

The Elizabethan Period

Plays and Poetry

1558-1603

HISTORY OF THE PERIOD

AGE OF EXPLORATION-

- John Cabot reaches Newfoundland in 1497
- Francis Drake attacks Spanish ships in 1572
- Walter Raleigh founds Roanoke Colony in 1584

RELIGIOUS TURMOIL-

- Elizabeth's predecessor Mary, had executed 300 Protestants and restored Catholicism.
- Elizabeth maintained a policy of tolerance, despite several Catholic plots against her life.

The English Nation

Centralization of monarchy
focused money and power in
London, around court.

Idle aristocracy +
Improving economy
Many willing patrons

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graph TD; A[Centralization of monarchy focused money and power in London, around court.] --> C[Strong personality of Queen and long reign attracted many creative types]; B[Idle aristocracy + Improving economy Many willing patrons] --> C; C --> D[Focus on arts and changing language contributed to literary explosion]; E[New playhouses and evolution of drama provided public entertainment] --> D;
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Strong personality of Queen
and long reign attracted
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New playhouses and
evolution of drama provided
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Focus on arts and changing
language contributed to
literary explosion



DRAMA

POETRY

- Thomas Kyd (1558-1594)

The Spanish Tragedy

- Kit Marlowe (1564-1593)

Doctor Faustus

- Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

Volpone

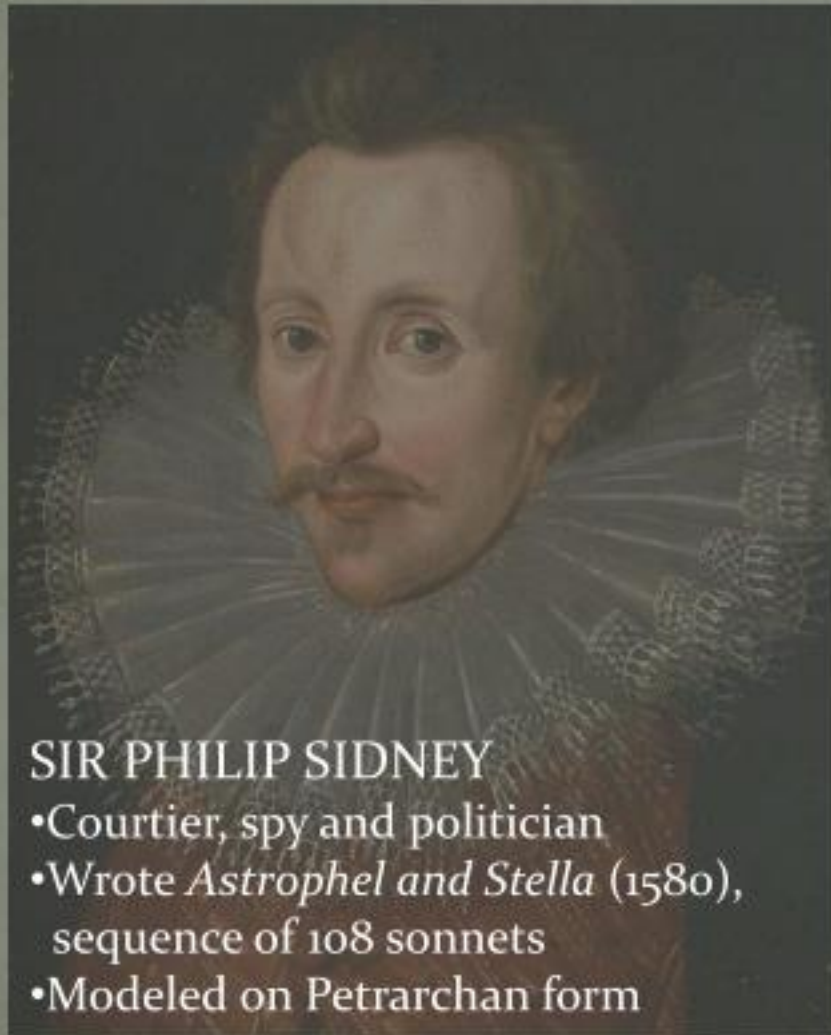
- Edmund Spenser (1552-1599)

The Faerie Queene

- Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586)

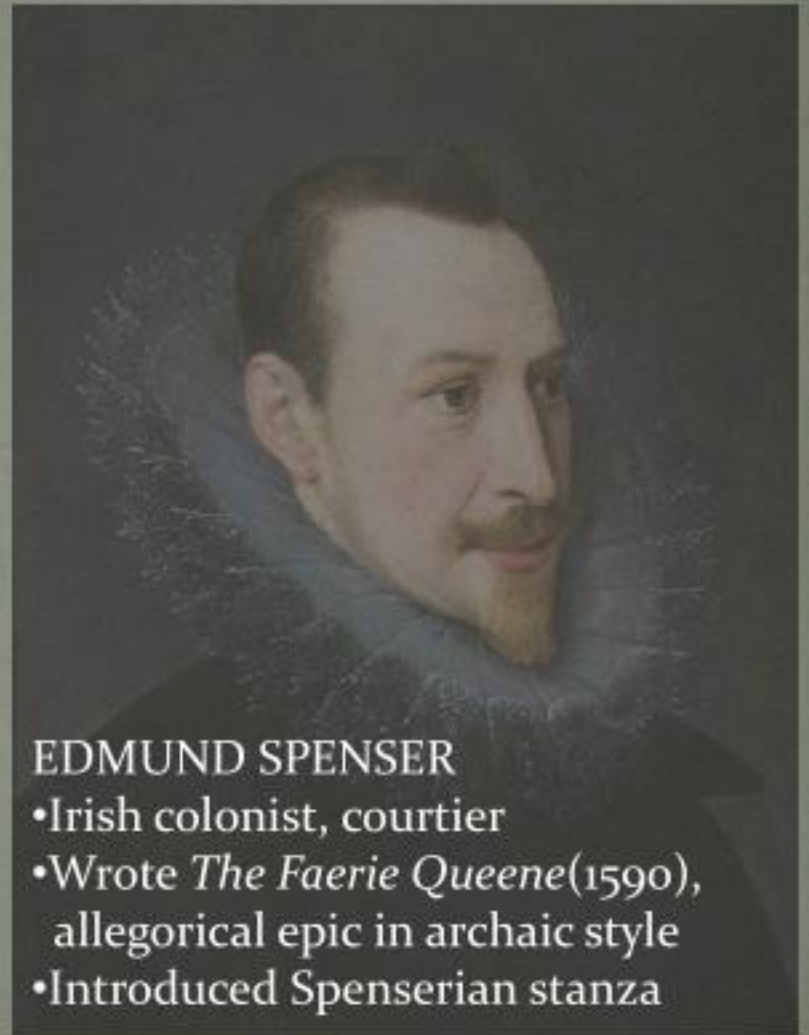
Astrophel and Stella

Sonnets and Soldiers



SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

- Courtier, spy and politician
- Wrote *Astrophel and Stella* (1580), sequence of 108 sonnets
- Modeled on Petrarchan form



EDMUND SPENSER

- Irish colonist, courtier
- Wrote *The Faerie Queene* (1590), allegorical epic in archaic style
- Introduced Spenserian stanza

TIES TO ELIZABETH:

- **Gloriana**, the Faerie Queene, represents Elizabeth
- **Archimago**, an evil magician, represents the Church
- Symbolic implication of Gloriana's descent from **Arthur**

OVERALL MESSAGE:

- Humans are naturally inclined toward **good**,
- **Weak** when confronted with **temptation**, especially deception
- Only the **steadfastly virtuous** ultimately prevail

The Faerie Queene

ALLEGORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The *Faerie* Queene

Britomart

Represents **Chastity**
Female knight
Moderation as key to salvation

Represents **Holiness**
Resembles **Peter**
Salvation through **suffering**
and **redemption**

Redcrosse

Artegal

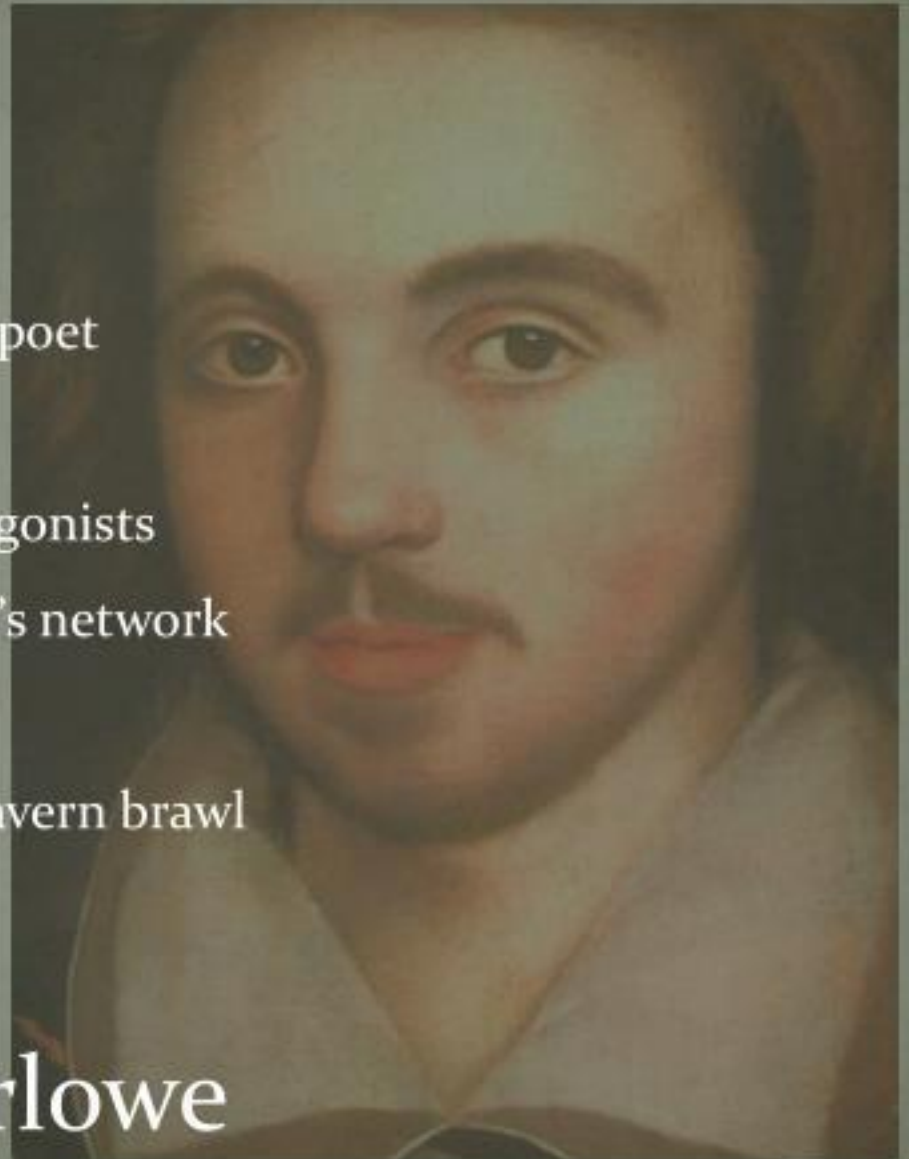
Represents **Justice**
Defeats, then falls for, **Britomart**
Justice can be **virtue or weapon**

MAJOR
CHARACTERS

DANGEROUS DRAMATISTS

- Talented young **playwright** and poet
- Inventor of **blank verse**
- Best known for **ambitious** protagonists
- Worked as a **spy** in Walsingham's network
- Connected to "**School of Night**"
- Died at a young age, **knifed** in tavern brawl
- Shakespeare's greatest **rival**

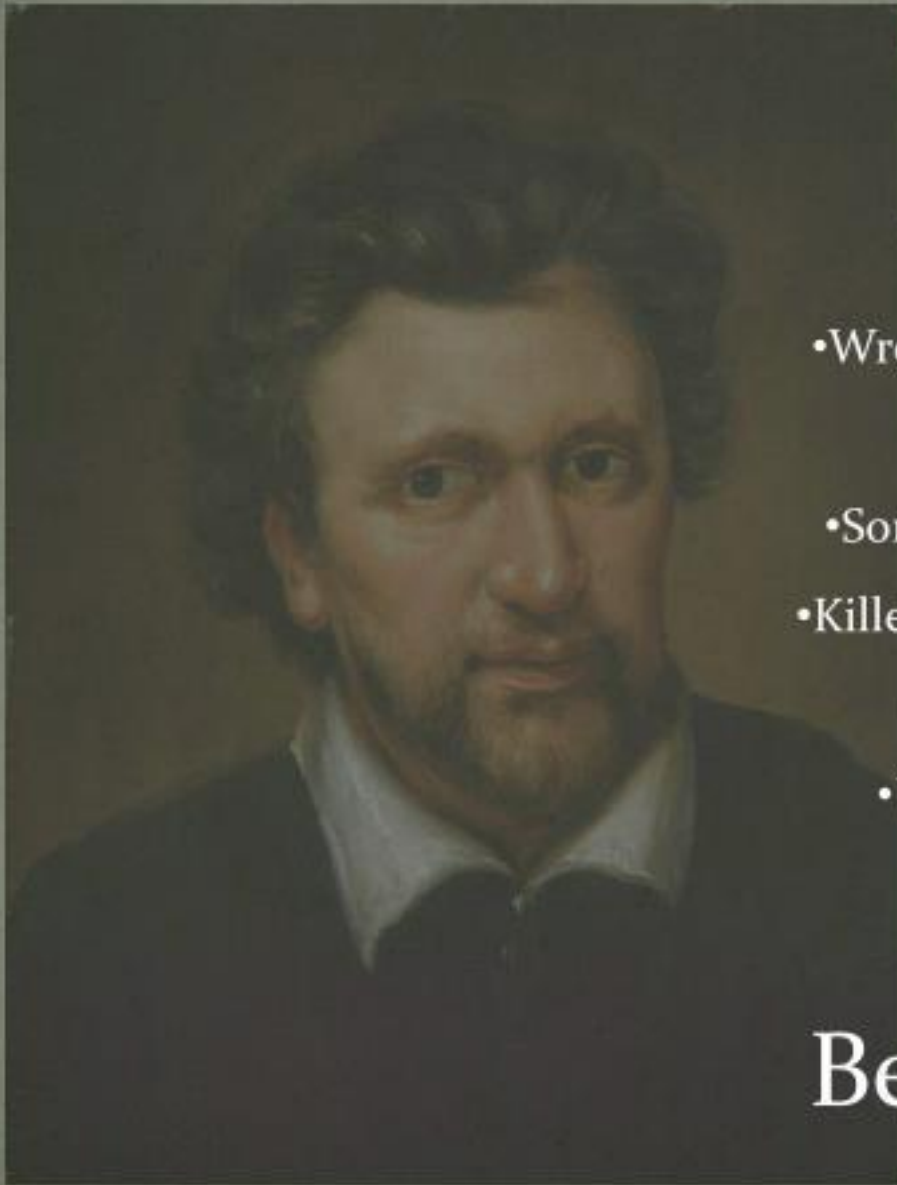
Christopher Marlowe



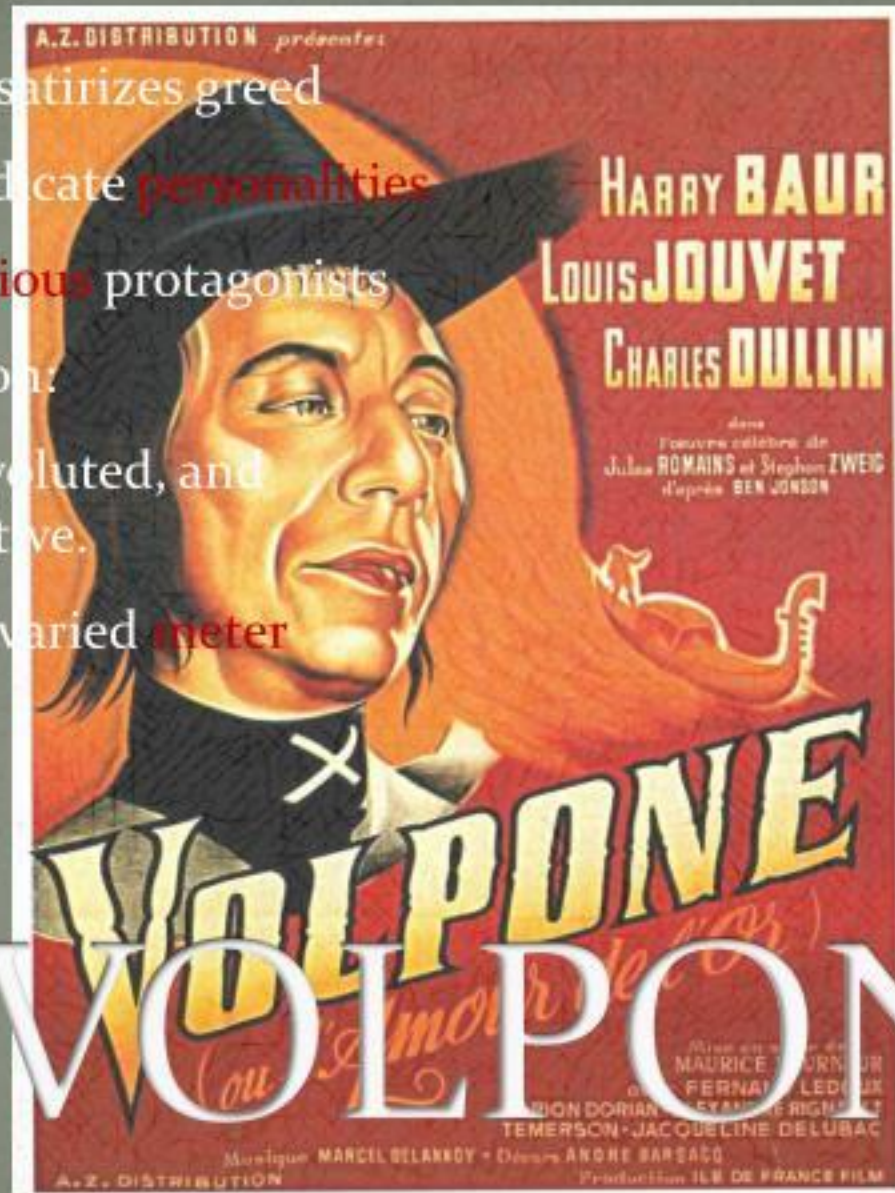
DANGEROUS DRAMATISTS

- Wrote **masques** and poetry as well as plays
 - Gift for comedy, especially **satire**
- Somewhat successful, but **temperamental**
- Killed a man in a duel, spent time in **prison**
 - **Popularity declined** as his plays aged
- *Volpone* and *The Alchemist* continue to win praise for **plotting and ingenuity**

Ben **Jonson**



- Allegorical **fable** that satirizes greed
- Characters' names indicate **personalities**
- Best known for **ambitious** protagonists
- **Plot** is typical of Jonson:
 - Complex and convoluted, and ultimately instructive.
- Use of **grotesque** and varied **meter**



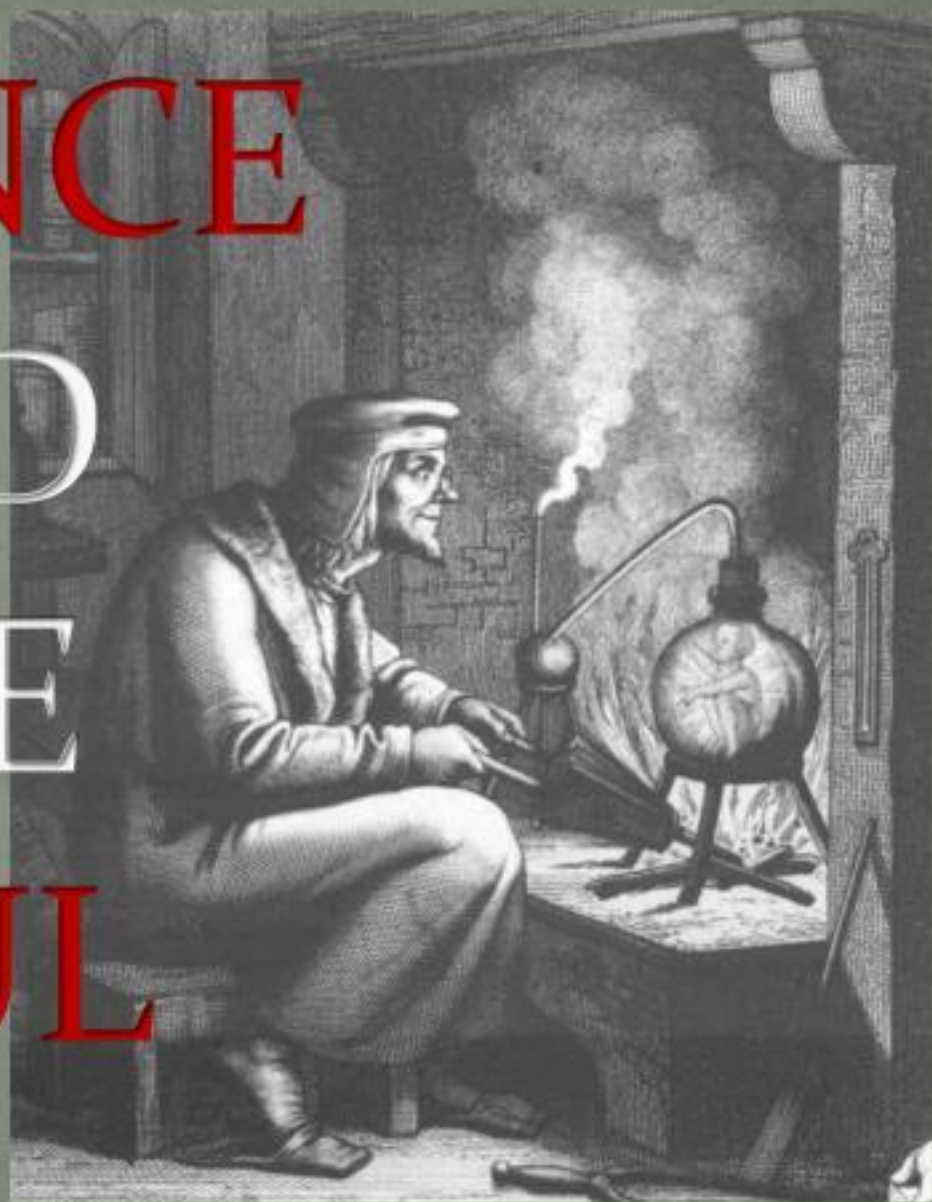
WOLFPONE

SCIENCE

AND

THE

SOUL



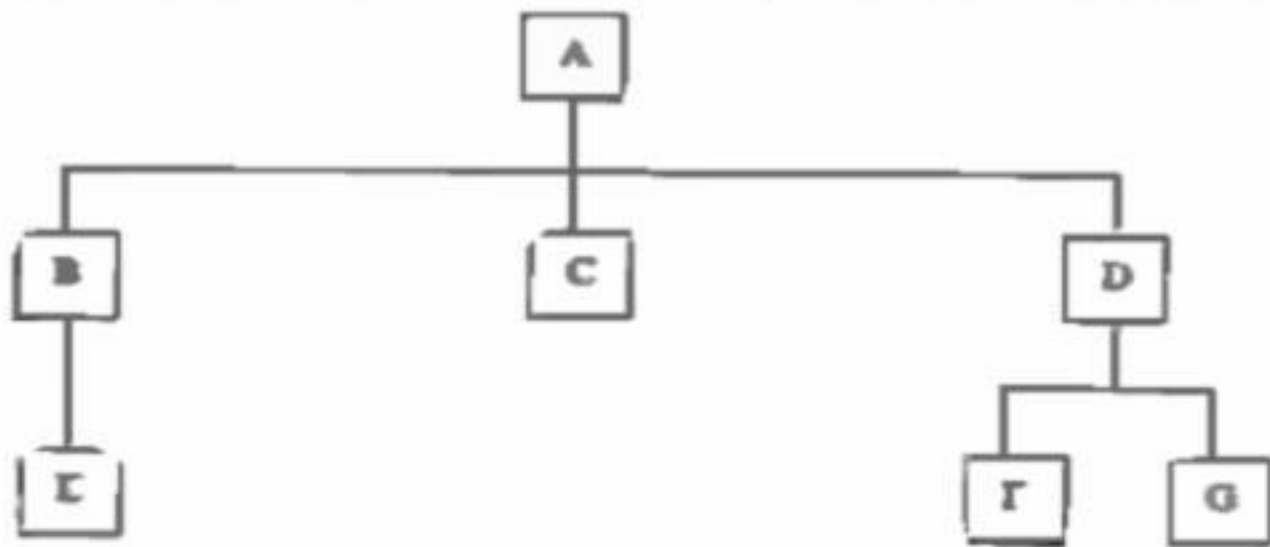
When we assume...



- **Faulty** assumptions lead to **incorrect** ideas
 - Four humors and human behavior
 - Homunculus and reproduction
- **Deductive** vs. **Inductive** Reasoning
- Development of the **scientific** method

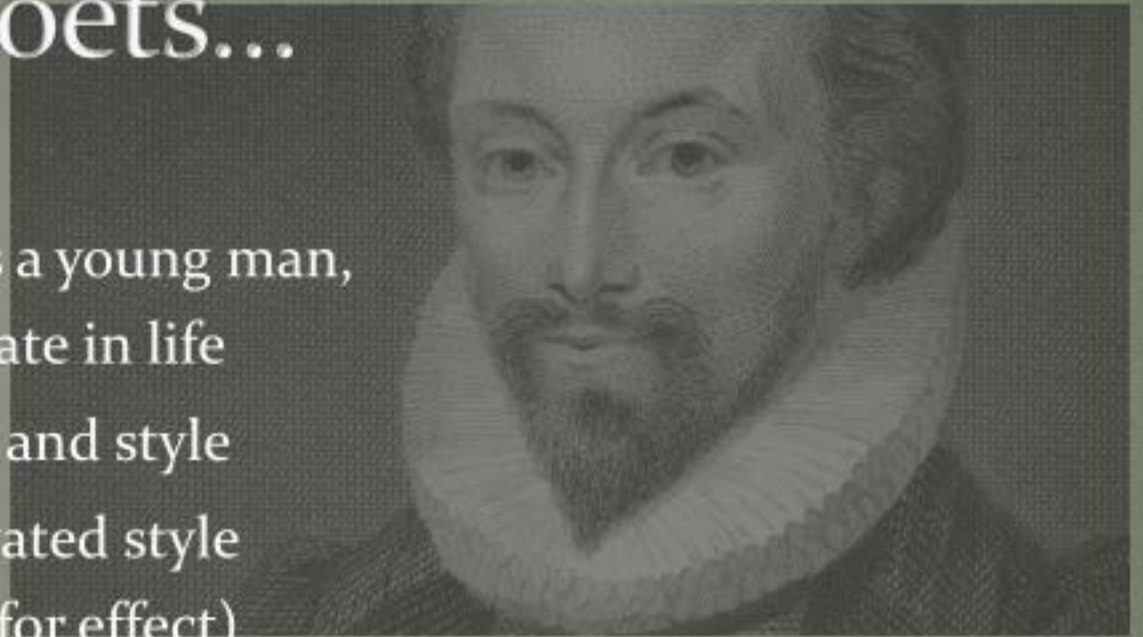
Formation of Syllogism...

Proposition → Idea → Syllogism



Prodigal Poets...

- **Soldier/politician** as a young man, became a **priest** late in life
- **Unconventional** life and style
- Often sacrifices elevated style for **discordancy** (for effect)
- Remembered for his poetry, but also his **conflict of faith**.



John Donne

Prodigal Poets...



- Soldier and politician as a young man, became a priest late in life
- Unconventional life and style
- Often sacrifices elevated style for discordancy (for effect)
- Remembered for his poetry, but also his conflict of faith, which reflects the period

John Milton