

As we know, the studying of English literature has a big significance for students and who interests with general literature. It helps the person to understand the social nature of the other societies. Therefore, the literature seems as a mirror of social life. It gives us new method to thinking in the world and a life around us. The literature is one of the form of arts, which able to evoke the excited emotion. The studying of literature makes us to understand the philosophical movements like literary movement, historical movement and the thought which was prevalent in certain time and certain society. To studying and understanding the characteristics of English literature, students must study and understand the types of literary arts. Where, the English literature consists from many fields of literary writings such as; poetry, drama, novel, short story, melodrama, parable, fable and so on. Each one of these types has different characteristic and different writing style. During this studying year we shall study the subject of drama as the one of important literary studies at universities. This significance comes from the wealthy critical information, which is brought by the dramatists (writers). Therefore. the new students of English literature need to study and understand the history, kinds and characteristics of drama. The purpose of that is to make students mental prepared to receiving the critical study in next time.

The history of English drama

The English drama passed in many times of its development, where it began from 10th century English mystery plays or miracle plays. Medieval miracle drama focused on the representation of Bible stories in churches. English drama continued in its development through the entertainment plays until the end of fifteenth century. While English Renaissance approximately began from (1500-1660) during that time were produced great drama like '*Doctor Faustus*' by Christopher Marlow and '*Hamlet*' by William Shakespeare and others. Marlowe's subject matter is different from Shakespeare. Marlowe focuses more on the moral drama of the Renaissance man than any other thing. He introduced the story of (Faustus) to England in his play Doctor Faustus (1592) as a scientist and magician who is obsessed by the thirst of knowledge and the desire to push man's technological power to its limits. During the 17th and 18th centuries, drama became more development than before, because English theatres were kept closed by the Puritans for religious and ideological reasons. Many play writers appeared in this period like John Dryden, Thomas Otway

and others, After eighteenth century happened a profusion on the London stage of comedy that aims at entertaining the audience. This great change came in the Victorian age, which continued with a high development. During Victorian age appeared great dramatists contributed in the spread of English literature like Thomas William Robertson, Edwardian dramatists and others. From 1890s began the new age of English literature in the field of drama. This age is called modernism era, which made the drama as brilliant literature. Then after modernism the drama became very famous and got a high level between the other field of literature in the post modernism age. Which began from 1950 until this our days.

Types of drama

There are many types of drama, each one of them presents specific situation. The writer used in each types many professional style to give his message to readers and audiences. Therefore, Drama is divided into many types. As a student of drama it is important to be able recognize these different types of drama.

Tragedy:

It usually involves serious subject matter and the death of one or more main characters. Tragedy was often an historical dramas featuring the downfall of a great man.

Comedy:

When we talk about comedy, we usually refer to plays that are light in tone, and that typically have happy endings. The intent of a comedic play is to make the audience laugh. In modern theater.

Farce: It is a subcategory of comedy, characterized by greatly exaggerated characters and situations. Characters tend to be one-dimensional situation.

Melodrama:

Melodrama is another type of exaggerated drama. As in farce, the characters tend to be simplified and one-dimensional situation. The formulaic storyline of the classic melodrama typically involves a villain, a heroine, and a hero who must rescue the heroine from the villain.

Development stages of drama in English literature.

Mundane Drama: Growing restrictions on religious drama in the late sixteenth century contributed to the emergence of mundane English theatre.

Professional Stage: The late sixteenth century saw the establishment of the first permanent theatres and the professionalisation of the English theatre world.

Acting Companies: Acting was company-based and all-male. Women were not allowed to act publicly. Acting companies were generally of two types: adult and boy companies.

Playwriting: There was a massive expansion in the number of plays in English in the late sixteenth century; many were written collaboratively; they drew on a variety of sources and classical and Medieval dramatic traditions.

Regulation: All plays had to be licensed for performance and for printing; some were subject to censorship, generally because they dealt directly with living individuals or contentious issues.

Publication: Plays were generally written for performance not reading; only some were printed. Printed versions of plays were not necessarily the same as each other or as the versions that were originally performed in the theatre.

Staging: Renaissance plays had to be adaptable for a variety of venues (stages) and therefore generally relied on a minimalist staging style; scenery and sets were not used; settings were usually evoked through textual allusions