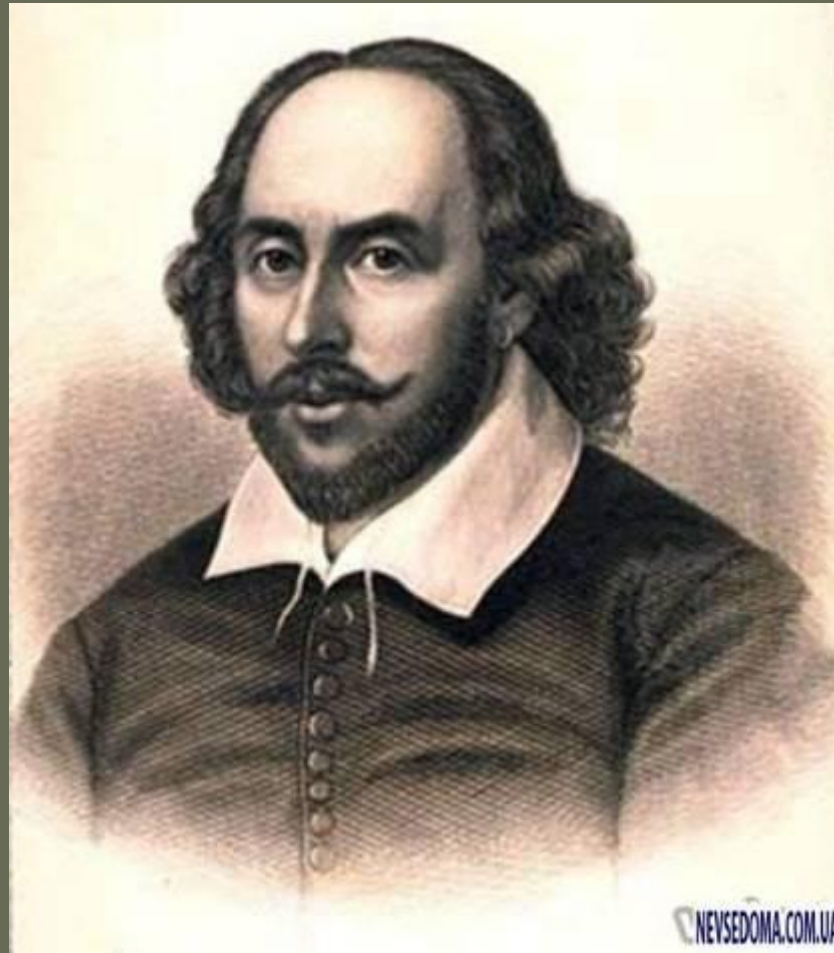


WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
(1564 -1616)

Lecture 9

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No household in the English-speaking countries can be imagined without the Bible and the works of William Shakespeare. They are symbols of Religion and Culture.



Unfortunately, very little is known about W.Shakespeare's life, as nobody collected any facts for his biography during his lifetime.

The most important sources for the biography of William Shakespeare are official and documentary records: definite, reliable and dull. Of prime importance is the register of Stratford-on Avon Holy Trinity Church, which gives the date of the baptism of William Shakespeare, his marriage, the baptism of his children, and his death.

William Shakespeare was born on April, 23, 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon, and was christened in Holy Trinity Church.

W. Shakespeare's birthplace



Holy Trinity Church



William Shakespeare's father, John Shakespeare, was one of the wealthiest citizens, and his mother, Mary Arden, belonged to an ancient and distinguished Catholic family.



William was their third child and the eldest son.

He must have attended Stratford Grammar school, where he acquired the knowledge of Latin.

The next record of Shakespeare's life is his marriage to Anne Hathaway, a daughter of a wealthy yeoman, in 1582.



In 1583 their first child, Susanna was born, and in 1585 the twins, Hamnet and Judith, followed her. After the birth of the twins we know absolutely nothing about Shakespeare's life for the next seven years.

It is known that by 1592 Shakespeare had settled in London and had started writing plays.



In 1593 a serious epidemic of the plague broke out, and all the theatres were closed down.

At that time William Shakespeare became a share-holder, the principal playwright and an actor of the Globe theatre on the southern bank of the Thames in London.

Shakespeare wrote and staged comedies, tragedies, historical plays and dramas. Besides, he composed sonnets.



As the time passed, he became rather rich, wrote less and in 1613 after the Globe had been destroyed by fire, Shakespeare retired to Stratford where he died on April, 23, 1616.

He was buried in the same Holy Trinity Church, where he was christened.

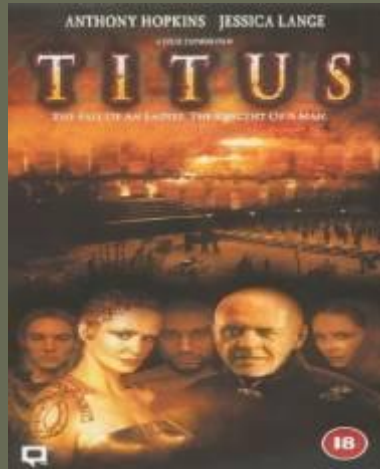


In 1623 Shakespeare's plays were collected by his fellow-actors and published in a single volume known as the First Folio.

His literary work may be divided into four periods. The plays are dated according to the theatrical season in which they were first staged.

William Shakespeare wrote 37 plays and 154 sonnets.

The first period ( the period of apprenticeship) includes the plays that were written under the influence of the University Wits.



1590/91 Henry VI, parts II and III

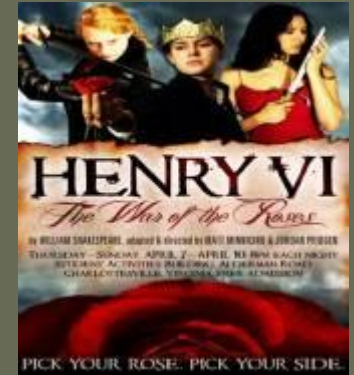
1591/92 Henry VI, part I

1592/93 Richard III

The Comedy of Errors

1593/94 Titus Andronicus

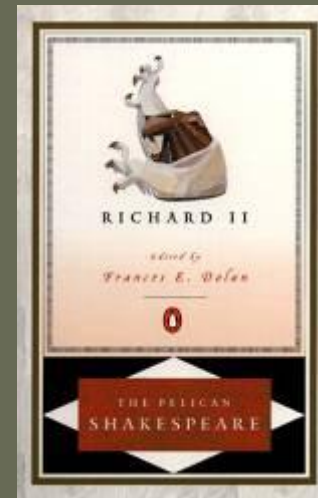
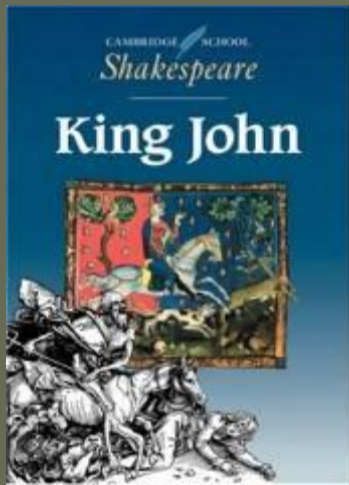
The Taming of the Shrew



During the second period William Shakespeare mainly wrote historical plays, chronicles, comedies . The only tragedy was “Romeo and Juliet”:

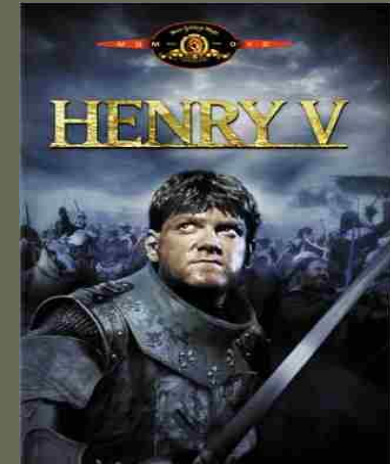
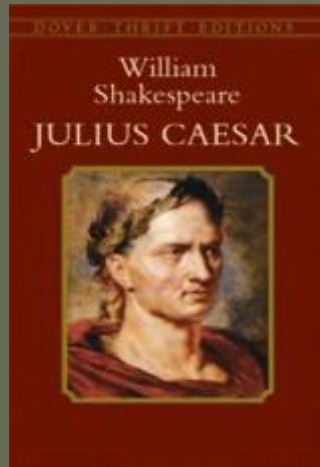
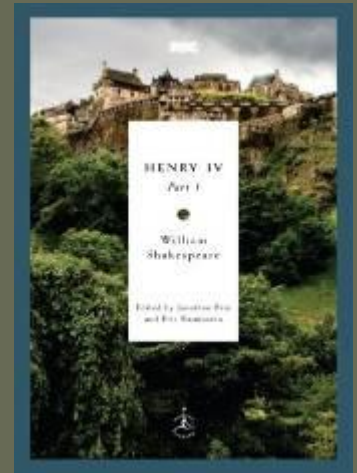


1594/95 The Two Gentlemen of Verona  
Love's Labour Lost  
Romeo and Juliet  
1595/96 Richard II  
A Midsummer Night's Dream  
1596/97 King John  
The Merchant of Venice





1597/98 Henry IV  
1598/99 Much Ado About Nothing  
Henry V  
1599/1600 Julius Caesar  
As You Like It  
Twelfth Night



The third period is marked by Shakespeare's great tragedies that were the peak of his achievement, and made him truly immortal:



1600/01 Hamlet

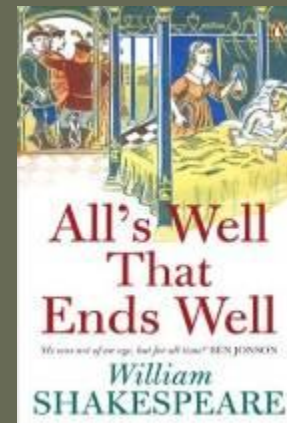
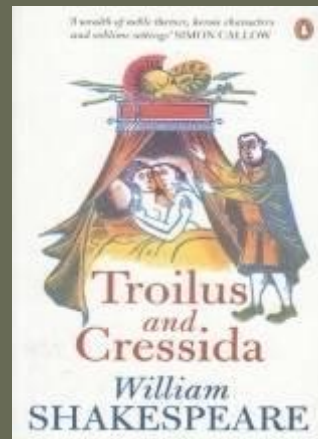
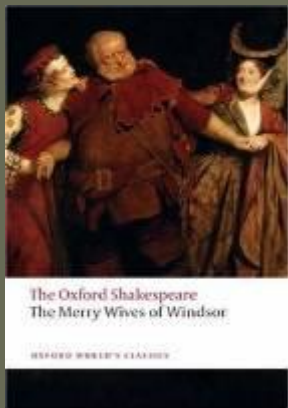
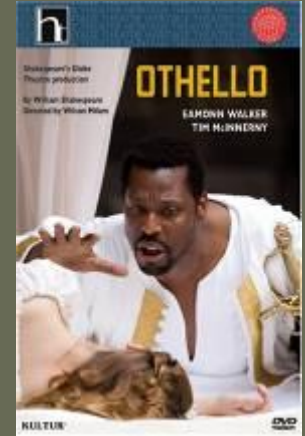
The Merry Wives of Windsor

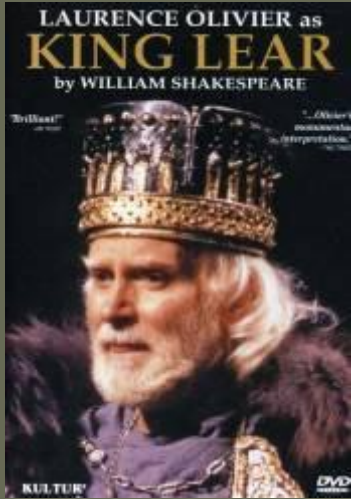
1601/02 Troilus and Cressida

1603/04 All's Well That Ends Well

1604/05 Measure for Measure

Othello





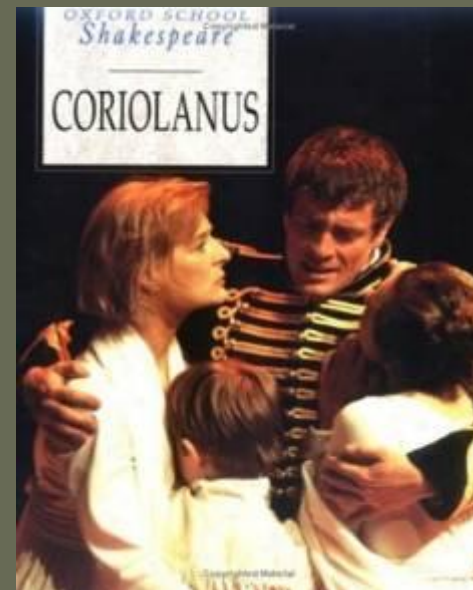
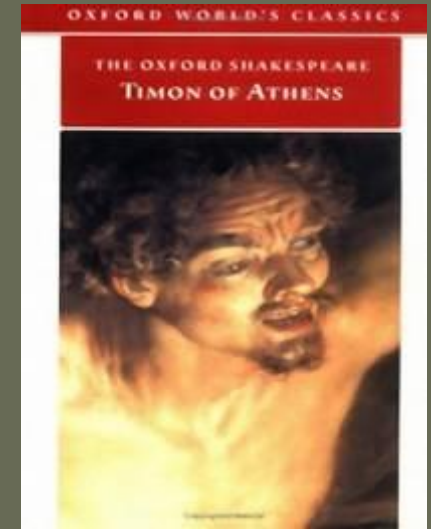
1605/06 King Lear

Macbeth

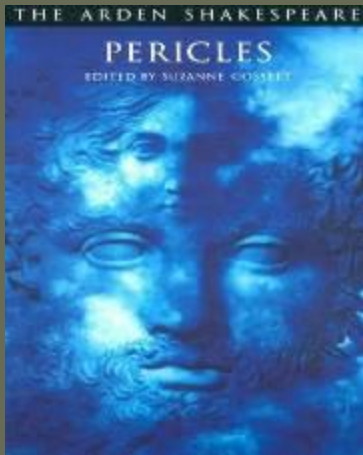
1606/07 Antony and Cleopatra

1607/08 Coriolanus

Timon of Athens



The fourth period of Shakespeare's creative activity is mainly constituted of the romantic dramas – plays written around a dramatic conflict, but the tension in them is not so great as in tragedies, all of them have happy endings:



1608/09 Pericles  
1609/10 Cymbeline  
1610/11 The Winter's Tale  
1611/12 The Tempest  
1612/13 Henry VIII



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