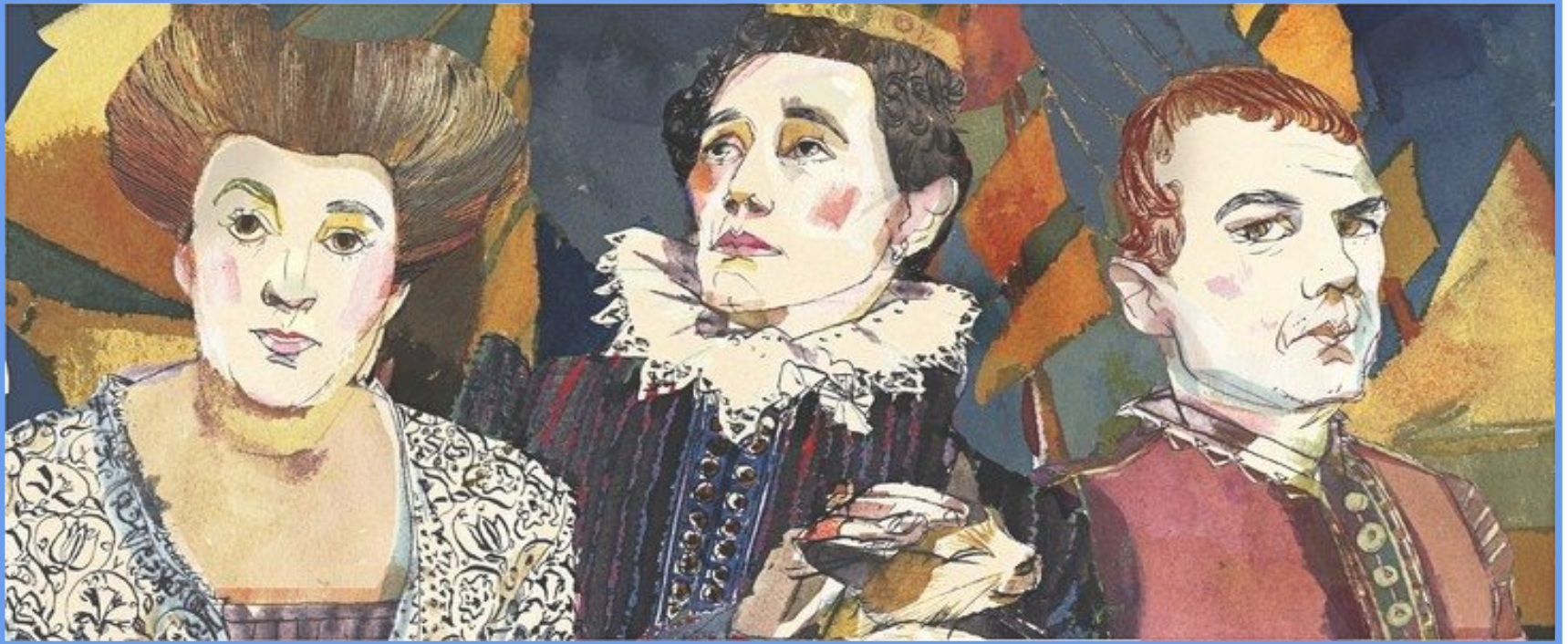


enGENDERED Perspectives: Then and Now (also, Why)

Vocabulary

Binary Structures

Colonialism



Non-Western & Pre-Colonial Gender Nonconformity



Muxe of Oaxaca (Mexico)



Hijra (India)

Non-Western & Pre-Colonial Gender Nonconformity



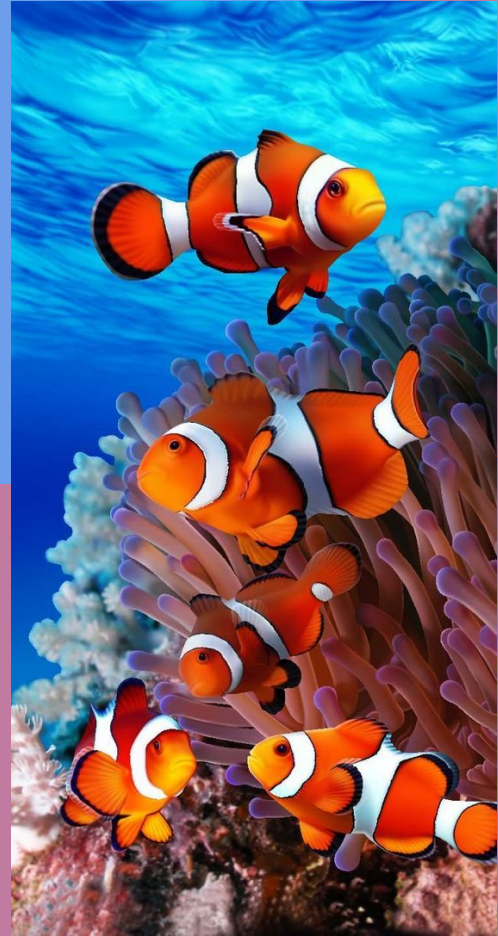
Fa'afafine (Samoa)



Two Spirit Powwow (America)

Nurture Your Nature: Illyria, Environment, and Expression

- Illyria
 - Amorphous, Ahistorical, Abinary
- Role reversal and subversion
 - Little focus on re-establishment of the “normal”
- Water, fluidity, and fish
 - Clownfish



Something's Fishy...

Unlearning Gender as a Fixed Identity



The Wrasse

Video by BBC, part of Planet
Earth: Blue Planet II

Other Motifs to Watch For

Time/Destiny

- “O time! thou must untangle this, not I”
- “Youth’s a stuff will not endure

Blood Sports/Hunting

- “My desires, like fell and cruel hounds/E’er since pursue me”
- “Now is the woodcock near the gin”

Birds and flowers

- “The sweet sound/That breathes upon a bank of violets”
- “Look, where the youngest wren of nine comes.”

Metatheatrical language

- “If this were played upon a stage now, I would condemn it as improbable fiction”
- “Are you a comedian?/I am not that I play.”

Body and disease imagery

- “Methought she purged the air of pestilence”
- “Even so quickly may one catch the plague?”

Madness and Folly

- “I am as mad as he/If sad and merry madness equal be”
- “Are all the people mad?”

Any Questions?