

# A DICTIONARY OF LITERARY TERMS

---

Over 2,000 terms—English, foreign language, technical—  
explained with quotations and illustrations from  
world literature past and present.

A valuable reference book and pure entertainment.

J.A. Cuddon

This unique, readable and often witty dictionary contains over two thousand literary terms internationally in use. In addition to those of the established literary genres, it includes lesser known technical and foreign terms. The *raison d'être* of this fine volume, writes the author, is "to provide a serviceable and comprehensive dictionary of those literary terms which are in regular use in the world today."

The plan is simple. The entries are listed alphabetically, from abecedarius to zeugma. Each term is defined or described, then its origin is usually given, often with an illustrative example or quotation. Some entries are only one line long, others are of ten pages or more. Over a dozen languages are represented—and the entire dictionary is cross-indexed so that the user may move easily from one entry to another.

Beat poets, black comedy, desert island fiction, roman à clef, limerick, macaronic, theater of the absurd, science fiction, vorticism, Gothic novel and many more—all are explained with many illustrations from world literature past and present. This is a dictionary that can be consulted as a valuable reference book or read for pure entertainment.

*continued on back flap*

:

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019 with funding from  
Kahle/Austin Foundation

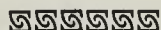




A DICTIONARY OF  
LITERARY TERMS



A DICTIONARY OF  
LITERARY TERMS



*J. A. Cuddon*

Doubleday & Company, Inc.  
Garden City, New York  
1977

ISBN 0-385-12713-8

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 76-47853

Copyright © 1977 by J. A. Cuddon  
All rights reserved

TO THE MASTER AND FELLOWS  
OF MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,  
IN GRATITUDE FOR THEIR KINDNESS  
AND HOSPITALITY



Every other author may aspire to praise: the lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach – and even this negative recompense has been yet granted to very few.

DR JOHNSON: *Preface to the Dictionary*





# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



- A. Alvarez, pastiche in the preface to *The New Poetry* (1961), by permission of the author.
- Kingsley Amis, extract from 'Beowulf' by permission of the author.
- W. H. Auden, 'If I could tell you . . .' from *Collected Shorter Poems 1927-57*, and extracts from *Letter to Lord Byron* by permission of Faber & Faber and Random House Inc.
- Nicolas Bentley, two clerihews by permission of the author.
- John Berryman, extract from 'The Dispossessed' from *Homage to Mistress Bradstreet* by permission of Faber & Faber and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc.
- John Betjeman, extract from 'In Westminster Abbey' from *Collected Poems* by permission of the author and John Murray Ltd.
- Roy Campbell, 'The Seventh Sword' from *Mithraic Emblems*, by permission of The Bodley Head.
- Charles Causley, extracts from 'Mother, Get Up, Unbar the Door', 'The Prisoners of Love', 'Timothy Winters' and 'The Life of the Poet', by permission of the author and David Higham Associates Ltd.
- J. R. Clark Hall, extracts from translation of *Beowulf* by permission of George Allen & Unwin Ltd and Barnes and Noble.
- Jack Clemo, extract from 'The Plundered Fuchsias' from *The Map of Clay*, by permission of Methuen & Co USA Ltd.
- John Crowe Ransom, extract from 'Dog' from *Selected Poems*, by permission of Laurence Pollinger Ltd and Alfred A. Knopf, Random House Inc.
- C. Day Lewis, extract from 'Sing We the Two Lieutenants' from *A Time to Dance* in *Collected Poems 1954*, by permission of the Executor of the Estate of C. Day Lewis, Hogarth Press and Jonathan Cape Ltd.
- T. S. Eliot, extracts from 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', 'The Waste Land', 'Ash Wednesday', 'Little Gidding', and 'Dry Salvages' from *Collected Poems 1909-62*; UK: by permission of Faber & Faber and USA: 'from *Collected Poems 1909-1962* by T. S. Eliot, copyright 1963, 1964, by T. S. Eliot. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc.'
- D. J. Enright, extract from 'The Laughing Hyena by Hokusai' from *Selected Poems*, by permission of Chatto & Windus and Bolt and Watson.
- Geoffrey Hill, extract from 'God's Little Mountain' from *For the Unfallen* by permission of the author and André Deutsch Ltd.
- David Holbrook, 'Living? Our Supervisors will do that for Us' reprinted by permission of the author.
- Ted Hughes, extracts from 'February', 'View of a Pig', and 'Thrushes' from *Lupercal*, by permission of the author, Faber & Faber and Harper & Row.
- Robinson Jeffers, extract from 'Hurt Hawks' from *The Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Random House Inc.
- David Jones, extracts from 'Middle Sea and Lear Sea' from *Anathemata*, by permission of Faber & Faber and the Chilmark Press.
- James Kirkup, extracts from 'Four Haiku on the Inland Sea', from *Paper Windows*, by permission of the author and Curtis Brown Ltd.

Philip Larkin, extract from 'The Whitsun Weddings', by permission of the author and Faber & Faber.

D. H. Lawrence, 'Kangaroo' and 'Snake'; UK: by permission of Laurence Pollinger Ltd; USA: 'From the *Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence* edited by Vivian de Sola Pinto and F. Warren Roberts, copyright 1964, 1971, by Angelo Ravagli and C. M. Weekley. Executors of the Estate of Frieda Lawrence Ravagli. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the Viking Press Inc.'

Robert Lowell, extracts from 'Our Lady of Walsingham', 'Mr Edwards and the Spider', 'The Holy Innocents', and 'Man and Wife' from *Lord Weary's Castle* in *Poems 1938-49*, by permission of Faber & Faber and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

George Macbeth, extracts from 'The God of Love', by permission of the author.

Hugh Macdiarmid, extract from 'On a Raised Beach' by permission of the author.

Norman McCaig, extract from 'Mutual Life' by permission of the author and Granada Publishing Ltd.

Roger McGough, extract from 'Hoarding' from *Watchwords* by permission of the author, Jonathan Cape Ltd and Hope Leresche & Steele.

John Masfield, extract from 'Cargoes' by permission of the Society of Authors and Macmillan Publishing Company Inc.

Ogden Nash, 'Reflections on Ice Breaking' from *Verses from 1929 On* (plus extra line 'pot is not'), 'What's the Use?' copyright Ogden Nash 1931 and 'Requiem', copyright Ogden Nash 1938 by permission of A. P. Watt & Son and Little, Brown & Co.

Sylvia Plath, extract from 'The Moon and the Yew Tree' by permission of Miss Olwyn Hughes and Harper & Row.

Ezra Pound, extracts from 'The Seafarer'; UK: Faber & Faber; USA: 'Ezra Pound. PERSONAE. Copyright 1926 by Ezra Pound. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.'

Peter Redgrove, extracts from 'Lazarus and the Sea' and 'The Archeologist' from *The Collector and Other Poems* by permission of the author and Routledge Keegan Paul Ltd

E. V. Rieu, translation of *Odyssey* (Book VIII) Penguin Classic 1964, by permission of Penguin Books Ltd.

Edith Sitwell, extract from 'I do like to be beside the sea-side . . .' by permission of the author and Duckworth.

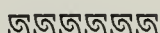
Dylan Thomas, 'Vision and Prayer' from *Collected Poems*; UK: J. M. Dent and the Trustees for the copyrights of the late Dylan Thomas; USA: 'The Poems of Dylan Thomas. Copyright 1946 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.'

R. S. Thomas, extracts from 'The Welsh Hill Country', 'Song at the Year's Turning', and 'A Blackbird Singing' from *Poetry for Supper*, by permission of the author and Granada Publishing Ltd.

Vernon Watkins, extract from 'Ballad of Mari Lwyd' by permission of Faber & Faber.

W. B. Yeats, extracts from 'Sailing to Byzantium' and 'Among School Children' from *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, by permission of M. B. Yeats, Miss Anne Yeats and Macmillan of London and Basingstoke.

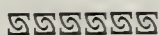
# ABBREVIATIONS



abbrev.	– abbreviation, -ated
AL	– Anglo-Latin
AN	– Anglo-Norman
A	– Arabic
Ar	– Armenian
c.	– century, or centuries
Ch	– Chinese
c.	– <i>circa</i> (as in c. 1150, meaning the approximate date)
cf.	– confer, 'compare'
Du	– Dutch
Eng	– English
e.g.	– <i>exempli gratia</i> 'for example'
et al.	– <i>et alii</i> 'and others'
fl.	– <i>floruit</i> 'he flourished'
F	– French
G	– German
Gk	– Greek
Heb	– Hebrew
HG	– High German
i.e.	– <i>id est</i> 'that is'
It	– Italian
J	– Japanese
K	– Korean
L	– Latin
LL	– Late Latin
LDu	– Low Dutch
LG	– Low German
MedL	– Medieval Latin
MDu	– Middle Dutch

ME	– Middle English	•
MHG	– Middle High German	
MLG	– Middle Low German	
ModL	– Modern Latin	
NGk	– Neo-Greek	
OE	– Old English	
OF	– Old French	
OHG	– Old High German	
ON	– Old Norse	
P	– Persian	
pl.	– plural	
Pg	– Portuguese	
Pr	– Provençal	
publ.	– published	
<i>qq. v.</i>	– <i>quae vide</i> ‘which see’ (pl.)	
<i>q.v.</i>	– <i>quod vide</i> ‘which see’ (sing.)	
R	– Russian	
Skt	– Sanskrit	
S	– Serbian	
sing.	– singular	
Sp	– Spanish	
Sw	– Swedish	
trans.	– translation, -ated	
T	– Turkish	
viz.	– <i>videlicet</i> ‘namely’	
W	– Welsh	

# PREFACE



It is not, I believe, until you actually undertake the task of making a dictionary that you fully appreciate the implications of Dr Johnson's definition of the lexicographer as a 'harmless drudge'.

You begin full of vigour, confidence and optimism; one might even say blithely. Gradually the work grows. The original list of entries increases steadily. There seems to be no end to the reading you must do. Continually you are nagged by the persistent apprehension that you are overlooking things. Months pass; years begin to pass; the end is still not yet in sight. But hardly a day passes without a fresh discovery, new and interesting facts. These discoveries sustain you like springs of sweet water on a long and arduous trek. 'Have you included *Dinggedicht*?' asks a friend. 'And what about *pevači*?' says another. A third enquires loftily 'I suppose you've got an entry on *zéjel*?'

And so it goes on. After a while the labour assumes Herculean proportions. Piles of books fill the room. The mounds of paper on the table begin to obscure the view. The card indices, notebooks and memoranda seem endless . . . The work becomes an obsession; and, after a certain stage, a kind of living creature, like an importunate child that needs continual attention and maintenance. Certainly there is drudgery. Whether or not it is harmless must depend on how accurate or inaccurate you are.

To me, making a dictionary has seemed much like building a sizable house singlehanded; and, having built it, wiring, plumbing, painting and furnishing it. Moreover, it takes about as long. But there can be no question that there is great satisfaction in the labour. When at last you survey the bundles of manuscript ready for the press you have the pardonable but, alas, fleeting illusion that now you know everything; that at last you are in a position to justify the ways of man to God.

As is usual in the making of anything, one of the main problems is to decide what to put in and what to omit. It has not been easy to



## Preface

decide what a literary term really is, because, by most standards, it is a vague classification. Epic is one, hexameter is, and so is elegy. But are pornography, patter-song and apocrypha? In the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* the main definition of 'literary' runs thus: 'Of or pertaining to, or of the nature of, literature, polite learning, or books and written compositions; pertaining to that kind of written composition which has value on account of its qualities of form.' If we accept this as a working indication of what is meant by 'literary', then what is to be done about the terms (and there are many) used by printers and compositors? What about the language of grammarians and the proliferating terminology of linguists? Most or all of these are related, however tenuously in some cases, to the literary, and to literature. After long debate on those issues, I decided to be judiciously selective and include a few terms of printers, grammarians and philologists. For instance, QUARTO and FOLIO are in; LINE-BLOCK and GALLEY are out. PARAGRAPH and LOOSE and PERIODIC SENTENCE are in; SUPINE and 'DECLENSION are out. KENEME and MORPHEME are in; DIPHTHONG and LABIAL are out.

Another poser was whether to include all literary terms from all languages and literatures and to provide copious illustrations and examples, but this would surely seem like assuming the function of the encyclopedist. In any case, some terms are so obscure (and rare) as to be of interest only to the specialist.

What I have endeavoured to do, then, is to provide a serviceable and fairly comprehensive dictionary of those literary terms which are in regular use in the world today; terms in which intelligent people may be expected to have some interest and about which they may wish to find out something more. If by any chance they do not know (or have forgotten) what a *haiku* is, or *verso tronco*, or how *blue-stockings* came to be so named, then I hope that this dictionary will provide them with the basic information.

I say 'fairly comprehensive' because any work of orismology is bound to be limited by the author's reading and knowledge. No man can be expected to have read everything or even a tithe of everything. I am familiar with Classical, European and Near Eastern literatures, and have some knowledge of the literatures of North America and of Commonwealth nations. But my knowledge of Oriental literatures, and those of Spanish America and South America is limited. There are, therefore, inevitably, considerable gaps.

Most of the terms are drawn from Greek, Latin, English, French,

German, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Russian, Arabic, Japanese, Old French, Old Provençal and Old Norse. A few are Serbian, Chinese, Persian, Turkish, Welsh and Korean.

Ten main categories can be distinguished at the outset, as follows:

1. Technical terms (e.g. iamb, pentameter, metonymy, *ottava rima*).
2. Forms (e.g. sonnet, *villanelle*, limerick, *tanka*, clerihew).
3. Genres or kinds (e.g. pastoral, elegy, *fabliau*, *Märchen*, *conte*).
4. Technicalities (e.g. pivot word, tenor and vehicle, communication heresy, aesthetic distance).
5. Groups, schools and movements (e.g. Pléiade, School of Night, Parnassians, Pre-Raphaelites, School of Spenser).
6. Well-known phrases (e.g. pathetic fallacy, willing suspension of disbelief, negative capability, *quod semper quod ubique*).
7. -isms (e.g. realism, naturalism, primitivism, Platonism, plagiarism).
8. Motifs or themes (e.g. *ubi sunt*, *carpe diem*, Faust-theme, *leitmotif*).
9. Personalities (e.g. *scop*, *jongleur*, villain, *guslar*).
10. Modes, attitudes and styles (e.g. *dolce stil nuovo*, irony, Marinism, grotesque, sentimental comedy).

These ten categories account for a fair proportion of literary terms but there are hundreds which do not belong to any easily recognizable family or phylum, and any kind of taxonomical approach almost at once breaks down as soon as one begins to classify. The following haphazard list suggests the impossibility of any satisfactory division: abstract, *belles-lettres*, courtly love, diction, enlightenment, Freytag's pyramid, great chain of being, *hamatia*, inspiration, juvenilia, Grub Street, quotation titles – to mention no others.

The plan of the dictionary is simple. It is alphabetical and runs from abecedarius to zeugma; and, so to speak, from epic to limerick. Each term is given a brief description or definition. In some cases, but by no means always, when I thought it might be helpful and/or of interest, I give some brief etymology of the term. This is particularly necessary where a term comes from one thing but now denotes another. For instance, the Spanish *estribillo*. The word goes back to 'little stirrup', being the diminutive of *estribo* 'stirrup'. It here denotes a refrain or chorus (also a pet word or phrase) and is a theme, verse or stanza (of from two to four lines) of a *villancico*; and there is more to it than that.

Many indications of origin are added in brackets. Where it was not possible to do this in a simple fashion I have shown the history

## Preface

at greater length within the definition of the term. Often this description explains the etymology and what the term denotes. For literary forms and genres I have provided a *resumé* of origins, history and development, and I have also provided details of notable examples and distinguished practitioners. I have not included bibliographies; to have done so would have been to lengthen the book by a third as much again. But, where appropriate, I have referred to the classic work on a particular theme or subject (e.g. C. S. Lewis's *The Allegory of Love*, A. O. Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being*, Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry*).

I would have liked to provide an example in full to illustrate every poetic form and genre (e.g. RONDEAU, ODE, ELEGY, LYRIC), but this was not feasible either. I would also have liked to include a quotation for every kind of metrical scheme, but this again would have expanded the book inordinately. It would have entailed quoting in at least sixteen different languages and this would have required translation in most, if not all, instances. Moreover, it would have involved using seven alphabets (Greek, Japanese, Cyrillic, Hebrew, Arabic, Sanskrit and Chinese) in addition to the Roman. Thus, in the interests of simplicity and brevity, I have settled, whenever possible, for a quotation in English verse.

Some entries were peculiarly difficult to condense, and none more so than NOVEL. The chief problem here was what to include out of the thousands of possible examples. In the end I decided to go by that principle which has guided me throughout the making of the dictionary and to include only those writers whose books I am familiar with and which have seemed to me to be of particular merit. Naturally enough, the selection must often coincide with what, in all probability, most other people would choose. Some novelists have to go in whether you like them or not because the general consensus over the years has confirmed that their novels are outstanding. For example, I do not particularly care for the novels of George Moore, Jean-Paul Sartre and J. D. Salinger; but they must go in. On the other hand I *do* care for the novels of R. S. Surtees, Ivo Andrić and Georges Barnanos, and so I include specific reference to their novels as well, though some may think that they are not all that important. On the whole, as far as the novel is concerned, I have mentioned most of those who I believe are major novelists, and I have provided a selection of minor novelists. Inevitably, the treatment of the novel (like the treatment of travel books and short stories) has involved long lists of books.

As for dates – these, as we all know, can become boring. On the



other hand, their absence can be frustrating. Accordingly, I have attempted a compromise. It seemed otiose to put in the dates of every author each time I referred to him or her, especially the famous. There are, for instance, many references to Aristotle, Plato, Horace, Dante, Chaucer, Sir Philip Sidney, Shakespeare, Molière, Dryden, Pope, Goethe, Keats, W. B. Yeats, Thomas Mann and T. S. Eliot. When referring to the famous I assume that the reader is familiar with the approximate period in which they flourished. When referring to the not-so-famous, but, nonetheless, important (e.g. Archilochus, Lucian, Cavalcanti, Dunbar, Clément Marot, Thomas Campion, Tieck, Lady Winchilsea, James Sheridan Knowles, Théophile Gautier, Queiros) I have, in many instances, included some indication of their dates. In any event it is clear as a rule when they lived because I refer to the century, or I give the dates of their works whenever it is helpful or necessary to do so. The dates indicate the year of first known publication. For plays I usually give the year of first recorded production.

The whole dictionary is cross-referenced so that the user can move easily from one entry to another. The references are the plumbing and wiring of the book. If, for example, you look up **ballad** you will be referred to REFRAIN, ORAL TRADITION, HOMERIC EPITHET, KENNING, INCREMENTAL REPETITION, NARODNE PESME, BROADSIDE, FOLKSONG, LAY and NARRATIVE VERSE.

The *raison d'être* of a dictionary, I take it, is to provide information – be it commonplace or abstruse. A decent dictionary of geography, for instance, will tell us what exfoliation, jungle and *karst* are. It should also inform us about katabatic winds, *poljes* and diastrophism. It may be of interest to the reader that I have extruded a large number of terms (rather more than two hundred) which I thought were too esoteric and specialized to merit inclusion.

Apropos of this I am obliged to mention the matter of terms used in Classical prosody. Miscellaneous hierophants and Gamaliels have pointed out to me that Classical prosody, its systems and classifications, bears little relationship to English verse. This may well be so, but we have inherited the terms; they have been in use for some hundreds of years; and it will be found that the vast majority of English poets have a thorough knowledge and understanding of them. Moreover, if in doubt about their utility, one might ask: is it easier to say (or write) 'an iambic pentameter', or 'a line of verse consisting of five feet with a rising rhythm in which the first syllable of each foot is unstressed and the second stressed'? The Greeks in fact *did* have a word for almost everything and we have inherited

## Preface

these terms whether we like them or not. And it seems to me much simpler to understand and use them rather than to pretend they do not exist, or find verbose alternatives.

I should add that, as this is a personal book, I have, occasionally, spread myself with entries on subjects of particular interest to me; for example, *danse macabre*, primitivism, folly literature, the conceit, revenge tragedy and table talk – to name a few. But every author and reader has his favourite themes and subjects. It is probable that, at times, I have allowed my prejudices and opinions a fairly easy rein; but when one has read many thousands of volumes of verse and drama, novels, essays, discourses, sermons, courtesy books, encyclopaedias, *novelle*, short stories, *Festschriften*, tracts and interpretations, perhaps one is entitled to ventilate a few prejudices and opinions. They are unlikely, I feel, to do any harm in such circumstances, and they may have the beneficial effect of provoking argument, comment or disagreement.

I have also taken the liberty of contributing three items of my own: first, a double-dactyl verse under that heading; secondly, an example of synthetic rhyme (under that heading); thirdly, two neologisms – namely *sufferingette* and *verbocrap* (both under the entry NEOLOGISM). At any rate, I put in a modest claim for having devised these ghost-words.

I wrote above that this is a ‘personal book’, but, naturally, in the course of making it, I have consulted a number of friends and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking them for giving me the benefit of their knowledge, advice and criticism. They are Mrs M. Heywood, Mr John Basing, Dr Derek Brewer, Mr Paul Craddock, Mr Vincent Cronin, Mr Charles Hoste, Dr Ian Jack, Mr Kevin Jackson, Dr Harry Judge, Mr Paul Moreland, Mr T. R. Salmon and Mr Philip Warnett. In addition I am particularly indebted to Mr Barry Duesbury who read parts of the book in manuscript and gave extensive advice on Old Norse literature; and also Mr Kenneth Lowes who gave me a great deal of help on matters relating to Spanish literature. I would like to thank my editor, Professor Simeon Potter, who has shown much patience and given me the unstinting help of his great learning and experience, and Helen Ormerod for her care in the preparation of the dictionary.

I am also indebted to the Master and Fellows of Magdalene College, Cambridge, whose hospitality of a ‘sabbatical’ term enabled me to lay the early foundations of this dictionary, in the making of which I have been constantly reminded (as, perhaps, all lexicographers should be) of Johnson’s sombre admonitions:

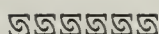
## Preface

It is the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life to be rather driven by the fear of evil than attracted by the prospect of good; to be exposed to censure without hope of praise; to be disgraced by miscarriage, or punished for neglect, where success would have been without applause, and diligence without reward.

Among these unhappy mortals is the writer of dictionaries, whom mankind have considered not as the pupil, but the slave, of science, the pioneer of literature, doomed only to remove rubbish and clear obstructions from the paths through which learning and genius press forward to conquest and glory, without bestowing a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress. Every other author may aspire to praise: the lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach – and even this negative recompense has been yet granted to very few.



# A



**abecedarius** *See* ACROSTIC.

**ab ovo** (L 'from the egg') This term may refer to a story which starts from the beginning of the events it narrates, as opposed to one which starts in the middle – *in medias res* (*q.v.*). Horace used the expression in *Ars Poetica*.

**abridged edition** An abbreviated or condensed version of a work. Abridgement may be done in order to save space or to cut out passages which are thought unsuitable for some sections of the reading public. School editions of Shakespeare were often abridged (and still are occasionally) lest the sensibilities of adolescents be offended. *See also* BOWDLERIZE.

**absolutism** The principle or doctrine that there are immutable standards by which a work of art may be judged. The absolutist contends that certain values are basic and inviolable. *See* RELATIVISM.

**abstract** (a) A summary of any piece of written work; (b) Not concrete. A sentence is abstract if it deals with a class of things or persons: for example: 'All men are liars'. On the other hand 'Smith is a liar' is a concrete statement. The subject of a sentence may also be an abstraction, as in 'The wealth of the ruling classes'. Something may be said to be abstract if it is the name for a quality, like heat or faith. Critics use the terms abstract and concrete of imagery. For instance, Pope's:

Hope springs eternal in the human breast,  
Man never is, but always to be, blest.

is abstract; whereas the same poet's



## abstract

Fair tresses man's imperial race insnare  
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

is concrete.

In poetics the concrete has tended to be valued above the abstract. Sidney, for example, in *Apologie for Poetrie* (1595), praised poetry's concreteness. Neoclassical thought preferred generality. A preference, in theory, for concreteness, reappears with Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley. In the 20th c. the distinction between concrete and abstract has undergone further change. Ezra Pound and T. E. Hulme attempted to formulate a theory of concrete poetry. T. S. Eliot reinforced this with his 'objective correlative' (*q.v.*).

For the most part poetry is the language of concreteness; prose that of the abstract. At any rate prose tends to be better able to deal with the abstract because it is more precise; not necessarily, therefore, more accurate. *See also* ABSTRACT POEM; IMAGISTS; NEOCLASSICISM.

**abstract poem** Edith Sitwell used this term for verses which depend primarily on their sound for meaning. In their more extreme forms sense is almost completely sacrificed to aural effects. Edith Sitwell herself was a gifted practitioner of such poetry, especially in the collection *Façade*. Gerard Manley Hopkins also made daring use of onomatopoeic and melopoeic devices; so did the French poet Rimbaud. Among writers using English Roy Campbell (1901-57) was perhaps the most outstanding and prolific experimenter. This example is taken from his series *Mithraic Frieze*, published in *Mithraic Emblems*:

Of seven hues in white elision,  
the radii of your silver gyre,  
are the seven swords of vision  
that spoked the prophets' flaming tyre;  
their sistered stridencies ignite  
the spectrum of the poets' lyre  
whose unison becomes a white  
revolving disc of stainless fire,  
and sights the eye of that sole star  
that, in the heavy clods we are,  
the kindred seeds of fire can spy,  
or, in the cold shell of the rock,  
the red yolk of the phoenix-cock  
whose feathers in the meteors fly.

*See also* ABSTRACT.

**academic** Four basic meanings may be distinguished: (a) that which belongs to the school of thought of Plato – from academy (*q.v.*); (b) a person or work that is scholarly and erudite; (c) concerned with the rules of composition rather than with the result of the act of creation; (d) of little importance or note. In the second and fourth senses the word is often used pejoratively.

**academy** The word is derived from the name of a park near Athens where Plato's Academy was situated from 387 B.C. to A.D. 529. The name was adopted in Italy by scholars during the Renaissance and now usually applies to some sort of institution devoted to learning, even if it be only the trade of war – as at the Royal Military Academy. There are a large number of academies scattered round the world. Most of them are concerned with research and culture and have limited memberships. Some are very exclusive. Probably the most famous is the Académie Française, founded by Richelieu in 1635. This is primarily a literary academy, one of whose main tasks is the compilation and revision of a dictionary of the French language. The British Academy was founded in 1902 for the promotion of moral and political sciences. The exclusiveness of many academies may account for the pejorative use of the word 'academic' (*q.v.*). The Académie Française, for instance, has been described as the 'hôtel des invalides de la littérature'. The pejorative use may equally derive from the anti-intellectualism of modern literary culture. *See also* ACADEMIC.

**academic drama** Plays, considerably under the influence of Roman comedy, which were performed in schools and colleges in England early in the 16th c. The works of Terence and Plautus were particularly popular. Eventually, original plays, based on Classical models, appeared in English. An early – possibly the earliest example – is *Ralph Roister Doister* (written c. 1553, printed c. 1567), a knockabout comedy by Nicholas Udall who was headmaster of Eton (1534–41). It follows Roman prototypes in divisions and unities (*q.v.*), in motivation and plot (*q.v.*). *See also* COMEDY; JESUIT DRAMA; SCHOOL DRAMA; SENECA TRAGEDY.

**acatalectic** (Gk 'not lacking a syllable in the last foot'). It denotes, therefore, a metrical line which is complete. If a line lacks one

## acatalectic

or more unaccented syllables, it is catalectic (*q.v.*) or truncated. If a line contains an extra syllable it is then hypercatalectic (or hypermetrical, redundant or extrametrical). In the following stanza from William Blake's *Ari and Artists* the first line is catalectic, the third acatalectic, and the fourth hypercatalectic:

When Sir Joshua Reynolds died  
All Nature was degraded;  
The King dropp'd a tear into the Queen's Ear,  
And all his pictures faded.

*See* BRACHYCATALECTIC; CATALEXIS; DICATALECTIC.

**accent** The emphasis or stress (*q.v.*) placed on a syllable, especially in a line of verse. It is a matter of vocal emphasis. Where the accent comes will depend on how the reader wishes to render the sense. In the following lines the metrical stress is fairly clear, but the accents can be varied:

All human things are subject to decay,  
And, when Fate summons, Monarchs must obey.

The variables are 'all', 'human', 'and', 'when', 'Fate', 'Monarchs', 'must', and 'obey'. At least half a dozen emphases are possible. Obviously, where the metrical scheme is very strict, then accent variation is limited. In blank verse (*q.v.*), however, many subtleties of accent are possible. *See* BEAT; HOVERING ACCENT; ICTUS; LEVEL STRESS; LOGICAL STRESS; QUANTITY.

**accentual verse** *See* METER.

**accidence** That branch of grammar which deals with 'accidents'; that is, the inflexions or the variable endings of words.

**acephalous** (Gk 'headless') A metrical line whose first syllable, according to strict meter, is wanting. An iambic line with a monosyllabic first foot would be acephalous.

**acmeism** The acmeists were a group of Russian poets who in 1910 began an anti-symbolist movement. They were in favour of an Apollonian (*q.v.*) lucidity and definiteness. Texture (*q.v.*) was what they most strove for in their verse. The movement lasted about ten years and does not appear to have had much influence.



**acroama** (Gk 'something heard') Two meanings may be distinguished: (a) a dramatic entertainment or a recital, during a meal or on some such occasion; (b) a lecture to the initiated; for instance, a discourse given by a *guru*, professor or comparable Gamaliel.

**acrostic** Apart from puzzles in newspapers and magazines the commonest kind of acrostic is a poem in which the initial letters of each line make a word or words when read downwards. An acrostic might also use the middle (mesostich) or final (telestich) letter of each line. In prose the first letter of each paragraph or sentence might make up a word.

The acrostic may have been first used as a kind of mnemonic device to aid oral transmission. In the Old Testament most of the acrostics belong to the alphabetical or abecedarian kind. The forming of words from the initials of words is also a form of acrostic. Chaucer used a simple acrostic device in *ABC*, a twenty-four stanza poem in which the first letter of the first word in each stanza is the appropriate letter of the alphabet, from A to Z. Some dramatists have put the titles of their plays in acrostic verses which give the argument (*q.v.*) of the play. A well-known instance is Ben Jonson's *Argument* prefacing *The Alchemist*.

A famous example of an 'all round' acrostic, which is a form of palindrome (*q.v.*) is the Cirencester word square, Roman in origin:

ROTA S  
OPERA  
TENET  
AREPO  
SATOR

There has been much learned debate as to the possible meanings of this acrostic, which is known in a second form from an Egyptian papyrus of the late 4th or early 5th c. A.D., thus:

SATOR  
AREPO  
TENET  
OPERA  
ROTAS

Various permutations suggest that one meaning may be: 'the sower Arepo holds the wheels carefully'.

## acrostic

This, like many acrostics, may have\* magic and/or religious significance. In Ethiopia in the 6th c. the five words, corrupted to Sador, Alador, Danet, Adera and Rodas, were used as the names of the five nails of Christ's Cross.

The word square is known to have been used in France as a form of charm (*q.v.*); a citizen of Lyons was cured of madness by eating three crusts of bread (each inscribed with the square) while making five recitations of the Pater Noster in remembrance of the five wounds of Christ and the five nails. In the 19th c. in South America it was used as a charm against snake bites and also to aid childbirth. *See also* LOGOGRIPH.

**acryology** *See* EUPHEMISM.

**act** A major division in a play. Each act may contain one or more scenes. Greek plays were continuous. Horace appears to have been the first to insist on five acts. At some stage during the Renaissance the use of five acts became standard practice among French dramatists. There is no evidence that Shakespeare and his contemporaries used act divisions, and it is probable that Ben Jonson introduced them from the French example. From the 17th c. onwards the vast majority of plays were in five acts. Ibsen cut the number to four. Dramatists like Chekhov and Pirandello also used four. During the last fifty years most playwrights have used three acts, though the two-act form is not uncommon. In production (especially in five-act plays) the act divisions are often overlooked and a convenient break is found for the sake of an interval. This is true of most modern productions of Shakespeare and other dramatists of his period. Many modern plays are written and presented in a sequence of scenes. Pirandello, Beckett and Shaw, among others, have been responsible for an increasing flexibility. *See* SCENE.

**action** Two basic meanings may be distinguished: (a) the main story (in cinematic jargon 'story-line') of a play, novel, short story, narrative poem, etc.; (b) the main series of events that together constitute the plot (*q.v.*). Action is fundamental to drama, and may be static or fluid. It implies motion forward, development. Much action is achieved without physical movement on stage, or even without anything being said. An essential part of action is the unfolding of character and plot. *See* CONFLICT.

**adage** A maxim or proverb (*q.v.*). A well-known collection of adages was made by Erasmus and published as *Adagia* (1500).

**adaptation** Broadly speaking, the re-casting of a work in one medium to fit another, such as the re-casting of novels and plays as film or television scripts. For example, *Stephen Hero*, *Passage to India*, and *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* as plays, and *The Forsyte Saga*, *Daniel Deronda* and *War and Peace* as television dramas. Sometimes a cycle or sequence is adapted: for instance, the dramatization (*q.v.*) of some of the *Canterbury Tales* as a musical comedy (1967). Short stories and poems are often equally suitable.

As an extension of the normal kind of adaptation there are works like the TV version of *Peyton Place* and *Colditz* of which episodes continued to be presented long after the original stories had been used up.

**addendum** (L 'something to be added') An addition or an appendix to a book (pl. addenda).

**Addisonian** In the manner or style of Joseph Addison (1672-1719): equable, relaxed, good-humoured and urbane. Some would also add complacent. Addison is chiefly famous for his contributions to the periodical essay (*q.v.*).

**address** A statement or speech of some formality, which may be delivered or written. It also denotes the kind of receptor (*q.v.*) an author intends. He may be self-communing or addressing a single person or a group of people.

**adonic** A line consisting of a dactyl (*q.v.*) followed by a spondee (*q.v.*). The fourth and last line of the Sapphic (*q.v.*) is usually adonic.

**adversaria** (L *adversaria scripta* 'things written on the side') Miscellaneous collections of notes. The kind of things that most writers accumulate in a notebook, day book, journal or diary. See ANNOTATION; DIARY AND JOURNAL.

**advertiser** A journal or newspaper which publishes advertisements, like *The Advertiser's Weekly*.

**adynaton** (Gk 'not possible') A form of hyperbole (*q.v.*) which

## adynaton

involves the magnification of an event by reference to the impossible. There are famous examples in Marvell's poem *To His Coy Mistress* and his *The Definition of Love*, which begins:

My love is of a birth as rare  
As 'tis for object strange and high:  
It was begotten by Despair  
Upon Impossibility.

**Aeolic** The name derives from the Greek dialect which Alcaeus and Sappho used for their poetry. Thus it applies to particular meters in which dactyls and trochees (*qq.v.*) are brought close together so that the choriambes (*q.v.*) are very noticeable. *See* ALCAICS; SAPPHICS.

**Aeschylean** In the manner or style of Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.), the first of the great Greek tragedians. Thus – sombre, magnificent, lofty, possessing grandeur.

**aesthetic distance** This term, coined by Bullough in 1912, (*British Journal of Psychology*, 5) implies a psychological relationship between the reader (or viewer) and a work of art. It describes the attitude or perspective of a person in relation to a work, apart from whether it is of any personal interest to that person. A reader may dislike a work of literature for subjective reasons, but this should not vitiate his objective reactions. The reader or critic has at once to be involved with – and detached from – what he is concentrating on. The work is 'distanced' so that it may be appreciated aesthetically and not confused with reality. For instance, one may deplore Iago's motives and actions and the thoughts he expresses but at the same time receive considerable satisfaction from the way he does things or expresses himself, as well as from *what* he expresses. The writer bears the responsibility for gauging and determining the distance (not in the spatial sense) at which his work should be viewed. If he bullies the reader into attending, then his reader may be repelled. Conversely, if he understates too much, then his reader may not get the point. *See* SUBJECTIVITY AND OBJECTIVITY; VIEWPOINT.

**aestheticism** A complex term 'pregnant' with many connotations. The actual word derives from Greek *aisthēta* 'things perceptible by the senses'; and the Greek *aisthētēs* denotes 'one who per-



ceives'. In 1750 A. T. Baumgarten published *Aesthetica*, a treatise (*q.v.*) on the criticism of taste considered as a philosophical theory. Gradually, the term *aesthetic* has come to signify something which pertains to the criticism of the beautiful or to the theory of taste. An *aesthete* is one who pursues and is devoted to the 'beautiful' in art, music, and literature. And *aestheticism* is the term given to a movement, a cult, a mode of sensibility (a way of looking at and feeling about things) in the 19th c. Fundamentally, it entailed the point of view that art is self-sufficient and need serve no other purpose than its own ends. In other words, that art is an end in itself and need not be (or should not be) didactic, politically committed, propagandist, moral – or anything else but itself; and that it should not be judged by any non-aesthetic criteria (e.g. whether or not it is useful).

The origins of this movement or cult are to be found in the work of several German writers of the Romantic period (*q.v.*) – notably Kant, Schelling, Goethe and Schiller. They all agreed that art must be autonomous (that is, it should have the right of self-government) and from this it followed that the artist should not be beholden to anyone. From this, in turn, it followed that the artist was someone special, apart from others. Tennyson expressed the post-Romantic idea that the poet was superior to ordinary mortals:

Vex not thou the poet's mind  
With thy shallow wit:  
Vex not thou the poet's mind;  
For thou canst not fathom it.

This attitude helps to explain why, later in the 19th c., the artist developed the image of being a Bohemian and a non-conformist. This was the long-term result of Romantic subjectivism and self-culture; of the cult of the individual ego and sensibility.

The influence of the Germans referred to above was very considerable, especially that of Goethe. Their ideas were diffused in England by Coleridge and Carlyle; in America by Edgar Allan Poe and Ralph Waldo Emerson; and in France by what we would now call 'culture vultures' in the shape of Madame de Staël, Victor Cousin and Théophile Jouffroy.

Approximately concurrent with the new aesthetic (or 'science of beauty') we have the doctrine of 'art for art's sake' (*q.v.*), and the movement known as Parnassianism.

Gautier's Preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835) is often

## aestheticism

quoted as one of the earliest examples of a new aesthetic point of view. Thereafter, Poe and Baudelaire between them virtually launched aestheticism as a cult and their combined influence on the Symbolist poets in France was very great (See SYMBOL and SYMBOLISM). In England aestheticism was the result of French influence and native ideas.

The major implication of the new aesthetic standpoint was that art had no reference to life, and therefore had nothing to do with morality (Poe, for instance, had condemned the 'heresy of didacticism'), and in the later Victorian period we find Swinburne (who was much influenced by Baudelaire) proclaiming the art for art's sake theory. Walter Pater advocated the view that life itself should be treated in the spirit of art. His collection of essays *The Renaissance* (1873) had a deep influence on the poets of the 1890s, especially Wilde, Dowson, Lionel Johnson and Symons.

Art, not life. Art instead of life, or as an alternative to life. Life as art, or as a work of art. The outstanding example of the aesthete's withdrawal from life is J. K. Huysman's *A Rebours* (1884), in which the hero, Des Esseintes, seeks to create an entirely artificial life. The work 'illustrates' Wilde's flippant dictum that 'The first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible. What the second duty is no one has yet discovered'. Much of the attitude was neatly summarized by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam when he has his hero in *Axel* (1890) say: 'Live? Our servants will do that for us'.

In part aestheticism seems to have been a kind of reaction against the materialism and capitalism of the later Victorian period; and also against the Philistines who embodied what has been described as the 'bourgeois ethos'. Certainly one can detect a widespread disenchantment in the literature of the 'aesthetes', and especially in their poetry. By contrast it is noticeable that many novelists of the period (e.g. Dickens, Zola, Gissing and Samuel Butler) were dealing with reality in a forthright and unsqueamish fashion.

Aestheticism in poetry (as in art) is closely identified with the Pre-Raphaelites (*q.v.*) and shows a tendency to withdrawal or aversion. Many poets of the period strove for beautiful musical effects in their verses rather than for sense. They aspired to sensuousness and to what has become known as 'pure poetry' (*q.v.*). They also revived archaistic modes and archaic language (in this respect they were heavily influenced by Spenser and Keats) and revived an extensive use of Classical mythology as a frame-

work for expressing ideas. Medievalism (*q.v.*) and the interest in chivalry and romance was an important part of the aesthetic cult. Tennyson, William Morris, D. G. Rossetti and Swinburne are the major writers in these respects. Tennyson's *The Lotus-Eaters* embodies many of the feelings inherent in the aesthetic ideal. Ah, why *should* life all labour be?

Among English artists Burne-Jones, D. G. Rossetti, William Morris, James McNeill Whistler and Aubrey Beardsley were the main exponents of aestheticism. It should also be noted that George Moore (an enthusiast for pure poetry), Arthur Symonds and Edmund Gosse did much to popularize the works of French poets and painters in England in the 1890s.

Aestheticism is particularly associated with that decade; with Aubrey Beardsley, with Oscar Wilde (long the 'folk hero' or 'cult hero' of the aesthetic movement), with *The Yellow Book* (*q.v.*) with dandyism, with affectation, and with Max Beerbohm. But by the 1890s it was becoming less intense. As Beerbohm drolly observed: 'Beauty had existed long before 1880. It was Oscar Wilde who managed her début'.

With this period, too, are associated ideas about the Bohemian and immoral life of the artist. The cult of Bohemianism (itself a kind of rejection of a commercially orientated society) had been influenced earlier in the century by Henri Murger's *Scènes de la vie Bohème* (1845-49).

At its best aestheticism was a revitalizing influence in an age of ugliness, brutality, dreadful inequality and oppression, complacency, hypocrisy and Philistinism (*q.v.*). It was a genuine search for beauty and a realization that the beautiful has an independent value. At its worst it deteriorated into posturing affectation and mannerism, to vapid idealism and indeed to a kind of silliness which is not wholly dead. Nothing could be more 'Bohemian' than the post-war cultural revolution of the so-called 'freaked out' society. 'Pop' is another kind of aestheticism, another kind of reaction against a corrupt and commercial world. See DECADENCE; PARNASSIANS.

**affectation** The adoption of a mode or style of writing unsuited to the matter, form or occasion. In the 18th c. writers were particularly sensitive to inappropriateness of this kind. See DECORUM.

**affective fallacy** A term defined by Wimsatt and Beardsley (*The Verbal Icon*, 1954) as 'a confusion between the poem and its

## **affective fallacy**

results (what it is and what it does)'. It is said to be a critical error of evaluating a work of art in terms of 'its results in the mind of the audience'. It would be a mistake, therefore, for a reader to conclude that Spenser's *Faerie Queene* was a bad poem because it inspired in him a repugnance to Protestantism. The principles involved in this fallacy can also be applied to prose works. *See* INTENTIONAL FALLACY.

**afflatus** (L 'blown upon') As far as poetry is concerned, the equivalent of inspiration (*q.v.*). The usual phrase is 'divine afflatus'. The implications are that a writer's inspiration is vouchsafed to him by some supranormal or supernatural power, like a Muse (*q.v.*) or the gods. *See* DONNÉE; FANCY AND IMAGINATION; INVENTION; LIGNE DONNÉE.

**Age of Reason** A term applied to the Restoration and Augustan periods (*qq.v.*). So named because it was a period when the workings of reason were revered. Form, balance, restraint, harmony, decorum (*q.v.*) and order are some of the main characteristics of the literature of the period. *See* NEOCLASSICISM.

**agon** (Gk 'contest') In Greek drama a verbal conflict between two characters, each one aided by half the Chorus (*q.v.*). *See* ANTAGONIST; PROTAGONIST.

**agrarian movement** A 'back to grass roots', 'back to the soil', and 'back to nature' cult that had some vogue in Germany and America early in the 20th c. Sherwood Anderson was one of its exemplars. *See* NEW CRITICISM.

**aiodos** An itinerant Greek singer of songs and poems. *See also* GUSLAR; MINNESINGER; SCOP; SKALD; TROUBADOUR; TROUVÈRE.

**air** It usually denotes a song (*q.v.*), tune or melody, or all three. Frequently used in the late 16th c. and during the 17th when many collections were published. For example: John Dowland's *Second Book of Aires*, (1600); Robert Jones's *First Book of Songs and Aires*, (1600). Cowper suggests the general sense when, in *A Winter Walk at Noon*, he writes:



There is in souls a sympathy with sounds;  
 And, as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleased  
 With melting airs, or martial, brisk, or grave:  
 Some chord in unison with what we hear,  
 Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.

*See also* MOTET.

**akhyana** An Indian beast fable or folk-tale (*qq.v.*) in prose. The central part, or that which deals with the climax, is in verse.

**Alazon** The braggart in Greek comedy. Other examples of the type in drama are the Miles Gloriosus of Plautus, Molière's Tartuffe and, conceivably, Falstaff. *See also* BRAGGADOCIO; STOCK CHARACTER.

**alba** Spanish for aubade (*q.v.*).

**Alcaics** A four-lined stanza or strophe (*qq.v.*) named after the Greek poet Alkaios (Alcaeus, a native of Lesbos, late 7th to early 6th c. B.C.). The arrangement, predominantly dactylic, is:

ǃ / ǃ / ǃ / ǃ ǃ / ǃ ǃ  
 ǃ / ǃ / ǃ / ǃ ǃ / ǃ ǃ  
 ǃ / ǃ / ǃ / ǃ /  
 / ǃ ǃ / ǃ ǃ / ǃ / ǃ

The mark indicating an unstressed syllable placed above a stress mark denotes a possible variation.

The scheme was often used between the 16th and 18th c. by Italian poets, but has seldom been popular in England. However, Swinburne, Clough, Tennyson and R. L. Stevenson experimented with alcaics. A well-known example is Tennyson's sixteen-line poem on Milton which begins:

Ó mightǃ|moúthēd ĩn|véntör öf | hármöniēs,  
 Ó skill'd tō sĭng öf | Tíme ānd Ĕ|térnĭtǃ,  
 Gód-giftēd | örgān-|vóice öf | Énglānd,  
 Míltön, ā | náme tō rē|söund fōr | ágēs.

Less well known is Stevenson's *Alcaics: to H.F.B.*, whose first stanza runs:

## Alcaics

Bráve láds | ĩn óldĕn | músĭcāl | céntŭriĕs  
Sáng, níght | bý níght, ă|dórăblĕ | chórŭsĕs,  
Sát láte bý | álehŭuse | dóors ĩn | Áprĭl  
Cháuntĭng ĩn | jóy ăs thĕ | móon wăs | rĭsĭng.

See AEOLIC; DACTYL; SAPPHIC ODE.

**Alcmanic verse** A metrical form used by and named after Alcman (7th c. B.C.). It consists of a dactylic tetrameter (*q.v.*) line. It was used in Greek dramatic poetry, and is occasionally found in Latin dramatic poetry. The alcmanic strophe (*q.v.*) combines a dactylic hexameter (*q.v.*) with an archilochian (*q.v.*) verse. See DACTYL.

**Alexandrianism** The term refers to the works, styles and critical principles of the Alexandrian (Greek) writers who flourished between c. 325–30 B.C. Some of the main forms they used were: elegy, epigram, epyllion, lyric (*qq.v.*). They also wrote drama. Much of their work was marked by ornateness and obscurity (*q.v.*).

**alexandrine** In French prosody a line of twelve syllables and known as *tétramètre* (*q.v.*). It has been the standard meter of French poetry since the 16th c., especially in dramatic and narrative forms. The equivalent in English verse is the iambic hexameter (*q.v.*). The earliest alexandrines occur in *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem*, an early 12th c. *chanson de geste* (*q.v.*), but the term probably takes its name from a later poem – the *Roman d'Alexandre* (towards the end of the 12th c.). The meter was used by Ronsard and members of the Pléiade (*q.v.*) and was perfected by the great 17th c. French dramatists. These two lines are from Racine's *Andromaque* (I, ii, 173–4):

La Grèce en ma faveur est trop inquiétée,  
De soins plus important je l'ai crue agitée.

It has never been a popular meter in English verse, largely because it is rather unwieldy, just a little too long; though Spenser used it to good effect for the last line of his Spenserian stanza (*q.v.*) in *The Faerie Queene*. Other English poets to use it fairly successfully were Drayton in *Polyolbion*, Browning in *Fifine at the Fair*, and Bridges in *The Testament of Beauty*. A classic example of its use occurs in Pope's *Essay on Criticism*:

A needless Alexandrine ends the song,  
Thát, like | ă wŭund|ĕd snáke, | drágs ĭts | slŭw lĕngth ălŭng.

See TRIMÈTRE.

**alienation effect** Often abbreviated to A-effect. An important element in Brecht's theory of drama. The German word is *Verfremdung*. Brecht's view was that both audience and actors should preserve a state of critical detachment from the play and its presentation in performance. He required the audience to be reminded from time to time that they were only watching a play, a representation of life, and therefore they should control their identification with the characters and action. Likewise the actors should keep a kind of distance from the parts they are interpreting; they should have *an attitude towards* the character rather than try to efface themselves within it. See also COMMITMENT; CONVENTION; EPIC THEATRE; ESTRANGEMENT; ILLUSION; SOCIAL REALISM.

**aljamiado** A Spanish composition written in Arabic characters.

**allegory** The term derives from Greek *allēgoria* 'speaking otherwise'. As a rule, an allegory is a story in verse or prose with a double meaning: a primary or surface meaning; and a secondary or under-the-surface meaning. It is a story, therefore, that can be read, understood and interpreted at two levels (and in some cases at three or four levels). It is thus closely related to the fable and the parable (*qq.v.*). The form may be literary or pictorial (or both, as in emblem books *q.v.*). An allegory has no determinate length.

To distinguish more clearly we can take the old Arab fable of the frog and the scorpion, who met one day on the bank of the River Nile, which they both wanted to cross. The frog offered to ferry the scorpion over on his back provided the scorpion promised not to sting him. The scorpion agreed so long as the frog would promise not to drown him. The mutual promises exchanged, they crossed the river. On the far bank the scorpion stung the frog mortally.

'Why did you do that?' croaked the frog, as it lay dying.

'Why?' replied the scorpion. 'We're both Arabs, aren't we?'

If we substitute for the frog a 'Mr Goodwill' or a 'Mr Prudence', and for the scorpion 'Mr Treachery' or 'Mr Two-Face' and make the river any river and substitute for 'We're both Arabs . . .' 'We're both men . . .' we can turn the fable into an allegory. On the other hand, if we turn the frog into a father and the scorpion into a son (boatman and passenger) and we have the son

## allegory

say 'We're both sons of God, aren't we?', then we have a parable (if rather a cynical one) about the wickedness of human nature and the sin of parricide.

The best known allegory in the English language (if not in the world) is Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678). This is an allegory of Christian Salvation. Christian, the hero, representing Everyman Christian, flees from the City of Destruction and sets off on his pilgrimage. In the course of it he passes through the Slough of Despond, the Interpreter's House, the Palace Beautiful, the Valley of Humiliation, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, Vanity Fair, Doubting Castle, the Delectable Mountains, and the country of Beulah, and finally arrives at the Celestial City. On the way he meets various characters, including Mr Worldly Wiseman, Faithful, Hopeful, Giant Despair, the fiend Apollyon, and many others. In the second part of the book Christian's wife and children make their pilgrimage accompanied by Mercy. They are helped and escorted by Great-heart who destroys Giant Despair and other monsters. Eventually they, too, arrive at the Celestial City.

The whole work is a simplified representation or similitude (*q.v.*) of the average man's journey through the trials and tribulations of life on his way to Heaven. The figures and places, therefore, have an arbitrary existence invented by the author; and this distinguishes them from symbols (*q.v.*) which have a real existence.

The origins of allegory are very ancient, and it appears to be a mode of expression (a way of feeling and thinking about things and seeing them) so natural to the human mind that it is universal. Its fundamental origins are religious. Much myth (*q.v.*), for example, is a form of allegory and is an attempt to explain universal facts and forces. The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, for instance, is a notable example of the allegory of redemption and salvation. In fact, most Classical myth is allegorical.

Early examples of the use of allegory in literature are to be found in Plato's *Timaeus*, *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*. The myth of the Cave in Plato's *Republic* is a particularly well-known example.

In the lost sixth book of *De Republica* by Cicero (1st c. B.C.) there is a dream narrative (usually known as the *Somnium Scipionis*) in which Scipio Aemilianus makes a journey through the spheres and from this vantage point sees the shape and structure of the universe. Later (c. A.D. 400) Macrobius Theodosius compiled a commentary on *Somnium Scipionis* which was to have a considerable influence in the Middle Ages.



The journey through the underworld and the journey through the spheres are recurrent themes in European literature.

Another example in Classical literature is *The Golden Ass* (2nd c. A.D.) of Apuleius. The fourth, fifth and sixth books deal with the allegory of Cupid and Psyche. A further key-work for an understanding of Graeco-Roman allegory is *About Gods and the World* (4th c. A.D.) by Sallustius. But perhaps the most influential of all is Prudentius's *Psychomachia* (4th c. A.D.), which elaborates the idea of the battle within, the conflict between personified vices and virtues for the possession of the soul. It is thus a kind of psychological allegory and establishes themes which were used again and again during the Middle Ages as we can readily verify by examination of sermon literature, homilies, theological hand-books, exempla and works of moral counsel and edification. Above all, we find the themes in the Morality Plays (*q.v.*) which in their turn had a deep influence on the development of comedy (*q.v.*) and especially comedy of humours (*q.v.*).

Allegory, largely typological, pervades both the Old and the New Testaments. The events in the Old Testament are 'types' or 'figures' of events in the New Testament. In the *Song of Solomon*, for instance, Solomon is a 'type' of Christ and the Queen of Sheba represents the Church: later explained by Matthew (XII, 42). The Paschal Lamb was a 'type' of Christ.

Scriptural allegory was mostly based on a vision of the universe. There were two worlds: the spiritual and the physical. These corresponded because they had been made by God. The visible world was a revelation of the invisible, but the revelation could only be brought about by Divine action. Thus, interpretation of this kind of allegory was theological. St Thomas Aquinas analysed this in some detail in his *Summa* (13th c.) in terms of fourfold allegory; thus having four levels of meaning (*q.v.*). This exegetical method can be applied, for instance, to the City of Jerusalem. On the literal level, it is the Holy City; allegorically, it stands for the Church militant; morally or as a trope, it signifies the just soul; and anagogically, it represents the Church triumphant. In his *Convivio* Dante elaborated this theory in terms of poetry.

Some notable instances of allegory in European literature are: Bernardus Sylvesteris' *De Mundi Universitate* (12th c.); Alan of Lille's *Anticlaudianus* (12th c.); the *Roman de la Rose* (13th c.), by Guillaume de Lorris, and later continued by Jean de Meun; Dante's *Divina Commedia* (13th c.); Langland's *Piers Plowman* (14th c.); Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1574); Spenser's *Faerie*

## allegory

*Queene* (1589, 1596); Bunyan's *The Life and Death of Mr Badman* (1680) and *The Holy War* (1682); Dryden's allegorical satires *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), *Mac Flecknoe* (1684) and *The Hind and the Panther* (1687); Swift's *Tale of a Tub* (1704) and *Gulliver's Travels* (1726); William Blake's prophetic books (late 18th c.); Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (1872) and *Erewhon Revisited* (1901); C. S. Lewis's *Pilgrim's Regress* (1933) and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945). C. S. Lewis also wrote a classic work on allegory, namely *The Allegory of Love* (1936).

Allegorical drama, since the demise of the Morality Plays, has been rare. Two interesting modern examples are Karel Čapek's *The Insect Play* (1921) and Edward Albee's *Tiny Alice* (1964). See BEAST EPIC; MOCK EPIC.

**allegro** A musical term which, when used as a literary term, means much the same thing: in a lively and brisk manner. The rhythm and movement of Milton's *L'Allegro*, from which these lines are taken, indicate the meaning:

Haste thee Nymph, and bring with thee  
Jest and youthful jollity,  
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,  
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles.  
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,  
And Laughter holding both his sides.  
Come, and trip it as ye go  
On the light fantastic toe.

**alliteration** (L 'repeating and playing upon the same letter') A figure of speech in which consonants, especially at the beginning of words, or stressed syllables, are repeated. It is a very old device indeed in English verse (older than rhyme) and is common in verse generally. It is used occasionally in prose. In OE poetry alliteration was a continual and essential part of the metrical scheme and until the late Middle Ages was often used thus. However, alliterative verse (*q.v.*) becomes increasingly rare after the end of the 15th c. and alliteration – like assonance, consonance and onomatopoeia (*qq.v.*) – tends more and more to be reserved for the achievement of the special effect.

There are many classic examples, like Coleridge's famous description of the sacred river Alph in *Kubla Khan*:

Five miles meandering with a mazy motion

## alliteration

And many others less well known, like this from the beginning of Norman MacCaig's poem *Mutual Life*:

A wild cat, fur-fire in a bracken bush,  
Twitches his club-tail, rounds his amber eyes  
At rockabye rabbits humped on the world. The air  
Crackles about him. His world is a rabbit's size.

And this, from the first stanza of R. S. Thomas's *The Welsh Hill Country*:

Too far for you to see  
The fluke and the foot-rot and the fat maggot  
Gnawing the skin from the small bones,  
The sheep are grazing at Bwlch-y-Fedwen,  
Arranged romantically in the usual manner  
On a bleak background of bald stone.

Alliteration is common in nonsense verse (*q.v.*):

Be lenient with lobsters, and ever kind to crabs,  
And be not disrespectful to cuttle-fish or dabs;  
Chase not the Cochín-China, chaff not the ox obese,  
And babble not of feather-beds in company with geese.

In tongue-twisters (*q.v.*):

Better Botter bought some butter,  
But, she said, the butter's bitter;  
If I put it in my batter  
It will make my batter bitter,  
But a bit of better butter,  
That would make my batter better.

In jingles (*q.v.*):

Dingle dingle doosey,  
The cat's in the well,  
The dog's away to Bellingon  
To buy the bairn a bell.

And in patter (*q.v.*), beloved of drill sergeants and the like:

Now then, you horrible shower of heathens, have I your  
complete hattention? Hotherwise I shall heave the whole hairy  
lot of you into the salt box where you will live on hopeful

## alliteration

hallucinations for as long as hit pleases God and the commanding hoffer.

*See also* ASSONANCE; CACOPHONY; INTERNAL RHYME.

**alliterative verse** Alliterative meter is an essential feature of Germanic prosody. Alliteration (*q.v.*) was a basic part of the structure. Nearly all OE verse is heavily alliterative, and the pattern is fairly standard – with either two or three stressed syllables in each line alliterating. This example is from *Beowulf* (8th c.):

þa waes on burgum Beowulf Scyldinga,  
leof leodcyning longe þrage  
folcum gefræge fæder ellor hwearf,  
aldor of earde—, oþ þæt him eft onwoc  
heah Healfdene.

In succeeding centuries the systematic pattern is gradually loosened. These lines from the beginning of Passus III of Langland's *Piers Plowman* (14th c.) show some of the changes:

Now is Mede þe Mayde and namo of hem alle  
With bedellus & wiþ bayllyues brouzt bifor þe kyng.  
The kyng called a clerke can I nouzt his name,  
To take Mede þe mayde and make hire at ese.

Another but similar alliterative style is adopted in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (c. 1350–75):

The brygge wat3 brayde doun, and þe brode zate3  
Vnbarred and born open vpon boþe halue.  
De burne blessed hym bilyue, and þe bredez passed;  
Prayses þe porter bifore þe prynce kneled.

The poem *Pearl* (c. 1375) is also elaborately alliterative, and many of the Medieval Mystery Plays (*q.v.*) were written in rough alliterative verse. These lines come from the start of the York version of *The Harrowing of Hell*:

<Iesus. M>anne on molde, be meke to me,  
And haue thy Maker in þi mynde,  
And thynke howe I haue tholid for þe  
With pereles paynes for to be pynded.

The use of alliteration dwindled steadily during the 15th c. and



the only notable poet to make much use of it in Tudor times was John Skelton. Shakespeare used it occasionally, as in Sonnet XXX:

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste.

It was not until late in the 19th c. that Gerard Manley Hopkins revived the alliterative tradition. He experimented a great deal. These lines from *Spring* suggest how:

Nothing is so beautiful as spring –  
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;  
Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush  
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring  
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;

Later Ezra Pound also experimented with it. In 1912 he published *Ripostes* which contained a fine rendering of the OE elegiac lyric *The Seafarer*. These are the opening lines:

May I for my own self song's truth reckon,  
Journey's jargon, how I in harsh days  
Hardship endured oft.  
Bitter breast-cares have I abided,  
Known on my keel many a care's hold,  
And dire sea-surge, and there I oft spent  
Narrow nightwatch nigh the ship's head  
While she tossed close to cliffs.

Three other poets in recent years have shown mastery of this form: Richard Eberhart, C. Day Lewis and W. H. Auden. Eberhart's *Brotherhood of Men* is a distinguished experiment, so are C. Day Lewis's *As One Who Wanders into Old Workings* and *Flight to Australia*. The latter, particularly, shows the influence of the OE meter and the style of Langland. The third stanza runs:

Fog first, a wet blanket, a kill-joy, the primrose-of-morning's  
blight,  
Blotting out the dimpled sea, the ample welcome of land,  
The gay glance from the bright  
Cliff-face behind, snaring the sky with treachery, sneering  
At hope's loss of height. But they charged it, flying blind;  
They took a compass-bearing against that dealer of doubt,

## alliterative verse

As a saint when the field of vision is fogged gloriously steels  
His spirit against the tainter of air, the elusive taunter:  
They climbed to win a way out,  
Then downward dared till the moody waves snarled at their  
wheels.

W. H. Auden made skilful use of alliterative meters, as in *The Age of Anxiety*:

For the others, like me, there is only the flash  
Of negative knowledge, the night when, drunk, one  
Staggeres to the bathroom and stares in the glass  
To meet one's madness, when what mother said seems  
Such darling rubbish and the decent advice  
Of the liberal weeklies as lost an art  
As peasant pottery, for plainly it is not  
To the Cross or to Clarté or to Common Sense  
Our passions pray but to primitive totems  
As absurd as they are savage; science or no science,  
It is Bacchus or the Great Boyg or Baal-Peor,  
Fortune's Ferris-wheel or the physical sound  
Of our own names which they actually adore as their  
Ground and goal.

**allæostrophe** (Gk 'irregular strophe') A rare term. Used by Milton in his preface to *Samson Agonistes* to describe verses composed in stanzas of irregular length; verses not in the traditional strophic form. See STROPHE.

**allonym** Some one else's name used by an author. See PSEUDONYM.

**allusion** Usually an implicit reference, perhaps to another work of literature or art, to a person or an event. It is often a kind of appeal to a reader to share some experience with the writer. An allusion may enrich the work by association (*q.v.*) and give it depth. When using allusions a writer tends to assume an established literary tradition, a body of common knowledge with an audience sharing that tradition and an ability on the part of the audience to 'pick up' the reference. The following kinds may be roughly distinguished: (a) a reference to events and people (e.g. there are a number in Dryden's and Pope's satires); (b) reference

to facts about the author himself (e.g. Shakespeare's puns on will; Donne's pun on Donne, Anne and Undone); (c) a metaphorical allusion (there are many examples in T. S. Eliot's work); (d) an imitative allusion (e.g. Johnson's to Juvenal in *London*).

**almanac** (Sp *almanaque*) An annual calendar (*q.v.*) of months and days. Many almanacs provide an astonishing range of information. A famous example is *Old Moore's Almanac*, named after Francis Moore (1657-1715) who in 1699 published an almanac of weather predictions in order to promote the sales of his pills. There are now several almanacs under the name of Old Moore. A different kind is the *Almanach de Gotha* which has been published since 1763. It gives genealogies and statistics of the world.

**als ob** (G 'as if') In 1876 Hans Vaihinger put forward the idea that it was a prerequisite of any idealism that we must act on the assumption that something presented as art is as it appears. Thus it is *as if* we were watching a real representation. See WILLING SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF.

**altar poem** Also known as a *carmen figuratum* (L 'shaped poem'), it is a poem in which the verses or stanzas are so arranged that they form a design on the page and take the shape of the subject of the poem. The device is believed to have been first used by Simias of Rhodes (4th c. B.C.), and it was revived during the Renaissance period when it was practised by a number of poets - including Wither, Quarles, Benlowes, Herrick and Herbert. Herbert's *The Altar* and his *Easter Wings* are two particularly well-known instances. The latter is arranged thus:

Lord, who createst man in wealth and store,  
 Though foolishly he lost the same,  
 Decaying more and more,  
 Till he became  
 Most poore:  
 With thee  
 O let me rise  
 As larks, harmoniously  
 And sing this day thy victories:  
 Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

The second stanza is arranged in the same fashion.

A well-known recent example is Dylan Thomas's *Vision and*

## altar poem

*Prayer*, a series of twelve devotional poems; but the device has been exploited with other motifs. Rabelais, for example, wrote a bottle-shaped song, his *epilenie*, in honour of Bacchus; and Apollinaire wrote a poem called *Il pleut* (one in *Caligrammes*) which was printed so that the letters trickled down the page like falling tears. See also EMBLEM-BOOK; PATTERN POETRY.

**altercatio** (L 'argument') A Roman legal term signifying rapid cross-questionings and replies. Applied to literature, it refers to a series of short questions and answers. Common in drama, dialogue and debate. See STICHOMYTHIA.

**alternate rhyme** The rhyme of the stanza form abab. See QUATRAIN.

**ambiguity** Ever since William Empson published *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) this term has had some weight and importance in critical evaluation. In brief, Empson's theory was that things are often not what they seem, that words *connote* at least as much as they *denote* – and very often more. Empson explained thus: 'We call it ambiguous . . . when we recognize that there could be a puzzle as to what the author meant, in that alternate views might be taken without sheer misreading . . . An ambiguity, in ordinary speech, means something very pronounced, and as a rule witty or deceitful'. He uses the word in an extended sense and finds relevance in any 'verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language'. 'The machinations of ambiguity', he says, 'are among the very roots of poetry'.

He distinguishes seven main types, which may be summarized as follows:

1. When a detail is effective in several ways simultaneously.
2. When two or more alternative meanings are resolved into one.
3. When two apparently unconnected meanings are given simultaneously.
4. When alternative meanings combine to make clear a complicated state of mind in the author.
5. A kind of confusion when a writer discovers his idea while actually writing. In other words, he has not apparently pre-conceived the idea but come upon it during the act of creation.
6. Where something appears to contain a contradiction and the reader has to find interpretations.

7. A complete contradiction which shows that the author was unclear as to what he was saying.

In varying degrees Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem *The Bugler's First Communion* exemplifies all seven types. *See also* ALLUSION; ASSOCIATION; CONNOTATION; DENOTATION; PLURISIGNATION.

**amblysia** (Gk 'blunting') A device related to euphemism (*q.v.*) where language is reduced or modified by way of preparation for the announcement of something tragic or alarming. Often used by the bearers of bad news, it is the equivalent of saying 'I am afraid you must prepare yourself for a shock'. In Classical tragedy the Messenger had the task. Two good examples are Ross (in *Macbeth*) making ready to break the news to Macduff of the murder of the latter's wife and children; and the Messenger in Milton's *Samson Agonistes* gradually working his way up to the description of how Samson destroyed the temple.

**amoebean** (Gk 'interchanging') This term relates to verses, couplets or stanzas spoken alternately by two speakers. A device very similar to *stichomythia* (*q.v.*) and highly effective in creating tension and conflict. It is common in pastoral (*q.v.*) and not unusual in drama. A good example is to be found in *October*, the tenth Eclogue in Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*, where Piers and Cuddie have a debate. Such an exchange (at its best the amoebean verse involves competition) is reminiscent of the *débat* and poetic contest (*qq.v.*).

**ampersand** A corruption of *and per se and*. *Per se* means 'standing by itself'. Thus: 'and', standing by itself, means 'and'. Ampersand is the old way of naming and spelling the sign & (formerly &), the ligature of *et*.

**amphisbaenic rhyme** The term derives from the Greek word *amphisbaina* 'a monster with a head at each end'. It denotes a backward rhyme. For example: liar/rail. A rare poetical device.

**amphiboly** (Gk 'thrown on both sides') An ambiguity (*q.v.*) produced by either grammatical looseness or by double meaning. For example: (a) He spoke to the man laughing; (b) The article in question is the thirty-ninth. *See* DOUBLE ENTENTE.



## amphibrach

**amphibrach** (Gk 'short at both ends') A metrical foot consisting of a stressed syllable flanked by two unstressed ones:  $\cup / \cup$ . It is not common in English verse and very seldom indeed functions as the main foot of a poem. However, occasional amphibrachs (mixed with other feet) occur quite often in stress groups. Matthew Prior's *Jinny the Just* is a fairly well-known instance of a poem which has a basis of amphibrachs. This is the first verse:

Rěléas'd fróm | thě nóise ǒf | thě Búthěr | ǎnd Bákěr  
Whó, mǔ ǒld | Friénd's bě thánked, | díd sěldǒm | fǒrsáke hěr,  
ǎnd fróm thě | sǒft Dúns ǒf | mǔ Lándlǒrd | thě Quákěr,

Many three-syllable words in English are amphibrachs. For example: děpěnděnt, ǎrrángeměnt, cǒntúsiǒn. *See also* AMPHIMACER.

**amphigory** (Gk 'circle on both sides') The term has come to mean a kind of burlesque or parody (*qq.v.*), especially a kind of nonsense verse (*q.v.*) which appears to be going to make sense but does not. A well-known example is Swinburne's *Nepheleidia*.

**amphimacer** (Gk 'long at both ends') The opposite of an amphibrach (*q.v.*), thus:  $/ \cup /$ . Also known as the Cretic foot, it is believed to have originated with the Cretan poet Thaletas (7th c. B.C.). Rare in English verse, except when mixed with other feet. Tennyson used it in *The Oak*:

Líve thǔ Lífě,  
Yóung ǎnd ǒld,  
Líke yǒn óak,  
Bríght ĩn spríng,  
Lívíng góld.

And Coleridge described and imitated it:

Fírst ǎnd Lást | bėíng lóng, | mídđlě, shórt | Ámphímácěr  
Stríkes hís thún | děríng hoóves | líke ǎ próud | hígh-bréd Rácěr.

In the second line the pattern is not so regular, and unless 'like a' is counted as one syllable and '-bred' is unstressed the meter does not really fit.

**amplification** A device in which language is used to extend or magnify or emphasize. A part of rhetoric (*q.v.*) and common in



oratory. Often used to attain a particular effect, as in this passage from *Our Mutual Friend* by Dickens:

Mr and Mrs Veneering were bran-new people in a bran-new house in a bran-new quarter of London. Everything about the Veneerings was spick and span new. All their furniture was new, all their friends were new, all their servants were new, their plate was new, their carriage was new, their harness was new, their horses were new, their pictures were new, they themselves were new, they were as newly-married as was lawfully compatible with their having a bran-new baby, and if they had set up a great-grandfather, he would have come home in matting from the Pantechnicon, without a scratch upon him, French-polished to the crown of his head.

**-ana** As in *Holmesiana*, *Victoriana* etc. A suffix adopted in continental literature and deriving from the neuter plural of Latin adjectives ending in *-anus*. Johnson defined ‘-ana’ in his *Dictionary* thus:

Books so called from the last syllables of their titles; as *Scaligerana*, *Thuaniana*; they are loose thoughts, or casual hints, dropped by eminent men, and collected by their friends.

Other examples are *Baconiana* (1679); *Blackguardiana* (c. 1785); *Addisoniana* (1803); *Boxiana* (1818–29); *Feminiana* (1835). See ANECDOTE; BIOGRAPHY; TABLE-TALK.

**anabasis** (Gk ‘a going up’) The rising of an action to a climax or dénouement (*qq.v.*). In drama, for instance, the approach to the climax in *Othello* when the Moor murders Desdemona (V).

**anachorism** (Gk ‘something misplaced’) Action, scene or character placed where it does not belong. A famous instance is Shakespeare’s direction in *The Winter’s Tale*: ‘Bohemia. A desert Country near the Sea.’ See ANACHRONISM.

**anachronism** (Gk ‘back-timing’) In literature anachronisms may be used deliberately to distance events and to underline a universal verisimilitude and timelessness – to prevent something being ‘dated’. Shakespeare adopted this device several times. Two classic examples are the references to the clock in *Julius Caesar* and to billiards in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Shaw also does it in

## anachronism

*Androcles and the Lion* when the Emperor is referred to as 'The Defender of the Faith'. See ANACHORISM.

**anacclasis** (Gk 'back bending') The interchange of a long and a short syllable in verse.

**anacoluthon** (Gk 'lacking sequence') Beginning a sentence in one way and continuing or ending it in another. 'You know what I – but let's forget it!'

**anacreontic verse** Named after Anacreon of Teos (6th c. B.C.). The *Anacreontea* or *Anacreontics* consist of sixty-odd short poems on love, wine and song. They had a considerable influence on Ronsard and Belleau in France; on Tasso, Parini and Leopardi in Italy; and on some 18th c. German lyricists. There are not many examples in English literature, though Abraham Cowley wrote some *Anacreontiques*, and so did Thomas Moore in a translation called the *Odes of Anacreon*. But this example is by Thomas Campion (1567–1620):

Follow, follow,  
Though with mischief  
Armed, like whirlwind  
Now she flies thee;  
Time can conquer  
Love's unkindness;  
Love can alter  
Time's disgrace;  
Till death faint not  
Then but follow.  
Could I catch that  
Nimble traitor,  
Scornful Laura,  
Swiftfoot Laura,  
Soon then would I  
Seek avengement.  
What's th'avengement?  
Even submissely  
Prostrate then to  
Beg for mercy.

See ANACREÓNTICA.

**anacreóntica** A Spanish poetic genre named after the Greek poet Anacreon of Teos (6th c. B.C.). It was a kind of pastoral (*q.v.*) or nature poem particularly popular in the 18th c. See ANACREONTIC.

**anacrusis** (Gk 'striking up') One or more initial syllables in a line of verse which are unaccented, as in Blake's *The Tyger*:

When the stars threw down their spears  
And watered heaven with their tears.

The 'and' is unaccented.

**anadiplosis** (Gk 'doubling') A device of repetition (*q.v.*) to gain a special effect. For example, Samson at the beginning of *Samson Agonistes*:

I seek  
This unfrequented place to find some ease,  
Ease to the body some, none to the mind  
From restless thoughts.

See EPANADOS; EPANALEPSIS.

**anagram** (Gk 'writing back or anew') The letters of a word or phrase are transposed to form a new word. For instance, the word 'Stanhope' can be turned into the word 'phaetons'. A common feature of crosswords. Samuel Butler's title *Erewhon* is an anagram of 'nowhere'.

**anagnorisis** (Gk 'recognition') A term used by Aristotle in *Poetics* to describe the moment of recognition (of truth) when ignorance gives way to knowledge. According to Aristotle, the ideal moment of anagnorisis coincides with peripeteia (*q.v.*), or reversal of fortune. The classic example is in *Oedipus Rex* when Oedipus discovers he has himself killed Laius. See TRAGEDY.

**analects** (Gk 'things gathered up') A collection of passages, *obiter dicta* (*q.v.*), *pensées* (*q.v.*) taken from an author. They are crumbs or gleanings. Confucius, though he is supposed to have written nothing, is credited with the authorship of analects. A well-known Confucian example is: 'Do not do unto others what you would not wish done unto you'. There are also a number of ribald Confucianisms. See TABLE-TALK.

## analogue

**analogue** A word or thing similar or <sup>\*</sup>parallel to another. As a literary term it denotes a story for which one can find parallel examples in other languages and literatures. A well-known example is Chaucer's *The Pardoner's Tale*, whose basic plot and theme were widely distributed in Europe in the Middle Ages. The tale is probably of oriental origin and a primitive version exists in a 3rd c. Buddhist text known as the *Jatakas*; but the version usually taken to be the closest analogue to Chaucer's tale is in the Italian *Libro di Novelle e di Bel Parlar Gentile* (1572) which is nearly two hundred years later than Chaucer's story.

**analysis** A detailed splitting up and examination of a work of literature. A close study of the various elements and the relationship between them. An essential part of criticism. As T. S. Eliot put it, the tools of the critic are comparison and analysis. Analytical criticism helps to make clear an author's meaning and the structure of his work. It is argued that analysis spoils an intuitive and spontaneous response to a work of literature. Those in favour of 'deep' analysis contend that, on the contrary, it enhances the reader's enjoyment.

**analysed rhyme** Also known as suspended rhyme, this is usually the use of two or more types of rhyme. A common arrangement is assonantal and consonantal rhyme; for example: *fun|runt; bin|stint*. Another combination is a mixture of pure and consonantal rhymes; for instance: *fair|lyre; pair|dire*. In the following extract from Peter Porter's *John Marston Advises Anger* we have a mixture of pure, consonantal and assonantal rhyme:

All the boys are howling to take the girls to bed.  
Our betters say it's a seedy world. The critics say  
Think of them as an Elizabethan Chelsea set.  
Then they've never listened to our lot – no talk  
Could be less like – but the bodies are the same:  
Those jeans and bums and sweaters of the King's Road  
Would fit Marston's stage. What's in a name,  
If Cheapside and the Marshalsea mean Eng. Lit.  
And the Fantasie, Sa Tortuga, Grisbi, Bong-Bo  
Mean life? A cliché? What hurts on paper,  
Fades to classic pain. Love goes as the M.G. goes.

*Same* and *name* are pure rhymes; *set* and *Lit.* are consonantal; *bed* and *set* are assonantal – as are *say* and *same*, *Road*, *-Bo* and *goes*.

See ASSONANCE; CONSONANCE; EYE-RHYME; HALF RHYME; VOWEL RHYME.

**anamnesis** (Gk 'recalling to mind'). The recollection of ideas, people or events (in a previous existence). This is common in memoirs and autobiography (*qq.v.*), but it may also pervade a work of fiction or a poem. It is a special kind of harking back, and the maieutic processes of the writer often involve it. Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* is a good example in fiction. Among poets, the anamnestic element is particularly noticeable in the work of W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot and W. H. Auden.

**anonym** (Gk 'behind name') A name or word written backwards.  
See BACK SLANG.

**anapaest** (Gk 'beaten back') A metrical foot comprising two unstressed syllables and one stressed:  $\cup \cup /$ . The opposite of a dactyl (*q.v.*). It is a running and galloping foot and therefore used to create the illusion of swiftness and action. As Coleridge illustrates it in *Metrical Feet*:

With á leáp | ánd á bóund | thě swíft Á|nápäests thróng.

Originally it was a martial rhythm used in Greek verse, and was adapted by the Romans for drama. In English literature it is mostly found in popular verse until early in the 18th c. Thereafter it was used fairly frequently for 'serious' works by poets like Cowper, Scott, Byron, Morris and Swinburne. In the 20th c. Belloc, Chesterton, Masfield and Betjeman have all employed it successfully. Most poets at some time or another have occasion to use anapaests in combination with other feet. A famous anthology piece which illustrates the anapaestic rhythm is Byron's *Destruction of Sennacherib*. The following example comes from William Morris's *The Message of the March Wind*:

Bút ló, | thě öld inn, | ánd thě lights, | ánd thě fire  
Ánd thě fidd|lěr's öld túne | ánd thě shúf|líng ۆf feét;  
Soón fۆr ús | sháll bě quí|ét ánd rést | ánd désíre,  
Ánd tۆmۆr|rۆw's ۆprí|síng tۆ déeds | sháll bě sweét.

**anaphora** (Gk 'carrying up or back') A rhetorical device involving the repetition of a word or group of words in successive clauses. It is often used in ballad and song, in oratory and sermon (*qq.v.*),



## anaphora

but it is common in many literary forms. A fine example in verse occurs near the end of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*:

Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love!  
Swich fyn hath al his grete worthynesse!  
Swich fyn hath his estate real above,  
Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his noblesse!  
Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse!  
And thus bigan his lovyng of Criseyde,  
As I have told, and in this wise he deyde.

An equally fine instance in prose is the lament for Lancelot in Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*:

Said Sir Ector . . . Sir Launcelot . . . thou wert never  
matched of earthly knight's hand; and thou wert the courteoust  
knight that ever bare shield; and thou wert the truest friend to  
thy lover that ever bestrad horse; and thou wert the truest  
lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman; and thou wert  
the kindest man that ever struck with sword; and thou wert  
the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights;  
and thou wert the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate  
in hall among ladies; and thou wert the sternest knight to thy  
mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest.

*See also* INCREMENTAL REPETITION.

**anastrophe** (Gk 'turning back') The inversion of the normal order of words for a particular effect. The word order in these lines, from the beginning of Belial's speech in the Council of Pandemonium in *Paradise Lost*, is deliberately confused to suggest Belial's speciousness:

I should be much for open war, O Peers,  
As not behind in hate, if what was urged  
Main reason to persuade immediate war  
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast  
Ominous conjecture on the whole success.  
When he who most excels in fact of arms,  
In what he counsels and in what excels  
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
And utter dissolution, as the scope  
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.

**anatomy** (Gk 'cutting up') A detailed analysis of a subject; an



exhaustive examination. Well-known examples are: Lyly's *Euphues or the Anatomy of Wit* (1579); Philip Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583); Thomas Nashe's *Anatomie of Absurditie* (1589), a reply to Stubbes; Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), perhaps the most famous of all. Among more recent instances one should mention Rosamund Harding's *Anatomy of Inspiration* (1940). In his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) Northrop Frye treats 'anatomy' as a form of fiction associated with Menippean Satire (*q.v.*), and thus a compendious, if not encyclopaedic, satirical analysis of human behaviour, attitudes and beliefs.

**ancients and moderns** The phrase refers to two literary parties which grew up in France and England in the late 17th c. Originally, in France, there were arguments over the relative merits of French and Latin for literary purposes, an issue discussed by du Bellay long before in his *Défense et Illustration* (1549). The increasing influence of the French Academy in the 17th c. helped to provoke further argument. Fundamentally, it was a case of progress and the modern rationalistic spirit of inquiry versus reverence for Classical rules and precepts. Some moderns thought they were better than the ancients; others did not. A number of distinguished writers joined the fray, including Perrault, Bayle, La Fontaine and Boileau. By 1700 the quarrel was over, but the issues were still unresolved. Neoclassicism (*q.v.*) was to prevail in France for a very long time (far longer than anywhere else) and the moderns did not really gain their victory until the 19th c. was well advanced.

In England the *casus belli* was an essay by Sir William Temple, published in 1690, on the comparative merits of ancient and modern learning. Temple praised ancient learning at the expense of the moderns. In so doing he praised the spurious *Epistles* of Phalaris. This provoked the indignation and criticism of William Wotton and Richard Bentley.

However remote and even esoteric such intellectual and literary fracas may now seem, this one at any rate had good side-effects. Among other things it produced Swift's *The Battle of the Books* (1704), a prose satire in which the ancients have the advantage.

**anecdote** A brief account of or a story about an individual or an incident. The anecdotal digression is a common feature of narrative in prose and verse. In the history of English literature and of

## anecdote

literary characters the anecdote has a specific importance. In his *Dictionary* Johnson defined the term as 'something yet unpublished; secret history'. During the 18th c. an interest in 'secret' histories increased steadily, and no doubt there is some connection between this and the growing popularity of -ana, table talk and biography (*qq.v.*) at that time. During the second half of the 18th c. there was almost a 'craze' for 'secret' histories. In the last thirty years of it over a hundred books of anecdotage were published in England. Isaac Disraeli, father of Benjamin, became one of the best known and most assiduous gleaners of anecdotes. In 1791 he published three volumes titled *Curiousities of Literature, consisting of Anecdotes, Characters, Sketches, and Observations, Literary, Historical and Critical*. These he followed with other collections: *Calamities of Authors* (1812-13) in two volumes, and *Quarrels of Authors* (1814) in three volumes. In 1812 John Nichols published the first of nine volumes in a series titled *Literary Anecdotes of the 18th c.* Such works remained popular during the Victorian period. Nor is the appetite for collections of anecdotes assuaged. In 1975 there was *The Oxford Book of Literary Anecdotes*.

**angry young man** The term or phrase seems to have been first used as the title of an autobiography by Leslie Paul published in 1951. It became a catch-phrase in the middle and late 1950s, and by 1960 at the latest was a much-used cliché. Apart from the journalists, the writer mainly but indirectly responsible for its popularity was John Osborne whose play *Look Back in Anger* (1956) spoke for a generation of disillusioned and discontented young men who were strongly opposed to the establishment; to its social and political attitudes and *mores*, and indeed to the whole 'bourgeois ethic'. Jimmy Porter, the anti-hero (*q.v.*) of Osborne's play, was really the prototypal modern 'angry young man'. In a short time all such vocal protesters were classified as 'angry young men' or as 'the young angries'. Osborne's excellent play survives; the cliché is now hardly ever used. *See also* KITCHEN-SINK DRAMA.

**anisometric** (Gk 'of unequal lengths') A stanza composed of lines of unequal lengths; as in the first stanza of John Donne's *The Message*:

Send home my long strayd eyes to mee,  
Which (Oh) too long have dwelt on thee;  
Yet since there they have learn'd such ill,

Such forc'd fashions,  
And false passions,  
That they be  
Made by thee  
Fit for no good sight, keep them still.

**annals** (L 'year books') Notable examples are: The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, made in a number of recensions, of which seven survive, from the 9th c. to the middle of the 12th; and the *Annales Cambriae*, the ancient annals of Wales whose earliest extant manuscript dates from the second half of the 10th c. *See also* CHRONICLE; YEAR BOOK.

**annotation** Textual comment in a book. It may consist of a reader's comment in the margin, hence the term *marginalia* (*q.v.*), or printed explanatory notes provided by an editor. *See also* ADVERSARIA.

**anomoiosis** *See* CONTRAST.

**anonymous** There is a great body of anonymous literature, especially that belonging to early or primitive societies, most of which is of the oral tradition (*q.v.*). Much Homeric poetry was anonymous in origin, so was OE poetry (of which *Beowulf* is a notable example), and the South Slav *narodne pesme* (*q.v.*). Folk literature of all kinds tends to be anonymous; so are many sagas, ballads, medieval *chansons de geste*, *fabliaux*, proverbs, nursery rhymes, etc. (*qq.v.*). *See also* PSEUDONYMOUS LITERATURE.

**anonymuncule** (L 'nameless little man') A derogatory term for a petty type of anonymous writer. A mean, shifty writer who hides behind anonymity.

**antagonist** In drama or fiction the antagonist opposes the hero or protagonist (*q.v.*) In *Othello* Iago is antagonist to the Moor. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Farfrae is antagonist to Henchard.

**anthology** (Gk 'collection of flowers') In Classical times anthologies tended to be collections of epigrams, elegiac and otherwise, and date back to the *Garland of Meleager* (c. 90 B.C.). Phillipus of Thessalonica (c. A.D. 40) made a further collection of Greek epigrams. The first major anthology is the *Anthologia Palatina*

## anthology

called the *Greek Anthology*, made c. 925 by Constantine Cephalas, a Byzantine Greek. In the 16th c. anthologizing became commonplace. From this period date two important Latin anthologies: *Catalecta veterum poetarum* (1573) and *Epigrammata et poemata vetera* (1590). In England several notable collections appeared: *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557); Clement Robinson's *Very Pleasaunt Sonettes and Storyes in Myter* (1566); *The Paradice of Dainty Devices* (1576); *A Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions* (1578); *The Phoenix Nest* (1593); *England's Parnassus* (1600); *England's Helicon* (1602); *Poetical Rhapsody* (1602); then little of note until *Percy's Reliques* (1765). In 1831 Southey put out *Select Works of the British Poets*, and in 1861 came *Palgrave's Golden Treasury*, probably the most famous of all English anthologies. Others worthy of mention are T. H. Ward's *English Poets* (1883) and Arthur Quiller Couch's *Oxford Book of English Verse* (1900). In the last fifty years anthologies have proliferated endlessly.

**anthypophora** The answer to an argument put up by oneself. It is put up only that it may be refuted. A rhetorical device.

**antibacchius** See PALIMBACCHIUS.

**anticlimax** According to Dr Johnson's definition (and he appears to have been the first to record the word) it is 'a sentence in which the last part expresses something lower than the first'. In fact, a bathetic declension from a noble tone to one less exalted. The effect can be comic and is often intended to be so. A good example occurs in Fielding's burlesque (*q.v.*), *The Tragedy of Tragedies*:

King [Arthur, to his queen Dolallola]  
... Whence flow those Tears fast down thy blubber'd  
cheeks,  
Like swoln Gutter, gushing through the Streets?

The effect can also be unintentionally comic. There is a well-known example in Crashaw's *Saint Mary Magdalene, or the Weeper*:

And now where e'er He strays,  
Among the Galilean mountains,  
Or more unwelcome ways,  
He's followed by two faithful fountains;  
Two walking baths; two weeping motions;  
Portable, & compendious oceans.



See BATHOS.

**anti-hero** A 'non-hero', or the antithesis of a hero of the old-fashioned kind who was capable of heroic deeds, who was dashing, strong, brave and resourceful. It is a little doubtful whether such heroes have ever existed in any quantity in fiction except in some romances (*q.v.*) and in the cheaper kind of romantic novelette (*q.v.*). However, there have been many instances of fictional heroes who have displayed noble qualities and virtuous attributes. The anti-hero is the man who is given the vocation of failure.

An early example is the eponymous knight of *Don Quixote* (1605). Another notable instance is Tristram Shandy – in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759). One can find isolated representatives in European literature from the 18th c. onwards. A case could be argued that Leopold Bloom in Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) is a kind of anti-hero. Camus' Meersault in *L'Étranger* (1942) is an example. Charles Lumley in John Wain's *Hurry on Down* (1953) is another. When Kingsley Amis created Jim Dixon in *Lucky Jim* (1954) the post-war anti-hero type was established, and the anti-hero Jimmy Porter of John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger* (1956) produced a succession of personalities of the same kind. Other examples are Sebastien in J. P. Donleavy's *The Ginger Man* (1955), Herzog in Bellow's *Herzog* (1964), and Yossarian in Joseph Heller's *Catch 22* (1961). The principal male characters in several of Graham Greene's novels are also anti-heroes. See ANGRY YOUNG MAN; ANTI-NOVEL; NOUVEAU ROMAN.

**antilogy** (Gk 'against knowledge') An illogicality or contradiction in terms.

**anti-masque** An innovation by Ben Jonson in 1609. It took the form of either a buffoonish and grotesque episode before the main masque (*q.v.*) or an interlude, similarly farcical, during it. When it happened it was also known as an ante-masque. One form of it was a burlesque (*q.v.*) of the masque itself, in which case it had some affinity with the Greek satyr play (*q.v.*).

**antimetabole** See CHIASMUS.

**antinomy** (Gk 'contradictory law') A kind of division or contradiction between laws or principles, yet the term also contains the idea that the contradictions are reconcilable. For instance, Kant

## antinomy

proposes that on the subject of taste (*q.v.*), there can be no argument, and at the same time there can be. See APOLLONIAN/DIONYSIAN; CLASSICISM/ROMANTICISM; HEBRAISM/HELLENISM; NAIV UND SENTIMENTALISCH.

**anti-novel** This kind of fiction tends to be experimental and breaks with the traditional story-telling methods and form of the novel (*q.v.*). Often there is little attempt to create an illusion of realism (*q.v.*) or naturalism (*qq.v.*) for the reader. It establishes its own conventions and a different kind of realism which deters the reader from self-identification with the characters, yet at the same time persuades him to 'participate' but not vicariously. One has only to compare novels by, say, Thomas Hardy and Henry James, with those by, say, Nabokov and Samuel Beckett, to see how the work of the latter writers comes into the anti-novel category; though anti-novel is a thoroughly misleading term.

We can see the process of anti-novel innovation at work in the major experiments of James Joyce in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, in several novels by Virginia Woolf (e.g. *Mrs Dalloway*, *The Waves*, and *To The Lighthouse*) and in the early fiction of Samuel Beckett (e.g. *Mulloy* and *Murphy*).

Some of the principal features of the anti-novel are: lack of an obvious plot; diffused episode; minimal development of character; detailed surface analysis of objects; many repetitions; innumerable experiments with vocabulary, punctuation and syntax; variations of time sequence; alternative endings and beginnings.

Some of the more extreme features are: detachable pages; pages which can be shuffled like cards; coloured pages; blank pages; collage effects; drawings; hieroglyphics.

Of notable and influential contributions to the anti-novel – apart from those referred to above – one should mention Sartre's *La Nausée* (1938); Flann O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds* (1939); Nathalie Sarraute's *Tropismes* (1939) and her *Le Planetarium* (1959); Camus' *L'Étranger* (1942); Philip Toynbee's *Tea with Mrs Goodman* (1947); Robe Grillet's *Jalousie* (1957); Butor's *L'Emploi de temps* (1957) and *La Modification* (1957); Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962); Rayner Heppenstall's *The Connecting Door* (1962) and *The Shearers* (1969); Christine Brooke-Rose's *Out* (1964), *Such* (1966) and *Between* (1968); Claude Simon's *L'Herbe* (1958).

It is worth noting that as far back as 1627 Charles Sorel subtitled his novel *Le Berger extravagant* an *anti-roman*. See also ANTI-



## antistoichon

HERO; AVANT-GARDE; EXPRESSIONISM; FABULATION;  
NOUVEAU ROMAN; NOUVELLE VAGUE; STREAM OF CON-  
SCIOUSNESS.

**antiphon** either a hymn (*q.v.*) in alternate parts or a lyric (*q.v.*) containing responses, as in this example from George Herbert, which again is a kind of hymn:

CHO. Let all the world in every corner sing, My God and  
King.

VERS. The heavens are not too high,  
His praise may thither fly;  
The earth is not too low,  
His praises there may grow.

CHO. Let all the world in every corner sing, My God and  
King.

VERS. The church with psalms must shout,  
No door can keep them out:  
But above all, the heart  
Must bear the longest part.

CHO. Let all the world in every corner sing, My God and  
King.

The Divine Office is sung antiphonally.

**antiphrasis** (Gk 'expressed by the opposite') The use of a word in a sense opposite to its proper meaning. Common in irony and litotes (*qq.v.*)

**anti-play** A dramatic work which not only ignores the traditional conventions but actively distorts them. There is no observable plot and little development of character. Dialogue is often inconsequential or totally disconnected. Playwrights in the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*) have used anti-play techniques. Sometimes they have been very successful. *See* HAPPENING.

**antispast** (Gk 'drawn in the contrary direction') A metrical foot comprising two stressed syllables flanked by two unstressed ones:  $\cup / / \cup$ . In other words, an iamb and a trochee (*qq.v.*). It is by no means certain if this foot (*q.v.*) actually existed in Classical prosody.

**antistoichon** (Gk 'balanced opposition of ideas') An antithetical

### antistoichon

device in which statements counterbalance each other. *See* ANTI-THESIS.

**antistrophe** (Gk 'counter-turning') In Greek drama the return movement of the Chorus from left to right. It also refers to the choric song accompanying this movement. It was also the second of a pair of movements or stanzas in an ode (*q.v.*), exactly the same metrically as the preceding strophe (*q.v.*). *See also* EPODE.

**antisyzygy** *See* OXYMORON.

**antithesis** (Gk 'opposition') Fundamentally, contrasting ideas sharpened by the use of opposite or noticeably different meanings. For example, Bacon's apophthegm (*q.v.*): 'Crafty men contemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them'.

It is common in rhetoric (*q.v.*) and was particularly favoured by the Augustan poets and users of the heroic couplet (*q.v.*). These lines from Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* are strongly antithetical:

Rais'd in extremes, and in extremes decry'd;  
With Oaths affirm'd, with dying Vows deny'd.  
Not weighed, or winnow'd by the Multitude;  
But swallow'd in the Mass, unchew'd and Crude.  
Some Truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with Lyes;  
To please the Fools, and puzzle all the Wise.  
Succeeding times did equal folly call,  
Believing nothing, or believing all.

Pope was an expert at the antithetical, as this compact example in his *Moral Essays* shows:

Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise.

*See* EPIGRAM; OXYMORON.

**antode** (Gk 'opposite song') In Greek Old Comedy (*q.v.*), during the parabasis (*q.v.*) the antode was the lyric song sung by one half of the chorus in response to the ode (*q.v.*) sung earlier by the other half.

**antonomasia** (Gk 'naming instead') A figure of speech in which an epithet, or the name of an office or dignity, is substituted for a proper name. So 'the Bard' for Shakespeare, 'a Gamaliel' for

## apocalyptic literature

a wise man; 'a Casanova' for a womanizer; and 'a Hitler' for a tyrant. *See also* AUNT EDNA; METONYMY; SYNECDOCHE.

**antonym** A word of opposite meaning to another: fierce/mild; ugly/beautiful; abstract/concrete. *See* SYNONYM.

**aphaeresis** (Gk 'a taking away') The suppression of an initial, unstressed syllable, usually a vowel: 'mongst' for *amongst*; 'mid' for *amid*; 'tween' for *between*. *See also* APHESIS.

**aphesis** (Gk 'letting go') The loss of an unstressed initial vowel: 'squire' from *esquire*; 'fence' from *defence*. *See also* APHAERESIS.

**aphorism** (Gk 'marking off by boundaries') A terse statement of a truth or dogma; a pithy generalization, which may or may not be witty. The proverb (*q.v.*) is often aphoristic; so is the maxim (*q.v.*). A successful aphorism exposes and condenses at any rate a part of the truth, and is an aperçu or insight. For instance, the anonymous 'Conscience is a cur that will let you get past it, but that you cannot keep from barking'.

The aphorism is of great antiquity, timeless, and international. The Classical, Hebraic and Oriental worlds have all made great contributions, and the common stock of wisdom and knowledge everywhere has scattered these nuggets of truth in the writings and sayings of many civilizations. Of the thousands who have added to the store the following deserve special mention: Aristotle, Plato, St Augustine; Montaigne, Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort, La Bruyère, Vauvenargues, Joubert, de Tocqueville, Valéry, de Chazal, Remy de Gourmont, Proust, Camus; Chaucer, Francis Bacon, Sir Thomas Browne, George Halifax, Pope, Dr Johnson, Lord Chesterfield, William Blake, Coleridge, Walter Bagehot, Hazlitt, Samuel (Erewhon) Butler, Oscar Wilde, Bernard Shaw, A. N. Whitehead, W. H. Auden; Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thoreau; Goethe, Schopenhauer, Lichtenberg, Nietzsche, Karl Kraus; Kierkegaard; Chekhov; Cesare Pavese; Ortega y Gasset; Santayana. *See also* SENTENTIA.

**apocalyptic literature** The literature of revelation, particularly of the future. The last book of the New Testament, *The Revelation of St John*, is a classic instance. A work which aspires to the prophetic tone and manner – especially if it be doom-laden and minatory – may also be described as apocalyptic. An early example is

## apocalyptic literature

Wulfstan's homily (or address) to the English (c. 1014). In the later Middle Ages chiliastic movements in Europe evoked a large number of diatribes against the wickedness of humanity and the imminence of the end of the world. Sermon literature abounds in apocalyptic visions.

**apocope** (Gk 'cutting off') The dropping of a letter or letters from the end of a word. Fairly common in verse to achieve an elision, especially with the word 'the'. Other examples are: taxi(cab); edit(or); curio(sity); cinema(tograph). *See* BACK FORMATION.

**apocrypha** (Gk 'things hidden') Writings of unknown or uncertain authorship. Fourteen books of the Greek version of the *Old Testament*, contained in the *Septuagint* but not in the Hebrew Bible, were rejected from the Canon (q.v.). Writings ascribed on insufficient evidence to certain authors (e.g. Chaucer and Shakespeare) are also called apocryphal.

**apologue** *See* FABLE.

**Apollonian/Dionysian** Terms used by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music* (1872). Nietzsche was making a distinction between reason and instinct, culture and primitive nature; possibly brains as opposed to loins and heart. Apollonian is also often thought to signify 'sunny' and 'serene', whereas the Dionysian means 'stormy' and 'turbulent'. Nietzsche argued that these elements formed a unity in Greek tragedy where dialogue provided the Apollonian element and the dithyrambic choral songs the Dionysiac. In the 19th c. this antinomy (q.v.) was much elaborated, particularly in the work of Schopenhauer, and it was Schiller who made the famous distinction between *naiv und sentimentalisch* (q.v.). Among more modern writers D. H. Lawrence was deeply interested in it. He might be described as a Dionysiac writer whereas Stendhal and André Gide were Apollonian. Of course, a combination is possible, as in Shakespeare's sonnets, or the love poems of Donne and Burns. *See also* CLASSICISM/ROMANTICISM; EMOTIVE LANGUAGE; HELLENISM/HEBRAISM.

**apology** (Gk 'defence') A work written to defend a writer's opinions or to elaborate and clarify a problem. A well-known example is Plato's *Apology* in which Socrates defends himself against the

governing body of Athens. Another notable instance is Sir Philip Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie*, or *Defence of Poesie* (1595), an essay which examines the art of poetry and discusses the state of English poetry at the time. Shelley also wrote a *Defence of Poetry* (1821), a remarkable achievement in which he vindicates his views on the elements of love and imagination in poetry. A very different work was Lamennais' apologia, *Paroles d'un Croyant* (1834), a 'reply' to a Papal Encyclical. The most famous example of more recent times is John Henry Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864): a masterly exposition of Newman's beliefs, and a refutation of Charles Kingsley's accusation that Newman did not regard truth as a necessary virtue.

**apophasis** (Gk 'from speaking') Affirming by apparent denial, a stressing through negation. A famous example is contained in Hamlet's parting words to Gertrude at the end of the 'bedroom scene' (II, ii):

Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:  
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;

He goes on to emphasize a series of injunctions.

**apophthegm** (Gk 'speaking out plainly') A terse, pithy saying – akin to proverb, maxim and aphorism (*qq.v.*). A well-known collection from antiquity was the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, a compilation of anecdotes and sayings from the Egyptian Desert Fathers. The work was probably compiled late in the 5th c. Francis Bacon made a collection entitled *Apophthegms New and Old* (1624), which contained the saying 'Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper'. *See also* GNOMIC VERSE; SENTENTIA.

**aposiopesis** (Gk 'becoming silent') A rhetorical device in which speech is broken off abruptly and the sentence is left unfinished. A memorable example occurs in a speech by King Lear (II, iv) in which he fulminates against Regan and Goneril:

– No, you unnatural hags,  
I will have such revenges on you both,  
That all the world shall – I will do such things, –  
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be  
The terrors of the earth.

**apostrophe** (Gk 'turning away') A figure of speech in which a thing,



## apostrophe

a place, an abstract quality, an idea, a dead or absent person, is addressed as if present and capable of understanding. Classic instances are Goldsmith's opening of *The Deserted Village*: 'Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain . . .'; Antony's cry in *Julius Caesar*: 'O Judgement! thou art fled to brutish beasts . . .'; and Wordsworth's passionate appeal in *London 1812*: 'Milton! Thou should'st be living at this hour . . .'.

**aptronym** A name that fits the nature and character of a person and/or their occupation. This is how names were originally acquired or bestowed (e.g. Hunter, Farmer, Cooper, Smith, Mason, Miller, Draper). Aptronymic titles have often been used in literature as a kind of label (William Archer called them 'label names'). They were common in the Morality Plays (*q.v.*), in allegories like Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in novels (especially those of Fielding, Dickens and Thackeray) and in dramatic comedy (e.g. plays by Jonson, Congreve, Sheridan and Goldsmith). Famous instances are Mr Worldly Wiseman, Mrs Malaprop and Mr Gradgrind. See ALLEGORY; COMEDY OF HUMOURS; HUMOURS.

**Arcadia** Originally a mountainous district in the Peloponnese. For Classical poets Arcadia was the symbol of rural serenity, the harmony of the legendary Golden Age. Virgil's *Eclogues* illustrate an ideal way of pastoral life in Arcadia, where shepherds and shepherdesses, removed from 'real life', devote themselves to their flocks and their songs. During the Renaissance the idea was popularly revived by a number of writers, especially Sannazzaro, who published a series of verses linked by prose called *L'Arcadia* (1501), and by Sir Philip Sidney who published a prose romance, also called *Arcadia* (1590). Spenser's pastoral (*q.v.*) poems also depict this ideal existence. In the 16th c. the expression *Et ego in Arcadia vixi* ('And I too have lived' or 'Even I lived in Arcadia') was invented and attached to pictures of pastoral life.

**archaism** This term denotes what is old or obsolete. Its use was common in poetry until the end of the 19th c. The reasons are various. Sometimes the older form of a word was more suitable metrically. Many archaisms were used because of their associations with the past, especially those linked to the age of chivalry and romances (*q.v.*). Spenser, who much admired Chaucer, was the person chiefly responsible for the fashion – particularly in *The*

*Faerie Queene* (1589, 1596). Spenser, in order to try to recreate the spirit and atmosphere of chivalry and devotion in the Middle Ages (as seen from his point of view), used a sort of poetic diction (*q.v.*) which was partly archaic and partly of his own devising. Milton, who greatly admired Spenser, used them sparingly; but in Milton we find a different kind of archaism – namely the use of a syntax and word order characteristic of Latin which was by his day a dead language. The 18th c. ‘Spenserians’ continued the tradition; so did Keats (much influenced by Spenser), Coleridge and William Morris. Tennyson used archaisms for the same purposes as Keats and Spenser. Late in the 19th c. Gerard Manley Hopkins also resuscitated a number of archaisms, but they were seldom of the Spenserian type. He was interested in ‘working’ words, rather than the decorative or atmospheric.

This stanza from Thomas Parnell’s *A Fairy Tale* (c. 1700) illustrates a grotesque use of the Spenserian variety:

With that Sir Topaz, hapless youth!  
In accents faltering, ay for *ruth*  
Intreats them pity *graunt*;  
For *als* he been a mister *wight*,  
Betray’d by wandering in the night  
To tread the circled haunt.

The italicized words were all archaisms by the time this was written.

On the other hand, in Keats’s *The Eve of Saint Mark* (c. 1819) we find a deliberate archaism to suggest something written in the 14th c. The maiden fair Bertha is reading the ‘legend page’ of ‘Holy Mark’:

’Gif ye wol stonden hardie wight –  
Amiddes of the blacke night –  
Righte in the churche porce, pardie  
Ye wol behold a companie  
Appouchen thee full dolourouse  
For sooth to sain from everich house  
Be it in city or village  
Wol come the Phantom and image  
Of ilka gent and ilka carle  
Whom coldè Deathè hath in parle  
And wol some day that very year  
Touchen with foulè venime spear  
And sadly do them all to die –

## archaism

And so on for a further nineteen lines before he reverts to normal language thus:

At length her constant eyelids come  
Upon the fervent martyrdom;  
Then lastly to his holy shrine,  
Exalt amid the tapers' shine  
At Venice, —

Except in parody (*q.v.*), archaism is rare in prose. A noteworthy example is C. M. Doughty's *Arabia Deserta* (1888). In this extraordinary work Doughty used a mixture of Chaucerian and Elizabethan English combined with Arabic.

**archetype** (Gk 'original pattern') A basic model from which copies are made; therefore a prototype. In general terms, the abstract idea of a class of things which represents the most typical and essential characteristics shared by the class. Thus a paradigm or exemplar. An archetype is atavistic and universal, the product of 'the collective unconscious' and inherited from our ancestors. The fundamental facts of human existence are archetypal: birth, growing up, love, family and tribal life, dying, death, not to mention the struggle between children and parents, and fraternal rivalry. Certain character or personality types have become established as more or less archetypal. For instance: the rebel, the Don Juan (womanizer), the all-conquering hero, the braggadocio (*q.v.*), the country bumpkin, the local lad who makes good, the self-made man, the hunted man, the siren, the witch and *femme fatale*, the villain, the traitor, the snob and the social climber, the guilt-ridden figure in search of expiation, the damsel in distress, and the person more sinned against than sinning. Creatures, also, have come to be archetypal emblems. For example, the lion, the eagle, the snake, the hare and the tortoise. Further archetypes are the rose, the paradisaal garden and the state of 'pre-Fall' innocence. Themes include the arduous quest or search, the pursuit of vengeance, the overcoming of difficult tasks, the descent into the underworld, symbolic fertility rites and redemptive rituals.

The archetypal idea has always been present and diffused in human consciousness. Only latterly have the idea and subject been explored and analysed in depth. The major works in this venture of discovery include: J. G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890–1915); C. G. Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious: A Study of*

*the Transformations and Symbolisms of the Libido* (1916) and *Psychological Types* (1946); Sigmund Freud's *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1920); Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934); E. Cassirer's *Language and Myth* (trs. 1946); J. Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949); B. Seward's *The Symbolic Rose* (1960), plus several other inquiries. *See also* IMAGERY; MYTH; STOCK CHARACTER; STOCK RESPONSE; STOCK SITUATION; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**Archilochian verse** So called after the Greek poet Archilochus (c. 700 B.C.). He is believed to have invented lines or couplets in which different meters were combined. The main forms are: Greater Archilochian – a dactylic tetrameter (*q.v.*) plus a trochaic tripod (*q.v.*); and the Lesser Archilochian – a dactylic trimeter catalectic. He also used the dactylic tetrameter catalectic, the iambelegus and the elegiambus. In addition he is credited with four different kinds of strophe (*q.v.*). His work had a major influence on Horace. *See* CATALEXIS; DACTYL; TROCHEE.

**archive** (Gk 'public office') Archives are either the repository of public records, or the records themselves.

**argot** A French word of unknown origin. It means slang or cant (*qq.v.*) and usually refers to the slang used by social outcasts or those who are disapproved of socially. Much abstruse *argot* of this kind has been assembled by Auguste le Breton in *Langue Verte et Noirs Desseins* (1960). *See also* BACK SLANG; PATOIS; RHYMING SLANG.

**argument** (a) In literary use an abstract or summary of a plot pre-facing a work. For instance, each book of *Paradise Lost* is preceded by an explanation of what is going to happen. This used to be common practice with a long poem, a novel or a treatise of some length and substance. The practice survives in the summaries sometimes found in the contents pages of a book; (b) An argument is also a division of a speech; (c) The term is also used to describe the dialectic (*q.v.*) in a poem. The argument in this fine poem by Thomas Beedome, for instance, is set forth in four different but interlocked statements and is concluded in the resolution of the final couplet:



*The Question and Answer*

When the sad ruines of that face  
 In its owne wrinklès buried lyes  
 And the stiffe pride of all its grace,  
 By time undone, fals slack and dyes:  
     Wilt thou not sigh, and wish in some vext fit,  
     That it were now as when I courted it?

And when thy glasse shall it present,  
 Without those smiles which once were there,  
 Showing like some stale monument,  
 A scalpe departed from its haire,  
     At thy selfe frighted wilt not start and swear  
     That I belied thee, when I call'd thee faire?

Yes, yes, I know thou wilt, and so  
 Pitty the weaknesse of thy scorne,  
 That now hath humbled thee to know,  
 Though faire it was, it is forlorne,  
     Love's sweetes thy aged corps embalming not,  
     What marvell if thy carkasse, beauty, rot?

Then shall I live, and live to be  
 Thy envie, thou my pittie; say  
 When e're thou see mee, or I thee,  
 (Being nighted from thy beautie's day),  
     'Tis hee, and had my pride not wither'd mee,  
     I had, perhaps, beene still as fresh as hee.

Then shall I smile, and answer: 'True thy scorne  
 Left thee thus wrinkled, slackt, corrupt, forlorne.'

**argumentum ad** (L 'appeal to') There are several phrases: (a) *ad baculum* ('to the stick', and thus the argument according to force); (b) *ad crumenam* ('to the wallet', the argument which appeals to a person's material instincts); (c) *ad hominem* ('to the man', that is to his feelings); (d) *ad ignorantiam* ('to ignorance', that is, the argument which depends upon the person being ignorant or uninformed); (e) *ad populum* ('to the people', that is the argument which is intended to rouse the feelings of the crowd); (f) *ad verecundiam* ('to modesty', that is an argument so constructed that the other person has to make a cautious reply in order to avoid being indecorous).



## art for art's sake

**ars est celare artem** (L 'art is to conceal art') The implication is that the best art seems spontaneous though in all probability it is the outcome of extremely hard work. Or 'hard writing makes easy reading'. See INSPIRATION; SPONTANEITY.

**arsis and thesis** (Gk 'lifting up' and 'setting down') The terms describe the upward and downward beat keeping time in Greek verse. The long syllable of a dactyl (*q.v.*) was the *thesis*; the *arsis* comprised the two short beats.

**artificial comedy** See COMEDY OF MANNERS.

**arte mayor** (Sp 'major art') In the first place an eight-syllable verse in stanzas of eight lines; later of twelve syllables. It was usually employed for longer poems and there were several variations on the basic form. The twelve-syllable line would have a caesura (*q.v.*) after the sixth syllable and therefore this scheme amounted to a pair of *versos de redondilla menor*. But whereas the latter was only stressed on the fifth syllable, in *arte mayor* there is a stress on the second syllable. The rhyme scheme was usually abba acca. Intimations of *arte mayor* begin with Juan Ruiz, the Archpriest of Hita (*c.* 1280–*c.* 1351) and stories in the *Conde Lucanor*. Juan de Mena (1411–56) brought a new seriousness to Spanish poetry and was one of the masters of *arte mayor*. See ARTE MENOR; REDONDILLA.

**arte menor** (Sp 'minor art') A Spanish metrical term denoting lines of two to eight syllables with accent on the penultimate, and either assonance or rhyme. This type of line being relatively easy to compose *arte menor* can be said to be a rather vague term. Popular poetry of many types falls readily into this category. It is found in traditional narrative poetry, popular song, and dramatic work. See ARTE MAYOR.

**art for art's sake** The phrase connotes the idea that a work of art has an intrinsic value without didactic or moral purpose. This concept seems to have been first put forward by Lessing in *Laokoon* (1766), and became something of an artistic battle-cry or slogan (*q.v.*) following the publication of Gautier's Preface to *Mademoiselle de Maup in* (1835). Throughout the 19th c. it became a guiding principle for many writers. Oscar Wilde was one of its leading

**art for art's sake**

advocates. *See* AESTHETICISM; DECADENCE; PARNASSIANS; REALISM.

**arts, the seven liberal** *See* QUADRIVIUM.

**ascending rhythm** *See* RISING RHYTHM.

**Asclepiad** A meter named after the Greek poet Asclepiades (c. 290 B.C.) of Samos. It comprised one spondee, two or three choriambes and one iamb (*qq.v.*). It was used for lyric and tragic verse and was much employed by Horace. It is rare in English verse. W. H. Auden was probably the first poet since Campion to use accentual Asclepiads (in *In Due Season*).

**aside** In drama a few words or a short passage spoken in an undertone or to the audience. It is a theatrical convention and by convention the words are presumed inaudible to other characters on stage; unless of course the aside be between two characters and therefore clearly not meant for anyone else who may be present. It was in continual use until early in this century (especially in comedy and melodrama *qq.v.*). The advent of 'naturalistic drama' (*q.v.*) led to its almost complete exclusion. However, it is still liberally used in pantomime (*q.v.*) and in farce (*q.v.*).

**association** The shared connection between an object and ideas. Coleridge spoke of it in *Biographia Literaria*: 'Ideas by having been together acquire a power of recalling each other; or every partial representation awakes the total representation of which it had been a part'.

Any sensory perception or idea may be associated with something from the past. Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* is a sustained exercise in the use of associations. Nearly all poetry is strongly associative. *See* AMBIGUITY; CONNOTATION; DISSOCIATION OF SENSIBILITY; SUGGESTION.

**assonance** Sometimes called 'vocalic rhyme', it consists of the repetition of similar vowel sounds, usually close together, to achieve a particular effect of euphony (*q.v.*). There is a kind of drowsy sonority in the following lines from Tennyson's *Lotos-Eaters* which is assonantal:

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:  
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:

All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone  
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone,  
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust is blown.

In *Strange Meeting* Wilfred Owen uses a vocalic or half rhyme (*q.v.*) to similar effect:

It seemed that out of battle I escaped  
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped  
Through granites which titanic wars had groined.  
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,  
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.

See also ALLITERATION; CONSONANCE; EUPHONY; MELOPOEIA; ONOMATOPOEIA; PHANOPOEIA; VOWEL RHYME.

**asynartete** (Gk 'disconnected') Applied to a poem whose divisions have different rhythms and meters. The creator of this sort of verse was Archilochus (7th c. B.C.) who used dactylic, trochaic and iambic verse. Hence the term Archilochian verse (*q.v.*).

**asyndeton** (Gk 'unconnected') A rhetorical device where conjunctions, articles and even pronouns are omitted for the sake of speed and economy. Puttenham, in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), calls it 'loose language', but it has been particularly popular in modern poetry (e.g. the work of W. H. Auden, Robert Lowell and John Berryman) as a means of achieving compact expression. Milton often used it, in *Paradise Lost* especially:

The first sort by their own suggestion fell  
Self-tempted, self-depraved; man falls, deceived  
By the other first; man therefore shall find grace,  
The other none . . .

See ELLIPSIS.

**asyntactic** (Gk 'not arranged') Applied to prose or verse which is loose, ungrammatical in structure and therefore which breaks the normal conventions governing word order. See SYNTAX.

**atmosphere** The mood and feeling, the intangible quality which appeals to extra-sensory as well as sensory perception, evoked by a work of art. For instance, the opening scene in *Hamlet* where the watch is tense and apprehensive, even 'jumpy'. By contrast,

## atmosphere

the beginning of Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* indicates clearly that the play is going to be comic to the point of knockabout.

**atmosphere of the mind** A phrase invented by Henry James to denote what the subjective writer of the novel tries to convey to the reader. After a time we in a sense 'inhabit' the writer's mind, breathe that air and are permeated by his vision.

**atonic** (Gk 'without tone or stress') Generally used to describe the unaccented syllables of a word; or, in verse, the unstressed syllables of a word or foot (*q.v.*).

**Atellan Fables** *See* **FABULA.**

**Atticism** A style adopted by Greek and Roman orators; distinguished by its simplicity and directness and by its lack of rhetorical device.

**aubade** (F 'dawn song') The Provençal and German equivalents are *alba* and *Tagelied* (*q.v.*) respectively. The dawn song is found in almost all the world's early literatures and expresses the regret of parting lovers at daybreak. The earliest European examples date from the end of the 12th c. There is a theory that the *aubade* grew out of the night watchman's announcement from his tower of the passing of night and the renewal of day. The exchange between Romeo and Juliet at the end of their wedding night is a good example. Perhaps the most beautiful and moving one in English literature occurs in Book III of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*:

Myn hertes lif, my trist, and my plesaunce,  
That I was born, allas, what me is wo,  
That day of us moot make disseveraunce! . . .  
For tyme it is to ryse and hennes go,  
Or ellis I am lost for evere mo!  
O nyght, allas! why nyltow over us hove,  
As long as whan Almena lay by Jove?

Thus *Troilus* begins when he hears the cock crow, and the exchange continues between the lovers for a further fourteen stanzas.

**audition colorée** *See* **SYNAESTHESIA.**

**Aufklärung** A German term for Enlightenment (*q.v.*).

**Augustan Age** During the reign of the Emperor Augustus (27 B.C.–A.D. 14) many distinguished writers flourished, notably Virgil, Horace, Ovid and Tibullus. The term has been applied to that period of English history in which Dryden, Pope, Addison, Swift, Goldsmith, Steele and, to some extent, Johnson, lived and imitated their style: that is the final decades of the 17th c. and the first half of the 18th c. So the phrase suggests a period of urbane and classical elegance in writing, a time of harmony, decorum (*q.v.*) and proportion. Goldsmith contributed an essay to *The Bee* on 'the Augustan Age in England', but he confined it to the reign of Queen Anne (1702–14). In French literature the term is applied to the age of Corneille, Racine and Molière. *See also* ENLIGHTENMENT; NEOCLASSICISM.

**Aunt Edna** The typical theatre-goer invented by Terence Rattigan and called by Kenneth Tynan 'a mythical, middle-class admirer . . . backbone of the theatre . . . she follows, never leads, intelligent taste.' An instance of antonomasia (*q.v.*).

**aureate language** A kind of poetic diction (*q.v.*) often used in English and Scottish poetry in the 15th c. It is particularly noticeable in the work of Lydgate and Hawes in England; and of Dunbar, Henryson and King James I in Scotland. A rather ornate and ornamental language, often consisting of vernacular coinages from Latin words. These lines by Dunbar give some indication of the style:

Hale, sterne superne, hale in eterne  
 In Godis sicht to schyne:  
 Lucerne in derne for to discernen  
 Be glory and grace devyne:  
 Hodiern, modern, sempitern,  
 Angelicall regyne,  
 Our tern inferne for to disperne,  
 Helpe, rialest rosyne.  
*Ave Maria, gracia plena,*  
 Haile, fresche floure femynyne;  
 Yerne us, guberne, virgin matern,  
 Of reuth baith rute and ryne . . .

**autobiography** An account of a man's life by himself. The term



## autobiography

appears to have been first used by Southey in 1809. In Dr Johnson's opinion no man was better qualified to write his life than himself, but this is debatable. Memory may be unreliable. Few can recall clear details of their early life and are therefore dependent on other people's impressions, of necessity equally unreliable. Moreover, everyone tends to remember what he wants to remember. Disagreeable facts are sometimes glossed over or repressed, truth may be distorted for the sake of convenience or harmony and the occlusions of time may obscure as much as they reveal.

An autobiography may be largely fictional. Rousseau's *Confessions* (published posthumously in 1781 and 1788) are a case in point. They are unreliable as literal truth; they have a different literary value.

From Classical times little in the way of autobiography survives, and it is likely that little was written. Then history and autobiography were almost the same thing – as we can see from the *Histories* of Herodotus, Xenophon's *Anabasis* and Caesar's *Commentaries*. Tacitus reports that Rutilius Rufus and Emilius Scaurus both wrote autobiographies, but they are not extant. The nearest we get to the modern conception of autobiography at this period is the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, and these are of the 2nd c. A.D.

The first autobiography of any note was St Augustine's *Confessions* of the 4th c.: an intensely personal account of spiritual experience and an extraordinary instance of deep psychological self-analysis of a kind that has become commonplace only in modern times.

In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede (673–735) gave a brief account of his own life, but it was not until the 16th c. that autobiographies became common. Benvenuto Cellini (1500–71) was the author of one of the most vivid autobiographies ever written. Another important instance was the *De Vita Propria Liber* by Cardan (1501–76), an extremely personal account. In 1580 the first *Essais* by Montaigne appeared – thoughtful and analytical excursions into his own self. It seems that the cult of anthropocentric humanism during the Renaissance period encouraged people to explore and analyse themselves in greater detail. The analysis of character and personality in plays, essays and character sketches became frequent. Increasing subjectivity was almost bound to produce autobiography.

From early in the 17th c. it became more and more the practice

to keep a diary or a journal (*q.v.*), and to compile memoirs and soon the more or less 'straight' autobiographical narrative became commonplace. Notable instances were: Thomas Bodley's brief account of his own life published in 1647; Margaret Cavendish's *True Relation of My Birth, Breeding and Life* (1656); John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666) and Richard Baxter's *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (1696). During the same period Evelyn and Pepys were compiling their famous diaries. Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici* (1642) was a highly self-revealing form of autobiography.

Some autobiographies written in the 17th c. were not published until much later for political reasons. Three such distinguished examples were Lord Herbert of Cherbury's account of his life up until 1624 which was eventually printed by Horace Walpole in 1764, Sir Kenelm Digby's *Private Memoirs* which were not published until 1827-28, and Clarendon's *Life of Clarendon* which came out in 1759.

At the end of the 17th c. George Fox published his *Journal* (1694), a fascinating document. It set something of a vogue for 18th and 19th c. Quakers like Ellwood, Woolman, Pearson and Shilleto. Wesley and fellow Wesleyans, too, wrote similar kinds of 'confessional' biographies. Wesley's *Journal* came out in 1771-74. Later Silas Todd and William Black published their lives.

Several other such works of great merit appeared during the 18th c. For example, Colley Cibber's *Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber* (1740), believed to be the first 'theatrical' autobiography; David Hume's *My Own Life* (1777); and Edward Gibbon's *Memoirs* (1796), which were put together by Lord Sheffield. Apart from these and Boswell's copious *Journals*, the two most famous personal accounts of the 18th c. were Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* (1766) and Rousseau's *Confessions* (1781 and 1788), the latter being one of the most influential books ever written.

During the 18th c. we find there is some connection between autobiography and the then relatively new form of the novel. For example, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1768) are taken to be a kind of autobiographical fiction, or fictionalized autobiography. A good deal of fiction since has been fairly thinly disguised autobiography; and there has been an enormous quantity of it in the last fifty years owing, in considerable measure, to the development of the stream of consciousness (*q.v.*) technique. Very occasionally, too, the long

## autobiography

poem has been used for autobiography. The classic instance is Wordsworth's *The Prelude* completed in 1805, and published posthumously in 1850.

From early in the 19th c. autobiography of almost every kind (factual, detached narrative; self-communing narrative; 'progress of the soul' narrative) has proliferated. Some of the most notable works are: Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809); Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography* (1850); Benjamin Haydon's *Autobiography and Journals* (1853); George Sand's *Histoire de ma vie* (1854-55); Cardinal Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864); Alfred de Vigny's *Journal d'un poète* (1867); John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* (1873); Carlyle's *Reminiscences* (1881); Trollope's *Autobiography* (1883); Renan's *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse* (1883); Ruskin's *Praeterita* (1886); Darwin's *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (1887); George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888), and in his later trilogy *Hail and Farewell* (1911-14); Stendhal's *Journal* (1888), covering the years 1801-18, and his *Vie de Henri Brulard* (1890) and *Souvenirs d'égotisme* (1892) which covers the period 1822-30; Herbert Spencer's *Autobiography* (1904); Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis* (1905); A. R. Wallace's *My Life* (1905); Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son* (1907); and W. H. Davies's *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp* (1908).

The First World War produced a number of very fine autobiographical records: T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1926); Robert Graves's *Good-bye to All That* (1927); Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War* (1928); and Siegfried Sassoon's *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930). Sassoon also gave us *The Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (1928); *Sherston's Progress* (1930-36); *The Old Century* (1938); *The Weald of Youth* (1942); and *Siegfried's Journey* (1945).

Other notable examples after the First World War have been: Barbellion's *Journal of a Disappointed Man* (1919); Forrest Reid's *Apostate* (1926); H. G. Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934); J. M. Barrie's *The Greenwood Hat* (1937); Havelock Ellis's *My Life* (1940); Bernard Shaw's *Sixteen Self-Sketches* (1948); and Sir Osbert Sitwell's *Left Hand! Right Hand!* (1944-50), the first and title volume of a five-volume account of his life. This is one of the longest autobiographies ever written. Other outstanding works have been Arnold Bennet's *Journals* (1932-33); André Gide's *Journals*, which he kept over a very long period - the 1885-1939 period being published in 1939, the 1939-42 period in 1946, and the 1942-49 period in 1950; Stephen Spender's *World*

*Within World* (1951), plus a recent and extensive work by Leonard Woolf in the shape of a five-volume life: *Sowing* (1960), *Growing* (1961), *Beginning Again* (1964), *Downhill All the Way* (1967) and *The Journey not the Arrival Matters* (1969); the third volume gives an interesting account of the Bloomsbury Group (*q.v.*). There is also Sir Compton Mackenzie's marathon *My Life and Times* (1963-71), in ten octaves; a work which could have been cut heavily to its advantage.

To these might be added five highly individual and readable books of an autobiographical nature: namely, W. H. Hudson's *Far Away and Long Ago* (1918); Winston Churchill's *My Early Life* (1930); Denton Welch's *Maiden Voyage* (1943); Flora Thompson's *Lark Rise to Candleford* (1945) and *Still Glides the Stream* (1948); and Richard Church's *Over the Bridge* (1945), to which *The Golden Sovereign* (1957) was a less successful sequel.

Since the Second World War almost anyone who has achieved distinction in life – and many who have not – has written an account of his life; especially politicians, statesmen and high-ranking members of the services. *See also* CONFESSIONAL LITERATURE; SUBJECTIVITY AND OBJECTIVITY.

**autoclesis** (Gk 'self-invitation') A rhetorical device by which an idea is introduced in negative terms in order to call attention to it and arouse curiosity. A classic example is Mark Antony's use of the will in *Julius Caesar* (III, ii) in order to rouse the mob's interest.

**automatic writing** Writing which is attempted without conscious control. It is more likely to be possible in states of hypnosis or under the influence of drugs. When Dadaism and Surrealism (*qq.v.*) were fashionable, the disciples of the creeds 'went in for' automatic writing. It produced the equivalent of a 'happening' (*q.v.*). Nothing of any importance survives.

**autos sacramentales** An allegorical and didactic genre of Spanish religious drama intended to expound the doctrines of the Church. The allegories were taken from biblical, Classical and historical themes. The plays were put on by the civic authorities and staged with pomp. Calderón (1600-81), the most famous of the playwrights who composed them, is credited with over eighty. *Autos* were performed until 1765, when they were banned by Charles III. *See also* ALLEGORY; MYSTERY PLAY.



## autotelic

**autotelic** (Gk 'self-completing') A jargon term employed in the New Criticism (*q.v.*) to denote that a poem, for instance, has no other end or purpose but to *be*; therefore it has no didactic, moral or any other additional purpose.

**auxesis** *See* AMPLIFICATION.

**avant-garde** An important and much used term in the history of art and literature. It clearly has a military origin ('advance guard') and, as applied to art and literature, denotes exploration, path-finding, innovation and invention; something new, something advanced (ahead of its time) and revolutionary.

In 1845 Gabriel-Désiré Laverdant published a work called *De la mission de l'art et du rôle des artistes*. In it he wrote:

Art, the expression of society, manifests, in its highest soaring, the most advanced social tendencies: it is the forerunner and the revealer. Therefore, to know whether art worthily fulfils its proper mission as initiator, whether the artist is truly of the avant-garde, one must know where Humanity is going, what the destiny of the human race is . . .

In 1878 Bakunin founded and published for a short time a periodical devoted to political agitation called *L'Avant-garde*. Even at this period it is rare to find the term applied to art and literature alone. Baudelaire treats it with scorn. In his personal notebook, *Mon cœur mis à nu*, he refers to 'les littérateurs d'avant-garde', and elsewhere he speaks of 'la presse militante' and 'la littérature militante'. He is referring to radical writers, to writers of the political left.

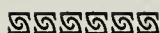
During the last quarter of the 19th c. the term and concept appear in both cultural and political contexts. Gradually the cultural-artistic meaning displaced the socio-political meaning. For a long time it has been commonplace to refer to *avant-garde* art or literature. Nowadays we are accustomed to think of the symbolist poets Verlaine, Rimbaud and Mallarmé as *avant-garde*; likewise the playwrights of the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*) and novelists like Alain Robe-Grillet, Michel Butor, Nathalie Sarraute. *See* ANTI-NOVEL; NOUVEAU ROMAN; NOUVELLE VAGUE.

**awdl** Originally this Welsh term was a variant of *odl* and came to acquire several meanings in succession: a stave (*q.v.*) bearing the



rhyme, a series of monorhymes, a poem in monorhyme (*q.v.*), a poem in particular *awdl* meters, and then a poem of some length in *cynghanedd* (*q.v.*) and in one of the strict meters (*q.v.*). In Wales an *awdl* is regarded as the summit of bardic achievement. *See* BARD; EISTEDDFOD.

# B



**bacchius** A metrical foot consisting of one unstressed syllable followed by two stressed ones: U//. The name may derive from the use of the foot in Greek drinking songs and verses devoted to the god Bacchus. Rare in English verse; not many three-syllable words take such quantities. *See* PALIMBACCHIUS.

**back-formation** The formation of what *appears* to be a root-word from a word which might be (but is not) a derivative of it. For example: *burgle* from *burglar*; *edit* from *editor*. *See* APOCOPE.

**back slang** A simple form of cryptic slang which consists merely of reversing words and saying them backwards. Thus, 'There aren't any apples for sale today' becomes 'Ereth tonera yna selppa rof elas yadot'. Cockneys are believed to be the originators of it and it can still be heard occasionally in London markets. It enables stall-holders to communicate with one another without bystanders or customers understanding. *See* ARGOT; PATOIS; SLANG.

**balada** A dance song of Provençal origin. It was not a fixed form but it had a refrain (*q.v.*) that was often repeated.

**ballad** Like *ballade* (*q.v.*) and ballet, the word derives from the late Latin and Italian *ballare* 'to dance'. Fundamentally a ballad is a song that tells a story and originally was a musical accompaniment to a dance. We can distinguish certain basic characteristics common to large numbers of ballads: (a) the beginning is often abrupt; (b) the language is simple; (c) the story is told through dialogue and action; (d) the theme is often tragic (though there are a number of comic ballads); (e) there is often a refrain (*q.v.*). To these features we may add: a ballad usually deals with a single episode; the events leading to the crisis are related swiftly; there

is minimal detail of surroundings; there is a strong dramatic element; there is considerable intensity and immediacy in the narration; the narrator is impersonal; stock, well-tried epithets are used in the oral tradition (*q.v.*) of kennings and Homeric epithets (*qq.v.*); there is frequently incremental repetition (*q.v.*); the single line of action and the speed of the story preclude much attempt at delineation of character; imagery is sparse and simple.

We may distinguish further between two kinds of ballad: the folk or popular ballad and the literary ballad. The former is anonymous and is transmitted from singer to singer by word of mouth. It thus belongs to oral tradition. The folk ballad exists among illiterate or semi-literate peoples and is still a living tradition in northern Greece, parts of the central Balkans, and in Sicily. Faroese and Icelandic ballad-makers continue to add to the corpus of traditional ballads. The latter kind of ballad is not anonymous and is written down by a poet as he composes it. These considerations apart, ballads of both traditions have distinct similarities. Here are two examples: firstly a traditional oral ballad; secondly a literary ballad by a modern poet, Charles Causley.

*The Twa Corbies*

As I was walking all alone,  
 I heard twa corbies making a mane;  
 The tane unto the t'other say,  
 'Where sall we gang and dine to-day?'  
 'In behint yon auld fail dyke,  
 I wot there lies a new-slain knight;  
 And naebody kens that he lies there,  
 But his hawk, his hound and his lady fair.  
 His hound is to the hunting gane,  
 His hawk, to fetch the wild-fowl hame,  
 His lady's ta'en another mate,  
 So we may mak our dinner sweet.  
 Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,  
 And I'll pike out his bonny blue een.  
 Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair,  
 We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.  
 'Mony a one for him makes mane,  
 But nane sall ken whare he is gane;

ballad

O'er his white banes, when they are bare,  
The wind sall blaw for evermair.'

*Mother, Get Up, Unbar the Door*

Mother, get up, unbar the door,  
Throw wide the window-pane,  
I see a man stand all covered in sand  
Outside in Vicarage Lane.

His body is shot with seventy stars,  
His face is as cold as Cain,  
His coat is a crust of desert dust  
And he comes from Alamein.

He has not felt the flaking frost,  
He has not felt the rain,  
And not one blow of the burning snow  
Since the night that he was slain.

O mother, in your husband's arms  
Too long now you have lain,  
Rise up, my dear, your true-love's here  
Upon the peaceful plain.

Though, mother, on your broken brow  
Forty long years are lain,  
The soldier they slew at twenty-two  
Never a one does gain.

I will unlock the fine front door  
And snap the silver chain,  
And meek as milk in my skin of silk  
I'll ease him of his pain.

My breast has been for years eighteen  
As white as Charles's wain,  
But now I'm had by a soldier lad  
Whistling *Lili Marlene*.

Farewell to Jack, farewell to Jim,  
And farewell Mary Jane,  
Farewell the good green sisterhood  
Knitting at purl and plain.

Go wash the water from your eye,  
 The bullet from your brain.  
 I'm drowned as a dove in the tunnel of love  
*And I'll never come home again.*

Ballad is a poetic form of great antiquity. Apart from those ballads which we may presume were the main materials for Homer's epics, the main ballad tradition in Europe begins to be evident in the late Middle Ages: in Denmark in the 12th c., in Russia in the 13th, in Spain, Scotland and England in the 14th. By the end of the 14th c. the ballad tradition was already well established in Scandinavia and in South Slav countries.

The ballad poet drew his materials from community life, from local and national history, from legend and folklore. His tales are usually of adventure, war, love, death and the supernatural. A very notable cycle combining all these themes and elements is the group of epic ballads or *narodne pesme* (q.v.) which grew up in Serbia as a result of the battle of Kosovo in 1389. In the British Isles the border conflicts between English and Scots produced many splendid ballads. Further important sources of balladry in England were the stories and legends of Robin Hood.

Among traditional ballads on various themes one should mention particularly *The Elfin Knight*; *The Twa Sisters*; *Lord Randal*; *The Cruel Mother*; *The Three Ravens*; *Clerk Colvill*; *Young Beichan*; *The Wife of Usher's Well*; *The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington*; *The Gypsy Laddie*; *James Harris*; *The Demon Lover*; and *Get up and Bar the Door*.

Of the Robin Hood and Border Ballads the following are among the better known: *Robin Hood and the Monk*; *Robin Hood's Death*; *Chevy Chase*; *Johnnie Armstrong*; *Johnnie Cock*; and *Captain Car*.

In the 18th c. the ballad tradition was particularly alive in Scotland, from which period survive *Edward*, *Sir Patrick Spens*, *Thomas Rhymer*, *Tam Lin*, *Geordie* and *Marie Hamilton*.

There are also a number of famous broadside (q.v.) ballads, some of which are anonymous and some of which are ascribed to authors. For instance: *A Ballade of the Scottyshe Kynge* (1513) by John Skelton; *The Journey into France*; *A Ballade Upon a Wedding* by Sir John Suckling; *On the Lord Mayor and Court of Alderman* (1674) by Andrew Marvell; *Clever Tom Clinch going to be hanged* (1726) by Swift; *Newgate's Garland* (1725) by John Gay; *The Fine Old English Gentleman* (1841) by Charles Dickens; *Wednesbury Cocking*; *Miss Bailey's Ghost*; and *Danny Deever* by Rudyard Kipling.



## ballad

There are also many fine Irish traditional ballads, particularly: *Brian O'Linn*; *Dunlavin Green*; *Brennan on the Moor*; *The Rocky Road to Dublin*; *The Night before Larry was Stretched*; *Mrs McGrath*; *The Old Orange Flute*; *Kevin Barry*; *The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly*; and *Van Diemen's Land*.

Among Australian and American ballads the following are more or less famous: *The Wild Colonial Boy*; *The Death of Morgan*; *Stir the Wallaby Stew*; *Barbara Allen*; *The Jam on Jerry's Rock*; *The Dying Cowboy*; *Blow the Candle Out*.

Among ballads in the literary tradition there are several distinguished works, especially Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*; Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*; Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*; W. S. Gilbert's *Bab Ballads*; Chesterton's *Ballad of the White Horse*; Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads*; and Masfield's *Salt-water Ballads*. To these should be added works which are in the ballad style. For instance, Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Lochinvar*; Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, and a number of works by Alfred Noyes (especially *The Highwayman*). Robert Service also wrote many poems which owe much to the traditional ballad – particularly *The Shooting of Dan MacGrew*. More recently the tradition of balladry has been sustained with many good poems by Charles Causley. Vernon Watkins's long narrative poem *The Ballad of the Mari Lwyd* also shows how alive and flexible this form still is.

Since early in the 18th c. there have been several important collections of ballad literature, namely: Allan Ramsay's *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (3 vols. 1724–27); Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765); J. Ritson's *Pieces of Ancient Popular Poetry* (1791); Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (3 vols. 1802–03); F. J. Child's *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (8 vols. 1857–59, 1882–98); A. Clark's *The Shirburn Ballads* (1907); Cecil Sharp's *Folk-songs of England* (5 vols. 1908–12); A. Quiller-Couch's *The Oxford Book of Ballads* (1910); *The Faber Book of Ballads* (1965). See also FOLKSONG; LAY; NARRATIVE VERSE.

**ballad meter** Traditionally a four-line stanza or quatrain (*q.v.*) containing alternating four-stress and three-stress lines. The rhyme scheme is usually abcb; sometimes abab. A refrain (*q.v.*) is common. Here is the opening stanza of *Earl Brand*:

Rise up, rise up, my seven brave sons,  
And dress in your armour so bright;

Earl Douglas will hae Lady Margaret awa  
Before that it be light.

**ballad opera** It may be considered an early form of musical (*q.v.*). It was virtually invented by John Gay when he created *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), a play with music and songs interpolated. It had a sequel, *Polly*, which was eventually produced in 1777. Sheridan also made a contribution to this form with *The Duenna* (1775). See BALLAD; OPERA.

**ballade** An OF verse form, particularly popular during the 14th and 15th c. The commonest type consists of three eight-line stanzas rhyming ababbcbc, with a four-line *envoi* (*q.v.*) rhyming bcbc. The last line of the first stanza serves as the refrain (*q.v.*) repeated in the last line of each stanza and of the *envoi*. Its rhyming complexity makes the *ballade* a difficult form.

The *ballade* was standardized by 14th c. French poets like Guillaume de Machaut and Eustache Deschamps, and perfected in the next century, principally by Villon (especially in, for instance, *Ballade des pendus* and *Ballade des dames du temps jadis*). By the 17th c. there was little regard for the form; it was mocked by Molière and Boileau.

Medieval English poets (especially Chaucer and Gower) occasionally imitated it but it never became popular. It was not until the 19th c. that English poets – notably Dobson, Lang, W. E. Henley and Swinburne – revived it with mixed success. Since then the few who have attempted it include Chesterton, Belloc and Sir John Squire. See also BALLAD; BALLAD METER; CHANT ROYAL; TERN.

**barbarism** An impropriety of language. The term includes a mistake in the form of a word and the unwarranted use of foreign words.

**barcaról** (Sp *barca* 'boat') A poem or song whose subject matter is in some way connected with boats or water; also one whose aural effects can suggest the movement of water. Dates from the Middle Ages.

**bard** (Welsh, *bardd*; Irish, *bard*) Among the ancient Celts a bard was a sort of official poet whose task it was to celebrate national events – particularly heroic actions and victories. The bardic

## bard

poets of Gaul and Britain were a distinct social class with special privileges. The 'caste' continued to exist in Ireland and Scotland, but nowadays are more or less confined to Wales, where the poetry contests and festivals, known as the Eisteddfodau, were revived in 1822 (after a lapse since Elizabethan times). In modern Welsh a *bardd* is a poet who has taken part in an Eisteddfod (*q.v.*). In more common parlance the term may be half seriously applied to a distinguished poet – especially Shakespeare.

**baroque** The term probably derives from the word *baroco*, often used in the late Middle Ages to describe any form of grotesque pedantry. It is a term more commonly used of the visual arts (and music) than literature, but it may be used judiciously to describe a particularly ornate or sumptuous style. It can be applied, for example, to the prose of Sir Thomas Browne and to the more extravagant conceits (*q.v.*) of Crashaw and Cleveland, all writers who flourished in the Baroque period. *See* EUPHUISM; GONGORISM; MANNERISM; MARINISM; SECENTISMO.

**barzelletta** (It 'joke, funny story') An Italian verse form. Originally it was a mixture of disconnected and nonsensical matter presented in variable meters and rhymes. In the 14th c. it denoted epigram and didactic verse. Later it was used by love poets but seems to have remained a very flexible form with which a poet might do much as he pleased. *See also* NONSENSE.

**basic English** A language devised by Ogden and Richards and presented in 1930. Its carefully selected vocabulary consisted of only 830 words – of which 600 were nouns, and 150 were adjectives. The remainder were what they called 'operators': that is, verbs, adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions. Though the range of expression was limited it was serviceable.

**batch** An early English word for a stanza (*q.v.*). *See also* FIT; STAVE.

**bathos** (Gk 'depth') In a mock critical treatise called *Peri Bathous, or, Of the Art of Sinking in Poetry* (1728), Pope assures the reader that he will 'lead them as it were by the hand . . . the gentle downhill way to Bathos; the bottom, the end, the central point, the non plus ultra, of true Modern Poesy!'

Bathos is achieved when a writer, striving at the sublime, over-reaches himself and topples into the absurd. Pope illustrates bathos himself with the lines:

## beginning rhyme

Ye Gods! annihilate but Space and Time  
And make two lovers happy.

There is a fine collection of the bathetic in *The Stuffed Owl* (1930), an anthology of bad verse selected by Wyndham Lewis and C. Lee. See ANTICLIMAX.

**battle of the books** See ANCIENTS AND MODERNS.

**beast epic** An allegorical tale, often, but by no means always, long, in which animals are characters and in which the style is pseudo-epic. The 1st c. collection of Latin fables made by Phaedrus was, after Aesop, the source and inspiration of a very large number of fables in European literature. The prototypal beast epic is almost certainly *Roman de Renart*, composed late in the 12th c. by Pierre de Saint-Cloud. The first episode is the Chanticleer story later used by Chaucer in the *Nun's Priest's Tale* (c. 1395). Spenser continued the tradition in *Mother Hubbard's Tale* (1590). Goethe used it in his *Reineke Fuchs* (1794). The intention of this form was often satirical, like many fables. Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) is in the same tradition. See also ALLEGORY; BESTIARY; EPIC; FABLE; MOCK-EPIC.

**beat** Metrical emphasis in poetry, sometimes used as a synonym for stress (*q.v.*). See also ACCENT; METER.

**beat poets** A term applied to a group of American poets whose work became particularly popular in the late 1950s. The best known of these writers are Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gregory Corso and Ferlinghetti. They are particularly associated with San Francisco, U.S.A. Their 'father figures' were Rexroth and Henry Miller. The term *beat* probably originates from a kind of synthesis of ideas or attitudes contained in the phrases *off-beat*, *beaten down*, *beaten up* and even, it has been surmised, *beatific*. The substantive *Beatnik* has its origin here. Stylistically the poets are all experimenters and what they seek to express is a kind of uncommitted spontaneity of thought and feeling in formless verse. Their influence has been considerable. Jack Kerouac's book *On The Road* (1957) expressed many of the feelings and attitudes of this generation.

**beginning rhyme** This is rare. An example occurs in Thomas Hood's *Bridge of Sighs*:



## beginning rhyme

*Mad from life's history,  
Glad to death's mystery.*

**belles lettres** (F 'fine letters') The term is the literary counterpart of *beaux arts*. Formerly, it was the equivalent of the 'humanities' or *literae humaniores* (literally, 'the more human letters'). Swift appears to have been the first to use the term in English literature, in *Tatler* No. 230 (1710), where he refers to '... Traders in History and Politicks, and the Belles lettres'. Now it is applied almost exclusively to literary studies, the aesthetics of literature and, conceivably, what may be described as 'light' literature, but not fiction or poetry. Often the essay (*q.v.*) is the favoured form of the belle-lettrist. The works of Max Beerbohm provide good examples. So do those of Aldous Huxley, many of whose collections of essays (*Themes and Variations*, *Vulgarity in Literature*, *Music at Night* etc) are listed as belles-lettres. They are witty, elegant, urbane and learned – the characteristics one would expect of *belles lettres*.

**bergette** A single strophe (*q.v.*) *rondeau* (*q.v.*) without a refrain (*q.v.*). Now used sometimes for light verse (*q.v.*).

**bestiary** A medieval didactic genre in prose or verse in which the behaviour of animals (used as symbolic types) points a moral. The prototype is probably the Greek *Physiologus* which was widely translated. The period of greatest popularity for bestiaries in Europe was from the 12th to the 14th c. especially in French. Many collections survive. Literary sleuths have surmised that stories like George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) and Richard Adams's *Watership Down* (1972) are modern developments of the bestiary. *See also* BEAST EPIC; FABLE.

**best-seller** This term first came into frequent use in the 1920s, and in its proper sense denotes a book that at any given time (in a particular country) is selling more copies than any other work. It is one that captures popular interest and imagination; for example, Voltaire's *Candide* (1759) or Byron's *Don Juan* (1819). More recent instances are Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929), Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* (1936), Nicholas Montserrat's *The Cruel Sea* (1951) and Jean le Carré's *The Spy who came in from the Cold* (1963). *Jane's Fighting Ships*, *Aircraft Recognition* and *The Bible* are perennial best-sellers.



**bibelot** A French word for a very small book.

**biblio-** A number of words, apart from bibliography (*q.v.*), which relate to literature, are built on this stem. The main ones are: **BIBLIOCLASM** (Gk 'breaking of a book'): The destruction of a book or books for religious, ideological or other reasons; **BIBLIOCLAST**: a destroyer of books; **BIBLIOGONY** (Gk 'book making'): The production of books; **BIBLIOLATRY** (Gk 'book worship'): an excessive devotion to or reverence for a book or books. (The bibliophile (*q.v.*) is susceptible to it; so are worshippers of the Bible and other sacred books (*q.v.*); **BIBLIOMANCY** (Gk 'divination by book'): The practice of opening the Bible or a comparable work at random and interpreting the first verse or verses as a form of prophecy or precognition; **BIBLIOMANIA** (Gk 'book madness'): a manic devotion to the collection and possession of books; **BIBLIOPHILE** (Gk 'book lover') one who collects, cherishes and preserves books for their value as physical objects, as well as for other reasons; **BIBLIOPOLE** (Gk 'book merchant'): a book-seller or book dealer; **BIBLIOTAPH** (Gk 'book' and 'tomb'): a burier of books; a concealer and hoarder; one who keeps them under lock and key; **BIBLIOTECHA** (Gk 'book' and 'repository'): a collection of books; a library; a bibliographer's catalogue.

**bibliography** (Gk 'book writing') A list of books, essays and monographs on a subject; or a list of the works of a particular author. More strictly the historical study of the make-up and form of books as physical objects.

**Biedermeier** In the first place this was a grotesque figure who originated in the German Punch, *Fliegende Blätter*. The caricature symbolized narrow-minded Philistinism and a head-in-the-sand attitude. Ludwig Eichrodt parodied the type in nonsense verses published in 1869 as *Biedermaiers Liederlust*. Later the name *Biedermeierstil* was given to the type of early Victorian furniture and decor common in Germany between 1815-48. The term was also extended to describe painting, sculpture, music and literature. *See also* GROBIANISM.

**bienséances, les** A French term closely related to *vraisemblance* (*q.v.*), which means and implies appropriate decorum, of which there are two kinds: external and internal. The former requires that a character behave as his rank, position, title etc. demand; the

## bienséances, les

latter that a character behave in character as he or she is depicted within the play, novel or story. *See also* CONSISTENCY; VERISIMILITUDE.

**Bildungsroman** (G 'formation novel') This is a term (more or less synonymous with *Erziehungsroman* – literally an 'upbringing' or 'education' novel). Widely used by German critics, it describes a novel which is an account of the youthful development of the hero or heroine. Famous examples are Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774) and his *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795–96); Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1849–50); Flaubert's *L'Education Sentimentale* (1869); Meredith's *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* (1871); Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* (1902); Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916); and Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks* (1900). A recent instance is Doris Lessing's five-volume work *Children of Violence*. *See also* KÜNSTLERROMAN; NOVEL.

**biography** An account of a person's life, and a branch of history. Dryden defined it as the 'history of particular men's lives'. As a literary form it has become increasingly popular since the second half of the 17th c., before which period it is rare.

Almost any form of material is germane to the biographer's purpose: the subject's own writings (especially diaries and letters), his laundry bills, official archives, memoirs of contemporaries, the memories of living witnesses, personal knowledge, other books on the subject, photographs and paintings.

The origins of biography are no doubt to be found in the early accounts of monarchs and heroes; in, for example, the Old Testament stories, in the Greek, Celtic and Scandinavian epics and sagas. The sayings of wise and holy men are also a branch of biography; and we can learn a lot about Socrates, for instance, from Plato's teaching; as we can from Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. However, the Roman historians Plutarch, Tacitus and Suetonius were the pioneers of the form. Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* (1st c. A.D.) covered twenty-three Greeks and twenty-three Romans, arranged in pairs. They proved an important source of plots for many plays, including some by Shakespeare. Sir Thomas North produced a version of them from a French translation in 1579. Incidentally, Plutarch seems to have been the first writer to distinguish between biography and history. The main biographical work of Tacitus is contained in his *Histories* (c. 104–9) which deal

with the reigns of the emperors from Galba to Domitian. An outstanding work by Tacitus is his account of Agricola, his father-in-law. Suetonius wrote *Lives of the Caesars* (from Julius Caesar to Domitian) and also lives of Terence, Horace and Lucan. The lives of the Caesars are particularly readable because they are full of gossip and scandal, but as history they are unreliable.

There was little in the way of biography in the Middle Ages, for, with few exceptions, the lives of the saints were idealized according to predictable patterns. However, hagiology does contain some notable instances of good biography. One should mention especially Bede's account of St Cuthbert and Adamnan's account of St Columba. Eadmer wrote an admirable biography of St Anselm. Secular biographies from the Middle Ages include Asser's *Life of Alfred* (c. 900); Aelfric's lives of St Oswald and St Edmund; and various lives of Edward the Confessor in both prose and verse. A remarkable work dating from the later Middle Ages is Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum et Feminarum Illustrium* (late 14th c.).

At the Renaissance biography, like autobiography (*q.v.*), acquired considerable interest. Notable achievements in the 16th c. were Sir Thomas More's *Life of John Picus, Earl of Mirandola* (1510) and his *History of Richard III* (1543, 1557); Vasari's important *Lives of the Painters* (1550, 1568); Thomas Cavendish's *Life of Cardinal Wolsey* (a contemporary account but not published until 1641); and William Roper's *The Life of Sir Thomas More* (written c. 1558 but not published until 1626). To these should be added John Leland's huge collection of lives of English authors which John Bale was to make use of.

The Elizabethan period in England produced some notable translations of Classical biographers and also Bacon's *The History of Henry VII* (not published until 1622). Like Plutarch, Bacon made clear distinctions between biography and history.

The 17th c. was the most important period for the development of English biography. From this age date Aubrey's *Brief Lives* (not published until 1813) and Izaak Walton's *Lives of Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert and Robert Sanderson* (the first four were written over a long period and published in one volume in 1670; the last appeared in 1678). These works are major contributions to the course of biography. Less important but notable are Bishop Burnet's *Life and Death of John, Earl of Rochester* (1680), Sprat's *Life of Cowley* (1688), and Dryden's biography of Plutarch, which prefaced his translation of

## biography

Plutarch's *Lives* published in 1683. Dryden clearly understood the business of the biographer better than most.

In the 18th c. the principal works are Roger North's *The Lives of the Norths* (1740-44), Mason's *Life of Gray* (1774), Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* (1778) and Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (1791). Johnson was one of the most influential and accomplished of biographers. Before him many biographies had been ruined by excessive adulation and, in some cases, indiscriminate panegyric. Johnson changed all this. He was not interested in what he described as 'honeysuckle lives' but in presenting a rounded and detailed portrait of a person. His life of Savage is an outstanding example of his method. Many think that Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is still the supreme example in this genre. Between them, Johnson and Boswell virtually decided the course of biography in the early 19th c., when biographies began to appear in great numbers: Southey's *Life of Nelson* (1813) and his *Life of Wesley* (1820); Moore's *Life and Letters of Byron* (1830); Hogg's *Early Life of Shelley* (1832); and Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (1838).

In the mid-Victorian period a certain prudishness and gentility pervaded biographical works for the worse. The truth was glozed by the need for 'respectability' and reticence candied over anything scandalous or disagreeable. However, there were honourable exceptions, like Carlyle's portrait of Abbot Samson in *Past and Present* (1843) and his account of *The Life and Times of Frederick the Great* (1858-65). Earlier, in 1824, Carlyle had published a good biography of Schiller. Mrs Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857) is also a distinguished work; as is Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens* (1872-74). Eventually Carlyle's friend and disciple Froude produced a major biography of Carlyle himself (1882-84). Other notable works from the second half of the 19th c. are Masson's *Milton* (1859-80), Morley's *Voltaire* (1872) and his *Rousseau* (1876), plus a large number of works by various authors in the Series *English Men of Letters* and *Heroes of the Nations*.

Soon after the First World War Lytton Strachey brought about something of a revolution in the art of biography. Like Carlyle and Froude, he despised panegyric and prolixity. He did not hesitate to be selective. His method was to criticize and expose, often irreverently. He wrote with elegance, ironic wit and acute perception. His biographies are supreme of their kind and include *Eminent Victorians* (1918), *Queen Victoria* (1921), *Books and Characters* (1922), *Elizabeth and Essex* (1928) and *Portraits in Miniature* (1931).



Apart from Strachey, during the 20th c., among English biographers Harold Nicolson is generally regarded as one of the ablest. His most notable works are *Tennyson* (1923), *Byron, the Last Journey* (1924), *Lord Carnock* (1930), *Curzon, the Last Phase* (1934) and *Helen's Tower* (1937). Other distinguished biographers of recent years have been Hesketh Pearson, Aldous Huxley, Peter Quenell, Lord Birkenhead, Montgomery Hyde, George Painter, Michael Holroyd and Jocelyn Baines.

Outside England biography has flourished in many countries, particularly France where the form was already established in the Middle Ages – for instance, de Joinville's life of St Louis written in the 13th c. Later Jacques Amyot translated Plutarch's *Lives* (1559). This work evoked great interest in biography in Europe. Towards the end of the 17th c. Fontenelle published his *éloges*, a remarkable collection of sketches of sixty-nine members of the Académie Française. In 1731 Voltaire published a highly successful life of Charles XII, and later in the century Condorcet wrote two outstanding biographies, namely *Vie de Turgot* (1786) and *Vie de Voltaire* (1787). Among other French biographers some of the best known are Emile Legouis, Anatole France, Romain Rolland and André Maurois. Maurois is particularly well known in England because of his excellent portraits of English authors: *Ariel, ou la Vie de Shelley* (1923), *Disraeli* (1927), *Byron* (1930) and *Dickens* (1934).

German biographies are less eminent, but a German classic is Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe* (*Gespräche mit Goethe*, 1836). A classic in Spanish literature is Guzmán's *Generaciones y Semblanzas* (15th c.). Early biographies in Italian were written by Boccaccio and Bruni on Dante (14th c.). Probably the most distinguished of modern Italian biographers is Pasquale Villari who wrote great works on Savonarola and Macchiavelli.

Among biographical collections some of the more valuable and important works are: the *Legenda Aurea* (13th c.) of Jacobus a Voragine, later translated by Caxton as *The Golden Legend*; the *Acta Sanctorum* (1654); *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* (1694); *Biographia Britannica* (1744); *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne* (1843–65); *Nouvelle Biographie Générale* (1852–66); and *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885–1900) with later Supplements. See also – ANA; ANECDOTE; TABLE-TALK.

**black comedy** A form of drama which displays a marked disillusionment and cynicism. It shows human beings without



## black comedy

convictions and with little hope, regulated by fate or fortune or incomprehensible powers. In fact, human beings in an 'absurd' predicament. At its darkest such comedy is pervaded by a kind of sour despair: we can't do anything so we may as well laugh. The wit is mordant and the humour sardonic.

This form of drama has no easily perceptible ancestry, unless it be tragi-comedy (*q.v.*) and the so-called 'dark' comedies of Shakespeare (for instance *The Merchant of Venice*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Winter's Tale* and *All's Well that Ends Well*). However, some of the earlier work of Jean Anouilh (what he describes as *pièces noires*) are blackly comic: for example, *Le Voyageur sans bagage* (1937) and *La Sauvage* (1938). Later he wrote what he described as *pièces grinçantes*, of which two notable examples are *La Valse des toréadors* (1952) and *Pauvre Bitos* (1956). Both these plays could be classified as black comedy. So might two early dramatic works by Jean Genet: *Les Bonnes* (1954) and *Les Nègres* (1959). Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (1962), Pinter's *The Homecoming* (1965), Peter Shaffer's *Black Comedy* (1965) and Joe Orton's *Loot* (1966) are other examples of this kind of play. The television dramatist Giles Cooper also made a very considerable contribution.

In other forms of literature 'black comedy' and 'black humour' (e.g. the 'sick joke') have become more and more noticeable in the 20th c. It has been remarked that such comedy is particularly prominent in the so-called 'literature of the absurd'. Literary historians have found intimations of a new vision of man's role and position in the universe in, for instance, Kafka's stories (e.g. *The Trial*, *The Castle*, *Metamorphosis*), in surrealist art and poetry and, later, in the philosophy of existentialism (*q.v.*). Camus' vision of man as an 'irremediable exile', Ionesco's concept of life as a 'tragic farce', and Samuel Beckett's tragi-comic characters in his novels are other instances of a particular *Weltanschauung* (*q.v.*). A baleful, even, at times, a 'sick' view of existence, alleviated by sardonic (and, not infrequently, compassionate) humour is to be found in many works of 20th c. fiction; in Sartre's novels, in Genet's non-dramatic works also, in Gunter Grass's novels, in the more apocalyptic works of Kurt Vonnegut (junior). One might also mention some less famous books of unusual merit which are darkly comic. For example, Serge Godefroy's *Les Loques* (1964), Thomas Pynchon's *V* (1963) and his *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966), Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (1961), D. D. Bell's *Dicky*, or *The Midnight Ride of Dicky Vere* (1970) and Mordecai Richler's

*St Urbain's Horseman* (1966). See NONSENSE; SURREALISM; THEATRE OF THE ABSURD; THEATRE OF CRUELTY.

**blank verse** This was introduced by the Earl of Surrey in the 16th c. in his translation of the *Aeneid* (1557) and consists of unrhymed five-stress lines; properly, iambic pentameters (*q.v.*). Surrey probably took the idea from the *versi sciolti* ('freed verse') of Molza's Italian translations of the *Aeneid* (1539). It has become the most widely used of English verse forms and is the one closest to the rhythms of everyday English speech. This is one of the reasons why it has been particularly favoured by dramatists. It was almost certainly first used for a play by Sackville and Norton in *Gorboduc* (1561), and then became the standard verse for later Tudor and Jacobean dramatists who made it a most subtle and flexible instrument: for instance, Thomas Heywood in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603):

O speak no more!  
 For more than this I know, and have recorded  
 Within the red-leaved table of my heart.  
 Fair, and of all beloved, I was not fearful  
 Bluntly to give my life into your hand,  
 And at one hazard all my earthly means.  
 Go, tell your husband; he will turn me off,  
 And I am then undone. I care not, I:  
 'Twas for your sake. Perchance in rage he'll kill me,  
 I care not, 'twas for you. Say I incur  
 The general name of villain through the world,  
 Of traitor to my friend; I care not, I.  
 Beggary, shame, death, scandal, and reproach,  
 For you I'll hazard all: why, what care I?  
 For you I'll live, and in your love I'll die.

Thereafter it was used a great deal for reflective and narrative poems, especially by Milton in *Paradise Lost* (1667). During the late 17th c. and the first half of the 18th c. it was used much less often. Dryden, Pope, indeed the majority of 18th c. poets, preferred the heroic couplet (*q.v.*). However, Thomson used it in *The Seasons* (1726), so did Young in *Night Thoughts* (1742) and Cowper in *The Task* (1785). Wordsworth especially, and Coleridge, made much use of it. All the poets of the Romantic period (*q.v.*) wrote blank verse extensively, and so did most of the great poets

## blank verse

of the 19th c. It is still quite widely practised today and dramatists like Maxwell Anderson and T. S. Eliot have experimented with it in freer forms in their plays.

**blazon** (F 'coat-of-arms' or 'shield') As a literary term it was used by the followers of Petrarchism (*q.v.*) to describe verses which dwelt upon and detailed the various parts of a woman's body; a sort of catalogue of her physical attributes. Such a catalogue was a convention established in the 13th c. by Geoffrey of Vinsauf and often used after Marot published his *Blason du Beau Tétin* (1536). Elizabethan sonneteers and lyric poets frequently listed the physical beauties of their mistresses. A well-known instance occurs in Spenser's *Epithalamium* (1595):

Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,  
Her forehead ivory white,  
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath rudded,  
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,  
Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncrudded,  
Her paps like lilies budded,  
Her snowy neck like to a marble tower,  
And all her body like a palace fair.

Such inventories or litanies are also to be found in Thomas Watson's *Hekatompathia* (1582), Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) and Thomas Lodge's *Phyllis* (1593). As a rule, there was nothing original in this form of conceit (*q.v.*). Most of the images were used long before by the elegiac Roman poets and the Alexandrian Greek poets.

Almost inevitably the convention became a cliché and we find poets parodying this kind of conceit in the *contreblazon*. Sir Philip Sidney, for example, copied Francesco Berni's device of using conventional descriptions for the 'wrong' parts of the body, thus producing a sort of grotesque mutant. Mopsa's forehead is 'jacinth-like', her cheeks are opal, her twinkling eyes are 'bedeckt with pearl' and her lips are 'sapphire blue'. Shakespeare turned the *blazon* upside down in his famous sonnet which begins: 'My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun'; And Greene, in *Menaphon* (1589), reduced the *blazon* to absurdity:

Thy teeth like to the tusks of fattest swine,  
Thy speech is like the thunder in the air:  
Would God thy toes, thy lips, and all were mine.

## boasting poem

It was only a few years earlier that Sidney had written one of the most famous *blazons* of all, beginning:

What tongue can her perfections tell?

*See also* CATALOGUE VERSE.

**Bloomsbury group** A *coterie* of writers who lived in the Bloomsbury area, London, before, during and after the First World War. The main figures were Virginia Woolf, Leonard Woolf, Lytton Strachey, Clive Bell, Roger Fry, Duncan Grant, Maynard Keynes, E. M. Forster, David Garnett and Christopher Isherwood. Indirectly (they did *not* form a 'school') they had a considerable influence in the world of letters, art and philosophy.

**blue book** A cheap (blue-covered) kind of thriller (*q.v.*), spine chiller, shocker, horror story, romance (*q.v.*) which sold in large quantities at the end of the 18th c. and the beginning of the 19th. A relation of the penny dreadful, the dime novel (*qq.v.*), and others.

**blue-stocking** A woman who affects literary tastes and behaves in a dilettante fashion: a female pedant. The term dates from *c.* 1750 when Mrs Elizabeth Montagu was in the habit of holding *soirées*, in the French *salon* tradition, at her house. Instead of card games there was 'conversation' with literary men. One, Benjamin Stillingfleet, wore blue worsted stockings instead of black silk. Because of this Admiral Boscawen nicknamed the group 'The Blue Stocking Society'. *See also* LA PRÉCIOSITÉ.

**blues, the** Solo Negro folksongs. Not to be confused with Negro spirituals (*q.v.*). Many blues songs are based on a three-line lyric and are often expressive of despair, grief, and a general feeling of hopelessness and oppression; hence suffering from 'the blues'.

**blurb** A brief description of the contents of a book printed on the dust jacket. Often couched in enthusiastic and, at times, extravagant terms. The word is believed to have been coined by the American author Gelett Burgess who defined it as 'a sound like a publisher'. Earlier the term 'puff' was used, probably after Mr Puff in Sheridan's *The Critic* (1779). *See also* PUFFERY.

**boasting poem** Common in oral literatures in many parts of the



## boasting poem

world, especially in the epic and ballad (*qq.v.*) traditions. A warrior or hero 'blows his own trumpet' about his exploits. It is debatable whether there is an example of a boasting poem in English literature, though there are instances of something akin to it in *Beowulf* – especially the slanging match between Unferth and Beowulf himself, when Unferth taunts the hero at being defeated by Breca in a seven-day swimming match at sea. Beowulf defends himself by giving the true account of the Breca episode. A further example occurs when Beowulf tells Hygelac how he overcame the Monster Grendel. *See also* FÂRSA; GIERASA.

**bob and wheel** A metrical device found in alliterative verse (*q.v.*). The first short line of a group of rhyming lines is known as the 'bob', and the following four as the 'wheel'. Often the group ends a strophe (*q.v.*). The bob contains one stress preceded by one and sometimes two unstressed syllables. Each line of the wheel contains three stresses. The device is used throughout *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. For example:

On many bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he sette  
wyth wyne,  
Where werre and wrake and wonder  
Bi syþe3 hat3 wont þerinne,  
And oft boþe blysse and blunder  
Ful skete hat3 skyfted synne.

Here 'wyth wyne' is the bob and final four lines form the wheel.

**Boerde** A MDu term for tales which tend to be bawdy or satirical, akin to the French *fabliau* (*q.v.*) and the Italian *novelle* (*q.v.*), and the kind of tale that Chaucer and Boccaccio delighted in. Many of them hale from Indian and Arabic legends.

**bombast** Originally the word described the cotton or horse-hair stuffing used in clothes to produce bulges. The term came to mean inflated and extravagant language. In *Othello* (I, i), Iago, complaining to Roderigo of how the Moor has passed him over for promotion, says:

But he (as loving his own pride and purposes)  
Evades them [i.e. three great ones of the city] with a  
bombast circumstance,  
Horribly stuffed with epithets of war;



And in conclusion  
Nonsuits my mediators.

There are many instances of ranting and bombastic speeches in late Tudor drama (especially in Marlowe's plays) and few better than Hotspur's tirade in *Henry IV* pt. 1 (1, iii):

By heaven methinks it were an easy leap  
To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon . . .

But Shakespeare burlesqued bombast in the play in *Hamlet*. Sometimes bombast has been used for humorous effect, as in Fielding's *Tom Thumb* (1730). See also FUSTIAN; HYPERBOLE; RODOMONTADE.

**book** The word probably derives from *boka* 'beech', the wood of that tree usually providing the tablets on which runes (*q.v.*) were carved (cf. 'Barbara fraxineis pingatur runa tabellis', Venantius Fortunatus VI). A book is either a written document or a record; or a written or printed literary composition. It may also be a volume of accounts or notes. It has a further meaning when it denotes a sub-division of a work (e.g. *Paradise Lost* is made up of twelve books). Occasionally, novels are divided into separate books, or parts. See also LEDGER; MANUSCRIPT; ROLL.

**book of hours** See CALENDAR.

**boulevard drama** A generic term for popular French drama from the mid-19th c. onwards. The plays consisted for the most part of farce (*q.v.*) and domestic comedy and were a distinctly commercial entertainment. Two of the best known dramatists were Halévy and Labiche.

**bourgeois drama** Now a slightly pejorative term describing modern naturalistic drama (*q.v.*) concerned with middle-class social problems. Many dramatists were engaged in writing this kind of play during the first forty years or so of this century. An outstanding example was Galsworthy, especially such works of his as *Strife* (1909), *Justice* (1910), *The Skin Game* (1920), and *Loyalties* (1922).

**boustrophedon** (Gk 'ox-turning') Lines written alternately from right to left and left to right, as in ancient Greek inscriptions.

## bouts-rimés

**bouts-rimés** (F 'rhymes without lines') A\* versifying game which appears to have originated in 17th c. Paris. It became a vogue and spread to England. The idea was, given certain rhymes, to compose lines for them and make up a poem which was natural. For instance, given the rhyming words 'might', 'dog', 'sleight' and 'fog', compose a four-line poem. The diversion remained fashionable in France, England and Scotland until the 19th c.

**bowdlerize** Derived from the name of Thomas Bowdler, M.D. (1754-1825) who in 1818 produced *The Family Shakespeare*.

Bowdler removed from the plays whatever in his opinion was 'unfit to be read by a gentleman in the company of ladies'. Other editors, for example A. W. Verity, when producing school editions of Shakespeare, cut out passages which they regarded as indecent. *See also* ABRIDGED EDITION.

**brachiology** (Gk 'short speech') Terse and condensed expression. Characteristic of the heroic couplet (*q.v.*). *See* ASYNDETON.

**brachycatalectic** (Gk 'short left off') A metrical line which lacks two syllables or a foot and is therefore an incomplete line. *See* ACATALECTIC.

**braggadocio** The term came into English c. 1590 from the verb *to brag*, to which the Italian augmentative suffix was added. It denotes a swaggering, idle man; usually a coward. Spenser created a character called Braggadocchio in *The Faerie Queene*, a typical braggart who is finally shown to be what he really is. Falstaff is probably the most famous *braggadocio* type in English Literature. *See also* ALAZON; MILES GLoriosus.

**breve** *See* MORA.

**breviary** (L 'summary, abridgement') The book contains the Divine Office for each day and is used by Roman Catholic priests. It contains: Calendar; Psalter; Proprium de Tempore (i.e. collects and lessons); Proprium de Sanctis (i.e. collects for Saints' Days); Hours of the Virgin; burial services.

**brief** We may distinguish the following meanings: (a) a summary; (b) a list or memorandum; (c) a letter; (d) a Papal communication on disciplinary matters; (e) a summary of a law case prepared for counsel.

**broadside** A sheet of paper printed on one side only and usually distributed by hand. Broadside were used largely for disseminating news and information and also for the publication of songs and ballads. They were hawked about Britain from early in the 16th c. until the 1920s. *See also* BALLAD.

**brochure** A pamphlet or comparably short work which is stitched, not bound. Nowadays brochures are mostly used for a variety of commercial and advertising purposes.

**broken rhyme** This occurs when a word is 'broken' or split in order to get a rhyme. Not unusual in light verse or for some comic effect, but rare in serious verse. However, Gerard Manley Hopkins uses it successfully in several poems. This example comes from *To what serves Mortal Beauty?*:

To what serves mortal beauty | -dangerous; does set danc-  
ing blood – the O-seal-that-so | feature, flung prouder form  
Than Purcell tune lets tread to? | See: it does this: keeps  
warm  
Men's wits to the things that are; | what good means –  
where a glance  
Master more may than gaze, | gaze out of countenance.

**brut** A transferred use, in French or in Welsh, of *Brutus* the name of the legendary and eponymous founder of Britain and the reputed grandson of Aeneas. The *Roman de Brut* and *Lazamon's Brut* (of the late 12th c.) were well-known accounts of English history that went back to Brutus. Thus, a chronicle (*q.v.*).

**bucolic** *See* PASTORAL.

**bucolic diaeresis** So called because it was so common in bucolic poetry and occurred after a dactyl (*q.v.*) in the fourth foot. *See* DIAERESIS.

**bugarštica** The term probably derives from the Serbo-Croatian word *bugariti* 'to chant' and denotes a long line of verse of fifteen or sixteen syllables, with a caesura (*q.v.*) usually after the seventh. They were used in the composition of heroic songs or epic ballads which for the most part dealt with combat against the Turks in Dalmatia and other parts of what is now Yugoslavia

## bugarštica

from the 15th c. onwards. See GUSLAR; NARODNE PESME; PEVAČI.

**bull** (L 'bubble, round object'). The lead seal on an official document, especially one of papal origin and thus the document itself. It is also used to denote a tall story (*q.v.*), or a story which strains credulity; for example, a cock and bull story (*q.v.*). More generally it may apply to a literary incongruity or howler.

**bululú** A single ambulatory actor in 16th and 17th c. Spain. In some respects a descendant of the *juglar* or *jongleur* (*q.v.*). Where two travelled and played as a pair they were known as *ñaque*; if four as a *gangarilla*; and there was a standard company of six – five men and one woman – known as a *cambaleo*. The *cambaleo* has been recorded as late as the 1930s.

**bunkum** Originally non-sensical oratory; now applicable to almost anything said or written if it is regarded as rubbish. It derives from the name of Buncombe County in North Carolina, because a member for that district, while attending the 16th Congress debate on the 'Missouri Question', persistently declared, when pressed for a 'Question', that he was obliged to make a speech for Buncombe.

**burden** (or bourdon or burthen) The word probably derives from the late Latin *burdo* 'drone bee'. The term denotes either the refrain (*q.v.*) or chorus (*q.v.*) of a song, or its theme or principal sentiment.

**burlesque** The term derives from the Italian *burlesco*, from *burla* 'ridicule' or 'joke'. It is a derisive imitation or exaggerated 'sending up' of a literary or musical work, usually stronger and broader in tone and style than parody (*q.v.*). For the most part burlesque is associated with some form of stage entertainment. Aristophanes used it occasionally in his plays. The satyr plays (*q.v.*) were a form of burlesque. Clowning interludes in Elizabethan plays were also a type.

An early example of burlesque in England is the play of Pyramus and Thisbe performed by Bottom and his companions in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (c. 1595). Here Shakespeare was making fun of the Interludes (*q.v.*) of earlier generations. A few years later Francis Beaumont created one of the first full-length



dramatic burlesques – namely *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607). In 1671 George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, had produced *The Rehearsal*, generally regarded as an outstanding example of a full-scale dramatic burlesque. In it he ridiculed contemporary actors and dramatists as well as the heroic tragedies of the period. Later Henry Carey did the same thing with his *Chrononhotonthologos* (1734). He also burlesqued contemporary opera in *The Dragon of Wantley* (1737). Fielding did much the same thing with *Tom Thumb* (1730) and his *Historical Register for the Year 1736*. Samuel Foote employed the same kind of caustic, but his plays and sketches ridiculed people rather than contemporary drama. One of the most famous works in this genre is Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), in part a burlesque of Italian opera. His work anticipates the kind of entertainment that became popular in the 19th c. in the hands of Gilbert and Burnand. Other dramatic burlesques of note from this period are: *The What d'ye Call it* (1715) by Gay; *Three Hours After Marriage* (1717) by Gay, Pope and John Arbuthnot; *The Covent Garden Tragedy* (1732) by Henry Fielding; *Distress upon Distress* (1752) by George Alexander Stevens; *The Critic* (1779) by Sheridan; *The Rovers* (1798) by George Canning, John Hookham Frere and George Ellis; and *Bombastes Furioso* (1810) by William Rhodes.

Burlesque was not confined to drama. In the mid-17th c. the French dramatist Scarron wrote a burlesque in verse called *Virgile travestie* (1648), and a little later Samuel Butler published *Hudibras* (1662), a mock-heroic (*q.v.*) poem ridiculing romance, chivalry and Puritanism. In 1674 Boileau wrote a famous mock-epic (*q.v.*), *Le Lutrin*, in which, with much irony and grave epic decorum (*q.v.*), he made fun of Classical epic. Dryden burlesqued the animal fable in *The Hind and the Panther* (1687); and, later, Pope showed great mastery of the possibilities of burlesque in his mock-epic *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) and in *The Dunciad* (1728, 1742, 1743). From this period also dates an agreeable burlesque by Swift – *Baucis and Philemon* (1709). See also ANTI-MASQUE; CARICATURE; FARCE; IRONY; INVECTIVE; SATIRE.

**burletta** Like burlesque (*q.v.*), the term derives from the Italian *burla*, 'joke' or 'fun'. A *burletta* is a comic play with music, or a play spoken to music, popular in the 18th and 19th c. theatre. It is of minor importance in the history and development of drama, except that, in company with musical burlesques and the



## **burlatta**

later musical comedies, it may well have had some influence on the conception of the modern musical.

**Burns Stanza** Also known as Burns meter, 'Scottish stanza' and 'Habbie stanza'. In fact, Burns did not invent it. It has been found in 11th c. Provençal poems and in medieval English romances. However, it takes its name from the frequent use Burns made of it. It comprises a six-line stanza rhyming aaabab. The first, second, third and fifth lines are tetrameters (*q.v.*) and the others dimeters (*q.v.*) as in *To a Mountain Daisy*:

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,  
That fate is thine – no distant date;  
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate  
Full on thy bloom  
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight  
Shall be thy doom.

**buskin** The derivation is disputed, but it occurs in a number of European languages. It denotes a thick-soled half boot (*cothurnus*) worn by actors in Athenian tragedy, and contrasted with the low shoes (*soccus*) or 'sock' worn by comic actors. Thus it describes figuratively the spirit or style of tragedy. There is a famous reference in Ben Jonson's poem of praise to Shakespeare:

To hear thy buskin tread,  
And shake a stage: or, when thy socks were on,  
Leave thee alone, for the comparison  
Of all, that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome  
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.

Milton, in *L' Allegro*, refers to Jonson's 'Learned sock'.

**bylina** A Russian term for an epic (*q.v.*) or heroic folk-song (*q.v.*) in blank verse. The word derives from *byl* 'that which happened', and came into use in the 1830s. The *byliny*, which belong to the oral tradition (*q.v.*) of literature, were chanted by professional reciters known as *skazateli*. Most *byliny* are concerned with the exploits of mythical or semi-mythical heroes (a folk hero was called a *bogatyr*) and warriors connected with the court of Prince Vladimir, and the military-feudal Kievan kingdom of the 10th to the 13th c. before the Tatar conquests. Peasants call these songs *stariny*, 'things of old times', and they are still recited in

## Byzantine age

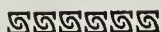
Russian rural districts. In the absence of a professional reciter, the headman of the village will chant them.

Russian Scholars began to collect these *byliny* assiduously in the 18th and 19th c., but the first collector was an Englishman, Richard James, who was chaplain to the English embassy in Moscow in 1619. *See also* BALLAD; DUMY; GUSLAR; NARODNE PESME; SKAZ.

**Byronic stanza** *See* OTTAVA RIMA.

**Byzantine age** A period which runs approximately from the beginning of the 6th c. until 1453, the year in which Constantinople fell to the Turks.

# C



**caccia** (It 'hunt') An Italian verse form which may have evolved from the madrigal (*q.v.*). A poem of short lines with a refrain (*q.v.*) but no rhyme. The name suggests that at some stage the subjects of the *caccia* were connected with hunting. The form was used mostly in the 14th and 15th c.

**cacoethes scribendi** (Gk 'evil habitat' + L 'of writing') This phrase goes back to Juvenal's *insanabile* (incurable) *scribendi cacoethes* (*Satires* VII, 52).

**cacophony** (Gk 'dissonance') The opposite of euphony (*q.v.*). Harsh sounds are sometimes used deliberately by writers, especially poets, to achieve a particular effect. A well-known example occurs in Tennyson's *Morte D'Arthur*:

Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves  
And barren chasms, and all to left and right  
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he based  
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels –  
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon.

The alliteration and assonance (*qq.v.*) of the first five lines are self-evidently rough; the last two lines, containing the same devices, are mellifluously smooth and euphonious. *See also* ONOMATOPOEIA.

**cadence** In particular it refers to the melodic pattern preceding the end of a sentence; for instance, in an interrogation or an exhortation; and also the rhythm of accented units. In more general

terms it refers to the natural rhythm of language, its 'inner tune', depending on the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables; so, now, a rising and falling. It is present in prose as well as verse. Almost every writer with any individuality of style at all has particular cadences which are really his own 'voice', the inherent and intrinsic melody of linked syllables and words, of phrases, sentences and paragraphs, which at once transcends and supports the meaning. Sense and sound are inseparable. The cadences of prose writers as various as Sir Thomas Browne, Edward Gibbon, Jack London and Samuel Beckett are instantly apparent. In verse, even within traditional metrical arrangements, differing cadences are apparent, especially in free verse (*q.v.*).  
*See RHYTHM.*

**caesura** (L 'a cutting') A break or pause in a line of poetry, dictated, usually, by the natural rhythm of the language. If near the beginning of the line it is called the initial caesura; near the middle, medial; near the end, terminal. The commonest is the medial. A masculine caesura follows the accented syllable; a feminine, the unaccented. A line may have more than one caesura or none at all. It is often marked by punctuation. In OE verse the caesura was used rather monotonously to indicate the half line:

Ða waes on burgum || Beowulf Scyldinga  
 leof leodcyning || longe þrage.

So long as alliterative verse (*q.v.*) was the favoured form, there was not a great deal of variation, as these lines from Langland's *Piers Plowman* show:

Loue is leche of lyf || and nexte owre lorde selue,  
 And also þe graith gate || þat goth in-to heuene.

The development of the iambic pentameter (*q.v.*) in Chaucer's hands produced much more subtle varieties:

With him ther was his sone, || a yong Squier  
 A lovyere || and a lusty bachelor  
 With lockes crulle || as they were leyd in presse  
(*Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*)

Blank verse (*q.v.*) allowed an even wider range in the preservation of speech rhythms, as these lines from Shakespeare suggest:

I have ventured  
 Like little wanton boys || that swim on bladders,  
 This many summers || in a sea of glory,  
 But far beyond my depth: || my high-blown pride  
 At length broke under me, || and now has left me  
 Weary and old with service, || to the mercy  
 Of a rude stream || that must for ever hide me.  
(*King Henry VIII* III, ii, 359)

For the most part it is more regular in the heroic couplet (*q.v.*) as Dryden shows:

In squandering wealth || was his peculiar art:  
 Nothing went unrewarded, || but desert.  
 Beggar'd by fools, || whom still he found too late:  
 He had his jest, || and they had his estate.  
(*Absalom and Achitophel* Part I, 559)

In more modern verse there is a great deal of variation in the placing of the caesura, as can be seen in the work of outstanding innovators like Gerard Manley Hopkins, W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Take, for instance, these lines from Yeats:

That is no country for old men. || The young  
 In one another's arms, || birds in the trees  
 – Those dying generations – || at their song,  
 The salmon-falls, || the mackerel-crowded seas,  
 Fish, flesh, or fowl, || commend all summer long  
 Whatever is begotten, || born, || and dies,  
 Caught in that sensual music || all neglect  
 Monuments of unageing intellect.  
(*Sailing to Byzantium*)

It will be noticed that the last line has no caesura.

It can be seen from these few examples that the caesura is used, basically, in two contrary ways: (a) to emphasize formality and to stylize; and (b) to slacken the stiffness and tension of formal metrical patterns.

**Calderonian honour** *El honor calderiano* implies an exaggerated concept of honour. A product of 17th c. Spanish drama, and particularly of the plays of Calderón (1600–81). The following are especially noteworthy: *El médico de su honra*, *A secreto agravio, secreta venganza*, *El Pintor de su deshonra*, *El mayor monstruo, los celos*.



The usual situation is that the play's climax centres on the sacrifice of the wife who is either really or supposedly unfaithful. The atmosphere of the dénouement (*q.v.*) is harsh and even bloody. For instance, in the first of the above four plays the jealous husband engages a blood-letter to perform the deed in his wife's bedroom where she is apparently ill, thus purging his own besmirched honour by 'surgery'.

**calendar** The term derives from Latin *calendae* (calends, or kalends), the first day of the month and the date on which accounts were due. Hence Latin *calendarium* 'an account book'. The ordinary calendar is a table giving the divisions of the year. Some of the major calendars are: the Julian, the Gregorian, the Jewish, the French Republican and the Mohammedan. The perpetual calendar provides the year, the dominical letter (i.e. the *dies dominica*, Latin for 'Sunday'; a convention adopted in tables to indicate that day in January on which the first Sunday falls in any particular year), followed by the regnal years, their beginning and ending. It also shows the fixed feasts and saints' days which are important in the dating of documents.

Another kind of calendar is the book of hours (*les heures*), an illustrated prayer-book (*q.v.*) based on the priest's breviary (*q.v.*) and ordered according to the hours of the Divine Office in monasteries. Such books made their appearance in the 12th c. and quite soon became popular, especially in France and the Netherlands. Some of them were of remarkable beauty and exquisitely illustrated. A very well-known example is the Duc de Berry's *Très Riches Heures* of the 15th c. which was illustrated by the Limbourg brothers. Such a work contains the usual *calendarium*, the Little Office of Our Lady, the Penitential Psalms, the Litanies, the Office for the Dead, The Adoration of the Cross, Devotions to the Holy Ghost, and others.

A notable instance of the form of the calendar being used for a poetic work is Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* (1579) which comprises twelve eclogues – one for each month of the year. John Clare attempted something similar in *The Shepherd's Calendar* (1827).

Another type of calendar is a sort of register (*q.v.*). An unusual example is *The Newgate Calendar, or Malefactor's Bloody Register* (1774), a work which gave an account of the more infamous crimes perpetrated from 1700 to 1774. A further series came out c. 1826.

## calendar

A curiosity in the genre is Nicolas Breton's *The Fantasticks* (1626), a collection of observations arranged in calendar form according to hours, days and seasons. See ALMANAC.

**calypso** Usually an improvised song or ballad (*qq.v.*) composed and sung by West Indians on festive and public occasions – like carnivals, elections and test matches. The word happens to be the same as the name of the nymph who detained Ulysses on the island of Ogygia, but there appears to be no connection.

**canción** The term is now generally applied to any Spanish poem consisting of strophes (*q.v.*) with alternate lines of eleven and seven syllables. This, the Italianate *canción* was introduced into Spain near the middle of the 16th c. See LIRA; REMATE; SILVA.

**cancioneiros** Portuguese songbooks and, in particular, collections of medieval Galician and Portuguese poems extant in three manuscripts – namely *Cancioneiro de Ajuda*, *Cancioneiro da Vaticana* and *Colocci-Brancuti*. They cover the period from late in the 12th c. to the middle of the 14th c. These collections contain mostly love lyrics and satires. The later *Cancioneiro Geral* (1516) is a huge anthology (*q.v.*) which contains verses written by court poets. Many of the poems are also love lyrics.

**cancrine** (L 'crab-wise') Verses that read both ways, and which thus form a palindrome (*q.v.*).

**canon** A body of writings established as authentic. The term usually refers to biblical writings accepted as authorized – as opposed to the *Apocrypha* (*q.v.*). The term can also apply to an author's works which are accepted as genuine. For example: the Shakespeare Canon.

**canso** Also *chanso* and *chanson* (*q.v.*) A Provençal love song or lyric (*q.v.*). The lyrical *canso* has five or six stanzas with an *envoi* (*q.v.*). Metrical virtuosity in the *canso* was much prized. The themes were almost invariably those of courtly love (*q.v.*). See ODE; SONNET.

**cant** The jargon or slang (*qq.v.*) of a particular class, group, trade, calling or profession. Usually associated with pedlars, thieves, gipsies, tinkers and vagabonds. Professional tramps or roadmen,

for instance, have a variety of cant terms – like: *blagging hard* – travelling fast; *castle* – the house, flat or office of a wealthy person; *croker* – fourpence; *dead hard mark* – a place only approachable by an expert tramp; *dollcie* – well-off; *front the gaff* – call at the entrance of a large house; *gry* – a horse (of Romany origin); *lurk* – a tramp’s favourite stopping place; *mark* – a house, its resident or the sign outside; *merry* – a girl; *postman* – a fast-moving tramp; *sham* – a gentleman; *steamer* – a mug, a simpleton; *top-cock* – a master tramp; *wheeler* – a pauper who circles near institutions and who is despised by the real roadmen or ‘pikers’ who refer to the road as ‘the stem’, ‘the grit’, ‘the white’.

**cantar** In Spanish literature the word has often been used vaguely to denote words for a song. In modern times it has come to mean an octosyllabic quatrain (*q.v.*), with certain characteristics: assonance (*q.v.*) and, occasionally, consonance (*q.v.*) in the even-numbered lines, and unrhymed oxytones (*q.v.*) in the odd ones.

**cantar de gesta** (Sp ‘song of deeds’) The Spanish equivalent of the French *chanson de geste* (*q.v.*), but differing in some respects from the French *chansons* which tend to be in assonanced *laissez* (*q.v.*) of ten syllables whereas the Spanish type is usually in longer lines, but of varying length with a leaning towards fourteen syllables, in four-accent *laissez* with all four having the same assonance. The most complete and most famous *cantar de gesta* is the *Poema del Cid* (c. 1200) whose composer probably had the advantage of reading the French *chansons*, including *Roland*.

**cantar de pandeiro** A Galician folksong in the three-lined tercet (*q.v.*) form, sung to the accompaniment of the *pandeiro* or timbrel; sometimes written in groups and interconnected in theme.

**cante jondo** An Andalusian term for *cante hondo* ‘deep song’; also called a *cante flamenco*. A type of folksong which is typical of southern Spain. Traditional subjects are love, its loss, and death.

**cantica de serrana** In the 14th c. book called *Libro de buen amor*, by Juan Ruiz, the Archpriest of Hita, the *canticas de serrana* are pastoral lyrics intended for singing. The *serrana* is a shepherdess or cow-girl.

## canticle

**canticle** A form of hymn (*q.v.*) with biblical words, other than those from the *Psalms*.

**canticum** In Roman drama that part of a play which was declaimed or sung, as opposed to the *diverbiūm* (*q.v.*) or spoken dialogue. There are a large number of *cantica* in the plays of Plautus; few in Terence.

**cantiga** The term usually refers to Iberian folksongs and to the collection of Galician and Portuguese lyrics of the Middle Ages which are contained in the *Cancioneiros* (*q.v.*).

**canto** (It 'song') A sub-division of an epic (*q.v.*) or narrative poem; comparable to a chapter in a novel. Outstanding examples of its use are to be found in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* and Byron's *Childe Harold*.

**canzone** An Italian and Provençal form of lyric (*q.v.*) which consists of a series of verses in stanza form but without a refrain (*q.v.*). Usually written in hendecasyllabic lines with end-rhyme (*q.v.*). There were three main styles: tragic, comic and elegiac. William Drummond of Hawthornden was one of the few British writers to use it. The *canzone* had considerable influence on the evolution of the sonnet (*q.v.*). See CANZONET; OTTAVA RIMA.

**canzonet** *Canzonetta* is a diminutive of the Italian *canzone* (*q.v.*), and a *canzonet* is 'a little song'; a light-hearted song akin to the madrigal (*q.v.*).

**capa y espada** (Sp 'cloak and sword') The term describes 16th and 17th c. comedies about more or less melodramatic love and conspiracy among the aristocracy. Two of the main playwrights were Lope de Vega and Calderón. See also COMEDY; COMEDY OF INTRIGUE.

**capitolo** (It 'chapter') An Italian verse form which is either an imitation or a parody (*q.v.*) of Dante's *terza rima* (*q.v.*). It has all the characteristics of that form and has been widely used since the 15th c., especially for satire (*q.v.*).

**caricature** In literature (as in art) a portrait which ridicules a person by exaggerating and distorting his most prominent features and



characteristics. Quite often the caricature evokes genial rather than derisive laughter. English literature is exceptionally rich in examples. The following are a few of the more outstanding: Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Malvolio and Sir Toby Belch (*Twelfth Night*); Pistol and Fluellen (*Henry V*); Falstaff (*Henry IV*) – all by Shakespeare. Other examples are Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*; Sir Epicure Mammon in Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*; and Jonson's Volpone in *Volpone*; Sir Fopling Flutter in Etherege's *The Man of Mode*; Captain Brazen in Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*; Sir Lucius O'Trigger in Sheridan's *The Rivals*; Tony Lumpkin in Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*; Lady Bracknell in Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*; Drinkwater in Shaw's *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*.

There are many in satirical poems: for instance, Dryden's caricature of Shadwell in *Mac Flecknoe*; and Pope's of Cibber in *The Dunciad*.

There are so many in novels that the list would be almost endless. The works of Fielding, Smollett, Dickens, Thackeray and Surtees are especially rich in them.

On the whole caricature belongs to the province of comedy (*q.v.*). However, a caricature is occasionally to be found in tragedy – among minor characters. For instance, the weak and gullible Roderigo in *Othello*; and Osric, the pansy courtier, in *Hamlet*.

**carmen** (L 'song') Usually a song or lyric (*qq.v.*) but the word has been applied to a wide variety of forms ranging from epic (*q.v.*) to legal formula. Now almost an archaism (*q.v.*) and, if used, likely to be very nearly facetious, except when referring to Catullus's *Carmina* or Horace's *Odes* or a *carmen figuratum* (*q.v.*).

**carmen figuratum** See ALTAR POEM.

**carmina burana** A collection of Goliardic poems from the Benedictine monastery of Benedictbeuern in Bavaria. See GOLIARDIC VERSE; SONGBOOK.

**carol** The word derives from the Italian *carola*. It seems very probable that originally a carol was a kind of ring or round dance, then the song accompanying the dance. Now a carol denotes a light-hearted song sung in a spirit of joy at Christmas time (and also, occasionally, at Easter). Thus, a festive religious song. It appears to have been an ancient practice in the Church to sing



## carol

carols, and throughout the Middle Ages the clergy wrote many of them – usually in sequences like the *Laetabundus*. Most of the carols we know today are not earlier than the 15th c. In 1521 Wynkyn de Worde, a pupil of Caxton, printed the first collection of Christmas carols. Counterparts of the carol elsewhere are the *noël* in France (dating from the 16th c.), and the *Weihnachtslied* in Germany. After the Reformation the practice of composing carols dwindled, though in the 17th c. several poets (Milton, Southwell, Crashaw, Vaughan and Herbert) wrote poems and songs which belong to the carol genre. Milton's *Nativity Hymn* is an outstanding example; so is Southwell's *The Burning Babe*. Among well-known carols mention should be made of *The Seven Joys of Mary*; *I saw Three Ships*; *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen*; *The Virgin Unspotted*; *Jesus Born in Bethlehem*; and *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. Other kinds of carol have moral and satirical themes. There are also love carols. *See also* LYRIC; SONG.

**Caroline period** Of the time of Charles I (1625–49), from the Latin *Carolus* 'Charles'. During this period the Civil War was fought and a large number of distinguished writers were active. The following were pre-eminent: Dekker, Donne, Burton, Shirley, Massinger, Milton, Herbert, Sir Thomas Browne, Carew, Crashaw, Vaughan, Quarles, Killigrew, Herrick, Sir John Suckling and Lovelace. *See also* CAVALIER DRAMA; CAVALIER POETS.

**carpe diem** (L 'snatch the day') The phrase occurs in Horace's *Odes* (I, xi):

*Dum loquimur, fugerit invida  
Aetas: carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.*

In short: 'Enjoy yourself while you can'. Horace elaborates on the motif (*q.v.*) in *Odes* III, xxix. It is found in Greek as well as Latin poetry, recurs frequently in many literatures and obviously arises from the realization of the brevity of life and the inevitability of death. It might be assessed as the motto of epicureanism.

At some point, possibly in the work of the 4th c. Roman poet Ausonius, the rose became the symbol (*q.v.*) of the beauty and transitoriness of life, a thought finely expressed by Ausonius in *De Rosis Nascentibus*. Whatever its origin the symbolism persisted through the Middle Ages and is to be found associated with the *carpe diem* motif in Goliardic verse (*q.v.*) and in much French and

English poetry. At some stage the rose came to represent virginity; and its death, loss of virginity. The 15th and 16th c. love poets incorporated both theme and symbolism in their appeals to their mistresses not to deny them or disdain them. The Cavalier Poets (*q.v.*) were among the last to elaborate the idea, (for example, Herrick's poem *To The Virgins*, to make much of time, begins: 'Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may'), but it has never entirely lost its hold on the poet's imagination – as is evident in the work, for instance, of Yeats.

The *carpe diem* motif, in more specifically Christian and didactic writings, appears in many sermons and much devotional literature during the Middle Ages and thereafter, but the import tends to be admonitory: life is short – prepare to meet thy doom. However, it is the more pagan and epicurean spirit of the motif that has made the greatest appeal to writers, and in few places is it better expressed than in a poem about a Syrian dancing girl, in the *Appendix Vergiliana*, which concludes:

*pone merum et talos. pereat qui crastina curat.  
Mors aurem vellens, 'vivite', ait, 'venio'.*

*See also* UBI SUNT.

**catachresis** (Gk 'misuse') The misapplication of a word, especially in a mixed metaphor (*q.v.*). Puttenham, in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), described catachresis as a figure of 'plain abuse, as he that bade his man go into his library to fetch his bow and arrows'. A famous instance occurs in Milton's *Lycidas*:

Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold  
A Sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least  
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!

**catalects** Literary works which are detached (or detachable) from the main body of a writer's work. *See* ANALECT.

**catalexis** The omission of the last syllable or syllables in a regular metrical line. Often done in trochaic and dactylic verse to avoid monotony. The second and fourth lines of this verse from Hood's *The Bridge of Sighs* illustrate the point:

Óne mōre ũn|fórtūnāte,  
Wéarŷ ōf | breáth,  
Ráshlŷ ĩm|pórtūnāte,  
Góne tŏ hěř | deáth!

## catalexis

It may, however, be argued that the second and fourth lines are choriambic feet. *See* ACATALECTIC; CHORIAMBUS.

**catalogue raisonné** A descriptive and annotated catalogue of books or works of art. Often divided into subject groups.

**catalogue verse** The term describes a list of people, things, places or ideas. It is a device of ancient origin and found in many literatures. Sometimes its function has been didactic. In almost any event its object is to reinforce by elaboration. There are many instances in epic (*q.v.*) poetry, like this from Milton's *Paradise Lost* (X, 695):

Now from the north  
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,  
Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice,  
And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,  
Boreas and Caecias and Argestes' loud  
And Thrascias rend the woods, and seas upturn;  
With adverse blasts upturns them from the south  
Notus and Afer, black with thunderous clouds  
From Serralliona; thwart of these, as fierce  
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,  
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,  
Sirocco and Libecchio.

*See also* BLAZON; EPIC SIMILE.

**catastasis** Two meanings may be distinguished: (a) the narrative part that comes in the introduction of a speech (*q.v.*); (b) the third of the four divisions of a tragedy (*q.v.*) – the first, second and fourth being *protasis*, *epitasis* and *catastrophe* (*qq.v.*). *See also* FREYTAG'S PYRAMID.

**catastrophe** (Gk 'overturning') The tragic dénouement (*q.v.*) of a play or story. For example, the Moor's murder of Desdemona and his own suicide at the climax (*q.v.*) of *Othello*. *See* CATASTASIS; FREYTAG'S PYRAMID.

**catch** In verse the term denotes an extra unstressed syllable at the beginning of a line when the regular meter requires a stress. A famous example occurs in Gray's poem *On Vicissitude*:

New-born flocks; in rustic dance,  
Frisking ply their feeble feet;

Forgetful of their wintry trance,  
The birds his presence greet –

In contrast to 'new-born' and 'frisking', the word 'forgetful' takes a stress on the second syllable.

A catch is also a 'round' for three or more voices. A singer starts a line, another follows him. They take each other up and harmonize. A good example occurs in *Twelfth Night* (II, iv) when Sir Toby Belch, Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Feste are fooling about and getting drunk.

**catharsis** (Gk 'purgation') Aristotle uses the word in his definition of tragedy (*q.v.*) in Chapter VI of *Poetics*, and there has been much debate (still inconclusive) on exactly what he meant. The key sentence is: 'Tragedy through pity and fear effects a purgation of such emotions'. So, in a sense, the tragedy (*q.v.*), having aroused powerful feelings in the spectator, has also a therapeutic effect; after the storm and climax there comes a sense of release from tension, of calm.

**cauda** (L 'tail') The short line or tail which, in a stanza (*q.v.*) of longer lines, usually rhymes with another short line. The use of *caudae* was common in medieval metrical romances (*q.v.*). See also TAIL-RHYME.

**caudate sonnet** A form of sonnet (*q.v.*) in which the normal pattern of fourteen lines is modified by one or more *codas* or 'tails'. The practice is believed to originate from Francesco Berni, the 16th c. Italian poet. The form is rare in English verse, though it has been used for satirical purposes: for instance, Milton's poem *On the New Forces of Conscience Under the Long Parliament*. See TAIL-RHYME.

**causerie** (F *causer* 'to talk, converse') It denotes an informal talk, essay or article particularly on literary topics. The term comes from Sainte-Beuve's *Causeries du lundi*, his contributions to *Le Globe* and *Le Constitutionnel* in the 19th c. See also ESSAY; PROPOS.

**Cavalier drama** In the 1630s the Queen gave patronage to a type of court play called Cavalier drama. It was a decadent form, artificial and ponderous in style, unoriginal in subject matter. The main playwrights were Sir John Suckling and Thomas Killigrew. The Civil War put an end to it.



## Cavalier poets

**Cavalier poets** A group of English lyric poets who were active, approximately, during the reign of Charles I (1625–49). The label is much later than the 17th c., but it is fair to include in the group Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, Herrick, Carew and Waller; plus some minor ones like Godolphin and Randolph. These poets virtually abandoned the sonnet (*q.v.*) form which had been the favoured medium for love poems for a century. They were considerably influenced by Ben Jonson. Their lyrics are light, witty, elegant and, for the most part, concerned with love. They show much technical virtuosity. Good representative examples are: Suckling's *Why so pale and wan, fond lover?*; Herrick's *Delight in Disorder*; Lovelace's *To Althea, from Prison*. See CAROLINE PERIOD.

**Celtic twilight** A vague term used to describe that atmosphere, that romantic and somewhat dreamy sense and evocation of the past, which was cultivated and admired in Ireland towards the end of the 19th c. Irish writers, in what has been called the Irish literary Renaissance, wishing to dispel the influence of English literature, turned to their own heritage in search of myth and legend and the glories of a putative 'golden age' represented by such heroic figures as Finn MacCool. It was an attempt, partially successful, at a revival of Irish Celtic culture.

Three influential works in this recrudescence were: O'Grady's *History of Ireland: Heroic Period* (1878); W. B. Yeats's *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889) and his *The Celtic Twilight* (1893). Yeats, with other distinguished writers, founded the Irish Literary Society in London and The Irish National Literary Society in Dublin. In 1899 he, George Moore and Edward Martin founded the Irish Literary Theatre; and, in 1901, the Abbey or National Theatre Society was established. Yeats, Lady Gregory and Synge supported it. As the Movement gained popularity, libraries were created, books on Irish subjects published, lectures delivered and the Gaelic language revived. Many people ridiculed the movement and James Joyce dismissed it with the scornful phrase 'cultic twalette'.

**cénacle** (F 'supper room') The *cénacles* were groups or coteries which formed round the early leaders of the Romantic movement. The first is believed to have been formed in the *salon* of Charles Nodier (1780–1844) at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal. The second



gathered at Victor Hugo's house. Later a group of 'disciples' sat at the feet of Sainte-Beuve.

**cento** (L 'patchwork') A collection of bits and pieces from various writers. A patchwork poem made up of verses by different writers; like this ingenious example by A. Alvarez in *The New Poetry* (1962). The synthesis contains lines from eight different modern poets:

Picture of lover or friend that is not either  
Like you or me who, to sustain our pose,  
Need wine and conversation, colour and light;  
In short, a past that no one now can share,  
No matter whose your future; calm and dry,  
In sex I do not dither more than either,  
Nor should I now swell to halloo the names  
Of feelings that no one needs to remember:  
The same few dismal properties, the same  
Oppressive air of justified unease  
Of our imaginations and our beds.  
It seems the poet made a bad mistake.

See COLLAGE; PASTICHE.

**chain verse** A rhyming scheme, like *rime riche* (*q.v.*), where the last syllable of a line is repeated in the first syllable of the next line; but though the sound is the same, the sense is different. It is rare in English verse.

The term is also applied to a verse in which the last line of each stanza becomes the first line of the next. Again, this is rare.  
See VILLANELLE.

**chair ode** That ode which, at the eisteddfod (*q.v.*), gains the prize of a carved oaken chair.

**changga** (K 'long poem') A 'popular' Korean verse form, usually of ten or more lines or stanzas with refrains. A frequent theme was love.

**chanson** A form of love song, particularly among the Provençal *troubadour* (*q.v.*) poets. The *chanson* had five or six stanzas, all of the same construction, and an *envoi* (*q.v.*) or *tornada* (*q.v.*). A high degree of originality and technical virtuosity was required, but

## chanson

the themes and subjects were usually the same: devotion to a lady or mistress in the courtly love (*q.v.*) tradition.

**chansons à danser** Songs from the Middle Ages (the earliest extant date from the first half of the 13th c.) composed as an accompaniment to dances. The metrical forms varied considerably. The principal dance was the *carole*, from which evolved the poetic form *rondet de carole* – similar to a *triolet* (*q.v.*). The *ballette* was another dance song consisting of three stanzas and a refrain (*q.v.*).  
*See also* CAROL; VIRELAI.

**chansons à personnages** Medieval songs in dialogue form. Popular themes were a dispute between husband and wife, an exchange between lovers parting at dawn, a meeting between a knight and a shepherdess. *See* AUBADE; DÉBAT; PASTOURELLE; REVERDIE.

**chanson de gestes** (F 'song of deeds') OF epic poems which relate the heroic deeds of Carolingian noblemen and other feudal lords. Some describe wars against the Saracens; others are devoted to intrigue, rebellion and war among the nobles. They exhibit a combination of history and legend (*q.v.*) and also reflect a definite conception of religious chivalry. There are three main cycles: the cycle of Guillaume d'Orange; the cycle of Charlemagne; the third mostly develops the themes of a lord's revolt against his *seigneur*. They were very popular (a literature of entertainment) between the 11th and the 14th c. and over eighty survive. Easily the most famous is the *Chanson de Roland* ('The Song of Roland'), probably composed in the second half of the 11th c. *See also* EPIC; NARRATIVE VERSE; ROMANCE.

**chanson de toile** *Toile* is 'linen, canvas, cloth'. The *chansons de toile* are associated particularly with northern medieval France, the idea being that they were sung by women while they were sewing, spinning or the like. They were short poems in the form of monorhyme stanzas with a refrain (*q.v.*) and related some love episode or sorrow. They tended to be simple, and touching by their immediacy of feeling.

**chansonnier** A collection of Provençal troubadour (*q.v.*) poems in manuscript form.

character, the

**chant** (OF *chanter*, L *cantare* 'to sing') The term may denote almost any song or melody, particularly the melody to which the Psalms are sung. It may denote the Psalm itself. Chants are commonest in liturgical services. Gregorian plain song or *cantus firmus* is the most famous form of chant and has been the most influential. Anglican chant and the chants of the Orthodox churches are also notable. When a poem is chanted the musical elements are subordinate to the verbal. This produces a stylized quality, noticeable in the recitation of the choral pieces in Classical drama, or choral pieces modelled on the Classical style. Also in the recitation of epic ballads. The *guslari* (q.v.) for instance, chant their poems to the accompaniment of a one-string fiddle called a *gusle*.

**chant royal** A metrical and rhyming scheme related to *ballade* (q.v.) forms. It consists of five eleven-line stanzas rhyming ababccddedE, followed by an *envoi* (q.v.) rhyming ddedE. It also has a refrain (q.v.) as indicated by the capital letters, at the end of each stanza and including the last line of the *envoi*. A further complication is that no rhyme word may be used twice except in the *envoi*. The formidable technical difficulties involved make it a rare form except in the 14th c. when distinguished poets like Eustace Deschamps, Charles d'Orléans and Jean Marot used it.

**chante fable** A romance (q.v.) of adventure composed of alternating prose and verse. *Aucassin and Nicolette* (early 13th c.) is believed to be the only survivor of a genre which probably had some popularity in the 12th and 13th c.

**chantey** See SHANTY.

**chapbook** A form of popular literature hawked by pedlars or chapmen, mostly from the 16th to the 18th c. Chapbooks consisted of ballads, pamphlets, tracts, nursery rhymes and fairy stories (qq.v.). They were often illustrated with wood-blocks and were sold at a penny to sixpence. Old romances like *Bevis of Hampton* and *Guy of Warwick* were favourites.

**chapka** (K 'miscellaneous songs') Long narrative poems sung by professional Korean minstrels.

**character, the** A literary genre which became popular early in the

## character, the

17th c. At this time there was an increasing interest in the analysis of character (we may have here the beginning of the novelist's approach to character) but the 'Character' had already a long history, in one form or another, in European literature: in exemplum, allegory, fable, tale (*q.v.*) (for instance, the character studies in Chaucer's *General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*), and in the dramatic and psychological doctrine of humours (*q.v.*), influenced by Horace's precepts on dramatic types. Moreover, it seems there was a disposition towards and an interest in Character because of the by then well-established idea that man in little was an embodiment of the universe.

In his *Advancement of Learning* (1605) Francis Bacon discusses the ancient opinion that 'man was *microcosmus*, an abstract or model of the world'. And in his *History of the World* (1614) Sir Walter Raleigh wrote '... because in the little frame of man's body there is a representation of the Universal; and (by allusion) a kind of participation of all the parts there, therefore was man called *Micro-cosmos*, or the little World'. Later, Sir Thomas Browne, in *Religio Medici* (1642), observed: 'We carry within us the wonders we seek without us: there is all Africa and her prodigies in us; we are that bold and adventurous piece of Nature, which he that studies wisely learns in a *compendium* what others labour at in a divided piece and endless volume'.

Writers and thinkers of the period were very attracted to the microcosm/macrocosm concept, but the popularity of the 'Character' may also be attributed to the publication in 1592 of a Latin translation, by Isaac Casaubon, of the *Characters* of Theophrastus of Lesbos (371-287 B.C.) – the prototypal work – which was followed in 1593 by an English version of Casaubon's Latin by John Healey. Other works which very probably had some influence were pamphlets by Nashe and Greene and Nicolas Breton's *The Fantasticks* (1626).

The first major collection of character studies was Joseph Hall's *Characters of Virtues and Vices* (1608). A minor work by 'W.M.' called *The Man in the Moon* came out in 1609. The next major work was Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters* (1614), some of which are believed to have been written by Webster, Dekker and Donne. Another minor work was Geffray Mynshul's *Essays and Characters of Prison and Prisoners* (1617). By now the connection between the essay (*q.v.*) and the 'Character' is becoming clear, and one may suppose that the influence of Montaigne is to be detected here. Then, in 1628, John Earle published *Microcosmo-*



*graphie*. Earle is the truest descendant of Theophrastus and his characters are generally thought to be the best.

The subjects of Characterology fall into roughly three categories: (a) a type – a self-conceited man, a blunt man; (b) a social type – an antiquary, an old college butler; (c) a place or scene: a tavern or cockpit. The idea was to create an individual while formulating a type. There was usually an attempt at universality. For instance, a pretender to learning might be found in any part of the world at any time. The miniature portraits were aphoristically terse, a style particularly congenial in the 17th c.

Hall, Overbury and Earle had many imitators. The more notable authors and works were: Donald Lupton's *Long and Country Carbonadoed* (1632); Richard Flecknoe's *Enigmatical Characters* (1658); Francis Osborn's *A Miscellany of Sundry Essays* (1659). An elaborate extension of the whole idea of 'character' is George Halifax's *The Character of a Trimmer* (1688).

One of the most famous of all such collections was La Bruyère's *Les Caractères*, (1688) in the great French tradition of Montaigne, Pascal and La Rochefoucauld. He combined translations of Theophrastus with his own observations – which are shrewd, tartly laconic, aphoristic (like La Rochefoucauld's *Maxims*) and presented with Baconian terseness.

The practice of 'character' was carried on in the following century in the periodical essay (*q.v.*), especially by Steele, Addison, Goldsmith and Johnson. They took the process a stage further by naming the characters (for instance, Sir Andrew Freeport, Will Honeycomb, Dick Minim), and these essay characters, though types, were also particular individuals. The essay character gave place to and made possible the character of the novel (*q.v.*), as can be seen in Fielding's novels *Joseph Andrews* (1742) and *Tom Jones* (1749).

Modern 'Character' tends to be the portrayal of individuals, though many of Dickens's characters are also typical – just as virtues and vices are typical in most parts of the world. Something in between the characters of Earle and the novel character is to be found in such works as Dickens's *Sketches by Boz* (1839), Thackeray's *Book of Snobs* (1848) and George Eliot's *Theophrastus Such* (1879). See also MAXIM; PENSÉE.

**charm** A spell or incantation which may consist of song, verse or mere mumbo jumbo and abracadabra to invoke supernatural or supernormal powers. It is one of the earliest forms of written literature



## charm

and appears to be almost universal. The OE *Charms* are among the first extant written works in our language. There are several: For a sudden stitch; Against a dwarf; Against wens; For taking a swarm of bees; A land remedy; A journey spell; Against the theft of cattle; The nine herbs charm. Examples of charms incorporated in a more literary context are to be found in Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. Famous instances are the Witches' charms in *Macbeth* (c. 1606). Quite as good are those in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens* (1609). See INCANTATION.

**chastushka** (R 'part song'). A form of Russian folksong. It usually consists of two, four or six lines (four being the commonest) which rhyme. It tends to be epigrammatic and is occasionally bawdy.

**Chaucerian stanza** See RHYME ROYAL.

**cheville** (F 'peg, pin, bolt, plug') A French term for an expression or phrase which serves to round off a verse.

**Chevy Chase stanza** See BALLAD METER.

**chiasmus** (Gk 'a placing crosswise') A balancing pattern in verse or prose, where the main elements are reversed. Thus the last line of Sonnet 154 by Shakespeare:

Love's fire heats water, water cools not love.

See also ZEUGMA.

**Chicago critics** A group of critics associated with the University of Chicago who in 1952 published *Critics and Criticism: Ancient and Modern*.

**children's books** Until about the middle of the 18th c. there was little in the way of books specifically for children, except for didactic works of one sort and another like text books, books of etiquette and works of moral edification. For entertainment and diversion they had Aesop's *Fables*, romances, travel books, chapbooks, broadside ballads (*qq.v.*) and any 'adult' reading they could lay their hands on. Notable examples of this are Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). In France children had been a

little better off because of Fénelon's *Télémaque* (1966), Perrault's fairy tales, and *The Arabian Nights* which came to England via a French translation early in the 18th c.

In England one of the first people to realize that there was a demand for children's books was John Newbery (1713-67), a book-seller who issued a variety of works illustrated with wood-cuts or engravings at low prices. His two best known publications were *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (1744) and *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes* (1765?).

Apart from imitations of *Robinson Crusoe* (e.g. *The Adventures of Philip Quarll*, 1727) there was still not much available until the latter half of the 18th c. when a number of writers (among them several women) produced juvenile literature. Some of the better known works are *The History of Sandford and Merton* (1783-89) by Thomas Day, *Fabulous Histories* (1786) by Sarah Trimmer, *Evenings at Home* (1792-96) by John Aikin and Mrs Barbauld, and *The Parent's Assistant* (1796) by Maria Edgeworth, the novelist.

Early in the 19th c. Charles and Mary Lamb wrote their famous *Tales From Shakespeare*.

A certain amount of verse specifically for children was written in the 18th c., notably Cotton's *Visions in Verse* (1751). There were also a large number of ballads (q.v.) in circulation and nursery rhymes (q.v.). In 1804-05 there came out *Original Poems for Infant Minds*, a collection of moral verses; and in 1807 William Roscoe published *Butterfly's Ball* which was very popular.

From this point on we find an ever-increasing number of publications for children in Europe, England and America. Outstanding works are: Grimm's *Fairy Tales* (1823), Catherine Sinclair's *Holiday House* (1839), Edward Lear's *A Book of Nonsense* (1846), Hans Andersen's *Fairy Tales* which were translated into English in 1846, Lane's version of *The Arabian Nights* (1839-41), Ruskin's *King of the Golden River* (1851), Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring* (1855), Kingsley's *Water Babies* (1863), Jean Ingelow's *Mopsa the Fairy* (1869), George Macdonald's *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871). Probably none of these is as famous as Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871). Other works of importance in the 19th c. are Lang's collections of fairy tales, Hawthorne's *Tanglewood Tales* (1851) and Kingsley's *Heroes* (1856).

School stories have also proved a very popular form of fiction among children and adolescents. A few of the more or less

## children's books

classical works in this field are: Sarah Fielding's *Governess* (1749); Harriet Martineau's *Crofton Boys* (1841); Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857); Dean Farrer's *Eric or Little by Little* (1858); Tom Baines Reed's *The Fifth Form at St Dominic's* (1887); Kipling's *Stalky & Co.* (1899); Richmal Crompton's *Just William* (1922), which she followed up with thirty or more 'William' books; and the famous Billy Bunter stories by Frank Richards which first appeared in *The Gem* and *The Magnet* and were then gathered into volume form as *Billy Bunter of Greyfriars' School* (1947).

The fairy-tale (*q.v.*) is a widespread form of fiction for children. Again there are a number of classic works, like *The Arabian Nights*, Perrault's tales, the stories by the Grimm brothers and Hans Andersen, Chandler Harris's *Uncle Remus* (1880), Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* (1926) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928), Carlo Lorenzini's *Pinocchio* (1883), Waldemar Bonsels' *Maja* (1912) and Selma Lagerlöf's *Nils Holgersson* (1906-07).

There are also a large number of what may be described as animal stories. Notable instances are Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty* (1877), Kipling's *Jungle Books* (1894-95), J. W. Fortescue's *Story of a Red Deer* (1897), various stories by Grey Owl and Frances Pitt. In this field Henry Williamson wrote two classic works in the shape of *Tarka the Otter* (1927), which was not, in fact, intended as a children's story, and *Salar the Salmon* (1935).

Other children's stories of note are: Elizabeth Wetherell's *The Wide, Wide World* (1850); Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852); Charlotte M. Yonge's *The Daisy Chain* (1856); Richard Jefferies' *Bevis* (1882); Mrs Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1886); Edith Nesbitt's *The Story of the Treasure Seekers* (1899), and *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904); Noel Streatfield's *Ballet Shoes* (1936); and a number of very good books by Arthur Ransome.

Some notable instances of children's verse are Christina Rossetti's *Sing-Song* (1872); R. L. Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verses* (1885); Hilaire Belloc's *The Bad Child's Book of Beasts* (1896) and his *Cautionary Tales* (1908); T. S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* (1939). This last is a kind of nonsense verse (*q.v.*), a genre to which (for children) several famous writers have made outstanding contributions – especially Lewis Carroll and A. A. Milne. Walter de la Mare and Eleanor Fargeon have also written some fine poetry for children. In recent years Penguins have

published some of the best anthologies of children's verse, namely, *Junior Voices* (in four different books) and *Voices* (in three books).

In the 20th c. there are a number of works in the fairy tale (*q.v.*) category which have become classics. Obvious examples are: J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1904); Kipling's *Just So Stories* (1902), *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906) and *Rewards and Fairies* (1910); A. A. Milne's *Christopher Robin* series (began in the 1920s); Hugh Lofting's *Dr Dolittle* series (also begun in the 1920s). To these should be added Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* (1908), and the many Beatrix Potter stories, the first being published in 1902.

Adventure stories, most of which have been intended for boys, first became popular in the 19th c. An early and well-known example is Marryat's *Masterman Ready* (1841-42). R. M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1858) is a classic of the genre. So are Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1881-82) and Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885). Early SF (*q.v.*) written by Jules Verne and H. G. Wells was immensely popular and of a high order. W. E. Johns' Biggles stories had a great vogue from the 1920s onwards.

Most crime and detective story (*q.v.*) novels have been written for adults, but have proved very popular among children; especially Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and G. K. Chesterton's Father Brown stories. A classic in crime fiction aimed primarily at children is Erich Kästner's *Emil and the Detectives*.

Outside English literature some of the other better known outstanding works are: the Comtesse de Ségur's *Les Malheurs de Sophie* (1864); Louisa Alcott's *Little Women* (1868-69); Hector Malot's *Sans Famille* (1878); Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and his *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884); Johanna Spyri's *Heidi* (1880-81); and L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908).

In the last fifty years a huge quantity of books has been produced specifically for children of all ages.

**chimerat** A form of folk-tale story of the Indo-European culture which possesses the quality of universality (*q.v.*). Thus it does not depend for its verisimilitude on any particular place or period. See NOVELLAT.

**choliambus** (Gk 'lame' or 'limping iambic') A meter used by



## choliambus

Hipponax of Ephesus (c. 540 B.C.) and so called because of the substitution (*q.v.*) of a spondee or trochee (*qq.v.*) for the normal iamb (*q.v.*) in the sixth foot of the iambic trimeter (*q.v.*). If the fifth foot was also a spondee the verse was called ischiorrhogic or 'broken hipped'.

**choree** See TROCHEE.

**choriambus** (Gk 'chorus iamb') An iamb and a trochee (*qq.v.*) combined to make a metrical foot of two stressed syllables enclosing two unstressed: / U U /. In English verse, rare as the basic scheme of a poem; but not infrequently found in combination with other feet. Swinburne, a skilled and indefatigable experimenter in meter, shows its use well in *Choriambics*:

Sweét thě | kíssēs ōf deáth | sét ōn thỹ líps  
Cóldēr āre théy | thǎn mĩne;  
Cóldēr | súrelỹ thǎn pást | kíssēs ōf lóve  
Póured fŏr thỹ líps | ās wĩne.

**chorus** (Gk 'dance') Originally the Chorus was a group of performers at a religious festival, especially fertility rites. By some process of grafting or symbiosis Greek tragedy (*q.v.*) acquired (or grew out of) these choral rites. At any rate, the Chorus became an essential and integral part of Greek tragic drama. In the works of Aeschylus the Chorus often took part in the action; in Sophocles it served as a commentator on the action; and in Euripides it provided a lyric element. The Romans copied the idea of a Chorus from the Greeks, and Elizabethan dramatists took it over from the Romans. However, a full scale Chorus has seldom been used in English drama, or indeed European drama.

Usually the Chorus has been reduced to one person, as in *Henry V* (1599), *Pericles* (c. 1608) and *The Winter's Tale* (c. 1609-10). Milton used a full Chorus in his closet drama (*q.v.*) *Samson Agonistes* (1671), but thereafter there are few instances until T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) in which the remarkable chorus of the women of Canterbury takes part in the action, comments on it and provides mood and atmosphere. Eliot also used a Chorus of the *Eumenides* in *The Family Reunion* (1939). There have also been occasional uses of a single Chorus as commentator on the action (moving in and out of the play). Notable instances are to be found in Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1943-45); Anouilh's *Antigone* (1944); Tennessee Williams's *The Glass*



*Menagerie* (1945); and Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge* (1955).

**chrestomathy** (Gk 'useful learning') An anthology (*q.v.*) of passages in prose or verse (or both); particularly one to be used for learning a language.

**Christabel meter** The meter of Coleridge's poem *Christabel*. It comprises free couplets with a pattern of four stresses. Much of the time the feet are iambs or anapaests (*qq.v.*). Coleridge claimed that the meter was based, not on a syllable count but on an accent count, that this was a new principle and that the length of the line varied with the amount of passion expressed. In fact the principle was *not* new, but it is true that the passion does vary occasionally. One feature of the poem is that in a few lines he manages monosyllabic feet.

**chronicle** A register of events in order of time, often composed contemporaneously with the events they record. Early examples are the Roman *Fasti Consulares* or *Capitolini* compiled in the reign of Augustus. There were many medieval chronicles, in verse and prose, which are important sources for the historian. Among the earliest are the 6th c. chronicle of Gildas, *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae*, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (c. 731), the *Historia Britonum* of Nennius (c. 796), Asser's 9th c. chronicle covering the period 849–87, and the *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* by Flodoard of Rheims which covers the period 919–66. From the second half of the 10th c. dates the *Annales Cambriae*. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* are very valuable records of events in England from the beginning of the Christian era until the middle of the 12th c. Several Latin Chronicles belong to the 12th c., including Florence of Worcester's *Chronicon ex Chronicis* which he took down to 1117 and which was then extended by others until 1295. Eadmer's *Historia Novorum in Anglia* goes as far as 1122. William of Malmesbury, one of the best and most famous chroniclers, compiled several records: particularly the *Gesta Regum Anglorum* (449–1127) and *Historia Novella*, which covers English history as far as 1142. From the 12th c. also, date Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Roger of Hoveden's *Cronica*, Jocelin de Brakelond's chronicle of his abbey, several records by Giraldus Cambrensis and William of Newburgh's *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* (1066–1198). In the 13th c. some schools of history developed, particularly at St Denis where a large number of Latin chronicles were

## chronicle

produced which eventually became the *Grandes Chroniques de France*; and at St Albans where Matthew of Paris compiled his great chronicles (1235-59). From the 13th and 14th c. we should also note Robert Gloucester's chronicle from earliest times down to 1272, Richard of Cirencester's *Speculum Historiale* (447-1066), Froissart's *Chroniques* (1325-1400) and Andrew of Wyntoun's *The Orygynale Cronykil*. In the 15th c. John Capgrave made several important chronicles, and in the 16th c. we find an increasing number of such records: Robert Fabyan's *Concordance of Histories* (1516), an anonymous *History of Richard III* (1534), which was something of a landmark in history and biography (*q.v.*), Polydore Vergil's *Anglicae Historiae Libri xxvi* (1534-55), Camden's *Britannia* (1586), Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1586), Edward Hall's *The Union of the Noble and Illustre Families of Lancastre and York*, a number of very valuable *Chronicles* by John Stow (especially his account of London), and William Harrison's *Description of England* (included in *Holinshed's Chronicles*). Early in the 17th c. John Speed published *Historie of Great Britain* (1611), and between 1599 and 1636 Sir John Hayward published several biographies. By this stage the writing of history and the making of records was very different from what it had been earlier. Biography, autobiography (*q.v.*), memoirs, diaries, log-books, travel books, narratives of sea voyages and exploration were becoming commonplace and thereafter the chronicle was no longer a form of any note. The writing of history, as is evident from, for instance, Sir Walter Raleigh's *Historie of the World* (1614), was to become a much more specialized business. See ANNAL; CHRONICLE PLAY; DIARY AND JOURNAL; TRAVEL BOOK.

**chronicle novel** See BILDUNGSROMAN; ROMAN CYCLE; ROMAN FLEUVE; SAGA NOVEL.

**chronicle play** Also known as a History Play, and therefore based on recorded history rather than on myth or legend (*qq.v.*). Early examples are *The Persians* by Aeschylus, and *Octavia*, ascribed to Seneca.

Early chronicle plays in England were like pageants interspersed with battle scenes. However, some dramatists saw the possibility of the history play. Bale wrote what is generally regarded as the first: *King John* (c. 1555?). Two other important works in the transition from Interlude (*q.v.*) and Morality Play (*q.v.*) to historical drama were Sackville and Norton's *Gorboduc*

(1561) and Preston's *Cambises* (1569). Later, Marlowe also saw the possibilities of such presentation and, using Holinshed, dramatized the life of Edward II (1593). Shakespeare followed with a succession of chronicle plays which covered the English monarchy from Richard II to Henry VIII. After him Fletcher, with *Bonduca* (1619), and Ford, with *Perkin Warbeck* (1634), continued the tradition successfully.

Thereafter chronicle plays are fairly rare, though a number of dramatists attempted Roman historical subjects in the 18th and 19th c. James Sheridan Knowles, Darley, Tennyson, Browning and Swinburne all turned to history for their subjects but with little success – largely because they were out of touch with the requirements of the theatre and insufficiently familiar with the stage. Thomas Hardy also attempted a dramatization of history in the shape of *The Dynasts* (1904, 1906, 1908) which also proved unstageable. By general agreement Schiller in the *Wallenstein Trilogy* (1799) and *Maria Stuart* (1800) was the only subsequent dramatist to manage this kind of play with much success. *See* CHRONICLE; EPIC THEATRE.

**chronogram** (Gk 'time writing') An inscription in which letters form a date in Roman numerals.

**Ciceronian** In the style of Cicero (106–43 B.C.). Thus, dignified, balanced, melodious, well ordered and clear. Cicero had much influence on the writing of prose from the Renaissance onwards.

**cinquain** A five-line stanza with a variable meter and rhyme scheme. It may be of medieval origin. The American poet Adelaide Crapsey worked out a particular kind of *cinquain* consisting of five lines with a fixed number of syllables: two, four, six, eight and two respectively.

**cipher** A mode of writing which employs the substitution or transposition of letters. A private and secret means of communication. Interesting if childish examples occur in Mary Leith's letters to Swinburne. For instance:

Cy merest dozen,  
Anks thawfully for your kyind letter. Since  
you and Mr Watts kyindly give us the choice of days (or  
doice of chays) may we name Wednesday all things being  
propitious?. . . .

## cipher

This little delay has allowed me more time to devote to your most interesting Eton book . . . even tho' it be only the tavings of a rug, or even the topping of a mug, it is exceptionally amusing to your mi', tho' I could dish that it wealt with a pater leriod.

See SPOONERISM.

**circumambages** The devices of periphrasis (*q.v.*). A rare term.

**circumlocution** Roundabout speech or writing. Using a lot of words where a few will do. See EUPHEMISM; PERIPHRAISIS; TAUTOLOGY.

**circumstance, tragedy of** A tragedy (*q.v.*) in which some kind of external force like fate or the gods brings about the doom of the hero or heroine (and other characters).

**classic** A number of meanings may be distinguished, but principally: (a) of the first rank or authority; (b) belonging to the literature or art of Greece and Rome; and (c) a writer or work of the first rank, and of generally acknowledged excellence.

Originally a *scriptor classicus* wrote for the upper classes; a *scriptor proletarius* for the lower classes. Gradually, for the Romans, the term 'classic' came to signify an author of first class quality. During the Middle Ages the word merely meant a writer who was studied (in the class room) regardless of his merit. At the Renaissance (*q.v.*) only the major works by Greek and Latin authors were regarded as of first class importance, and the humanistic ideal established the view that the best classical authors had reached perfection. Nowadays we tend to use classic in one of three senses: (a) first class or outstanding (we have 'classic' races); (b) ancient; (c) typical (for instance, a classic example of a disease).

The adjective 'classical' usually applies to anything pertaining to Greece and Rome. Nearly always there is the implication of the 'best', a standard of excellence worthy of emulation. When applied to literature the word Classical suggests that the work has the qualities of order, harmony, proportion, balance, discipline . . . In short, nothing can be taken away from it or added to it without doing it some injury. See CLASSICISM/ROMANTICISM; NEOCLASSICISM.



**classicism** A term as replete with varied and contradictory meanings as romanticism (*q.v.*) and considerably complicated by the antinomy of classicism/romanticism (*q.v.*).

In general when we speak of classicism we refer to the styles, rules, modes, conventions, themes and sensibilities of the Classical authors, and, by extension, their influence on and presence in the work of later authors. For the Romans classicism was Greek influence. Seneca, for example, imitated the Greek tragedians; Virgil was much influenced by Homer. Then, in the 12th c., we find Graeco-Roman models used by writers of the French and German courtly romances. The imitation of the rules of Classical poetics is another very important development. Aristotle's *Poetics* and Horace's *Ars Poetica* were two major influences in the 15th and 16th c. Aristotle's shadow lies heavily, and in some cases not at all helpfully, over much drama from the 16th c. to the end of the 18th c. Many commentators on Aristotle in the 16th c. diffused his theories of imitation (*q.v.*). His views of tragedy and epic were regarded almost as gospel. The principal commentators on Aristotle were mostly Italian: Robortelli, Segni, Maggi Vettori, Castelvetro and Piccolomini. In England Scaliger's *Poetica* (1561) is a key work. Horace's remarks on decorum (*q.v.*), the appropriateness of language and style, the appropriateness of action to character, and his observations on the need for excellence in craftsmanship, were also taken up, analysed and disseminated by commentators in the 16th c.; principally, Vida, Robortello, Joachim du Bellay, Ronsard, Sir Philip Sidney (in *Apologie for Poetry*, 1595) and Opitz.

Another major Classical influence on drama was Seneca, especially in tragedy; to such an extent that we have a subspecies known as Senecan tragedy (*q.v.*).

Classicism was strongest in France in the 17th and 18th c. but it was also very strong in England. In France, the main authors to follow Classical precepts were Corneille, Racine, Molière, Voltaire, Boileau and La Fontaine. The most influential treatise by a Frenchman in this respect is undoubtedly Boileau's *Art Poétique* (1674). The major English authors to follow Classical rules and modes were Ben Jonson, Dryden, Pope, Swift, Addison and Dr Johnson. The influence of classicism is also very noticeable in the work of many German writers in the second half of the 18th c. (notably, Winckelmann, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller and Hölderlin), and also in the work of some Italian authors – especially Alfieri. The Germans, however, were not interested in



## classicism

French Neoclassicism (*q.v.*) or the Roman authors. They went back to the Greeks and imitated Greek forms.

Classicism in literature is by no means extinct. In the 20th c. there has been a considerable revival of interest in Classical themes in drama, fiction and verse, especially in French drama, and particularly in the plays of Sartre, Cocteau, Giraudoux and Anouilh. *See also* NEOCLASSICISM.

**classicism/romanticism** An antinomy (*q.v.*) devised by Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829) and expressed in *Das Athenaeum* (1798). Schlegel saw classicism (*q.v.*) as an attempt to express infinite ideas and feelings in a finite form and romanticism (*q.v.*) as an attempt to express a kind of universal poetry in the creation of which the poet made his own laws. Mme de Staël (1766–1817) first publicized this idea in *De l'Allemagne* (1813) and it was through this work, as much as through Schlegel's, that English and French writers became acquainted with the theory. Mme de Staël rejected classicism. Once this antinomy was established, many people modified and expanded it. The most notable person to do so was Goethe who equated classicism with health and romanticism with sickness. This oversimplified antinomy has been much debated ever since.

**clausula** A form of prose rhythm invented by Greek orators as a punctuation for oral delivery. Latin authors, particularly Cicero, adopted the device and introduced *clausulae* in the writing of prose. Prose is scannable, in the same way that verse is; thus writers developed the trick of concluding sentences and periods with regularized cadences.

**clef** *See* LIVRE À CLEF.

**clench** A quibbling form of pun (*q.v.*). Also a statement that settles an argument; one that clinches it.

**clerihew** A four-line verse consisting of two couplets, invented by Edmund Clerihew Bentley (1875–1956). He is supposed to have devised the form during a boring chemistry lesson – hence this:

Sir Humphrey Davy  
Abominated gravity.  
He lived in the odium  
Of having discovered sodium.

At their best they are witty, deft and epigrammatic. For instance:

George the Third  
Ought never to have occurred.  
One can only wonder  
At so grotesque a blunder.

Many people have composed good clerihews and making them up has become a parlour game. The inventor's son, Nicolas Bentley, is the author of a famous one:

Cecil B. de Mille  
Rather against his will  
Was persuaded to leave Moses  
Out of the Wars of the Roses.

*See also* BOUT-RIMÉS; DOUBLE DACTYL; LIMERICK.

**cliché** (F 'stereotype plate') A trite, over-used expression which is lifeless. A very large number of idioms (*q.v.*) have become clichés through excessive use. The following sentence contains eight common ones: 'When the grocer, who was as fit as a fiddle, had taken stock of the situation he saw the writing on the wall, but decided to turn over a new leaf and put his house in order by taking a long shot at eliminating his rival in the street – who was also an old hand at making the best of a bad job.' Hackneyed literary phrases (often misquoted) are another form of cliché. Pope remarked caustically on these in his *Essay on Criticism* (II, ll. 350 ff) when criticizing the stereotyped mannerisms of 18th c. poetasters (*q.v.*):

Where'er you find 'the cooling western breeze',  
In the next line it 'whispers through the trees';  
If crystal streams 'with pleasing murmurs creep',  
The reader's threatened (not in vain) with 'sleep'.

Eric Partridge's *A Dictionary of Clichés* is one of the best guides to these literary tares. *See* COLLOQUIALISM; DEAD METAPHOR; SLANG.

**climax** That part of a story or play (for that matter, many forms of narrative) at which a crisis (*q.v.*) is reached and resolution achieved. *See also* ANTI-CLIMAX; CATASTROPHE; DÉNOUEMENT; FALLING ACTION; FREYTAG'S PYRAMID; RISING ACTION; TURNING POINT.

## closed couplet

**closed couplet** Two metrical lines (almost invariably rhyming) whose sense and grammatical structure conclude at the end of the second line. It is very common in the heroic couplet (*q.v.*), as in these lines from Johnson's *London*:

In vain, these Dangers past, your Doors you close,  
And hope the balmy blessings of repose:  
Cruel with Guilt, and daring with Despair,  
The midnight Murd'rer, bursts the faithless Bar;  
Invades the sacred Hour of silent Rest  
And leaves, unseen, a Dagger in your Breast.

*See also* END-STOPPED LINE; ENJAMBEMENT; OPEN COUPLET.

**closet drama** A play (sometimes also called a dramatic poem) designed to be read rather than performed. The term may also apply to a play which was intended to be performed but hardly ever is, and yet has survived as a piece of worthwhile literature. Well-known examples are: Milton's *Samson Agonistes* (1671); Byron's *Manfred* (1817); Shelley's *Cenci* (1819); Keats's *Otho the Great* (1819); Swinburne's *Bothwell* (1874); and Hardy's *The Dynasts* (1904, 1906, 1908). *See also* SENECA TRAGEDY.

**clou** (F 'peg') A situation or episode upon which everything hangs. The meaning is implicit in the phrase 'And thereby hangs a tale.'

**cobla** In Old Provençal, the normal word for stanza (*q.v.*). It may also denote a poem composed of a single stanza. From the 12th c. onwards *coblas* are fairly common. Their themes are similar to those of the *sirventes* (*q.v.*). In some compositions one *cobla* is 'answered' by another, in which cases it is akin to the *tenson* (*q.v.*). *See also* DÉBAT; POETIC CONTESTS.

**cock-and-bull story** A long, rambling and improbable story, related to the tall story (*q.v.*). The origin of the phrase is obscure, but it is plausible that it derives from fables (*q.v.*) in which cocks and bulls were characters. There are a number of references in literature. In his *Anatomy of Melancholy* Burton refers to men who delight to talk 'of a cock and bull over a pot'. *See also* BEAST EPIC; BESTIARY; BULL.

**Cockney rhymes** False rhymes brought about by London pronunciation, like time and name: time/nime.

**Cockney school of poetry** This term was first used in *Blackwood's Magazine* (Oct. 1817) and thereafter employed derisively of a group of writers who were Londoners by birth or adoption. They included Keats, Leigh Hunt, Shelley and Hazlitt. Leigh Hunt was a favourite target.

**codex** The term derives from the Latin *codex*, a block of wood split into leaves or tablets and then covered with wax for writing on. When paper and parchment replaced wood, the word was retained for a book. Thus, a volume of manuscript. *The Vercelli Book* is a famous example.

**cofradía** A travelling company or guild of Spanish actors in the 16th and 17th c. They gave performances in the main towns on Sundays and feast days in order to make money for charities. At first they performed in existing courtyards (*corrales*) then in the new theatres of which there were three in Madrid by 1584. Before the time of Lope de Vega they played *comedias* (simply, plays) based on authors like Plautus and Seneca.

**coin** To invent and put into use a new word or expression. See NADSAT; NEOLOGISM.

**cola** The plural of colon (*q.v.*).

**collage** (F 'sticking' or 'pasting things on') A term adopted from the vocabulary of painters to denote a work which contains a mixture of allusions, references, quotations, and foreign expressions. It is common in the work of James Joyce, Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. The influence of Surrealism (*q.v.*) in this respect has been considerable. These collage lines come from David Jones's *Anathemata*:

Her menhirs

DIS MANIBUS of

many of a *Schiller's* people

many men

of many a Clowdisley's ship's company:

for she takes nine

in ten!

But what Caliban's Lamia

## collage

rung him for his Hand of Glory?  
(And where the wolf in the quartz'd height  
    – O long long long  
before the sea-mark light! –  
saliva'd the spume  
    over Mark's lost hundred.  
Back over the hundred and forty *mensae* drowned  
in the un-apsed *eghwysau*, under.  
Back to the crag-mound  
    in the drowned *coed*  
    under.)

Collage techniques have also been employed by modern novelists; particularly in the so-called anti-novel (*q.v.*). See DADAISM; CENTO.

**colloquialism** A colloquial word, phrase or expression is one in everyday use in speech and writing. The colloquial style is plain and relaxed. This sentence is colloquial: 'Naturally enough, the horse-coper, having taken his chance and been thrown twice, wouldn't risk a second attempt.' See CLICHÉ; IDIOM; KING'S ENGLISH; SLANG; STANDARD ENGLISH.

**colloquy** A dialogue (*q.v.*) or discussion. A *colloquium*. As a title and as a form there are a few instances: the *Colloquia* of Erasmus (*c.* 1526), and Southey's *Sir Thomas More Colloquies on the progress and prospects of Society* (1829).

**colon** (Gk 'limb') A metrical term which denotes a number of feet or metra. See FOOT.

**colophon** (Gk 'summit, finish') Either a publisher's emblem which appears on the title page of a book (or at the end of it), and/or information about the date, place, printer and edition.

**comédie** Originally in France this did not necessarily denote a play that was comic, but rather a play that was not a tragedy (*q.v.*). It might be a serious play which contained some comedy (*q.v.*). A good example in English dramatic literature is Eugene O'Neil's *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1956). See DRAME.

**comédie-ballet** Molière developed this dramatic form from ballet



by interspersing ballet between the acts of a comedy (*q.v.*). It was a satirical or farcical interlude related to the theme of the play. The first instance is *Les Fâcheux* (1661). Molière wrote fourteen plays of this kind. *See also* ANTI-MASQUE; SATYR PLAY.

**comédie de mœurs** French for 'comedy of manners' (*q.v.*).

**comédie larmoyante** (F 'tearful comedy') The French counterpart to 18th c. sentimental comedy (*q.v.*) in England. In France, its leading exponents were Nivelles de la Chaussée and Diderot: in Germany, Gellert and Lessing.

**comedy** (Gk *komos* 'revel, merrymaking') Comedy includes: *comédie*; *comédie-ballet*; *comédie larmoyante*; comedy of humours; comedy of ideas; comedy of intrigue; comedy of manners; comedy of morals; *commedia dell'arte*; *commedia erudita*; burlesque; black comedy; drawing-room comedy; domestic comedy; farce; high comedy; musical comedy; romantic comedy; satirical comedy; sentimental comedy; tragi-comedy (*qq.v.*), in addition to all those plays which may be classified under the heading of Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*).

Greek comedy (in speaking of which we distinguish between Old, Middle and New Comedy *qq.v.*) was from the beginning associated with fertility rites and the worship of Dionysus; thus, with *komos*. From Aristophanes onwards it has been primarily associated with drama (except during the Middle Ages). Aristophanes (c. 448–c. 380 B.C.) wrote a variety of comedies which combine fine lyric verse, dance, satire, buffoonery, social comment, fantastic plots and remarkable characters. Already, then, at an early stage we find a dramatist supremely confident in this mode. The following are his extant works: *Archonians*, *Knights*, *Clouds*, *Peace*, *Wasps*, *Birds*, *Frogs*, *Plutus*, *Lysistrata*, *Ecclesiazusae* and *Thesmophoriazusae*. The other great Greek 'comedian' was Menander (c. 343–c. 291 B.C.). Apart from *Dyskolos* only fragments of his plays survive but much is known about them because the Romans were familiar with them. In fact Menander had a great influence on succeeding dramatists. His themes were more social than political, and the theme of youthful love was a favourite one. Aristophanes belongs to what is known as the 'school' of Old Comedy (*q.v.*), and Menander to New Comedy (*q.v.*). In between came Middle Comedy (*q.v.*).

The other major comic writers of antiquity were the Romans

## comedy

Plautus (c. 254-184 B.C.) and Terence (190-159 B.C.). Both of them wrote imitations of Menander, and their themes also tended to be concerned with youthful love. Like Menander they used stock characters (*q.v.*), and the characters and situations they devised were used as models for many comedies during the Renaissance period and later. The extant works of Plautus are: *Amphitruo*, *Asinaria*, *Aulularia*, *Bacchides*, *Captivi*, *Casina*, *Cistellaria*, *Curculio*, *Epidicus*, *Menaechmi*, *Mercator*, *Miles*, *Mostellaria*, *Persa*, *Poenulus*, *Pseudolus*, *Rudens*, *Stichus*, *Trinummus* and *Truculentus*. Terence wrote six plays: *Andria*, *Hecyra*, *Heautontimorumenos*, *Eunuchus*, *Phormio* and *Adelphoe*.

Between the death of Terence and the late Middle Ages little comedy of note was produced; or, if it was, it has not survived. In the late Middle Ages, however, we have the development of farce and comic interludes (*q.v.*) in the Mystery Plays (*q.v.*).

As for the theory of comedy thus far, there is not much to record. In *Poetics*, Aristotle distinguishes it from Tragedy (*q.v.*) by saying it deals in an amusing way with ordinary characters in rather everyday situations. From the 4th c. A.D. we have a few generalizations by the grammarians Evanthius, Diomedes and Donatus. Evanthius says that in comedy the men are of middle fortune, the dangers they run into are neither serious nor pressing and their actions conclude happily. He goes on to say that whereas in tragedy life is to be fled from, in comedy it is to be grasped. Diomedes observes that the characters in comedy (unlike those in tragedy) are humble and private people (thus, not heroes, generals and kings). He adds that two of the main themes of comedy are love affairs and the abduction of maidens. According to Donatus, comedy was a tale containing various elements of the dispositions of town-dwellers and private people who are shown what is useful and what is not useful in life, and what should be avoided.

The next major reference to comedy occurs in the *Ars Versificatoria* of Matthieu de Vendôme (c. 1150), where he refers to comedy as an allegorical figure who comes surreptitiously with a work-a-day (or daily) grin or in a work-a-day dress, bearing his head in a humble fashion and not bringing any pretensions or suggestions of gaiety.

This striking description is a little ambiguous, but the implications are that comedy is unlike tragedy, and in comedy it does not *look* as if things are going to turn out well.

A century later, Vincent de Beauvais (in *Speculum maius triplex*)

describes a comedy as a poem changing a sad beginning into a happy ending. In 1286, in *Catholicon*, Johannes Januensis makes a distinction similar to that of Evanthius and Diomedes. Tragedy and comedy differ, he says, because comedy is concerned with the acts of private (or ordinary) men, and tragedy has to do with kings and people of importance. Comedy uses a humble style, tragedy a lofty style. Comedy begins with misfortune and ends with joy. Tragedy is the opposite.

By now a certain pattern is becoming clear. It is made even clearer by Dante in his *Epistle to Can Grande* in which he explains what he is setting out to achieve in *The Divine Comedy* (which he began c. 1300). He derives the word comedy from *comos* 'a village' and *oda* 'a song'; thus comedy is a sort of rustic song. He goes on to say that comedy is a form of poetical narrative which is different from any other kind. He contrasts comedy and tragedy and points out that comedy begins with harshness but ends happily. Its style is negligent and humble. Thus, *The Divine Comedy* begins with misfortune in the *Inferno* and concludes with pleasure and happiness in the *Paradiso*.

Surprisingly enough Chaucer uses the word 'comedye' but once, and that right at the end of *Troilus and Criseyde*, a tragic story:

Go, litel book, go, litel myn tragedye,  
Ther god thi makere yet, er that he dye,  
So sende myght to make in som comedye!

Here the usage is antithetical.

Frustrating though it is that Chaucer never told us what he thought comedy was, he comes very near to describing it in *The Canterbury Tales*. The Knight interrupts the Monk's long catalogue of tragedies and says that he would like to hear a different kind of story:

I seye for me, it is a greet disese  
Wher-as men han ben in greet welthe and ese,  
To heren of hir sodeyn fal, alas!  
And the contrarie is loye and greet solas,  
As whan a man hath been in povre estaat  
And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,  
And there abydeþ in prosperitee,  
Swich thing is gladsom, as it thinketh me.

The Knight's description of a person climbing out of misfortune

## comedy

to prosperity, to the 'gladsom', is as satisfactory a definition of the medieval conception of comedy as one will find. A description later confirmed by Lydgate in his *Chronicle of Troy* (1430):

A Comedy hath in his gynnyng,  
A pryme face, a manner complaynyng,  
And afterwarde endeth in gladnesse.

But it must be remembered that in the Middle Ages a comedy was a *poem* with a sad start and a happy end.

At the Renaissance a very different view of comedy prevailed, as one can soon discover from a brief examination of the English critics. For the most part they held the view that the object of comedy was corrective, if not actually punitive. Representative points of view were expressed by Sir Philip Sidney and George Puttenham. In his *Apologie for Poetrie* (1595) Sidney says that:

Comedy is an imitation of the common errors of life, which he representeth in the most ridiculous and scornful sort that may be; so that it is impossible that any beholder can be content to be such a one.

Now, as in Geometry the oblique must bee knowne as well as the right, and in Arithmetic the odde as well as the even, so in the actions of our life who seeth not the filthines of evil wanteth a great foile to perceive the beauty of vertue. This doth the Comedy handle so in our private and domestical matters, as with hearing it we get as it were an experience, what is to be looked for . . .

In *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), Puttenham wrote:

. . . but commonly of marchants, souldiers, artificers, good honest housholders, and also of unthrifty youthes, yong damsels, old nurses, bawds, brokers, ruffians, and parasites, with such like, in whose behaviors lyeth in effect the whole course and trade of man's life, and therefore tended altogether to the good amendment of man by discipline and example. It was also much for the solace and recreation of the common people by reason of the pageants and shewes. And this kind of poem was called Comedy. . . .

It is certainly true that many comedies of the Tudor and Jacobean periods had some moral and corrective purpose but quite a few had not. They were intended to give pleasure and entertainment.

*Ralph Roister Doister* (c. 1553) by Nicolas Udall is generally



regarded as the first English dramatic comedy, and it looks almost premature because another forty years were to pass before comedy as a principal dramatic form really exercised the attention of playwrights. In that forty-year period most dramatic literature with any pretensions to comedy consisted of Interludes (*q.v.*), a popular form of entertainment.

The two major writers of comedy between *c.* 1590 and the 1630s in England were Shakespeare (1564–1616) and Ben Jonson (1573–1637). In their conception and treatment of comedy they were very different. Shakespeare wrote almost every kind *except* satirical comedy; Jonson hardly wrote any that was not satirical.

Shakespeare's early experiments were *The Comedy of Errors* (1594) based on the *Menaechmi* of Plautus, *The Taming of the Shrew* (*c.* 1594), a farcical comedy, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (*c.* 1594–95) and *Love's Labour's Lost* (*c.* 1595), both of which could be described (with reservations) as a form of romantic comedy (*q.v.*). These he followed with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (*c.* 1595–96) which is certainly a romantic comedy and *The Merchant of Venice* (*c.* 1596), a play which has darker and more sombre elements but also possesses a strong romantic and love theme. His next comedy was *Much Ado About Nothing* (*c.* 1598–99) which might well be classified as comedy of manners (*q.v.*) and which is important in the history of comedy because about 80 per cent of it is in prose which became the chosen medium for comedy from the end of the 17th *c.* onwards. *As You Like It* followed *Much Ado* and this was another romantic comedy influenced by pastoral (*q.v.*) drama. *Twelfth Night* (*c.* 1600–01) and *The Tempest* (*c.* 1611) were probably his best attempts at romantic comedy. His other plays which have been classified as comedies all contain darker qualities and sometimes a certain bitterness which makes them difficult to categorize. They might be described as black comedy or tragi-comedy (*qq.v.*) but those terms would probably be too strong. The French term *comédie* (*q.v.*) fits them more accurately. These so-called 'dark' comedies were: *Measure for Measure* (*c.* 1604), *All's Well that Ends Well* (*c.* 1602–03), *The Winter's Tale* (*c.* 1609–10) and *Cymbeline* (*c.* 1610). In most of his comedies the main characters are happily united after undergoing various misfortunes, but if we consider the great variety of comic elements in all these plays (and his use of comedy in the History Plays and the Tragedies) then we find that Shakespeare did not wish to restrict himself too much to any particular form or convention.



## comedy

Renaissance theory about the nature and function of comedy is borne out in the practice of Ben Jonson who, in his early Comedy of Humours (*q.v.*), drew on the medieval teaching about the various humours (*q.v.*) and who, in most of his plays, was concerned to expose the vices, foibles and follies of the society as he saw it. His main works in the genre of comedy were: *Every Man in His Humour* (1598), *Every Man out of His Humour* (1599), *Cynthia's Revels* (1601), *The Poetaster* (1601), *Volpone* (1606), *Epicæne* (1609), *The Alchemist* (1610), *Bartholomew Fayre* (1614), *The Devil is an Ass* (1616) and *The Staple of News* (1625).

Shakespeare and Jonson had many imitators, but there were also many original works written in the period. Notable minor works are John Lyly's *Endimion* (1591); Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594); George Peele's *The Old Wives' Tale* (1595); Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1600), *Old Fortunatus* (1600); John Marston's *The Malcontent* (1604), *The Dutch Courtezan* (1605), *What You Will* (1607); Chapman's *All Fools* (1605), *Eastward Ho!* (1605), *Monsieur D'Olive* (1606); Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1633) – plus several plays by Beaumont, Fletcher and Heywood. Marlowe wrote no comedies but there is so much rough and ready comedy in *Dr Faustus* (*c.* 1588) that at times it is almost farcical. One should also mention the sombre tragedies of Webster and Tourneur which depend for much of their effect upon comedy of a peculiarly sardonic and ironical kind.

The most important contributions to dramatic comedy outside England had hitherto come from Italy in the genre known as *commedia erudita* (*q.v.*) and from Spain with what is known as comedy of intrigue (*q.v.*).

With the coming of the Civil War, the closing of the theatres and the Puritan or Commonwealth Period (*qq.v.*), comedy, like other forms of drama, was not produced in England. However, in France, in the middle of the century, there appeared a man whom many regard as the greatest comic dramatist of all – Molière; an immensely prolific playwright and many of whose works have become classics. Like Ben Jonson he was a satirist. His most remarkable plays are: *Les Précieuses ridicules* (1659); *L'École des femmes* (1662); *Tartuffe* written *c.* 1664 but not produced publicly in its entire form until 1669; *Don Juan* (1665); *L'Amour médecin* (1665); *Le Misanthrope* (1666); *Le Médecin malgré lui* (1666); *L'Avare* (1668); *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (1670); *Les Femmes savantes* (1672); *Le Malade imaginaire* (1673). Contemporaries of

Molière's who wrote some good comedies were Racine, Quinault, Montfleury and Cyrano de Bergerac.

In the last thirty-odd years of the 17th c. what is now known as Restoration Comedy (*q.v.*) kept the English theatre alive. It was predominantly comedy of manners (*q.v.*) and was succeeded by what is called sentimental comedy (*q.v.*), which was popular in the early part of the 18th c. in France and England. After the vogue of sentimental comedy no new comic form emerges in drama until the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*), but many dramatists worked within the conventions already established, modifying them and exploiting them. A particularly popular form of comic drama in England in the 18th c. was burlesque (*q.v.*).

In the second half of the 18th c. two Irishmen (of that glittering succession of Irish dramatists without whom English comedy would scarcely have existed since the Restoration period) wrote outstanding plays which combined some elements of comedy of manners, satirical comedy (*q.v.*) and sentimental comedy. They were Goldsmith and Sheridan. Goldsmith's two plays are *The Good-Natured Man* (1768) and *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773). Sheridan's two main works are *The Rivals* (1775) and *The School for Scandal* (1777), but he also wrote a farce (*St Patrick's Day; or the Scheming Lieutenant*), a comic opera (*The Duenna*) and a burlesque (*The Critic*).

During the 18th c. in France the most notable comic dramatists were Marivaux, Destouches, Voltaire, Diderot, Mercier, Le Sage and Beaumarchais. There was little chance for comedy during the revolutionary period in France, and it did not really revive until the Empire period. In England, too, there is little of note after Goldsmith and Sheridan. But during the first half of the 19th c. there was one important innovator in France, namely, Scribe, who wrote a large number of successful comedies most of which have worn badly and come into the category of the 'well-made play' (*q.v.*). Scribe's most successful follower in this form was Sardou whose influence near the end of the 19th c. was considerable and provoked Shaw to condemn the superficiality and contrivance of the 'well-made play' as 'Sardoodledom'.

In general, during the 19th c., farce (*q.v.*) proved the most popular dramatic form of comedy, until approximately the last twenty years of the century when we find a remarkable resurgence of vitality in the theatre in Europe, England and Russia. In Russia this had been presaged to a certain extent by the work of Gogol and Turgenev, and in particular by Gogol's *The Government*

## comedy

*Inspector* (1836) and his farce *The Marriage* (1837-42); and by Turgenev's *A Month in the Country* (1850). Turgenev wrote several other comedies which anticipate the work of Chekhov.

In the 1890s Chekhov first made his influence felt. Subdued, ironical and sad, his comedies (which are very nearly tragicomedies) represent something approaching perfection. His four main works were *The Seagull* (1896), *Uncle Vanya* (1899), *The Three Sisters* (1901) and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904).

In the 1890s, too, Wilde revived comedy of manners (*q.v.*), and this was just in time because he wrote for an audience that scarcely existed after the First World War. His main works were: *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892), *A Woman of No Importance* (1893), *An Ideal Husband* (1895) and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895).

In the same period Shaw broke upon the scene and was to be a dominating force in the theatre for many years. His plays showed a wide range of talent but most are comedies of one sort or another, though not always easy to classify. His major works were *Widowers' Houses* (1892), *Arms and the Man* (1894), *Candida* (1895), *The Devil's Disciple* (1897), *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898), *You Never Can Tell* (1899), *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1902), *Major Barbara* (1905), *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906), *Misalliance* (1910), *Androcles and the Lion* (1912), *Pygmalion* (1913), *Heartbreak House* (1920), *The Apple Cart* (1929). Other notable works were *Man and Superman* (1901-03), *Back to Methuselah* (1918-20), *The Millionairess* (1935).

Since approximately the 1870s the energy which generated the revival of drama (and, specifically, of comedy) has hardly flagged. In the last hundred years a great number of gifted dramatists have exploited the comic forms in different ways and directions. The most remarkable feature of the whole period, therefore, is the extraordinary *variety* of comedy that has been created. In many cases the traditional classifications are not adequate, but the variety certainly includes satirical comedy, drawing-room comedy, 'french window' comedy, social comedy, domestic comedy, comedy of manners, tragic-comedy, and many works which come under the heading of 'Theatre of the Absurd'. There are also a large number of plays which may be put under the French category of *drame* (*q.v.*) – serious plays with comic elements.

The following are a few of the better known and more notable achievements in dramatic comedy from *c.* 1870 onwards: T. W. Robertson's *Caste* (1867), a landmark in realistic comedy; J. M. Barrie's *The Professor's Love Story* (1894); Jarry's *Ubu Roi* (1896),



a landmark in the Theatre of the Absurd; J. M. Barrie's *The Little Minister* (1897); Pinero's *Trelawny of the 'Wells'* (1898); J. M. Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* (1902); Synge's *The Well of Saints* (1905) and his *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907); J. M. Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows* (1908); Ferenc Molnar's *The Guardsman* (1910); Granville-Barker's *The Madras House* (1910); Montague and Glass's *Potash and Perlmutter* (1913); Chiarelli's *La Maschera e il Volto* (1916); Harold Brighouse's *Hobson's Choice* (1916); Frederick Lonsdale's *Aren't We All* (1923); Somerset Maugham's *Our Betters* (1923); Noel Coward's *The Young Idea* (1923); Ashley Dukes's *The Man with a Load of Mischief* (1924); Eden Philpotts's *The Farmer's Wife* (1924); Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* (1925) and *Fallen Angels* (1925); Vitrac's *Victor* (1928); Somerset Maugham's *The Constant Wife* (1928); Noel Coward's *Private Lives* (1930); Bridie's *Tobias and the Angel* (1930); Dennis Johnston's *Moon in the Yellow River* (1931); Eugene O'Neill's *Ab, Wilderness* (1933); J. B. Priestley's *Laburnum Grove* (1933); Terence Rattigan's *French Without Tears* (1936); Jacques Deval's *Tovaritch* (1936); Claire Boothe's *The Women* (1936); Gerald Savory's *George and Margaret* (1937); Esther McCracken's *Quiet Wedding* (1938); George Kaufman's *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (1939); Philip Barry's *The Philadelphia Story* (1939); William Saroyan's *The Time of Your Life* (1939); Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* (1941); Esther McCracken's *Quiet Week-End* (1941); Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* (1942); Noel Coward's *Present Laughter* (1943); R. F. Delderfield's *Worm's Eye View* (1945); Marcel Aymé's *Lucienne et le Boucher* (1946); Jean Anouilh's *L'Invitation au château* (1947); Christopher Fry's *The Lady's Not for Burning* (1948); T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* (1950); Rattigan's *Who is Sylvia* (1950); Jean Anouilh's *Colombe* (1951); Ustinov's *The Love of Four Colonels* (1951); John Whiting's *Penny for a Song* (1951); Marcel Aymé's *La Tête des autres* (1952); Jean Anouilh's *La Valse des toréadors* (1952); Samuel Taylor's *Sabrina Fair* (1953); John Patrick's *Teahouse of the August Moon* (1953); Sartre's *Kean* (1953); N. R. Nash's *The Rainmaker* (1954); William Douglas Home's *The Reluctant Debutante* (1955); Enid Bagnold's *The Chalk Garden* (1955); Sartre's *Nekrassov* (1955); Anouilh's *Pauvre Bitos* (1956); Stephen Lewis's *Sparrers Can't Sing* (1960); Tennessee Williams's *Period of Adjustment* (1961); Enid Bagnold's *The Chinese Prime Minister* (1963); and many others.

The term comedy is still usually applied to drama; occasionally, though, a novel may be described as a comedy. Yet it is

## comedy

more likely that we should speak of a 'comic novel'. Moreover, we would be disinclined to refer to a 'tragic' play or a 'comic' play. And, nowadays, we would never refer to a poem as a comedy.

The comic novel (*q.v.*) has become a well-established form from Fielding onwards, and many of the great European novels are 'comedies'. In verse there are fewer instances of works which are intended to be comic. Outstanding examples are Butler's *Hudibras*, Boileau's *Le Lutrin*, Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, Byron's *The Vision of Judgment* and Auden's *Letter to Lord Byron*. A 'serious' comic poem is rare, and most comic poetry is classified as light verse (*q.v.*); or nonsense verse (*q.v.*); or *vers de société* (*q.v.*).

**comedy of humours** A form of drama which became fashionable at the very end of the 16th c. and early in the 17th. So called because it presented 'humorous' characters whose actions (in terms of the medieval and Renaissance theory of humours (*q.v.*), were ruled by a particular passion, trait, disposition or humour. Basically this was a physiological interpretation of character and personality. Though there were ample precedents for this in allegory (*q.v.*), Tudor Morality Plays (*q.v.*), and Interludes (*q.v.*), Ben Jonson appears to have been the first person to have elaborated the idea on any scale. His two outstanding works in this kind of comedy are *Every Man in His Humour* (1598) and *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599); plus minor works like *The Magnetic Lady: or Humours Reconciled* (1632). Following the practice of the Moralities and Interludes, Jonson named *dramatis personae* aptronymically: Kiteley, Dame Kiteley, Knowell, Brainworm and Justice Clement (in *Every Man in His Humour*); Fastidious Brisk, Fungoso, Sordido, and Puntarvolo the vain-glorious knight, and so forth (in *Every Man Out of His Humour*). The indication of character in this fashion became a common practice and continued to be much favoured by dramatists and novelists in the 18th and 19th c.

John Fletcher, a contemporary of Jonson's, wrote a number of 'humour' comedies, and other plays of note from the period are Chapman's *All Fools* (c. 1604), Middleton's *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (1605) and Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1625). Shadwell revived comedy of humours late in the 17th c. with *The Squire of Alsatia* (1688) and *Bury Fair* (1689).

The use of an individual to formulate a type in this way was also practised by those who wrote books of Characters, as in Earle's *Microcosmographie*. See **APTRONYM**; **CHARACTER**; **ESSAY**.



**comedy of ideas** A term loosely applied to plays which tend to debate, in a witty and humorous fashion, ideas and theories. Shaw is an outstanding exponent in *Man and Superman* (1905), *Doctor's Dilemma* (1906), *Androcles and the Lion* (1912) and *The Apple Cart* (1929).

**comedy of intrigue** A form of comedy which depends on an intricate plot full of surprises and tends to subordinate character to plot. This distinguishes it from comedy of manners (*q.v.*), though the latter may also have complex plots. The form originated in Spain and was largely the work of a group of four famous dramatists: Lope de Vega (1562–1635), Tirso de Molina (1571–1648), Alarcón (1581–1639) and Moreto (1618–69). It has not appealed much to English dramatists, but Mrs Aphra Behn made some distinguished contributions: *The Rover* (1677–81) and *The City Heiress* (1682). In France, Beaumarchais' *Le Barbier de Séville* (1775) deserves special mention.

**comedy of manners** This genre has for its main subjects and themes the behaviour and deportment of men and women living under specific social codes. It tends to be preoccupied with the codes of the middle and upper classes and is often marked by elegance, wit and sophistication. In England Restoration comedy (*q.v.*) provides the outstanding instances. But Shakespeare's comedies *Love's Labour's Lost* (c. 1595) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (c. 1598–99) are also comedies of manners. Molière's *Les Précieuses ridicules* (1658), Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* (1777) and Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892), *A Woman of No Importance* (1893) and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895) are other outstanding examples of the genre. Latterly, some of the 'drawing room' comedies of Somerset Maugham might be so classified; and so might several plays by Noel Coward, especially *Private Lives* (1930). See COMEDY; DOMESTIC COMEDY; DRAWING-ROOM COMEDY.

**comedy of morals** Satirical comedy (*q.v.*) designed to ridicule and correct vices like hypocrisy, pride, avarice, social pretensions, simony and nepotism. Molière is the supreme playwright in this genre. Ben Jonson and Shaw are other notable instances.

**comic relief** Comic episodes or interludes, usually in tragedy (*q.v.*) aimed to relieve the tension and heighten the tragic element by

## comic relief

contrast. They are or should be an essential and integral part of the whole work. If not actually extended into an episode or interlude, the relief may take the form of a few remarks or observations (or some form of action) which help to lower the emotional temperature. The humour involved tends to be wry or sardonic. Good representative examples are Iago's gulling of Roderigo in *Othello*, the drunken porter scene in *Macbeth* (regarded as a *locus classicus*), Hamlet's laconic and witty treatment of Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and Osric in *Hamlet* (and the Gravediggers 'scene' in *Hamlet*) and the Fool's mockery in *King Lear*. Other outstanding examples are to be found in Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The White Devil*, and Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* and *The Atheist's Tragedy*.

There was good precedent for such relief in some Mystery Plays (*q.v.*). A remarkable example is the York Mystery Cycle version of the *Crucifixion* in which the four soldiers talk in the colloquial, matter-of-fact style of everyday life as they go about their business of nailing Christ to the Cross. In a different vein is the almost slapstick (*q.v.*) and buffoonish comedy that occurs in Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, which itself is a counterpoint and contrast to the wry ironies of Mephistopheles.

Since the 16th c. hardly a tragedian of any note has failed to make use of the possibilities of comic relief. *See also* BLACK COMEDY; COMEDY; FARCE; LOW COMEDY; TRAGI-COMEDY.

**commedia dell' arte** In medieval Italy the *arti* were groups of artisans or guilds; hence the term means 'comedy of the professional actors'. The absolute origins of this dramatic genre are obscure, but they are probably Roman. *Commedia dell' arte*, as we understand it now, developed in 16th c. Italy and had a considerable influence on European drama. The troupes or companies who performed the plays travelled widely through Europe, especially in France. The plots of *commedia dell' arte* were usually based on love intrigues involving people of all ages; masters and servants, mistresses and confidantes. Both plot and dialogue were often improvised after basic rehearsal (improvisation was important because performance could be adapted to local and contemporary needs) and the success of a piece depended very largely on the comic ingenuity of the performers, who would include mime, farce (*qq.v.*), clownish buffoonery and music in the presentation. Characters were stock types. The main male

characters were: Pantaloon, the Captain, a Doctor, the Inamorato, the servants Harlequin, Brighella and Scapino. The main female characters were also stock types. There was Inamorata, her confidante the Soubrette – as like as not in love with one of the servants – plus Canterina and Ballerina who provided interludes in the main action. In spirit, if not in fact, a play like Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (1594) owes something to the traditions of *commedia dell' arte*, and one can detect the influence of the form in the work of Ben Jonson, Molière and Goldoni; in pantomime, farce (*qq.v.*), puppet plays and ballet. *See* COMEDY.

**commedia erudita** (It 'learned comedy') A form of comedy (*q.v.*) favoured in Italy in the 16th c. It was often a learned imitation of Classical comedies, particularly those by Terence and Plautus. Ariosto was one of the main developers of the form; Machiavelli and Aretino were two of the best known dramatists to follow him. Machiavelli's *La Mandragola* (1513–20) is widely regarded as an outstanding example.

**commitment** A committed or *engagé* writer (or artist) is one who, through his work, is dedicated to the advocacy of certain beliefs and programmes, especially those which are political and ideological and in aid of social reform. In order to achieve this he needs to detach himself from the work in order to calculate its effect. Notable dramatists who have been 'committed' are Shaw, Brecht, Sartre and Arnold Wesker. There have been many novelists, among whom one should mention: Sartre, Malraux, James Aldridge, Doris Lessing and Gunter Grass. Commitment is common in the work of writers who belong to the so-called Communist Bloc. *See also* ALIENATION; EPIC THEATRE; PROPAGANDA; SOCIAL REALISM; THESIS NOVEL.

**common measure** The quatrain (*q.v.*) of the ballad meter (*q.v.*) also called the hymnal stanza (*q.v.*). *See also* HEPTAMETER.

**common rhythm** *See* RUNNING RHYTHM.

**commonplace book** A notebook in which ideas, themes, quotations, words and phrases are jotted down. Almost every writer keeps some kind of commonplace book where he can put things into storage. In a properly organized one the matter would be grouped under subject headings. A famous example is Ben Jonson's

## commonplace book

*Timber: Or Discoveries* (1640-41), which comprises a draft for a treatise on the art of writing and on types of literature, miniature essays, *sententiae*, *pensées* (*qq.v.*) and so forth.

**Commonwealth period** This extended from the end of the Civil War (1649) to the Restoration (1660). It is sometimes called the Puritan Period because England was ruled by a Puritan parliament. The theatres were closed as they were held to be immoral. The main English writers who flourished in these years were Milton, Sir Thomas Browne, Izaak Walton, Vaughan, Waller, Cowley and Marvell.

**comparative criticism** *See* CRITICISM.

**comparative linguistics** *See* LINGUISTICS.

**comparative literature** The examination and analysis of the relationships and similarities of the literatures of different peoples and nations. The comparative study of literature, like the comparative study of religions, is relatively recent. We see little evidence of it before the 19th c. *See* WELTLITERATUR.

**communication fallacy** A term used by the American poet Allen Tate to describe poetry which attempts to convey ideas and feelings which would be better served by and expressed in prose; at any rate, *not* in poetry. Propaganda (*q.v.*) verse, for instance, may stimulate reactions which have little to do with the aesthetic qualities of the verse.

**communication heresy** A term used by the American critic Cleanth Brooks. It refers to the belief that the function of a poem is to convey an idea, whereas Brooks's contention is that the reader should have a *total* aesthetic experience of the poem. In short, the substance and form of a poem are not separable; though, of course, one may analyse both style and matter individually.

**commus** In Classical Greek drama, a type of lyric in dialogue form sung by the Chorus (*q.v.*) to express profound emotion.

**compensation** An adjustment for an omitted syllable or foot (*q.v.*) in a metrical line. It is either made up for by an additional foot in



the next line, or compensated for by an added foot in the same line. A pause or rest (*q.v.*) sometimes compensates for a missing foot or part of a foot.

**complaint** A plaintive poem; frequently the complaint of a lover to his inconstant, unresponsive or exacting mistress. For example, Surrey's *Complaint by Night of the Lover not Beloved*. The theme or burden of complaint became a convention, and finally a cliché, of a great deal of love poetry, but it was still being worked successfully in the middle of the 17th c. by the Cavalier Poets (*q.v.*), and particularly well by poets like Thomas Carew and Thomas Stanley.

There are other types of complaint; most of them lament the state of the world, the vicissitudes of Fortune and the poet's personal griefs. An early and fine example is *Deor*, an OE poem about a minstrel who is out of favour and has been supplanted by another. To this may be added two of the best, both by Chaucer: *A Complaint Unto Pity*, in which the poet seeks some respite for his unhappy state; and the more light-hearted *Complaint of Chaucer to his Purse*. Spenser's minor verses and juvenilia contain some complaints, including *The Ruines of Time*.

There are a number of curiosities in this genre. For instance, Sir David Lyndsay's poem *The Dreme*, an allegorical lament on the misgovernment of the country, and the same poet's *Complaynt to the King*, and his *Testament and Complaynt of Our Sovereign Lordis Papyngo* – both of similar import and tone as *The Dreme*.

Thomas Sackville's *The Complaint of Buckingham* in *Mirror for Magistrates* is another notable example. So is Cowley's ode *The Complaint*, and Young's long didactic poem, in elegiac mood, *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts*. See DIRGE; ELEGY; LAMENT.

**complex metaphor** See TELESCOPED METAPHOR.

**composite verses** Those composed of different kinds of feet. For instance, those which combine dactyl and trochee (*qq.v.*).

**composition** Textbooks on this subject distinguish four kinds of prose composition: exposition, argument, description and narrative.

**conceit** (L *conceptus* 'concept' influenced by It *concetto*). By c. 1600 the term was still being used as a synonym for 'thought', and as roughly equivalent to 'concept', 'idea' and 'conception'. It might



## conceit

also then denote a fanciful supposition\*, an ingenious act of deception or a witty or clever remark or idea. As a literary term this word has come to denote a fairly elaborate figurative device of a fanciful kind which often incorporates metaphor, simile, hyperbole or oxymoron (*qq.v.*) and which is intended to surprise and delight by its wit and ingenuity. The pleasure we get from many conceits is intellectual rather than sensuous. They are particularly associated with the Metaphysical Poets (*q.v.*), but are to be found in abundance in the work of Italian Renaissance poets, in the love poetry of the Tudor, Jacobean and Caroline poets, and in the work of Corneille, Molière and Racine.

We can distinguish various kinds. The sonneteering conceits are among the commonest. These tend to be decorative, and the writers of love sonnets had a large number of conventional conceits (many of them *exempla* conceits) which they could make use of and many of which are of the Petrarchan type. The origin of the majority of them is Cupid's analysis of the lover's complaints and maladies in *The Romaunt of the Rose* (14th c.). There is, for instance, the conceit of oxymoron. A classic example is Sir Thomas Wyatt's poem which begins:

I find no peace and all my war is done;  
I fear and hope, I burne and freeze like ice.

In a jealousy conceit a lover wishes he were an ornament, article of clothing or creature of his mistress so that he might be that much closer to her. As in Romeo's lines when he first sees Juliet:

See! how she leans her cheek upon her hand:  
O! that I were a glove upon that hand,  
That I might touch that cheek.

(*Romeo and Juliet* II, i)

A third type is the inventory or *blazon* (*q.v.*) conceit which comprises a catalogue of a mistress's charms and perfections, as in Sir Philip Sidney's ninth sonnet in the *Astrophel and Stella* sequence:

Queen Virtue's Court, which some call Stella's face,  
Prepar'd by Nature's choicest furniture,  
Hath his front built of alabaster pure;  
Gold is the covering of that stately place.  
The door by which sometimes comes forth her grace  
Red porphir is, which lock of pearl makes sure,  
Whose porches rich – which name of cheeks endure –  
Marble, mixt red and white, do interlace.

Another notable example occurs in Spenser's *Epithalamion*. A fourth type is what may be called the *carpe diem* (*q.v.*) conceit: the appeal to the mistress not to delay loving because beauty fades and time is a devourer. Herrick made this famous in:

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,  
Old Time is still a-flying;

An extension of this is the kind of conceit which contains an assurance that though beauty may fade and die, the poet's verses will be immortal.

Such conventions and devices were often parodied by Tudor and Jacobean poets. A well-known example is Shakespeare's 130th sonnet in which he satirizes the *blazon* form:

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red:  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.

Thus he 'sends up' the traditional conceit of the idealizers.

Yet another kind is that which incorporates hyperbole (*q.v.*) (it has been called 'pastoral hyperbole'), and commonly expresses the view that the loved one has a powerful effect on the natural order. Constable expresses such a conceit in *Diana*:

My lady's presence makes the roses red,  
Because to see her lips they blush for shame;  
The lilies' leaves for envy pale became,  
And her white hands in them this envy bred;  
The marigold abroad the leaves did spread,  
Because the sun's and her power is the same.

Marvell used the same idea very ingeniously in his poem *Upon Appleton House*:

'Tis she that to these gardens gave  
That wondrous beauty which they have;  
She straightness on the woods bestows;  
To her the meadow sweetness owes . . .

What is known as the heraldic conceit is also common in the 16th and 17th c. It displays the language and images of heraldry. A fairly complex example sustains William Dunbar's *The Thistle and the Rose*, a work which celebrated the marriage of Margaret Tudor and James IV of Scotland. The red and white rose to which Dunbar refers alludes both to Margaret's complexion and to the fact that her father was a Lancastrian and her mother a Yorkist. The thistle is self-explanatory.

Related to the heraldic conceit is the emblematic type. Both kinds tend to be more esoteric and recondite, what we should now call 'way-out' and which in the 17th c. were described as 'far-fet' (or far-fetched), 'far-fet' being a term often used in critical discussion of conceits at this time. Emblem books (*q.v.*) contained verses with a moral accompanied by a picture which the verses explain. 'Conceited' poets or concettists used the emblem idea to elucidate morals in descriptions of the natural order; as in these lines by George Wither on the marigold:

How duly every morning she displays  
Her open breast when Titan spreads his rays;  
How she observes him in his daily walk  
Still bending towards him her tender stalk;  
How, when he down declines, she droops and mourns,  
Bedewed (as 'twere) with tears till he returns;  
And how she veils her flowers when he is gone,  
As if she scorned to be looked on  
By an inferior eye; or did contemn  
To wait upon a meaner light, than him.

Wither then elaborates the moral thus:

When this I meditate, methinks the flowers  
Have spirits far more generous than ours,  
And give us fair examples to despise  
The servile fawnings and idolatries  
Wherewith we court these earthly things below,  
Which merit not the service we bestow.

A fine example of the verbal emblem is Vaughan's beautiful poem *The Waterfall*:

With what deep murmurs through times silent stealth  
Doth thy transparent, cool and watry wealth  
Here flowing fall,  
And chide, and call,

As if his liquid, loose Retinue staid  
 Lingring, and were of this steep place afraid,  
     The common pass  
     Where, clear as glass,  
     All must descend  
     Not to an end:  
 But quickned by this deep and rocky grave  
 Rise to a longer course more bright and brave.

Then the verses change to a different rhythm, meter and line length to suggest the tranquil waters of the stream beyond the fall. The lines quoted most skilfully suggest the movement of the waterfall in what is known as phanopoeia (*q.v.*).

The etymological conceit depends upon the meanings of names. For example, Raleigh's poem *The Ocean to Cynthia* is a kind of double conceit. Raleigh compliments Queen Elizabeth by saying that she has the same influence upon him as the moon has upon the tides. Cynthia was a name frequently used to denote the Queen as a moon-goddess and 'Water' was the Queen's pet-name for Sir Walter Raleigh.

Typological conceits were rather more abstruse still. The following lines from George Herbert's poem *The Agony* illustrate the method:

A man so wrung with pains, that all his hair,  
 His skin, his garments bloody be.  
 Sin is that press and vice, which forceth pain  
 To hunt his cruel food through every vein.

A form of literary exegesis is required to squeeze out the full sense of this. The image of the wine-press is typological of the Passion. Christ described himself as the 'true vine'. Grapes and wine were sacred. The tale of the men from Canaan bearing a cluster of grapes was typological of the Crucifixion. Vice is clearly a kind of pun (*q.v.*) which suggests that Christ suffers in the grip (or vice) of our vices. In a brilliant and witty essay (*The Conceit*, 1969), K. K. Ruthven showed how this kind of exegesis can be best undertaken.

The conceit was much used to embellish the sermon in the 17th c. and such conceits were known as *concetti predicabili*. They tend to be learned, witty, allusive and paradoxical, as in this instance from Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple*:



## conceit

•  
Give to Caesar – and to God – Mark XII  
All we have is God's, and yet  
Caesar challenges a debt,  
Nor hath God a thinner share,  
Whatever Caesar's payments are;  
All is God's; and yet 'tis true,  
All we have is Caesar's too;  
All is Caesar's: and what odds,  
So long as Caesar's self is God's?

A minor poet of the 17th c. who had a great reputation in his day, John Cleveland (1613–58), gives his name to another form of conceit – the Clevelandism (now, as a rule, a pejorative term). The following lines come from his *To the State of Love, or, The Senses' Festival*:

•  
My sight took pay, but (thank my charms)  
I now impale her in my arms,  
(Love's Compasses) confining you,  
Good Angels, to a circle too.  
Is not the universe strait-laced  
When I can clasp it in the waist?  
My amorous folds about thee hurled,  
With Drake I girdle in the world.  
I hoop the firmament and make  
This my embrace the zodiac.  
How would thy centre take my sense  
When admiration doth commence  
At the extreme circumference.

Here the poet has condensed a series of related and interlocking images while elaborating one of those microcosm/macrocosm arguments dear to poets and readers of the period. Such cosmological acrobatics were then much admired, but Dryden castigated Cleveland for his abstruseness; and indeed many Clevelandisms are far-fetched to the point of being grotesque. Such whimsical imagery has now come to be regarded as gross catachresis (*q.v.*) and a sign of decadence.

In general one may say that a juxtaposition of images and comparisons between very dissimilar objects is a common form of conceit in the 17th c. and the so-called metaphysical conceit is the kind that most readily springs to mind. A famous example is



Donne's *A Valediction: forbidding mourning*. He is comparing two lovers' souls:

If they be two, they are two so  
 As stiffe twin compasses are two,  
 Thy soule, the fixt foot, makes no show  
 To move, but doth, if the other doe.  
  
 And though it in the center sit,  
 Yet when the other far doth rome,  
 It leanes, and hearkens after it,  
 And growes erect, as that comes home.  
  
 Such wilt thou be to mee, who must  
 Like th' other foot, obliquely runne;  
 Thy firmnes makes my circle just,  
 And makes me end, where I begunne.

By the middle of the 17th c. or soon afterwards the concettists were becoming 'over-conceited' and conceits were devised for the sake of themselves rather than for any particular function. Meretriciousness had set in. Apart from Cleveland, this is especially noticeable in the poetry of Edward Bedlowes (1602-76) - conspicuously in *Theophila or Love's Sacrifice* (1652). Andrew Marvell, however, most of whose best poems were produced well after 1650, showed himself to be a supremely adroit artist in the use of the conceit. The wit, sense of balance and finesse of his conceits are the verbal equivalents of a virtuoso gymnastic display.

The conceit fell into desuetude and literary theory required something different. The recondite, the erudite, the 'far-fet' were displaced by, to paraphrase Thomas Sprat in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667), a closer, easier, more naked and more natural way of speaking. In fact, easiness and naturalness became wholly desirable attainments and modes in writing, and were so for a long time.

**conceptismo** (Sp *concepto* 'conceit') A literary practice and attitude in 17th c. Spain and very closely associated with the *culteranismo* (q.v.) of the same time. For the sake of convenience Góngora may be taken as the best representative of *culteranismo* and Lope de Vega of *conceptismo*. But the leader of the *conceptismo* party was Francisco Gómez de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645), usually referred to as Quevedo. He was the sworn enemy of *culteranismo*,

## conceptismo

and between 1626 and 1635 wrote many satires against this movement and its devotees. The *conceptistas* disapproved of obscure references, arcane (and archaic) language and any kind of hermeticism (*q.v.*). They insisted that language should be precise, correct and idiomatic in the pure sense. Yet they *did* favour the use of conceits – especially the metaphor and pun – hence their title. Lope de Vega was not a prominent or active theorist. He practised the art of pleasing beloved of Molière. He liked and believed in good taste, sense, sensibility, order and balance, and lacked the aggressive spirit of Góngora. The different kinds of conceit were classified by Gracián in *Agudeza y arte de ingenio* (1642). See GONGORISM.

**concordance** An alphabetical index of words in a single text, or in the works of a major author. It shows, therefore, the number of times a particular word is used and where it may be found. There are concordances for The Bible and for Shakespeare's works. See also DICTIONARY; GLOSSARY.

**concrete universal** The term derives from idealist philosophy. Hegel expanded his theory of the concrete universal as a solution to the problem of the nature and reality of universals. As far as a work of art is concerned, it refers to the unification of the particular and the general; perhaps a general idea expressed through a concrete image. As Sir Philip Sidney put it: '... the poet coupleth the general notion with the particular example'. This term has produced much discussion of late. Two of its principal debaters have been W. K. Wimsatt in *The Verbal Icon* (1954) and John Crowe Ransom in *The World's Body* (1938). See ABSTRACT.

**concrete verse** A recent development of the altar poem (*q.v.*) and the *carmen figuratum*. The object is to present each poem as a different shape, regardless of whether it makes any or much sense. It is basically a form of gimmickry which appears to be an attempt to compete with concrete music, and comparable manifestations in the plastic and visual arts. A recent example is Emmett Williams's *Sweathearts* (1968). See PATTERN POETRY.

**confessional literature** Into this rather vague category we may place works which are a very personal and subjective account of experiences, beliefs, feelings, ideas, and states of mind, body and

soul. The following widely different examples are famous: St Augustine's *Confessions* (4th century); Rousseau's *Les Confessions* (1781, 1788); De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1822); James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824); Alfred de Musset's *Confession d'un enfant du siècle* (1836); Chateaubriand's *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* (1849-50); George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888). See AUTOBIOGRAPHY; CONFESSIONAL NOVEL; DIARY AND JOURNAL; TESTAMENT.

**confessional novel** A rather misleading and flexible term which suggests an 'autobiographical' type of fiction, written in the first person, and which, on the face of it, is a self-revelation. On the other hand it may not be, though it looks like it. The author may be merely assuming the role of another character. An outstanding modern example is Camus' *La Chute* (1956) in which the judge penitent 'confesses' to the reader. In the last fifty years this type of novel has become common.

Another form of confessional novel is that which employs a variation of the 'frame story' (*q.v.*) technique: a story in which the novelist is actually writing the story we are reading. This device was used by André Gide in *Tentatives amoureuses* (1891) and in *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* (1926). See CONFESSIONAL LITERATURE.

**confidant** A character in drama and, occasionally, in fiction (feminine *confidante*) who has little effect on the action but whose function is to listen to the intimate feelings and intentions of the protagonist (*q.v.*). He is a trusted friend, like Horatio in *Hamlet*. From fiction one example is Maria Gostrey, the confidante of Strether in Henry James's *The Ambassadors*. The confidant is also a common feature of the detective story (*q.v.*). See COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE; IDEALSPECTATOR; RAISONNEUR.

**conflict** The tension in a situation between characters, or the actual opposition of characters (usually in drama and fiction but also in narrative poetry). In *Othello*, for instance, the conflicts between Iago, Roderigo, Othello and Desdemona. There may also be internal conflict, as in Hamlet's predicament of wishing to avenge his father and yet not knowing when and how to do it. There may also occur conflict between a character and society or environment. An example is Jude's efforts in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the*

## conflict

*Obscure* to overcome the social obstacles which keep him from university.

**connotation** The suggestion or implication evoked by a word or phrase, or even quite a long statement of any kind, over and above what they mean or actually denote. For example: 'There is a cockroach', may inspire a shudder of distaste in one person; but a scientific inquiry, like 'What is it? *Blatta orientalis* or *Blatta Germanica*?' in another person.

A connotation may be personal and individual, or general and universal. Probably nearly all words with a lexical meaning can have public and private connotations. The sentence 'The Fascist activities were continuous' would be likely to have different connotations for a Jew and a professional historian. *See* ASSOCIATION; DENOTATION; KENEME; MEANING.

**consciousness, stream of** *See* STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

**consistency** In the structure, style and tone of a literary work, consistency implies an *essential* coherence and balance. An untimely comic episode in a tragedy might be disastrous to its consistency. Inappropriate words and usage may mar consistency of style. A character suddenly acting completely 'out of character' might produce inconsistency. So might a breach of literary convention (*q.v.*); for instance, the use of soliloquy in a naturalistic drawing-room comedy. *See also* BIENSÉANCES, LES.

**consonance** The close repetition of identical consonant sounds before and after different vowels. For example: slip – slop; creak – croak; black – block. *See also* ASSONANCE; EYE-RHYME; HALF-RHYME; ONOMATOPOEIA.

**constructivism** A term given to the attitudes and methods of a group of Soviet writers in the 1920s. They tried to reconcile and combine ideological beliefs and principles with technical development. Their approach was most noticeable in stage design, which was non-representational and geometrical. *See also* PROLETARSKAYA KUL'TURA; SMITHYPOETS.

**contamination** This usually refers to the Roman practice of adapting and combining Greek New Comedy (*q.v.*). Such a work was known as a *fabula palliata*. The main authors of *palliatae* were Andronicus, Naevius, Plautus and Terence. *See* FABULA.



**conte** (F 'tale, story') The term denotes a kind of fictitious narrative somewhat different from the *roman* and the *nouvelle* (*qq.v.*). The true *conte* tended to be a little fantastic (not realistic), droll and witty. They were often allegorical and moral. Well-known examples are La Fontaine's *Amours de Psyché et Cupidon* (1669), Perrault's *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* (1697) and Voltaire's *Candide* (1759). In this category one might also include Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Voltaire's *Zadig* (1747), Johnson's *Rasselas* (1759), and the anonymous Japanese romance *Wasôbyôe* (1774-79) which has affinities with *Gulliver's Travels*. It was a popular form of fiction in the 18th c. when the other main authors were Hamilton, Crébillon *frs* and Voisenon. From the 19th c. the term has tended to denote merely a short story (*q.v.*). For example, Flaubert's *Trois Contes* (1877). Maupassant called his short stories *contes*. See also ALLEGORY; CONTE DÉVOT; LAI; TALE.

**conte dévot** (F 'pious tale') A French genre of the 13th and 14th c. A tale in verse or prose designed to instruct and therefore having affinities with hagiography (*q.v.*) and the moral tale. A good many *contes dévots* were inspired by the collections of tales called the *Vitae Patrum* and the *Miracles Notre Dame*. Two well-known examples are: *Tombeor Notre Dame* and *Conte del'hermite et del jongleour*. See CONTE.

**contests** See POETIC CONTESTS.

**contextualism** A jargon term current in the New Criticism (*q.v.*) which denotes a particular kind of aesthetic experience of (and response to) a work of literature. The work is experienced as a self-contained artefact and possessed of 'mutually opposing energies of a tension-filled object that blocks our escape from its context and thus from its world' (*sic*).

**contractions** In verse there are two kinds: synaeresis and syncope. They are forms of elision (*q.v.*) used to keep the syllable count regular. Synaeresis occurs when a poet joins two vowels to make a single syllable, as in this line from Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*:

Titles and Names 'twere tedious to Reherse



## contractions

'Tedious' counts as a two-syllable word.

Syncope occurs when a vowel flanked by two consonants is not pronounced, as in this line from the same poem:

Him Staggering so when Hells dire Agent found,

'Staggering' is taken as a disyllable.

Such contractions were common between 1660 and 1800. The metrical demands of the heroic couplet (*q.v.*) encouraged them.

**contrast** The juxtaposition of disparate or opposed images, ideas, or both, to heighten or clarify a scene, theme or episode. A famous example is the life-in-death image in Andrew Marvell's *To His Coy Mistress*:

Thy beauty shall no more be found;  
Nor, in thy marble Vault, shall sound  
My echoing song: then Worms shall try  
That long preserv'd Virginitie:  
And your quaint Honour turn to dust;  
And into ashes all my Lust.  
The Grave's a fine and private place,  
But none I think do there embrace.

See IMAGERY; METAPHYSICAL.

**conundrum** A word of very obscure origin, it denotes a form of riddle (*q.v.*) whose answer involves a pun (*q.v.*).

**convention** In literature, a device, principle, procedure or form which is generally accepted and through which there is an agreement between the writer and his readers (or audience) which allows him various freedoms and restrictions. The term is especially relevant to drama. The stage itself, as a physical object and area, establishes a convention by creating boundaries and limitations. The audience is prepared to suspend disbelief and to experience a representation of scenery and action, of lighting and words. The use of verse, blank or rhymed, dance, song (*q.v.*), a Chorus (*q.v.*), the unities (*q.v.*), the aside (*q.v.*), the soliloquy (*q.v.*), are all examples of dramatic convention. Working within the conventions and using them to the best possible advantage is essential to the art of the dramatist. The people in the audience

are party to the agreement and their acceptance makes possible dramatic illusion.

Dr Johnson summarizes the matter in a famous passage in his *Preface to Shakespeare*:

Delusion, if delusion be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the spectator can be once persuaded, that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Caesar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharsalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a state of elevation above the reach of reason, or of truth, and from the heights of empyrean poetry, may despise the circumscriptions of terrestrial nature. There is no reason why a mind thus wandering in exstasy should count the clock, or why an hour should not be a century in that calenture of the brains that can make the stage a field. The truth is, that the spectators are always in their senses, and know, from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage, and that the players are only players.

In fact every writer accepts conventions as soon as he begins. It can be argued that conventions are essential to all literature as necessary and convenient ways of working within the limitations of the medium of words. And we may not, as Maritain puts it, abuse the limitations of our medium. Thus, in literature, as in the other arts, there are recurring elements.

By convention the sonnet (*q.v.*) has fourteen lines (though there are exceptions), and *terza rima* (*q.v.*) rhymes aba, bcb, cdc, and so on. The ballad (*q.v.*) tends to have a particular kind of diction and stanza form, and the pastoral elegy (*q.v.*) traditional essentials. The epic (*q.v.*) tends to begin *in medias res* (*q.v.*) and the Cavalier lyric (*q.v.*) presents certain attitudes towards love. The stock character (*q.v.*) is also a convention. So is tragic love in grand opera, and the flash-back (*q.v.*) in the novel (*q.v.*).

A convention may be established as an invention: for instance, Gerard Manley Hopkins's sprung rhythm (*q.v.*) and Chaucer's rhyme royal (*q.v.*). One may be revived – as alliterative verse (*q.v.*) was revived in the 14th c. by Langland and other poets, and again in this century by W. H. Auden and C. Day Lewis. Or one may be abandoned – as the heroic couplet (*q.v.*) was towards the end of the 18th c. (though there have been recent revivals by Roy Campbell in *The Georgiad*, and by Nabokov (as a parody) in *Pale Fire*).

Periodically conventions are broken or replaced. Wordsworth's

## convention

rejection of 18th c. poetic diction (*q.v.*) is an obvious instance; so is the substitution, in drama, of naturalistic conventions for the traditional dramatic ones.

Ignorance of convention may lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. To criticize a work for *not* being what it was never *intended* to be is a fault. A classic example is Johnson's misunderstanding of Milton's *Lycidas*. He condemned it for its 'inherent improbability', mainly because (apart from disliking pastoralism) he was not aware of the pastoral conventions. *See also* ALIENATION; DECORUM; ORIGINALITY; NATURALISM; NEOCLASSICISM; REALISM; TRADITION.

**conversation piece** A form of poem which has a relaxed and fairly informal style and tone, may even be 'chatty', tends to display a personal mood, but nevertheless has quite serious subject matter. Horace's *Epistles* and *Satires* are generally taken to be conversation pieces (Pope caught the tone of Horace very well in his *Imitations*). The two English poets who have excelled at them were Coleridge and Wordsworth. Coleridge's *This Lime-tree Bower My Prison*, for example; and Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*. Other poets who have mastered this genre are Robert Browning, Robert Frost and W. H. Auden. Auden's *Letter to Lord Byron* is an outstanding example.

**copla** (Sp 'couple') In prosody a couplet, strophe or stanza. A metrical combination of great antiquity which has been used by many Spanish poets and still is. There are various kinds of *copla*; for instance, *copla de arte mayor* (*q.v.*), *copla de pie quebrado* (*q.v.*), *coplas de caláinos* (meaning 'useless', from the character of Caláinos in the Spanish books of chivalry), and *coplas de ciego* (literally 'blind man's *coplas*' and therefore bad verses).

Generally the *copla* will be of four octosyllabic lines assonanced in pairs. But it can also be rhymed and may have a length of eleven or twelve syllables; or again octosyllables may alternate with heptasyllables. It may consist of three, four, five or even more lines and is found in the *villancico*, the *redondilla*, the *quintilla* and *sextilla* (*qq.v.*).

**copyright** Until the middle of the 16th c. authors had little or no protection against plagiarism (*q.v.*), or downright filching and pirating. When this became a serious problem printer's guilds were granted rights to protect their members. The first English

## correspondence of the arts

copyright law dates from 1709. Under the 1956 Act the copyright covers an author's lifetime and fifty years thereafter.

**coq-à-l'âne** Derived from an OF proverbial expression *C'est bien sauté du coq a l'asne*, which signified incoherent speech or writing. The term denotes a satirical *genre* of verse devoted to ridiculing the vices and foibles of society. Clément Marot is believed to have created the form in 1530. At any rate he composed a number of poems which come into this category. *See also* FATRASIE.

**coranto** The term appears to derive from the French word *courant*, 'runner'. It was the name applied to periodical news pamphlets issued between 1621 and 1641 giving information about foreign affairs taken from foreign newspapers. One of the earliest forms of English journalism. The *corantos* were followed by the news-book (*q.v.*). *See also* GAZETTE.

**coronach** The Gaelic word means 'wailing together'; thus a funeral lament or dirge (*qq.v.*). Such laments originated in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands. *See also* COMPLAINT; ELEGY.

**correctness** Adherence to and conformity with rules, convention, and decorum (*qq.v.*). In the 18th c. a much prized ideal and standard which writers frequently discussed, especially with regard to verse.

**correlative verse** Verse in the shape of abbreviated sentences where there is a linear correspondence between words, as in the last two lines of this stanza from a sonnet by George Peele:

His golden locks time hath to silver turned;  
Oh time too swift, Oh swiftness never ceasing!  
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,  
But spurneth in vain; youth waneth by increasing:  
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading seen;  
Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green.

**correspondence of the arts** The idea that all the arts have certain features in common and resemble each other. In Classical times it was believed that art imitated nature but that each art was a separate and distinct activity. In the 19th c., and not, apparently, before, the belief that the arts contained certain correspondences



## correspondence of the arts

began to take hold. This was encouraged by experiment with drugs and synaesthetic experiences they produced. The French Symbolist poets, especially, made use of the knowledge of these effects. *See* SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM; SYNAESTHESIA; UT PICTURA POESIS.

**cossante** A Spanish verse form associated with a Castilian round dance; one of the forms arising from the old *danza prima* (q.v.). The lines are in assonanced couplets separated by a short third line which remains unchanged throughout the poem. *See also* CANTIGA.

**costumbrismo** The Spanish word *costumbre* denotes 'custom, habit'; *costumbrista* = the person or writer responsible. The term is used of prose forms which appeared early in the 19th c. – articles, sketches, short novels – and which concentrated on regional customs. Prominent authors of the genre were Larra Mesonero Romanos and Estébanez Calderón. The bigger novels which followed when this style became popular were consequently based on real observation of typical life in particular regions. One such which became famous was *La Gaviota* by Fernan Caballero (1796–1877). The early work of Blasco Ibañez is also of this type. *See* NOVEL; REALISM; REGIONAL NOVEL.

**cothurnus** *See* BUSKIN.

**counterplot** *See* SUB-PLOT.

**counterpoint** A term adopted by literary critics. In music it means the simultaneous combination of two or more melodies. When applied to verse it denotes metrical variation – which is very common. If the basic meter of a poem is iambic and there are dactylic and trochaic variations, then a counterpoint is achieved. The counterpoint effects in this stanza from George Macbeth's *The God of Love* are very noticeable:

Í founð thēm bētweén fár hílls, bý ā frózēn láke,  
Ōn ā páтч ōf báre gróund. Thēy wēre gróuped  
Ín ā sólíd ríng, líke ān árķ ōf hórń. Ānd āróund  
Thēm círcłēd, slówlŷ clósíng ín,  
Thēir tóngues lóllíng, thēir cárs fláttēned āgáínst thē wínd,  
Ā whírłpóol ōf wólves.



See SUBSTITUTION; TENSION.

**counter-turn** Describes the function of the antistrophe (*q.v.*) and the response to the strophe (*q.v.*) in choral song. It may also refer to the surprise dénouement (*q.v.*) at the end of a short story ('the twist in the tail'), and, conceivably, a wholly unexpected development in a play or story; unexpected, that is to say, by either the characters or the reader/audience. See COUP DE THÉÂTRE.

**coup de théâtre** An unexpected and theatrically startling event which twists the plot and action. For instance, the sudden leap into activity of the supposedly invalid and bedridden wife of General St Pé in Jean Anouilh's play *The Waltz of the Toreadors*. See COUNTER-TURN; DEUS EX MACHINA.

**couplet** Two successive rhyming lines, as here from the beginning of Chaucer's *Merchant's Tale*:

Whilom ther was dwellynge in Lumbardye  
A worthy knyght, that born was of Pavye,  
In which he lyved in gret prosperitee;  
And sixty yeer a wyflee man was hee,  
And folwed ay his bodily delyt  
On wommen, ther as was his appetyt  
As doon thise fooles that been seculeer.

The couplet is one of the main verse units in Western literature and is a form of great antiquity. Chaucer was one of the first Englishmen to use it, in *The Legend of Good Women* and for most of *The Canterbury Tales*. Tudor and Jacobean poets and dramatists used it continually; especially Shakespeare, Marlowe, Chapman and Donne. The dramatists at this time employed it as a variation on blank verse (*q.v.*), and also (very often) to round off a scene or an act. This is virtually a convention (*q.v.*) of the period. The couplet composed of two iambic pentameter (*q.v.*) lines – more commonly known as the heroic couplet (*q.v.*) – was the most favoured form. This was developed particularly in the 17th c. and perfected by Dryden, Pope and Johnson; but Chaucer had already shown many of its possibilities. It was also used for heroic drama (*q.v.*) during the Restoration period (*q.v.*) in England.

The octosyllabic couplet (or iambic tetrameter) has also been much used. Outstanding instances are Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* and Coleridge's *Christabel*.

## couplet

The couplet in all forms of meter (even monometer, dimeter and trimeter *qq.v.*) has proved an extremely adaptable unit: in lines of different lengths; as part of more complex stanza forms; as a conclusion to the sonnet (*q.v.*); as part of *ottava rima* and rhyme royal (*qq.v.*); and for epigrams (*q.v.*).

In French poetry the rhyming alexandrine (*q.v.*) couplet has been a major unit, and used with especial skill by Corneille, Racine, Molière and La Fontaine. During the 17th and 18th c., partly owing to French influence, this unit was used extensively for German and Dutch narrative and dramatic verse. Later Goethe and Schiller revived the *Knittelvers* (*q.v.*), a tetrameter couplet.

In the 20th c. the couplet has fallen somewhat into desuetude, but it is still used periodically in combination with other metrical units. *See* CLOSED COUPLET; END-STOPPED LINE; ENJAMBEMENT; OPEN COUPLET.

**courtesy book** Basically, this is a book of etiquette but many of the early courtesy books (especially those of the 16th and 17th c.) were much more than this in that they embodied a philosophy of the art of living (elegantly, with *virtù*) and a guide to it. Moreover, many of them were extremely well written and are an invaluable source for the history of education, ideas, customs and social behaviour.

Some very early examples date from the 13th c.: Thomasin von Zirclaria's *Der Walsche Gast*, Bonvincino da Riva's *De le xinquanta cortexie da tavola*, and two poems by Francesco da Barberino. The best known of the early English books was the *Babees Book* (a collection of pieces from the 15th and 16th c.), which, like Master Rhodes's *Book of Nurture*, was a useful primer for youths who went to serve in the houses of noblemen in order to learn how to behave. Two 15th c. works in verse, *The Boke of Curtasye* and *Urbanitatis*, were also popular. Though often crudely naive in their delineation of the principles of civilized conduct, they all aimed to encourage good manners, chivalry, courtly behaviour and the knightly ideal exemplified in Chaucer's description of the Knight in the *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*; an ideal, which, it may be argued, owes much to the early medieval tradition of the Christian knight whose paragon and exemplar was Christ. Courtesy meant rather more than merely good manners.

After the year 1400 behaviour, especially that of the better educated, was profoundly affected by the invention of gun-

powder and printing. Fire-arms eventually reduced the importance of skill-at-arms with the sword and altered the ideals of chivalry. Printing made available a large number of books from which people might learn to behave in a more civilized manner.

In the Tudor period, there developed the conception of a 'gentleman', a civilized 'all-rounder' or 'universal man' (sometimes called 'Renaissance man'). We can broadly distinguish two types. Type A: Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, Cellini. Type B: Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus and Sir Thomas More. All these men, like others less known, in many ways exemplified the attainments and ideals of humanism (*q.v.*). They were, so to speak, the *beati* of the humanist calendar.

Italian scholarship and culture had much to do with this humanist conception of many-sided excellence, and the most influential of all the courtesy books was Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (The Book of the Courtier) published in Venice in 1528, and translated into English by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561. In 1576 came a translation of Della Casa's *Galateo* (still much read in Italy). The other most famous and influential Italian work was Guazzo's *La civil conversatione*, translated into English in 1581.

However, before these events English writers had addressed themselves to manuals of instruction. Sir Thomas Elyot's *Governour* (1531) was the first treatise on education to be printed in England. About the same time appeared Thomas Lupset's *Exhortation to Yonge Men, perswading them to walke in the pathe way that leadeth to honeste and goodnes*; and in 1555, the anonymous *Institution of a Gentleman*.

Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1589, 1596) can almost be described as the Bible of Renaissance anthropocentric humanism, which, in its most idealistic form, was a sort of apotheosis of man. Spenser's greatest work presents both the medieval and the Renaissance conceptions of knightly and chivalrous conduct. He made his purpose clear in his Dedication, when he wrote: 'The generall end therefore of all the books is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline.' It was the most ambitious courtesy book of all.

In the early 17th c. appeared James Cleland's *Institution of a Young Nobleman* (1607); Richard Braithwaite's *The English Gentleman* (1630), and *The English Gentlewoman* (1631); and Henry Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), a work of considerable charm. A lesser one was Richard Weste's *The Schoole of Vertue* (1619). Such courtesy books were comprehensive. Advice ranged from

## courtesy book

education, the duties of parents and the exercise of the nobler faculties, to exactly how one should eat, blow one's nose, and clean one's teeth; plus other admonitions:

Let not thy privy members be  
Layd open to be view'd,  
It is most shameful and abhord,  
Detestable and rude.

Retain not urine nor the winde,  
Which doth the body vex,  
So it be done with secresie  
Let that not thee perplex.

There was also emphasis on what the Italian courtesy books called *sprezzatura* – doing things gracefully, with nonchalance bordering on disdain, however difficult they might be. It is also important that the vast majority of these works were concerned with worldly and secular matters (this secular morality is particularly noticeable in *Della Casa*) and not with religious morals. The medieval conception of the Christian knight and chivalrous hero had been modified.

Other 17th c. works of note were Obadiah Walker's *Of Education, especially of Young Gentlemen* (1673), Gailhard's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1678); and two influential books translated from the French: *The Rules of Civility* by Antoine de Courtin, and an anonymous work called *Youth's Behaviour*. To these one might add George Halifax's *Advice to a Daughter* (1688), a work of much charm and urbane good sense.

By this time, manners, dress and generally polished behaviour were tending to become an end in themselves, and thus leading to affectation and posturing, all too apparent in Restoration Comedy (*q.v.*). The Tudor ideals of amateur *virtù*, of 'the glass of fashion and the mould of form' were being reduced. Nevertheless, the 18th c. produced one noteworthy contribution in the shape of Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to His Son* (1774) which may well be regarded as the last of the traditional courtesy books concerned with the principles of gentlemanly behaviour as well as with the details. Thereafter, books of etiquette concentrated on the do's and don't's: from how to address a marquis to the degree of pressure permissible on the waist of a young lady doing a waltz.

**courtly love** The term *amour courtois* (Italian *amore cortese*; Provençal



*domnei*) was coined by Gaston Paris in 1883 to describe that courtly love which had its origins in southern France and was celebrated in the poetry of the *troubadours* (q.v.). It was primarily a literary phenomenon, though there were indeed actual courts of love where amatory problems were discussed.

Before the 12th c., women, for the most part, were regarded as inferior to men, but courtly love idealized women; and the lover, stricken by the beauty of his lady, put her on a pedestal and was obedient to her wishes. The idea was that the lover's feelings ennoble him and make him worthier of his sovereign mistress. He longs for union with her in order to attain moral excellence. Paradoxically, though the lover adored his lady, genuflected at her door and observed Christian behaviour strictly, the *troubadour* version of this form of love was adulterous. In fact, adultery was glorified; partly, perhaps, because medieval marriages were the result of practical convenience (they were 'arranged') rather than romance, and partly because of the theory that true love had to be freely given and was not possible between husband and wife.

The literary origin of this very remarkable development in the relationship of the two sexes is to be found in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (published at the very beginning of the Christian era), and most of the rules were laid down by a monk, Andreas Capellanus, late in the 12th c. in *De Amore* – also known under the title *De Arte Honeste Amandi*.

The feudal concept of vassalage to an overlord and the medieval tradition of devotion to the Virgin Mary also influenced the evolution of courtly love. It is noticeable that the later devotional lyrics of the Middle Ages become more and more secular in their attitude and language as the earthly mistress replaces the celestial goddess and Queen of Heaven. By the time the sonneteers are producing their sequences we have almost an 'overlady', and, on the face of it, the equivalent of a masochistic devotion to beauty.

The *troubadour* tradition spread to Italy where it attained its sublime form in the work of Guinicelli and Cavalcanti, the gentlest of the *dolce stil nuovists*. It also permeated to northern France where it is established in the work of the *trouvères* (q.v.), and in the romances (q.v.) – particularly in the work of Chrétien de Troyes. In Germany its ideals are presented in the poetry of the Minnesingers. In England the tradition appears in Chaucer, especially in *Troilus and Criseyde* (though Chaucer is in a way rejecting it); and in the work of Gower and Usk. But the ideals

## courtly love

of courtly love do not really manifest themselves in English literature until the 16th c. (via Petrarch) in the great sonnet (*q.v.*) sequences of Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare.

Courtly love is an example of an idea about heterosexual relationships which became widely diffused (just as a political theory might) in various cultures and environments and was susceptible to a variety of different interpretations and expressions. Nevertheless, there appear to be some fundamental elements which are fairly universal: (a) the four marks of courtly love are humility, courtesy, adultery and the religion of love; (b) the love is desire; (c) it is an ennobling and dynamic force; (d) it generates a cult of the beloved.

It will be found that, over a very long period, its ideals, and the attitudes towards women implied in them, have gradually influenced the changing conception of woman's position in society. Nowadays the nearest thing to the discussions in the courts of love are the advice columns in women's magazines. The acknowledged classic on the subject of courtly love is C. S. Lewis's *The Allegory of Love* (1936).

**courtly makers** A group of poets at Henry VIII's court who imported Italian and French poetic forms. The best known are Sir Thomas Wyatt who wrote the first English sonnets (*q.v.*), and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who introduced blank verse (*q.v.*). Much of the work of the court poets was published in *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557), a collection which had a considerable influence on Elizabethan writers.

**Cowleyan ode** An ode (*q.v.*) in which the stanzas or verse paragraphs are irregular in rhyme, line length and number of lines. It is named after Abraham Cowley (1618–67) and has been used a good many times since. Notable instances are: Dryden's *Song for St Cecilia's Day* and Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*.

**cradle books** Books printed before 1501 are known by this name, or Latin *incunabula* 'swaddling clothes': G. *Wiegendrucker*.

**craft cycle** See MYSTERY PLAYS.

**crambe** Applied to unnecessary and disagreeable repetition. From Juvenal's phrase *crambe repetita* 'rehashed cabbage'.

**crambo** A versifying game. A word or a line of verse is given and then each player has to supply a rhyme or rhyming line. In dumb crambo the players are given a word rhyming with another word which is concealed on a piece of paper. The players 'act' out possible rhyming words until they find the right one. Crambo also denotes a bad rhyme. *See also* BOUTS-RIMÉS.

**creationism** A theory of poetry which originated after the First World War in Buenos Aires. The Chilean poet Huidobro was responsible for it. It was an attempt to write a so-called 'pure' poetry (*q.v.*). The theories had some influence in Spain. *See also* ULTRAISM.

**cretic** *See* AMPHIMACER.

**crisis** That point in a story or play at which the tension reaches a maximum and a resolution is imminent. There may, of course, be several crises, each preceding a climax (*q.v.*). In *Othello*, for instance, there is a crisis when Iago provokes Cassio to fight Roderigo, another when Othello is led to suspect his wife, a third when Othello accuses Desdemona of infidelity. Several other minor crises precede the murder of Desdemona. *See* DÉNOUEMENT.

**criticism** The art or science of literary criticism is devoted to the comparison and analysis, to the interpretation and evaluation of works of literature.

It begins with the Greeks, but little of their work has survived. Aristotle's *Poetics* is mostly devoted to drama; and Plato's theories of literature are scarcely literary criticism. From the Romans the major works are Horace's *Ars Poetica* (c. 19 B.C.) and the works on rhetoric (*q.v.*) composed by Cicero and Quintilian. The first important critical essay in the Christian era is Longinus's *On the Sublime*, and the first medieval critic of note was Dante who, in his *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (c. 1303-5), addressed himself to the problems of language appropriate to poetry.

The Renaissance writers and critics for the most part followed the Classical rules on the principle that the ancients were bound to have been right; but there were some attempts at originality. For example, Vida's *Poetica* (1527), a treatise on the art of poetry; Du Bellay's *Défense* (1549); and Lope de Vega's *New Art of*

## criticism

*Making Comedies* (1609). In England there is little criticism of note until Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie* (1595), which is important because it is a detailed examination of the art of poetry and a discussion of the state of English poetry at the time.

For nearly a hundred years the major critical works to appear tended to reinforce the Classical tradition and rules (*q.v.*). Some of the main works were Ben Jonson's *Timber: Or Discoveries* (1640), Pierre Corneille's *Discours* (1660) and Boileau's *L'Art Poétique* (1673). With Dryden, however, in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668) – not to mention his prefaces, dedications and prologues – we find a critic of judicious discrimination and open-mindedness whose critical essays are works of art in themselves. He, if anybody, showed the way to the proper function of criticism.

In the next century there was a very pronounced emphasis on following the rules in the creation of literature and a considerable emphasis on imitating the laws of nature. As Pope put it in *An Essay on Criticism* (1711):

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame  
By her just standard, which is still the same;  
Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,  
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light.

In the 18th c. G. B. Vico, the Italian critic and philosopher, was the pioneer of the historical approach to literature. Historicism, as it is called, completely changed, in the long run, critical methods. It enabled people to realize that the rules that held good for the Classical writers do not necessarily hold good in a later age, and that there were not absolute principles and rules by which literature could be judged (which was Dr Johnson's point of view).

There was thus a reaction against Neoclassicism (*q.v.*), an increasing interest in literatures other than those of Greece and Rome, and a greater variety of opinions about literature, about the language to be used, and about the creative and imaginative faculties and processes of the writer. The new views found expression in Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1817), Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* (1820) – a reply to Peacock's ironical debunking in *The Four Ages of Poetry* (1820) – Poe's *The Poetic Principle* (1850) and *The Philosophy of Composition* (1846), and Matthew Arnold's *Essays in Criticism* (1865, 1888). The writings of Walter Pater on culture



and art, especially *The Renaissance* (1873) and *Appreciations* (1889), had a profound influence on critical thinking.

By the second half of the 19th c. many different critical theories had begun to proliferate, as is clear from a study of the philosophy of aestheticism (*q.v.*), the doctrine of art for art's sake (*q.v.*) and the work of the Symbolist poets. There were fewer rules of any kind as more and more writers experimented. At the same time the work of the best critics continued in the tradition and method of Vico. Sainte-Beuve, with his immense range of learning and his keen sense of critical and judicious detachment, was the supreme exponent of historicism.

Recent criticism has tended to be more and more closely analytical in the evaluation and interpretation of literature, as is evident in the achievements of major critics like T. E. Hulme, A. C. Bradley, Ezra Pound, I. A. Richards, T. S. Eliot, Cleanth Brooks, F. R. Leavis, Allen Tate, Edmund Wilson and W. K. Wimsatt. See SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**crossed rhyme** Also known as interlaced rhyme, this occurs in long couplets (*q.v.*) – especially the hexameter (*q.v.*). Words in the middle of each line rhyme. Swinburne used the device successfully in *Hymn to Proserpine*, as these lines suggest:

Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has  
grown grey from Thy breath;  
We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the  
fullness of death.  
Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a day;  
But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives  
not May.

See also LEONINE.

**crown of sonnets** A sequence of seven, so linked as to form a 'crown' or panegyric (*q.v.*) to the person concerned. The last line of each of the first six sonnets is the first of the succeeding one, and the last line of the seventh repeats the opening line of the first. The best known English example introduces Donne's *Holy Sonnets*. The crown is a prologue to the main sequence. The seven are named *La Corona*, *Annunciation*, *Nativitie*, *Temple*, *Crucifying*, *Resurrection* and *Ascension*. See SONNET; SONNET CYCLE.

## **crown poem**

**crown poem** That work which is awarded the bardic crown at an Eisteddfod (*q.v.*). *See also* CHAIR ODE.

**cruelty, theatre of** *See* THEATRE OF CRUELTY.

**cuaderna vía** (Sp 'quaternary way, quaternary manner') A four line verse form containing fourteen syllables to the line. All the lines rhyme. The model for this form may be Latin Goliardic verse (*q.v.*). Never a courtly form, it was commonly used in the Middle Ages and it seems that it was employed for the very last time in a collection of poems titled *Rimada de Palacio* by the Chancellor Pero López de Ayala (1332-1407). They were probably composed *c.* 1385 when he was imprisoned (in an iron cage). *See also* MESTER DE CLERECÍA; QUATERNARY FORM.

**cubo-futurism** A jargon term. The cubo-futurists were an 'iconoclastic' group of Russian poets who, shortly before the First World War, published manifestoes in which they advocated the demolition of most, if not all, literary conventions. They were more interested in the possibilities of sound than of sense. *See also* DADAISM; EGO-FUTURISM; PURE POETRY.

**culteranismo** In 17th c. Spain there came to a head a difference of practice and attitude between two schools of writing and poetry, conveniently known as '*culteranismo*' and '*conceptismo*' (*q.v.*). It is easier now to compile the names of the opposing teams than it would have been for some of the protagonists themselves. Though famous personalities were involved, this is not to say they were team leaders. It is therefore an over-simplification to say that it boiled down to Góngora versus Lope de Vega. In practice most of the propaganda was produced by others of less distinction, but sometimes of clearer aim and warmer feeling.

Góngora (1561-1627) began to write in a style which called for a knowledge of earlier literatures and their languages if his references, couched in refined and stylized terms, were to be appreciated or understood. Two outstanding examples were the *Soledades* and the *Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea*. The learned and elaborate language can be compared with that in the movement known as *la préciosité* (*q.v.*) in France. One of the elements of *culteranismo* which provoked opposition was its slavish imitation of Latin syntax. Among writers who were trying to reach a wide audience, such a tendency would have been suicidal. Lope de

Vega, a natural enemy of such a tendency and regarded as the leader of *conceptismo* movement, asserted that poetry should cost great trouble to the poet but little to the reader. *See* GONGORISM.

**cultures, the two** In 1959 C. P. Snow delivered the Rede Lecture in Cambridge and in the course of it deplored the increasing gap between the humanities and technology, between the arts and science, the two cultures. This lecture caused a great deal of controversy.

**cursus** (L 'running') A term applied to the rhythm (*q.v.*) or pattern of prose. *See* CADENCE.

**curtain raiser** An entertainment, often of one act, which precedes the main part of the programme. They are rare now, but in the late 19th and early 20th c. were often used to divert audiences while late-comers arrived. In this way, the main programme would not be interrupted. *See* FARCE; ONE-ACT PLAY; QUART D'HEURE; SOTIE.

**curtal sonnet** Literally a sonnet (*q.v.*) cut short. Gerard Manley Hopkins used the term in *Preface to Poems* (1918) to describe a curtailed form of sonnet of his invention. He reduced the number of lines from fourteen to ten, divided into two stanzas: one of six lines, the other of four – with a half line tail-piece. In *Poems* there are curtal sonnets called *Peace* and *Pied Beauty*. The latter is as follows:

GLORY be to God for dappled things –  
 For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;  
 For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;  
 Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;  
 Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow and plough;  
 And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;  
 Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)  
 With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;  
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:  
 Praise him.

*See* QUATRAIN; SESTET; TAIL-RHYME.

## cycle

**cycle** A group of poems, stories or plays which are united by a central theme. The term 'epic cycle' was first used by the Alexandrine grammarians to describe a group of epic poems which, by c. 800 B.C., had grown up in connection with the battle for Troy. The individual epics, in some cases fairly short ballads, were elaborated and eventually joined with others to form an epic cycle. The result we now know as Homer's *Iliad*.

This kind of accretive process has been repeated in many civilizations. Conceivably, quite a large number of the Old Testament stories were originally separate and gradually formed a more or less homogeneous unit. The same may well be true of stories about Buddha and other great religious leaders and rulers; and also the accounts of the lives of some saints. Legend and fact intermingle.

Old Irish epic poetry bears all the marks of cyclical structure. The Scandinavian, Arthurian and Charlemagne cycles are analogous. Russian *byliny* and *stariny* are also grouped about a particular hero or town. The South Slav *narodne pesme* (q.v.) – still part of living oral tradition (q.v.) – are similar, and form an outstanding example of the cycle. One should mention also the Albanian Geg *Mujo-Halil* cycle, and other Albanian cycles which survive in south-eastern Italy and are concerned with the exploits of the hero Skandarbeg.

Into the cyclic category may also be placed such collections of tales as Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. A series of lyrical poems may also form a cycle. For instance: Dante's *Vita Nuova*, Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, and Shakespeare's *Sonnets*.

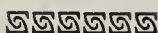
Finally there are the cycles of the Mystery Plays (q.v.) which attempt an encyclopaedic dramatization of the Old and New Testaments. See BALLAD; CHRONICLE PLAY; EPIC; SONNET SEQUENCE.

**cyghanedd** A Welsh term which denotes sound correspondences peculiar to Welsh poetry, particularly alliteration (q.v.) and internal rhyme (q.v.). Gerard Manley Hopkins called such devices 'chimes'. See also AWDL.

**cywydd** A Welsh metrical form developed by the 14th c. Welsh poet Dafydd ap Gwilym. It comprises rhyming couplets, each line being of seven syllables.



# D



**dactyl** (Gk 'finger') A metrical foot consisting of one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed ones: | ∪ ∪. Just like finger joints. Dactyls were often used in Classical verse, but not often by English poets until the 19th c. when Scott, Byron, Tennyson, Browning and Swinburne (among many others) experimented with them. Tennyson, for example, used them in his *Charge of the Light Brigade*. One of the best known instances of dactylic verse is Browning's *The Lost Leader*:

Júst főr ä | hándfűl öf | sílvěr hě | léft ůs  
 Júst főr ä | ríbănd tő | stíck ĩn hĩs | cóat –  
 Fóund thě öne | gíft öf whích | fórtűne bě | réft ůs,  
 Lóst äll thě | óthěrs shě | léts ůs dě | vóte.

Dactyls are not unusual in light verse (*q.v.*), as in these 'Railway Dactyls' by G.D.:

Hére wě gő | óff ön thě | 'Lóndön änd | Bírminghă'm',  
 Biddĩng ä | diéu tő thě | fóggỹ mě | trópölĩs!  
 Stáyĩng ät | hóme wĩth thě | dúmps ĩn cõn | fírming 'ēm: –  
 Mótiön änd | mĩrth äre ä | fílíp tő | lífe.

The dactyl, like the trochee (*q.v.*) produces a falling rhythm (*q.v.*) and, as this is not the natural rhythm of English verse, poems composed entirely of dactyls are rare. But the dactyl, like the trochee, is often used in combination with other feet to provide counterpoint (*q.v.*) and to act as a substituted foot. *See also* ANAPAEST; ELEGIAIC DISTICH; IAMB; PYRRHIC; RISING RHYTHM; SPONDEE; SUBSTITUTION.

**dadaism** (F *dada* 'hobby-horse') A nihilistic movement in art and literature started in Zurich in 1916 by a Rumanian, Tristan Tzara, an Alsatian, Hans Arp, and two Germans, Hugo Ball and Richard Huelsenbeck. The term was meant to signify everything and

## dadaism

nothing, or total freedom, anti rules, ideals and traditions. Dadaism became popular in Paris immediately after the First World War. The basic word in the Dadaist's vocabulary was 'nothing'. In art and literature manifestations of this 'philosophy' were mostly collage (*q.v.*) effects: the arrangement of unrelated objects and words in an illogical fashion. In England and America its influence is discernible in the poetry of Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot and in the art of Pollock and Rauschenberg. By 1921 Dadaism as a movement was dead. It was replaced by Surrealism (*q.v.*). However, its influence was detectable for many years. *See also* CUBO-FUTURISM; EXPRESSIONISM; ULTRAISM.

**daina** A type of folk poetry (*q.v.*) to be found among Lithuanians and Latvians. It is usually a four-line poem, though sometimes several are joined up to make a longer one. The meter is dactylic or trochaic and there is usually some rhyme. The verses are sung to the accompaniment of the *kanklys*, a harp. *See also* BALLAD; DUMY; FOLK LITERATURE; FOLK SONG; NARODNE PESME.

**danse macabre** Also known as the Dance of Death. The etymology of the word *macabre* is obscure. So far as its form is concerned it might be a corruption of OF *Macabre* – *Maccabeus*. An example of 'Judas Macabre' has been found; and in the 15th c. the Dance of Death was called *Chorea Machabaeorum* in Latin, *Makkabeusdans* in Dutch. It may be that the original reference was to a miracle play in which the slaughter of the Maccabees under Antiochus Epiphanes was enacted. It seems likely that the first use of the word dates from 1376 when it appeared in a poem written by Jehan Le Fèvre called *Respit de la Mort*: 'Je fis de macabre la dance'.

Le Fèvre used it as a noun and after his time it was limited as an adjective in the phrase 'dance macabré'. Since the period of Romanticism (*q.v.*) it has been freely used to designate 'une impression où se mélangent le funèbre et le grotesque', and an 'amalgame singulier de burlesque et de tragique'.

The Dance of Death (in art *and* literature) depicted a procession or dance in which the dead lead the living to the grave. It was a reminder of mortality, of the ubiquity of death and of the equality of all men in that state. It was also a reminder of the need for repentance. Apart from its moral and allegorical elements it was very often satirical in tone. The dead might be represented by a

number of figures (usually skeletons) or by a single personification of death. The living were usually arranged in some kind of order of precedence – Pope, cardinal, archbishop; emperor, king, duke etc. – almost, in Johnson's fine phrase, in the 'cold gradations of decay'. Many different media were employed: verse, prose, manuscript illustrations, printed books, paintings on canvas, wood and stone, engravings on stone and metal, woodcuts, sculpture, tapestry, embroidery, stained glass and so on. Its many and various versions were also widespread geographically – chiefly in France, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Istria and Britain – and were shaped and altered by numerous classes of people in a variety of social milieux: by printers, publishers, artists, merchants, friars, scribes, lay and church men.

The theme or subject was especially popular in the late Middle Ages and the 16th c. and the influence has continued to our own time. It appealed particularly to artists. The two major works were Holbein's engravings, and the pictures and verses in the cloisters of the church of the Holy Innocents in Paris. In Britain there survive the stone screen in the parish church of Newark-on-Trent and the paintings in Hexham Priory. On the continent the best known are at Lübeck, Basel, La Chaise Dieu, Kemaria and Beram. There is a curious absence of pictures in Spain but a multitude in Italy. In Germany and Switzerland especially there are many poems in block-books and on woodcuts and frescoes.

There is an early suggestion of the *Danse Macabre* in a late 12th c. poem, *Les Vers de la Mort* (c. 1195), written by Hélinand, a monk of Fiordmont, in which death is encouraged to travel about visiting different people in order to warn them that they must die. Other predecessors were the 12th c. *Débat du corps et de l'âme*, the 13th c. *Vado Mori* poems and the *Dit des Trois Mors et des Trois Vifs* (c. 1280) (a macabre tale of three living men being told by three dead men of their future decay), Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale* (late 14th c.) and its analogues – all in the same *memento mori* tradition. In the following century there survive the *Ballo della morte* from Italy, Guyot Marchant's *Danse Macabre* (1485) and his *Danse Macabre des Femmes* (1486), the Spanish *Danza general de la muerte* (mid-15th c.), a Catalan *Dance of Death* translated from the French, and Lydgate's version in *The Falles of Princes* (1494). The theme seems to have come to England via translations of the *Danse Macabre* verses in Paris. It is Lydgate who, with characteristic English laconicism, sums it up:

## **danse macabre**

The daunce of Machabree wherin is lively expressed and shewed the state of manne, and how he is called at uncertayne tymes by death, and when he thinketh least thereon.

The motif (*q.v.*) of the dance is echoed in many *ubi sunt* (*q.v.*) poems, and we find macabre elements in the work of many writers: in the sombre tragedies of Webster and Tourneur, in the work of Poe, Baudelaire and Strindberg, and particularly in Espronceda's eerie poem *El Estudiante de Salamanca* (1839) whose Don Juan hero dances with a corpse.

The personification of death and the motif of the macabre is recurrent and appears to exercise a considerable fascination for writers and artists. Death is, as it were, presented as a kind of sardonic joke. Death is 'la Railleuse par excellence' 'variée à l'infini, mais toujours boufonne'. The skull's grin is the last mocking laugh at the doleful jest of life. Richard II sums it up in one of the soliloquies that Shakespeare gives him:

... for within the hollow crown  
That rounds the mortal temples of a king  
Keeps Death his court, and there the antick sits,  
Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp.

*See also* BLACK COMEDY; CARPE DIEM; DIRGE; ELEGY; LAMENT; UBISUNT.

**danza prima** Primitive Spanish folk songs of the early middle ages; then found in Galicia and still found in Asturias. They display repetitive forms of an unusual kind in that pairs of lines of identical wording, except for the last word, succeed one another to unfold a story; and each pair has a slight difference of assonance (*q.v.*) adhered to in pairs. *See also* COSSANTE.

**dead metaphor** A metaphor which has been so often used that it has become lifeless and lost its figurative strength. In other words, a cliché (*q.v.*). There are some hundreds, possibly thousands, in the English language. For example: 'green with envy', 'the heart of the matter', 'top dog', 'to beat about the bush', 'pride of place', 'at one fell swoop'. *See also* IDIOM.

**débat** A form particularly popular in the 12th and 13th c. It was usually a kind of poetic contest (*q.v.*) in which some question of morality, politics or love was discussed. A typical *débat* began



with an introduction of the matter to be discussed and/or a description of the circumstances. There followed the discussion which had some dramatic quality. At the end the issue was referred to a judge.

This form has a long history. There are some early instances in the plays of Aristophanes, especially *Frogs* and *Clouds*. The eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil contain pastoral contests of wit. This kind of debate survives into the 4th c. in the work of Calpurnius, Nemesianus and Vespa.

A well-known example of a debate on a love theme is the 12th c. *Altercatio Phylididis et Florae*. There are a good many examples in Provençal and OF literature. A famous instance is the *Débat du corps et de l'âme* (12th c.). Later Villon wrote a *Débat du coeur et du corps*. In English literature the theme of the soul versus the body is found in OE literature and later. Probably the most noteworthy in England is the 13th c. debate of *The Owl and the Nightingale* ascribed to Nicholas of Guildford. The solemn owl and the gay nightingale represent the religious poet and the love poet. In the debate they discuss the benefits they confer on men.

*Débat*, in various forms, was an important influence in the early stages of the development of drama; probably as important an influence as the exemplum (*q.v.*) in the sermon (*q.v.*). The debate was especially concerned with the war between God and the Devil. In the 4th c. Prudentius represented the conflict of good and evil for the soul of man in *Psychomachia*. In the 12th c. Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugo of St Victor made the debate of the *Four Daughters of God* in which Mercy and Peace plead against Truth and Righteousness for Man's Soul (or Mansoul). It was not such a long step from this to more complex allegory (*q.v.*) and also to rudimentary psychological drama of the kind we find in the Mystery Plays (*q.v.*)

Notable *débat* works which influenced the development of drama were the 13th c. *Interludium de Clerico et Puella*; the *Ludus de Bellyale* (1471), based upon the treatise of Jacobus de Theramo called *Processus Belial* (1381); and the *Processus Sathanae* (1570-80), but this is almost certainly a much earlier work.

Various versions of the *Four Daughters of God* appear in the Mystery and Morality Plays (*qq.v.*). One should mention also what is generally regarded as the first secular play – namely, Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucrece* (late 15th c.) which is a dramatized *débat*.

Dramatic debate makes a re-appearance in the work of George

Bernard Shaw; especially in *The Apple Cart* (1929) and *Man and Superman* (1903). See also AMOEBEAN VERSES; CHANSONS À PERSONNAGES; DIALOGUE; DIT; FABLIAU; JEU PARTI; PASTORAL; PREGUNTA.

**decadence** The term usually describes a period of art or literature which, as compared with the excellence of a former age, is in decline. It has often been applied to the Alexandrine period (300–30 B.C.), and to the period after the death of Augustus (A.D. 14). In modern times it is used of the late 19th c. symbolist movement in France, especially French poetry. The movement emphasized the autonomy of art, the need for sensationalism and melodrama, egocentricity, the bizarre, the artificial, art for art's sake (*q.v.*) and the superior 'outsider' position of the artist *vis-à-vis* society – particularly middle-class or bourgeois society. Much 'decadent' poetry was preoccupied with personal experience, self-analysis, perversity, elaborate and exotic sensations.

In France the 'high priest' of decadence was Baudelaire (about whom Gautier wrote one of the most perceptive analyses of decadence), and Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* was a sort of manifesto of the movement or cult. *Le Decadent* (1886–89) was the journal of the movement. Huysmans's novel *A Rebours* (1884) was what Arthur Symons described as its 'breviary'. Des Esseintes, the hero, exemplifies the decadent figure who is consumed by *maladie fin de siècle*. He devotes his energy and intelligence to the replacement of the natural with the un-natural and artificial. His quest was for new and more bizarre sensations.

Other notable figures who showed allegiance to this aesthetic cult and spirit were Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Rimbaud, Verlaine, and Laforgue. Disenchantment, world-weariness and ennui pervaded their work. Verlaine's remarks on the word decadent itself display the truth of the matter:

Ce mot suppose . . . des pensées raffinées d'extrême civilisation, une haute culture littéraire, une âme capable d'intensives voluptés . . . Il est fait d'un mélange d'esprit charnel et de chair triste et de toutes les splendeurs violentes du Bas-Empire. . . .

The preoccupation with decay and with ruins, with sadness and despair, was apparent much earlier in the Ossianic poetry of James Macpherson in the 1760s. Some would contend also that Leopardi, the great Italian lyric poet, was a decadent. The more

morbid and flamboyant aspects of Poe's stories reveal a decadent element.

The cult did not catch on much in England, but the influences of the French movement are clear in the work of Oscar Wilde (for instance, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, 1891), in Dowson's *Cynara*, and in various works by Rossetti, Swinburne and Aubrey Beardsley. Decadent verse was published in *The Yellow Book* (q.v.). Gilbert and Sullivan satirized decadence and the aesthetic movement in *Patience* (1881). See AESTHETICISM; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**decastich** (Gk 'ten rows') A poem or stanza (q.v.) of ten lines.

**decasyllable** A line of verse of ten syllables. It seems to have first been used c. 1050 in France. It became an increasingly popular form and was used by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. Chaucer's discovery of it is important because he worked out a five-stress line which became fundamental to the development of the sonnet, the Spenserian stanza, the heroic couplet and blank verse (qq.v.). In practice, often enough, a decasyllabic line has eleven syllables (occasionally nine) but the extra one is often negotiated by an elision (q.v.). This couplet from Pope's *Moral Essays* illustrates the two kinds of line:

To observations which ourselves we make,  
We grow more partial for th'observer's sake.

**décima** A much used and classic Spanish stanza form. It consists of ten octosyllabic lines rhyming abbaaccddc.

**decorum** In literature, and especially in poetry, decorum is consistency with the canons of propriety (q.v.); a matter of behaviour on the part of the poet *qua* his poem, and therefore what is proper and becoming in the relationship between form and substance. Action, character, thought and language all need to be appropriate to each other. At its simplest, the grand and important theme (for instance that of *Paradise Lost*) is treated in a dignified and noble style; the humble or trivial (for example, Skelton's *The Tunning of Elinor Running*) in a lower manner.

Decorum was of considerable importance to Classical authors. Aristotle deals with it in *Poetics*; Cicero in *De Oratore*; Horace, in *Ars Poetica*. What they said had wide influence during and after

## decorum

the Renaissance, though there were many who did not subscribe to their dictates.

Many Elizabethan plays, for example, show an awareness of certain rules of decorum. An obvious instance is *Much Ado About Nothing* (c. 1598–99). It being a comedy of manners (*q.v.*), all the comic passages, especially the badinage between Beatrice and Benedick, are written in colloquial dramatic prose; the romantic episodes and themes are always rendered in verse. As soon as Benedick and Beatrice realize they are in love, the emotional temperature rises and they speak in verse.

Decorum became of great importance towards the end of the 17th c. and during the 18th when Classical rules and tenets were revered. The use of correct language was of particular interest. For instance, Johnson observed that the words ‘cow-keeper’ and ‘hogherd’ might not be used in our language; but he added that there were no finer words in the Greek language. Though the subject matter of 18th c. writers was often what they thought of as ‘low’, if not vulgar, they managed to dress it in appropriate language. Pope combines elegance, wit and grace with an almost brutal forcefulness and succeeds in writing of the crude, the corrupt and the repulsive without offending.

Wordsworth and Coleridge found the doctrines of Neoclassicism (*q.v.*) too restrictive; hence Wordsworth’s attempt, as expressed in the preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, to rebel against ‘false refinement’ and ‘poetic diction’ (*q.v.*).

Since then writers have always considered matters of literary decorum, though in a more flexible way. Dickens is a good example of a writer who adjusts his style to the needs of the moment. Fundamentally, most people have an awareness of the need to adjust their language to the occasion, whether they are writing or speaking. See AFFECTATION; CONVENTION; PERIPHRAISIS; STYLE.

**defective foot** A metrical foot lacking one or more unstressed syllables. In the line:

This is the forest primeval

one would expect a final dactyl (*q.v.*) but it ends with a trochee (*q.v.*). Only the purists would regard this kind of variation as a fault. See CATALEXIS.

**definitive edition** Either an author’s own final text which he wishes



## desert island fiction

to be regarded as the accepted version, or a work which is deemed to be 'the last word' on a subject. It may, for example, be the edition of a text, a biography or a work of reference.

**denotation** The most literal and limited meaning of a word, regardless of what one may feel about it or the suggestions and ideas it connotes. *Apartheid* denotes a certain form of political, social and racial régime. It *connotes* much more. See CONNOTATION; MEANING.

**dénouement** (F 'unknotting') It may be the event or events following the major climax (*q.v.*) of a plot, or the unravelling of a plot's complications at the end of a story or play. See CRISIS; DESEN-LACE; DISCOVERY.

**descending rhythm** See FALLING RHYTHM.

**descort** Either a synonym for the Provençal *lai* (*q.v.*), or a term for a poem whose stanzas are in different languages. Also a Galician verse form expressing the 'discord' felt by the poet when he is suffering the pangs of unrequited love. Line length and meter are variable.

**desenlace** (Sp 'untying, unlacing') Directly comparable both in original meaning and in usage with its virtual synonym in French, *dénouement* (*q.v.*).

**desert island fiction** A form of fiction in which a remote and 'uncivilized' island is used as the venue of the story and action. It has a particular attraction because it can be placed right outside the 'real' world and may be an image of the ideal, the unspoilt and the primitive. It appeals directly to the sense of adventure and exploratory instinct in most people (it also appeals to a certain atavistic nostalgia) and many a child must have thought at least once how splendid it would be to be shipwrecked on a desert island.

The publication of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719 marked the inception of a literary genre which has attained universal popularity. In France desert-island stories came to be known as *Robinsonnades*; in Germany as *Robinsonaden*. In 1719 Defoe also published *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, and in the same year an

## desert island fiction

imitation appeared, called *The Adventures and Surprising Deliverances of James Dubourdieu and his Wife from the Uninhabited Part of the Island of Paradise*. French and German editions of *Robinson Crusoe* came out in 1720, and since that time there have been 196 English editions, some 130 translations into two dozen different languages, about 120 adaptations and approximately 280 imitations (many of which have been translated).

The theme of *Crusoe* has appeared in numerous other works, of which some of the more notable are: *The Hermit, or . . . The Adventures of Mr Philip Quarll* (1727); J. G. Schnabel's *Die Insel Felsenburg* (1731-43); J. J. Campe's *Robinson der Jüngere* (1779); and the European classic *Der Schweizerische Robinson* by Wyss which was translated into English as *The Swiss Family Robinson* in 1814. The increasing popularity of children's books (*q.v.*) in the 19th c. produced a good many developments of the *Crusoe* theme, like J. Taylor's *The Young Islanders* (1841), Madame de Beaulieu's *Le Robinson de douze ans* (1824) and Jules Verne's *L'île mystérieuse* (1875). One should note several other works in the Wyss tradition; namely, Marryat's *Masterman Ready* (1841), R. M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1858) and his *Dog Crusoe* (1861), R. L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883), and, more recently, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), a story which reverses the image of an unspoilt and semi-paradisal existence. By contrast Aldous Huxley depicted an Utopian way of life in *Island* (1966). Related to this genre are Gerhard Hauptmann's *Die Insel der grossen Mutter* (1924), Giraudoux's *Suzanne et le Pacifique* (1939) and Michel Tournier's *Vendredi* (1967). See also NOBLE SAVAGE; PRIMITIVISM; UTOPIA.

**detective story** A story in which a mystery, often involving a murder, is solved by a detective. The traditional elements are an apparently insoluble crime, uncooperative or dim-witted police, the detective (often an amateur) who may be an eccentric, the detective's confidant (*q.v.*) who helps to clarify the problems, a variety of suspects and carefully laid red-herrings to put the reader off the scent, a suspect who appears guilty from circumstantial evidence, and a resolution, often startling and unexpected, in which the detective reveals how he has found out the culprit. The good detective story displays impeccable logic and reasoning in its unravelling.

An early instance of a novel which deals with crime and detection in some depth is Godwin's remarkable story *The Adventures*

of *Caleb Williams* (1794), but it is generally accepted that the first detective story as a recognizable form was E. A. Poe's *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841), which he followed shortly afterwards with *The Purloined Letter* and *The Mystery of Marie Roget*; and that the first full-length detective novel was Emile Gaboriau's *L'Affaire Lerouge* (1866). These he followed with *Le Crime d'Orcival* (1868) and *Monsieur Lecoq* (1869). Later Fortuné du Boisgobey wrote stories similar to Gaboriau's and is chiefly remembered for his *Le Crime de l'Opéra* (1880).

The first English detective novel was Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1868). If we except the minor role of Bucket in Dickens's *Bleak House* (1852-3), then Collins's Serjeant Cuff is one of the very first detectives in fiction. In 1887 the Australian Fergus Home published *Mystery of a Hansom Cab*, and in that same year Sherlock Holmes made his bow in *A Study in Scarlet* by Conan Doyle. In 1890 was published *The Sign of Four*, and in the 1890s Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories were published in *The Strand Magazine*. The enormous popularity of the genre dates from this period.

However, it should be added that even before Poe, Voltaire had published *Zadig* (1747, 1749), a philosophical tale comparable with Johnson's *Rasselas* (1759), in which the eponymous philosopher hero solves problems of detection with a combination of observation and logic which even Holmes could not have improved on. In some ways, therefore, Voltaire must also be considered a pioneer.

The invention of Holmes and Watson produced a cult and a legend to which there has been no equal and after Doyle the detective story proliferated in the most astonishing fashion. L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace displayed the scientific method in *The Sanctuary Club*, and in the opening years of the 20th c. several classic detective stories were written. For example: Austin Freeman's *The Red Thumb Mark* (1909), *John Thorndyke's Cases* (1909), *The Eye of Osiris* (1911), and the same author's *The Singing Bone* (1912); A. E. W. Mason's *At the Villa Rose* (1910) which was later followed by his *The House of the Arrow* (1924) and *The Prisoner in the Opal* (1928); G. K. Chesterton's *Father Brown Stories: The Innocence of Father Brown* (1911), which was followed by *The Incredulity of Father Brown* and *The Secret of Father Brown*; and one of the acknowledged classics of the form, *Trent's Last Case* (1913) by E. C. Bentley. In the early part of the century, two French authors made notable contributions; namely, Gaston Leroux

## **detective story**

(1868–1927) who remains particularly well known for his *Le Mystère de la Chambre Jaune* (1907), and Maurice Leblanc who created Arsène Lupin and some of whose better known books are *Arsène Lupin* (1907), *Arsène Lupin contre Sherlock Holmes* (1908) and *Arsène Lupin, gentleman cambrioleur* (1914).

After the First World War a crime wave helped to stimulate a renewed interest in the detective story and from then on a great many able practitioners raised the form to a very high standard. Among the most famous names one should mention Agatha Christie (who created the detective Hercule Poirot), Dorothy Sayers (who created Lord Peter Wimsey), Freeman Wills Croft (creator of Inspector French), Edgar Wallace (detective, J. G. Reeder), and Georges Simenon whose detective Maigret became almost as famous as Holmes was in his day. One should also mention Margery Allingham, Ernest Bramah, Anthony Berkeley, Ronald Knox, Ngaio Marsh, A. A. Milne, Ellery Queen, Nicholas Blake (C. Day Lewis), Michael Innes (J. I. M. Stewart), John Dickson Carr, H. C. Bailey, Philip MacDonald, Dashiell Hammett, Rex Stout, Peter Cheyney, E. McBain, Erle Stanley Gardner and Raymond Chandler. *See also* ENTERTAINMENT; SPY STORY; THRILLER.

**deus ex machina** (L ‘god out of the machine’) In Greek drama a god was lowered on to the stage by a *mēchanē* so that he could get the hero out of difficulties or untangle the plot. Euripides used it a good deal. Sophocles and Aeschylus avoided it. Bertolt Brecht parodied the abuse of the device at the end of his *Threepenny Opera*. Today this phrase is applied to any unanticipated intervener who resolves a difficult situation.

**deuteragonist** In Greek drama, a second actor – often the same as the antagonist (*q.v.*). *See* PROTAGONIST.

**diacope** (Gk ‘cutting through’) The separation of a compound word. For instance: *never the less*; *what so ever*.

**diacritic** A sign under or above a letter to distinguish different values or sounds. For example: è, é, ê, ç, ö, ž.

**diaeresis** (Gk ‘taking apart’) A sign put over the second of two vowels to indicate that they are pronounced separately. For example: naïve.



**dialect** A language or manner of speaking peculiar to an individual or class or region. Usually it belongs to a region, like the West Riding or East Anglia. A dialect differs from the standard language of a country, in some cases very considerably. Greek, German and Sicilian dialects, for instance, show great variations from the standard.

A good deal of literature is in dialect, especially that created in the earlier stages of a country's civilization. As far as England is concerned, much of the best English medieval verse is in dialect. For example: Robert Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* (North East Midland or Lincolnshire); *Sir Orfeo* (South West); *Ayenbite of Inwyrt* (Kentish); *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (West Midland or Lancashire or Cheshire); *The Pearl* (West Midland); Langland's *Piers Plowman* (South Midland); Sir John Mandeville's *Travels* (South East Midland); not to mention many of the medieval Mystery Plays (*q.v.*) and romances (*q.v.*).

Chaucer (who wrote in the East Midland dialect, and thus helped to establish it as the vernacular of educated people) uses words from other dialects quite often; sometimes to suggest local characteristics, sometimes to secure a rhyme.

Since the 16th c., dialect in writing has been used less and less. Scottish poetry has been the most conservative and retentive of dialect forms, as can be seen by comparing the work of Henryson and Dunbar with that of Burns and Edwin Muir. Burns was easily at his best when using the Ayrshire dialect. William Barnes is probably the most distinguished example of an English dialect poet since the 14th c. Most of his *Poems of Rural Life* (in three series, 1844, 1859, 1863) are in the Dorset dialect. Thomas Hardy also used the Dorset successfully in *Wessex Poems and Other Verses*. Tennyson experimented with it in *Northern Farmer – Old Style*. James Russell Lowell's *Bigelow Papers* rather comically take off New England rural speech; and, if cockney is accounted a dialect, then Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads* provide good examples of its use. A large number of novelists have used dialect forms, particularly to give verisimilitude (*q.v.*) to dialogue. Dickens, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and D. H. Lawrence are notable instances. *See also* SLANG; VERNACULAR.

**dialectic** A method of philosophical inquiry and reasoning. Plato's Socratic *Dialogues* are exercises in dialectic through question and answer analysis.

The term may also be applied to the ideas, logic and reasoning

## dialectic

which run through and hold together a work, or works, of literature. We may refer, for instance, to the dialectic of Donne's love poems, or of Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* or of Aldous Huxley's essays or of Sartre's novels. *See also* ARGUMENT.

**dialogue** Two basic meanings may be distinguished: (a) the speech of characters in any kind of narrative, story or play; (b) a literary genre in which 'characters' discuss a subject at length.

Of the latter, the earliest examples are believed to be the mimes of Sophron of Syracuse (c. 430 B.C.), but only fragments survive. To the 4th c. B.C. belong Plato's Socratic *Dialogues*, which are philosophical debates or dramas which employ the heuristic and dialectical method of question and answer. These are supreme examples of dialogue. Aristotle used the form for more specifically didactic purposes. Lucian's Greek *Dialogues of the Dead* (2nd c. A.D.) were modelled on Plato's, but Lucian used dialogue for comic and satirical ends and as a form of entertainment (rather as Plato did in *The Symposium*). Plato's method was imitated at the Renaissance by Juan de Valdes and Tasso, and Lucian's in the 17th and 18th c. by Fontenelle and Fénelon.

Notable instances in English of dialogues are: Thomas Starkey's *A Dialogue between Reginald Pole and Thomas Lupset* (c. 1533-36); Dryden's *Essay on Dramatic Poesie* (1668); Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779); Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* (1824-29), followed by his *Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans* (1853); and Oscar Wilde's *The Critic as Artist* (1891). Shaw used the form dramatically in *The Apple Cart* (1929). An interesting minor example of a Platonic dialogue is that by Gerard Manley Hopkins: *On The Origin of Beauty* (1865).

In France the Platonic form was revived by Valéry and his Socratic debates are generally thought to be outstanding for their structure and lucidity. The two works were: *L'Âme et la danse* and *Eupalinos ou l'Architecte* (1923). *See also* DÉBAT.

**dialysis** (Gk 'dismembering') The term denotes a method of analysis, argument or inquiry by which all the possible reasons for or against something are put forward and then disposed of rationally. *See also* DÉBAT; DIALECTIC; DIALOGUE.

**diary and journal** Diaries and journals can be roughly divided into two categories: the intimate and the anecdotal. Examples of the

first are Swift's *Journal to Stella*, the journals of Benjamin Haydon, Amiel, Shelley, Mary Godwin, Constant, Tolstoy and André Gide. Into the second category come Pepys's *Diary*, Evelyn's *Journal*, Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, and the diaries of Charles Greville and Thomas Creevey.

It seems that keeping a diary became habitual in the 17th c., though one may assume that there are similar records from earlier times which have been lost; and there are a few which are extant from the 16th c., like the diary kept by King Edward VI as a boy. Sir William Dugdale (1605-86), historian and topographer, kept a journal of great interest. Other minor English diarists of the 17th c. were Edward Lake, Henry Teonge and Roger Lowe. Late in that century Celia Fiennes began a diary c. 1685 which she finished in approximately 1703 (parts of which were first published by Southey in 1812). But the two great 17th c. diarists (by many considered the greatest of all) were John Evelyn (1620-1706) and Samuel Pepys (1633-1703). Evelyn's *Journal* covers much of his life but was not published until 1818. Pepys's diary, which also covers a long period, was written in a cipher which was not deciphered until 1825, and not published in its entirety until 1893-99.

Many diaries and journals survive from the 18th c., a period when women kept them regularly. Some of the more notable female diarists were Mary, Countess Cooper (1685-1724), Elizabeth Byrom (1722-1801), Fanny Burney (1752-1840), Lady Mary Coke (1756-1829), Mrs Lybbe Powys (1756-1808). From the 18th c., too, dates one of the most agreeable and interesting diaries in English literature - Parson Woodforde's. Titled *A Diary of a Country Parson*, it was published in five volumes (1924-31). It gives memorable pictures of life in college and on a country parish. Pre-eminent in this period are Fielding's *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (1755), Swift's *Journal to Stella* (1766, 1768) and Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (1785), plus his very detailed accounts of his travels published in many volumes this century. A curiosity of the 18th c. is Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722), an historical reconstruction of the Great Plague of London 1664-65.

From the end of the 18th c. and throughout the 19th we find many other examples of diaries. Again, some of the best were kept by women; for instance: Lady Holland (1770-1845), Mary Frampton (1773-1846), Lady Charlotte Bury (1775-1861), Ellen Weeton (1776-1850), Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845), Caroline Fox

## diary and journal

(1819-71) and Margaret Shore (1819-39). These are works of minor importance.

From near the end of the 18th c. and for many years, Dorothy Wordsworth kept detailed diaries and journals which tell us much about Wordsworth. The separate works are: *The Alfoxden Journal* (1798); the *Journal of a Visit to Hamburg* and *A Journey from Hamburg to Goslar* (1798); the *Grasmere Journal* (1800-03); *Recollections of a Journey made in Scotland* (1803); *Journal of a Mountain Ramble by Dorothy and William Wordsworth* (1805); *Journal of a Tour on the Continent* (1820); *A Tour in Scotland* (1822); and *A Tour in the Isle of Man* (1828). The complete journals were published in 1941.

Two other important women published diaries in the 19th c., namely George Eliot and Queen Victoria. The Queen's contribution was *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands* (1862), and *More Leaves* (1883). George Eliot's *Journals* came out in 1885.

Diaries and journals by men of note in the 19th c. are numerous. Here there is space to mention only a few of the more remarkable ones; like the journal of Benjamin Haydon (1786-1846), the painter, whose records were published as an autobiography in 1853. Of greater importance, especially from the point of view of the biographer and the social historian, are the diaries of Creevey and Greville. Thomas Creevey (1768-1838) kept extensive diaries which were published as the *Creevey Papers* in 1903. Charles Greville (1794-1865) had published three series of 'Greville Memoirs'. The first (1874) covered the reigns of George IV and William IV; the second (1885) covered the years 1837-52; and the third (1887) covered the period 1852-60. In addition to these one should mention a work of great charm and interest, the diaries of the clergyman Francis Kilvert (1840-79) which were edited by William Plomer and published in 1938. At the very end of the 19th c. George and Weedon Grossmith published *Diary of a Nobody* (1894), a minor classic. It is a record of Charles Pooter, an assistant in a mercantile business towards the end of the 19th c., and is an unpretentious and immensely readable account of social, domestic and business problems.

Most of the works mentioned have not been by poets, novelists or dramatists, though some have been the records of what may be called occasional writers. There are, however, a large number of works which are part diary, part journal and part notebook. Some of the more valuable and interesting examples are: Shelley's *Notebooks* (not published until 1911); Samuel Butler's *Notebooks* (1912); *The Journal* of Katherine Mansfield



(1927); C. E. Montague's *A Writer's Notes on his Trade* (1930); Arnold Bennett's *Journals* (1933-34), a remarkable work in which Bennett kept a detailed record almost daily from 1896 until his death in 1931; and Somerset Maugham's *A Writer's Notebook* (1949).

Sometimes authors keep a journal of the creation of a book. An interesting recent example in English literature is Graham Greene's *In Search of a Character* (1962). This is a short journal of his travels in the Congo and contains the basis of his novel *A Burnt-Out Case* (1961).

In France the habit (especially among writers) of keeping diaries, journals and notebooks is deeply engrained. Here there is space to mention only a few instances. French writers, exhibiting a certain Gallic thrift, have a predilection for the *journal intime*. Among the more famous are: Constant's *Journal Intime* (1895, 1952) and his *Cahier Rouge* (1907); Amiel's *Journal Intime* which he kept for thirty-odd years from 1947; *Le Journal des Goncourts*, kept by the Goncourt brothers from 1851 to 1870, and thereafter kept by Edmund, the survivor; André Gide's *Journal* which he started in 1885 and was still adding to in 1947. Among the many other well-known Frenchmen who have kept this kind of journal are: Baudelaire, Léon Bloy, Du Bos, Renard and De Vigny. The painters Gauguin and Delacroix also kept diaries and journals which are of much value and interest. See AUTOBIOGRAPHY; CONFESSIONAL LITERATURE.

**diatribe** (Gk 'rubbing through') It now has the more or less exclusive meaning of a rather violent attack on a person or work, couched in vitriolic language. See FLYTING; INVECTIVE; LAMPOON.

**dibrach** A metrical foot of two short unstressed syllables: ∪ ∪. Also a pyrrhic (*q.v.*). Very rare in English verse.

**dicatalectic** A metrical line which lacks a syllable of the basic meter in the middle and at the end. See ACATALECTIC; CATALEXIS.

**diction** See POETIC DICTION.

**dictionary** The word derives from medieval Latin (*liber*) *dictionary* or (*manuale*) *dictionary*, from *dictio* 'saying'. It is primarily a book

## dictionary

containing the words of a language arranged alphabetically. It contains definitions of the meanings of words, which are often accompanied by some etymological explanations. In some dictionaries quotations are given to illustrate meanings and usage over the years. Two-language dictionaries provide corresponding words, phrases and meanings in other tongues – again arranged alphabetically. Special dictionaries (like this one) give information about one particular subject.

Dictionaries of language are relatively recent. Neither the Greeks nor the Romans had anything like a modern dictionary. On the other hand, the glossary (*q.v.*) appeared quite early. Apollonius's Homeric *Lexicon* was compiled in the 3rd c. B.C.

In 1531 Robert Estienne completed his great *Dictionarium seu linguae latinae thesaurus*, and in 1572 his son Henri Estienne published his *Thesaurus graecae linguae*, a landmark in Greek lexicography and a work on which others have built steadily. In 1678 Charles du Fresne du Cange produced his monumental dictionary of medieval Latin titled *Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*; and, ten years later, a companion work on medieval Greek.

All the major dictionaries of modern ethnic languages were first compiled in the 17th c. Notable examples are the Italian *Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca* (1612), and the great dictionary of the French Academy in 1694. In the following century the Academy of Madrid published their Spanish dictionary (1726–39). In England the most outstanding work of that century was Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) on which he worked single-handed for many years. The forerunner of this was Nathan Bailey's *Dictionary* (1721). Johnson's work is remarkable for its range and knowledge, for the compression and adroitness of its definitions and also because Johnson allowed his prejudices and opinions to appear in the definitions. His Preface is one of the finest pieces of prose in the language.

In 1854 Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm began their *magnum opus* on the German language. The work has been carried on by others ever since. A majestic achievement in French lexicography was Emile Littré's *Dictionnaire de la langue française* which came out in four volumes (1863–78). In that latter year was begun the monumental *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (1884–1928) edited by Sir James Murray, Dr Henry Bradley, Sir William Craigie and Dr C. T. Onions. It is a work without parallel in the history of lexicography and gives all the uses of every English

word since at least the 12th c. It also provides illustrative quotations to show shifts and changes of meaning.

Other dictionaries of great note which should be mentioned here are: Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828); Webster's *New International Dictionary* (1934, 1961); *A Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles* (1938-44) edited by Craigie and Hulbert; and *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (1966) edited by C. T. Onions – a remarkable work for which its editor has the reputation of never making a mistake.

Other special dictionaries are Ebenezer Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (1870) and Eric Partridge's *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (1937). Recently Penguin Books have started a useful series of special dictionaries on politics, art and artists, architecture, biology, music, natural history, psychology and sailing. See CONCORDANCE; ENCYCLOPAEDIA; THESAURUS.

**didactic** (Gk 'that which teaches') Any work of literature which sets out to instruct may be called didactic. Didactic poetry is almost a special category of its own. Early works are Greek; for instance, Hesiod's *Works and Days* and *Theogony* (8th c. B.C.). The former combines a farming manual with moral precepts; the latter is an account of the gods and creation. The major works in Latin verse are Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* (1st c. B.C.) and Virgil's *Georgics* (1st c. B.C.). Lucretius expounded the Epicurean system and Virgil expatiated on husbandry and moral principles.

The Middle Ages produced the bulk of the didactic literature in Europe and most of it was in verse. Proverbs, charms, gnomic verses (*qq.v.*), guides to the good life, and manuals of holy living were abundant. In English literature the 12th c. *Poema Morale*, and the 13th c. *Ormulum* and *Proverbs of Alfred* were essentially didactic. In *Handlyng Synne* (1303), Robert Mannyng of Brunne (Bourne in Lincolnshire) told stories to illustrate the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins, and the seven sacraments. Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (1388) contained a good deal of instruction.

Consciously didactic poetry had a revival in the 18th c. A number of poems, somewhat in the Virgilian tradition, combined pastoral life with ethics; but they cannot be taken very seriously today. Indeed, at times they appear naively comic. Notable examples are Philips's *Cyder* (1708), Armstrong's *Art of Preserving*

## didactic

*Health* (1744) and Dyer's *Fleece* (1757). Near the end of the century came Erasmus Darwin's *Botanic Garden* (1789, 1791) which was in heroic couplets in the style of Pope. Part I dealt with the 'Economy of Vegetation', Part II with 'The Loves of the Plants'.

It has been argued that all poetry is, by implication, didactic; that it should and does instruct as well as delight. Horace's *Ars Poetica*, Boileau's *Art Poétique*, in imitation of Horace, and Pope's *Essay on Criticism* were intended to instruct poets in their craft. See also COURTESY BOOK; EXEMPLUM; PROPAGANDA.

**digest** Either a publication which abridges books or articles (or both) which have already been published; or, the abridgement itself. See ABRIDGED EDITION; BOWDLERIZE.

**digression** Material not strictly relevant to the main theme or plot of a work. Sterne proved himself an incorrigible digressionist in *Tristram Shandy*.

**diiamb** A metrical foot which consists of two iambs (*q.v.*):  $\cup / \cup /$ . It is taken as one unit.

**dilogy** An expression or statement with a double meaning, like double entente (*q.v.*). See AMBIGUITY; AMPHIBOLY.

**dime novel** So called because it cost a dime. A cheap form of exciting and melodramatic fiction especially popular in the late 19th c. Akin to the shilling shocker and the blue book (*q.v.*). See BLUE BOOK; PENNY DREADFUL; THRILLER.

**dimeter** A line of verse containing two feet. The third and fourth lines of the Limerick (*q.v.*) are dimeters.

**diminishing metaphor** A figure of speech in which there is a kind of discrepancy or conjunctive discord between tenor and vehicle (*q.v.*). It occurs when a thought and the image which embodies it are brought together in such a way that they are not wholly congruous. The result is often witty, arresting and intellectually stimulating. Such metaphor is common in metaphysical poetry (*q.v.*) and a good deal of modern poetry. A famous example begins T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*:



Let us go then, you and I  
 When the evening is spread out against the sky  
 Like a patient etherised upon a table;

*See* DISCORDIA CONCORDS; DISSOCIATION OF SENSIBILITY;  
 METAPHOR; OBJECTIVE CORRELATIVE.

**Dinggedicht** (G 'thing poem') A form of poetry which attempts to describe objects from within rather than externally. Notable examples are to be found in Rilke's *Neue Gedichte* (1907). *See* IMAGISTS.

**Dionysian** *See* APOLLONIAN AND DIONYSIAN.

**dipody** A pair of any metrical feet which are taken as a single unit. It also denotes verse constructed rhythmically so that in scansion (*q.v.*) pairs of feet must be considered together. It is common in children's rhymes, nursery rhymes (*q.v.*) and ballad (*q.v.*). Occasional in other verses. For example, in John Masfield's *Cargoes*:

Quinquireme of Nineveh || from distant Ophir  
 Rowing home to haven || in sunny Palestine

Here the sound of the rhythm requires grouping of feet in each half line. The same effect occurs in Chesterton's *Lepanto*:

The cold queen of England || is looking in the glass.  
 The shadow of the Valois || is yawning at the Mass.

*See* FOOT.

**dirge** A song of lament, usually of a lyrical mood. The name derives from the beginning of the antiphon of the Office of the Dead: *Dirige, Domine* . . . 'Direct, O Lord . . .' As a literary genre it comes from the Greek *epicedium* (*q.v.*) which was a mourning song sung over the dead and a threnody (*q.v.*) sung in memory of the dead. In Roman funeral processions the *nenia*, a song of praise for the departed, was chanted; and the professional wailing women (*praeficae*) were hired for the task on some occasions. Later the dirge developed into a lyric poem, as in Sir Philip Sidney's poem included in *Arcadia* (1590), which begins, 'Ring out your bells, let mourning shews be spread', and Henry King's *Exequy* on his young wife, 'Tell me no more how fair she is.' Both are very fine poems.

## dirge

Occasionally dirges occur in plays. There are two particularly famous ones by Shakespeare: Ariel's song for Ferdinand's dead father in *The Tempest* (I, ii), and Fidele's dirge in *Cymbeline* (IV, ii). Very nearly as famous as these is Cornelia's song over Marcello in Webster's *The White Devil* (V, iv). See COMPLAINT; ELEGY; LAMENT; LYRIC; MONODY; SONG; UBI SUNT.

**discordia concors** A phrase used by Johnson in his *Life of Cowley* when referring to metaphysical poetry (*q.v.*). The relevant passage is: 'Wit, abstracted from its effects upon the hearer, may be more rigorously and philosophically considered as a kind of *discordia concors*, a combination of dissimilar images or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Of wit thus defined they (Donne and the other Metaphysicals) have more than enough.' (It is an inversion of Horace's *concordia discors* 'harmony in discord'.) See DIMINISHING METAPHOR.

**discourse** Usually a learned discussion, spoken or written, on a philosophical, political, literary or religious topic. It is closely related to a treatise and a dissertation (*qq.v.*). In fact, the three terms are very nearly synonymous. A famous example is Descartes' *Discourse on Method* (1637).

**discovery** In a literary work the revelation of facts hitherto unknown to one of the principal characters. It often comes at the time of the dénouement (*q.v.*) or climax (*q.v.*). There are two good examples in *The Winter's Tale*: first, when Leontes discovers the identity of Perdita; second, when Polixenes realizes that Perdita is Leontes' daughter.

**disemic** (Gk 'of two time units') A term applied in Classical prosody when a long syllable was regarded as two short ones. See MORA.

**disinterestedness** (in criticism) 'Disinterestedness' is an important term in Matthew Arnold's essay *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*, first delivered as a lecture in 1864 and later published in *Essays in Criticism* (1865). Arnold spoke of the need, in the study of all branches of knowledge, to see the object 'as in itself it really is'. This depended on the attitude of the critic which, in his view, ought to be objective and open-minded; a kind of involved detachment.

## dissociation of sensibility

**dispondee** Two spondees (*q.v.*) combined into a single unit. It is rare, and a series of spondees is extremely rare.

**dissertation** Like a discourse (*q.v.*), a dissertation is usually a substantial and erudite disquisition. Sir Thomas Browne's *Vulgar Errors* (1646) and Burke's *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* (1770) might fairly be put into this category. Occasionally such a work may be droll, as Lamb's *Dissertation upon Roast Pig* in *Essays of Elia* (1823). See TREATISE.

**dissociation of ideas** In 1901 Remy de Gourmont published *La Culture des idées* which contained an essay called *Dissociation des idées* in which he put forward the point of view that it was necessary to avoid the unquestioning acceptance of ideas and associations of ideas which have become everyday commonplaces.

**dissociation of sensibility** The phrase was used by T. S. Eliot in his essay *The Metaphysical Poets* (1921). The relevant and self-explanatory passage is:

Tennyson and Browning are poets, and they think; but they do not feel their thought as immediately as the odour of a rose. A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.

We may express the difference by the following theory: The poets of the seventeenth century, the successors of the dramatists of the sixteenth, possessed a mechanism of sensibility which would devour any kind of experience. They are simple, artificial, difficult, or fantastic, as their predecessors were; no less nor more than Dante, Guido Cavalcanti, Guinicelli, or Cino. In the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered; and this dissociation, as is natural, was aggravated by the influence of the two most powerful poets of the century, Milton and Dryden. Each of these men performed certain poetic functions so magnificently well that the magnitude of the effect concealed the

## dissociation of sensibility

absence of others. The language went on and in some respects improved; the best verse of Collins, Gray, Johnson, and even Goldsmith satisfies some of our fastidious demands better than that of Donne or Marvell or King. But while the language became more refined, the feeling became more crude. The feeling, the sensibility, expressed in the *Country Churchyard* (to say nothing of Tennyson and Browning) is cruder than that in the *Coy Mistress*.

Eliot contended that modern poets like Corbière and Laforgue had avoided the 'dissociation of sensibility'. Certainly they had a considerable influence on Eliot, and the combined effect of the influence of Hopkins, Yeats, Pound and Eliot has helped to bring about a unification of sensibility in modern poetry, and this unification is apparent in the work of those four poets. See ASSOCIATION; SENSIBILITY.

**dissonance** The arrangement of cacophonous sounds in words, or rhythmical patterns, for a particular effect. A very common device in much poetry. The following stanzas from Browning's *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came* illustrate the possibilities of dissonance:

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk  
Above its mates, the head was chopped; the bents  
Were jealous else. What made those holes and rents  
In the dock's harsh swarth leaves, bruised as to baulk  
All hope of greenness? 't is a brute must walk  
Pashing their life out, with a brute's intents.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair  
In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked the mud  
Which underneath looked kneaded up with blood.  
One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,  
Stood stupefied, however he came there:  
Thrust out past service from the devil's stud!

A more subtle effect, using the same means, is achieved by Crabbe in these lines from *Peter Grimes*:

Here dull and hopeless he'd lie down and trace  
How sidelong crabs had scrawl'd their crooked race,  
Or sadly listen to the tuneless cry  
Of fishing gull or clanging golden-eye;



What time the sea-birds to the marsh would come,  
And the loud bittern from the bull-rush home,  
Gave from the salt ditch side the bellowing boom:

Particularly good examples can also be found in the work of more modern poets like John Berryman and Robert Lowell. *See* ASSONANCE; CACOPHONY; CONSONANCE.

**distances, the three** A jargon which denotes the physical and psychological planes explicit or implicit in a work of literature.

**distich** (Gk 'two rows') A pair of metrical lines of different lengths, usually rhymed and expressing a complete idea. Commonly used in Classical elegiacs (*q.v.*). Often it consisted of a dactylic hexameter (*q.v.*) followed by a dactylic pentameter (*q.v.*).

**distributed stress** *See* HOVERING STRESS.

**dit** (F 'something said') A rather vague term used of some types of medieval didactic poetry (*q.v.*), related to the *débat*, the *fabliau*, *conte* and *lai* (*qq.v.*). *See also* EXEMPLUM.

**dithyramb** Originally a Greek choric hymn, with mime (*q.v.*) describing the adventures of Dionysus. It may have been introduced into Greece early in the 7th c. B.C., and thereafter, for at least three hundred years, it underwent various developments. In modern literature dithyrambs are very rare. Dryden, in *Alexander's Feast*, is one of the few poets to have used the form successfully. The opening stanza gives an indication of the shape and mood:

'Twas at the Royal Feast, for Persia won,  
By Philip's warlike son:  
Aloft in awful State  
The God-like Heroe sate  
On his Imperial Throne;  
His valient Peers were plac'd around;  
Their Brows with Roses and with Myrtyles bound.  
(So should Desert in Arms be Crown'd:)  
The lovely Thais by his side  
Sate like a blooming Eastern Bride  
In Flow'r of Youth and Beauty's Pride,  
Happy, happy, happy Pair!  
None but the Brave,  
None but the Brave,  
None but the Brave deserves the Fair.

## **dithyramb**

Dithyrambic is an adjective which may be applied to any form of rather 'wild' song or chant.

**ditrochee** Also dichoree. Two trochees (*q.v.*) / ∪ / ∪ taken as one metrical unit. Also called trochaic monometer (*q.v.*).

**ditty** A composition to be sung; perhaps a lai (*q.v.*) or any short song, even a ballad (*q.v.*). It can denote many kinds of composition in verse. It may also refer to the words of a song, its theme or burden (*qq.v.*). See **ROUNDELAID**; **SONG**.

**divan** (P *dēvān* 'brochure, account, custom-house') An oriental council of state or council chamber; also the long seat against the wall of a room. But *also* a collection of poems. It has a large number of other meanings. See *also* **GHAZEL**.

**diverbium** The spoken dialogue in Roman drama, as distinguished from the *canticum* (*q.v.*) – the sung part.

**divertissement** (F 'entertainment, amusement, recreation') A French term for a ballet given as a kind of interlude between longer pieces. In effect, the *comédie-ballet* (*q.v.*) developed by Molière. More generally the term is used to describe a literary trifle, something slight and gay.

**divisional pause** See **CAESURA**.

**dizain** A French poem or stanza of ten octosyllabic or decasyllabic lines, such as Maurice Scève's poem *Délie* (1544) which contains 449 connected dizains. In some cases three or five *dizains*, combined with an *envoi* (*q.v.*), formed a *ballade* (*q.v.*) or *chant royal* (*q.v.*).

**dochmiac** (Gk 'slanted') In Classical prosody a metrical foot of two unstressed syllables and three stressed, normally occurring thus: ∪ / / ∪ /. Dochmiacs were confined to Greek tragedy and were used for the very emotional passages. It has been argued that some five-syllable English words like 'originally' are dochmiacs.

**document** Something written that provides information or evidence in the shape of a record: yearbooks, annals, gazettes, registers, diaries (*qq.v.*) and so forth; also state papers, wills, certificates, archives, files and dossiers. See *also* **DOCUMENTARY NOVEL**.

**documentary novel** A form of fiction which, like documentary drama, is based on documentary evidence in the shape of newspaper articles, legal reports, archives, and recent official papers, sometimes described as 'instant fiction'. Memorable examples have been Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* (1925) and Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1966). Another kind of documentary novel is that which deals with a prominent contemporary matter almost by anticipation, for example: Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* (1955) and Morris West's *In the Shoes of the Fisherman* (1963). An interesting recent use of documentary technique combined with conventional narrative occurs in V. S. Naipaul's *In a Free State* (1971). See THESIS NOVEL.

**documentary theatre** A form of drama, related to epic theatre (*q.v.*), which is propagandist and didactic, and may make use of relatively recent history and documentary evidence of the kind provided by newspapers, reports, archives, official histories, diaries and journals. Recent exemplifications are: Hochhuth's *The Deputy* (1966) which examined the role of the Pope and the Papacy in the Second World War; and his *Soldiers* (1967) which investigated part of Sir Winston Churchill's career during the same period; Kipphardt's *In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer* (1968), which investigated the United States' atomic energy commission; and Peter Brook's *US* (1969). Robert Nichols's play *Front Page* (1972) was also a kind of documentary. See DOCUMENTARY NOVEL; LIVING NEWSPAPER.

**dog-Latin** Mongrel Latin. Rough, impure, cross-bred, unidiomatic Latin. See also DOGGEREL.

**doggerel** Probably from *dog*, with contemptuous suggestion as in *dog-Latin*. After Chaucer has broken off his burlesque (*q.v.*) *Tale of Sir Thopas* the Host makes a remark about 'rym dogerel'. This seems to be the earliest reference to doggerel, a term which originally applied to verse of a loose and irregular measure, as in Skelton's *Colyn Cloute* (1519) and Butler's *Hudibras* (1663-78). Now it has come to describe rough, badly made verse, monotonous in rhythm and clumsy in rhyme, usually on a trivial subject. See JINGLE; MACARONIC; NONSENSE VERSE; SKELTONICS; TUMBLING VERSE.

**dogma** A dogma is a tenet, doctrine, law or principle. Something

## dogma

laid down as being so. Dogmatism in criticism (*q.v.*) is as emphatic. The dogmatic critic ascribes to himself a kind of *ex cathedra* authority.

**dolce stil nuovo** (It 'sweet new style') The style of Italian lyric poetry in the second half of the 13th c. The term was first used by Dante, in the *Purgatorio*, of his own literary style; but, more importantly, it represented an attitude towards women and earthly love which derived from the *troubadour* (*q.v.*) tradition. Woman, represented as the embodiment of God's beauty, was believed to inspire gentle love which should lead the lover to Divine love. The *stilnuovisti* poets (other notable ones were Guinicelli and Cavalcanti) attempted to reconcile or, in a sense, combine sacred and profane love. See COURTLY LOVE.

**domestic comedy** A counterpart to domestic tragedy (*q.v.*), it is a form of drama about, predominantly, 'upper-middle or middle-class life and characters. It has been particularly fashionable since late in the 19th c., and, as the words suggest, is often concerned with family situations and problems. An early example is Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (c. 1621). Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) might also be taken as an instance. In the 19th c. a most talented playwright in this form was T. W. Robertson whose best works are *Ours* (1866), *Caste* (1867), *Play* (1868) and *School* (1869). Harold Brighouse's *Hobson's Choice* (1915) is another excellent play in the genre. Several plays by Somerset Maugham in the 1920s were highly successful domestic comedies; particularly *Our Betters*, *Home and Beauty*, *The Constant Wife* and *The Breadwinner*. Domestic comedy continued to fill the theatres in the 1930s and during the postwar period. Other notable dramatists in the genre are Noel Coward, Tennessee Williams, Jean Anouilh, N. C. Hunter, Terence Rattigan and Bill Naughton. See BOULEVARD DRAMA; COMEDY; DRAWING-ROOM COMEDY; NATURALISTIC DRAMA.

**domestic tragedy** A play about middle or lower middle-class life which concentrates on the more personal and domestic element of tragedy (*q.v.*), as opposed to tragedy in the grand manner which involves kings, princes and enterprises 'of great pith and moment'. There are a number of examples in Tudor and Jacobean drama. For instance: the anonymous *Arden of Feversham* (1592); the anonymous *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599); Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Kilde with Kindnesse* (1603); the anonymous *A*



## double dactyl

*Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608); and Thomas Middleton's *The Changeling* (1623). There was some domestic tragedy in the 18th c. like Lillo's *The London Merchant* (1731). Hebbel's *Maria Magdalena* (1844) is also taken to be in this genre. The term might also be judiciously applied to some of the work of Ibsen, Strindberg, Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. *See also* DOMESTIC COMEDY; DRAME.

**donnée** A French word which signifies something 'given' in the sense that it is an idea or notion implanted in the mind or imagination: the seed, so to speak, of a creative work; what Henry James called 'the speck'. It may be a phrase, a conversation, the expression on a person's face, a tune, indeed almost any kind of experience which starts a series of thoughts and ideas in the writer's mind. What species of creative magic brings such an event about is not really known. *See* AFFLATUS; FANCY AND IMAGINATION; INSPIRATION; LIGNE DONNÉE; MUSE; SPONTANEITY.

**Doric** Doris is a region of Greece, south of Thessaly. Doric denotes the rustic and unsophisticated as opposed to the Attic – the urban and urbane. Milton's lines in *Lycidas*:

He [the uncouth swain] touch'd the tender stops of various quills,  
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay.

suggest the pastoral (*q.v.*) connotations of the word.

**double dactyl** A metrical form comprising two dactyls: / U U / U U. A fixed form in light verse in which there are two stanzas of four double dactyl lines. The rules, such as they are, require the last lines of each stanza to rhyme and the last lines to be truncated. The first line should be a jingle, the second line a name, and one line in the second stanza should consist of one word, as in this trifle by J. A. Cuddon:

Higgledy-piggledy  
Nicholas Williamson  
Sat in the bathtub and  
Scratched at his nose.  
  
Seldom was schoolboy so  
Anthropocentrically  
Gifted with flexible  
Bendable toes.

*See* JINGLE; NONSENSE VERSE.

## **double-decker novel**

**double-decker novel** A term which came into use in the 19th c. to describe novels which were published in two parts or books. Novels of the period tended to be long and many of them were published in serial form first. A three-decker novel came out in three books. *See* NOVEL.

**double entente, un mot à** A French term signifying an ambiguity (*q.v.*). A word or expression so used that it can have two meanings; one of which is usually frivolous or bawdy. There are a large number of *doubles ententes* in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* involving the word 'china'. *See* IRONY; PUN.

**double rhyme** *See* FEMININE RHYME.

**drama** In general any work meant to be performed on a stage by actors. A more particular meaning is a serious play; not necessarily tragedy. Diderot and Beaumarchais were responsible for this restricted usage. *See* COMÉDIE; COMEDY; DRAME; TRAGEDY.

**drama of ideas** *See* COMEDY OF IDEAS AND THESIS PLAY.

**drama of sensibility** *See* SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

**dramatic irony** When the audience understand the implication and meaning of a situation on stage, or what is being said, but the characters do not. Common in tragedy and comedy (*qq.v.*). Oedipus does not realize his crime. Sir Peter Teazle (in *School for Scandal* IV, iii) does not know his wife is behind the screen when he is talking about her to Joseph Surface.

Another kind of dramatic irony occurs when a character's words 'recoil' upon him. For instance, Macbeth's 'bloody instructions' which 'return to plague the inventor'. In the event he is the one thus plagued. *See* IRONY.

**dramatic lyric** A term used by Browning for his dramatic monologues (1842). *See* MONOLOGUE.

**dramatic monologue** *See* MONOLOGUE.

**dramatis personae** The characters in a play. Usually the names of these characters are printed at the beginning of the text.

**dramatic proverb** *See* PROVERBE DRAMATIQUE.

**dramatization** The art of making a play out of a story in another genre; from a chronicle, novel, short story (*qq.v.*) and so forth. In medieval drama the Bible was dramatized into the Mystery Plays (*q.v.*). In the Tudor period dramatists 'lifted' plots, stories, and ideas from chroniclers like Holinshed, Saxo Grammaticus, Belleforest and others. But it was not until the 18th c. that dramatization really began to flourish. Then novels provided the material. For example, Richardson's *Pamela*, dramatized by James Dance, was extremely popular. There followed dramatizations of novels by Mrs Radcliffe, Walpole, Godwin, Monk Lewis and Clara Reeve. In the 19th c. Dickens and Scott were the authors most used; so were Lord Lytton, Charlotte Brontë, Charles Reade, Wilkie Collins, and many more. The arrival of a group of original dramatists towards the end of the century saved the theatre from this deadening activity. But it is a practice by no means extinct, as television and recent theatrical history amply demonstrate.

**drame** A term given in France to the kind of play which was neither tragedy nor comedy, but a serious play somewhere between the two. Diderot expatiated on this genre in the prefaces to his plays *Le Fils Naturel* (1757) and *Le Père de Famille* (1758). There were earlier examples by Voltaire, and by Nivelle de la Chaussée, who was the main dramatist of *comédie larmoyante* (*q.v.*). Diderot's theory was that such plays were serious dramas concerned with middle-class domestic problems. Their counterpart in England was domestic tragedy (*q.v.*) *See* DRAME ROMANTIQUE; META-THEATRE.

**drame romantique** A 19th c. French dramatic form, in prose and verse. Works in this genre tend to be melodramatic, emotionally torrid, and intricate in plot at the expense of characterization. Apart from Hugo's *Hernani* (1830) the most famous example is unquestionably Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897) which is a fine play by any standards and arguably the best of the *dramas romantiques*. *See also* DRAME.

**drápa** (From ON *drepa*, 'to strike' (the chord of a musical instrument)) A complex form of skaldic heroic poem. The stanza was usually the *dróttkvætt* (*q.v.*) and there was a refrain (*q.v.*) of two

## drápa

or more half lines. Such a poem normally consisted of an introduction (*upphaf*), a middle section (the *stef* or *stefjamál*) and a conclusion (the *slæmr*).

**drawing-room comedy** A species of drama which had a considerable vogue in the early 20th c. Sometimes known disparagingly as 'French-window comedy', owing to the frequency with which the main set has such windows opening on to a garden or balcony, it is often concerned with the comic predicaments of the English middle classes and is therefore akin to domestic comedy (*q.v.*). Out of the scores of examples extant the following are well known: Shaw's *Candida* (1895); Coward's *Hay Fever* (1925); Terence Rattigan's *The Browning Version* (1948); N. C. Hunter's *The Waters of the Moon* (1951); Enid Bagnold's *The Chalk Garden* (1955).

**dream vision** A form of literature extremely popular in the Middle Ages. By common convention the writer goes to sleep, in agreeable rural surroundings and often on a May morning. He then beholds either real people or personified abstractions involved in various activities. The commentary of Macrobius (*c.* A.D. 400) on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, and the work itself, is generally agreed to have had great influence on the genre. Very often the vision was expressed as an allegory (*q.v.*). Probably the best known example of all is the *Roman de la Rose* (13th c.), which had a wide influence in this period and was translated by Chaucer. Chaucer also made use of the dream convention in *The Book of the Duchess* (1369), the *Parlement of Foules*, *The House of Fame* and the prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* (all believed to have been written between 1372–86). However, Langland's vision of *Piers Plowman* (1366–99) is probably the best known English vision poem, to be compared with the anonymous *The Pearl* (*c.* 1350–80), and many visions of heaven, hell and purgatory; and accounts of journeys there and back. These were almost a form of travel literature and have been taken by some to be the precursors of Science Fiction (*q.v.*). A common figure of these works is the guide: Virgil in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, an angel in the 12th c. *Vision of Tundale*. The angelic guide became a kind of convention in itself, splendidly parodied by Chaucer in the prologue to *The Summoner's Tale* when the vengeful Summoner gets his own back on the Friar.

The dream vision device has been used many times since and



its evergreen popularity can be judged by the tens of thousands of compositions from school children who use it.

Two later examples are John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) and Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* has also been taken as a kind of cosmic dream.

**droll** A comic dramatic piece, often with music and dancing, which was commonly performed at fairs during the Commonwealth Period (1649–60) when the theatres were closed and ordinary plays forbidden. The *droll* was a subtle means of evading the Puritan ban.

**dróttkvætt** (ON *drótt* 'the King's bodyguard' and *kvæði* 'poem song') Also known as the *dróttkvæðr hátt*, this is the normal meter of the ON *drápa* (q.v.). It consists of eight-line stanzas, each line having three main stresses and internal rhyme. Each line has a regular trochaic ending. The commonest and most intricate of the skaldic poetic forms, it survives in contemporary Icelandic poetry; and, originally, was the noble meter, suitable for recitation before the *drótt*, the chosen body of warriors in the king's personal following. See HRYNHENT; KENNING; SKALD.

**drowned-in-tears, school of the** A derisive term applied to those early Romantic poets who were inclined to dwell on the sadder and more morbid aspects of life. See GRAVEYARD SCHOOL.

**duan** A Gaelic term for a poem or a canto (q.v.).

**dualism** See ANTINOMY.

**dumb show** A mimed performance whose purpose was to prepare the audience for the main action of the play to follow. Early and important examples occur in *Gorboduc* (1561) where it plays a considerable part throughout, and in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (III, xvi). Perhaps the most famous instance occurs in *Hamlet* (III, ii) where the players wordlessly enact the murder of a king. In *Hamlet* it is strange that the precise action of the dumb show is repeated in words immediately afterwards.

Although not a feature of English stage tradition, it does seem characteristic of the theatre in Denmark. The English diarist Abraham de la Pryme records how, in 1688, a body of Danish soldiers stationed in the north of England 'acted a play in their

## dumb show

own language'. He noticed that 'all the postures were shown first . . . and, when they had run through all, so then they began to act'. We know that great lords treated their players with little respect (witness their attitude in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), and it is possible that the Danish custom of the dumb show was a device to draw the audience's attention to the play to stop them talking to one another. So, with *Hamlet*.

In such plays as Peele's *Battle of Alcazar* (1594) and Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594) the dumb show provided the dramatist with a means of including more action in his play (without using more dialogue) and of varying the action by showing the audience, as well as characters on stage, something that is happening elsewhere. Good examples occur in the latter (II, iii; IV, iii). In the example in Act IV, two young men, with the aid of Bacon's magic glass, see how their fathers meet and kill each other. Closely parallel to this is Webster's use of the dumb show in *The White Devil* (II, ii). By contrast, in Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* (IV, i), the dumb show merely represents details necessary to the play's action which it would be tedious or dramatically difficult to present on stage in the normal way.

Two modern instances occur in André Obey's *Le Viol de Lucrèce* (1931) and in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1967). See REVENGE TRAGEDY; MIME.

**dummy** A form of lyric-epic song of Ukrainian origin. The lines are of uneven length, the meters vary and the rhyme scheme is variable; sometimes there is no rhyme. They were chanted or recited, as a rule, by blind beggar minstrels (a remarkable parallel here with the South Slav *guslari* (q.v.) to the accompaniment of a *kobza* or *bandura* which is similar to a Spanish guitar. The form developed in the 16th c. and belongs to the oral tradition (q.v.) of poetical composition. In this respect, as in others, there are clear counterparts in the shape of the Russian *byliny* (q.v.), the Lithuanian and Latvian *daina* (q.v.), the South Slav *narodne pesme* (q.v.), the ballad (q.v.) in general and the Homeric ballad. The *dummy* were mostly concerned with the *hajduk*-type warfare that the Cossacks conducted against the Turks, the Tatars and the Poles. See FOLK LITERATURE; FOLK-SONG.

**duodecimo** (L *in duodecimo* 'in a twelfth') The size of a book in which one page is one twelfth of a sheet (abbreviated 12mo). See FOLIO; QUARTO.

**duologue** A conversation between two characters in a play, story or poem. *See* DIALOGUE.

**duple meter** This comprises two syllables to a metrical foot, as with the iamb, spondee and trochee (*qq.v.*). Duple meter is rare. A fairly well-known example is Herrick's *Upon his departure hence*:

Thus I  
Passe by,  
And die:  
As One,  
Unknown,  
And go.

Here he combines iamb, spondee and trochee. *See* MONOMETER.

**duple rhythm** This occurs when the metrical scheme requires two-syllable feet. It is thus common in iambic and trochaic verse. *See* IAMB; TROCHEE; TRIPLE RHYTHM.

**duration** One of the four characteristics of the spoken word, the others being pitch, loudness and quality. In poetry the duration of syllables (that is, their phonetic time value) is of particular importance. In these lines, for instance, from D. J. Enright's poem *The Laughing Hyena, by Hokusai*, the varying duration of the syllables contributes subtly to the general effect:

For him, it seems, everything was molten. Court ladies flow in  
gentle streams,  
Or, gathering lotus, strain sideways from their curving boat,  
A donkey prances, or a kite dances in the sky, or soars like  
sacrificial smoke.  
All is flux: waters fall and leap, and bridges leap and fall.  
Even his Tortoise undulates, and his Spring Hat is lively as a pool  
of fish.  
All he ever saw was sea: a sea of marble splinters –  
Long bright fingers claw across his pages, fjords and islands and  
shattered trees –

*See* MORA; ONOMATOPOEIA.

**dyfalu** A Welsh term for a form of fanciful conceit (*q.v.*) in which, by

## **dyfalu**

a succession of metaphors, an object is compared with a number of different things. There are many good examples in the work of the great 14th c. Welsh poet, Dafydd ap Gwilym.

**dysphemism** (Gk 'not fair speech') The opposite of euphemism (*q.v.*), it emphasizes defects – as in saying 'a filthy dirty face'.



# E



**echo** The repetition of the same sound, or a combination of sounds, fairly close together, so that they 'echo' each other. A common device in verse to strengthen meaning and structure, and also to provide tune and melody. Assonance, alliteration, consonance, the various kinds of rhyme (*q.q.v.*) and also the refrain (*q.v.*) are all varieties of echo. *See also* ECHO VERSE.

**echo verse** Normally a poem in which the final syllables are repeated as by an echo (*q.s.*) with a change of meaning. Early examples are to be found in the *Greek Anthology* (10th c. A.D.). The form became popular again in French, Italian and English verse in the 16th and 17th c. Sir Philip Sidney, George Herbert and Swift, among others, composed notable echo verses. The following is an extract from Herbert's *Heaven*:

O Who will show me those delights on high?

ECHO. I.

Thou, Echo, thou art mortall, all men know.

ECHO. No.

Wert thou not born among the trees and leaves?

ECHO. Leaves.

And are there any leaves that still abide?

ECHO. Bide.

What leaves are they? impart the matter wholly.

ECHO. Holy.

*See also* ECHO.

**eclipsis** (Gk 'a leaving out') The omission of essential grammatical elements.

**eclogue** (Gk 'selection') A short poem – or part of a longer one – and often a pastoral (*q.v.*) in the form of a dialogue or soliloquy

## eclogue

(*q.v.*). The term was first applied to Virgil's pastorals or bucolic poems. Thereafter it describes the traditional pastoral idyll (*q.v.*) that Theocritus, and other Sicilian poets, wrote. The form was revived by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio and was particularly popular during the 15th and 16th c. A major influence came from the *eclogues* of Baptista Mantuanus Spagnuoli. Spenser's *The Shepherd's Calendar* (1579) was outstanding. Later Pope attempted it in his *Pastorals*, and Gay burlesqued it in *Shepherd's Week* (1714). By the 18th c. the term merely referred to the form, and there were non-pastoral eclogues. A good example was Swift's *A Town Eclogue*. 1710. *Scene, The Royal Exchange*. In modern poems like Frost's *Build Soil*, MacNeice's *Eclogue from Iceland* and Auden's *The Age of Anxiety: a Baroque Eclogue*, it is the medium for any ideas the poet feels a need to express. See also GEORGIC.

**école parnassienne** See PARNASSIANS.

**ecphonema** (Gk 'outcry') An exclamation: of joy, woe, amazement.

**edda** (ON 'great-grandmother') A term used metaphorically for two collections of ON literature, with the implication that they are composed of ancient tales. Other suggestions for the derivation of *edda* include that which connects the word with Oddi where Snorri Sturlusson (1179-1241) – the Icelandic chieftain and historian to whom is attributed the authorship of the prose *Edda* – grew up; another derives the word from *oðr* 'poetry', since the prose *Edda* is largely a handbook of poetics.

Snorri's *Edda* consists of four parts: *Prologue*, *Gylfaginning*, *Skáldskaparmál* and *Háttatal*. Of these it is most likely that the last was written first. When Snorri returned home from a visit with the Norwegian king, Hákon Hákonarson, and Jarl Skúli in 1220, he composed a poem in their honour which was finished in the winter of 1222-23. The poem consisted of 102 stanzas in 100 different meters. Hence the work was called *Háttatal* or 'list of meters', and was, in essence, a practical *ars poetica*. The work is complete with a full practical commentary in prose; the poem itself has little poetic value and suggests that Snorri was a better interpreter than writer of poetry.

The prose *Edda* also contains a section of specifically poetic words, the so-called *heiti* and kennings (*q.v.*). Many of these circumlocutions can only be understood with a knowledge of some of the tales to which they refer. So, in *Skáldskaparmál* ('poetic

diction') Snorri re-told many of the old mythological stories. The fourth and best-known section, *Gylfaginning* ('the beguiling of Gylfi'), recounts how the wise king of Sweden, Gylfi, travelled to Asgardr – the dwelling of the gods or *sesir* – to question them about the world's origin, the gods and the destruction of the world. The work becomes a comprehensive survey of ON mythology, indispensable to the student of the old Scandinavian world.

The prose *Edda* was intended as a book of instruction for skalds (*q.v.*). Skaldic poetry enjoyed a renaissance in the 13th c. but Snorri's work also had some influence on the saga writers since it led to an increase in the number of *lausavísur* – individual occasional verses connected with definite situations or episodes which were incorporated in the main works of the saga age.

The poetic *Edda* (also called *Elder Edda* or *Sæmund's Edda*) is a collection of poems found in a manuscript *c.* 1270 and which, from linguistic and literary evidence, originate from a period earlier than the settlement of Iceland (870). The poetry of the *Elder Edda* falls into two groups: the mythological lays and the heroic lays.

The mythological poetry is composed of lays about the gods in various meters and of various ages. Some are didactic and can be regarded almost as treatises on pagan belief and legend. Such a lay is *Vafðrúðismál* which consists of a dialogue between Óðinn and the giant Vafðrúðnir, whom Óðinn visited in disguise. The god and the giant enter on a contest of wits, each wagering his head. Óðinn questions the giant on the origin of the earth, sun and moon, the winds and the gods. The giant answers readily but finally forfeits his head when Óðinn asks him the question: 'What did Óðinn whisper into the ear of his son (Baldr) as he was laid on the funeral pyre?' Of course, only Óðinn knew the answer to this. Other poems of this sort are *Grímnismál* and *Hávamál*.

The heroic lays represent a form of poetry which was at one time current among all Germanic tribes from the Black Sea to Greenland. Such lays were probably designed, in the first place, to be declaimed in the halls of chieftains, often to the accompaniment of the harp. They differ in many ways from epics with which they might naturally be associated, not only in length but also in scope and choice of subject. They dealt not with the whole life of the hero but with one or two incidents in that life, usually of a tragic or a moving nature. Such a lay is *Hamðismál* where the heroes Hamðir and Sqrli, in the full knowledge that death is

## edda

inevitable, meet that death courageously and readily at the cruel hands of Jörmunrekkr. This particular lay, like *Atlakviða* ('The Lay of Atli'), appears to be derived from continental poems as old as the 5th and 6th c.

**edition** The total number of copies of a book printed from one set of type. If the original type is changed and the book is re-printed then the term *second edition* is used. One edition may have several impressions or printings. The term *issue* usually describes a book to which new material has been added or which is somehow altered in format. The term *re-issue* may describe the re-printing of a book without changes. The term edition is also used to describe, say, the edited collected works of an author. For example: the *Twickenham Edition* of Pope's works.

**Edwardian** Pertaining to King Edward VII's reign (1901–10): a period of considerable change, and reaction against Victorianism.

**ego-futurism** A jargon term coined by the Russian poet Igor Severyanin (1887–1942) to describe a movement in early 20th c. Russian poetry. The ego-futurists were anti-traditionalist and wrote highly personal verse in which they went in for neologisms (*q.v.*). The movement did not last long. *See also* CUBO-FUTURISM.

**eidyllion** *See* IDYLL.

**eight-and-six meter** *See* FOURTEENER.

**Einfühlung** *See* EMPATHY.

**Eisteddfod** A Welsh term denoting an assembly of bards. Basically a form of contest at which literary, musical and dramatic works are presented. The main prizes are a carved oak chair awarded for the best poem in strict Welsh meters (known as the chair ode), and a silver crown for the best poem in free meters (known as the crown poem).

The *Eisteddfod* is an event of some antiquity: there are records of a bardic festival as long ago as 1176 at Cardigan. After the 16th c. the *Eisteddfodau* seem to have degenerated into rather casual gatherings in village inns. The event was restored to its original dignity and splendour in the 19th c. since when it has become the



## elegy

supreme cultural festival of Wales. *See also* BARD; POETIC CONTESTS.

**elegant variation** A term used by H. W. and F. G. Fowler to denote a particular fault of style: namely, the too obvious avoidance of repetition.

**elegantia** Regarded by the Romans as one of three essential attributes of a discourse, the others being *compositio* and *dignitas*. They subdivided *elegantia* into *Latinitas* and *explanatio*. The former required the absence of linguistic faults, like solecisms; the latter made the matter of the speech or discourse clear.

**elegiac distich** The Greek *elegeion* was a distich (*q.v.*) or couplet comprising a dactylic hexameter (*q.v.*) followed by a pentameter (*q.v.*). It seems to have been first used in the 8th or 7th c. B.C., especially by Archilochus. The form was used for many purposes by Greek and Latin poets, but is rare in English. Poets who have imitated it are Sidney, Spenser, Clough, Kingsley, Swinburne and Sir William Watson, from whose *Hymn to the Sea* the following lines are taken:

While, with throes, with raptures, with loosing of bonds, with  
unsealings,

Arrowy pangs of delight, piercing the core of the world,  
Tremors and coy unfoldings, reluctances, sweet agitations,  
Youth, irrepressibly fair, wakes like wondering rose.

It will be noticed that the lines are not wholly dactylic and that they alternate double and single terminals. The form is also known as elegiacs. *See* DACTYL; ELEGY; EPICEDIMUM.

**elegiac meter** The meter used in the elegiac distich (*q.v.*).

**elegiac stanza** Also known as Hammond's meter, heroic quatrain (*q.v.*) and elegiac quatrain. It seems that a quatrain (*q.v.*) of iambic pentameters (*q.v.*), rhyming abab, has acquired the name elegiac stanza from its use by Gray in *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (1750). James Hammond's *Love Elegies* (1743) is probably the earliest example. *See* ELEGY.

**elegy** (Gk 'lament') In Classical literature an elegy was any poem

## elegy

composed of elegiac distichs (*q.v.*), also known as elegiacs, and the subjects were various: death, war, love and similar themes. The elegy was also used for epitaphs (*q.v.*) and commemorative verses, and very often there was a mourning strain in them. However, it is only since the 16th c. that an elegy has come to mean a poem of mourning for an individual or a lament (*q.v.*) for some tragic event. In England there were few attempts in the 16th c. to imitate elegiacs because the language is unsuited to prolonged series of dactylic hexameters and pentameters. 16th c. French writers like Doublet and Ronsard had the same problem.

Near the turn of the 16th c., the term *elegie* still covered a variety of subject matter. For example, Donne wrote *Elegie. His Picture*, and *Elegie. On his Mistris*. Later the term came to be applied more and more to a serious meditative poem, the kind that Coleridge was hinting at when he spoke of elegy as the form of poetry 'natural to a reflective mind'. English literature is especially rich in this kind of poetry which combines something of the *ubi sunt* (*q.v.*) motif with the qualities of the lyric (*q.v.*) and which, at times, is closely akin to the lament and the dirge (*qq.v.*). For instance, the OE poems *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer* and *Deor's Lament*, several medieval lyrics, Thomas Nashe's song 'Adieu, farewell earth's bliss', Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*, Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, Young's *Night Thoughts*, Keats's *Ode to Melancholy* and Walt Whitman's *When Lilacs last in the Dooryard Bloom'd* – to name only a handful of the scores that exist.

Many elegies have been songs of lament for specific people. Well-known examples are: Thomas Carew's elegy on John Donne, John Cleveland's on Ben Jonson, Henry King's *Exequy*, Pope's *Verses to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*, Dr Johnson's *On the Death of Mr Robert Levet*, Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, and, more recently, Auden's *In Memory of W. B. Yeats*. In addition to these there are *Astrophel* and *Daphnida*, and the four major elegies in English literature – *Lycidas*, *Adonais*, *In Memoriam* and *Thyrsis*.

The major elegies belong to a sub-species known as pastoral elegy, the origins of which are to be found in the pastoral laments of three Sicilian poets: Theocritus (3rd c. B.C.), Moschus (2nd c. B.C.) and Bion (2nd c. B.C.). Their most important works were: Theocritus's *Lament for Daphnis*, which is pretty well the prototype for Milton's *Lycidas*; Moschus's *Lament for Bion* (a doubtful attribution) which influenced Milton's *Lycidas*, Shelley's *Adonais*

and Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis*; and Bion's *Lament for Adonis*, on which Shelley partly modelled his *Adonais*.

Spenser was one of the earliest English poets to use for elegy what are known as the pastoral conventions; namely in *Astrophel* (1586), an elegy for Sir Philip Sidney. It is a minor work but important in the history of the genre. Spenser also wrote *Daphnida* (1591), on the death of Sir Arthur Gorge's wife.

The conventions of pastoral elegy are approximately as follows: (a) The scene is pastoral. The poet and the person he mourns are represented as shepherds; (b) The poet begins with an invocation to the Muses and refers to divers mythological characters during the poem; (c) Nature is involved in mourning the shepherd's death. Nature feels the wound, so to speak; (d) The poet inquires of the guardians of the dead shepherd where they were when death came; (e) There is a procession of mourners; (f) The poet reflects on divine justice and contemporary evils; (g) There is a 'flower' passage, describing the decoration of the bier, etc.; (h) At the end there is a renewal of hope and joy, with the idea expressed that death is the beginning of life.

After Spenser, Milton established the form of the pastoral elegy in England with *Lycidas* (1637), a poem inspired by the death of Henry King. In the same tradition as *Astrophel* and *Lycidas* are *Adonais* (1821), Shelley's lament for Keats; and *Thyrsis* (1867), Matthew Arnold's lament – he calls it a monody (*q.v.*) – for A. H. Clough. They follow Bion's *Lament for Adonis* by having a hopeful conclusion and all except Spenser's dwell on the poet's own problems and anxieties. However, in *The Ruines of Time* (1591), an allegorical elegy on the death of Sidney, Spenser laments the neglect of letters and refers to his own position.

*In Memoriam* (1850), Tennyson's elegy for Hallam, differs from the others in that it lacks the pastoral conventions. But most of the other features are retained and the element of personal reflection is much more marked.

Gray's *Elegy* is also in a class of its own because it laments the passing of a way of life.

Since *In Memoriam* many poets have written elegiac poems (e.g. Gerald Manley Hopkins's *Wreck of the Deutschland*), but the formal pastoral elegy has not been favoured.

Many European poets have made varied and noteworthy contributions to the elegy, or have written noble elegiac poems. The *ballades* of Villon, for instance; some poems by Camoens (1524?–1580), Chiabrera (1552–1638) and Filicaia (1642–1707);

## elegy

Ronsard's *Élégies* in the 16th c.; Pushkin's *Elegy on the Portrait of F.-M. Barclay de Tolly*; several poems by the Slovene Prešeren in *Slovo od mladosti* (1830) and *Sonetje nesreče* (1834); several poems, also, by the Sardinian Satta (1867-1914), particularly some in *Canti Barbaricini* (1910); not to mention Rilke's *Duineser Elegien* (1911-22), and several collections by Juan Ramón Jiménez - *Elegías puras* (1908), *Elegías intermedias* (1909) and *Elegías lamentables* (1910). But perhaps Leopardi, more than anyone else, in making despair and *noia* beautiful, achieved the best of elegiac poetry. See also ELEGIAC STANZA; EPICEDIMUM; GRAVEYARD SCHOOL OF POETRY; OCCASIONAL VERSE.

**elision** The omission or slurring of a syllable, as in the following lines from *Paradise Lost* describing the opening of the gates of Hell:

On a sudden open fly  
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound  
Th'infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
Harsh thunder.

The 18th c. poets often practised elision in order to secure a level decasyllabic line. The omission of one or two adjacent vowels is also called *synelepha*. See CONTRACTION; SYNAERESIS; SYNCOPE.

**Elizabethan period** A rather vague classification applied as a rule to the second half of the 16th c. and the early part of the 17th. Elizabeth actually reigned from 1558 to 1603. Some take the period to run from her accession to 1642, the year when the theatres were shut. In this case it includes the Jacobean and much of the Caroline period (*qq.v.*). The forty-odd years of Elizabeth's reign alone were remarkable for their creative activity and output in English literature, especially drama. At this time there flourished some dozens of dramatists, many of whom were prolific writers. Apart from drama, almost every literary form was exploited, developed and embellished. Among the more famous writers of the age were: Marlowe, Sir Philip Sidney, Greene, Kyd, Nashe, Spenser, Sir Francis Bacon, Shakespeare, Sir Walter Raleigh and Ben Jonson.

**ellipsis** (Gk 'leaving out') A figurative device where a word (or several words) is left out in order to achieve more compact



## emotive language

expression. It has been frequently used by modern poets like Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot and W. H. Auden. The following lines from Eliot's *The Waste Land* suggest the kind of use that may be made of ellipsis:

Elizabeth and Leicester  
Beating oars  
The stern was formed  
A gilded shell  
Red and gold  
The brisk swell  
Rippled both shores  
Southwest wind  
Carried down stream  
The peal of bells  
White towers

See ASYNDETON; PARATAXIS.

**emblem-book** A book of symbolic pictures with a motto. The pictures were usually woodcuts or engravings to illustrate the word or motto, plus an *explicatio*, or exposition. Among the earliest emblem-books was the *Emblematum Liber* (1522) by the Milanese writer Alciati. The earliest English emblem-book was probably Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes* (1586); and the most famous was certainly Francis Quarles' *Emblemes* (1635). About the same time George Wither produced a *Collection of Emblemes*. Some makers of emblems wrote verses in the shape of objects like crosses and altars – hence *altar poem* (q.v.) and *carmen figuratum*. Wither actually wrote a dirge (q.v.) in rhomboidal form. The early emblem books were plundered for images by Elizabethan and 17th century poets. William Blake revived the emblem form in *The Gates of Paradise* (1793).

See also CONCEIT; GNOMIC VERSE; PATTERN POETRY.

**emendation** The correction or alteration of a text or manuscript where it is, or appears to be, corrupt.

**emotive language** Language intended to express or arouse emotional reactions towards the subject. To be distinguished from referential language which aims only to denote; for instance, the language of the scientist and the philosopher. In *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923) C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards made the

## emotive language

distinctions clear. See APOLLONIAN / DIONYSIAN; ASSOCIATION; CONNOTATION; DENOTATION.

**empathy** The word was introduced in 1909 by Titchener when translating the German word *Einfühlung*. The idea of empathy was developed in Germany by Lotze in *Mikrokosmos* (1858). When we experience empathy we identify ourselves, up to a point, with an animate or inanimate object. One might even go so far as to say that the experience is an involuntary projection of ourselves *into* an object. Thus the contemplation of a work of sculpture might give us a physical sensation similar to that suggested by the work. This is related to the common experience of lifting a leg when watching a man or a horse jumping. In a different way, reading, for instance, Gerard Manley Hopkins's *The Windhover*, one might empathically experience some of the physical sensations evoked in the description of the movement of the falcon.

**enallage** (Gk 'exchange') A figurative device which involves the substitution of one grammatical form for another. Common in metaphor. For example: 'to palm someone off'; 'to have a good laugh'; 'to be wived'; 'to duck an appointment'. See also HYPALLAGE.

**encadenamiento** (Sp 'chaining together') In a type of Galician poetry in which parallel stanzas are a feature there is a variation known as *encadenamiento* in which the first line of the third stanza is the second line of the third stanza. This is followed by a new line. See also TERZA RIMA.

**enchiridion** (Gk 'manual') A book that can be carried by hand. See GUIDEBOOK; HANDBOOK; MANUAL; VADE MECUM.

**encomium** (L from Gk 'praise') Formal eulogy in prose or verse glorifying people, objects, ideas or events. Originally it was a Greek choral song in celebration of a hero sung at the *komos* or triumphal procession at the end of the Olympic games. Pindar wrote some encomiastic odes praising the winners. Many English poets have produced encomiastic verse: Milton's *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* (1629); Dryden's *Song for St Cecilia's Day* (1687); Gray's *Hymn to Adversity* (1742); Wordsworth's *Ode*

to *Duty* (1805). Encomium can also be the vehicle of irony (*q.v.*) as Erasmus demonstrated in *Moriae Encomium* 'The Praise of Folly' (1509), a satire directed against the follies of theologians and churchmen. A curiosity in this genre is the *Panegyrici Latini*, a collection of encomia on Roman emperors dating from 289 to 389. See also EPINICION; OCCASIONAL VERSE; ODE; PANEGRIC.

**encyclopaedia** The term derives from the Greek *enkyklios* 'circular' or 'general' and *paideiā* 'discipline' or 'instruction'. Though not known to Classical writers, the term embraced that 'circle' of instruction which included grammar, rhetoric, music, mathematics, philosophy, astronomy and gymnastics. The first use of the term in English appears to be that in Sir Thomas Elyot's *Boke of the Governour* (1531), a treatise on education. We again find the term in the title of Paul Scalich de Lika's *Encyclopaediae seu orbis disciplinarum tam sacrarum quam profanarum epistemon* (1559).

There are three basic kinds of encyclopaedia: (a) those which are encyclopaedic in intent but not universally comprehensive; (b) comprehensive encyclopaedias; (c) special encyclopaedias.

Some famous early encyclopaedic works are Varro's *Rerum Humanarum et Divinarum Antiquitates* (1st c. B.C.), the Elder Pliny's *Historia Naturalis* (1st c. A.D.), Isidore of Seville's *Originum seu Etymologiarum Libri* (7th c.), Martianus Capella's *De Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae* (5th c.) and Rabanus Maurus's *De Universo* (9th c.). The greatest medieval encyclopaedia was the tripartite *Speculum* of Vincent de Beauvais (13th c.): *Speculum Historiale*, *Speculum Naturale* and *Speculum Doctrinale*.

Also to the 13th c. belongs Bartholomew de Glanville's *De Proprietatibus Rerum* later translated into English by John Trevisa (1398).

During the Renaissance period and the 17th c. other encyclopaedic works were Johann Heinrich Alsted's *Encyclopaedia Cursus Philosophici* (1608), which was later developed by the author into *Encyclopaedia septem tomis distincta* (1620). This was one of the last works in Latin. Hereafter it was customary to use the vernacular. Later in this century there appeared Moréri's *Grand Dictionnaire Historique* (1643–80), Hofmann's *Lexicon Universale* (1677), Thomas Corneille's *Dictionnaire des Arts et des Sciences* (1694) and Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697) – all major works.

In the 18th c. a large number of important works in English,

## encyclopaedia

French and German were published. Some of the principal ones were: *Universal, Historical, Geographical, Chronological and Classical Dictionary* (1703); John Harris's *Lexicon Technicum, or an Universal English Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (1704); Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopaedia, or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (1728). Upon this monumental work was based the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des Arts and des Métiers* (1751-76), which was compiled by D'Alembert and Diderot in 35 volumes.

In 1771 appeared the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The ten-volume edition – and this was the first attempt in the English language to encompass the sum of human knowledge – appeared soon afterwards (1777-84). Eminent scholars and scientists have contributed to it. It remains, in its various successive editions, and continuous revisions, one of the best of all encyclopaedias.

In the 19th and 20th c. there were an increasing number of encyclopaedias which attempted to cope with the vast quantities of knowledge accumulating daily. Some of the more famous are: *Encyclopédie méthodique ou par ordre de matières*, a work in 200 volumes which came out between 1781-1832; a successor to Chambers's work called the *New Encyclopaedia* (1802-20), in 45 volumes; Brewster's *Edinburgh Encyclopaedia* (1809-31); the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana* (1817-45); Ersch and Gruber's *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* (this was first published in 1818 and thereafter 167 volumes were produced); the *Penny Encyclopaedia*, begun in 1833; the *Encyclopaedia Americana* (1829-32); another version of Chambers's *Encyclopaedia* (1860-68); Larousse's *Le Grand Dictionnaire du XIXe siècle* (1866-76); the *Encyclopédie Française* (1935); the *Encyclopedia Italiana* (1929-39); the *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopedia* (1928-47), in 65 volumes; the *Encyclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana* (1905-30), in 70 volumes.

There are also a large number of specialist encyclopaedias, of which the following are especially notable: the *Encyclopaedia of Gardening* (1822) by Loudon; the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1882-1901), to which there are many supplements; the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* (1901-06); the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* (1907-14); the *Dictionary of Applied Chemistry* (1891, revised and brought up to date in various editions since); *Allgemeines Lexicon der bildender Künstler* (1907-47), a work in 37 volumes; the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (1908-26); and the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (1930-35). See DICTIONARY.



**end-stopped line** A term applied to verse where the sense and meter coincide in a pause at the end of a line. End-stopped couplets were characteristic of a great deal of 18th c. poetry. This passage from Pope's *Essay on Man* illustrates both the end-stopped line and the open-ended line:

All nature is but art unknown to thee,  
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
All partial evil, universal good;  
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear: Whatever is, is right.

The incidence of the end-stopped line has been used to date Shakespeare's plays and other works. *See* CLOSED COUPLET; COUPLET; ENJAMBEMENT; HEROIC COUPLET; OPEN COUPLET; SINGLE-MOULDED LINE.

**endecha** (Sp 'dirge, lament') The term may derive from Latin *indicia* 'manifestations'. A metrical combination used repeatedly in compositions on sombre themes and made up of six- or seven-syllable lines, usually with assonance. The strophic form of the *endecha real* or 'royal lament', introduced in the 16th c., was usually of four lines. The *endecha* is sometimes called a *romancillo*. A well-known example is Lope de Vega's *Pobre barquilla mía*.

**end-rhyme** This occurs at the end of a line of verse, and is distinguished from head-rhyme or alliteration (*qq.v*) and internal rhyme (*q.v.*).

**engagement** *See* COMMITMENT.

**English sonnet** *See* SONNET.

**englyn** A group of strict Welsh meters. The *englyn* mono-rhyme (*q.v.*) is the most popular of all the strict meters. *See also* CYNGHANEDD; CYWYDD.

**enjambement** (F 'in-striding' from *jambe* 'leg') Running on of the sense beyond the second line of one couplet (*q.v.*) into the first line of the next. The device was commonly used by 16th and 17th c. poets but much less frequently in the 18th c. The Romantic poets revived its use. This was part of the reaction against what

## enjambement

were felt to be restrictive rules governing the composition of verse. This example is from Keats's *Endymion*, a poem in which he used it often:

Who, of men, can tell  
That flowers would bloom, or that green fruit would swell  
To melting pulp, that fish would have bright mail,  
The earth its dower of river, wood, and vale,  
The meadows runnels, runnels pebble-stones,  
The seed its harvest, or the lute its tones,  
Tones ravishment, or ravishment its sweet  
If human souls did never kiss and greet?

See CLOSED COUPLET; END-STOPPED LINE; REJET; RUN-ON LINE.

**enlightenment** A term used to describe the philosophical and literary spirit and movement between, approximately, 1660 and 1800. Sometimes referred to in England as 'the Age of Reason'. (G. *Zeitalter der Aufklärung*). See AUGUSTAN PERIOD; STURM UND DRANG.

**enoplious** A term in Classical Greek prosody which has the meaning and force of being 'in martial arms', or 'up in arms'. The verse scheme was either:  $\cup / \cup \cup / \cup \cup //$  or:  $\cup \cup / \cup \cup / \cup \cup //$ .

**ensalada** (Sp 'salad, medley, mix-up') Colloquially a 'hodge-podge' and, in literature, a poem comprising lines and strophes of varying lengths and various rhyme schemes. Usually a composition of a lyric nature. Possibly the earliest known example in Spanish is by Fray Ambrosio Montesinos c. 1500.

**ensenhamen** An Old Provençal form of didactic poem. They were usually composed in a non-lyrical meter. Their burden (*q.v.*) was normally advice or instruction, on a variety of topics. See DIDACTIC POETRY.

**entelechy** A term used by Aristotle to denote the realization or complete expression of something that was potential. Later it was used by writers to signify what helped to develop perfection.

**entertainment** As a specific literary classification, a term used by Graham Greene to distinguish his serious novels from his more

light-hearted ones. For instance, he classes *The Power and the Glory* and *The End of the Affair* as novels; *A Gun for Sale* and *Our Man in Havana* as 'entertainments'.

**entr'acte** (F 'between act') A short interlude, often musical, to divert an audience between the acts of a play.

**entremes** A Spanish term deriving from French *entremets*. A diversion (dramatic or otherwise) between the courses of a banquet. In Catalonia they were called *entrameses* and the term was later applied to dramatic interludes during the Corpus Christi procession. In Castilian, during the 16th and 17th c., they were brief comic interludes performed between the acts of a play. Many were written by well-known *dramatists* including Cervantes, Lope de Vega and Calderón. In the 18th c., similar entertainments were named *sainete*; and in the 19th c. the *género chico* was comparable. See also ENTRE'ACTE; INTERLUDE; INTERMEZZI.

**entremets** See ENTREMES.

**envelope** When the envelope device is used a line or a stanza is repeated, either in the same form or with a slight variation, to enclose the rest of the poem. There are several variations. Keats uses the first four lines of *The Mermaid Tavern* to envelop the rest of the poem at the end.

An envelope stanza also denotes a group of lines which has enclosed rhymes – say, abba. Tennyson used this stanza form in *In Memoriam*.

**envoi** (F 'a sending on the way') Also *envoy*. A final stanza, shorter than the preceding ones, often used in the *ballade* (*q.v.*) and *chant royal* (*q.v.*). In a *ballade* there are usually four lines, in *chant royal* five or seven. The *envoi* also repeats the refrain (*q.v.*) of the poem. Among English poets Chaucer used it in *Envoy de Chaucer à Scogan* and in *Envoy de Chaucer à Bukton*. But Chaucer's *envoi* to Scogan was equal in length to the other stanzas. Scott, Southey, Swinburne and Wilde, among others, also employed the device. More recently, Chesterton, in *A Ballade of an Anti-Puritan*:

Prince Bayard would have smashed his sword  
To see the sort of knights you dub –  
Is that the last of them – O Lord!  
Will someone take me to a pub?

## epanados

**epanados** (Gk 'a repeating of words') A figure of speech in which a word or a phrase is repeated at the beginning and middle, or at the middle and end of a sentence. As in this line from Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*: 'Hear you this soul-invading voice, and count it but a voice?'. See EPANALEPSIS.

**epanalepsis** (Gk 'a taking up again') A figure of speech which contains a repetition of a word or words after other words have come between them. There is a good example at the beginning of *Paradise Lost*:

Say first, for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,  
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause  
Moved our grand Parents, in that happy state . . .

See ANADIPLOSIS; EPANADOS; REPETITION.

**epanaphora** See ANAPHORA.

**epanorthosis** (Gk 'setting straight again') A figure of speech in which something said is corrected or commented on.

**epic** An epic is a long narrative poem, on a grand scale, about the deeds of warriors and heroes. It is a polygonal, 'heroic' story incorporating myth, legend, folk tale and history. Epics are often of national significance in the sense that they embody the history and aspirations of a nation in a lofty or grandiose manner.

Basically, there are two kinds of epic: (a) primary – also known as oral or primitive; (b) secondary – also known as literary. The first belongs to the oral tradition (*q.v.*) and is thus composed orally and recited; only much later, in some cases, is it written down. The second is written down at the start.

In category (a) we may place, for example, *Gilgamesh*, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, the lays of the *Elder Edda* and the epic cycles or *narodne pesme* of the South Slavs. In category (b) we may put Virgil's *Aeneid*, Lucan's *Pharsalia*, the anonymous *Song of Roland*, Camoëns's *Os Lusíadas*, Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Victor Hugo's *La Légende des siècles*.

There is also a very large number of other poems which might be put into one or other category. The majority belong approximately to category (b).

*Gilgamesh*, the Sumerian epic (c. 3000 B.C.), is the earliest extant work in the oral tradition. It recounts the adventures of the king



of that name, his travels with Enkidu the wild man, Enkidu's death and then the journey of Gilgamesh to the Babylonian Noah, Utnapishtim – the only man known to have discovered the secret of immortality. Utnapishtim shows him the plant of life. On his return a snake robs Gilgamesh of the plant, but the king consoles himself with the fame he has gained as the builder of the walls of Erech. The poem, which is in twelve books, is an account of a man's search for glory and eternal life.

Next come the Homeric epics, *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (c. 1000 B.C.), whose heroes are Achilles and Odysseus respectively. The *Iliad* recounts the story of the wars between the Greeks and the Trojans, and in particular the anger of Achilles caused by Agamemnon's slight, and how Achilles slew Hector and dragged his body round the walls of Troy. The *Odyssey* relates the adventures of Odysseus during his return from the Trojan wars to Ithaca.

*Beowulf* survives in a single MS (probably of the 10th c., though a much earlier date is ascribed to the composition of the poem – very likely some time in the 8th c.). The poem relates the exploits of a legendary Geatish hero who first rids the Danish kingdom of Hrothgar of two demonic monsters: Grendel and Grendel's mother. Later in the story, after a long reign (a period which appears to have been of little interest to the epic poet) Beowulf meets a dragon, kills it with the help of Wiglaf, but dies of his wounds.

These primary epics have features in common: a central figure of heroic, even superhuman calibre, perilous journeys, various misadventures, a strong element of the supernatural, repetition of fairly long passages of narrative or dialogue, elaborate greetings, digressions, epic similes (particularly in the Homeric poems), long speeches, vivid and direct descriptions of the kind favoured by the ballad maker and, in general a lofty tone; the tone of Classical tragedy. All is larger than life. A further and important characteristic of primary epic is the use of the stock epithet, known as the Homeric epithet and the kenning (*qq.v.*).

Primary epic is, in many cases, the result of a number of lays or ballads being gradually joined together by a poet or bard. The lays or ballads are of common knowledge and of common inheritance and have been often recited by a bard, rhapsodist, scop, *skald*, *guslar*, *troubadour* or *gleeman* (*qq.v.*). There eventually comes a time when, in an increasingly literate society, the lays or ballads are written down for the use of minstrels.

In Book VIII of the *Odyssey* there is a kind of 'inset' description

## epic

of the blind bard or musician which gives us an insight into the composition of oral epic:

The equerry now came up, leading their favourite bard . . . Pontonous placed a silver-studded chair for him in the centre of the company, with its back to one of the great pillars, and the equerry hung his tuneful lyre on a peg just above his head and showed him how to lay his hand upon it . . . When they had satisfied their appetite and thirst, the bard was inspired by the Muse to sing of famous men. He chose a passage from a lay well known by then throughout the world, the Quarrel of Odysseus and Achilles, telling how these two had fallen out at a ceremonial banquet . . .

(E. V. Rieu's translation)

About a third of the way through *Beowulf* there is an account of how a thane of the company began to compose a lay about Beowulf:

Now and then the famous warriors let their bay horses gallop, – run on in races, where the country tracks seemed suitable, – excellent in repute.

At times a thane of the king, a warrior filled with poetic eloquence, who remembered many lays, who recollected countless old traditions, framed a new story in words correctly linked. The man began to set forth with skill the deed of Beowulf, and fluently to tell a well-told tale, – to weave together his words. (J. R. Clark Hall's translation)

There are many other instances of oral epic and one may suppose that in the more primitive societies the Homeric tradition of primary epic still exists. It certainly does among the South Slavs.

Secondary epic is composed by being written down in the first place. Early and important instances in Classical literature are the works of Naevius and Ennius. Naevius (c. 270–c. 199 B.C.) wrote a long epic in Saturnian verse about the First Punic War. Ennius (239–169 B.C.) composed *Annales*, in eighteen books. Neither work survives complete.

Both these authors wrote of Roman history and legend, but Virgil is generally regarded as the first national poet. The *Aeneid* (c. 30–20 B.C.) records and celebrates the foundation of Rome by Aeneas after many hazardous adventures following upon the

Trojan wars and the fall of Troy. As in many other epics (primary and secondary) there is the central heroic figure, and there are many elements of Homeric epic in the poem. One might even say that the *Aeneid* was the Roman's answer and challenge to the Greek epics. Certainly Virgil's style and method recall Homer's (invocations, digressions, similes), but Virgil is a more 'civilized' poet, a more conscious and 'contriving' artist. He also has an intense feeling for and sense of the past.

Two other Latin poets wrote works on an epic scale: Ovid and Lucan. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1st c. A.D.) in fifteen books, in tone and style – indeed, in many ways – is epic in the manner of Virgil, but, by comparison, it is a diffused, episodic and very nearly sprawling creation; and it has no central hero. Broadly speaking Ovid adopted the framework of epic and worked into it anything he felt like including, rather as Dante did in the *Divine Comedy* though that is a *much* more elaborately constructed poem. In more modern times, and at a humbler level, Ezra Pound in *Cantos* and David Jones in *Anathemata* have both composed major works in the mode of what may be called 'collage' epic. It should be noted that Ovid's influence in the late Middle Ages and during the Renaissance period, was immense. Very nearly as great as Virgil's.

Lucan's *Pharsalia* (1st c. A.D.) is an epic poem about the civil war between Caesar and Pompey. Lucan based the structure and style on that of other epic poets and, though unfinished, the poem was intended to have the full epic treatment, and did include many, by then, established epic conventions. However, it seems generally agreed that *Pharsalia* is very uneven, though fitfully splendid – largely because of its fine descriptive passages and glittering epigrams.

Apart from the *Ilias Latina*, a Latin version of the *Iliad* composed in the 1st c. A.D., there is little of note in epic in Europe for the best part of a thousand years. Outside Europe, however, there are the great Indian epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* – both of very uncertain date though the former is ascribed to a period A.D. 300–500. Towards the end of the first millennium the Persian Firdowsi composed *Shah-Nameh*, a national epic, the equivalent of the *Aeneid* and *Os Lusiadas*.

Though epic appears to be dormant in Europe for a thousand years we may suppose that the oral tradition was still alive and that materials were being gathered for the good reason that in the 11th and 12th c. a considerable body of epic poetry, oral in origin,

## epic

was being written down in order to preserve it, and a considerable quantity of literary epic was also composed.

The *Chanson de Roland* (c. 1100) was probably the best of all the *chansons de gestes* (q.v.). Then came the Spanish *Cantar de mio Cid* (early 12th c.); the Provençal epic *Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise* (13th c.); the German *Kudrun* (c. 1240) and the *Nibelungenlied* (early 13th c.); the French epic *Huon de Bordeaux* (c. 1220); the Middle Dutch epic *Beatrijs* (14th c.); *Heliand*, the only surviving German epic in alliterative long lines; the *Dede Korkut* stories which are twelve Turkish epic tales of the oral tradition collected in the 14th c.; not to mention the great body of Eddic and Skaldic poetry and the Icelandic sagas (q.v.).

At this period, then, one can say that primary and secondary epic were, in a sense, overlapping and influencing each other. In general, from early in the 13th c. literary or secondary epic becomes the main form – and in this Virgil is the principal influence. This is particularly apparent in the works of the two great Italian poets Dante and Petrarch. Early in the 14th c. Dante wrote his *Divine Comedy* (1307–21) in Italian; later in the century Petrarch wrote his epic *Africa* in Latin. The *Divine Comedy* is a ‘personal’ epic, a kind of autobiographical and spiritual Aeneid. *Africa* records the struggle between Rome and Carthage.

Neither Langland’s *Piers Plowman* nor Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* (both late 14th c.) have any claims as conventional epics, but by virtue of their range, diversity and scale they are of epic proportions – just as Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* are. Their imaginative depth and scope, too, rival the aspirations of their great epic predecessors.

A hundred and more years later two Italian poets created what was very nearly a new form of epic – a long poem which was both romantic and comic. Hitherto the world of epic had been overwhelmingly masculine and any love interest or anything approaching a heroine was rare. Boiardo’s unfinished *Orlando Innamorato* (late 15th c.) dealt with three main themes: Charlemagne’s wars against Gradasso and Agramante; Orlando’s love for Angelica; Ruggiero’s love for Bradamante. Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* (1532) was a sequel to it. Orlando is driven mad by love for Angelica; but the heroine is Bradamante, and the love between her and Ruggiero is the main subject of the work. The poem contains a certain amount of mockery of chivalric ideals and knightly prowess.

There are two other outstanding European epics of the 16th



c., namely Camoëns's *Os Lusíadas* (1572) and Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1575). The first is Classical and Virgilian in structure and spirit, and indeed Camoëns set out to do for Portugal what Virgil had done for Rome. It has for its theme Vasco da Gama's discovery of the sea-route to India. In the course of the poem, by narrative and through 'prophecy', Camoëns covers the whole history of Portugal, and in doing so creates a 'nationalistic' epic in which the poet sees the Portuguese waging a holy war against paganism. Tasso's subject is the recovery of Jerusalem in the First Crusade. It is thus a Christian rather than a 'nationalistic' epic. It has many heroes and heroines, owes a good deal to the tradition of the medieval romance (*q.v.*) and contains a strong element of the chivalric and supernatural. It is also a didactic and allegorical poem.

Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1589-96), was the greatest narrative poem in 16th c. English literature. It is a mixture of epic and romance for which Spenser designed what has come to be known as the Spenserian stanza (*q.v.*). He planned it in twelve books, by this period a well-established conventional number for epic, but only seven survive. The poet was obviously conscious of working in the grand epic tradition. In a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh he mentioned as his four greatest predecessors: Homer, Virgil, Ariosto and Tasso.

Spenser organized the poem as an extended and elaborate allegory or 'darke conceit', as he put it, using the material of the Arthurian legends and the Charlemagne romances. The hero of each book represents a virtue, and the poem is throughout a didactic work of astonishing complexity, richness and allusiveness.

In addition it should be noted that it is a courtesy book (*q.v.*), the most elaborate and courtly of all books of etiquette in an age which produced so many of them. In the same prefatory letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, Spenser made perfectly clear what his intention was: 'The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline.'

The *Faerie Queene* brings to an end the tradition of the epic of chivalry – and the whole cult of chivalry which, by this time, was beginning to come under satirical attack. However, ultimately, Spenser was to have almost as much influence (some of it baneful) on the form and style of the narrative poem as Milton was to have a century later with *Paradise Lost*; arguably the greatest of all the post-Classical epic poems.

## epic

There was something of a craze for epic near the middle of the 17th c., especially in France where a number of poets produced works, most of which are now barely readable and are certainly seldom read. Among them one might mention Saint-Amant's *Moyse sauvé* (1653), Godeau's *Saint Paul* (1654), Chapelain's *La Pucelle* (1656), Desmarets's *Clovis* (1657), Louis le Laboureur's *Charlemagne* (1664) and Carel de Saint-Garde's *Childebrand* (1666). One might also mention at this point Cowley's *Davideis* (1656), a twelve-book epic in the Virgilian tradition, composed in rhyming couplets. Two years later Milton began dictating *Paradise Lost*, the theme of which was the loftiest, the grandest and, in many ways, the most difficult ever undertaken by any poet. At the very beginning of the poem, in a traditional and conventional manner, he states his intention and makes clear the magnitude of his task:

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing, Heavenly Muse . . .

I thence

Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th'Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rime.

Then he invokes the aid of the Holy Ghost Himself.

Milton's least soluble problem was how to create a convincing God: the first cause uncaused, omniscient and omnipotent; and at the same time preserve an element of doubt and suspense in his story.

Milton was an immensely learned poet and had studied the work of his predecessors in epic in great detail. Preparing long and beginning late, he trained himself for the feat. One feels that he was fully conscious of the fact that he was competing at an Olympic level in the most arduous marathon of all and was staking everything on it.

Thus, the poem has the full epic apparatus: invocations, digressions, similes, legend, history, folklore, magic and the supernatural, eloquent speeches, perilous journeys, battles, and scenes in the underworld. The range is colossal, the sweep majestic.

The sequel, *Paradise Regained* (1671), is also an epic poem (in four books). Most people would probably agree that in this poem Milton has run out of steam, and he only occasionally attains the level of *Paradise Lost* in the scenes of the temptations of Christ.

It has become a commonplace that Milton wrote the last major epic, or the last poem that can be described with minimal reservations as epic. It may be so, but the last 300 years have produced a large number of narratives (in prose and verse) which have continued the epic tradition by virtue of their scale, their heroic themes and their elevated style.

In the late 17th c., when there was something of an obsession with the 'heroic', there set in a reaction against the heroic. This resulted in mock-epic (*q.v.*). In general, poets tended to modify and reduce the scale and scope of narrative poems, even while retaining the mode and manner of the full-dress epic with all or much of its conventional apparatus. Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), for instance, is conducted in fully ceremonial manner. Later came Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) and *The Dunciad* (1728, 1735). It should be noted also that Dryden did a fine translation of the *Aeneid* and that Pope did an equally good one of the *Iliad*.

The next major poet to attempt an epic-type poem was Byron whose *Don Juan* (1819-24) has many of the trappings and features of epic even though it is satire. Keats, his contemporary, after a careful study of *Paradise Lost*, wrote *Hyperion* (1818-19); again epic in manner and in both versions unfinished. Later in the 19th c. Matthew Arnold, William Morris, Tennyson, and Browning all wrote epic works. Arnold's principal attempts are *Sobrab and Rustum* (1853), in the Homeric and Miltonic style and marked by some particularly magnificent Miltonic similes; and *Balder Dead* (1853), which was much more in the Homeric manner. William Morris's *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867) is an uneasy mixture of Chaucerian and Miltonic influences. Tennyson's contribution to epic was *Idylls of the King*. Tennyson spent well over forty years, on and off, creating this work; beginning in 1842 with *Morte d'Arthur* and concluding with the twelfth idyll in 1885. Browning also wrote a twelve-book epic called *The Ring and the Book* (1868), a highly original poem in style and subject. In the 19th c. we also find examples of what may be called 'autobiographical' epic (a kind which has been considerably developed in the 20th c.). The outstanding instances in the 19th c. are

## epic

Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (begun 1799, completed 1805, but not published until 1850), and *The Excursion* (1814).

In France the 18th c. produced one considerable epic in the shape of Voltaire's *La Henriade* (1728), but this is not generally thought to be one of his best works. His mock-heroic *La Pucelle* (1755) is much more readable. In the following century French poets were prolific in the epic form, or at any rate in long narrative poems. There are many instances of which the following are notable: Alfred de Vigny's *Hélène* (1822), *Le Déluge* (1823) and *Eloa* (1824); Lamartine's *Jocelyn* (1836) and *La Chute d'un ange* (1838); Louis Ménard's *Prométhée délivré* (1843); Soumet's *Jeanne d'Arc* (1845); Viennet's *Franciade* (1863); Victor de Laprade's *Pernette* (1868); Leconte de Lisle's *Quain* (1869); and, above all, Victor Hugo's *La Légende des siècles* (1859, 1877, 1883).

There have been other attempts at epic which should be mentioned. For example, the American Joel Barlow's *Vision of Columbus* (1787), which was re-named the *Columbiad* in 1807. Also Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855) and Ferguson's *Congal* (1872).

In the 20th c. several poets have written works of merit on an epic scale, such as Pound's 'collage' epic *Cantos* (1954). An earlier work, less well known, but reminiscent in some ways of the *Cantos* is *Paterson* (1946) by William Carlos Williams. This, too, is a kind of collage of autobiographical material. So is David Jones's *Anathemata* (1952).

Most people would probably include three other long poems of the 20th c.: Saint-John Perse's *Anabase* (1924), which was translated by T. S. Eliot and published as *Anabasis* in 1960; Kazantzakis's *Odyssey*, a twenty-four book poem of over 33,000 lines which continues the story of Odysseus after he has returned home; and Vasco Popa's *Secondary Heaven* (1968), a series of cycles which constitute a diffused autobiographical work.

In some respects it seems that the 20th c. epic poet has tended to employ the subjective stream of consciousness (*q.v.*) method of the novelist. This is apparent in several of the works mentioned, and also in Andrew Young's remarkable poem *A Traveller in Time* (1950), in twelve parts plus a thirteenth which is a kind of conclusion or epilogue. It is a form of pilgrimage of the soul, the memory and the mind back to early Christian times; almost a 'pilgrim's regress'.

In the last hundred years or more the novel, the cinema and, to a lesser extent, the theatre, have been much favoured media for



narratives on an epic scale. In retrospect it seems fairly logical that as the novel (*q.v.*) developed so the novelist would find it an increasingly suitable vehicle for a grandiose treatment of individual and national destiny. Indeed, there has been an impressive number of novels which can fairly be described as epic in their range and magnitude. Famous instances are: Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851); Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1865-72) and *Anna Karenina* (1875-76); Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922); Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Schweik* (1930), a 'comic' epic in the picaresque (*q.v.*) tradition; Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939); Ivo Andrić's *Travnička Kronika* (Bosnian Story) 1945, and *Na Drini Cuprija* (Bridge on the Drina) 1948; Patrick White's *The Tree of Man* (1956) and *Voss* (1957); and Pasternak's *Dr Zhivago* (1958).

The cinema has tended to be the medium for creations on an epic scale in the 20th c. but often the epic makers have been too big for their books; a shortcoming cleverly summarized in the clerihehew (*q.v.*):

Cecil B. de Mille  
Was feeling ill  
Because he couldn't put Moses  
In the Wars of the Roses.

In a more modest fashion epic theatre (*q.v.*) has had some success.

Ultimately epic aspires to grandeur of no common sort; to a state where men transcend their human limitations and, for a time at least, become more obviously in the image of God-like creatures. In epic the men are ten feet tall. In epic, to apply Wordsworth's lines from Book I of *The Prelude*, no familiar shapes remain,

no pleasant images of trees,  
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;  
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live  
Like living men . . .

See EPHYLLION; NARRATIVE VERSE; ROMANCE.

**epic simile** An extended simile (*q.v.*) in some cases running to fifteen or twenty lines, in which the comparisons made are elaborated in considerable detail. It is a common feature of epic (*q.v.*) poetry, but is found in other kinds as well. A good example will be found in Milton: 'as when a wandering fire . . . so glistened the dire snake' (*Paradise Lost* IX 634-44). See also CATALOGUE VERSE.

## epic theatre

**epic theatre** A form of drama and a method of presentation developed in Germany in the 1920s. The founder and director of this influential movement was Erwin Piscator; its greatest dramatist, Bertolt Brecht. In Brecht's words the 'essential point of epic theatre is that it appeals less to the spectator's feelings than to his reason'. The term derives from Aristotelian usage and denotes a form of narrative and didactic play which is not restricted by the unity of time and which presents a series of episodes in a simple and direct way. Notable features are the use of a Chorus (*q.v.*), a narrator, slide projection, film, placards and music. Much epic drama was devoted to the expression of political ideas and ideals, though not overtly propagandist. Piscator's dramatization (*q.v.*) of Hašek's novel *The Good Soldier Schweik* (in 1928) and *War and Peace* (in 1942) are two of the major works in epic drama. Brecht's *Threepenny Opera* (1929) and *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1941) are two others. *See also* ALIENATION; CHRONICLE PLAY; COMMITMENT; EXPRESSIONISM; PROPAGANDA.

**epicedium** (Gk 'funeral song') A song of mourning in praise of a dead person, sung over the corpse. A *threnos* (or dirge) (*q.v.*), on the other hand, might be sung anywhere. *See* ELEGY; ELEGIAC DISTICH; MONODY.

**epideictic poetry** Verse which follows the rules of demonstrative oratory. Epideictic (Gk 'adapted for display') denotes oratory in praise or blame of somebody. Statius's *Silvae* (c. A.D. 92) is generally reckoned to be one of the best collections of such verse.

**epigram** (Gk 'inscription') As a rule a short, witty statement in verse or prose which may be complimentary, satiric or aphoristic. Coleridge defined it as:

A dwarfish whole,  
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.

Originally an inscription on a monument or statue, the epigram developed into a literary genre. Many of them are gathered in the *Greek Anthology* (10th c.). Roman authors, especially Martial, also composed them.

The form was much cultivated in the 17th c. in England by Herrick, William Drummond of Hawthornden, Dryden and Swift, and in the 18th c. by Pope, Prior, Richard Kendal, Burns

and Blake. Coleridge also showed adroitness in the form, as in these lines on John Donne:

With Donne, whose muse on dromedary trots,  
Wreath the iron pokers into true-love knots;  
Rhyme's sturdy cripple, fancy's maze and clue,  
Wit's forge and fire-blast, meaning's press and screw.

In the 19th c. Landor is generally regarded as the expert of the genre. He wrote a good many, and this is one:

Go on, go on, and love away!  
Mine was, another's is, the day.  
Go on, go on, thou false one! now  
Upon his shoulder rest thy brow,  
And look into his eyes until  
Thy own, to find them colder, fill.

Mention should also be made of Belloc and Walter de la Mare, both of whom made distinguished contributions to this form. For example, Belloc's:

When we are dead, some Hunting-boy will pass  
And find a stone half-hidden in tall grass  
And grey with age: but having seen that stone  
(Which was your image) ride more slowly on.

And de la Mare's:

'Homo? Construe!' the stern-faced usher said.  
Groaned George, 'A man, sir'. 'Yes,  
Now *sapiens*?' . . . George shook a stubborn head,  
And sighed in deep distress.

Occasionally in verse an epigram takes the form of a couplet or quatrain (*qq.v.*) as part of a poem, as in this example by Pope in the *Essay on Criticism*:

We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow,  
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.

In more recent times the verse epigram has become relatively rare, but very many (especially from the 16th c. onwards) have used the form in prose or speech to express something tersely and wittily: These are fairly recent examples: A Protestant, if he wants aid or advice on any matter, can only go to his solicitor (Disraeli); Forty years of romance make a woman look like a

## epigram

ruin and forty years of marriage make her look like a public building (Oscar Wilde); He [Macaulay] has occasional flashes of silence that make his conversation perfectly delightful (Sidney Smith); The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true (J. H. Cabell); God made women beautiful so that men would love them; and he made them stupid so that they could love men (attributed to La Belle Otero, the 19th c. courtesan).

Some other famous epigrammatists have been Lord Chesterfield, Byron, Bernard Shaw and F. E. Smith (Lord Birkenhead). *See also* ANTITHESIS; EPITAPH.

**epigraph** Four meanings may be distinguished: (a) An inscription on a statue, stone or building; (b) The writing (legend) on a coin; (c) A quotation on the title page of a book; (d) A motto heading a new section or paragraph.

**epilogue** Three meanings may be distinguished: (a) A short speech to be delivered at the end of a play. It often makes some graceful and witty comment on what has happened and asks for the approval, if not the indulgence, of the audience; (b) The end of a fable (*q.v.*) where the moral is pointed; (c) The concluding section or paragraph of any literary work, sometimes added as a summary, but more often as an afterthought. *See also* PROLOGUE.

**epimythium** A summary of the moral of a fable (*q.v.*) placed at the end of the fable. If at the beginning it was called a *promythium*. *See* EPILOGUE.

**epinicion** A triumphal ode (*q.v.*) commemorating a victory at the Olympic Games. As a rule it comprised a number of groups of three stanzas each, arranged as strophe, antistrophe and epode (*qq.v.*) and gave an account of the victor's success. Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides all composed *epinicia*. Euripides also wrote one for Alcibiades. *See* ENCOMIUM.

**epiphany** (Gk 'manifestation') A term used by Christians to signify a manifestation of God's presence in the world. James Joyce gave this word a particular literary connotation in his novel *Stephen Hero* (1944), part of the first draft of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, which was probably written between 1904 and 1906. The relevant passage (p. 216) is:



This triviality made him think of collecting many such moments together in a book of epiphanies. By an epiphany he meant a *sudden spiritual manifestation* [*my italics*], whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself. He believed that it was for the man of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments. He told Cranly that the clock of the Ballast Office was capable of an epiphany.

(A little further on he says:)

Imagine my glimpses of that clock as the gropings of a spiritual eye which seeks to adjust its vision to an exact focus. The moment the focus is reached the object is epiphanized.

Joyce elaborates this theme at considerable length. The epiphany is a symbol of a spiritual state. This aspect of aesthetic theory is left out of *A Portrait*, but a knowledge of it is essential for an understanding of Joyce as an artist. *Dubliners*, *A Portrait*, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* are a series of increasingly complex and revealing insights of grace as well as intuitions of immortality.

**epiplexis** (Gk 'on-stroke') A form or style of argument which seeks to shame the interlocutor into seeing the point. For example: 'If you had any sense at all, you would understand that. . . .'

**epiploce** (Gk 'plaiting together') A term used by Classical prosodists to denote the various possibilities in the scansion (*q.v.*) of metrical lines.

**epirrhema** (Gk 'that said afterwards') A speech delivered in the *parabasis* (*q.v.*) of Old Comedy (*q.v.*) by the leader of one half of the Chorus (*q.v.*) after that part of the Chorus had sung an ode (*q.v.*). It was usually satirical, didactic or exhortatory.

**episode** Two meanings may be distinguished: (a) An event or incident within a longer narrative; a digression (*q.v.*); (b) A section into which a serialized work is divided.

**episodios nacionales** The name given to a series of forty-six historical novels written by Pérez Galdós between 1873 and 1912 when he went blind. See NOVEL.

## epistle

**epistle** A poem addressed to a friend or patron, thus a kind of 'letter' (*q.v.*) in verse. There are approximately two types: (a) On moral and philosophical themes (e.g. Horace's *Epistles*); (b) On romantic or sentimental themes (e.g. Ovid's *Heroides*).

In the Middle Ages the Ovidian type was the more popular. It influenced the theories of courtly love (*q.v.*) and may have inspired Samuel Daniel to introduce the form in, for instance, *Letter from Octavia to Marcus Antonius* (1603). During the Renaissance and thereafter it was the Horatian kind which had the greater influence. Petrarch, Ariosto and Boileau all wrote such epistles, and there were two outstanding Spanish ones; Garcilaso's *Epístola a Boscán* (1543); and the *Epístola Moral a Fabio* (early 17th c.) ascribed to various authors. In England Jonson appears to have been the first to use the Horatian mode, in *Forest* (1616). Vaughan, Dryden and Congreve also produced epistles of the Horatian kind. Pope proved to be the most skilled practitioner of this form, especially in his *Moral Essays* (1731-35) and *An Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot* (1735). More recent poets have revived the form, which was not much favoured in the 19th c. Auden's *Letter to Lord Byron* is a good example; so is his *New Year Letter*. Louis MacNeice wrote *Letters from Iceland*.

**epistolary novel** A novel (*q.v.*) in the form of letters. It was a particularly popular form in the 18th c. Among the more famous examples are: Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa Harlowe* (1747, 1748); Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* (1771); Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761); and de Laclos's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (1782). Since the 18th c. the form has been little employed, but it is not unusual for letters to make up some part of a novel.

**epistrophe** (Gk 'upon turning') A figure of speech in which each sentence or clause ends with the same word.

**episyntheton** (Gk 'compound') Meter composed of different cola (*q.v.*).

**epitaph** (Gk '(writing) on a tomb') Inscription on a tomb or grave; kind of valediction which may be solemn, complimentary or even flippant. Simonides of Ceos (556-468 B.C.) wrote epitaphs of simplicity and power including the famous one on the Three Hundred who fell at Thermopylae:

Go, tell the Lacedaimonians, passer-by,  
That here obedient to their laws we lie.

The major collection of Classical epitaphs is to be found in Book Four of the *Greek Anthology*. They vary from comic to serious and had considerable influence on Roman and Renaissance writers. Thomas Gray appended his own epitaph to his *Elegy* (1750). Other famous epitaphs include: *William Browne on The Countess of Pembroke*:

Underneath this sable hearse  
Lies the subject of all verse,  
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother;  
Death! ere thou hast slain another,  
Fair and learn'd, and good as she,  
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

*Dryden on his wife*

Here lies my wife: here let her lie!  
Now she's at rest, and so am I.

*John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester on King Charles II*

Here lies a great and mighty king  
Whose promise none relies on;  
He never said a foolish thing,  
Nor ever did a wise one.

*Johnson on Goldsmith*

To Oliver Goldsmith, Poet, Naturalist, and  
Historian, who left scarcely any style of writing  
untouched, and touched nothing that he did not  
adorn.

*See also* EPIGRAM.

**epitasis** (Gk 'near intensification') That part of a play when the dénouement or climax (*qq.v.*) approaches, when the plot thickens. It precedes the catastrophe (*q.v.*). *See also* CATASTASIS; FREYTAG'S PYRAMID; PROTASIS.

**epithalamium** (Gk 'at the bridal chamber') A song or poem sung outside the bride's room on her wedding night. Sappho is believed to have been the first poet to use it as a literary form. Theocritus wrote one; so, among other Latin poets, did Catullus.

## epithalamium

At the Renaissance, poets revived the form and many created memorable *epithalamia*: Tasso, Ronsard and du Bellay, to name three Europeans; and in England Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, Donne, Ben Jonson, Herrick, Marvell, Crashaw and Dryden. Thereafter the form declined. By general agreement one of the finest of all is Spenser's. The traditional conventions of this form required the circumstances of a wedding, the events of the wedding day, and the celebration by the poet of the married couple's experience. Spenser wrote his in honour of his own wedding (1594). See PROTHALAMIUM.

**epithet** Usually an adjective or phrase expressing some quality or attribute which is characteristic of a person or thing. For example: Long John, Dusty Miller, Chalky White, Knobby Clark, Richard the Lionheart. See also HOMERIC EPITHET; POETIC DICTION.

**epitome** (Gk 'cutting short') An abridgement or summary. A long scientific treatise or historical work may be compressed into a single book. A good modern example is the one-volume edition of Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890-1915) which originally appeared in twelve volumes.

**epitrite** (Gk 'a third as much again') In Classical prosody a metrical foot containing one unstressed and three stressed syllables:  $\cup \text{ / / / }$ . Like the paeon (*q.v.*), the epitrite had three other forms:  $\text{ / } \cup \text{ / / }$ ;  $\text{ / / } \cup \text{ / }$ ; and  $\text{ / / / } \cup$ . They were known as first, second, third and fourth epitrites. Rare in English verse; occasionally used in combination with other feet. Gerard Manley Hopkins, who experimented with paeonic feet, sometimes used them. See also SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**epizeuxis** (Gk 'fastening together') A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is repeated emphatically to produce a special effect. See INCREMENTAL REPETITION; REFRAIN.

**epode** (Gk 'additional song') In a lyric ode (*q.v.*) by a Classical writer the epode completed the strophe and anti-strophe (*qq.v.*) and its metrical form was different. It is not often found in English verse, but there is an interesting example of its use in Gray's Pindaric Ode, *The Progress of Poesy*.



**eponymous** (Gk 'giving the name to') An eponymous hero, heroine or protagonist (*qq.v.*) gives his or her name to the title of the work. For instance: *King Lear*, *Pamela*, *Silas Marner*, *Dr Zhivago*.

**epopee** (Gk 'poem making') An epic (*q.v.*) poem or epic poetry.

**epos** (Gk 'word, song') A name given to early epic (*q.v.*) poetry in the oral tradition (*q.v.*).

**epyllion** (Gk 'little epos', 'scrap of poetry') A rare term. The sense of 'little epic' appears to date from the 19th c., when it was used to describe a short narrative poem in dactylic hexameters. The genre included mythological subjects and love themes. The poems are usually learned, elaborate and allusive. They were popular in the Alexandrian period, the late Republican and early Augustan periods. The Byzantine poets also wrote *epyllia*. As a form of narrative verse (*q.v.*) it has some affinities with the Russian *byliny*, the South Slav *narodne pesme* (*q.v.*) and Greek *kleftic* songs. There are a great many poems in English literature which might be described as *epyllia*. For example: Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*; C. Day Lewis's *Flight to Australia*; and Peter Levi's *The Shearwaters*.  
See EPIC; NARRATIVE VERSE.

**equivalence** In quantitative verse the rule that two short syllables equal one long.

**equivoque** See PUN.

**erotesis** (Gk 'question') A rhetorical device in which a question is asked in order to get a definite answer – usually 'no'.

**erotic poetry** It is necessary to distinguish between erotic poetry and love poetry. Erotic poetry is about sex and sexual love; love poetry tends to avoid sexual details, though there are exceptions, like some of Donne's love poems. Erotic poetry tends to concentrate on the more physical aspects of love and passion; while love poetry dwells more on the nobler manifestations of love, the 'higher' feelings.

Much erotic poetry comes from the Indian and Arab cultures. In early Sanskrit literature there is the *Medhaduta* (5th c.). To the 7th or 8th c. belongs the collection of quatrains known as the

## erotic poetry

*Sringasataka*. A third important series of erotic poems is the *Pancacika*. From Arab civilization we have two major collections of poems: the *Hamasa* and the *Muallakat*, of the 10th c. The lyric form of the *ghazal* (q.v.) was widely used for the expression of erotic feelings in Persian, Arabic and Turkish verse in the Middle Ages.

There is also a considerable body of Greek erotic verse particularly by Sappho and Anacreon; also a number of erotic epigrams in the *Greek Anthology* (10th c.). Most Greek erotic poetry is lyrical. The major Roman authors are Catullus, Propertius and Ovid. Ovid's *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* are important since they had a considerable influence on medieval literature, and in particular on the concept of courtly love (q.v.).

Medieval Latin lyric poetry was often erotic, and the Goliards made a notable contribution. Their work is extant in the *Carmina Burana* (q.v.). Memorable examples of the treatment of erotic love are also to be found in Gottfried of Strassburg's *Tristan* (13th c.) and Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (late 14th c.). Less exalted erotic themes are worked out in the medieval *fabliaux* (q.v.) and in stories like Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* (late 14th c.).

During the Renaissance period many poets wrote what can be regarded as erotic poetry, especially Boiardo, Tasso, Ariosto, Spenser, Marlowe and Shakespeare. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* (1598) and Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* (1593) are outstanding examples. The Italian Renaissance poets of the humanistic movement composed erotic verse, especially Giovanni Pontano and Marino. In French literature Ronsard's *Les amours de Marie* (1555) is a major example.

The last half of the 19th c. sees a noticeable increase in this kind of poetry, especially by the French Symbolist poets – Gautier, Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Verlaine. In England the Pre-Raphaelite movement (q.v.) encouraged an interest in erotic themes. Both Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Swinburne wrote erotic verse. One should mention especially Rossetti's *The House of Life* (1881), and Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* (1866).

The sometimes close relationship between love poetry and devotional religious poetry has produced what may be called religious love poetry in which the poet uses worldly and secular imagery and language to express divine love. The result is a species of erotic verse. The most famous example is the mystical poetry of St John of the Cross, the 16th c. Spanish mystic. His *Canciones entre el alma y el Esposo*, *Canciones del alma en la intima*

*comunicación de unión de amor de Dios and Coplas del mismo hechas sobre un éxtasis de alta contemplación* are remarkable expressions of mystical love and union.

**Erziehungsroman** *See* BILDUNGSROMAN.

**escape literature** *See* LITERATURE OF ESCAPE.

**esperanto** One of several artificial 'international' languages compounded of words from different tongues. The word appears to derive from the Spanish *esperanza* 'hope'. L. L. Zamenhof invented the language and published it in 1887.

**espinella** A Spanish stanza form believed to have been invented by the poet Vicente Espinel (1550-1624). It is an octosyllabic ten-line stanza which rhymes abba:accddc. Since its innovation it has been widely used.

**essay** (F *essai* 'attempt') A composition, usually in prose (Pope's *Moral Essays* in verse are an exception), which may be of only a few hundred words (like Bacon's *Essays*) or of book length (like Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*) and which discusses, formally or informally, a topic or a variety of topics. It is one of the most flexible and adaptable of all literary forms.

It was known to the Classical writers (Bacon observes that 'the word is late, but the thing is ancient') and the *Characters* of Theophrastus (3rd c. B.C.), *The Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius (2nd c. A.D.) and Seneca's *Epistle to Lucilius* (1st c. A.D.) all qualify for inclusion in this genre.

Montaigne coined the word *essai* when, in 1580, he gave the title *Essais* to his first publication. In 1597 Bacon described his *Essays* as 'grains of salt which will rather give an appetite than offend with satiety'. Whereas Montaigne was discursive, informal and intimate (writing on such subjects as Liars, The Custom of Wearing Clothes and The Art of Conversation), Bacon was terse, didactic and aloof; though choosing not dissimilar topics (Of Envy, Of Riches, Of Negotiating, Of the Vicissitude of Things). Montaigne's essays often run to many thousands of words; Bacon's seldom exceed a few hundred. Sir William Cornwallis's *Essays* (1600-01) were personal and unassuming reflections very much in the style of Montaigne. Somewhat later Nicolas Breton, a

contemporary and friend of Bacon's (and of Florio's who translated and published Montaigne's *Essais* in 1603), composed *The Fantasticks* (1626), a collection of observations arranged in calendar (*q.v.*) form according to seasons, days and hours. More important than Breton were Sir Thomas Overbury and John Earle (and several other similar writers who flourished in the first half of the 17th c.). Overbury modelled his collection of *Characters* (1614) on Theophrastus, and so did Earle in a collection of character sketches titled *Microcosmographie* (1628). Between the essay and the 'Character' (*q.v.*) there was a kind of cross-pollination whose good influences are apparent for two hundred years or more.

In the 1660s Abraham Cowley became the second important pioneer (after Cornwallis) of the English essay in the Montaigne tradition of personal and reflective informality. Cowley knew and admired the Frenchman's essays and, like him, chose to portray himself. He wrote of such subjects as liberty, solitude, avarice, the brevity of life and the uncertainty of riches; he even wrote an essay *Of Myself*. His work was published posthumously in 1668.

Cowley and St-Évremond, the French critic, between them stimulated interest in Montaigne's work; and Sir William Temple and Dryden consolidated the form of the essay. Both were to have a considerable influence on Steele and Addison. Temple's essays were, for the most part, in the manner of Montaigne. His *Miscellanea* appeared in 1680, 1690 and 1701. Dryden was more formal as, for instance, in his best known work in this genre, the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), which was, in fact, in dialogue (*q.v.*) form.

Towards the end of the 17th c. there were a number of fore-runners to *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, and it is clear that by this stage the essay was becoming an increasingly popular form of diversion. There were, for example, Sir Roger L'Estrange's *Observer papers* (1681-87); Edward Ward's *London Spy* (1698-1700); Tom Browne's *Amusements Serious and Comical* (1700); and John Dunton's *The Athenian Gazette* (1690-97).

Daniel Defoe's journalistic essays and pamphlets, and especially his *Review* (1704-13), influenced the evolution of the essay, but even more important was the type of periodical essay established by Addison and Steele in *The Tatler* (1709-11) and *The Spectator* (1711-12). They wrote on such subjects as the tombs in Westminster Abbey, Ladies' Head-dress, the Cries of London, and Recollections of Childhood. Addison invented a kind of club of



'characters' for *The Spectator* in the Overbury/Earle/Theophrastian tradition. At this period also, a large number of relatively short-lived periodicals published a variety of essays. Some of the better known periodicals were: *The Guardian*, March–Oct. 1713; *The Englishman*, March–Oct. 1713; *The Lover*, March–May 1714; *The Reader*, April–May 1714; *Town-Talk*, Dec. 1715–Feb. 1716; *The Plebeian*, March–April 1719; *The Theatre*, Jan.–April 1720. No fewer than ninety different periodicals came out between 1709 and 1720.

In the middle of the 18th c. Johnson made his contribution to the essay with *The Rambler* and *The Idler*. He also contributed to other publications like *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Johnson for the most part was moral and didactic (though there are moments of levity in some of *The Idler* papers) and his prose was lapidary; a very considerable contrast to Addison and Steele who set out to divert and amuse and whose style was urbanely relaxed. Oliver Goldsmith is nearer to them in spirit and manner, especially in such essays as *Beau Tibbs*, *The Man in Black*, *National Prejudices*, and *A Party at Vauxhall Gardens*. Goldsmith published his own journal, *The Bee*, in 1759.

The essay has flourished ever since. Lamb, Hazlitt, Thomas de Quincey, Coleridge, Macaulay, Leigh Hunt, Carlyle, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Walter Pater, Walter Bagehot and R. L. Stevenson were all outstanding essayists. Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, Leigh Hunt and Stevenson wrote very much in the tradition of Montaigne; as Lamb's *Essays of Elia* (1823, 1833) demonstrate, or Hazlitt's *On Persons One would Wish to have Seen*, and *On Life in General*; also his essays on John Bunce and Cavanagh, the fives player; Leigh Hunt's *On Getting up on Cold Mornings*; De Quincey's *On The Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth*; and Stevenson's *A Plea for Gas Lamps*. The other essayists just mentioned wrote more often of aesthetics, philosophy, literary and historical topics, which have usually been the subjects chosen by European essayists.

Since towards the end of the 19th c. the essay has proliferated. The informal and familiar type of *divertissement* retained its popularity until fairly recently, while weightier matters have been covered more and more by the form. Literary critics, reviewers, journalists and columnists have found the essay to be an indispensable medium.

In *A Christmas Garland* (1912) and *And Even Now* (1920) Max Beerbohm produced two outstanding volumes of essays. Both

## essay

Chesterton and Belloc were extremely prolific and readable essayists on a wide variety of topics, often polemical. E. V. Lucas and A. A. Milne were very nearly as talented and nearer in mood and style to, say, Llewellyn Powys of the *Dorset Essays* (1935). Harold Nicolson's *Small Talk* is one of the best collections of modern essays. Again in the Montaigne tradition, he chooses such subjects as Good Taste and Bad, On Being Polite, On Telling the Truth.

Among the many others who have adorned this genre one should mention Lytton Strachey, Arthur Symons, Ivor Brown, Robert Lynd, James Agate, Virginia Woolf, Neville Cardus, Augustine Birrell, J. B. Priestley, Maurice Hewlett, D. H. Lawrence, Cyril Connolly and Aldous Huxley. All show a wide range of subject, style and knowledge; with, perhaps, Huxley pre-eminent for his wit, learning and urbanity.

In the late 20th c. fewer familiar and informal essays were published because there were fewer periodicals to take them. At the same time the literary and critical essay and the essay of ideas became commonplaces, especially in academic publications. From time to time distinguished authors produce a volume of them. Notable examples are: T. S. Eliot's *Selected Essays* (1932); George Orwell's *Selected Essays* (1946); Graham Greene's *The Lost Childhood and Other Essays* (1951); Aldous Huxley's *Adonis and the Alphabet* (1956); and W. H. Auden's *The Dyer's Hand* (1963).

The essay has also flourished in Europe where some of the outstanding essayists have been La Bruyère, Sainte Beuve, Miguel de Unamuno, Ortega y Gasset and Salvador de Madariaga.

Distinguished American essayists include: Washington Irving, Emerson, Poe, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Thoreau, John Muir, John Burroughs, Frank Moore Colby, Agnes Repplier, Clarence Day, Christopher Morley, E. B. White, James Thurber, W. C. Brownell, Paul Elmer More and George Santayana. *See also* CAUSERIE; PROPOS.

**estancia** A general and ultimately vague Spanish term for a series of verses forming a rhythmic whole. Some are regular, following an ordered plan; some irregular and giving an effect of caprice or disorder. Often of four, six, eight or ten lines; six or eight syllables or even alexandrines (*q.v.*) may be found. The poet chose his form according to his feelings as he composed.

**estrambote** In Spanish verse a term denoting an addition of a few

lines which may be made to a stanza or a sonnet (*qq.v.*). Sometimes used for a comment or gloss (*q.v.*) on what has gone before.

**estrangement** Apart from its everyday meaning, this term has been used to refer to the results of the alienation effect (*q.v.*) when the spectator or receptor (*q.v.*) detaches himself emotionally from the work the better to follow its didactic import.

**estribillo** (Sp 'little stirrup'; diminutive of *estribo* 'stirrup') The equivalent of the French *ritournelle*; in Spanish it denotes a refrain or chorus (also a pet word or phrase). It is a theme-verse or stanza (of from two to four lines) of a *villancico* (*q.v.*) and may have originated in the Arabic *zǧeǧel* (*q.v.*). We first come across it in the 11th c. in the form of the romance *jarcha* (*q.v.*) of a Hebrew poem. After *villancicos* ceased to be written they developed another lease of life as the *copla* (*q.v.*) of modern times. The *estribillo* is thus a diachronic element in Spanish popular lyric poetry. Sometimes the *estribillo* formed an introductory stanza, stating the theme of a poem, and then was repeated at the end. Also used in ballad. *Estribote* is an augmentative from *estribo*.

**estrofa** (Sp 'strophe') The equivalent to the English usage of stanza (*q.v.*).

**estrofa mauriqueña** A type of *copla de pie quebrado* named after Jorge Maurique (c. 1440-79), with the rhyme pattern ABc ABc, where c is the short broken line. The effect is produced by having the two octosyllabic lines (A and B) followed by a four-syllable line (c). See *COPLA*; *PIE QUEBRADO*.

**euphemism** (Gk 'fair speech') The substitution of a mild and pleasant expression for a harsh and blunt one, such as 'to pass away' for 'to die'. Euphemism has become the bane of much writing in the 20th c., especially in the jargon (*q.v.*) language of sociologists, educationists and bureaucrats. It is common in officialese (*q.v.*); also in broadcasting and newspapers. So widespread is it and so insidious its influence that it frequently becomes a form of Newspeak (*q.v.*). The following are current euphemisms of a general nature, with their 'interpretations':  
(a) A man is helping the police with their inquiries/a suspected criminal is detained by the police and probably under close arrest;  
(b) A large accident/the explosion of a nuclear power station;

## euphemism

(c) A clean bomb/a bomb with a minimal fall-out which kills tens of thousands of people as opposed to hundreds of thousands; (d) armed emergency/a small-scale war in which large numbers of people are being killed, buildings destroyed, etc.; (e) under-achiever/a school-child who is backward or merely bone from the neck upwards; (f) the locus of evaluation/the class-room; (g) lower ability group/slow learners; (h) a member of the lower socio-economic bracket/a poor person; (i) terminal illness/a fatal illness. See DYSPEHEMISM; METALEPSIS; PERIPHRAISIS.

**euphony** (Gk 'sweetness of sound') The term denotes pleasing, mellifluous sounds, usually produced by long vowels rather than consonants; though liquid consonants can be euphonic. The almost voluptuously drowsy vowel sounds in the following lines from Keats's *Hyperion* soothe the ear:

As when upon a tranced summer night,  
Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch-charmèd by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,

Consider also the effect of the liquid sounds in this stanza from Gerard Manley Hopkins's *Wreck of the Deutschland*:

Is out with it! Oh,  
We lash with the best or worst  
Word last! Now a lush-kept plush-capped sloe  
Will, mouthed to flesh-burst,  
Gush! – flush the man, the being with it, sour or sweet,  
Brim, in a flash, full! – Hither then, last or first,  
To hero of Calvary, Christ's feet –  
Never ask if meaning it, wanting it, warned of it – men go.

See ASSONANCE; CACOPHONY; DISSONANCE; MELOPOEIA; ONOMATOPOEIA; TONE COLOUR.

**euphuism** An ornately florid, precious and mazy style of writing (often alliterative, antithetical and embellished with elaborate figures of speech) which takes its name from two works by John Lyly: namely, *Euphues, the anatomy of wyt* (1578) and *Euphues and his England* (1580). In Greek *euphues* means 'well endowed by nature'. Gabriel Harvey dubbed Lyly's style 'euphuism' in *Advertisement for Papp-Hatchet* (1589). Lyly's works are important in the history and development of English prose. They were



written at a time when many writers were experimenting with prose style. Euphuism appears to have had a certain amount of influence. It is evident, for example, in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Love's Labour's Lost*. Shakespeare parodied the style in *Henry IV* Pt. I. One can hardly imagine, either, that Sir Thomas Browne had not read Lyly. In fact, the more ornate and baroque (*q.v.*) prose styles of some of the early 17th c. writers suggest that Lyly's influence was considerable.

The following passage gives some idea of the euphuistic manner:

Which things, Lucilla, albeit they be sufficient to reprove the lightness of some one, yet can they not convince every one of lewdness, neither ought the constancy of all to be brought in question through the subtlety of a few. For although the worm entereth almost into every wood, yet he eateth not the cedar tree; though the stone cylindrus at every thunder clap roll from the hill, yet the pure sleek stone mounteth at the noise; though the rust fret the hardest steel, yet doth it not eat into the emerald; though polypus change his hue, yet the salamander keepeth his colour; though Proteus transform himself into every shape, yet Pygmalion retaineth his old form; though Aeneas were too fickle to Dido, yet Troilus was too faithful to Cressida; though others seem counterfeit in their deeds, yet, Lucilla, persuade yourself that Euphues will be always current in his dealings.

See also GONGORISM; MANNERISM; MARINISM; SECENTISMO.

**eupolidian** (Gk 'well varied') In Classical prosody a term denoting a varied metrical form: a tetrameter (*q.v.*) with mixed choriambic and trochaic feet. See CHORIAMB; TROCHEE.

**excursus** (L 'running out') A detailed examination and analysis of a point, often added as an appendix to a book. An incidental discussion or digression.

**exegesis** In Roman times the exegetes were professional and official interpreters of charms, omens, dreams, sacred law and oracular pronouncements. Thus the term has come to mean an explanation or interpretation and is often applied to biblical studies. As far as

## exegesis

literature is concerned, it covers critical analysis and the elucidation of difficulties in the text. A variorum edition (*q.v.*), for example, contains a great deal of exegesis.

**exemplum** (L 'example') A short narrative used to illustrate a moral. The term applies primarily to the stories used in medieval sermons. Occasionally the *exemplum* found its way into literature. Two good examples in Chaucer are *The Pardoner's Tale* and *The Nun's Priest's Tale* (late 14th c.). Gower, in *Confessio Amantis* (c. 1385) makes use of *exempla* when illustrating sins against Venus. In the Middle Ages theological handbooks for preachers contained large numbers of *exempla*. Two particularly important works of this kind were John Bromyard's *Summa Praedicatorum* and the *Liber Exemplorum ad Usus Praedicatorum* (14th c.). One of the most famous source books was the 13th c. Latin *Gesta Romanorum*. Other notable collections in the 12th, 13th and 14th c. were: the *Alphabet of Tales*; Nicolas Bozon's *Metaphors*; the *Early South English Legendary*; *Jacob's Well*; Dan Michel's *Azenbite of Inwyte*; John Mirk's *Festial*; the *Myroure of Our Lady*; Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne*; the *Speculum Christiani*; the *Speculum Laicorum*; and the *Speculum Sacerdotale*. Many *exempla* can be traced back to the early Fathers and are contained in the *Patrologia Latina*. See also FABLE; FABLEAU; GESTA; SHORT STORY.

**exergasia** (L 'amplification') A device by which a number of figures of speech amplify a point and embellish a passage. See also EUPHUISM.

**existentialism** (or *existenzphilosophie*) In philosophy, the terms *exist* and *existence* denote something active rather than passive and thus are closely dependent on the Latin root *ex* 'out' + *sistere* from *stare* 'to stand'. The term existentialism means 'pertaining to existence'; or, in logic, 'predicating existence'. Philosophically, it now applies to a vision of the condition and existence of man, his place and function in the world, and his relationship, or lack of one, with God. It is generally agreed that existentialism derives from the thinking of Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55), and especially in his books *Fear and Trembling* (1843), *The Concept of Dread* (1844) and *Sickness Unto Death* (1848). In these and other works Kierkegaard was for the most part re-stating and elaborating upon the belief that through God and in God man may find freedom from tension and discontent and therefore find peace of mind and

spiritual serenity; an idea that had prevailed in much Christian thinking over many centuries. Kierkegaard became the pioneer of modern Christian existentialism. After him existential thought was greatly expanded at the beginning of the 20th c. by Heidegger and Jaspers (German philosophers), whose ideas in turn influenced a large number of European philosophers (e.g. Berdyaev, Unamuno, J. de Gautier and B. Fondane) and in whose work are to be found the sources of atheistic existentialism.

An important feature of atheistic existentialism is the argument that existence precedes essence (the reverse of many traditional forms of philosophy) for it is held that man fashions his own existence and only exists by so doing, and, in that process, and by the choice of what he does or does not do, gives essence to that existence.

Jean-Paul Sartre is the hierophant of modern *existentialisme* and his version, expressed through his novels, plays and philosophical writings, is the one that has caught on and been the most widely influential. In Sartre's vision man is born into a kind of void (*néant*), a mud (*le visqueux*). He has the liberty to remain in this mud and thus lead a passive, supine, acquiescent existence (like Oblomov and Samuel Beckett's sad tatterdemalions), in a 'semi-conscious' state and in which he is scarcely aware of himself. However, he may come out of his subjective, passive situation (in which case he would 'stand out from'), become increasingly aware of himself and, conceivably, experience *angoisse* (a species of metaphysical and moral anguish). If so, he would then have a sense of the absurdity of his predicament and suffer despair. The energy deriving from this awareness would enable him to 'drag himself out of the mud', and begin to exist. By exercising his power of choice he can give meaning to existence and the universe. Thus, in brief, the human being is obliged to make himself what he is, and has to be what he is. A now classic statement on this situation is Sartre's description of the waiter, in *L'Être et le Néant* (p. 100).

In *L'Existentialisme est un humanisme* (1946) Sartre expressed the belief that man *can* emerge from his passive and indeterminate condition and, by an act of will, become *engagé*; whereupon he is committed (through *engagement*) to some action and part in social and political life. Through commitment man provides a reason and a structure for his existence and this helps to integrate society.

In 1946 Sartre founded the review *Les Temps modernes*, a medium for existentialist writings. Apart from Sartre, some of

## existentialism

the main exponents of *existentialisme* have been Simone de Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty and Jean Wahl. The main exponent of Christian *existentialisme* has been Gabriel Marcel, the philosopher and dramatist, who has written some brilliant critical analyses of Sartre's point of view, and who, in his article *Existence et objectivité* (1925), was very probably the first to introduce the term *existentialisme* into the vocabulary of French philosophy. Marcel's influence has been discernible in the work of some French novelists, notably Jean Cayrol and Luc Estang. *See also* COMMITMENT; THEATRE OF THE ABSURD.

**exordium** The introductory part of a speech (*q.v.*) as laid down by the Classical rhetoricians. *See also* RHETORIC.

**experimentelen** (Du 'experimentalists') Members of a Dutch movement in art and literature who were active in the 1950s. The term was invented by the painter Asgar Jorn.

**explication** A formal and close analysis of a text: its structure, style, content, imagery – indeed every aspect of it. As a method of elucidation it is commonly practised in French schools, and to a certain extent now in England since the 1920s. Key works in the development of this kind of critical analysis are: *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* (1928) by Laura Riding and Robert Graves; *Practical Criticism* (1929) by I. A. Richards; and *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) by William Empson.

**exposition** At the beginning of his play the dramatist is often committed to giving a certain amount of essential information about the plot and the events which are to come. He may also have to give information about what has 'already happened'. All this comes under the heading of exposition. A skilful dramatist is able to introduce this material without holding up the action of the play and without recourse to the obvious devices of narrative. *See also* PROTATIC CHARACTER.

**expressionism** The term (probably used by Vauxcelles after a series of paintings by Julien-Auguste Hervé in 1901 under the title *Expressionismes*) refers to a movement in Germany very early in the 20th c. (*c.* 1905) in which a number of painters sought to avoid the representation of external reality and, instead, to project them-



selves and a highly personal vision of the world. The term can be applied to literature, but only judiciously.

Briefly summarized, the main principle involved is that expression determines form, and therefore imagery, punctuation, syntax, and so forth. Indeed, any of the formal rules and elements of writing can be bent or disjointed to suit the purpose.

The theories of expressionism had considerable influence in Germany and Scandinavia. In fact, Expressionism dominated the theatre for a time in the 1920s. Theatrically it was a reaction against realism (*q.v.*) and aimed to show inner psychological realities. The origins of this are probably to be found in Strindberg's *The Dream Play* (1907) and *The Ghost Sonata* (1907). Wedekind's plays of the same period were also strongly expressionistic. Other notable works were: Sorge's *The Beggar* (1912); Kaiser's *From Morning to Midnight* (1912); Unruh's *Officers* (1913); Hasenclever's *The Son* (1913) and Kaiser's *The Burgers of Calais* (1914). In these plays we see the makings of epic theatre (*q.v.*).

By the mid-1920s Expressionism in the theatre was nearly extinct and it did not catch on much outside Germany – nor was it much understood. In France the influence has been negligible. In England and America the dramatists are really the only writers to have been affected; particularly Eugene O'Neil, Elmer Rice and Thornton Wilder. Up to a point T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood have also been influenced.

It can be argued that Expressionistic theories have also had some effects on writers like Wyndham Lewis and Virginia Woolf, as they certainly had upon Kafka, Schickele and Edschmid. The more involved and exaggerated prose experiments of James Joyce, William Faulkner and Samuel Beckett also bear signs of it. The long-term influences are discernible in the anti-novel (*q.v.*).

Merely sonic and colour effects in poetry and attempts at synaesthesia (*q.v.*), where much of the sense is sacrificed for the sake of sound (as in some of the work of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Roy Campbell), might also be described as Expressionistic. Edith Sitwell, who investigated the possibilities, wrote some Expressionist poems (e.g. *I Do Like To Be Beside The Seaside*):

When  
Don  
Pasquito arrived at the seaside  
Where the donkey's hide tide brayed, he  
Saw the banditto Jo in a black cape

## expressionism

Whose black shape waved like the sea –  
Thetis wrote a treatise noting wheat is silver like  
the sea; the lovely  
cheat is sweat as foam; Erotise notices she  
Will  
Steal  
The  
Wheat-King's luggage, like Babel  
Before the League of Nations grew –  
So Jo put the luggage and the label  
In the pocket of Flo the Kangaroo.

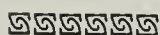
*See also* ULTRAISM.

**expressive form, fallacy of** The idea that if a poet feels with sufficient intensity then this will be enough to create a successful poem. But if a poet depends only on inspiration, then this will not be adequate. He must also judge, compare, analyse.

**extravaganza** The word derives from the Italian *stravaganza* which means, approximately, 'influenced by extravagance'. It is a form of 19th c. English drama which consisted of an elaborately presented fairy tale (*q.v.*) or some mythical story: a sort of mixture of musical, pantomime (*q.v.*) and ballet. The spirit was always light, gay, even farcical, and reminiscent of burlesque (*q.v.*). The most talented writer of this form of entertainment was J. R. Planché who got his inspiration from a French diversion described as 'féerie folie'. It was at the Olympic Theatre, London, that a Madame Vestris perfected the form. Nowadays the nearest thing to an extravaganza is a revue (*q.v.*).

**eye-rhyme** A rhyme which gives to the eye the impression of an exact rhyme, but does not, in fact, possess identical sounds. Examples are *come* | *home*; *forth* | *worth*.

# F



**fable** (L. *fabula* 'discourse, story') A short narrative in prose or verse which points a moral. Non-human creatures or inanimate things are normally the characters. The presentation of human beings as animals is the characteristic of the literary fable and is unlike the fable that still flourishes among primitive peoples.

The genre probably arose in Greece, and the first collection of fables is ascribed to Aesop (6th c. B.C.). His principal successors were Phaedrus and Babrius, who flourished in the 1st c. A.D. Phaedrus preserved Aesop's fables and in the 10th c. a prose adaptation of Phaedrus's translation appeared under the title *Romulus*, a work whose popularity lasted until the 17th c. A famous collection of Indian fables was the *Bidpai* which were probably composed originally in Sanskrit c. A.D. 300. Many versions of these were made in prose and verse in different languages between the 3rd c. and 16th c. The best of the medieval fabulists was Marie de France who, c. 1200, composed 102 fables in verse. After her came La Fontaine who raised the whole level of the fable and is generally acknowledged as the world's master. He took most of the stories from Aesop and Phaedrus but translated them in his verse. His *Fables choisies* were published in twelve books (1668, 1678-9, 1694).

La Fontaine had many imitators: principally, Eustache de Noble, Pignotti, John Gay, J. P. C. de Florian and Tomás Iriarte. Later, Lessing followed the style of Aesop. John Gay's *Fifty-one Fables in Verse* were published in 1727. In Russia the greatest of the fabulists was Ivan Krylov who translated a number of La Fontaine's fables and between 1810 and 1820 published nine books of fables. More recently Kipling made a notable contribution to the genre with *Just So Stories* (1902). Mention should also be made of James Thurber's droll *Fables of Our Time* (1940) and George Orwell's remarkable political satire *Animal Farm*

## fable

(1945), which is in fable form. *See also* ALLEGORY; BEAST EPIC; BESTIARY; CONTE.

**fabliau** A short narrative in octosyllabic (*q.v.*) verse, usually of 300 to 400 lines. The genre flourished in France between 1150 and 1400 A.D. About 150 are extant. The earliest known is *Richent* (1159), but it seems likely that they existed earlier because disapproval of them was expressed in Egbert's *Poenitentie* of the 8th c.

*Fabliaux* tended to be ribaldly comic tales. They were satirical, in a rough and ready fashion, often at the expense of the clergy. Their caustic attitude towards women may have been a reaction against the apotheosis of women in the tradition and cult of courtly love (*q.v.*). The form is primarily French, but there are examples in English literature, like Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* and *Reeve's Tale* (late 14th c.). *See also* FABLE; LAI.

**fabula** (L 'narrative, story, tale') The Latin *fabulae* were forms of drama among which we may distinguish the following: (a) *fabula Atellana*, so called after the Oscan town Atella. A kind of southern Italian farce (*q.v.*) popular in Rome until the period of Augustus (63 B.C.-A.D. 14). They were bawdy pantomimes (*q.v.*) with stock characters (*q.v.*) who were represented by masks. Some of the main dramatis personae were: Bucco, the clown; Maccus, the fool; Pappus, the grandfather or foolish dotard; Manducus, a glutton; Dossenus, a hunchback; (b) *fabula crepidata*, Roman tragedies based on Greek themes. The Roman word for *cothurnus* (*q.v.*) worn by the tragic actors was *crepida*; a term rendered in English by *buskin* (*q.v.*); (c) *fabula palliata* (*palliata* from Latin *pallium* 'cloak'). A type of comedy first introduced in Roma by Livius Andronicus in the 3rd c. B.C. It remained popular for well over a hundred years and consisted for the most part of adaptations of Greek New Comedy (*q.v.*). The only extant *palliatae* were created by Plautus and Terence; (d) *fabula praetexta*, so called from the *toga praetexta* - a garment worn by priests and magistrates and bordered with a purple stripe. Such *fabulae* were dramas based on Roman history which presented well-known Roman personalities. Thus, a kind of history play (*q.v.*). The invention of the form is attributed to Naevius of the 3rd c. B.C.; (e) *fabula saltica*, so called from *saltire* 'to jump', they were a form of Roman ballet and pantomime; (f) *fabula stataria*, so called because it tended to be a static form of drama, in distinction from the



*motoria* or rapidly moving comedy (or what we should now call farce) with stock characters; (g) *fabula togata*, so named from the *toga* – the traditional Roman garment. Such dramas were a form of comedy based on Greek models but dealing with Roman life and characters. The main dramatist was Afrianus and this type of comedy had some vogue in the latter part of the 2nd c. B.C.

**fabulation** A term used to describe the anti-novel (*q.v.*). It appears to have been introduced by Robert Scholes in *The Fabulators* (1967). Fabulation involves allegory (*q.v.*), verbal acrobatics and surrealist effects. However, it is not entirely a new term; Caxton used *Fabulator* in 1484.

**facetiae** A bookseller's term for humorous or obscene books.

**fairy tale** The fairy tale belongs to folk literature (*q.v.*) and is part of the oral tradition (*q.v.*). And yet no one bothered to record them until the brothers Grimm produced their famous collection of *Haus-Märchen* or *Household Tales* (1812, 1815, 1822).

In its written form the fairy tale tends to be a narrative in prose about the fortunes and misfortunes of a hero or heroine who, having experienced various adventures of a more or less supernatural kind, lives happily ever after. Magic, charms, disguise and spells are some of the major ingredients of such stories, which are often subtle in their interpretation of human nature and psychology.

The origins of fairy tales are obscure. Some think they may have come from the East. *The Thousand and One Nights* or *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* were written in Arabic and were translated into French in the 18th c.

In European literature there are three major collections: (a) Charles Perrault's *Contes de ma mère l'Oye* (1697), which were translated into English by Robert Samber in 1729; (b) The collection made by the Grimm brothers already mentioned; (c) Hans Christian Andersen's *Fairy Tales* (*Eventyr*) published in 1835. Other fairy tales have been composed by Ruskin, Thackeray, Charles Kingsley, Jean Ingelow and Oscar Wilde. Stories about Prince Charming, Red Riding Hood, Puss in Boots and Cinderella have a European background. See CONTE; SHORT STORY; SUPERNATURAL STORY.

**Falkentheorie** A theory of the *novella* (*q.v.*) worked out by the German writer Paul Heyse (1830–1914). This theory is based on

## Falkentheorie

the ninth tale of the fifth day of Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1350). It is the story of Federigo who wasted his substance in the fruitless wooing of a rich mistress; wasted it to such an extent that he had only his favourite falcon left. This, too, he sacrificed – and his mistress was so moved by the act that she surrendered. The falcon is thus symbolic and denotes the strongly marked silhouette – as Heyse puts it – which, according to him, distinguishes one *novella* from another and gives it a unique quality. An interesting but elaborate theory, which is only another way of saying that each story is different from the others.

**falling action** That part of a play which follows the dénouement or climax (*qq.v.*). See FREYTAG'S PYRAMID; RESOLUTION; RISING ACTION.

**falling rhythm** This occurs when the stress pattern is thrown backwards in a line of verse so that it falls on the first syllables of the feet. The dactyl and the trochee (*qq.v.*) are the two basic feet in falling rhythm. The following example (basically trochaic) comes from Shakespeare's *The Passionate Pilgrim*:

Crábbed áge ánd yóuth  
Cánnót líve tógéthër;  
Yóuth ís fúll óf pleásánce,  
Áge ís fúll óf cáre;  
Yóuth líke súmme'r mórn,  
Áge líke wíntèr's weáthër;  
Yóuth líke súmme'r bráve,  
Áge líke wíntèr báre;  
Yóuth ís fúll óf spórt,  
Ágè's breáth ís shórt.

See RISING RHYTHM.

**false masque** See ANTI-MASQUE.

**familiar verse** See LIGHTVERSE.

**fancy and imagination** Two much used and much debated terms in the history of critical theory. As on so many matters relating to literature, its forms and principles, issue was joined again during the Middle Ages and at the Renaissance in the names of the two critical world champions – Aristotle and Plato. Medieval

## fancy and imagination

thought on matters of invention was dominated by Aristotle. Renaissance thought was dominated by Plato. Shakespeare represented the Platonic point of view in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (V, i):

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,  
Are of imagination all compact;

And again in that play:

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And, as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.

For the Elizabethans poetry had something in it of the divine; it enabled one to express things that were beyond the rational powers. Intuitive perception gave insight by the 'feigning' (*q.v.*) of poetry. As Bacon put it in Book II of *The Advancement of Learning*, poetry was always thought:

. . . to have some participation of divinesse, because it doth raise and erect the Minde, by submitting the shewes of things to the desires of the Mind, whereas reason doth buckle and bowe the Mind unto the Nature of things.

In his *Apologie for Poetrie* (1595), Sir Philip Sidney puts the point that poetry pleases and instructs by *mimesis* (*q.v.*), by metaphor, by counterfeiting, and at the same time the poet transforms what he finds in Nature, creates forms that did not exist.

Half way through the 17th c. Hobbes addressed himself to the matter of the poetic imagination in *Leviathan* (1651). All knowledge, he avers, comes from sensory experience. Images of objects are stored in the memory. Judgement and fancy (or imagination) between them develop from this store. In a famous passage in his *Answer to D'Avenant* (1650) he writes:

Time and Education begets experience; Experience begets memory; Memory begets Judgement and Fancy; Judgement begets the strength and structure, and Fancy begets the Ornaments of a Poem.

In *Leviathan* he expresses the view that fancy is a faculty which finds likeness, and that judgement distinguishes differences.

## fancy and imagination

Judgement which, for Hobbes, was very nearly the same thing as memory, needs to hold fancy in check.

Dryden's views about poetic composition were very similar to those of Hobbes (see Dryden's preface to *Annus Mirabilis*). Hobbes's theory was very influential indeed.

The next major contribution to this topic came from John Locke in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). He describes 'wit' in very much the same terms that Hobbes had used for 'imagination', and their views of the function of judgement are almost identical. Locke also developed the theory of the 'association of ideas'. Locke's influence was also great, and it can be said that between them Locke and Hobbes laid the basis of psychological theory in aesthetics and literary criticism which was to prevail in the 18th c. Addison, too, made a vital contribution in his *Spectator* papers on *The Pleasures of the Imagination*. These were widely read. Addison amplified the associative theory and showed that the connotations of words were quite as important as their denotations.

During much of the 18th c. the creative and inventive processes of the mind were analysed in considerable depth, particularly by Hartley in *Observations on Man* (1749), by Joseph Priestley in *Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind*, by Hume in *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739) and his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), by Shaftesbury in *Characteristicks* (1711), by Alexander Gerard in *Essay on Genius* (1774), and by William Blake who took a wholly different point of view from the empiricists. Blake's view was different because the last thing he believed or wanted to believe was that the world was a great machine and God its divine mechanic. Blake held that the human soul existed before birth and had intuitive knowledge and understanding of the spirit world from which it came. To Blake the natural order was an external manifestation of the spiritual and transcendent world. Everything in the natural world had for him a spiritual meaning and thus it was full of symbols, symbols of ideal forms. As Baudelaire was later to express it in *Correspondances*:

La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers

Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles.

L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles . . .

To Blake, the function of the imagination was to decipher these codes, symbols and celestial hieroglyphics, these outward signs of an inward universal grace, and render their meaning in poetry.



Thus Blake had not an intellectual and philosophical system. He trusted to intuition rather than analysis.

But, fundamentally, during the 18th c., fancy and imagination were usually taken to be, if not synonymous, very nearly the same thing, and judgement was regarded as the superior and stronger faculty because it controlled (or ought to control) the fanciful and imaginative processes. Scattered about Johnson's various writings, for example, we continually find strictures on flights of fancy and admonitions to guard against them. Johnson was deeply suspicious of the potency of the fancy and imagination, but it may be said that in general people would have agreed with him. Moreover, judgment was the power of reason, of sobriety, of restraint, of balance and order. The neoclassicists prized these qualities.

It was eventually Coleridge who made the most telling and lasting observations on this topic. His theory of imagination is contained in *Biographia Literaria* (1817). Coleridge was in search of the unified personality and believed that the imagination was the means to attain it. The imagination, he wrote, was the 'synthetic' and 'magical' power which could bring about the fusion of human faculties. When Coleridge heard Wordsworth reading his own poetry he speculated about the imagination and later wrote in *Biographia Literaria* that he suspected that:

. . . Fancy and Imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or, at furthest, the lower and higher degrees of one and the same power.

From being a follower of Locke and Hartley, Coleridge turned to Platonism (*q.v.*) and then became a follower of Berkeley whose main philosophical principle was that to be is to be perceived and that everything exists as an idea in the mind of God. Thus Nature is part of God and is the language of God. Coleridge expressed these new beliefs in *Destiny of Nations*:

All that meets the bodily sense I deem  
Symbolical, one mighty alphabet  
To infant minds; and we in this low world  
Placed with our backs to bright reality,  
That we might learn with young unwounded ken  
The substance from the shadow.

Having discovered this 'eternal language' of Nature, Coleridge

## fancy and imagination

was at pains to work out the function of the imagination. In this venture he was considerably influenced by Kant, Schelling and Spinoza and he finally expressed his theories in Chapter XIII of *Biographia Literaria*.

He decided that fancy was a mode of memory 'emancipated from the order of time and space' which received all its materials 'made from the law of association'. The real imagination is either primary or secondary. The primary mediates between sensation and perception and is the living power and 'prime agent of all human perception', and this faculty is common to all percipient human beings. The secondary or poetic imagination is:

. . . an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency, and differing only in *degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create: or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify.

In the preface to his *Poems* (1815) Wordsworth took a rather different point of view, which Coleridge disagreed with:

Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalry with Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse . . .

This is plainly much less precise than Coleridge's views but the implications are that imagination is the more important and more powerful faculty. Usage suggests that fancy has been the lesser or 'weaker' of the two terms. Fancy is an abbreviation of *fantasy* (L *phantasia*, a transliteration from the Greek) and if we disengage the connotations of the following phrases we find that fancy is associated with the light-weight, the insubstantial, with caprice and whim, with liking or wanting, with satisfying a temporary need: 'I have a fancy to'; 'He lives in a world of fantasy'; 'That is a fanciful idea'; 'She has a fancy man'; 'Do you fancy it/her/him?'; 'Fancy that!'; 'A strange fancy'.

By contrast we have phrases like: 'I can just imagine it'; 'Imagine that!'; 'What an imagination!'; 'A very imaginative person'; 'He imagined the whole thing'; 'Her imagination runs away with her'. And so forth. In no case can we substitute 'imagine',

'imagination' or 'imaginative' for 'fancy' or 'fanciful' without a radical change of meaning.

We may conclude, then, that imagination is the superior faculty, the transubstantiator of experience; while fancy is a kind of assistant to imagination, an inventive tactician. One might even go so far as to suggest that a sexual antinomy is implied: fancy is feminine; imagination, masculine. *See also* AFFLATUS; DONNEÉ; FEIGNING; INSPIRATION; INVENTION; LIGNE DONNEÉ; MUSE; WIT.

**farce** The word derives from the Latin *farcire* 'to stuff'. As applied to drama the term derives from the OF *farce* 'stuffing'.

The object of farce is to provoke mirth of the simplest and most basic kind: roars of laughter rather than smiles. It is a matter, therefore, of humour rather than wit (*q.v.*). It is associated with burlesque (*q.v.*) – though it must be distinguished from burlesque – with clowning, buffoonery, slapstick (*q.v.*) and knockabout. It is 'low' comedy – and it is broad. The basic elements of farce are: exaggerated physical action (often repeated), exaggeration of character and situation, absurd situations and improbable events (even impossible ones, and therefore fantastic), and surprises in the form of unexpected appearances and disclosures. In farce, character and dialogue are nearly always subservient to plot and situation. The plot is usually complex and events succeed one another with almost bewildering rapidity.

The absolute origins of farce are obscure, though it may be reasonably supposed that it precedes anything merely literary. At its simplest, perhaps, it could be described as a form of pre-historic horseplay. In classical literature farcical elements are to be found in the plays of Aristophanes and Plautus. The Aristophanic plot combined low comedy (*q.v.*) – in the shape of ridiculous situations and ludicrous results, ribaldry and junketings – with serious satire (*q.v.*) and invective (*q.v.*). Plautus also used the absurd situation (especially that arising from mistaken identity), knockabout and bawdy. The farcical is also discernible in the Greek satyr-play (*q.v.*) and in the Roman *fabula* (*q.v.*).

The first plays to be described as *farces* were French and belong to the late Middle Ages. The 'stuffing' consisted of comic interludes between scenes in religious or liturgical drama. Such 'stuffings' or 'gags' were usually written in octosyllabic couplets, and an average length was 500 lines. These interpolations poked fun at the foibles and vices of everyday life (particularly at

## farce

commercial knavery and conjugal infidelity) and are related to the *fabliau* and the *sotie* (q.v.). This kind of comedy is well illustrated in Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* (late 14th c.).

Later, in the French theatre, these farcical interludes developed into a form of their own: a one-act farce. About 150 of these survive. Some of the better known are: *Maître Pierre Pathelin*, *La Farce du Pâté et de la Tarte*, *Le Chaudronnier*, *Le Poulier*, *Le Cuvier* and *Le Meunier et le gentilhomme*.

The English Mystery Plays (q.v.) also contain comic interludes and these (as, occasionally, in France) were provided with demonic and grotesque figures behaving in a buffoonish manner, gambolling about and letting off fireworks. There is some connection between these 'characters' who ran clowning among the audience and the Vice (q.v.) of the Interludes (q.v.) and later Morality Plays (q.v.).

The influence of French farce is discernible in Italy, Germany and in England where the first writer of note to use the form was John Heywood who borrowed from and imitated French farce. His interludes became almost a comic genre of their own. For example: *The Play of the Wether* (1533), *Thersites* (c. 1537) and *The Foure P's* (c. 1545).

No doubt Heywood influenced Tudor dramatists who began to introduce farcical episodes in their plays: *Ralph Roister Doister* (1553); *Gammer Gurton's Needle* (1566); *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594); Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (1594), *The Taming of the Shrew* (c. 1594), *Henry IV* (c. 1597) and *Henry V* (1599), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1600-1), *Twelfth Night* (1600-1) and *The Tempest* (c. 1611); the anonymous *Mucedorus* (1598); Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1606) and *The Alchemist* (1610).

It should be noted also that something approaching farce was sometimes used in tragedy (q.v.) for comic relief (q.v.). Notable instances occur in Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* (IV, vii) a play which, though as late as c. 1588, contains much that is characteristic of the Morality Plays (q.v.).

However, in this period, apart from *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, there is little that could be described as farce without some reservations. Later, we have Jonson's *Bartholomew Fayre* (1614), an outstanding farcical comedy. And then, in the middle of the 17th c., Molière showed himself a master of the genre – especially with *Le Malade Imaginaire* (1672). In Restoration Comedy (q.v.) and 18th c. comedy there are plentiful farcical episodes, particularly in burlesque (q.v.) plays. In the 18th



c. also we find a number of short farces used as curtain raisers (*q.v.*).

Fully-developed and mature farce finally established itself in the 19th c.; in France with the work of Labiche and Feydeau; in England with the work of Pinero. W. S. Gilbert also helped to popularize the form.

Some of Labiche's major works are: *Monsieur de Coislin* (1838); *Le Chapeau de paille d'Italie* (1851); *Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon* (1860); and *La Cagnotte* (1864). Feydeau was a prolific writer of farces, and some of his most important plays are: *Un Fil à la patte* (1894); *Hotel Paradiso* (1894); *Le Dindon* (1898); *La Dame chez Maxim's* (1899); *La Puce à l'oreille* (1907); *Occupe-toi d'Amélie* (1908); and *On purge bébé* (1910). Pinero's main achievements in farce were: *The Magistrate* (1885); *The Schoolmistress* (1886); *Dandy Dick* (1887); and *The Cabinet Minister* (1890).

From this period, too, date three one-act farces by Chekov: *The Bear* (1888); *The Proposal* (1889); and *The Wedding* (1890); and two full-length farces by Georges Courteline: *Les Gaietés de l'escadron* (1886) and *Boubouroche* (1893). To the 1890s also belongs a classic farce in the English repertoire: Brandon Thomas's *Charley's Aunt* (1892). Some would describe Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895) as a farce; but it is really a beautiful example of farce combined with comedy of manners (*q.v.*). The same might be said of Gogol's *The Government Inspector* (1836).

In the 20th c. the genre of farce continued to flourish in, for example, Somerset Maugham's *Home and Beauty* (1919); Frederick Lonsdale's *On Approval* (1927); R. F. Delderfield's *Worm's Eye View* (1945); John Dighton's *The Happiest Days of Your Life* (1947); Marcel Aymé's *Clerembard* (1950); Jean Paul Sartre's *Kean* (1953); and Joe Orton's *Loot* (1967).

For many years two London theatres produced successful farces. At the Aldwych many good farces by Ben Travers were staged: *Cuckoo in the Nest* (1925); *Rookery Nook* (1926); *Thak* (1927); *A Bit of a Test* (1933); and *Banana Ridge* (1938). Later the Whitehall Theatre presented many farces by Brian Rix: *Reluctant Heroes* (1950); *Dry Rot* (1954); *Simple Spymen* (1958); and *One for the Pot* (1961).

Since Labiche and Feydeau, and thanks to them, what is known as the 'bedroom farce', whose themes are sexual infidelity and amorous escapades both in and out of wedlock, has been one of the most popular forms.

Other distinguished dramatists who have made contributions

## farce

to farce are: André Roussin, Ferenc Molnar and Jean Anouilh. *See also* BLACK COMEDY; COMEDY; THEATRE OF THE ABSURD; VAUDEVILLE.

**fârsa** A type of boasting poem (*q.v.*) found among the African Galla tribe. Such poems recite a litany of heroes and their heroic deeds. *See also* GIERASA.

**fate drama** A form of play which had some vogue in Germany early in the 19th c. In such plays the hero or heroine was driven towards crime or destruction by a kind of fate or nemesis from which there was no escape. The sombre and doom-laden quality of these plays owes something to Greek tragedy, the Gothic novel (*q.v.*) and to the more bizarre extravagances of Gothic-type romances. Possibly the first example was Werner's *Der vierundzwanzigste Februar* (1809). Other instances were Adolf Müllner's *Der neunundzwanzigste Februar* (1812) and Grillparzer's *Die Ahnfrau* (1817).

**fatrasie** (F 'medley, rubbish, farrago') A French medieval verse form, usually of eleven lines. It was marked by a certain amount of comic nonsense, sometimes in macaronics (*q.v.*). It can be taken as an early example of nonsense verse (*q.v.*). *See* COQ-À-L'ÂNE; SORAISMUS.

**Faust theme** At some time during the 16th c. a late medieval legend about a man who sold his soul to the Devil became linked with the man called Johann Faust (*c.* 1488–1541), an itinerant conjuror. The first known account of this man's life, the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, was published in 1587 and described a magician's pact with the Devil. The publication coincided with a noticeable increase of interest in demonology and Satanism in Europe; an interest which was to continue late into the 17th c. and produced an astonishing number of demonologies, as well as ecclesiastical and civil measures against Satanism.

Faust appears to have been a magician of the same lineage as Solomon, Simon Magus, Pope Sylvester II and Zyto. He is also associated with Theophilus, another who pledged himself to the Devil and whose story was widely known in medieval legends from late in the 8th c. onwards. Versions of these are to be found in French medieval drama, Low German and Middle Dutch drama and also in miscellaneous tales in verse and prose in Dutch and English.

It may well be that by an allotropic process stories of human pacts with the Devil became more and more associated with Faust until he became a representative figure.

Christopher Marlowe appears to have been the first writer of merit to perceive the possibilities of the Faust theme and he dramatized them in his *Tragical History of Dr Faustus* (c. 1588-93), a drama which owes much to the Morality Play (*q.v.*). Marlowe's version travelled to Germany, via a troupe of players known as the 'English Comedians'. A derived play from the German text survived. Later in the 17th c. the story of Faustus was rendered in puppet theatres, but in these presentations Faust was a buffoon and the Devil a bogeyman. Other versions of the *Historia* sustained the legend and the idea of a diabolic pact was inherent in a number of early 17th c. works. In some it was overt; for instance, Mira de Amescua's *El esclavo del demonio* (1612) and Guevara's *Diablo conjuelo* (1641).

However, it is not until the 18th c. – a period during which there was a singular absence of interest in anything to do with devilry – that we find the theme taken up in earnest. In 1707 Lesage published *Le Diable boiteux*, a kind of picaresque (*q.v.*) novel (*q.v.*) in which the demon Asmodée becomes the servant of Don Cléophas Zambullo. Then, in 1731, a Dutch play titled *De Hellevart von Doktor Ioan Faust* was produced – and the basis of this was a play derived from the German text of Marlowe's tragedy of more than a century earlier. In 1759 Lessing published his *Faust-play*, but only parts of it survive. In 1775 Paul Weidmann produced *Johann Faust: Ein allegorisches Drama*, and, somewhat later, the writers of the *Sturm und Drang* (*q.v.*) movement used the legend for satirical purposes and combined domestic tragedy with the Faust story. The following year Friedrich Müller published part of his *Fausts Leben*, and in 1778 completed the first of its five parts. Klinger's novel *Fausts Leben* came out in 1791. Meanwhile Goethe had been working on the theme. In 1775 he published Part I of his *Faust*, and Part II in 1790 and 1808. The third part was not published until 1832. Goethe's version of the story is generally regarded as the best.

During the 19th c. the theme proved no less attractive to many writers. In 1803 Chamisso published a dramatic fragment, *Faust: Ein Versuch*, and in 1814 produced his well-known supernatural tale *Peter Schlemihl* – the story of a man who sold his shadow to the Devil. Byron was influenced by Goethe's *Faust* and treated the theme in *Manfred* (1817). Heine, too, who translated

## Faust theme

the first act of *Manfred* into German, began a Faust play in 1824. Later Heine did a ballet-scenario of *Faust*. In 1862 Friedrich Vischer parodied the theme in *Faust: Der Tragödie, dritter Teil*.

Early in the 19th c. the Faust legend and the Don Juan legend became mingled and Faust became a Don Juan type profligate. In 1804 Schink and von Voss collaborated to produce *Faust: Dramatische Fantasie, nach einer Sage des 16. Jh.* They also wrote *Faust. Trauerspiel mit Gesang und Tanz* (1823). Grabbe's tragedy *Don Juan und Faust* (1829) was inspired by *Manfred* and by Klinger-mann's *Faust: ein Trauerspiel* (1815).

Other notable works which we should remark on are: Lanau's *Faust* (1836); Woldemar Nürnberger's treatment in an epic poem (1842); Dorothy Sayers's play *The Devil to Pay* (1939); Valéry's unfinished *Mon Faust* (1946); and Thomas Mann's long and opaque novel *Doktor Faustus* (1947).

Nor has the peculiar fascination of this theme been confined to dramatists and poets. A number of 19th c. composers were inspired by it in various ways. Outstanding instances are: Spohr's opera *Faust* (1816); Wagner's *Faust Overture* (1839); Berlioz's cantata *The Damnation of Faust* (1846); Schumann's *Scenes from Goethe's Faust* (1853); Liszt's *Faust Symphony* (1857); Gounod's opera *Faust* (1859); Liszt's *Episodes from Lenau's Faust* (1861) and his four Mephisto waltzes; Boito's *Mephistopheles* (1868). To these we should add Busoni's opera *Faust* (1920), and Benjamin Britten's comic opera *The Devil Take Her* (1931).

**feigning** 'To feign' means 'to invent' (as well as 'to pretend falsely'), and derives from the Latin *ingere* 'to form, mould, conceive or contrive'.

Plato would not allow poets in his ideal commonwealth of *The Republic* because they were 'liars' – in the sense that they imitated the truth. In *Poetics* Aristotle took a contrary point of view and held that the poet told a kind of truth by imitation. Between them they raised an issue that was much debated on and off for centuries, and particularly at the Renaissance. However, imitation, or feigning, then came to be regarded as indispensable to the poet. Now, it is generally accepted that poetry conveys something beyond the literal verisimilitude (*q.v.*). *Mutatis mutandis*, the same is true of fiction in prose. The gist of the matter is suggested in *As You Like It* (II, iii) in an exchange between Audrey and Touchstone:



## fescennine verse

AUDREY: I do not know what poetical is: is it honest in deed and word? is it a true thing?

TOUCHSTONE: No, truly; for the truest poetry is the most feigning; and lovers are given to poetry, and what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers they do feign.

See FANCY AND IMAGINATION; IMITATION.

**feminine caesura** A caesura (*q.v.*) which comes after an unstressed syllable, as after 'open' in this line from John Berryman's *Homage to Mistress Bradstreet*:

The winters close, Springs open, || no child stirs.

See MASCULINE CAESURA.

**feminine ending** An extra unstressed syllable at the end of a line of verse. Common in blank verse, with the slack eleventh syllable, as in the third line of these three from George Chapman's *De Guina* (the first two have masculine endings *q.v.*):

O incredulity! the wit of fools,  
That slovenly will spit on all things fair,  
The coward's castle, and the sluggard's cradle.

See FEMININE RHYME.

**feminine rhyme** When words of two or more syllables rhyme it is known as feminine or double rhyme. It is particularly common in humorous verse, as in the first two lines of this flippant epitaph:

Here lie I and my four daughters,  
Killed by drinking Cheltenham waters.  
Had we but stuck to Epsom salts,  
We wouldn't have been in these here vaults.

See FEMININE ENDING; MASCULINE RHYME.

**fescennine verse** A very early form of bawdy Latin verse which probably originated in festivals celebrating the gathering of the harvest and the grape crops. They were also wedding songs. They are important as possible ancestors of drama (because some were in dialogue form) and of satire (*q.v.*) – because some of them were caustic as well as coarse. The derivation of the word is obscure. It may be a corruption of *fascinium*, a phallic emblem worn as a charm; on the other hand it may come from the town of Fescennium in Etruria.

## Festnachtsspiel

**Festnachtsspiel** (G 'feast night's play') A carnival play or Shrovetide play popular in Germany in the 15th c. A crude form of drama, it was usually performed by students and artisans. It has some features in common with the French *sotie* (q.v.). The German Hans Sachs (1494-1576) wrote at least one notable *Festnachtsspiel*.

**Festschrift** (G 'celebration writing') The term denotes a symposium (q.v.) compiled in honour of a distinguished scholar or writer. The first 'homage volume' of this kind was presented to Friedrich Ritschl, classical scholar, in 1867; but yet more famous was that compiled in honour of the eminent historian Theodor Mommsen under the title *Commentationes Philologicae* (1877).

**fiction** A vague and general term for an imaginative work, usually in prose. At any rate, it does not normally cover poetry and drama though both are a form of fiction in that they are moulded and contrived – or feigned. Fiction is now used in general of the novel, the short story, the *novella* (qq.v.) and related genres.

**ficción** (Sp 'fiction') A genre invented by the Argentine poet and critic Luis Borges. A *ficción* is a story-essay which glosses human dreams and illusions. It is ironical in tone and also didactic. Borges published a collection called *Ficciones* in 1944.

**figurae causae** In Classical rhetoric (q.v.) the term denotes the stylistic shape and pattern of a speech in relation to the speaker's purpose.

**figurate poem** See ALTAR POEM; PATTERN POETRY.

**figurative language** Language which uses figures of speech; for example, metaphor, simile, alliteration (qq.v.). Figurative language must be distinguished from literal (q.v.) language. 'He hared down the street' or 'He ran like a hare down the street' are figurative (metaphor and simile respectively). 'He ran very quickly down the street' is literal. See HYPERBOLE; METONYMY; SYNECDOCHE.

**fin de siècle** See DECADENCE.

**fit** The division of a poem, a canto (q.v.). The term may have acquired its meaning from the ON *fit* 'a hem', or the German *Fitze*, a skein

of yarn or the thread with which the weavers marked off a day's work. Now hardly ever used. *See* STANZA; STAVE.

**flamenca** *See* SEGUIDILLA.

**flashback** A term which probably derives from the cinema, and which is now also used to describe any scene or episode in a play, novel, story or poem which is inserted to show events that happened at an earlier time. It is frequently used in modern fiction.

**flat and round characters** Terms used by E. M. Forster in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) to describe two basically different types of character – and characterization. A 'flat' character does not change in the course of a story or play; a 'round' one develops and thus alters. Forster cites Mrs Micawber as a flat character and Becky Sharp as a round one. Shakespeare's *Henry IV* (Pts I and II) provides a suitable contrast in the shape of Falstaff and Prince Hal. The former is a 'flat' character; the Prince changes and develops considerably in the course of the play. *See also* BURLESQUE; CARICATURE.

**fleshly school of poetry** A derogatory term used by Robert Buchanan in *The Contemporary Review* (Oct. 1871) to describe Rossetti, Swinburne and William Morris. Buchanan regarded these writers as decadent, morally irresponsible and aesthetic (in the pejorative sense), and over-interested in the carnal or sensual. Buchanan was a misguided man and his vituperations caused considerable controversy. Swinburne replied to him with some venom. *See also* AESTHETICISM; PRE-RAPHAELITES.

**flyting** (from OE *flitan* 'to contend, strive or wrangle') A *flyting* (or *fliting*) is a cursing match in verse; especially between two poets who hurl abuse at each other. An early instance of a kind of *flyting* is the vehement exchange between the leader of the Vikings and Byrhtnoth, the English leader, in the OE poem *The Battle of Maldon*. The 16th c. Scottish poets were particularly fond of the form. A well-known example is the *Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie*. Skelton appears to have been influenced by this kind of invective (*q.v.*). *See also* DIATRIBE; LAMPOON; POETIC CONTESTS.

**folía** (Sp *un folio* 'a folio'; *foliar* 'to number pages') A Spanish stanza

## folia

form of four lines in which the lines may be octosyllabic or shorter. Of uncertain origin, they are known to have existed before 1600 and are related to a kind of Portuguese dance-song. The term has also been applied variously to: light music and popular music; the sound and the figure of the Spanish dance which used to be danced only with castanets; a fiesta in certain provinces, with evening bonfires, etc. See SEGUIDILLA.

**folio** (L *folium* 'leaf') Made by folding a printer's sheet once only, to form two folios or four pages. It also refers to editions of Shakespeare's plays published after his death: the First Folio appeared in 1623. There were three others in 1632, 1663 and 1685, all of which are now preserved in The Shakespeare Institute, Birmingham. See DUODECIMO; LEAF; QUARTO.

**folk drama** This kind of drama almost certainly has its origins in fertility rites so ancient that it is not possible to do much more than guess at them. However, folk drama is a common and living phenomenon in many parts of the world – especially in Europe – and often shows affinities with the sword dance (*q.v.*). In the British Isles there are two basic folk plays: *The Mumming Play* (or *St George Play*) and *The Plough Monday Play* (*qq.v.*) See also REVESBY PLAY.

**folk literature** Under this general and somewhat vague term one may include folksong, ballad, fairy tales, drama, proverbs, riddles, charms and legends (*qq.v.*). For the most part, folk literature (or, perhaps, more properly, folklore) is the creation of primitive and illiterate people – and therefore much of it belongs to oral tradition (*q.v.*). It becomes literature in the correct sense of the word only when people gather it together and write it down. When this happens, it is usually a sign that the folk literature in question is in decline.

There were few systematic attempts to gather such literature together until the 19th c., when, for example, the brothers Grimm made their famous collection of fairy tales, and the great Serbian scholar Vuk Karadžić collected many of the epic ballads or *narodne pesme* (*q.v.*) which the *guslari* (*q.v.*) had been reciting and passing down in oral tradition since the 14th c.

Since then, increasingly, individual scholars, cultural societies, academies, universities and many other organizations have laboured to preserve folk literature from oblivion. See FOLK DRAMA; FOLKSONG; FOLK TALE.



**folksong** This kind of song belongs to oral tradition (*q.v.*) and is thus passed on from mouth to mouth. It is a communal form of expression and appears to be universal. Many of them have now been written down. The category includes ballad, carol, sea shanty and lullaby (*qq.v.*). Marching songs, work songs, hobo songs and Negro spirituals are also forms of folksong. To these should be added the *dumi*, *daina*, *bylina* and the *narodne pesme* (*qq.v.*).

Other special kinds of folksong are the *serenade* or *serenata* – the song the lover sings when he visits his beloved at night; the *aubade* (*q.v.*), or song the lover sings on leaving his beloved at dawn; the *pastourelle* (*q.v.*) or wooing song; and the *coronach* (*q.v.*), a type of lament (*q.v.*).

**folk tale** Like the folksong (*q.v.*) many folk tales belong to oral tradition (*q.v.*). Some thousands have been collected in the British Isles alone. They include legends, fables, tall stories, shaggy dog stories, fairy stories, ghost stories (*qq.v.*), stories of giants and saints, devils and spirits; husband and wife tales; master and man tales; and what are known as ‘rhozzums’, short humorous tales, often about local characters. *See also* FOLK LITERATURE; MÄRCHEN; SUPERNATURAL STORY.

**folly literature** The title given to a variety of literature that had some vogue between the 15th and the 17th c. Most of the works in this category are a form of satire (*q.v.*) and can be regarded as early instances of ‘the absurd’. They combine elements of fantasy, nonsense and the zany, but have a serious intent to expose, ridicule and ‘send up’ the more risible aspects of human behaviour. Like the nonsense verse (*q.v.*) of more recent times, and the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*), they display an attempt to correct overmuch seriousness as well as to combat the pretensions and hypocrisies of this world. A way of ‘laughing things off’; so it is also called ‘Fool Literature’.

An early and classic example is Brant’s *Narrenschiff*, ‘The Ship of Fools’ (1494), a ‘travel’ tale reminiscent of Lucian’s fantasies. Brant filled his ship with 112 different kinds of recognizable fool, but became so interested in showing the characters that the ship never left port; rather as if Chaucer’s pilgrims never left the Tabard Inn. The success of the work was instant. In 1497 Locher Philomusus translated it into Latin under the title *Stultifera Navis*. In the same year Pierre Rivière translated it into

## folly literature

French under the title *La Nef des Folz du Monde*. Other translations followed in rapid succession. Alexander Barclay did an English version (in verse) in 1509, and adapted the original so that it should fit with the English scene. It gives a picture of contemporary English life (dwelling in particular on affectations of manners, customs and clothing, social evils, venal officials and corrupt courts), and provides an early collection of satirical types. Later, comedy of humours and the character (*q.v.*) sketch were to be a development of this kind of treatment of individuals and types.

Another English work of note belonging to the 16th c. is *Cocke Lorell's Bote*, a satire in which various tradespeople embark on a ship and 'sail' through England. The captain of the ship is Cocke Lorell, a tinker. This work in verse gives a vivid picture of 'low life' in England at that time.

In 1509 also Erasmus wrote his *Moriae Encomium*, 'The Praise of Folly', which was published in 1511. This had enormous success (forty editions came out in the author's life-time). In 1549 Dedekind wrote *Grobianus, De Morum Simplicitate*, a poem which burlesqued social conditions in Germany. He took his title from Brant's St Grobianus (in *Narrenschiff*) who was symbolic of boorish behaviour. This work was translated into English and German.

Such books, among several others, influenced the jest-book and the emblem-book (*qq.v.*), both of which had considerable popularity in the 16th and 17th c. Dekker's *Gull's Hornbook* (1609), for instance, was a satire at the expense of fops, gallants and other forms of fool.

Folly literature very probably helped writers to develop character in drama and romance (*q.v.*) and also probably influenced the picaresque (*q.v.*) narrative. Later instances of folly literature are *Gulliver's Travels* (1736) and *Candide* (1759). In 1962 Katherine Anne Porter published *Ship of Fools*, a novel which updated the themes and ideas of Brant's *Narrenschiff*. The celebration of folly is still a popular activity as we can see in the books of, for example, Spike Milligan. See BEIDERMEIER; GROBIANISM.

**foot** A group of syllables forming a metrical unit; a unit of rhythm.

The Classical prosodists and poets established nearly all the known foot formations. We measure feet in terms of syllable variation: long and short syllables, stressed and unstressed. The following are the names of the principal feet, illustrated with their

## foreshadowing

stress patterns: / denotes a long syllable or a stressed one; ∪ denotes a short or unstressed syllable:

- amphibrach ∪ / ∪
- amphimacer / ∪ /
- anapaest ∪ ∪ /
- antibacchius // ∪
- antispast ∪ // ∪
- bacchius ∪ //
- choree (trochee) / ∪
- choreus (by resolution) ∪ ∪ ∪
- choriamb / ∪ ∪ /
- cretic (alternative for amphimacer) / ∪ /
- dactyl / ∪ ∪
- di-iamb ∪ / ∪ /
- dibrach ∪ ∪
- dispondee ///
- ditrochee / ∪ / ∪
- dochmiac ∪ // ∪ /
- dochmiac ∪ / / ∪ / (plus any other combinations of the same pattern)
- epitrite ∪ / / / (known as first, second, third or fourth according to the position of the first syllable)
- iamb ∪ /
- ionic majore // ∪ ∪
- ionic minore ∪ ∪ //
- mollossus ///
- paeon / ∪ ∪ ∪ (known as first, second, third or fourth according to the position of the stressed syllable)
- palimbacchius (alternative for antibacchius) // ∪
- proceleusmatic ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪
- pyrrhic (alternative for dibrach) ∪ ∪
- spondee //
- tribrach ∪ ∪ ∪ (and see choreus)
- trochee (alternative for choree)

The commonest feet in English prosody are: iamb, trochee, dactyl, anapaest and spondee, in that order. *See* FALLING RHYTHM; RISING RHYTHM; ROCKING RHYTHM; SCANSION; SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**foreshadowing** The technique of arranging events and information in a narrative in such a way that later events are prepared for or

## foreshadowing

shadowed forth beforehand. A well-constructed novel, for instance, will suggest at the very beginning what the outcome may be; the end is contained in the beginning and this gives structural and thematic unity.

**foreword** (modelled on G *Vorwort*) Usually a short introductory piece to a book. It is similar to a preface (*q.v.*) and an introduction, but is generally composed not by the author but by someone else.

**forgery** A literary forgery occurs when someone deliberately tries to pass off a piece of writing as being by someone else, or as something else. There have been many famous instances: the *Letters of Phalaris* (2nd c. A.D.); Psalmanazar's *Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa* (1704); William Lauder's attempts to discredit Milton in *An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns* (1750); Chatterton's *Rowley Poems* (1769); the Ossianic forgeries by James Macpherson (1760, 1762); and Thomas Wise's forgeries of bibliographies in the 19th c. which led to a large number of bogus first editions. There have been a large number of Shakespearean forgeries of various kinds. See **PLAGIARISM**; **PSEUDEPIGRAPHA**.

**form** When we speak of the form of a literary work we refer to its shape and structure and to the manner in which it is made (thus, its style *q.v.*) – as opposed to its substance or what it is about. Form and substance are inseparable, but they may be analysed and assessed separately.

A secondary meaning of form is the *kind* of work – the genre (*q.v.*) to which it belongs. Thus: sonnet, short story, essay (*qq.v.*).

**formalism** A term associated with a literary movement started in Russia in 1917 by Viktor Shklovsky. The formalists took the view that art is a matter of style and technique only, and so formalist criticism concentrated on form (*q.v.*) to the exclusion of other considerations. By the late 1920s the 'movement', if it can be called that, was more or less defunct.

**format** The physical make-up of a book (*q.v.*).

**fornyrðislag** An ON Eddic metrical form which comprises a four-line stanza in which each line is divided by a caesura (*q.v.*) into two



half lines. Each half line has two accented or stressed syllables, and two or three unstressed syllables. As in OE verse, alliteration (*q.v.*) is a notable feature of the form. Most of the Eddic poems are composed in this measure. *See also* KVÐUHÁTTTR; LJÓÐAHÁTTTR; MÁLAHÁTTTR.

**four ages of poetry** The title of a provocative essay by Thomas Love Peacock published in 1820. With a certain amount of drollery Peacock classified Poetry into four periods: iron, gold, silver and brass. Shelley took the matter seriously and replied with *Defence of Poetry* (1821); and in 1926 I. A. Richards published an equally serious refutation in *Science and Poetry*.

**four levels of meaning** The origins of the four levels of meaning are not certain, but an awareness of them is manifest in the Middle Ages. It was Dante who explained most clearly (in a letter to his patron Can Grande della Scala) what they consisted of. He was introducing the matter of the *Divine Comedy* and he distinguished: (a) the literal or historical meaning; (b) the moral meaning; (c) the allegorical meaning; (d) the anagogical.

Such criteria applied to, for instance, Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945), might suggest the following: (a) the story is about the revolt of the animals against their human overlords, and the outcome of that revolt; (b) 'power tends to corrupt'; (c) Major = Lenin; Napoleon = Stalin; Snowball = Trotsky; Jones = corrupt capitalist landowners – and so forth; (d) human (*and* animal) nature does not change. *See* ALLEGORY.

**four meanings** In *Practical Criticism* (1929) I. A. Richards distinguishes four different meanings in a poem: (a) the sense – what is actually said; (b) feeling – the writer's emotional attitude towards it; (c) tone – the writer's attitude towards his reader; (d) intention – the writer's purpose, the effect he is aiming at.

**fourteener** Also known as a heptameter and a septenary. A line of seven feet and fourteen syllables; usually seven iambics (*q.v.*). It was used in Greek and Latin verse and flourished in English narrative verse (*q.v.*) in the later Middle Ages and in Tudor times. The Elizabethans coined the term 'fourteener'. It has not been much used since largely because it is rather unwieldy, as the following lines (alternating with hexameters) from Surrey show:

## fourteener

In winter's just return, when Boreas gan his reign,  
And every tree unclothèd fast, as nature taught them plain,  
In misty morning dark, as sheep are then in hold,  
I hied me fast, it sat me on, my sheep for to unfold.

The rhyming couplet of the fourteener, written as four lines, became what is known as the eight-and-six meter of the common ballad (*q.v.*) stanza (*q.v.*).

**frame story** A frame story is one which contains either another tale, a story within a story, or a series of stories. Well-known instances are the *Arabian Nights* (of uncertain date, but mentioned in the 9th c. A.D.); Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1353); Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (late 14th c.); Marguerite of Navarre's *Heptameron* (1558). Much later Goethe used this Boccaccio technique in *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* (1795). Other notable writers who have used this structure are: Tieck, Hoffman, Keller, R. L. Stevenson and G. F. Meyer. *See also* DIGRESSION; RAHMENERZÄHLUNG.

**Franciscan literature** The considerable body of writings which were produced in many countries during and after St Francis of Assisi's life. A well-known collection is the *Fioretti di S. Francesco* compiled by an anonymous Tuscan in the first half of the 14th c.

**free association** A term commonly used in psychology but which has achieved some currency in literary criticism and theory. The point involved is that a word or idea acts as a stimulus or trigger to a series or sequence of other words or ideas which may or may not have some logical relationship. Some writing *looks* like free association. Much writing that looks like it is probably the result of carefully thought out and contrived arrangement. In his *Ulysses* (1922) James Joyce was one of the principal pioneers of this kind of technique. In the following passage for instance, (p. 33-4), words and images are 'freely' associated:

Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver rust: coloured signs. Limits of the diaphane. But he adds: in bodies. Then he was aware of them bodies before of them coloured. How? By knocking his sconce against them, sure. Go easy. Bald he was and a millionaire, *maestro di color che sanno*. Limit of the diaphane in. Why

in? Diaphane, adaphane. If you can put your five fingers through it, it is a gate, if not a door. Shut your eyes and see.

See STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

**free meter** A term rarely used in matters of English prosody; but among the Welsh it refers to all those meters which are not 'strict'. The 'strict meters' (*q.v.*) were those laid down in the 15th c. Among the better known are: *awdl*, *cywydd* and *englyn* (*qq.v.*).

**free verse** Called *vers libre* (*q.v.*) by the French, it has no regular meter or line length and depends on natural speech rhythms and the counterpoint (*q.v.*) of stressed and unstressed syllables. In the hands of a gifted poet it can acquire rhythms and melodies of its own.

Its origins are obscure. There are signs of it in medieval alliterative verse (*q.v.*) and in King James's translations of the *Psalms* and the *Song of Songs*. Milton was clearly experimenting with it in *Lycidas* and *Samson Agonistes*. Interest in its possibilities was renewed in Europe after the period of Neoclassicism (*q.v.*). Heine and Goethe (in Germany), Bertrand, Hugo and Baudelaire (in France), Macpherson, Smart, Blake and Arnold (in England) were some of the better known writers who experimented. It was very probably Walt Whitman, the American poet (who influenced Baudelaire) who did more than anyone else to develop it. The other main innovator in the 19th c. was Gerard Manley Hopkins. In the 20th c. many poets employed it, including Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, D. H. Lawrence and William Carlos Williams. The following example comes from Whitman's *After the Sea-ship*:

After the sea-ship, after the whistling winds,  
After the white-grey sails taut to their spars and ropes,  
Below, a myriad myriad waves hastening, lifting up their  
    necks,  
Tending in ceaseless flow toward the track of the ship,  
Waves of the ocean bubbling and gurgling, blithely prying,  
Waves, undulating waves, liquid, uneven, emulous waves,  
Toward that whirling current, laughing and buoyant, with  
    curves,  
Where the great vessel sailing and tacking displaced the  
    surface . . .

**free verse**

*See also* PROSE POEM; SPRUNG RHYTHM; VERS LIBÉRÉS; VERSE PARAGRAPH.

**French forms** *See* OF AND PROVENÇAL FORMS.

**Freytag's pyramid** The German critic Gustav Freytag, in *Die Technik des Dramas* (1862) analysed the structure of a typical five-act play thus: (a) introduction; (b) inciting moment; (c) rising action; (d) climax; (e) falling action; (f) catastrophe. The climax is the apex of the pyramidal structure. The pattern can be applied to a large number of plays. *See* CATASTROPHE; CLIMAX; FALLING ACTION; RISING ACTION; TURNING POINT.

**frottola** *See* BARZELLETTA.

**Frühromantik** *See* ROMANTICISM.

**fu** A Chinese prose poem, but one which contains rhyme and lines of constant length which are not metrical. It was perfected in the 2nd c. B.C., but used thereafter.

**fugitives, the** A group of poets and critics from the Southern States who gathered at Vanderbilt University in the early 1920s where they published a magazine called *The Fugitive*. In politics and poetry they were traditionalists and regionalists, opposed to the industrial and urban development of the North. The group was distinguished and had among its members Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson and Robert Penn Warren.

**functional metaphor** *See* ORGANIC METAPHOR.

**fustian** from Med L (*pannus*) *fustaneus* 'cloth of Fostat, suburb of Cairo'. Formerly a coarse cloth made of cotton and flax; now a thick, twilled cotton cloth. In the 16th c. it was used to describe inflated, turgid language. Pope mentioned it in the *Epistle to Arbuthnot*:

And he, whose fustian's so sublimely bad,  
It is not poetry, but prose run mad.

*See* BOMBAST.

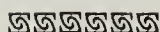
**futurism** A literary movement in Europe which advocated a complete break with tradition and aimed at new forms, new subjects



and new styles, all in keeping with the advent of a mechanistic age. Its main protagonist was Filippo Marinetti who founded the periodical *Poesia* in 1905. The manifesto (*q.v.*) of Futurism was published in *Figaro* in 1909. The movement became politically Fascistic but did not have much influence on literature except in Russia. It probably also had some indirect effect on Dadaism, Expressionism and Surrealism (*qq.v.*).

fyrftotalisterna (Sw 'the poets of the forties'). Their work is marked by extreme pessimism and great stylistic complexity in the use of free association (*q.v.*), allusion (*q.v.*) and startling images. They appear to have been influenced by T. S. Eliot and the French surrealist poets. The main members of the group were Erik Lindegren, Karl Vennberg, Sven Alfons, Stig Sjödin and Ragnar Thoursie.

# G



**gai saber** A Provençal term which denotes the art of composing poetry. *See* **SABER**.

**gaita-gallega** (Sp *gaita* 'bagpipe', *gallega* 'Galician') Conceivably, in origin, a form of verse or song which was recited or sung to the music of a bagpipe – and such verses or songs accompanied by bagpipe can still be heard in the Balkans. In prosody it denotes a hendecasyllable (*q.v.*) formed by using dodecasyllables with the first syllable omitted. The form was used by Juan de Mena (1411–56), leader of a new school of humanist poets. It is worth noting that de Mena wrote his long epic-didactic poem *Laberinto de Fortuna* to be sung. In the following century such verses were sung to lively dances like the *zarabanda* and the *tárraga*.

**galliambic** A meter associated with the worship of Cybele, the mother goddess. The term derives from the name of the priests – the Galli. Its technical name is ionic tetrameter (*q.v.*) catalectic; thus, four ionic feet per line with the final syllable missing. The *Attis* poem of Catullus is the most famous example of this meter, which was used by George Meredith in *Phaethon* and by Tennyson in *Boadicea*.

**gatha** A form of metrical hymn (*q.v.*), of usually four, five or seven words to the line. Found in Buddhist writings; and, in group form, in the *Avesta*.

**gathering** A printed sheet folded into pages is called a signature (*q.v.*). The signatures are then gathered – hence the term.

**gazette** (It *gazetta* from Venetian *gazeta*, a coin of small value) The *Oxford Gazette* was the first newspaper, other than a newsletter, published in England in 1665 when the Court took shelter in

Oxford from the plague. It later became the *London Gazette*, which is no longer a newspaper, but a record of official appointments, bankruptcies and so forth. See CORANTO; NEWSBOOKS.

**gazetteer** A geographical index or dictionary.

**generación del (or de) 1898.** Following the break-up of the Spanish Empire, and as a result of an alleged *fin de siècle* (q.v.) feeling among Spanish intellectuals, a movement arose among a section of the latter which was a kind of miniature renaissance. Usually referred to as *la generación del '98* ('the 1898 generation') because mention of that year focussed attention on the severance of the last remnant of the once vast Spanish empire, and the Cuban war had produced talk of 'regeneración nacional'.

Although supported by prominent Spanish writers and scholars (such as Azorín, Onís, Ortega and Madariaga), others, like Baroja, Ramiro de Maeztu and Unamuno, were sceptical. Azorín first drew general attention to the movement in 1913 in his book *Clásicos y modernos*. One of the main precepts was that there should be a rebirth of energy, ideas and achievement in the 20th c., to replace those losses, both material and cultural, which were blamed fairly specifically on the 19th c. – by then already held in scorn.

The idea of a 'generation' had been applied to history both before and elsewhere. Ortega had called it a new and integral social corpus with its select minority and with its crowd, and having a vital and determined path to follow. The character of each 'generation' would depend on two elements: the received and the spontaneous. If the second predominated, the generation would be one of combat. The generation of '98 in Spain was one such.

The common interests binding a single literary generation were held to include proximity of birth-dates, homogeneity of formation, a state of conscience created by an historical fact and an identity of inspiration. Of particular importance to the protagonists of this '98 generation were a fresh enrichment of the language from outside, the reform of expression and style, the search for naturalness and truth, and a new lyricism.

**general and particular** See ABSTRACT.

**género chico** See ENTREMES.

## genius

**genius** Originally a genius was the tutelary spirit or deity that guarded a person from birth, or presided over a place (*genius loci*). Later it was applied to the general tendency or guiding principle of an age or a nation. In the 18th c. it acquired the meaning of a man's innate ability, as opposed to what he could learn. In the Romantic period (*q.v.*) people were beginning to think of a genius as a person of exceptional powers, and this is the approximate meaning we accept today. We might say, therefore, that a genius is gifted with an intellectual, imaginative and creative ability of an outstanding order, and with remarkable powers of original speculation and invention.

**genre** A French term for a kind, a literary type or class. The major *genres* are: epic, tragedy, lyric, comedy, novel and short story (*qq.v.*). From the Renaissance and until well on into the 18th c. the *genres* were carefully distinguished, and writers were expected to follow the rules prescribed for them. *See* CONVENTION; DECORUM; NEOCLASSICISM.

**Georgian poetry** Poetry which appeared in five anthologies edited by Edward Marsh and published between 1912-22. The major poets represented were: A. E. Housman, W. H. Davies, Walter de la Mare, John Masefield, Ralph Hodgson, Edward Thomas, James Stephens, Flecker, J. C. Squire, Andrew Young, Siegfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, Wilfred Owen, Robert Graves and Edmund Blunden.

**Georgic** A poem about rural life and husbandry, so called from the Greek word for 'earth worker, farmer'. This is a form of didactic poetry (*q.v.*) and its principal purpose is to give instructions on how to do something. As Addison put it in his essay on the Georgic, it consists in giving 'plain and direct instructions'. The Georgic also tends to extol the rural life and nature. A very early example is Hesiod's *Works and Days* (8th c. B.C.). Virgil's *Georgics* are the best known, and they had a wide influence. James Thomson's *Seasons* (1726-30) and Cowper's *The Task* (1785) were very much in the Virgilian tradition. Other Georgics include Poliziano's *Rusticus* (1483); Vida's *De Bombyce* (1527); Alamanni's *La Coltivazione* (1546); Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* (1573); and Rapin's *Horti* (1665). *See also* ECLOGUE; PASTORAL.



**Gesellschaftslied** (G 'song of fellowship') A form of German song for several voices which originated in the latter half of the 16th c. and whose main themes were love, drinking and dancing.

**gesta** (L 'deeds') The *gesta* were accounts of deeds or tales of adventure. For example: the *Gesta Francorum*, a medieval Latin chronicle (*q.v.*) about the First Crusade; the *Gest Historiale* of the Destruction of Troy (14th c.); and the *Gesta Romanorum*, the most famous of all medieval collections of such stories, compiled in the 14th c. (*c.* 1330) and first printed *c.* 1472. It was later translated by Wynkyn de Worde *c.* 1510. It remained a popular work until well on in the 16th c. It consisted of legends of the saints, romances, tales from Jewish and Indian lore and so forth, and was often used by preachers for exempla. A moral was attached to each tale. *See* CHANSONS DE GESTE; EXEMPLUM; ROMANCE.

**Gestalt** (G 'form, figure, shape') A term imported from German philosophy and occasionally used in literary criticism to denote the unified whole of a literary work; its organic unity. *See* STRUCTURE.

**ghazel** (or *ghazal*) An Arabic word for love-making, it has come to denote a love-song or love poem. A lyric form widespread in Arabia, Persia and Turkey, used by a very large number of poets. The two most famous are the Persians Sa'di (13th c.) and Hâfiz (14th c.). *See also* DIVAN; EROTIC POETRY.

**ghost story** *See* SUPERNATURAL STORY.

**ghostword** A term invented by Skeat to describe words which have no real existence. Such spurious words are often the result of inadvertent errors made by copyists, printers and editors.

**ghost-writer** One who does literary work for someone else who takes the credit. It has become a common practice for professional writers to 'ghost' the autobiographies, memoirs, or reminiscences of famous cricketers and footballers and other sportsmen.

**gierasa** A boasting poem (*q.v.*) akin to the *fârsa* (*q.v.*) of the African Galla tribe. It extols the strength and accomplishments of a particular warrior hero.

## glee

**glee** (OE *glīw*, *glēo* 'minstrelsy, merriment') A *glee* or *glee-song* was a part song for three or more voices, not necessarily with an accompaniment. They had a particular vogue from c. 1750 to c. 1850. Choirs of glee-singers are still to be heard in the United States.

**glosa** A Spanish metrical form invented by the court poets late in the 14th c. or early in the 15th. It is a poem of a single line or a short stanza which introduces the theme of the work and which is then followed by a stanza for each line of the introductory *cabeza*. The stanza explains or 'glosses' the line. *See also* CANTIGA; ESPINELLA; MOTE; GLOSS.

**gloss** In the first place an interlinear (or marginal) comment on or explanation of a word or phrase. Classical Greek manuscripts frequently had glosses in Latin. Occasionally poems have been published with marginal glosses. A good example is Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, which he glossed himself. Another well-known example is E.K.'s gloss to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*. *See also* GLOSSARY.

**glossary** An alphabetical list of unfamiliar or difficult words and phrases, sometimes appended to the edition of a particular text, and sometimes published as a separate volume like *A Shakespeare Glossary* by C. T. Onions (1911, 1919). *See also* CONCORDANCE; DICTIONARY; GLOSS.

**glyconic** The name of a Greek lyric meter named after Glykon, a poet (date unknown). There are two basic patterns: either:  $\check{\text{ / }} \check{\text{ / }} | | \cup \cup | | \cup \check{\text{ / }}$  or:  $\check{\text{ / }} \check{\text{ / }} | | \cup \cup | | \check{\text{ / }} |$ . It was used for early Greek lyric poetry and drama. *See* PHERECRETAN.

**gnomic verse** Gnostic derives from the Greek word for 'opinion' or 'judgement', and a *gnome* has come to mean a short pithy statement of a general truth; thus a maxim or aphorism (*qq.v.*). The adjective *gnomic* was first applied to a group of 6th c. B.C. Greek poets but there are much earlier examples of *gnomes* in Chinese, Sanskrit and Egyptian. *The Book of Proverbs*, which follows *The Psalms* in the Old Testament, is one of the best examples of gnomic utterance. Irish, Norse and Germanic literature provide many instances. In OE literature there are four sets of *Gnostic Verses*, preserved in the MS Cotton Tiberius B1 and the Exeter

Book. *Beowulf* contains a number of gnomic passages. In more recent times Francis Quarles's *Book of Emblemes* (1633) is one of the best known collections. *See also* APOPHTHEGM; EMBLEM-BOOK; PROVERB; SPRUCH.

**gobbledegook** An onomatopoeic word which no doubt derives from the noises that poultry make. The term denotes unintelligible language, gibberish, and thus nonsense (*q.v.*). It is often applied derisively to the kind of language cherished by lawyers, bureaucrats, art critics, music critics and other purveyors of jargon (*q.v.*).

**Goliardic verse** The Goliards were wandering scholars and clerks of the 12th and 13th c., called *vagi scholares aut goliardi*. It is not certain how they got their name. As there are references to their belonging to the 'household of Goliath', some believe this may be the origin. But there was no guild of Goliards, no *ordo vagorum*. The name may have derived from Goliath, Goliath of Gath, the giant of lawlessness and evil, associated later with the Latin word *gula* 'gluttony'. Much Goliardic verse consists of satire (*q.v.*) against the Church, and extravagant praise of the delights of love-making and drinking. It is full of zest, caustic humour and a rough earthiness; at times almost pagan in its unabashed hedonism. The theme of *carpe diem* (*q.v.*) is recurrent. *See* CARMINA BURANA.

**Gongorism** A style of writing derived from the name of the Spanish poet Luis de Góngora y Argote (1561-1627). It is a baroque (*q.v.*) and affected style whose chief characteristics are: Latinistic vocabulary and syntax, intricate metaphors, excessive hyperbole (*q.v.*), rich colour images, mythological allusions and a general strangeness of diction. Comparable features are to be found in the French *la préciosité* (*q.v.*). Such a style provoked mixed reactions and some considerable opposition, especially from the devotees of *conceptismo* (*q.v.*); but many discerning critics have given the highest praise to Góngora's best work among which the *Soledades* and *La Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea* persist as favourites. Góngora, who did not always write like this, had many imitators. Gongoristic elements are to be found in a number of 17th c. English writers including Sir Thomas Browne and Richard Crashaw. *See also* CONCEPTISMO; EUPHUISM; MANNERISM; MARINISM; SECENTISMO.

## good sense

**good sense** During what is known as the period of Neoclassicism (*q.v.*) in France and England, that is during the latter half of the 17th c. and for much of the 18th, good sense was a much prized criterion of excellence in art and literature. If a work displayed good sense then it possessed order, balance, harmony, restraint, appropriateness of style to subject matter, and a general absence of excess or flamboyance. Good sense implied sane understanding and good manners. *See* CONVENTION; DECORUM.

**Gothic novel** A type of romance (*q.v.*) very popular late in the 18th c. and at the beginning of the 19th, which has had a considerable influence on fiction since. Most Gothic novels were tales of mystery and horror, intended to chill the spine and curdle the blood. They contained a strong element of the supernatural and the now traditional 'haunted house' props. Often they were set in medieval castles which had secret passages, dungeons, winding stairways, a stupefying atmosphere of doom and gloom and a proper complement of spooky happenings and clanking spectres. Their influence is particularly discernible in the work of Edgar Allan Poe and the Brontës. Notable examples of this genre (which was something of a reaction against the good sense (*q.v.*) and sentimentality (*q.v.*) of the Augustans for whom the Gothic was a distasteful phenomenon) are: Thomas Leland's *Longsword* (1762); Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764), a seminal work which had the most influence; Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* (1778); Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794); M. G. ('Monk') Lewis's *Ambrosio*, and *The Monk* (1795); C. R. Maturin's *The Fatal Revenge* (1807) and his *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820); and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). To these should be added C. M. Wieland's *Don Sylvio von Rosalba* (1764), which was translated into English and published in 1773. *See* NOVEL; SHORT STORY; SUPERNATURAL STORY.

**Göttinger Dichterbund** A group of German poets (also known as the *Hainbund*) who were students at Göttingen University between 1772-76. Disciples of Klopstock, they revived the folk-song (*q.v.*) and wrote some notable lyric poetry. *See* STURM UND DRANG.

**grace** That mysterious, even magical, attribute or quality which is, as it were, the spirit of beauty; beauty being the outward sign of inward grace. Because of its mystery it is a *je ne sais quoi* (*q.v.*).



### grand tour, the

The quality of gracefulness was much prized among Classical writers, at the Renaissance and during the 18th c. Pope, in his *Essay on Criticism*, wrote of snatching 'a grace beyond the reach of art', suggesting perhaps the qualities of ease and elegance which, though elusive, might be caught upon the wing.

**gracioso** (Sp 'graceful, gracious, amusing, droll') A comic actor. On the Spanish stage the *gracioso* is often of much importance; the part may be small but it may have great impact. The usual role is that of parodying the actions of the principal character, and its creation is credited to Lope de Vega. It was also used by Calderón to provide comic relief. The *gracioso* is perhaps comparable to the Fool in Shakespeare. Until the time of Zorrilla (1607-48) the humour in a play was nearly always reserved for the *gracioso*.

**grand guignol** Guignol is the name of a French marionette or puppet 'created' in Lyon towards the end of the 18th c. The puppet master Mourquet (1744-1844) may have been the creator. This puppet was believed to represent the main characteristics of the peasant and provincial man in the district of Dauphiné. By some symbiotic process Polinchinelle (or Punch) and this character became one. The brutality and violence of the Punch and Judy show may have been an influence here. At any rate, the name Guignol was given to Paris cabarets which presented decadent shows. Later the Théâtre du Grand Guignol specialized in melodramatic plays whose subjects were horrific: murder, rape, and suicide. Since then the term has denoted any kind of play which is bloody, gruesome and sensational. See MELODRAMA; THEATRE OF CRUELTY.

**grand style** In his Oxford lectures *On Translating Homer* and *On Translating Homer: Last Words* (1861, 1862), Matthew Arnold used this now famous phrase. Such a style, he maintained, arises, when a noble nature 'poetically gifted, treats with simplicity or with severity a serious subject'. Arnold refers to Homer, Pindar, Virgil, Dante and Milton as exponents of the grand style. It was a lofty or elevated style (*q.v.*) suitable for epic: a style which Arnold himself attempted in, for instance, *Sohrab and Rustum* (1853).

**grand tour, the** The term appears to have been first used in a printed work by Richard Lassels in his *Voyage of Italy* (1670). It came to

## grand tour, the

denote a regular tour of many sights and cities of Europe, especially those in the Netherlands, Germany, France, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. The climax of this journey was a visit to Rome and Naples. The Grand Tour is of some interest and importance in the history of literature because a number of famous writers undertook it, and the journeys produced a substantial variety of entertaining travel reminiscences and travel books (*q.v.*). Indeed, it became so popular that detailed guide-books (*q.v.*) were compiled to assist travellers. Some of the more interesting examples of these are: James Howell's *Instructions for Forreine Travell* (1642), the earliest of the continental handbooks; Henry Logan's *Directions for such as shall travel to Rome* (1654); *The Gentleman's Pocket Companion For Travelling into Foreign Parts* (1722); Nemeitz's *Séjour de Paris* (1727), one of the most popular and useful guides of the period; Thomas Nugent's *The Grand Tour containing an Exact Description of most of the Cities, Towns and Remarkable Places of Europe* (1743), a work in four volumes and an essential *vade mecum*; Thomas Martyn's *A Gentleman's Guide in his Tour through France* (1787); and Johann Ebel's *The Traveller's Guide through Switzerland* (1818).

At least a hundred years before Lassels used the phrase an extensive tour of Europe was regarded as an invaluable part of a gentleman's education; this at a time when there was some premium on education and considerable *cachet* was attached to the importance of learning to behave as a gentleman should. Hence the number of courtesy books (*q.v.*) of the period.

In Elizabethan England tours abroad were recognized as a means of collecting information about foreign countries which might be of use to England. Sir Philip Sidney is a notable example of a man sent abroad for three years to acquaint himself with foreign courts. Trips like this were often subsidized by the Queen.

Curious travellers set off on their own account, even though travel in Europe in those days was dangerous, arduous and expensive. One of the earlier and more adventurous ones was Fynes Morison who published his *Itinerary* of travels in 1617. During the 17th c. increasing numbers of Englishmen explored Europe, including John Evelyn and Milton. By 1700 the Grand Tour was an established practice, and the influence of continental manners and customs became observable in England; so observable that Restoration dramatists poked fun at imported affectations.

During the 18th c. the tour became more fashionable. Thomas

Gray toured the continent with Horace Walpole for three years (1739-41). Other famous tourists were the intrepid Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Thomas Sterne, Tobias Smollett, Dr Johnson, Boswell, Gibbon, Lord Chesterfield and William Beckford. Among Europeans easily the most famous writer to make the trip was Goethe, who subsequently published his *Italienische Reise* (1786-88).

By the middle of the century, if not before, the Tourist had become an object of caricature; a target not to be missed by Pope who sniped at one kind of traveller in *The Dunciad*:

Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,  
And gather'd ev'ry Vice on Christian ground;  
Saw ev'ry Court, heard ev'ry King declare  
His royal sense of Op'ras or the Fair;  
The Stews and Palace equally explor'd  
Intrigu'd with glory and with spirit whor'd;  
Try'd all hors d'oeuvres, all liqueurs defin'd;  
Dropt the dull lumber of the Latin score,  
Spoil'd his own language and acquir'd no more;  
All Classic learning lost on Classic ground,  
And last turn'd Air, the Echo of a Sound!  
See now, half-cur'd and perfectly well-bred,  
With nothing but a Solo in his head.

Forty-odd years later, in *The Progress of Error*, William Cowper, more genially than Pope, satirized the Oxbridge tourist broadening his mind on the Grand Tour.

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars combined to put an end to the tour as it had been known in the 18th c. After peace came there began the great railway development. Permanent way was laid over much of Europe and hotels were readily available at railway stations. Soon Thomas Cook started his circular tours of the continent. By the 1860s one could reach Rome in three days, whereas before it had taken three weeks or more.

**Grangerize** To illustrate a book by the addition of prints, engravings and so forth, and particularly those cut out from other books. In 1769 James Granger (1723-76) published a *Biographical History of England* with blank pages for the addition of engraved portraits or other kinds of illustration. For a time Grangerizing became an innocent hobby.

## graveyard school of poetry

**graveyard school of poetry** The poets who have been put into this school wrote a type of mournfully reflective poetry with emphasis on the brevity of life and the sepulchral (and the hope of immortality) which had some vogue in 18th c. England, and in the latter half of the century was a widespread phenomenon in Europe. It was possibly part of a reaction against Augustan principles of decorum (*q.v.*) which did not favour anything melancholy or self-indulgently piteous. One of the earliest examples is Thomas Parnell's *Night-Piece on Death* (1721). The best known works are Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742) and Robert Blair's *The Grave* (1743). Some would include Gray's *Elegy* (1750) and Ugo Foscolo's *De' Sepolcri* (1807), but the general opinion seems to be that these two poems are not typical of the graveyard school. Indeed, they transcend its limitations. See ELEGY; UBI SUNT.

**great chain of being, the** The phrase summarizes an idea of considerable antiquity; namely, that all that exists in the created order is part of an hierarchical system, a *scala naturae* from the lowest possible grade up to the *ens perfectissimum*. It implements the concept that Nature abhors a vacuum. Emerson epitomized the concept adroitly in a well-known couplet:

Striving to be man, the worm  
Mounts through all the spires of form.

The concept has pervaded philosophy, literature and scientific thought from the time of Plato and Aristotle onwards.

Apart from Ulysses' famous speech on 'degree' in *Troilus and Cressida* (I, iii), one of the clearest statements of the idea in English literature occurs in Pope's *Essay on Man*:

Vast chain of being! which from God began,  
Natures aethereal, human, angel, man,  
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,  
No glass can reach; from Infinite to thee,  
From thee to nothing. – On superior pow'rs  
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;  
Or in the full creation leave a void,  
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd;  
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,  
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

The classic work on the subject is A. O. Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (1936).



**Greek tragedy** This form of tragedy (*q.v.*) had a definite structure which was more or less prescribed. There were five main parts to a play: (a) The *Prologos* or Prologue: an introductory scene of monologue or dialogue. This exposition established the subject and theme of the play and portrayed one or more characters; (b) *Parodos*: the entrance of the Chorus (*q.v.*); the choral song provides further exposition and foreshadows subsequent events; (c) *Epeisodia*: episodes (perhaps four or five) which constitute the main action of the play. One or more characters take part in these with the Chorus. Each episode is separated by a choral ode or *stasimon*. In some plays, a part of the episode may involve a *kommos* – a kind of lamentation in which both characters and Chorus take part; (d) *Exodos*: the conclusion, which follows the last ode (*q.v.*) sung and danced by the Chorus. By convention the *Exodos* includes two features: the messenger's speech and the *deus ex machina* (*q.v.*); but the *deus ex machina* was used only by Euripides.

**greguería** Brief observations in prose by the Spanish writer Ramon Gómez de la Serna (1888–1963) and defined as 'humour plus metaphor'. The author has referred to them as attempts to define the indefinable and to capture the fugitive. Almost a form of aphorism (*q.v.*), with an element of the conceit (*q.v.*).

**Grobianism** The word Grobian derives from the German *Grobheit* 'rudeness'. Grobian was an imaginary person continually referred to by 15th and 16th c. writers in Germany as a paradigm of coarseness and rudeness. In his *Narrenschiff* (1494) Brant invented St Grobianus – a figure typical of boorish and uncouth behaviour. Through this character Brant was able to satirize contemporary manners. In 1549 Dedekind wrote *Grobianus, De Morum Simplicitate*, a poem in Latin elegiacs which was a burlesque (*q.v.*) at the expense of the uncivilized social conditions in Germany. In this work he gave rules for the guidance of boors. This was translated into German and English and provided Dekker with the idea for his *Guls Hornebooke* (1609) which was a satirical attack on the fops and gallants of the day in the guise of a book of manners or courtesy book (*q.v.*). Dedekind's ironical approach had a good many imitators. This type of literature coincided with a large number of manuals on good behaviour and a greatly increased interest in urbane conduct. See BEIDERMEIER; COURTESY BOOK; FOLLY LITERATURE.

## grotesque

**grotesque** The word derives from Italian *grotte* 'caves', whose adjective is *grottesco*; the noun being *la grottesca*. In French we find *crotesque* being used c. 1532 for the first time; and this form was used in English until it was replaced c. 1640 by *grotesque*. Its correct technical sense has little to do with its normal usage. It denotes a kind of decorative ornament consisting of medallions, sphinxes, foliage, rocks and pebbles. Because they were found in grottoes they were called *grotteschi*. The term came to be applied to paintings which depicted the intermingling of human, animal and vegetable themes and forms. Some of the works of Raphael and Arcimboldo are typical grotesques. It has also been used to describe architectural embellishments like gargoyles, hideous diabolic shapes and, again, the complex interweaving of themes and subjects. An outstanding instance is Radovan's main doorway of Trogir cathedral.

The extension of the word to a literary context may well have occurred in 16th c. France. Rabelais, for example, uses it apropos parts of the body. But it does not seem to have been used regularly in a literary context until the 18th c., the period of the age of reason and Neo-classicism (*qq.v.*), when it was commonly employed to denote the ridiculous, bizarre, extravagant, freakish and unnatural; in short, aberrations from the desirable norms of harmony, balance and proportion.

In art the use of grotesque effects has been frequent. Outstanding instances are to be found in the works of such painters as Hieronymus Bosch, the Brueghels, Goya, Gustave Doré, Daumier, Fuseli, Piranesi, John Martin, Max Ernst and Salvador Dali – among many others. It is very noticeable that these artists use the grotesque for comic, sardonic and exaggerated satirical effects. Much of the comic impact of graphic caricature (*q.v.*) also depends on the skilful use of grotesque; witness the work, for instance, of George Grosz and Gerald Scarfe.

In a comparable way the writer employs grotesque for comic and satirical purposes. In literature one is most likely to find grotesque elements in caricature, parody, satire, invective, burlesque, black comedy, the macabre and what is known as the Theatre of the Absurd (*qq.v.*). Grotesque is often a constituent of comic relief (*q.v.*), the sick joke, sick verse (*q.v.*) and pornography (*q.v.*). Excellent examples of the grotesque can be found in the works of Rabelais, Skelton, Webster, Tourneur, Swift, Pope, Smollett, Byron, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Victor Hugo, E. A. Poe, Zola, Dickens, Browning, Kafka, Alfred Jarry, Samuel Beckett,

Evelyn Waugh, Genet, Ionesco and Roald Dahl – to name but a few.

**Grub Street** According to Dr Johnson, this was 'originally the name of a street near Moorfields in London much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems, whence any mean production is called *grubstreet*.' It now describes anything in the way of literary hackwork.

**guidebook** A book designed to help travellers. Guidebooks range widely from mere hackwork to elegant writing. An early and distinguished example is the *Periegesis* of Pausanias (2nd c. A.D.), a remarkably well-informed and interesting guidebook to Attica, Central Greece and the Peloponnese.

Until travel for diversion and holiday (as opposed to that for exploration, proselytizing and commercial enterprise) became fashionable there was little in the way of organized guidebooks; though since the Middle Ages there have been a very large number of travel books (*q.v.*) and reminiscences, often of considerable literary merit.

In the 17th c. the Grand Tour (*q.v.*) caused a number of writers to produce detailed guides for Europe. Possibly the earliest instance of a handbook for continental travel was James Howell's *Instructions for Forreine Travell* (1642). As the Tour became more and more popular so the number of guidebooks multiplied, and there were many in the 18th c. For the most part they were well written, well-organized and still make interesting reading.

However, the guidebook proper really belongs to the last hundred years or so – a period which has produced such series as: *Murray's Handbooks for Travellers*, *Nagel's Guides*, the *Baedeker Guides*, *Fodor Guides*, the *Guides Bleux* (outstanding for their comprehensiveness and accuracy) and the *Michelin Guides* (which also set a high standard of accuracy and detail). These are the result of joint efforts by teams of investigators.

Occasionally an author has produced a more personal type of guidebook. Richard Ford, for instance, who wrote *Handbook for Travellers in Spain* (1845); and Augustus Hare, who wrote *Days near Rome* (1875), and *Cities of Northern and Central Italy* (1876). From recent years one might cite William Collins's *Companion Guides* and Jonathan Cape's *Travellers' Guides*.

Since the Second World War, travel having become a simple

## guidebook

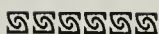
undertaking for millions of people, guidebooks have proliferated in large numbers all over the world and there is little sign of any diminution. In many instances the quality, too, has improved. In fact, the guidebook may be good literature which, at its best, is distinguished by learning, an elegant style and a high degree of readability. See HANDBOOK AND MANUAL; VADE MECUM.

**guslar** The *gusle* is a one-stringed fiddle played by a *guslar* (pl. *guslari*). The *guslari* were blind minstrels among the South Slavs; professional and itinerant reciters of national heroic poems of the oral tradition (*q.v.*) called *narodne pesme* (*q.v.*). These men corresponded to the Greek *rhapsodists*, the Celtic *bards*, the Old English *scops*, the Scandinavian *skalds* (*qq.v.*), and the French *trouvères* and *jongleurs* (*qq.v.*). Their profession dates from the 14th c. or before.

Many of them composed heroic poetry as well as reciting it. They are still to be found occasionally in Yugoslavia (especially in Bosnia, Serbia and Macedonia) and they carry on the ancient tradition of making up and chanting (to the accompaniment of the *gusle*) heroic poems. The author has seen and heard a blind *guslar* (in the uplands of Bosnia) making up such a poem. Its subject was an engagement between the Partisans and the Germans in the Second World War. See also PEVAČI.



# H



**hadith** (A 'statement') The term given by Muslims to those traditions which are believed to embody the practice and precepts of the Prophet. Many statements were ascribed to the Prophet after his death and a number of *hadith* compilations were made. How authentic they were has been much debated.

**hagiography** (Gk 'sacred writing') The writing or study of the lives of the saints. Also known as hagiology; it is, as a rule, the specialized study of saints, often inspired by veneration. There are two main groups of such works: the literary and liturgical. Notable examples of the literary are: Eusebius of Caesarea's record of the martyrs of Palestine (4th c.); Theodoret's account of the monks of Syria (5th c.); Gregory the Great's of the monks of Italy (6th c.); the Byzantine menology (12th c.) – the menology (*q.v.*) being a sort of calendar of the Greek church which incorporates biographies of the saints; the Chronicle of Nestor (*c.* 1113) written by a priest of that name and known as the primary *Russian Chronicle*; *The Golden Legend* of Jacobus a Voragine (13th c.). Liturgical sources are documents, very often calendars (*q.v.*), which record information about devotion paid to saints. These were local as well as universal calendars; also known as martyrologies. Well-known examples were compiled by Hieronymian (5th c.), Bede (8th c.), Adon and Usuard (9th c.). There was also the *Roman Martyrology* of the late 16th c.

To these instances one should add the *Acta Sanctorum*, a series of lives of the saints arranged in order of their feasts in the ecclesiastical year. This was begun by the Bollandists, a body of Belgian Jesuits (named after John Bolland, a Flemish Jesuit), in the 17th c. The first volume appeared in 1643, and the last of the original series in 1786. There are also the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*, a history of the saints of the Benedictine Order, published between 1668 and 1701.

## hagiography

A curiosity in this genre in English literature is John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (popularly known as *The Book of Martyrs*) first published in Latin in 1559 and in English in 1563. This vast work (about twice the length of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*) was a history of the Christian Church but contains detailed accounts of many martyrs, particularly the Protestant martyrs of Queen Mary's reign. *See also* SACRED BOOKS; SYNAXARION.

**haiku** A Japanese verse form consisting of seventeen syllables in three lines: five/seven/five. A correct *haiku* is complete in itself, and expresses a single idea, feeling or image: in fact, a miniature 'snap' in words. It was first established as a form in the 16th c. Recently it has attracted the interest of poets associated with T. E. Hulme and the Imagist movement. Ezra Pound made use of the principles of the *haiku* in *Mauberry* and the *Cantos*. Other poets to be influenced by it were Amy Lowell, Robert Frost, Conrad Aiken and W. B. Yeats. But few western poets have been able to imitate it successfully. James Kirkup is one of the few, as in *Evening*, the last of a sequence called *Four Haiku on the Inland Sea*;

In the amber dusk  
Each island dreams its own night.  
The sea swarms with gold.

*See also* IMAGISTS.

**half-rhyme** The repetition in accented syllables of the final consonant sound but without the correspondence of the vowel sound. Therefore it is a form of consonance (*q.v.*), which is also known as approximate, embryonic, imperfect, near, oblique, para and slant rhyme. It was common in Icelandic, Irish and Welsh verse. Henry Vaughan appears to have been the first to use it in English, but it was not until Gerard Manley Hopkins and W. B. Yeats that English poets began to use it regularly. Since then there have been many examples in the work of such poets as Wilfred Owen, John Crowe Ransom, T. S. Eliot, Emily Dickinson, Allen Tate and W. H. Auden. The following well-known example comes from Emily Dickinson's *I like to see it lap the miles*:

I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks;  
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare.

Up/step, peer/pare are the half-rhymes. *See also* ASSONANCE.

**hallel** (Heb. 'praise, celebrate') A hymn of praise consisting of Psalms 113-118, each of which is headed with *Hallelujah* 'praise ye'. Thus, a song of praise to God. Sung at the four main Jewish festivals: Passover, Pentecost, Dedication and Tabernacles. *See* HALLELUJAH METER.

**hallelujah meter** Named from its frequent use in hymns. It consists of a stanza of six iambic lines: four trimeter, and two tetrameter (*qq.v.*). *See also* HALLEL; HYMNAL STANZA.

**hamartia** (Gk 'error') Primarily, an error of judgement which may arise from ignorance or some moral shortcoming. Discussing tragedy (*q.v.*) and the tragic hero in *Poetics*, Aristotle points out that the tragic hero ought to be a man whose misfortune comes to him, not through vice or depravity, but by some error. For example: Oedipus kills his father from impulse, and marries his mother out of ignorance. Antigone resists the law of the state from stubbornness and defiance. Othello allows himself to be deceived by Iago and overcome by his own jealousy. Hamlet procrastinates. Macbeth succumbs to ambition and the lust for power. King Lear commits the 'sin' of rejecting Cordelia. Phèdre is consumed by her passion for Hippolyte. *See* HUBRIS; TRAGIC FLAW.

**handbook and manual** (OE *handboc*) (Med L *liber manualis*) A small book for handy use like the manual for ecclesiastical offices and ritual. Many guidebooks (*q.v.*) are handbooks, and there are a very large number of handbooks published by way of general information and reference on nations, technical subjects, arts and crafts. In America *handbook* has another and particular sense of 'betting book'. In most cases manual and handbook are synonymous. In the medieval Church a manual contained the forms to be observed in the administration of the sacraments. Other examples are the manual of daily prayer; and specialist works like the various manuals for military training; or the B.R.

## handbook and manual

rule book, a remarkable publication which caters for almost every conceivable contingency in a railwayman's life. This is a masterpiece in its way because of its opaque, convoluted and, at times, mandarin prose which might have been written by Henry James while under hypnosis. The section on emergency action in fog is especially noteworthy. *See also* VADE MECUM.

**happening** A form of theatrical event, or quasi-theatrical event, which has developed since the late 1950s. It appears to be a mutant offspring of the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*) and almost certainly originated in America. It is a kind of semi-improvised 'non-event' which, nevertheless, and paradoxically, occurs. It belongs to the world of 'non-sense' yet appeals directly and forcefully to the senses. A happening may take place in a café, a church, a theatre, a discotheque, a market place or on the street; at any rate somewhere where people assemble. Often what is presented requires audience participation and is accompanied by technical gimmickry in the use of film, stroboscopic lights, smells, music, violent noises. The intention is to 'bombard' the audience with sense data, and make a direct onslaught on the emotions. It may have neither rhyme nor reason, neither structure nor logic. On the other hand, it may have a specific purpose: a recent 'happening' in the U.S.A. presented the 'mock' lynching of a Negro in a public square. *See also* ANTI-PLAY; OFF-BROADWAY.

**harangue** An exhortatory speech, usually delivered to a crowd to incite them to some action. The fire-and-brimstone sermon (*q.v.*) is a kind of harangue. Henry V's pre-battle speeches in *Henry V*, and Mark Antony's oration over Caesar's body in *Julius Caesar* are two well-known examples of harangue in dramatic literature.

**Harlequin** The name derives from the character Arlecchino in *commedia dell'arte* (*q.v.*). He is the young lover in the harlequinade and the suitor of Columbine.

**head rhyme** *See* ALLITERATION.

**headless line** *See* ACEPHALOUS.

**hero and heroine** The principal characters in a work of literature. In criticism the terms carry no connotations of virtuousness or



honour. An evil man or a wicked woman might be the central characters, like Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

**Hebraism/Hellenism** This antinomy (*q.v.*) was elaborated by Matthew Arnold in Chap. IV of *Culture and Anarchy* (1869). Arnold sees the essence of Hebraism as 'strictness of conscience'; that of Hellenism as 'spontaneity of consciousness'. He regards a combination of these two as a necessary pre-requisite to a mature life. They are not contradictory because, as he puts it, 'the desire, native in man, for reason and the will of God, the feeling after the universal order', is their common aim. This is one of several antinomies worked out in the 19th c. *See also* APOLLONIAN/DIONYSIAN; CLASSICISM/ROMANTICISM; NAIV UND SENTIMENTALISCH.

**hemiepes** (Gk 'half-hexameter') In Classical prosody a dactylic trimeter catalectic (*qq.v.*) ending in a long syllable. *See* DACTYL.

**hemistich** (Gk 'half line') Half a metrical line divided at the caesura (*q.v.*). Very common in OE, OHG, ON and medieval alliterative verse (*q.v.*). In drama the half line is used to build up tension and create the effect of cut-and-thrust argument. It is a highly effective device. In drama it is called *hemistichomythia*. *See* STICHOMYTHIA.

**hendecasyllable** (Gk 'eleven syllables') A metrical line of eleven syllables. The usual scheme is either:  $\cup \cup / \cup \cup / \cup / \cup / /$  or:  $\cup / / \cup / / \cup / \cup / \cup$ . It was often used by Greek and Latin poets, and also employed by Dante and Petrarch in sonnets, *terza rima* and *ottava rima* (*qq.v.*). It has not often been used by English poets, but Tennyson and Swinburne experimented with it. Landor wrote some Latin hendecasyllabics.

**hendiadys** (Gk 'one through two') A figure of speech in which one idea is expressed by two substantives, as in 'gloom and despondency' or 'darkness and the shadow of death'.

**hepthemimeral** A form of caesura (*q.v.*) which occurs within the fourth foot of an hexameter (*q.v.*) line.

**heptameter** A metrical line of seven feet, also known as a septenarius or a 'fourteener' (*qq.v.*). Greek and Latin poets used it, mostly

## heptameter

for comic verse, but it has been little used in English verse since the Tudor period. Thereafter it is rare in English verse, though Tennyson and Elizabeth Barrett Browning both attempted it. This example of trochaic heptameter comes from Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*:

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!  
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!  
Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest nature's rule!  
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool.

The heptameter readily breaks down into standard ballad meter or common measure (*qq.v.*) of alternating four and three stress lines.

**heptastich** (Gk 'seven lines') A stanza of seven lines, much used by English poets. For example: Chaucer's rhyme royal (*q.v.*) in *Troilus and Criseyde*; Spenser used it in *The Ruines of Time*, *Daphnida*, and in his four *Hymns* in honour of Love, Beauty, Heavenly Love and Heavenly Beauty; Cowley in *The Lover to his Lyre*; Shelley in *To Night and Mutability*; Robert Browning in *A Lover's Quarrel*; Longfellow in *Olive Basselin*; John Masefield in *The Widow in the Bye Street*, *Dauber and Daffodil Fields*; and, more recently, W. H. Auden in *Letter to Lord Byron*.

**heptasyllabic** A line of seven syllables.

**heresy of paraphrase** A term introduced and examined by Cleanth Brooks in *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947). Brooks's thesis is that if paraphrase means 'to say the same thing in other words' then it is not possible to paraphrase a poem, because a poem means more than merely what it says.

**Hermeticism** Hermes Trismegistus, the 'thrice great Hermes' to whom Milton refers in *Il Penseroso*, was the name given by the Neoplatonists to the Egyptian god Thoth who was regarded as identical with the Grecian Hermes and the author of mystical doctrines. Some works have survived. Hermeticism now refers to poetry which uses occult symbolism and the term has been used particularly of the French symbolist poets. Hermeticism was defined and analysed in 1936 by Francesco Flora in *La poesia ermetica*. In this work Flora takes Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Valéry and Ungaretti as the main Hermetic poets. The Italian poet Arturo Onofri (1885-1928) is usually accepted as the principal

influence in Italian poetry. Loosely, the term denotes obscure, difficult poetry in which the language and imagery are subjective and in which the 'music' and the suggestive power of the words are of as great an importance (if not greater) as the sense. *See also* PURE POETRY; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**heroic couplet** It comprises rhymed decasyllables, nearly always in iambic pentameters rhymed in pairs: one of the commonest metrical forms in English poetry but of uncertain origin. It is generally thought that it developed with Chaucer, possibly because he was familiar with the OF decasyllabic rhymed couplets. However, it is just as possible that as the old alliterative meters were adapted and modified so the rhyming couplet emerged. But there can be no doubt that Chaucer was the first poet to make extensive and successful use of this verse form. The 15th c. poets used the couplet occasionally but it is not until the 16th and 17th c. that it becomes firmly established. Then one can see poets gradually exploiting its possibilities and gaining a mastery of it. Of the many poets who used it at some time or another the most memorable are Spenser, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Hall, Drayton, Fletcher, Beaumont, Donne, Waller, Denham and Oldham.

Thereafter Dryden, and then Pope, made it their own. One might say that Dryden was the farrier and artificer who wrought it into shape; and that Pope was the silversmith who, with elegance, wit and subtlety, polished and refined it to near perfection. The following quotations suggest some of the differences. The first is taken from the beginning of Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe*:

All humane things are subject to decay,  
And, when Fate summons, Monarchs must obey:  
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young  
Was call'd to Empire and had govern'd long:  
In Prose and Verse was own'd, without dispute  
Through all the realms of Non-sense, absolute.  
This aged Prince now flourishing in Peace,  
And blest with issue of a large increase,  
Worn out with business, did at length debate  
To settle the Succession of the State;  
And pond'ring which of all his Sons was fit  
To Reign, and wage immortal War with Wit,  
Cry'd, 'tis resolv'd; for Nature pleads that He  
Should onely rule, who most resembles me:

## heroic couplet

Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,  
Mature in dullness from his tender years;  
Shadwell alone of all my Sons is he  
Who stands confirm'd in full stupidity.  
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,  
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.

Dryden made the couplet a flexible, robust, resonant instrument for satire (as he did for his plays). For the most part his verses move with a stately and deliberate speed, a canonical tread. By contrast, Pope is more nimble, acrobatic and elusive. He is more like a spikey and chuckling magician, whose wit glitters sardonically. These lines come from *Epistle II: To a Lady: Of the Characters of Women*:

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,  
To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;  
Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a Lover's pray'r,  
And paid a Tradesman once to make him stare,  
Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,  
And made a Widow happy, for a whim.  
Why then declare Good-nature is her scorn,  
When 'tis by that alone she can be born?  
Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?  
A fool to Pleasure, and a slave to Fame:  
Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,  
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres.  
Now Conscience chills her, and now Passion burns;  
And Atheism and Religion take their turns;  
A very Heathen in the carnal part,

Throughout the 18th c. the heroic couplet was the most favoured verse form, and some of the best verse was written in it, especially by Johnson, Goldsmith, Crabbe and Cowper. In the 19th c. it was used much less; nevertheless, Byron, Keats, Shelley, Browning, Swinburne and William Morris all made use of it. In the 20th c. the heroic couplet is rare, but mention should be made of Roy Campbell's *Georgiad* – a satire in the Augustan manner; and Nabokov's dazzling parody in his anti-novel (*q.v.*), *Pale Fire*. See also RIDING RHYME.

**heroic drama** A name given to a form of tragedy (*q.v.*) which had some vogue at the beginning of the Restoration period (*q.v.*). It



was drama in the epic mode – grand, rhetorical and declamatory; at its worst, bombastic. Its themes were love and honour and it was considerably influenced by French classical drama, especially by the work of Corneille. It was staged in a spectacular and operatic fashion, and in it one can detect the influences of opera, which at this time was establishing itself. The two main early works were by Sir William Davenant who was virtually the pioneer of English opera. His *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656) and *The Spaniards in Peru* (1658) helped to establish heroic drama. The main dramas thereafter were Robert Howard's *The Indian Queen* (1665), Dryden's *The Indian Emperor* (1665), *The Conquest of Granada* (1669–70) and *Aureng-Zebe* (1675). Dryden was the best of the heroic dramatists. This kind of tragedy was satirized and burlesqued by Buckingham in *The Rehearsal* (1672), and much later again by Sheridan in *The Critic* (1779). *See also* BURLESQUE.

**heroic quatrain** A four-line stanza rhyming either abab, or aabb.

**heroic verse** The meter (*q.v.*) used for epic poetry. For the Classical writers it was the dactylic hexameter (*q.v.*). In England the unrhymed pentameter (*q.v.*) line was commonly used, as in *Paradise Lost*, or the heroic couplet (*q.v.*). The French epic writers normally used the Alexandrine (*q.v.*), and the Italians the hendecasyllabic line (*q.v.*). *See also* EPIC SIMILE; HEROIC QUATRAIN.

**hexameter** (Gk 'of six feet') A metrical line of six feet. In Greek and Latin verse it is often dactylic, especially in epic (*q.v.*). Often the first four feet were spondees (*q.v.*), the fifth a dactyl (*q.v.*) and the last a spondee. It is not a form that has much suited English poets, though there have been many experiments with it especially in the 19th c. by Southey, Kingsley, Coleridge, Longfellow, Clough, Tennyson and Swinburne. But it has never proved a very wieldy line. The occasional hexameter or alexandrine (*q.v.*) has often been used for a particular effect as in *The Faerie Queene*. Michael Drayton in *Poly-Olbion* (c. 1610) was one of the first poets to write at length in iambic hexameters:

When Phoebus lifts his head out of the winter's wave,  
No sooner doth the earth her flowery bosom brave,  
At such time as the year brings on the pleasant spring,  
But hunts-up to the morn the feathered sylvans sing:  
And in the lower grove, as on the rising knoll,

## hexameter

Upon the highest spray of every mounting pole,  
Those quiresters are perched with many a speckled breast.

The basic foot here is the iamb (*q.v.*).

**hexastich** (Gk 'six lines') A stanza of six lines. A very common stanza form. *See* SESTET; SESTINA; SEXAIN; SONNET.

**hiatus** Either a gap in a sentence so that the sense is not completed, or a break between two vowels coming together where there is no intervening consonant. The indefinite article takes an 'n' – as in 'an answer'.

**high comedy** A term introduced by George Meredith in *The Idea of Comedy* (1877). By it he meant a form of comedy of manners (*q.v.*) marked by grace, wit and elegance; an urbane form whose appeal was primarily to the intellect. Such creations as Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Molière's *Tartuffe*, Congreve's *Way of the World*, Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance* and Shaw's *Pygmalion* might all be put into this category. At the other end of the scale we have Low Comedy (*q.v.*). The term Middle Comedy (*q.v.*) has a more specialized meaning. The term High Comedy can be applied to both poems and novels: Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, for instance, in verse. Among novels we might mention Pierre de Laclos's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*; Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*; Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*; and Aldous Huxley's *Crome Yellow*. Not to mention works by George Meredith, Henry James and Evelyn Waugh. *See* COMEDY.

**higher criticism** In biblical studies higher criticism is concerned with the date and composition of the Scriptures, their authorship, their inter-relationship and their cultural and historical backgrounds. This critical technique has its roots in the University of Göttingen late in the 18th c. During the 19th c. it was extended far beyond biblical studies and adopted as a discipline.

**hilarody** A form of ancient Greek mime (*q.v.*) which burlesqued tragedy. *See* BURLESQUE; MAGODY; SATYR PLAY.

**historical novel** A form of fictional narrative which reconstructs history and recreates it imaginatively. Both historical and fictional characters may appear. Though writing fiction, the good his-

## Homeric epithet

torical novelist researches his chosen period thoroughly and strives for verisimilitude (*q.v.*). The supreme example of the historical novelist in English literature is Sir Walter Scott. In the last fifty years this kind of fiction has become extremely popular. It varies greatly in quality. Much of it is poor stuff even by circulating library standards, but some of it is good. Some of the better known exponents are Conan Doyle, Zoë Oldenberg, T. H. White, Marie Renault, Carola Oman, Mary Stuart, Alfred Duggan and Georgette Heyer. *See* NOVEL.

**historical rhyme** A rhyme which was acceptable and good when composed but is no longer so because of a change in pronunciation. A well-known instance occurs in Pope's *Essay on Criticism*:

Good nature and good sense must ever join;  
To err is human, to forgive, Divine.

In Pope's day *join* was pronounced *jine*.

**history play** *See* CHRONICLE PLAY.

**Hochromantik** *See* ROMANTICISM.

**hokku** *See* HAIKU.

**holograph** (Gk 'entire writing') A manuscript or letter written entirely by the person in whose name it appears.

**holophrasis** (Gk 'entire phrase') The use of one word to express a number of ideas.

**homeoteleuton** (Gk 'similarity of endings') A term first used by Aristotle in *Rhetoric*. It has two basic meanings: (a) a figure consisting of a series of words with the same or similar endings; (b) the occurrence of similar endings in two or more adjacent words, clauses or lines of writing. *See also* RHYME.

**Homeric epithet** Homer joined adjectives and nouns to make compound adjectives known as 'Homeric epithets' when applied to stock nouns. Two famous examples are 'wine-dark sea' and 'rosy-fingered dawn', but there are a great many in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and they become an important feature of poetry in the oral tradition (*q.v.*). Examples from the *Iliad* are: 'Hector with

## Homeric epithet

glancing helm', 'swift-footed Achilles', 'well-greaved Achaeans', 'cloud-gathering Zeus', 'white-armed Hera', 'bronze-clad Achaeans', 'god-like Paris', and 'loud-roaring sea'. Examples from the *Odyssey* are: 'god-like Odysseus', 'much-enduring noble Odysseus', 'Odysseus of many counsels', 'bright-eyed Athene', 'Menelaos dear to Ares', 'sharp sword', 'broad heavens', 'splendid armour', and 'well-built hall'. *See also* INCREMENTAL REPETITION; KENNING; PERIPHRAISIS; POETIC DICTION.

**homily** (Gk 'discourse') Either a sermon (*q.v.*) delivered to an assembled congregation, or a written work of an admonitory kind edifying the reader morally. Two well-known books of *Homilies* were published in 1547 and 1563 and appointed by the Church of England to be read at Divine Service.

The *Blickling Homilies* (c. 970) and *The Vercelli Homilies* (c. 1000), collections of 19 and 23 pieces respectively, are valuable OE prose texts, whereas *The Lambeth Homilies* (c. 1200) are important in ME.

**Homeric simile** *See* EPIC SIMILE.

**homograph** (Gk 'same writing') A word written in the same way as another, but having a different pronunciation and meaning, e.g. *row/row*; *tear/tear*; *lead/lead*.

**homonym** (Gk 'same name') A word having the same sound and spelling as another, but a different origin and meaning, e.g. *rest* 'repose'/*rest* 'remainder'; *bay* 'gulf'/*bay* 'laurel'.

**homophone** (Gk 'same sound') A word which is pronounced the same as another but has a different spelling and meaning, e.g.: *foul/fowl*; *wood/would*; *pearl/purl*.

**Horatian ode** So called after the Roman poet Horace who perfected the form. Each stanza has the same metrical form and pattern. *See* ODE.

**hornbook** A sheet of paper, bearing the alphabet, combinations of consonants and vowels, the Lord's Prayer and the Roman numerals, which was mounted on a piece of wood resembling a small paddle or old-fashioned butter-patter and then covered with transparent horn. It was used for teaching children to read up



until the 18th c., when it was replaced by the primer. In 1609 Dekker published *The Gul's Hornebooke*, which was a kind of spoof book of manners, or courtesy book (*q.v.*), for the fops and gallants of the time. *See also* GROBIANISM.

**hovering stress or accent** This occurs when it is not absolutely clear in verse whether a syllable should be stressed or not, or whether it should be half stressed. It is a very common phenomenon, as in these lines from Robert Lowell's *Man and Wife*:

Tamed by Miltown, we lie on Mother's bed;  
the rising sun in warpaint dyes us red;  
in broad daylight her gilded bed-*posts* shine,  
abandoned, almost Dionysian.  
At last the trees are green on Marlborough Street,  
blossoms on our magnolia ignite  
the morning with their murderous five *days'* white.

Hovering stress in these lines occurs on the syllables italicized. Also known as distributed stress. *See* LEVEL STRESS; VARIABLE SYLLABLE.

**howler** A blatant or glaring error, as in these examples from examination papers by schoolboys: (a) 'The worm is an hermaphrodite, but it has to meet another worm before it can do anything'; (b) 'I always wanted to come to ----- school because I thought it was Wandsworth Prison, but that is not the real reason'; (c) 'born of the Virgin Mary, deceived of the Holy Ghost'. Called howlers because they are so 'loud'.

**hrynhent** A form of skaldic meter. It consists of an eight-line stanza and is similar to the *dróttkvætt* (*q.v.*) except that each line is lengthened by a trochee (*q.v.*). Used in court poems between the 11th and 13th c., and still in use today by Icelandic poets. *See also* SKALD.

**hubris** (Gk 'wanton insolence') This shortcoming or defect in the Greek tragic hero leads him to ignore the warnings of the gods and to transgress their laws and commands. Eventually *hubris* brings about downfall and nemesis (*q.v.*), as in the case of Creon in Sophocles' *Antigone* and Clytemnestra in Aeschylus's *Oresteia* trilogy. *See* HAMARTIA; TRAGEDY.

## Hudibrastic verse

**Hudibrastic verse** So called from Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663, 1674, 1678), a mock-heroic satirical poem in octosyllabic couplets. Butler's wit, exuberance and invention in this poem have made it an outstanding instance of what may be called 'low satire'. These lines from Canto I give an idea of the tone and manner (they are about the Metaphysical Sectarian):

He was in Logick a great Critick,  
Profoundly skill'd in Analytick.  
He could distinguish, and divide  
A Hair 'twixt South and South-West side:  
On either which he would dispute,  
Confute, change hands, and still confute.  
He'd undertake to prove by force  
Of Argument, a Man's no Horse.  
He'd prove a Buzard is no Fowl,  
And that a Lord may be an Owl;  
A Calf an Alderman, a Goose a Justice,  
And Rooks Committee-men and Trustees.

**huitain** A stanza or strophe (*q.v.*) of eight lines, each of eight or ten syllables, normally written on three rhymes. One rhyme occurs four times, and the rhyme for the fourth and fifth lines is the same. This form was popular in France in the 15th and 16th c. Villon wrote his *lais* (*q.v.*) and many of his *ballades* (*q.v.*) in *huitains*. Marot also used this form. See OTTAVA RIMA.

**humanism** In the first place, the humanists of the Renaissance period were students of *literae humaniores*; the literature of the Greek and Latin poets, dramatists, philosophers, historians and rhetoricians. At the Renaissance (*q.v.*) there was a great revival of interest in Classical literature and thought and this revival was, to some extent, at the expense of medieval scholasticism (*q.v.*). The long-term influences of this revival were immense and incalculable, and they led to an excessive devotion to Classical ideals and rules in the late 17th c. and 18th c.

Humanism, a European phenomenon, was a more worldly and thus more secular philosophy; and it was anthropocentric. It sought to dignify and ennoble man.

In its more extreme forms humanistic attitudes regarded man as the crown of creation; a point of view marvellously expressed in *Hamlet*, by Hamlet:

. . . What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason!  
How infinite in faculty! in form, in moving, how express and  
admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how  
like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!

It would have been inconceivable that anyone in the 14th c. should have expressed such a view. Then Hamlet adds: 'And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?' And in that one line he summarizes another attitude or feeling, which a man in the 14th c. would have responded to instantly.

At its best, humanism helped to civilize man, to make him realize his potential powers and gifts, and to reduce the discrepancy between potentiality and attainment. It was a movement that was at once a product of and a counteraction to a certain prevalent scepticism; a way of dealing with the disequilibrium created by the conflict between belief and doubt. Humanism turned out to be a form of philosophy which concentrated on the perfection of a worldly life, rather than on the preparation for an eternal and spiritual life.

The popularity of the courtesy book (*q.v.*) in the 16th and 17th c., for instance, suggests what a radical change there had been in man's view of himself. He was increasingly regarded as a creature perfectible on earth. Hence the secular emphasis in courtesy books.

Humanistic ideas and beliefs pervade much other literature of the Renaissance period. Ficino (1433-99); Pico della Mirandola (1463-94); Erasmus (1466-1536); Sir Thomas More (1478-1535); and Montaigne (1533-92) were outstanding humanists.

**humanisme** A short-lived movement in poetry begun by Fernand Gregh in 1902. Its manifesto (*q.v.*) was published in *Le Figaro*. It represented a reaction against the *Symboliste* poets (see SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM) and against the *Parnassians* (*q.v.*).

**humours** The term humour (it derives from Latin *humor* 'moisture'; hence *humid*) was used in the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance period – in the tradition of Hippocratic pathology and physiology – to denote the four humours of the body. These depended on the four fluids: blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. The admixture or commingling of these determined a person's disposition, character, mind, morality and temperament. The humours released spirits or vapours which affected the brain,

## humours

and thence a person's behaviour. According to the predominant humour a man was sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric or melancholy. Robert Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* I ii 3 (1621), gives an excellent description of the qualities of the humours.

Vestigially, the theory of humours survives in such expressions as: 'ill-humoured', 'good-humoured', 'black with rage', 'in a black mood', 'yellow with jealousy', 'green with envy', 'yellow-livered', 'red with remorse', and so forth. And we still use 'sanguine' or 'melancholy' to describe certain temperaments.

The theory of humours had a considerable influence on writers when it came to the creation of characters. Dramatists devised characters based on the theory of the imbalances that occurred between the bodily fluids. Comedy of humours (*q.v.*) developed characters who were dominated by a particular mood, inclination or peculiarity. Ben Jonson is the most notable instance of a dramatist to do this – in *Every Man in His Humour* (1598); almost certainly the first play created on the theory of personality and ruling passion. This he followed with *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599).

It may be no coincidence that at this period writers were also addressing themselves to the depiction of 'characters' in character sketches, and analysing character and temperament.

It is not until the 18th c. that we find 'humour' associated with laughter and being used in contra-distinction to wit (*q.v.*). See APTRONYM; CHARACTER; MORALITY PLAYS.

**hyangga** (K 'native songs') A form of Korean folksong composed of four, eight or ten lines divided into two stanzas. The number of syllables in each line varies from four to fifteen. It is believed that only twenty-five of these poems survive, all of the 13th c.

**hybrid** (L 'half-breed, mongrel') A word formed from a stem or word in one language plus a suffix or prefix from another. For example: *cablogram* (English and Greek); *gullible* (English and Latin).

**hymn** (Gk 'song in praise of a god or hero') Early examples are the Homeric Hymn to Demeter (c. 7th c. B.C.) and the first Delphic Hymn (c. 138 B.C.). Many Latin hymns date from the Middle Ages: *Pange lingua gloriosi*; *Te lucis ante terminum*; *Iam lucis orto sidere*; *Veni Creator Spiritus*; *Veni Sancte Spiritus*; *Jesu dulcis memoria*; *Stabat Mater*; *Dies Irae*. Most English hymns of repute



date from the 17th to the 19th c., their authors being: John Keble, Nahum Tate, Nicholas Brady, John Mason Neale, Reginald Heber, Isaac Watts, and Charles and John Wesley. In the 20th c. there have been few contributions.

Among English-speaking-poets of note who have attempted the form one should mention George Herbert, Dryden, Milton, William Blake, William Cowper, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, John Greenleaf Whittier, Tennyson and Christina Rossetti. *See also* ANTIPHON; CANTICLE; HYMNAL STANZA; LAUDA; LYRIC.

**hymnal stanza** A four-line stanza in iambics with a rhyming scheme of either abcb or abab. It is also known as common measure. This example is the first stanza of a hymn by Nahum Tate:

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.

*See also* HALLELUJAH METER; HYMN; SHORT MEASURE.

**hypallage** (Gk 'exchange') Also known as transferred epithet. A figure of speech in which the epithet is transferred from the appropriate noun to modify another to which it does not really belong. Common examples are: 'a sleepless night'; 'the condemned cell'; 'a happy day'. It is a very common poetic device, as in these lines from Part One of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*:

Winter kept us warm, covering  
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding  
A little life with dried tubers.

Clearly, the snow is not 'forgetful', but rather conceals, muffles, 'shrouds' the earth, so that for a time we forget what the earth looks like. *See also* PROLEPSIS.

**hyperbaton** (Gk 'overstepping') A figure of speech in which words are transposed from their usual order. A very common poetic device. Milton, for instance, uses it constantly – as in these lines from *Paradise Lost*:

High on a throne of royal state, which far  
Outshone the wealth of Ormuz or of Ind,

## hyperbaton

Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,  
Satan exalted sat.

**hyperbole** (Gk 'overcasting') A figure of speech which contains an exaggeration for emphasis. For example, Hotspur's rant in *Henry IV* Pt. I, I, iii, 201:

By heaven methinks it were an easy leap  
To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon,  
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,  
Where fathom line could never touch the ground,  
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks.

Hyperbole was very common in Tudor and Jacobean drama, and in heroic drama (*q.v.*). It is an essential part of burlesque (*q.v.*). There are plentiful examples in writers of comic fiction; in Dickens, especially.

Everyday instances, of which there are many, are: 'I haven't seen you for ages'; 'as old as the hills'; 'terrible weather', and so on. See ADYNATON; BOMBAST; LITOTES; TAPINOSIS.

**hypercatalectic** (Gk 'beyond the last metrical foot') A line is so called when it has an extra syllable at the end. Also known as hypermetrical and extrametrical. Each of these three lines from Crashaw's *Wishes to His Supposed Mistress* illustrates the point:

Sydnæan showers  
Of sweet discourse, whose powers  
Can crown old Winter's head with flowers.

**hyperdochmiac** A trochaic tripod (*q.v.*) which is catalectic (*q.v.*); that is to say, short of half a foot at the end of the line. See DOCHMIAC; FOOT.

**hypermetric syllable** See HYPERCATALECTIC.

**hyphaeresis** (Gk 'taking away from beneath') In general the term denotes the omission of a letter from a word: 'o'er' for 'over'; 'e'en' for 'even'; 'heav'n' for 'heaven'. See ELISION.

**hypocorism** The term derives from a Greek word meaning 'to play the child'. Commonly used of pet-names, like 'Mike' for Michael,

## **hysteron proteron**

and the use of familiar terms like these : Will Shakespeare, Jim Boswell, Willie Yeats, Tom Eliot. Also endearments like: 'money spider', 'cherry blossom', 'honey', 'chuck'.

**hyporchema** (Gk 'song accompanied by dancing') A choral song accompanied by dancers is believed to have been invented by Thaletas of Gortyn, Crete (7th c. B.C.). The Cretic measure was used for the verse. It was used as a hymn (*q.v.*) in honour of Apollo and was related to the paean and the dithyramb (*qq.v.*).

**hypostatization** A form of personification (*q.v.*) in which an abstract quality is spoken of as something human. For example: 'Truth insists I tell the story'; 'Decency compels me to admit the truth'. Not uncommon in everyday usage.

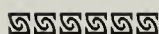
**hypotaxis** (Gk 'under arrangement') Subordination; syntactic relationship between dependent and independent constructions, e.g. 'He who knows will tell us' as against 'Who knows? He will tell us'. See PARATAXIS.

**hypotyposis** A figurative device by which something is represented as if it were present. For example: John of Gaunt's dying speech in *Richard II* (II, i, 31) in which he 'sees' England as a sceptred isle and creates a general word image of the country.

**hypozeugma** See ZEUGMA.

**hysteron proteron** (Gk 'latter former') A figurative device in which events in the temporal order are reversed. Sometimes used for comic effect, it implies 'putting the cart before the horse'. There is an agreeable example in *Much Ado About Nothing* IV, ii, 20, when Dogberry is holding forth to the Watch, and investigating the malefactors Conrade and Borachio.

# I



**iamb** The term derives from a Greek word of unknown etymology and denotes a metrical foot consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, thus:  $\cup /$ . For instance: *děféat*. It was probably first used by Archilochus (7th c. B.C.). In antiquity the iambic rhythm was thought to be the nearest to speech and it is the commonest type of foot in all English verse because it fits the prevailing natural pattern of English words and phrases. Of these lines from Pope's *Prologue* to Addison's *Cato*, the first is in regular iambic meter and the next three have slight variations – as the ear soon informs one:

Tõ wáke | thě sóul | bý tén | děr strókes | őf árt,  
Tõ ráise | thě génřus, | ānd tõ ménd | thě héart;  
Tõ máke | mánkind | ĩn cón | sciořs vír | tũe bóld,  
Líve o'er | eāch scéne, | ānd bé | whāt théy | běhóld.

**iambelegus** In Classical prosody, an iamb (*q.v.*) followed by a dactylic colon (*q.v.*).

**iambes, les** French satiric poems in which a twelve-syllable line alternates with one of eight syllables. The *iambe* came into use with the publication of Chénier's *Iambes* (1787–90) and Barbier's *Les Iambes* (1830–31).

**iambic trimeter** A line of six iambic feet (each pair of feet taken as a unit or dipody), used for satirical verses by Archilochus (7th c. B.C.) and Simonides (6th–5th c. B.C.) and common in Greek and Latin drama. *See also* SYZYGY.

**ibidem** (L 'in the same place, in that very place') Often abbreviated to *ibid.* or *ib.*, the term indicates a reference to or quotation from 'the same place' in a book or chapter or on a page. *See* IDEM; OPERE CITATO.



## ideal spectator

**icon** (Gk 'image') A quasi-literary term used to describe the depiction of an object or person in figurative language, but in a particular way, as in George Herbert's *The Church-floore*:

Mark you the floore? That square & speckled stone  
which looks so firm and strong,  
Is *Patience*:  
And th'other black and grave, wherewith each one  
is checker'd all along,  
Humilitie:

See also EMBLEM-BOOK.

**ictus** (L 'blow, stroke') The stress or accent (*qq.v.*) placed on particular syllables in a line of verse. Gerard Manley Hopkins used it quite often to show which syllables he wanted the reader to stress; sometimes syllables which would not normally be so, as in these lines from *Spelt from Sybil's Leaves*:

For earth | her being has unbound, her  
dapple is at an end, as-  
tray or aswarm, all throughther, in throngs; | self in self steepèd  
and páshed – quíte  
Dismembering, dísmémbering | áll now. Heart, you round me  
right  
With: Our évening is over us; óur night | whélms, whélms,  
ánd will end us.

See SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**ideal reader** What every author wants. That imaginary person who, the writer hopes, will understand completely the experience he is trying to convey, and respond to it as he wishes. See also IDEAL SPECTATOR.

**ideal spectator** Two basic meanings may be distinguished: (a) the 'everyman' for whom the dramatist writes; for all practical purposes synonymous with the average man; (b) a character in a play who either expresses the attitudes and feelings of the dramatist or is representative of the majority of the audience.

The French term is *raisonneur* and both 'characters' are related to the Greek Chorus and the single character acting as chorus (*q.v.*), as well as, possibly, to the confidant (*q.v.*).

The ideal spectator of category (b) is not much involved in the

## ideal spectator

plot but is rather an onlooker; a sort of neutral character, like Horatio in *Hamlet*, Kent in *King Lear*, Lord Goring in *An Ideal Husband* and the lawyer in Arthur Miller's play *A View from the Bridge*. See also IDEAL READER.

*à la fixe*

**idée fixe** (F 'fixed idea') A preconception, an unshakable conviction; hence a dominating theme; a monomania. Quite a common term in music; rare as a literary term, but important in connection with Valéry's theories on the subject expressed in *Idée fixe* (1932), a dialogue. Like Heraclitus, Hegel and William James (among others) Valéry denies that an idea is ever quite the same on two occasions of its occurrence. An idea, it is argued, cannot be fixed because the mental state is transitory. Some ideas have the property of reappearing to consciousness more often than others. Their appearance may be relied on in appropriate contexts; thus they are 'fixed' in the sense that a roulette wheel can be fixed. These are 'privileged' and their privilege is shown, not only in the frequency of their reappearances but also in their status.

It is in the nature of an idea to intervene in the mind's normal state of disorder and inattention, and to accentuate and momentarily arrest (or retard) some element in it. The idea is, in fact, this momentarily favoured element which, by thus being coagulated as it were from the general psychic mass, suggests comparisons and hypotheses, whereby the animal flux of images and instincts becomes transmuted into thinking. When the arrestation becomes habitual and the same idea recurs repeatedly in a variety of mental 'situations', we have what may be called an *idée fixe*. Recurrent symbols, word complexes, images and themes in a writer's work are also associated with the fixed idea.

**idée reçue** (F 'received idea') This term is perhaps most prominent in connection with Flaubert's *Dictionnaire des idées reçues* (1913). It was a collection of a mass of notes and not really complete. It attacks the sin of affirming without examining. Flaubert, who had a particular aversion to the platitude, conceived the idea as a youth. There are two main themes: an attack on the *cliché* (q.v.); and the peril of accepted ideas. Writing to George Sand in 1871 Flaubert said 'All our trouble comes from our gigantic ignorance. When shall we get over empty speculation and accepted ideas? What should be studied is believed without discussion. Instead of examining, people pontificate.' Reference to Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (1881), a bitter condemnation of human stupidity,

helps to show the relevance of *idées reçues* to everyday life. Flaubert also collected specimens for a *Catalogue des idées chics* in order to complete this unfinished novel.

**idem** (L 'the same') Often abbreviated to *id.*, it denotes the same word or name or title already referred to. *See also* IBIDEM; OPERE CITATO.

**identical rhyme** The repetition of the same word in the rhyming position in order to achieve emphasis. An interesting example occurs in stanza XI of Keats's *Isabella*:

All close they met again, before the dusk  
 Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
 All close they met, all eves, before the dusk  
 Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
 Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
 Unknown of any, free from whispering tale.

In medieval French verse identical rhyme or *rime riche* was fashionable. It was sometimes imitated by Chaucer, as in the *Prologue to Canterbury Tales*:

The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
 That hem hath holpen when that they were seeke.

*See* RHYME.

**ideograph** A written symbol. A picture of the thing itself or a representation of the idea. The Chinese and Japanese languages are ideographic.

**idiolect** The aggregate of speech habits peculiar to an individual.

**idiom** A form of expression, construction or phrase peculiar to a language and often possessing a meaning other than its grammatical or logical one.

Some languages have thousands of idioms and English is no exception. These are a handful out of the many in existence and use: by chance; far and wide; again and again; spick and span; wear and tear; neither here nor there; off and on; as fit as a fiddle; better late than never; no wonder; to turn adrift; to hang fire; to have the upper hand; to back the wrong horse; at daggers drawn; to lead by the nose.

## idiom

See CLICHÉ; COLLOQUIALISM; DEAD METAPHOR; SLANG.

**ido** An international language devised by Louis Couturat in 1907. It was a 'child' of Esperanto (*q.v.*), in which language *ido* means 'offspring', but was in many ways a simplification of Esperanto. By many it has been thought to be an improvement on the parent language.

**idyll** (Gk 'little form') It can refer to either a poem or an episode in a poem, or to a poem which describes some episode or scene in rural life (in which case it is very nearly synonymous with pastoral) (*q.v.*), or a description of any scene of tranquil happiness. In common parlance 'idyllic' is used to describe a serene and euphoric state or environment which is remotely attainable and idealized. It is not therefore a definite poetic genre, though having strong associations with the bucolic e.g. the *Idylls* of Theocritus. It has indeed been used for a variety of works, like Victor de Laprade's *Idylles héroïques* (1858), Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (1885), Browning's *Dramatic Idylls* (1879–80) and Barrie's *Auld Licht Idylls* (1888). See also ECLOGUE; PASTORAL.

**illusion** The semblance of reality and verisimilitude (*q.v.*) in art which most writers seek to create in order to enable the reader to think that he is seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, and smelling, or, conceivably, having some extra-sensory or kinaesthetic experience. The creation of illusion is a co-operative act between writer and reader. It brings about in the reader what Coleridge called 'the willing suspension of disbelief' (*q.v.*). However, the writer also destroys illusion, sometimes for a specific purpose: for example, to address the reader directly – a not uncommon practice among 18th and 19th c. novelists. The contrast helps the illusion and at the same time sharpens and clarifies the impression of things happening at a distance. Illusion should be distinguished from *delusion* and *hallucination*.

**imagery** (L 'making of likenesses') The terms *image* and *imagery* have many connotations and meanings. Imagery as a general term covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, states of mind and any sensory or extra-sensory experience. An 'image' does not necessarily mean a mental picture.

In the first place we may distinguish between the literal, the



perceptual and conceptual. These lines from Robert Lowell's *Our Lady of Walsingham* illustrate the basic differences:

There once the penitents took off their shoes  
And then walked barefoot the remaining mile;  
And the small trees, a stream and hedgerows file  
Slowly along the munching English lane,  
Like cows to the old shrine, until you lose  
Track of your dragging pain.  
The stream flows down under the druid tree,  
Shiloah's whirlpools gurgle and make glad  
The castle of God.

The first two lines are a literal image (without figurative language) which may or may not convey a visual image also. The phrase 'hedgerows file slowly' is a perceptual image because of the metaphorical use of the word 'file'. The phrase 'castle of God' is conceptual. One can hardly visualize it but one may have an idea of it.

Many *images* (but by no means all) are conveyed by figurative language, as in metaphor, simile, synecdoche, onomatopoeia and metonymy (*qq.v.*). An image may be visual (pertaining to the eye), olfactory (smell), tactile (touch), auditory (hearing), gustatory (taste), abstract (in which case it will appeal to what may be described as the intellect) and kinaesthetic (pertaining to the sense of movement and bodily effort).

These lines from Peter Redgrove's *Lazarus and the Sea* contain all these kinds of image:

The tide of my death came whispering like this  
Soiling my body with its tireless voice.  
I scented the antique moistures when they sharpened  
The air of my room, made the rough wood of my bed,  
(most dear)  
Standing out like roots in my tall grave.  
They slopped in my mouth and entered my plaited blood  
Quietened my jolting breath with a soft argument  
Of such measured insistence, untied the great knot of my heart.  
They spread like whispered conversations  
Through all the numbered rippling tissues radiated  
Like a tree for thirty years from the still centre  
Of my salt ovum. But this calm dissolution  
Came after my agreement to the necessity of it;

## imagery

Where before it was a storm over red fields  
Pocked with the rain, and the wheat furrowed  
With wind, then it was the drifting of smoke  
From a fire of the wood, damp with sweat,  
Fallen in the storm.

It is often the case that an image is not exclusively one thing or another; they overlap and intermingle and thus combine. Thus, the kinaesthetic may also be visual.

In this quotation the first two lines are clearly auditory, but the use of the word 'soiling' may suggest the tactile; on the other hand, for some, the word may have olfactory associations. The third line is olfactory. In the fourth and fifth lines we have a combination of the tactile and visual. The sixth line intermingles the tactile, olfactory and gustatory. The phrases 'quietened my jolting breath' and 'through all the numbed rippling tissues' are kinaesthetic, but are also visual and tactile. 'But this calm dissolution/ Came after my agreement to the necessity of it;' is abstract. 'Untied the great knot of my/heart' is visual-cum-kinaesthetic. The other images in the poem fall readily into one of the categories mentioned. See ARCHETYPE; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**imagination** See FANCY AND IMAGINATION.

**imagists** A group of poets who were prominent immediately before the First World War. The best known were Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, T. E. Hulme, Richard Aldington and Hilda Doolittle. They believed that a hard, clear image was essential to verse. They also believed that poetry should use the language of everyday speech and have complete freedom in subject matter. Pound edited the first anthology, *Des Imagistes* (1914), and in 1915 Amy Lowell published some imagist poets. This work contained a statement of the ideals of Imagism (or 'amygism', as it was called). T. E. Hulme's *Above the Dock* is a good example of a poem in the imagist manner:

Above the quiet dock in midnight,  
Tangled in the tall mast's corded height,  
Hangs the moon. What seemed so far away  
Is but a child's balloon, forgotten after play.

See also ABSTRACT; DINGGEDICHT; HAIKU; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM; VORTICISM.

**imitation** Three basic meanings can be distinguished: (a) copying or plagiarism (*q.v.*); (b) the adoption of the tone, style and attitude of another writer; a re-creation; (c) a representation. Literary theory during and after the Romantic period (*q.v.*) regarded imitation in sense (b) as a somewhat inferior practice, derivative, lacking in originality. Prior to that and for many centuries (especially during the 18th) it had been regarded as a wholly respectable practice. Aristotle advocated it, so did Cicero and Horace. The idea was that a writer should learn everything he could from the masters who were his predecessors. This point of view prevailed during the medieval and Renaissance periods and continued into the 18th c. Pope, who composed some of the best imitations (*Imitations of Horace*), gives the 18th c. view in *An Essay on Criticism* (1711):

Those RULES of old discover'd, not devis'd,  
Are Nature still, but Nature Methodiz'd;  
Nature, like Liberty, is but restrain'd  
By the same Laws which first herself ordain'd . . .

You then whose Judgment the right course wou'd steer,  
Know well each ANCIENT'S proper Character,  
His Fable, Subject, Scope in ev'ry Page,  
Religion, Country, Genius of his Age:  
Without all these at once before your Eyes,  
Cavil you may, but never Criticize.  
Be Homer's Works your Study, and Delight,  
Read them by Day, and meditate by Night,  
Thence form your Judgment, thence your Maxims bring,  
And trace the Muses upward to their Spring;  
Still with It self compar'd, his Text peruse;  
And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse . . .

Nowadays, imitation is seldom used as a critical term. When it is, it is roughly synonymous with mimesis (*q.v.*). See NOVELTY.

**impression** See EDITION.

**impressionism** The term very probably derives from Claude Monet's painting *Impression: Soleil Levant* (first exhibited in Paris in 1874). The Impressionists were a school of painters who were particularly concerned with the transitory effects of light, and they wished to depict the fleeting impression from a subjective

## impressionism

point of view. They were not interested in a precise representation; the resulting impression depended on the perception of the spectator. The terms *impressionist* and *impressionism* have crept into literary criticism, but they are vague terms which we might well dispense with. French symbolist poets have been called *impressionist*; so have English poets like Oscar Wilde and Arthur Symonds. The term *impressionism* has also been used to describe the novelist's technique of concentrating on the inner life of the main character rather than on external reality. Abundant examples of this technique are to be found in the work of James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf. *See also* STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**imprimatur** (L 'let it be printed') The term signifies that the Roman Catholic Church has sanctioned the printing of a work. It is a declaration that a book or pamphlet is free of moral or doctrinal error. But it does *not* imply that those who have given the *imprimatur* agree with the contents of the book. *See* NIHIL OBSTAT.

**imprint** (a) publisher's name, place and date of publication at the bottom of the title page; (b) printer's name with that of the printing press traditionally on the final page.

**incantation** A formulaic use of words to produce a magical effect and to create an intensifying emotional temperature. The words may be chanted or spoken. It is very common in primitive literatures and is much used by sorcerers and witches, and also for ritual purposes as in a charm (*q.v.*). Famous examples are the incantations of the witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and in Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens*, from which these lines come:

The owl is abroad, the bat and the toad  
And so is the cat-a-mountain;  
The ant and the mole sit both in a hole,  
And the frog peeps out o' the fountain.  
The dogs they do bay, and the timbrels play,  
The spindle is now a-turning;  
The moon it is red, and the stars are fled,  
But all the sky is a-burning:  
The ditch is made, and our nails the spade:  
With pictures full, of wax and of wool,  
Their livers I stick with needles quick;  
There lacks but the blood to make up the flood.



Quickly, dame, then bring your part in!  
 Spur, spur upon little Martin!  
 Merrily, merrily make him sail,  
 A worm in his mouth and a thorn in his tail,  
 Fire above, and fire below,  
 With a whip in your hand to make him go!  
     O now she's come!  
 Let all be dumb.

**incremental repetition** A term invented by Francis Gummere in *The Popular Ballad* (1907) to describe a rhetorical device of the ballad (*q.v.*) form. It has been widely used in ballads for hundreds of years and is very typical of poetry in oral tradition (*q.v.*). The following stanzas from the traditional ballad *James Harris (The Demon Lover)* illustrate well the use of the device:

'O where have you been, my long, long love,  
 This long seven years and mair?'  
 'O I'm come to seek my former vows  
 Ye granted me before.'

'O hold your tongue of your former vows,  
 For they will breed sad strife;  
 O hold your tongue of your former vows,  
 For I am become a wife.'

He turned him right and round about,  
 And the tear blinded his ee:  
 'I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground,  
 If it had not been for thee.'

'I might hae had a king's daughter,  
 Far, far beyond the sae;  
 I might have had a King's daughter,  
 Had it not been for love o thee.'

This kind of repetition is thought by some to be peculiar to English and Scottish ballads, but a very similar device is frequent in South Slav *narodne pesme* (*q.v.*) of the oral tradition. See ANAPHORA; REPETITION; SYNTHETIC RHYTHM.

**incunabula** See CRADLE BOOK.

**index** (L 'forefinger') The plural is indexes or indices. An alphabetical list of subjects treated in a book, with page references. It

## index

is now found at the end, but in older books it may serve as a *table of contents* at the beginning.

**index expurgatorius** A list of passages in a book which, by order of the Roman Catholic Church, must be deleted before it can be read. *See also* IMPRIMATUR; INDEX LIBRORUM PROHIBITORUM; NIHIL OBSTAT.

**index librorum prohibitorum** A list of books which Roman Catholics are forbidden by the Church to read, or books which may only be read in an expurgated edition. Commonly known as 'the Index'. *See also* IMPRIMATUR; INDEX EXPURGATORIUS; NIHIL OBSTAT.

**indirect speech** The changing of spoken words (*oratio recta*) into reported speech (*oratio obliqua*). For example: 'I won't go tomorrow,' said Fred – becomes 'Fred said that he would not go on the following day'.

**induction** An archaism (*q.v.*) for introduction or prologue (*qq.v.*). A good example occurs at the beginning of *The Taming of the Shrew*, where Christopher Sly, a drunken tinker, is brought in by a lord and his huntsmen and is then treated as a lord and persuaded that he has lost his wits. He is then obliged to watch the play of the taming of the shrew performed by a troupe of strolling players. Another well-known example is that by Thomas Sackville in *Mirror for Magistrates* (1559), in which Sorrow leads the poet into the dominions of the dead.

**inflection** Two basic meanings may be distinguished: (a) a change in the form of a word, to show a change in its grammatical function. Usually at the end of a word, the case in a noun for instance. Inflections are common in Latin and Greek, and in Slav languages but there are few in English; (b) the term is also used to describe changes in pitch. For example, the word 'well' as a noun, adjective and exclamation could be said in a number of different ways.

**initial rhyme** *See* HEAD RHYME AND ALLITERATION.

**initiating action** The event or events in a plot which bring about a state of conflict and tension. *See also* CLIMAX; EXPOSITION; FALLING ACTION; RISING ACTION.

**inkhorn terms** Pedantic terms and learned borrowings from foreign tongues: Thomas Wilson, in his *Arte of Rhetorique* (1553), observed that the first lesson to be learned was never to affect 'any straunge ynkhorne termes, but to speak as is commonly received'. An inkhorn was a small vessel for ink fastened to the clothing. See LOAN WORD.

**in medias res** (L 'into the middle of things'). The locus classicus (*q.v.*) may well be Horace's remarks in *Ars Poetica* to the effect that 'semper ad eventum festinat (that is, the poet) et in medias res' and the phrase has become almost a cliché (*q.v.*) to describe a common method of beginning a story – in other words, starting in the midst of the action at some crucial point, when a good deal has already happened. The writer is then able to shuttle back and forth in time between interrelated incidents. Milton does it very effectively in *Paradise Lost* by beginning his narrative in Hell, after the fall of the rebel angels. See also AB OVO.

**In Memoriam stanza** So named because Tennyson used it in *In Memoriam* A. H. H. (1850). A four-line iambic tetrameter rhyming abba:

I held it truth, with him who sings  
To one clear harp in divers tones,  
That men may rise on stepping-stones  
Of their dead selves to higher things.

**inscape and instress** Terms invented by Gerard Manley Hopkins. By 'inscape' he meant the individual 'distinctive' form, the 'oneness' of a natural object. For the energy of being by which things are upheld and for the natural stress which determines an 'inscape', he used the word 'instress'. This is akin to what Shelley called 'the One Spirit's plastic stress', and instress is the 'sensation of inscape' – a kind of mystical illumination or insight into the underlying order and unity of creation. The poet's notebooks and journals, which are of enormous interest, reveal his preoccupation with both terms. See SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**inspiration** There are two basic theories about inspiration: (a) that it comes from outside the writer; (b) that it comes from within him. The first is the older. Many Greek and Latin writers attempted to explain it by suggesting that inspiration was of divine

## inspiration

origin – the action of a Muse (*q.v.*). Invoking the muse was common and became a literary convention (*q.v.*). Homer often did so. Plato and Aristotle both suggest that inspiration is divine. For the most part during the Renaissance period the Classical view was retained – at any rate as a convention.

The external force theory prevailed and proved the more attractive of the two until late in the 18th c. when writers started to favour the second theory and ascribed inspiration to the workings of individual genius (*q.v.*). Psychology and theories of psycho-analysis suggest that the unconscious or subconscious is the main source of creative activity. Few people now, except those with 'romantic' ideas about it (usually women), believe in inspiration. As William Faulkner once put it tersely, 'No one ever told me where to find it'. One of the more interesting modern comments on the subject is provided by Graham Greene in *The End of the Affair* (1951), a comment which, in its way, covers both theories. 'So much in writing', he says, 'depends on the superficiality of one's days. One may be preoccupied with shopping and income tax returns and chance conversations, but the stream of the unconscious continues to flow undisturbed, solving problems, planning ahead: one sits down sterile and dispirited at the desk, and suddenly the words come as though from the air: the situations that seemed blocked in a hopeless impasse move forward: the work has been done while one slept or shopped or talked with friends.' *See also* AFFLATUS; DONNÉE; FANCY AND IMAGINATION; INVENTION; LIGNE DONNÉE.

**instress** *See* INSCAPE AND INSTRESS.

**intention** *See* FOUR MEANINGS OF A POEM.

**intentional fallacy** The error of judging a work by attempting to assess what the writer's intention was, and whether or not he has fulfilled it. Modern criticism tends to the point of view that this is irrelevant, that the work itself is all that matters. As Henry James put it succinctly in *The Art of the Novel* (1934): 'Never trust the artist. Trust the tale. The proper function of a critic is to save the tale from the artist who created it.' *See* AFFECTIVE FALLACY.

**interior monologue** *See* MONOLOGUE.

**inter-laced rhyme** *See* CROSSED RHYME.



**interlude** (L 'between play'). A short entertainment put on between the courses of a feast or the acts of a play. During the Middle Ages and up to the 16th c. the term was used to describe a variety of dramatic entertainments. Italian Renaissance drama had *intermedii*. In France and Spain similar diversions were called *entremets* and *entremes*. Interludes were particularly popular in England in the 15th and 16th c., and especially between 1550-80. In the *Annals of English Drama* 975-1700 Harbage lists 90 or so plays which could qualify as Interludes. It is very likely that they form a link between the Mystery Play, the Miracle Play and the Morality (*q.v.*), and the psychological drama of the Elizabethans. Dividing lines are not clear. Many of them are very similar to Moralities and in some cases are indistinguishable from them. They were often allegorical and didactic (many also were farcical) and written in rough verse; at times so rough that it becomes doggerel (*q.v.*). They were usually about a thousand lines long and there seems little doubt that most were intended as entertainment at banquets at court, in the houses of nobility, at University colleges and at the Inns of Court. Two main types can be distinguished: (a) the popular (e.g. *Youth*, *The Pride of Life* and *Mankind*); (b) the aristocratic or courtly (e.g. *Fulgens and Lucrece* and *Appius and Virginia*).

One of the earliest instances is the *Interludium de Clerico et Puella* (1290-1335). A list of the most notable examples (some of these are also classified as Moralities) should include: *The Pride of Life* (c. 1300-25); *Mankind* (1465-70); *The Castell of Perseverance* (1400-25); *Wisdom* (1460-63); Medwall's *Fulgence and Lucrece* (1490-1500); *Youth* (c. 1515-28); Heywood's *The Play of the Wether* (c. 1527); *A Play of Love* (c. 1534); *Thersites* (1537); and *The Foure P's* (1545); Redford's *Wit and Science* (c. 1531-47); *Respublica*, possibly by Nicholas Udall, (c. 1533); *Appius and Virginia* (c. 1567); *Like Will to Like* (c. 1567); *Sir Thomas More* (1593-95) by Munday, Chettle, Heywood, Shakespeare and Dekker. See MORAL INTERLUDE; TAFELSPEL.

**intermezzi** Light, comic interpolations put on between the acts of serious plays in Italy during the 15th and 16th c. They were usually devoted to mythological subjects. They were similar to the *momeries* and *entremets* in France, and the *entremes* (*q.v.*) in Spain. See also ENTR'ACTE.

**internal evidence** A term used in analytical and textual criticism

## internal evidence

(especially in the dating of a literary work) to refer to features of style (e.g. imagery, syntax, idiom, spelling, rhyme, punctuation), or details of environment, fashion and period, which might give some indication of when the work was written. Sometimes it is possible to date within a few years.

**internal rhyme** It occurs when two or more words rhyme within a single line of verse as in W. S. Gilbert's libretto for *Patience*:

Then a sentimental passion of a vegetable fashion  
must excite your languid spleen,  
An attachment à la Plato, for a bashful young potato,  
or a not too French French bean!  
Though the Philistine may jostle, you will rank as an  
apostle in the high aesthetic band,  
If you walk down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily in  
your medieval hand.

Shelley also used it very successfully in *The Cloud*. See also  
CROSSED RHYME; LEONINE RHYME.

**introduction** Normally an essay (of varying length) which states the author's intention and gives the reader some idea of the theme and scope of a work. It may also refer to the first part of a speech (*q.v.*). See FOREWORD; PREFACE.

**invective** Speech or writing which is denunciatory, abusive or vituperative. The term is related to the verb *inveigh* 'to bring in' or 'introduce' or 'denounce'; as in the phrase 'inveigh against'.

In literature examples of invective are to be found fairly evenly distributed in verse and prose, and it is closely associated with satire, lampoon and caricature (*qq.v.*). Many writers have employed invective for a variety of purposes, the commonest being to express dislike, disgust, contempt and even hatred. It is often directed against a particular person (e.g. Junius on the Duke of Grafton in *The Letters of Junius*); occasionally against a class or group (e.g. Swift on the English nobility in *Gulliver's Travels*); against an institution (e.g. William Prynne on the stage in *Histrionastix*); a scene (e.g. Smollett on London night life in *Humphry Clinker*); and on life itself (e.g. Jeremy Taylor in *Of Holy Dying*).

As a mode of expression invective is very ancient. Archilochus (7th c. B.C.) had a reputation for being a mordant wit (Eustathius called him 'scorpion-tongued') in his writings of which, un-

happily, few are extant. There are plentiful instances of invective in the plays of Aristophanes, and there are supposed to have been examples in the *Sermones* of Lucilius (180–102 B.C.), but these last have not survived. Persius (A.D. 34–62) was influenced by Lucilius, and in his *First Satire* is fairly abusive of the poetasters (*q.v.*) and decadent literary tastes of his period. But the greatest of inveighers in Classical literature is unquestionably Juvenal (1st c. A.D.) who wrote ferocious attacks on the vices and abuses of the Roman 'life-style'. He was particularly savage at the expense of the rich, and of women – to whom he devoted his *Sixth Satire*: a sustained and bitter diatribe (*q.v.*) in which women are compared unfavourably to many different animals.

There is little in the way of invective in European literature from Juvenal's age until the late Middle Ages and early Tudor times, if we except some Latin verse, some Goliardic poetry, the occasional indignant outburst from the pulpit (like Wulfstan's celebrated homily to the English *c.* 1014), and the flytings (*q.v.*) of some Scottish poets like Dunbar. We find, also, some instances in the poetry of Langland and in the *ballades* of Villon. Then comes John Skelton who lashed out in his good-humoured and boisterous fashion at the evils of society and at the expense of individuals (particularly Cardinal Wolsey). More moderate invective is to be found in the Folly Literature (*q.v.*) of the period; and John Knox's famous *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558) is a splendid example of objurgation.

The late Tudor dramatists and pamphleteers found invective a most effective weapon. Good examples in Shakespeare's plays are to be found in: *Cymbeline* (II, v); *Troilus and Cressida* (I, ii); *The Tempest* (I, ii; II, ii); *King Lear* (II, ii; IV, i); *Timon of Athens* (IV, i); and *Coriolanus* (III, iii). Thomas Lodge, John Marston and Ben Jonson were other writers of the period well capable of exploiting abusive language. A curiosity of this time was King James I's *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (1604). Among 17th c. writers Samuel Butler and Dryden are two witty exponents of invective; the former in *Hudibras*, the latter in *Mac Flecknoe* and *Absalom and Achitophel*. In the following century one should note Pope (especially in *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, *Epistle to Sir Richard Temple* and *The Dunciad*), Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* and Smollett in *Humphry Clinker*. Thereafter *et passim* in the works of Burns, Byron, Macaulay, Dickens, Thackeray, Carlyle, Swinburne, Shaw, Belloc and G. K. Chesterton, to name only a few.

## invention

**invention** The term derives from the *inventio* of Classical and medieval rhetoric. *Inventio* was the first of the five 'parts' of oratory. Invention equalled discovery. Later it came to be applied generally to original discovery and the organization of any literary work. However, it has had many special and particular meanings at different times. It has been contrasted with 'imitation' (*q.v.*), and with judgement. It has been used to describe things incredible and the products of fancy. Sometimes it has meant the production of fiction as opposed to historical truth; or the combination of fiction with historical truth. One of the key remarks on invention occurs in Johnson's *Life of Pope*, where he describes it as the faculty by which 'new trains of events are formed and new scenes of imagery displayed' and by which 'extrinsic and adventitious embellishments and illustrations are connected with a known subject'. In general one may now take it that invention denotes the discovery of an idea or fact, and the arranging of words and ideas in a fresh and arresting fashion. See FANCY AND IMAGINATION; INSPIRATION; ORIGINALITY.

**inversion** In rhetoric the turning of an argument against an opponent. In grammar the reversal of the normal word order of a sentence; as in these lines from *Paradise Lost*:

His spear, to equal which the tallest pine  
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast  
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,  
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps  
Over the burning marle.

In prosody, the turning of feet by substitution (*q.v.*).

**invocation** An appeal or request for help, (for instance: for inspiration) (*q.v.*) addressed to a muse (*q.v.*) or deity. In epic, it is a literary convention. It usually comes at or near the beginning of a poem. Good examples are to be found in the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and *Paradise Lost*. Mock heroic (*q.v.*) poetry produced mock invocations (as in Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*). It is seldom used now but a good modern example is to be found in Hart Crane's *The Bridge*.

**ionic** A verse form believed to have originated with the Ionians of Asia Minor. It is thought that they used it in odes in praise of Dionysus and Cybele. There are two kinds of ionic foot: *a*



*majore*: / / ○ ○; and a *minore*: ○ ○ / /. Ionics are found in the work of Anacreon, Euripides and Horace. They are very rare in English verse, except as occasional feet in combination with others. Browning attempted lesser ionics in the *Epilogue* to *Asolando* (1889), his last volume of poems which was published on the day of his death:

At the midnight | in the silence | of the sleep-time,  
 When you set your | fancies free,  
 Will they pass to where – by death, fools think,  
   imprisoned –  
 Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so?  
   – Pity me?

It can be seen from this how difficult it is to maintain ionics for long without forcing words into an unnatural stress pattern.

#### Irish literary Renaissance See CELTIC TWILIGHT.

**irony** (Gk 'dissimulation'). First recorded in Plato's *Republic* (4th c. B.C.), where it has approximately the meaning of 'a glib and underhand way of taking people in'. In the Platonic dialogues Socrates himself takes the role of the *eirōn* or 'dissembler' and, assuming the pose of ignorance and foolishness, asks seemingly innocuous and naive questions which gradually undermine his interlocutor's case and trap him (through the latter's admissions) into seeing the truth. Hence what is known as Socratic irony (*q.v.*). Demosthenes regarded an *eirōn* as a man who ducked his responsibilities as a citizen by pretence of illness (what we should now call 'swinging the lead', 'malingering' or 'draft dodging'). Theophrastus regarded an *eirōn* as a person who was slippery in his speech, non-committal; a man who does not come out into the open. In Greek comedy the *eirōn* was the underdog, a feeble but crafty and quick-witted character who got the better of Alazon – the braggadocio (*q.v.*) type who was loud-mouthed and block-headed.

For the Roman rhetoricians (in particular Cicero and Quintillian) *ironia* denoted a rhetorical figure and a manner of discourse, in which, for the most part, the meaning was contrary to the words. This double-edgedness appears to be a diachronic feature of irony.

It is not until 1502 that we find the first mention of irony in

English: 'yronye' – 'of grammare, by the whiche a man sayth one & gyveth to understande the contrarye'. This suggests a common usage. Later we find a gloss by 'E.K.' to the October Eclogue in Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* (1579) in which he refers to a passage as 'An Ironicall Sarcasmus spoken in derision . . .' The term irony did not come into general use until late in the 17th c., or early in the 18th, though at this period irony, as a mode of thinking, feeling and expression, was beginning to attain a high degree of sophistication. Curiously enough, Dryden appears to have used the term only once, but then there had been (and still were), as D. C. Muecke has pointed out in a splendid essay on the subject, called *Irony* (1970), a number of other well-tried and homely words which had served for the idea of the ironical; words like *fleece*, *gibe*, *jeer*, *mock*, *rail* and *scorn*. Such words suggest the rough and readiness of abuse and invective (*q.v.*); they smack of the bar and the market-place, of sleeves rolled up; whereas irony is redolent of something altogether more refined and polished, more considered and deliberate. It is a more *literary* term. Puttenham may have been feeling for this quality of urbanity when, in *The Art of English Poesie* (1589), he rendered the Latin *ironia* as 'Drie Mock'.

One receives the general impression that in England and Europe the *concept* of irony developed gradually and lagged far behind the practice of it. This is especially noticeable in view of the fact that by 1750 Dryden, Swift, Voltaire, Pope, Fielding and Johnson (to name only a handful of writers) had shown themselves supremely adept in the use of this particular form of expression.

In the wake of an increasing number of practitioners came the analysts and theorists. At the turn of the 18th c. the concept of irony inspired some careful thinking in Germany where A. W. and F. Schlegel, Tieck and Karl Solger all addressed themselves to the extremely difficult task of understanding this subtlest of manifestations of the comic spirit. Friedrich Schlegel, for instance, perceived the irony of events in *Troilus and Cressida* where the fine speeches and grandiose ideas eventually produce nothing, except the equivalent of a ridiculous *mus*; and the tragic irony in *King Lear* – by which, one presumes, Schlegel meant the act (and the results of that act) of Lear's rejection of the daughter who loved him most. Once we are alerted to the nature of this kind of irony then we can find numerous instances (e.g. the essential irony of the predicament of Oedipus, the irony of

the laconic Mephistopheles in Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, the almost unbearable irony inherent in the relationship between Iago and Othello). A. W. Schlegel pointed out the ironical nature of the equilibrium or equipoise maintained between the serious and the comic (e.g. the sub-plots in Elizabethan and particularly Shakespeare's plays). Comic relief (*q.v.*) itself, can, by contrast, intensify the irony of a situation. Karl Solger introduced the concept that true irony begins with the contemplation of the fate of the world; a concept which goes under the titles of World Irony or Cosmic Irony or Philosophical Irony. The Schlegels and Solger also used the term irony in connection with the detached and objective point of view (*q.v.*) of the artist *qua* his work (see below). And it was Friedrich Schlegel who worked out the idea of Romantic Irony (*q.v.*).

An important work in the history of irony is Thirlwall's essay *On The Irony of Sophocles* (1833). He discussed verbal or rhetorical irony, and also what he calls 'Dialectical Irony' (which is the same as Socratic). In the same essay he points out the paradoxical nature of irony.

In *The Concept of Irony* (1841) Kierkegaard elaborated the idea that irony is a mode of seeing things, a way of viewing existence. Later, Amiel, in his *Journal Intime* (1883-87) expressed the view that irony springs from a perception of the absurdity of life. Others who developed theories about irony were Nietzsche, Baudelaire, Heine and Thomas Mann. For them, most irony is Romantic. (See ROMANTIC IRONY.)

By the end of the 19th c., then, we find that most of the major forms and modes of irony have been explored and, to some extent, identified and classified. But it seems to be of the essential nature of irony (the need to use the word 'seems' rather than 'it is' is a product of the inherent ambiguousness of the whole concept) that it eludes definition; and this elusiveness is one of the main reasons why it is a source of so much fascinated inquiry and speculation. No definition will serve to cover every aspect of its nature, just as no definition will serve to explain and describe mirth and why we find some things risible and others not.

However, it seems fairly clear that most forms of irony involved the perception or awareness of a discrepancy or incongruity between words and their meaning, or between actions and their results, or between appearance and reality. In all cases there may be an element of the absurd and the paradoxical.

The two basic kinds of irony are verbal and irony of situation

## irony

(for the latter one may substitute, on occasions, irony of behaviour). At its simplest, verbal irony involves not meaning what one *says*, but saying what one *means*. Johnson defined it as a mode of speech in which the meaning is contrary to the words; such as 'Bolingbroke was a holy man'. Such ironies are often hyperbole (*q.v.*) or litotes (*q.v.*). At their very crudest: 'I haven't seen you for ages,' from one man to another when they meet every day; or 'That's not bad', said of something superlatively good or beautiful.

Situational irony occurs when, for instance, a man is laughing uproariously at the misfortune of another even while the same misfortune, unbeknownst, is happening to him. To call the roll of the great ironists in literature, or the roll of those in much of whose work the spirit of irony prevails, is to mention a large number of distinguished writers: Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Plato, Horace, Catullus, Tacitus, Chaucer, Ariosto, Erasmus, Sir Thomas More, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Ben Jonson, Pascal, Molière, Boileau, Dryden, Samuel (Hudibras) Butler, Racine, Defoe, Swift, Voltaire, Pope, Johnson, Fielding, Gibbon, Burke, Goethe, Jane Austen, Stendhal, Byron, Balzac, Heine, Kierkegaard, Samuel (Erehon) Butler, Anatole France, Thackeray, Dickens, Baudelaire, Thomas Hardy, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Flaubert, Meredith, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Mark Twain, Henry James, Shaw, Chekov, Joyce, Gide, Pirandello, Proust, Hašek, Thomas Mann, Kafka, Brecht, Andrić, Silone, Evelyn Waugh, Camus, Lampedusa, Heinrich Böhl, Ivy Compton-Burnett and Iris Murdoch. It will be noticed that there are only three women in this catalogue.

As irony is such an oblique quality or mode of expression, it would be true to say that in many works by many of these authors we find not so much direct or overt irony, but, rather, an ironic temper or tone; an ironic way of looking at things and of feeling about them. In this respect, writers like Voltaire, Swift, Gibbon, Henry James and Thomas Mann are supreme ironists. The dry, teasing, laconic, detached sensibility which permeates their work develops into an individual vision of human beings and existence. These five authors in particular share the ability to make the smile on the face of the reader broader and broader and broader, very, very slowly, until, finally, he finds himself laughing. Of the five, Thomas Mann is probably the most accomplished at this kind of sustained ironical joke.

Many writers have distanced themselves to a vantage point,



a quasi god-like eminence, the better to be able to view things. The artist becomes a kind of god viewing creation (and viewing his own creation) with a smile. From this it is a short step to the idea that God himself is the supreme ironist, watching the antics of human beings (Flaubert referred to a 'blague supérieure'), with a detached, ironical smile. The spectator in the theatre is in a similar position. Thus the everlasting human condition is regarded as potentially absurd.

This kind of standpoint and attitude is evident in, for example, Lucan, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Voltaire, Swift, Gibbon, Flaubert, Thomas Hardy, Henry James and Thomas Mann. In fact Mann, expert on the ironical, when speaking of the novel (in *Die Kunst des Romans*, 1939) says that the novel keeps its distance from things and by its very nature is distanced from them; it 'hovers' over them, and 'smiles down upon them'.

Irony has many functions. It is often the witting or unwitting instrument of truth. It chides, purifies, refines, deflates, scorns and 'sends up'. It is not surprising, therefore, that irony is the most precious and efficient weapon of the satirist.

It can be no accident that the beginning of the great age of satire (*q.v.*) in the second half of the 17 c. roughly coincides with the increasing use of irony as a means of expression throughout a work. It is as if before then many writers (as has been suggested) were fully aware of the possibilities and uses of irony but had not considered it to be a mode for conducting or bearing a whole work. Socrates uses his naive irony; Dante's vision of the damned in the *Inferno* displays many ironies; Sir Thomas More grows more and more ironical in *Utopia*; the comments of the clown in *King Lear* provide ironical counterpoint to the tragedy of the old man; Falstaff is a kind of ironical parody of and counterpart to Bolingbroke; ironic tones illuminate the sombre tragedies of the Jacobean and the love poetry of Donne.

We can see Milton working his way towards using it in this fashion in *Areopagitica* (1644), and Dryden beginning to employ it more and more in his satires. The increasing pleasure taken in parody and burlesque (*qq.v.*) suggests a growing awareness of the possible scope of irony. Then, at the beginning of the 18th c. irony becomes 'fashionable'. Everybody starts using it: Addison, Defoe, Arbuthnot, Steele, Swift and others; and, a little later, Pope, Johnson, Fielding and Voltaire. Among the many works by these authors one may mention Defoe's *The Shortest way with Dissenters* (1702) and *The Political History of the Devil*; Arbuthnot's

## irony

*The History of John Bull* (1712), *The Art of Political Lying* (1712) and *The Memoirs of Scriblerus* (1741); Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) and *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from being a Burden to their Parents or Country* (1729). The other writers mentioned above employed an ironic tone in much of their work.

Irony went 'out of fashion' later in the 18th c. but was revived by the prose writers of the 19th c. (e.g. Peacock and Thackeray). Ironical verse is rare in this period, but Byron's is an honourable exception. In prose the consummate ironist of the 19th c. is Samuel Butler whose major achievements in irony (in the manner of Swift) were *Erewhon* (1872), *The Fair Haven* (1872), *Erewhon Revisited* (1901) and *The Way of All Flesh* (1903).

With the decline of satire in the 20th c. irony ceases to be the principal mode except in Thomas Mann's novels; though it is frequently occasional, so to speak, in verse, prose and drama. See also LITOTES; MEIOSIS.

**irregular ode** An alternative term for the Cowleyan Ode (*q.v.*). See ODE.

**isochronism** (Gk 'equal timing') In Classical prosody the assumption that meter comprises a succession of units (like the foot) which are of the same duration. They are then said to be isochronous.

**issue** See EDITION.

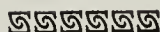
**Italian sonnet** See PETRARCHAN SONNET.

**ithyphallic verse** The term derives from the Greek for an 'erect phallus', and denotes an ode (*q.v.*) or dance performed at festivals of Dionysus. It is also applied to the verse form: / ∪ / ∪ / ∪ × ×, which is known as trochaic dimeter brachycatalectic or trochaic tripody. It was used by Archilochus in the 7th century B.C.

**ivory tower** In *The Song of Songs* (7:4) Solomon tells his beloved: 'Thy neck is as a tower of ivory'; (F *Ton cou est comme une tour d'ivoire*). Sainte-Beuve (1804-69) is believed to have applied this simile to de Vigny suggesting that he lived in an ivory tower,

thereby meaning that he was detached and isolated from the world, haughtily aloof from it. This connotation has survived. If we say that a writer or artist lives in an ivory tower, we imply that he is remote from the world, out of touch with reality, and probably devitalized.

# J



**jabberwocky** A form of nonsense; unintelligible speech or writing.

At its worst it degenerates into whimsy, that apparently ineradicable cancer of English humour. Lewis Carroll invented the Jabberwock and wrote a poem called *Jabberwocky* in *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* (1872). Alice discovered the poem printed backwards in a looking-glass book. She held it up to the mirror and read (the first verse):

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Humpty Dumpty says that 'brillig' means 'four o'clock in the afternoon – the time when you start broiling things for dinner.'

The reader can invent for himself. 'Slithy toves' are, perhaps, slithery creatures. 'Gyre and gimble' perhaps suggests a slow and solemn dance of joy. 'Mimsy' – delicate, and bearing blossoms?

The work had some influence on Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939). See GHOSTWORD; JINGLE; NONSENSE; NURSERY RHYMES.

**Jacobean age** So called from *Jacobus* 'James', and thus belonging to the reign of James I (1603–25). A period which, like the Elizabethan age (*q.v.*), was particularly rich in literary activity. The king himself published at least four books: two on poetry, a work on demonology, and the famous *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (1604). Among dramatists Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Webster, Tourneur, Ford, Middleton and Rowley were all very active. Donne and Drayton were two of the most famous of the lyric poets of the period. Bacon and Robert Burton were the best known prose writers. In 1611 was published the King James Bible.



**jargon** (OF 'warbling (of birds)'). Coleridge still used *jargon* in this sense in *The Ancient Mariner*, but by the end of the 16th c. and probably long before, it came to signify unintelligible language. We are accustomed to using it derogatorily now to describe a private or technical vocabulary peculiar to a trade or profession. Bureaucrats, lawyers, medical practitioners, engineers, scientists of all kinds, plumbers, builders, diplomats, sailors, architects, psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, geneticists and ecologists (to name only a few), all have extensive jargon vocabularies. One of its latest manifestations is the barbarous 'Euro-babble' the 'language' of Common Market officials.

See COLLOQUIALISM; EUPHEMISM; GOBBLEDEGOOK; IDIOM; OFFICIALESE; PERIPHRAISIS; REGISTER; SLANG.

**jarcha** See KHARJA.

**je ne sçai (sais) quoi** (F 'I don't know what') An example of critical jargon popular in France in the 17th c. and used to suggest the existence of some otherwise indefinable merit, quality, property or grace (*q.v.*) in a work of art or literature. The term was first used in England c. 1656 to describe a sensation or awareness of illness which had no apparent cause. In the 18th c. it served, as it had in France, to describe otherwise indescribable merits in a poetical work. By the end of that century it no longer functioned as a 'support', as Pope put it, to 'all ignorant pretenders to delicacy'. However, the phrase is still used occasionally (as it was in the 19th c.) for more or less its original purpose. We would put it more crudely now. For example: 'It's got something'.

**Jeremiad** A tale of woe; a sustained complaint; a prolonged railing against the world, the times, the estate of man and God. By allusion to the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* in the Old Testament. There are several good examples in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*; especially in the bitter exchanges between Timon and Apemantus.

**jest book** A collection of stories of a kind that was particularly popular in England and on the continent during and after the 16th c. Jest books were descendants of such collections of tales as the *Gesta Romanorum* ('jest' derives from *gesta* or *geste*), volumes of moral anecdotes like the *Alphabet of Tales* and *Speculum Laicorum*, and theological handbooks like John Bromyard's *Summa*

## jest book

*Praedicatorum* (a kind of guide to easier preaching). The jests are often reminiscent of the medieval *fabliau* (q.v.) and for the most part are brief and didactic, humorous and satirical; sometimes they are ribald. The earliest known example in English is *A Hundred Merry Tales* (c. 1526). Later popular works were *The Geystes of Skoggan* (1565-66), an account of the exploits of John Scogan, a famous jester at the court of Edward IV; *Tarlton's Jestes* (before 1592); and *The Merry Conceited Jestes of George Peele* (1607). A Latin source was the *Facetiae* of Poggio (late 14th c.). The modern counterpart of the old jest books is the compilation of jokes and stories for all occasions.

**Jesuit drama** The drama of the Jesuit schools was similar to other forms of scholastic drama and had a specific didactic purpose. The first plays were performed as part of the school curriculum. They were in Latin and their subjects were religious (or sacred): for instance, stories of people like Saul, Herod, Absalom, Judith, Esther and St Catherine the martyr. The plays were designed to inculcate moral virtues.

The first recorded performance was at Messina in 1551. In the next ten years or so plays were performed at Cordoba, Ingolstadt, Munich and Vienna. By 1587 (only fifty-three years after the foundation of the Society of Jesus by St Ignatius Loyola), there were 148 Jesuit colleges in Europe and at least one play was performed at them every year. In 1586 the *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum* provided for the acting of tragedies and comedies. Gradually, partly because of the influence of secular drama, ballet and opera, the plays became more ambitious and spectacular. Great pains were taken in perfecting the technique of presentation. Though plays were still written in Latin, the use of the vernacular became quite common. The range of subject matter was widened to include themes from national history and classical legend and history (e.g. the defeat of the Saracens at Messina in 1068, the liberation of Vienna in 1683, the lives of Pompey, Brutus, Croesus and Damocles).

This form of drama prospered throughout Europe during the 17th c. Productions became more and more sumptuous and elaborate, and technical effects increasingly ingenious and lavish. Such a standard of excellence was achieved that the plays were performed increasingly for the general public and at courts. During the 18th c. this form of drama fell gradually into desuetude. See SCHOOL DRAMA.

## jingle

**jeu d'esprit** (F 'play of the mind') An epigram (*q.v.*), witticism or brief flight of fancy, urbanely expressed. Oscar Wilde was particularly adept at them; as in these lines from *A Woman of No Importance* (1893):

Mrs Allonby: They say, Lady Hunstanton, that when good Americans die they go to Paris.

Lady Hunstanton: Indeed? And when bad Americans die, where do they go?

Lord Illingworth: Oh, they go to America.

See WIT.

**jeu parti** (F 'play divided') A kind of debate poem, which had some vogue in the 13th c., in which two characters argued over an hypothesis; usually some matter of love. The argument proceeded in alternating stanzas. Normally, at the end, the issue was referred to arbitration – perhaps by a patron. Poetic 'contests' of this kind are common in pastoral (*q.v.*). See also DÉBAT; PARTIMEN; TENSON.

**jingle** Usually a verse or verses with a catchy rhythm, emphatic rhyme and alliteration. Often jingles verge on nonsense. For example:

    Eeeny meeny miny mo  
    Catch a nigger by his toe

Or:

    One, two,  
    Buckle my shoe;  
    Three, four,  
    Shut the door;  
    Five, six,  
    Pick up sticks.  
    Seven, eight,  
    Lay them straight;  
    Nine, ten,  
    A good fat hen.

Somewhere between jingle and patter (*q.v.*) or chant (*q.v.*) comes this kind of thing:

    Dear Mother, the Army's a bugger: sell the pig and buy me out  
    Your loving son John.  
    Dear John, pig's gone: soldier on.

## jingle

Plentiful examples are to be found in Geoffrey Grigson's *Faber Book of Popular Verse* (1972); in *The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book* assembled by Iona and Peter Opie (1955); and in the *Everyman Library A Book of Nonsense* (1927). See DOGGEREL; DOUBLE DACTYL; JABBERWOCKY; NONSENSE VERSE; NURSERY RHYME; TONGUE-TWISTER.

**Joe Miller** A hackneyed joke, named after Joseph Miller (1684–1738) an actor and comedian in the Drury Lane Company who had a considerable reputation as a wit. Many stories and jokes were attributed to him.

**jogral** A Galician term for the Castilian *joglar*, the equivalent of the French *jongleur* and the English minstrel (*qq.v.*).

**Johnsonian** In the style or manner of Samuel Johnson (1709–84). That is, characterized by grand, lapidary language, balanced phrases, sentences and periods, Latinistic construction, and, often, a didactic tone. However, at its best, Johnson's full-dress manner displays a melodious resonance and a certain martial splendour. Moreover, he was perfectly capable of expressing in a pithy sentence what others might labour over in a paragraph. When verbose and pompous, language and style are sometimes called Johnsonese.

**jongleur** (F *jongleur* variant of *jongleur*, OF *jogleor*, L *joculatore*m). Though *jongleur* is a term which dates only from the 8th c., such entertainers were active much earlier. They were the literary descendants of the *mimi* and *histriones* of the Roman world. Besides being minstrels who sang and recited, many *jongleurs* were acrobats, jugglers and exhibitors of animals. As versatile professionals, they made a living where and when they could, and their audiences were plebeian as well as patrician. They reached their apogee of popularity in the 13th c., and thereafter they declined. Individual versatility gave way to specialization. Because they were itinerant, they played a considerable part in disseminating literary forms throughout Europe. See GUSLAR; PAYADA; SCOP; SKALD; TROUBADOUR; TROUVÈRE.

**joruri** A form of Japanese puppet-theatre. Many major Japanese plays have been written for this form, including a number by Chikamatsu (1653–1725). Originally Joruri was a kind of epic



recitation which, c. 1630, was cross-fertilized with the puppet shows to create *ningyo-joruri*. The themes and subjects of these plays were mostly legends and historical events. Productions were lavish and the puppets (usually about two-thirds of life size) were manipulated by several puppeteers. The dialogue, accompanied by music, was delivered by a group from the side of the stage. A comparable form of drama is the Sicilian *opra d'i pupi*, once performed in many puppet theatres all over Sicily. *See also* KARAGÖZ.

**journal** A paper, periodical (*q.v.*) or magazine (*q.v.*). It is often of a learned nature, like: *The Quarterly Review*; *Journal des Savants*; *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*.

**journalese** This term denotes a manner of writing which employs ready-made phrases and formulas, and which breeds its own clichés in abundance.

We must distinguish between *journalese* and *headlines*: the eye-catching and formulaic style of newsman's English. For example: Fire Horror in Spastic Home; Police Probe; Prime Minister Attacked in House; Sea Drama in Channel; Mother of Eight Adopts Monkey. Some carelessly worded headlines have become notorious: Chinese Generals Fly Back To Front; Tank Attacks Peter Out In Desert; Infantry Push Bottles Up German Rear.

**journalism** The occupation or profession of journalist; journalistic writing. Sometimes used derogatorily, in contradistinction to more exalted and less ephemeral forms of literature. But numerous able and distinguished authors have made a name for themselves as journalists. When newspapers increased their range early in the 19th c. many famous writers contributed to them (e.g. Coleridge, Southey, Hazlitt). Charles Dickens was a highly successful reporter; so were Rudyard Kipling and J. M. Barrie. American writers like Mark Twain and Bret Harte also made a name for themselves as journalists. In this century it has become common practice for novelists and poets to write for newspapers (e.g. Robert Graves, Aldous Huxley, Ernest Hemingway, Graham Greene, Norman Mailer). In France there has long been a closer connection than elsewhere between newspapers and writers eminent in fiction and drama. Men of letters like Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, François Mauriac and Georges Duhamel have been well known for their contributions to journals and newspapers.

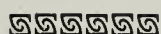
## Jugendstil

**Jugendstil** (G 'youth style') *Die Jugend* was an influential literary journal first published in Munich by George Hirth in 1896. Subsequently the journal gave its name to the style of work printed in it. Like baroque (*q.v.*) and impressionism (*q.v.*), *Jugendstil* is a term which was first used in the history of art, architecture and decoration, then applied to literature. It described a decorative style popular in Germany between 1890 and 1910. An attempt, perhaps, to escape from academic tradition. Its French counterpart is *art nouveau*.

**junačke pesme** (S 'men's songs') Songs or poems of oral tradition and the ballad (*qq.v.*) type frequently sung or chanted by South Slav men. Their themes are often war, revenge, death and treachery. A particularly fine example is the *Death of Ivo* (*Smrt Senjanina Iva*). See NARODNE PESME; ŽENSKE PESME.

**juvenilia** (L 'works done in one's youth') Such were Dryden's occasional poem *Upon the Death of Lord Hastings* (1649), written when Dryden was still at Westminster and aged eighteen; Pope's *Pastorals*, composed in 1704, when he was only sixteen and published in Tonson's *Miscellany* (1709); Byron's *Hours of Idleness* (first called *Juvenilia*) published in 1807 when Byron was nineteen.

# K



**kabuki** A type of Japanese drama. Popular rather than courtly or lyrical drama like *Nō* (*q.v.*), yet *kabuki* may well have developed from this in the 17th c. At any rate, it has adopted many subjects and conventions from *Nō*. The plays are presented on a stage like a *Nō* stage. It is wide and shallow and has what is called a 'flower way' running from the back of the hall or auditorium to the side of the stage. Along this actors make their exits and entrances. The stage is nearly always a revolving one. Scenery is elaborate and detailed. Costumes are rich and elaborate. The characters are not masked (as in *Nō*) but are heavily made up. Female roles are taken by men. The dramas usually have some musical accompaniment, whose precise nature will depend on the kind of play. Scenery is changed by two stage-hands: one hooded and one not. By convention they are invisible, and are a survival from the time when each actor had a 'shadow' behind him who held a light on the end of a bamboo to illuminate the actor's features.

The plays are based on popular legends and myths (sometimes historical subjects) and are usually long and episodic. There are three main classes: *jidaimono*, or histories; *sewamono*, or domestic dramas; and *shosagoto*, or dances. A normal programme would present a variety of plays or scenes from these categories.

**kailyard school** A group of writers (the best known are J. M. Barrie, J. J. Bell, S. R. Crockett and Ian Maclaren) who wrote stories about Scottish peasant life late in the 19th c. The term derives from a Scottish Jacobite song 'There grows a bonnie brier bush in our kailyard', which Maclaren chose as a motto for his book *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (1894). A kailyard was a cabbage patch or kitchen garden attached to a cottage.

**karagöz** A traditional Turkish shadow puppet play (the equivalent of Punch and Judy) named after the principal character who

## karagöz

represents Turkish Everyman or ordinary man. The antagonist (*q.v.*) or deuteragonist (*q.v.*) is Haçivat, usually represented as a lazy or self-important and officious character; clearly the 'baddy' to the 'good' Karagöz. Both persons are believed to be based on actual characters of the 14th c., from which period the Karagöz entertainment dates.

There are thirty-odd traditional stories involving these characters, but one of the most popular themes is confusion arising from the meanings of words. Karagöz uses the colloquial language of the common people; Haçivat uses literary and high-falutin' terms. A third character, Efe (the equivalent of Robin Hood) is often introduced to solve the problem. The stock subjects give ample opportunity for improvisation, which will include jokes, satire, songs, dances, badinage with the audience and comments on current social and political matters. The puppeteer does the dialogue. *See also* JORURI; ORTA OYUNU.

**kasa** (K 'song words') A Korean verse form composed of octosyllabic lines, each line being sub-divided into two 'phrases'. There was no limit to the number of lines.

**keneme** A neo-Hellenic derivation from Greek *kenós* 'empty' used to denote a small word (article, conjunction or preposition) with little or no lexical meaning, whose function is mainly or entirely syntactic. For example: *the, and, at*. Such words are also known as *structure words* or *functors*. By contrast words like *angry* (adjective), *horse* (noun) and *clamber* (verb) have lexical meaning; that is, they do mean something on their own. These are sometimes called *pleremes* (from Greek *plērēs* 'full'). *See also* MORPHEME.

**kenning** The term derives from the use of the ON verb *kenna* 'to know, recognize' in the phrase *kenna eitt við* 'to express or describe one thing in terms of another'. The *kenning* (pl. *kenningar*) was a favourite figure in skaldic verse, where it is employed most lavishly.

It is a device for introducing descriptive colour or for suggesting associations without distracting attention from the essential statement.

Some Old Norse kennings were fairly complex: (a) *Fróða mjöl* – 'meal (or corn) of Frodi' and so 'gold'. (Fródi was an early and legendary king of Denmark. He had a mill named Grotti which would grind out whatever was asked of it. Gold was the first material for which Frodi asked.); (b) *Vidris munstrandar marr* –



'the weather-maker's mind-strand'; that is, 'sea of Odin's breast' and so 'poetry'; (c) *brimils vøllr* – 'seal's field' and so 'sea'; (d) *malmbríð* – 'metal storm' and so 'battle'; (e) *Odins eiki* – 'Odin's oak' and so 'warrior'.

Old English kennings were simpler: (a) *helmberend* – 'helmet bearer' and so 'warrior'; (b) *beadoleoma* – 'battle light' and so 'flashing sword'; (c) *swansrad* – 'swan road' and so 'sea'.

See also HOMERIC EPITHET; PERIPHRAISIS; POETIC DICTION; RÍMUR.

**key novel** See LIVRE À CLEF.

**kharja** A form of popular verse written in Arabic or Romance, in the idiom of the common people (and found in Spain). It produces an effect of sadness or despair or longing. It is probably earlier than the *muwashshab* of which it commonly forms the final part or refrain. It was usually given to a woman to utter, but was usually composed by a man. See MOZARABIC LYRIC.

**kind** A term widely used in the 17th and 18th c. for a literary type or genre (*q.v.*). Criticism determined the category of a work (e.g. epic, tragedy, elegy) and then decided whether or not it obeyed the rules and conventions. Dryden was one of the first to indicate that a writer must begin by deciding what kind he wished to practise. Writers of the Romantic period (*q.v.*) rejected such an approach. See FORM.

**King's English** English as it should be spoken. This term was used as early as the 16th c. Thomas Wilson refers to it in his *Arte of Rhetorique* (1553) thus: 'These fine English clerkes will sai thei speake in their mother tongue, if a manne should charge them for counterfeityng the Kinge's Englishe'. A reference to 'Queene's English' occurs in Nashe's *Strange Newes of the Intercepting Certaine Letters* (1593); Shakespeare uses the term in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1600–1) and Dekker refers to the 'Kinge's English' in *Satiromastix* (1602). See COLLOQUIALISM; SLANG; STANDARD ENGLISH.

**kitchen-sink drama** A term which became popular in the middle and late 1950s. Often used derogatorily, it applied to plays which, in a realistic fashion, showed aspects of working-class life at the time. The implication was that the play centred, metaphorically (or psychologically) and in some cases literally, on the kitchen

## kitchen-sink drama

sink. The works of John Osborne, Arnold Wesker and Alun Owen (among others) were all so described. It is doubtful if the term derives in any way from Wesker's play *The Kitchen* because this was first presented in a production without décor in 1958, and not given a full production until 1961.

**kitsch** (G *kitschen* 'to throw together') A pejorative term for a work which is of little merit; a mere potboiler (*q.v.*); something 'thrown together' to gratify popular taste.

**klucht** A form of drama which flourished in the Netherlands in the Middle Ages, but was still alive in the 17th c. They tended to be short plays which satirized sexual matters.

**knickerbocker group** A group of early 19th c. New York writers. The term derives from *History of New York to the end of the Dutch Dynasty*, by Diedrich Knickerbocker (1809). One of the more famous members was James Fenimore Cooper. Later a publication called *Knickerbocker Magazine* was produced (1833-65), but by then the group had either died or dispersed.

**Knittelvers** (G 'cudgel verse') What we would call doggerel (*q.v.*); a term used derogatorily in the 17th c. of a popular meter used in 15th and 16th c. German poetry. *Knittelvers* consisted of octosyllabic rhyming couplets. The meter was revived in the 18th c. by Gottsched, and then used by Schiller and Goethe.

**Künstlerroman** (G *Künstler* 'artist' + *Roman* 'novel') A novel (*q.v.*) which shows the development of the artist from childhood to maturity and later. A classic example in English literature is Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916). See BILDUNGSROMAN; NOVEL.

**Kunstlied** (G *Kunst* 'art' + *Lied* 'song') An artistic and sophisticated song, as distinguished from a *Volkslied* or 'folksong' (*q.v.*).

**Kunstmärchen** A German term for a 'literary' folk-tale, and thus one which is written down; as opposed to one which belongs to the oral tradition (*q.v.*). See VOLKSMÄRCHEN.

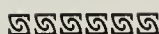
**Kviðuháttir** (ON *kviða* 'an epic song, poem or ballad' and *háttir* 'meter') An ON alliterative verse (*q.v.*) form, similar to the

*fornyrðislag* (*q.v.*). It consists of alternating three and four syllable lines. What is believed to be the earliest poem containing this form is *Ynglingatöl* (prior to 900). In the 10th c. the form appears in Skallagrímsson's *Arinbjarnarkviða* and *Sonatorrek*. In general the term means little more than the meter used for epic poems, such as the *Völuspá*.

**kyōnggich'aega** A form of aristocratic Korean poem with a fixed refrain. The subjects were often the natural scene; a kind of topographical poetry (*q.v.*).

**kyrielle** A shortened form of *kyrie eleison* (Gk 'Lord have mercy'). A French verse form usually consisting of eight-syllable lines in couplets. Or, quatrains (*q.v.*) rhymed aabb. The refrain (*q.v.*) may consist of the last word in a line, a complete line, or part of a line.

# L



**label names** *See* APTRONYM.

**lai** *See* LAY.

**laisse** A stanzaic or verse paragraph (*q.v.*) division in OF epics.

**Lake Poets** Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey. They came to be known as the Lake School or 'Lakers' as a result of the abusive articles written by Francis Jeffrey, a Scottish judge, in the *Edinburgh Review* over a period of twenty years – beginning in 1802. He associated these three poets with the Lake District in Cumbria.

**lament** An expression of deep regret or sorrow for the loss of a person or position. A non-narrative kind of poetry, it appears to grow up alongside heroic poetry and is widespread in many languages. Famous examples are: the Lamentations of Jeremiah, David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan, the OE *Deor's Lament*, Dunbar's *Lament for the Makaris*, and Burns's *Lament for Flodden* and *Lament for Culloden*. *See* COMPLAINT; CORONACH; DIRGE; ELEGY; EPICEDIIUM; MONODY; UBI SUNT.

**lampoon** The term derives from the French *lampon*, said to be from *lampons* 'let us drink', used as a refrain. It dates only from the 17th c. The verb *lamper* means 'to swig' or 'to booze'. This suggests excess, coarseness, a rough crudity; a lampoon in fact is a virulent or scurrilous form of satire (*q.v.*). It is more likely to be found in graphic caricature than in writing but there are a few notable examples in literature, like Pope's attack on Hervey in his *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, and this description by Dryden of the unfortunate Shadwell (here named Og) in *Absalom and Achitophel* (Pt. II) beginning thus at line 457:



Now stop your noses, Readers, all and some,  
 For here's a tun of Midnight work to come,  
 Og from a Treason Tavern rowling home.  
 Round as a Globe and Liquored ev'ry chink,  
 Goodly and Great he Sayls behind his Link.  
 With all this Bulk there's nothing lost in Og,  
 For ev'ry inch that is not Fool is Rogue:  
 A Monstrous mass of foul corrupted matter,  
 As all the Devils had spew'd to make the batter.  
 When wine has given him courage to Blaspheme,  
 He curses God, but God before curst him;  
 And if man cou'd have reason, none has more,  
 That made his Paunch so rich and him so poor.

*See also* DIATRIBE; FLYTING; INVECTIVE; PASQUINADE.

**Latinism** A word, phrase, or grammatical construction based on a Latin form or model. Characteristic of many prose and verse styles from the 17th c. onwards; and particularly in the 18th c. when the influence of the Roman authors was at its strongest. Latinisms are common in Milton, Johnson and Gibbon, to name only three of the major influences.

**lauda** A religious poem or song adapted from the liturgy. The earliest examples were in Latin and date from the 13th c. Two well-known ones were the *Stabat Mater* and the *Dies Irae*. Later they were composed in the vernacular. St Francis produced a noble work in *Cantico delle Creature*, and Jacopone da Todi composed a fine collection of *laude*. The chanting of *laude* was an important part of the activities performed by *laudesi* fraternities. Religious sects like the *flagellanti* and *disciplinati* also made them a part of their ritual.

**laureate** *See* POET LAUREATE.

**lay** (OF *lai*) A short narrative or lyrical poem intended to be sung. The oldest narrative *lais*, mostly in octosyllabics (*q.v.*), are the *Contes* of Marie de France (c. 1175). They were stories of romance believed to have been based on Celtic legends. The lyric lays were Provençal and usually had love themes. The oldest in OF were by Gautier de Dargiès (early 13th c.). The term 'Breton lay' was applied to 14th c. English poems with a Breton setting and

## lay

similar to those by Marie de France. A dozen or more are extant in English, the best known being *Sir Orfeo*, *Havelok the Dane*, *Sir Launfal* and Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*. Since the 16th c. the term *lay* has been used more loosely to denote any historical ballad or narrative of adventure. Good examples are Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842). See also BALLAD; CONTE; FABLIAU; NOUVELLE; ROMANCE.

**lectio difficilior** (L 'the harder reading') That principle which may guide an editor in choosing between two manuscript variants of apparently equal authority.

**lectionary** From the Ecclesiastical Latin *lectionarium*, denoting a book containing extracts from the Scriptures to be read at Divine Service.

**legend** (Med L 'things to be read'). Originally legends were the stories of lives of saints which, in monastic life, might be read in church or in the refectory and therefore belonged to hagiography (*q.v.*). The term came to be applied to a collection of such stories (as well as the book in which they were recorded). An outstanding example of such a collection is the 13th c. *Legenda Aurea* ('The Golden Legend') of Jacobus de Voragine. Chaucer, no doubt, was using *legend* in a similar sense in his *Legend of Good Women*, a group of stories (in the manner of Ovid's *Heroides*) about famous women of antiquity (Cleopatra, Thisbe, Dido, Medea, Lucrece, Ariadne, Philomela *et al.*). Recently Slovene authors like Francé Berk and Ludvik Mrzel have revived the Chaucerian type in the reworking of biblical themes.

Subsidiary meanings of the term are: (a) the title or description beneath an illustration; (b) the explanation of the symbols on a map; (c) a story or narrative which lies somewhere between myth (*q.v.*) and historical fact and which, as a rule, is about a particular figure or person. Famous examples are Faust, The Flying Dutchman, The Wandering Jew, Hamlet, Beowulf, King Arthur, Charlemagne, Robin Hood, Jasonik (the Czech Robin Hood), Skandarbeg (the Albanian national hero), Marko Kraljević (the South Slav warrior hero) and Dhigenis (the Greek warrior hero). Any popular folk hero (or heroine), revolutionary, saint or warrior is likely to have legends develop about him; stories which often grow taller and longer with time and which may eventually be

## Leonine rhyme

written down or recited in song, verse and ballad (*q.v.*), through which means the oral tradition (*q.v.*) is sustained. Two modern examples of such folk heroes are Salvatore Giuliano (the Sicilian Robin Hood type bandit and political revolutionary) and Che Guevara. Quite often the stories and motifs which accrete to such figures had nothing to do with them in the first place. Recent and familiar examples of this accretive process are the many stories that have gathered about the names and personalities of men like W. G. Grace, Churchill, Rommel, and Lord Montgomery – not to mention the statements ascribed to them.

**legitimate theatre** Often abbreviated in the business to 'legit'. It describes 'straight' drama; that is, a theatrical performance without songs, dances or musical accompaniments and interludes of any kind. The term derives from the old theatre licensing laws which were designed to cover only non-musical entertainments. These regulations could be evaded by the addition of musical interludes.

**Leich** (G 'lyric') A medieval German lyric (*q.v.*) form widely used between 1200 and 1350. It was sung to music and may have been accompanied by dance. Three main types have been distinguished: the *Tanzleich* or dance lyric; the *religiöse Leich* or religious lyric; and the *Minneleich* or love lyric. It appears that after the 14th c. the form survived only in religious poetry.

**leitmotif** (G *Leitmotiv* 'leading motif'). A term coined by Hans von Wolzogen to designate a musical theme associated throughout a whole work with a particular object, character or emotion, as so often in Wagner's operas. Thomas Mann used it as a literary term to denote a recurrent theme (*q.v.*) or unit. It is occasionally used as a literary term in the same sense that Mann intended, and also in a broader sense to refer to an author's favourite themes: for example, the hunted man and betrayal in the novels of Graham Greene.

**lemma** The argument (*q.v.*) or subject of a composition, prefixed as a heading or title.

**Leonine rhyme** A form of internal rhyme (*q.v.*) in which the word before the caesura (*q.v.*) rhymes with the last word of the line of verse. Traditionally it is named after Leo, a 12th c. Canon of St

## Leonine rhyme

Victor's in Paris, whose Latin verses contained such a device. However, Ovid used it in *Ars Amatoria*, and the OE *Rhyming Poem* is also Leonine. Tennyson used it at random in *The Revenge*, from which these lines come:

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,  
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign  
grace;

But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:  
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;  
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:  
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!  
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

See also CROSSED RHYME.

**letrilla** (Sp diminutive of *letra* 'a short gloss'). It is a poem in short lines and very often with a refrain (*q.v.*). The themes and topics were commonly light and satirical. A well-known example is Góngora's *Andeme yo caliente, y ríase la gente* (17th c.).

**letter** Latin rhetoricians made a convenient distinction between the private letter (*personalis*) and the letter of affairs (*negotialis*). A third kind is the open or general letter addressed to an individual or a newspaper editor, and intended for publication. Some manuals of letters survive from Classical times. In the Middle Ages there were a large number of manuals on the subject. Many medieval treatises on rhetoric were also 'guides' to letter writing.

Nearly any sort of letter may be of use to the historian and the biographer. A very famous collection is *The Paston Letters* (1422–1509), the correspondence of three generations of a Norfolk family. Other well-known collections of letters are those written by Mozart, Keats, Flaubert, and Horace Walpole.

The letter form has been adapted and exploited in various ways since the 17th c. For example, there are Pascal's *Lettres Provinciales* (1656–57), a defence of Jansenism, dealing with divine grace and the ethical code of the Jesuits. Between 1687 and 1694 were published *Letters of a Turkish Spy*, a form of travel book (*q.v.*) in epistolary form which started a new genre in European literature. These pseudo-foreign letters purport to be written by a Turkish spy who sends in reports on various aspects of life in England, France, Spain and Italy. A better known example of this



genre is Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* (1721). Voltaire made a highly individual contribution with *Lettres philosophiques* (1734), better known as *Lettres Anglaises*. Another similar work was Madame de Graffigny's *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* (1747). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu also wrote a series of very entertaining *Turkish Letters* (1763) which gave an account of her travels in the Near East.

In the 18th c. the form of the epistolary novel (*q.v.*) was developed. Such novels included: Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), and his *Clarissa* (1747-48); Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* (1771), one of the best of the genre; and the French classic by de Laclos, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (1782). Lord Chesterfield's *Letters* to his natural son, Philip Stanhope, written almost every day from 1737 onwards, were intended to educate any young man. In fact, the whole collection combined a treatise of education with the kind of advice found in the courtesies book (*q.v.*).

During the 18th c. the letter served other purposes. Examples are: Bolingbroke's *Letter to Sir William Wyndham* (1717), a political polemic; Rousseau's *Lettre à d'Alembert sur les spectacles* (1758), a controversial treatise on the morality of drama; the *Letters of Junius*, a pseudonymous invective against individuals, published in the *Public Advertiser* (1769-71); and Edmund Burke's *A Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (1777), a political address.

In the following century, two remarkable examples of letters are: Sydney Smith's *Letters of Peter Plymley* (1807), a defence of Catholic emancipation; and the correspondence, published as part of Cardinal Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, between Charles Kingsley and Newman. Other notable writers of letters have been George Sand, Byron, Chateaubriand, Proust, Gide and Claudel and D. H. Lawrence. More recently, Albert Camus' *Lettres à Un Ami Allemand* (1948) have shown once again the flexibility of the letter form. This distinguished work is more like an essay, or open letter, in which Camus argues moral issues arising from differing German and French attitudes. See EPISTLE.

**level stress** Also known as even accent (*q.v.*) it occurs when the stress falls evenly on two syllables in the same word, or on two adjacent monosyllables, e.g. *buckwheat*; *gang plank*. See HOVERING STRESS; SPONDEE.

**lexicographer** A maker of dictionaries. In Johnson's famous phrase 'a harmless drudge'.

## lexicography

**lexicography** The art or task of making a dictionary (*q.v.*).

**lexicon** The dictionary (*q.v.*) itself, but usually the term denotes a dictionary for Classical languages; also Hebrew and Arabic. *See also* ONOMASTICON.

**lexis** In computational stylistics (that is, the analysis of an author's writing by computerized measurement) *lexis* is the term for the actual vocabulary of the author while *taxis* denotes the arrangement of the words. For instance, the lexical/taxical computation of the works of James Joyce would show the frequency of the recurrence of words and parts of speech; an analysis of grammatical structure; the number of times a particular word was used per page; the number of ablative absolutes (for example) per chapter; variations from normal order or structure; lengths of words by letters and by syllables; and length of sentences. Actually, this branch of linguistic science is not new. A Sanskrit grammar of c. 500 B.C. provides the number of syllables, words and verses in the *Rig-Veda*. Though this might appear to be one of the less fruitful activities of the academic industry, it has been helpful in reconstructing blurred and missing passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

**liaison** (F 'binding' or 'joining', formed from *lier* 'to bind') In the 17th c. a dramatic principle which required that the parts of a play be linked by various kinds of liaison: (a) *présence* – a character remaining from the preceding scene; (b) *vue ou recherche* – a character entering sees another about to leave and vice versa; (c) *bruit* – a noise on stage which brings in a character in search of an explanation; (d) *discours* – when a character in hiding later speaks.

**libretto** (It 'little book'). The text of an opera or operetta (*qq.v.*) or any fairly substantial vocal composition, like an oratorio, which involves dialogue and narrative. The term was first used in England in 1742. Well-known librettists include Quinault, Catzabigi, Da Ponte, Schikaneder, Boito, Gilbert, Hofmannsthal, J. B. Priestley and W. H. Auden.

**lied** *See* MEISTERGESANG.

**light ending** *See* FEMININE ENDING.

**light rhyme** When one of a pair of rhyming syllables is unstressed. Common in ballad (*q.v.*), as in this stanza from the traditional ballad *Young Beichan*:

O whan the porter came up the stair,  
He's fa'n low down upon his knee:  
'Won up, won up, ye proud porter,  
An what makes a' this courtesy?'

**light stress** In verse, a stress (*q.v.*) on a word which is not normally accented in speech. In the following lines from Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* the trochaic and dactylic meter requires a number of light stresses:

Ónce ůpón ā mīdnight dreáry, whīle Ī pōndēred, weák ānd weáry,  
Óvēr máný ā quāint ānd cūrīoůs vólůme ōf fōrgōtten lóre,  
Whīle Ī nōddēd, neárlý náppīng, súddēnlý thére cáme ā táppīng,  
Ās ōf sōme ōne gēntlý ráppīng.

**light verse** A vague and comprehensively flexible term used to describe poetry that lacks serious intent. Under this heading one might place: *vers de société*, occasional verse, nonsense verse, sick verse, satire, burlesque, parody, epitaph, epigram, limerick and cleriheuw (*qq.v.*), not to mention the acrostic and emblematic poems, the jingle and the riddle (*qq.v.*) and punning verses. The following lines from A. H. Bullen's *Musa Proterva* (1889), suggest the main attributes of light verse:

Gay, frolic verse for idle hours,  
Light as the foam whence Venus sprang;  
Strains heard of old in courtly bowers,  
When Nelly danced and Durfey sang.

Wit, elegance, grace, ingenuity and technical virtuosity are among the distinguishing characteristics of light verse, as brilliantly displayed in, say, the libretti of W. S. Gilbert.

Among anthologies of light verse one might mention Thomas D'Urfey's *Wit and Mirth, or Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719); Locker-Lampson's *Lyra Elegantiarum* (1867), and A. H. Bullen's *Lyrics from the Song-Books of the Elizabethan Age* (1888); as well as his *Speculum Amantis* (1888) and *Musa Proterva* (1889). *The Oxford Book of Light Verse* (1938), edited by W. H. Auden, illustrates better than most the possible scope of the form.

## light verse

Much light verse is anonymous. Among the many famous and accomplished practitioners in English, mention should be made of Skelton, Campion, Herrick, Lovelace, Samuel Butler, Prior, Goldsmith, Cowper, Hood, Theodore Hook, Oliver Wendell Holmes, C. S. Calverley, W. M. Praed, Edward Lear, Austin Dobson, Lewis Carroll, W. S. Gilbert, Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, A. P. Herbert, T. S. Eliot, E. E. Cummings, John Betjeman and Ogden Nash.

**ligne donnée** (F 'given line'). Paul Valéry (1871-1945) spoke of the *ligne donnée* of a poem, thereby meaning the line that is 'given' to the poet by God, or by nature, or by a Muse (*q.v.*), or by some power outside himself. The implication is that he has to find the other lines for himself. See AFFLATUS; DONNÉE; FANCY AND IMAGINATION; INSPIRATION; INVENTION; SPONTANEITY.

**limerick** A type of light verse (*q.v.*) and a particularly popular fixed verse form in English. It usually consists of five predominantly anapaestic lines rhyming aabba, as in:

There was a young person of Mullion,  
Intent upon marrying bullion;  
By some horrible fluke  
She jilted a duke  
And had to elope with a scullion.

From this it will be seen that the first, second and fifth lines are trimeters (*q.v.*), and the third and fourth dimeters (*q.v.*), though these two may be printed as a single line with internal rhyme (*q.v.*) as in this limerick by Edward Lear:

There was a Young Lady of Lucca,  
Whose lovers completely forsook her;  
She ran up a tree and said 'Fiddle-de-dee!'  
Which embarrassed the people of Lucca.

The origin of the term is obscure. There is one theory that it was an OF form brought to the Irish town of Limerick in 1700 by soldiers returning from the French war. Another that it originated in the nursery rhymes published in *Mother Goose Melodies for Children* (1719). A third that it stems from the refrain 'Will you come up to Limerick?' sung at convivial gatherings where such nonsense verses were fashionable.



The limerick is to be found in the *History of Sixteen Wonderful Old Women* (1821) and in *Anecdotes and Adventures of Fifteen Gentlemen* (1822). Edward Lear, who composed a great many limericks, cited this latter volume as the source of his idea of the form. Lear popularized it in his *Book of Nonsense* (1846). As a result M. Russell, S. J. coined the term 'learic'.

Distinguished writers like Tennyson, Swinburne, Kipling, R. Stevenson and W. S. Gilbert experimented with the form and by the end of the 19th c. it was well established. It has flourished steadily since, mostly as oral poetry in clubs, messes, common rooms and sporting fraternities, and the tendency has been to exploit the final line to provide a witty or surprising conclusion.

Many of the best limericks are ribald, like:

A vice both obscure and unsavoury  
Kept the bishop of Leicester in slavery.  
Amidst terrible howls,  
He deflowered young owls,  
In a crypt fitted out as an aviary.

A large number also are innocuously obscene or pornographic, like the famous:

There was a young lady of Niger,  
Who had an affair with a tiger.  
The result of the \*\*\*\*  
Was a bald-headed duck  
Two gnats and a circumcised spider.

Though a comparatively humble form of verse, it is capable of distinction. Consider the following:

Titian was mixing rose madder.  
His model posed nude on a ladder.  
Her position to Titian  
Suggested coition.  
So he nipped up the ladder and 'ad 'er.

The rather grand and solemn opening line, the adroit use of assonance and internal rhyme (*qq.v.*) in the third and fourth lines and the quickening rhythm and colloquial language of the last line make a pleasing combination and contrast. Moreover, it is successful visually. In view of the fact that it was rose madder one might speculate on what part of the girl's body Titian was engaged. *See also* MACARONIC.

## limited edition

**limited edition** An edition of a work which is restricted to a certain number of copies. They are usually numbered and the book is not reprinted in the same form.

**line** A formal structural division in a poem, normally classified according to the number of feet it contains. For example, a pentameter (*q.v.*) contains five feet, a hexameter (*q.v.*) six feet, and so on. *See* FOOT; METER.

**line endings** In prosody there are two general types, according to the position of the final stress (*q.v.*) near the end of the line. A masculine ending has the stress on the final syllable; the feminine has the last stress on the penultimate (occasionally the antepenultimate) syllable. The following verse from Sir John Suckling illustrates the two basic kinds:

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?  
Prithee, why so pale?  
Will, when looking well can't move her,  
Looking ill prevail?  
Prithee, why so pale?

The first and third lines are feminine; the others masculine.

Blank verse (*q.v.*), especially in Tudor and Jacobean drama, has many feminine endings (*q.v.*) which help to preserve colloquial speech rhythms.

**lingo** A loosely colloquial term for a foreign language or any strange unintelligible speech; as in 'Do you speak the lingo?' It probably derives from Portuguese *lingoa*, from Latin *lingua* 'a tongue'.

**linguistics** The scientific study of a language. Descriptive linguistics classifies the characteristics; historical or comparative linguistics deals with its growth and development. The principal branches of linguistics are: etymology, semantics, phonetics, morphology and syntax.

**linked rhyme** *See* RHYME.

**linked sonnet** *See* SPENSERIAN SONNET

**lipogram** (Gk 'wanting a letter') A composition in words from

which a specific letter is deliberately omitted. For instance, Pindar's *Ode minus sigma* (5th c. B.C.) and Ronden's *Pièce sans A* (1816). Perhaps the most extraordinary examples are Lope de Vega's five novels, each of which omits one vowel. There seems little point to a lipogram except as an exercise in verbal ingenuity.

**lira** (Sp 'lyre') A Spanish stanza form and a special form of the *canción* (*canzone*) (*q.v.*). It consists of a combination of five eleven-syllable and seven-syllable lines rhyming ababb. The name derives from Garcilaso de la Vega's fifth *canción* which begins 'si de me baja lira'.

**litany** (Gk 'supplication') A liturgical prayer consisting of a series of petitions or invocations, often chanted by a church choir in procession.

**literal** Several meanings may be distinguished: (a) the misprint of a letter; (b) taking the meaning of words in their primary and non-figurative sense, as in literal interpretation; (c) giving an exact rendering of something, as in literal translation; (d) an opinion based on what is actually written, as opposed to what is implied. See FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

**literati** (L 'the learned') Used not wholly seriously nowadays to denote men of letters and learned men. The meaning is not dissimilar to *cognoscenti* 'those who know' or who are 'in the know'.

**literature** A vague term which usually denotes works which belong to the major genres: epic, drama, lyric, novel, short story, ode, (*qq.v.*). If we describe something as 'literature', as opposed to anything else, the term carries with it qualitative connotations which imply that the work in question has superior qualities; that it is well above the ordinary run of written works. For example: 'George Eliot's novels are literature, whereas Fleming's Bond books are unquestionably not.'

However, there are many works which cannot be classified in the main literary genres which nevertheless may be regarded as literature by virtue of the excellence of their writing, their originality and their general aesthetic and artistic merits. A handful of examples at random suggests how comprehensive the term can be. For instance: Aristotle's treatise on *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*;

## literature

St Augustine's *Civitas Dei*; Erasmus's *Moriae Encomium*; Descartes' *Discourse on Method*; Berkeley's *Platonic Dialogues*; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico*; Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*; Lord Acton's *Essays on Church and State*; Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria*; R. G. Collingwood's *The Idea of Nature*; D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson's *On Growth and Form*; Sir Arthur Keith's *A New Theory of Human Evolution*; Sir Charles Sherrington's *Man on His Nature*; Sir Steven Runciman's *A History of the Crusades*; and Dame Rebecca West's *The Meaning of Treason*. Scores of others might be added to such a list.

**literature of escape** From the First and Second World Wars came many books about escaping – mostly from prisoner-of-war camps. They form almost a minor genre of their own, and many of them, apart from being very exciting, are well written. Well-known examples from the First World War are: H. E. Hervey's *Cage-birds*; H. G. Durnford's *The Tunnellers of Holzminden*; *Escapers All* by various contributors; and *The Escaping Club*. Probably the most famous from the Second World War is *The Wooden Horse* (1949) by Eric Williams. There have been many others, including T. D. Teare's *The Evader*; André Devigny's *Escape from Montluc*; David James's *A Prisoner's Progress*; Airey Neave's *They have Their Exits*; George Millar's *Horned Pigeon*; Anthony Deane-Drummond's *Return Ticket*; W. B. Thomas's *Dare to be Free*; Peter Medd's *The Long Walk Home*; W. K. Sexton's *We Fought for Freedom*; and Anthony Farrar-Hockley's *The Edge of the Sword*.

**litotes** (Gk from *litós* 'single, simple, meagre') A figure of speech which contains an understatement for emphasis, and is therefore the opposite of hyperbole (*q.v.*). Often used in everyday speech (frequently with a negative assertion) and usually with laconic or ironic intentions. A stock instance is 'not bad' meaning 'very good'. *See also* IRONY; MEIOSIS; PARADIASTOLE.

**littérateur** (F 'a man of letters') One who devotes himself to the study or writing of literature. It may also suggest an *amateur* or *dilettante*.

**liturgical drama** Plays performed as part of the liturgy of the Church in the Middle Ages. The Mass, containing nearly all the



elements and conventions of drama, was (and is) a theatrical spectacle much enhanced by ceremonial and symbolic ritual, and by the use of antiphonal singing which lends itself readily to dialogue. As services were elaborated additional melodies (and tropes (*q.v.*) in dialogue form) were interpolated. These plays became more popular, vernacular elements were introduced, and the laity as well as the clergy took part in them. They are almost certainly the source of the Mystery Plays (*q.v.*). *See also* MIRACLE PLAY.

**living newspaper** A kind of documentary revue (*q.v.*) using currently topical material (e.g. relating to social and political problems) presented in a series of short scenes. The American Federal Theatre devised this entertainment in the 1930s. The method was later used elsewhere during the Second World War for propaganda purposes. *See* DOCUMENTARY THEATRE.

**livre à clef** (F 'book with a key') Also known as a *roman à clef*, in English as a *key novel* and in German as a *Schlüssel-roman*. Usually a work of fiction in which actual persons are presented under fictitious names. The genre developed in 17th c. France, from which time notable examples are Mlle de Scudéry's *Le Grand Cyrus* (1649–53) and *Clélie* (1654–60), and La Bruyère's *Caractères* (1688). The 'keys' were provided later. Periodically since there have been other instances, like Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey* (1818) which contained caricatures of Coleridge, Byron and Shelley; Disraeli's *Venetia* (1837) which suggested notable figures of his period; Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928) in which the personalities of D. H. Lawrence, Oswald Mosley and Middleton Murry were thinly disguised; and several novels by Somerset Maugham, who earned some disapproval at his lack of effort to disguise characters.

**ljoðaháttir** An Eddic meter. The first and third lines of each stanza are like the usual line of the fornyrðislag (*q.v.*). The second and fourth lines are shorter and lack a caesura (*q.v.*).

**loa** (Sp 'praise') A kind of prologue (*q.v.*) or address to an audience intended to evoke sympathetic support.

**loan word** A word imported into a language from another language,

## loan word

or 'borrowed' from it. Very often such borrowings are permanent. English, a particularly permeable language, has assimilated a huge number of foreign elements, especially French, Scandinavian, Celtic, Latin and Greek. The following common words, for instance, are of Scandinavian origin: *calf, leg, skin, skull, anger, bank, crook, dirt, egg, gait, haven, knife, link, root, sky, thrift, window*.

**local colour** The use of detail peculiar to a particular region and environment to add interest and authenticity to a narrative. This will include some description of the locale, dress, customs, music, etc. It is for the most part decorative. When it becomes an essential and intrinsic part of the work then it is more properly called *regionalism*. A number of American authors have used local colour successfully. For instance: Joel Chandler Harris, Thomas Nelson Page, Mary N. Murfee, Francis Hopkinson Smith, George Washington Cable and Mark Twain. Zola was also a good local colourist; so were Kipling and Hardy. *See also* REALISM; REGIONAL NOVEL.

**loco citato** (L 'in the place cited') Often abbreviated to *loc. cit.*, the term indicates a reference to a book or page or passage already mentioned. *See* IBIDEM; IDEM; OPERE CITATO.

**logaoedic** (Gk 'speech song') A term which describes a composition which combines the rhythms of poetry and prose. Applied to Greek meter in which dactyls are combined with trochees and anapaests with iambs (*qq.v.*). It may also apply to any mixed metre.

**logical stress** Also known as rhetorical or sense stress, it is the emphasis required by the meaning of the verse. As in these lines from T. S. Eliot's *Ash Wednesday*:

Lady of silences  
Calm and distressed  
Torn and most whole  
Rose of memory  
Rose of forgetfulness  
Exhausted and life-giving  
Worried reposeful  
The single Rose  
Is now the Garden  
Where all loves end . . .

## loose and periodic sentence

**logogriph** (Gk 'word riddle') An anagram (*q.v.*) or verses from which anagrams or other word puzzles can be guessed. *See also* ACROSTIC.

**logomachy** (Gk 'word contest') A dispute or fight about words.

**logopoeia** (Gk 'making of words') A poem both *means* and *is*. In *ABC of Reading* (1934) Ezra Pound discusses language as a means of communication and finds three ways in which language can be charged with meaning: (a) by throwing the object, be it fixed or moving, on to the visual imagination; this is phanopoeia (*q.v.*); (b) by inducing emotional correlations by the sound and rhythm of speech; this is melopoeia (*q.v.*); (c) by inducing both of the effects, thus stimulating the intellectual or emotional associations which have remained in the receiver's consciousness in relation to the actual words or groups of words employed; this is logopoeia. *See* ONOMATOPOEIA; SYNAESTHESIA; TONE COLOUR.

**log-rolling** Vulgarly known as 'back-scratching'. The practice by which authors review each other's books favourably. *See* PUFFERY.

**logorrhoea** (Gk 'word flowing') Excessive verbosity and prolixity. Vulgarly known as 'verbal diarrhoea'.

**long measure** The L.M. of the hymn books. A variant of ballad or common meter. It consists of a tetrameter (*q.v.*) in which the foot pattern is usually iambic (but sometimes dactylic) as in this stanza from Burns's *Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn*:

The mother may forget the child  
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;  
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn;  
And a' that thou hast done for me.

**long syllable** *See* QUANTITY; METER.

**loose and periodic sentence** In a loose sentence the main clause comes first and is followed by its dependent clauses. In a periodic the main clause is last. In the following passage from Macaulay's *Essay on Milton* the first sentence is loose, the second periodic:

They [the Puritans] rejected with contempt the ceremonious

## loose and periodic sentence

homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on his intolerable brightness . . .

**low comedy** A coarse (often bawdy) type of comedy (*q.v.*), sometimes used as comic relief (*q.v.*). The mirth it provokes is likely to come from the belly rather than the brain. It commonly contains buffoonery, slapstick (*q.v.*), violent action and ribald jokes. It is thus a crudely fundamental form which trades upon people's relish at seeing others humiliated and ridiculed and involved in scabrous episodes. The punch-up, the custard-pie contest and the man caught with his trousers down are common examples of low comedy situations. It is frequent in Aristophanic comedy, farce (*q.v.*), medieval English drama, Tudor and Jacobean drama, and also Restoration comedy (*q.v.*). Notable instances are to be found in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the brothel scenes in *Pericles* (IV) and several scenes from Wycherley's *The Country Wife*. Low comedy is also to be found in the satyr-play, the *fabula* and the anti-masque (*qq.v.*).

Low comedy is plentiful in other literary forms. Excellent examples occur in Goliardic verse (*q.v.*), Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. It may also be applied to Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, Pope's *Dunciad* and a number of scenes in the sporting novels of R. S. Surtees. Some of the Mack Sennett and early Charles Chaplin films are masterpieces of low comedy.

**lullaby** A soothing bed-time song or chant to send a child to sleep.

The first lines of some of the better known lullabies are : 'Hush-a-bye baby, on the tree top'; 'Hush thee, my babby'; 'Rock-a-bye, baby'; 'Hush-a-bye, baby'; 'Hush, little baby, don't say a word'; 'The little lady lairdie'; 'Bye, baby bunting'; 'Hush ba, burdie beeton'; 'Hush-a-ba birdie, croon, croon'. See also NURSERY RHYME.

**lū-shih** (Ch 'regulated poem') A verse form developed in China during the T'ang and Sung dynasties. It also went under the name *chin-t'i shih* to distinguish it from *ku-shih* or 'old poem'. Notable features of the *lū-shih* are parallelism (*q.v.*) and an elaborate tonal pattern. This kind of formalization also affected the *fu* (*q.v.*) or prose poem.



**Lyon school** From the town of Lyon where, in the 16th c., a group of writers lived and met. They were chiefly poets, and were in some cases involved in the other arts; their particular interest as a group was a theory of spiritual love based on ideas of Plato and Plutarch and enunciated in Antoine Heroet's *Parfaicte Amye* (1542). The group was noteworthy for the number of women who took an active part.

The leader of the Lyon school was Maurice Scève (c. 1500–64), architect, musician and painter as well as poet. He is known for the following main works: *Délie* (anagram of *l'idée*), *objet de plus haulte vertu* (1544); *Le microcosme* (1562), an encyclopaedic poem on the fall of man; two eclogues – *Arion* (1536) and *La saulsaye* (1547). Other members of the group were Claude de Taillemont and women poets such as Jeanne Gaillarde, Pernette de Guillet, Clémence de Bourges, and Scève's sisters Claudine and Sibylle. However, the poetess Louise Labé (c. 1525–66) was the most prominent of Scève's colleagues. It is said that at sixteen this remarkable woman fought on horseback in the siege of Perpignan on the side of the Dauphin. The daughter of a rope-maker, she married a rope-maker and became known as *La Belle Cordière*. She was a linguist and musician and her house became known as a salon for the cultured. Some of her poetry was published in Lyon in 1555. She also wrote a prose allegory *Le débat de folie et d'amour*.

**lyric** The Greeks defined a lyric as a song to be sung to the accompaniment of a lyre (*lyra*). A song is still called a lyric (the songs in a musical are known as lyrics) but we also use the term loosely to describe a particular kind of poem in order to distinguish it from narrative or dramatic verse of any kind.

A lyric is usually fairly short, not often longer than fifty or sixty lines, and often only between a dozen and thirty lines; and it usually expresses the feelings and thoughts of a single speaker (not necessarily the poet himself) in a personal and subjective fashion. The range and variety of lyric verse is immense, and lyric poetry, which is to be found in most literatures, comprises the bulk of all poetry.

Probably the earliest lyric poetry is Egyptian (c. 2600 B.C.). The Pyramid texts of this period reveal examples of the funeral song (a kind of elegy), the song of praise to the king (a type of ode), and an invocation to the gods (a form of hymn). Inscriptions on tombs of the same period include the songs of shepherds and

## lyric

fishermen. Later works (c. 1550 B.C.) include a love song and an epitaph (*q.v.*).

Apart from some Hebrew lyric poetry, the most memorable contribution in ancient times came from the Greeks. Like the Egyptian and Hebrew, the Greek lyric originated in religious ceremonial. Greek lyrics were sung or chanted, sometimes to the accompaniment of a dance. The dithyramb (*q.v.*) was originally sung and then took on the shape of a formal dance. These dithyrambic rhythms were probably the prototypes of the ode (*q.v.*), or song of celebration (with divisions of strophe and antistrophe) (*qq.v.*) which Pindar and Sophocles, among others, were to write.

There were indeed hints of lyrical mood and subject in Hesiod and Homer, but it was not until the 7th c. B.C. that there appeared lyrics proper. Here we can distinguish between the Aeolian or personal lyrics written by Sappho and Alcaeus; and the Dorian (more impersonal and objective) lyrics by Alcman, Arion, Ibycus and Stesichorus.

The 5th c. in Greece produced some of the best of all lyric poetry – by Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides; and by the dramatists Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides in their beautiful choral odes. Melic poetry then predominated, in the Dorian mood. Some of the main lyric types practised were the dance song, the dirge, the dithyramb, ode, hymn and paean (*qq.v.*).

The Roman lyricists tended to be more subjective and autobiographical in the use of this form (the Aeolian mood), as in the poetry of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Virgil and Martial.

The Medieval Latin lyric, from about A.D. 300 onwards, showed a remarkable range of subject and technical skill. The early Church lyrics were hymns based on the Hebrew Psalter and Greek hymns. The major poets of the Middle Ages writing lyrics in Latin were Abelard, Ausonius, Fortunatus, Paulinus of Nola, Petronius Arbiter and Prudentius, much of whose work is gathered together in Helen Waddell's *Medieval Latin Lyrics* (1929). The Church lyrics of the 12th and 13th c. were unique in their beauty. Such were the *Stabat Mater* and the *Dies Irae*.

A parallel development of the so-called Patristic lyric was the Mozarabic poetry of Spain. Hymns, psalms and poems arising from religious ceremonial were the chief contributions.

Between c. A.D. 300 and c. A.D. 1200 two other traditions in the lyric form can be distinguished. In the first place the OE lyric, of which outstanding examples are: *The Seafarer*, *The Wanderer*, *The Wife's Lament*, *The Lover's Message* and *Deor*. Contemporaneously,

the art of the lyric was being perfected in China and Japan, and between the 12th and the 15th c. was highly developed in Persia. The main influence of the Persian lyric was not felt in England until the 19th c.

An abundance of lyric poetry survives from the later Middle Ages. Much of it was composed by *troubadours* and *trouvères* (q.v.) and other wandering minstrels, and by the *Minnesinger* (q.v.). Many of the lyric forms had specific names, like *chanso*, *sirventes*, *planh*, *tenso*, *pastorela* and *aubade* (q.v.). It was intended to be sung, and it was often danced to. From the 13th and 14th c. a large number of religious and devotional lyrics in English survive. Many of them are of great beauty. The principal European poets of the period who composed lyrics to be read were Bertrand de Born, Chaucer, Chrétien de Troyes, Walther von der Vogelweide, Rutebeuf, Pierre Vidal and Sordello.

The Renaissance period, however, was the great age of the lyric. Petrarch in Italy and Ronsard in France were the two major poets in this form, especially in the use of the sonnet (q.v.). In England Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey made outstanding contributions with their songs, lyrics and sonnets. Some of the finest songs in the language were written by Wyatt for the lute. Between c. 1550 and the Restoration period scores of poets wrote lyrics, many of which are extant. The major collection of such verse in the 16th c. was *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557). The principal lyric poets in this period were Sidney, Daniel, Spenser, Shakespeare, Campion, Southwell, Drayton, Donne, Ben Jonson, Herrick, Lovelace, Suckling, Carew, Marvell, Herbert, Vaughan and Milton. To this period belong the great sonnet sequences (q.v.) of Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare, the love poems of the Metaphysicals and the mystical and religious lyrics of Donne, Herbert and Vaughan. Not until the 19th c. do we find a comparable variety of religious lyrical poetry.

Thy lyric form was not so much favoured by the 18th c. poets, except Smart who was a noble minor lyric poet. Some other minor poets also attempted this form – notably Lady Winchilsea, Thomas Parnell, William Collins and Thomas Gray. The odes of Collins and Gray are particularly distinguished lyrics.

Towards the end of the 18th c. and during the Romantic period (q.v.) there was a major revival of lyric poetry throughout Europe. In the British Isles the most accomplished lyrists were Burns, Wordsworth, Blake, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats, John Clare and Thomas Moore; in Germany, Goethe, Schiller,

## lyric

Hölderlin, Eichendorff and Heine; in France, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny and Alfred de Musset; in Italy, Giacomo Leopardi; in Spain, Espronceda; and in Russia, Pushkin.

Throughout the 19th c. many poets used the lyric form. The principal English poets were Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, Matthew Arnold and Gerard Manley Hopkins. Like some of the Metaphysicals Hopkins wrote some remarkable religious and mystical poetry. Two minor poets are associated with him in this respect; namely, Francis Thompson and Coventry Patmore. Other minor poets who wrote notable lyrics were Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Christina Rossetti.

In France the major writers of lyric poetry in the later part of the 19th c. were the Parnassians, particularly Leconte de Lisle and Prudhomme. The American poet Edgar Allan Poe had a very considerable influence on Baudelaire who was the precursor of the *Symbolistes*. Baudelaire wrote some of the best lyrics in the French language. The other Symboliste poets who wrote fine lyrics were Mallarmé, Verlaine and Rimbaud. Since the end of the 19th c. almost every major European and American poet has attempted and enriched the lyric form. One should mention especially W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas, W. H. Auden, Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, and William Carlos Williams among British and American poets. Among Frenchmen some of the main composers of lyric verse have been Verhaeren, Valéry, Laforgue, Pierre Emmanuel and Claudel. Stefan George and Rilke are the two outstanding Germans. In Spain there have been the brothers Manuel and Antonio Machado. In Italy, D'Annunzio, Campana, Ungaretti, Montale and Quasimodo. Besides these, scores of minor poets have written fine lyrics.

From the thousands of such poems which exist and from which one might choose, I take this short poem by John Clare as an example of the lyric form:

### The Secret

I loved thee, though I told thee not,  
Right early and long,  
Thou wert my joy in every spot,  
My theme in every song.

And when I saw a stranger face  
Where beauty held the claim,



I gave it like a secret grace  
The being of thy name.

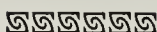
And all the charms of face or voice  
Which I in others see  
Are but the recollected choice  
Of what I felt for thee.

*See also* LEICH; METAPHYSICAL POETRY; SONG; SYMBOL  
AND SYMBOLISM.

**lyrisme romantique** A term used to describe those qualities of French lyrical poetry which appeared to depend greatly upon the individual poet's personal experiences and feelings. Thus, deeply subjective poetry. The four major poets of the French Romantic Movement – Hugo, Lamartine, Musset and de Vigny – 'wrote from the heart'.

lysiody *See* MAGODY.

# M



**macabre** *See* DANSE MACABRE.

**macaronic** The term derives indirectly from the Italian word *maccaroni*, an earlier form of *maccheroni*. Properly speaking, macaronic verse is made when a writer mixes words of his own language with those of another and twists his native words to fit the grammar of the foreign tongue (e.g. *standez, womenorum*). Broadly speaking, the term applies to any verse which mixes two or more languages together. Latin is the language most often used, and the intention in macaronics is nearly always comic and/or nonsensical.

They are first recorded in *Carmen macaronicum de Patavinis* (1490) by Tisi degli Odassi. The form was popularized by Teofilo Folengo in *Liber Macaronices* (1517). Folengo described his verses as a literary analogue (*q.v.*) of *macaroni*. There is a good deal of of macaronic verse in French and German literature (the Germans call it *Nudelverse*) and some interesting examples in English literature: for instance: several poems by John Skelton, and William Drummond of Hawthornden's 'epic' *Polemo-Middinia*. Many writers of light verse and nonsense verse (*qq.v.*) have diverted themselves by composing macaronics. This example comes from *Malum Opus* by the American J. A. Morgan:

Prope ripam fluvii solus  
A senex silently sat;  
Super capitum ecce his wig.  
Et wig super, ecce his hat.

Blew Zephyrus alte, acerbus,  
Dum elderly gentleman sat;  
Et capite took up quite torve  
Et in rivum projecit his hat.

And so on for three more verses to the *envoi*:

Contra bonos mores, don't swear,  
It is wicked, you know (verbum sat),  
Si this tale habet no other moral,  
Mehercle! You're gratus to that!

Occasionally we find the macaronic limerick (*q.v.*), of which these are bawdy examples (they often *are* bawdy):

King Louis, when passing through Bruges  
Met a lady, whos \*\*\* was so huge  
That he said, as he came  
In that fabulous dame,  
'Atta girl! *Après moi le déluge.*'

And:

There was a young lady of Nantes  
*Très jolie, et très élégante,*  
But her \*\*\* was so small  
It was no good at all,  
Except for *la plume de ma tante.*

See also FATRASIE; SORAISMUS.

**machinery** In his preface to *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, 1714), Pope refers to *machinery* as a term invented by the critics 'to signify that part which the deities, angels or demons are made to act in a poem'. The term is particularly associated with Greek tragedy in connection with the mechanical means by which the Greeks used to put a god on stage. It is also associated with epic (*q.v.*) because Homer included a large number of gods in the *Iliad*. Thus, supernatural figures were referred to as 'machines'. There is a good deal of supernatural 'machinery' in *Paradise Lost*.

**macrology** (Gk 'long language') Verbose repetition by way of long words and phrases. See JARGON; OFFICIALESE; PERIPHRAISIS; TAUTOLOGY; VERBOCRAP.

**macron** The horizontal sign (—) put over a vowel to indicate length. See MORA.

**madrigal** (L *maternalis* 'maternal' and so 'simple, primitive') Originally a pastoral song, it is a short lyric, especially one to be set to music and intended for several voices. It arose in northern Italy

## madrigal

in the 14th c. and Petrarch wrote a number of them. In the 16th c. there was a revival of the form and it became extremely popular in England in Tudor times.

Metrically it showed much variety. In the 14th c. it tended to consist of two or three tercets (*q.v.*) followed by one or two rhyming couplets. By the 16th c. there were few rules, but for the most part madrigals were of ten to fourteen lines and normally ended with a rhyming couplet. The themes were usually love, the pastoral or the satiric. Many Tudor poets attempted it, but its three famous English composers were Thomas Morley, Thomas Weelkes and John Wilbye.

**magazine** (A *makhazīn*, plural of *makhzan* 'a storehouse'). A periodical (*q.v.*) publication.

**magnum opus** (L 'great work') A major literary work, perhaps a writer's masterpiece. Milton's *Paradise Lost* was his *magnum opus*. These days the term is often used ironically.

**magody** (Gk 'rude pantomime') Like lysiody (named after Lysis who wrote songs for actors playing female characters in male attire) and hilarody (Gk 'joyous song'), magody was a form of Greek mime (*q.v.*). The magodist took a comic plot or a theme from comedy and worked out a mime. Wearing female clothes, he played both male and female parts. The lysiodist, by contrast, wore male clothes and played female roles, to the accompaniment of a flute. Hilarody was a kind of parody of tragedy (*q.v.*). The actor wore male clothes and buskins (*q.v.*). Simody was an alternative, and later, name for hilarody. *See also SATYR PLAY.*

**málahátttr** (ON *mál* 'a speech' and *hátttr* 'meter') An ON Eddic meter, quite similar to fornyrðislag (*q.v.*). It consists of a four-line stanza, each line being divided into two half lines, the half lines having two accented and three or four unaccented syllables.

**malapropism** (F *mal à propos* 'not to the purpose') So called after Mrs Malaprop, a character in Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), who had a habit of using polysyllabic words incorrectly. There are some characteristic examples in the following passage from the opening Act:

Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in



accounts; – and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries . . . and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; – and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

But malapropisms were by no means new. Dogberry, the Watch in *Much Ado About Nothing* (c. 1598–9), was addicted to them. So was Mrs Slipslop in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742). One of the most amusing malapropists was Mrs Winifred Jenkins in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* (1771), who was capable of writing: 'I have already made very creditable correxions in this here place; where, to be sure, we have the very squintasense of satiety'.

**mal mariée** (F 'unhappily married') An OF form of song or poem in which a married woman laments her marriage and calls upon her lover. In some cases the lover comes to rescue her. A variant is the lament of a nun who wants to be taken away from her convent by a lover. The poems were often written in ballade (*q.v.*) meter.

**manifesto** (L *manu festus* 'struck by hand') A public declaration, usually of political, religious, philosophical or literary principles and beliefs. Literary movements are also given to publishing manifestos. For instance, Wyndham Lewis's *Blast: Review of the Great English Vortex* (1914, 1915), a manifesto for Vorticism (*q.v.*), and André Breton's *Manifeste de Surréalisme* (1924).

**mannerism** The idiosyncratic element of an author's style. Any peculiarity, affectation or quality which sets it apart and makes it easily recognizable. For example, the Latinistic syntax of Milton, the balanced and antithetical cadences of Gibbon, the quaint archaisms of C. M. Doughty, the pseudo-biblical rhythms of Hemingway. See EUPHUISM; GONGORISM; MARINISM.

**mantra** An Indian religious chant (*q.v.*) accompanied by pantomime (*q.v.*). The *Mantrapatha*, a prayerbook, contains about six hundred *mantras*. It is a kind of manual of prayer for all occasions, especially domestic ceremonials.

## manuscript

**manuscript** (L *codex manu scriptus* 'book written by hand'). Strictly a book or document of any kind written by hand rather than printed or typed. True, a typewritten document is often called a manuscript. It is, in fact, a *typescript*.

**maqāma** An Arabic term for stories in rhymed prose. The two great masters of the form were Abu al-Fadl Ahmed ibn al-Husain al-Hamadhani (967-1007) and Abu Mohammed al-Qasim al-Hariri (1054-1122). Most of the tales come into the category of picaresque (*q.v.*).

**märchen** A German term for a folk tale or fairy story (*qq.v.*). The classic collection is that made by the Grimm brothers early in the 19 c. – the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812, 1815, 1822).

**marginalia** Notes written in the margin of a manuscript or book by a reader or annotator. Coleridge (in 1832) was the first English man of letters to use this term. *See also* ANNOTATION.

**Marinism** The affected style of the Italian poet Giovanni Battista Marini (1569-1625). Writing characterized by an exaggerated and rather artificial language and imagery. *See* EUPHUISM; GONGORISM; MANNERISM; SECENTISMO.

**Marivaudage** A manner of writing similar to that of Pierre Marivaux (1688-1763), the dramatist and novelist. Marivaux's style was often affected by being strained, over-elegant, too subtle and too nice by half. Voltaire said of him rather cruelly that he had spent his life weighing nothing in scales made of spiders' webs. Thus Marivaudage is usually a pejorative term. Nevertheless he had a considerable (and by no means wholly harmful) influence on a number of French writers, especially Alfred de Musset and Giraudoux.

**masculine caesura** A caesura (*q.v.*) which comes after a stressed syllable, as after 'moles' in the second of these lines from Matthew Arnold's *To a Republican Friend*:

The barren optimistic sophistries  
Of comfortable moles, || whom what they do  
Teaches the limit of the just and true.

*See* FEMININE CAESURA.

**masculine rhyme** A single monosyllabic rhyme, like *thorn/scorn* at the end of a line. It is the commonest type of rhyme in English verse. In French verse it frequently alternates with feminine rhyme. See FEMININE RHYME; TRIPLE RHYME.

**masque** (F 'mask') What is probably the first use of the term occurs in Hall's *Chronicle* for 1512 where 'maske' applies to a dance of masked figures. According to Ben Jonson, masques were formerly called 'disguisings'. John Lydgate, in the period 1427-35, composed seven of these entertainments which he called 'mummings' or 'mummings by way of disguisings'. These may well be the first specimens of the genre to survive.

A masque was a fairly elaborate form of courtly entertainment which was particularly popular in the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I, as it was in Italy (where the masque first acquired a distinctive form), and in France. In fact, *Circe* (1581), first produced in Paris, had a considerable influence on English masque.

The masque combined poetic drama, song, dance and music. The costumes were often sumptuous. The structure was usually simple. A Prologue introduced a group of actors known to the audience. They entered in disguise or perhaps in some kind of decorated vehicle. Plot and action were slight. Usually the plot consisted of mythological and allegorical elements. Sometimes there might be a sort of 'debate'. At the end there was a dance of masked figures in which the audience joined. In short, it was a kind of elegant, private pageant (*q.v.*).

In the Tudor period masques accompanied many festive occasions. Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign the poetic element, thanks to the influence of Daniel and Gascoyne, began to predominate. In the reign of James I Ben Jonson perfected the genre with the help of Inigo Jones who (like Brunelleschi in Italy) created lavish sets and costumes and performed many ingenious and spectacular feats with stage machinery. By this time masques had become so elaborate that they could almost be described as forerunners of the musical. They were extremely expensive. For example, Jonson's *Love Freed from Ignorance and Folly* (1611) cost a little under £1,000, and his *Oberon* (1611) cost over £2,000 – huge sums of money for those days.

As time went on they became more and more spectacular, and operatically splendid; to such an extent that even Jonson was disillusioned and felt that they were merely obscuring truth. As he put it in *An Expostulation with Inigo Jones* (1631):

## masque

Oh, to make boards to speak! There is a task!  
Painting and carpentry are the soul of masque!  
Pack with you peddling poetry to the stage!  
This is the money-get, mechanic age.

In the development of the theatre the masque was particularly important because it was Inigo Jones who was responsible for the technique of proscenium staging. Moreover, the masque had considerable influence on contemporary drama, as we can see from Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* (c. 1593), Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (1600), John Ford's *The Sun's Darling* (1624) and Nabbe's *Microcosmus* (1637). The most famous instance was the masque of Juno and Ceres within the fourth act of *The Tempest* (c. 1611), rivalled only by Milton's *Comus* presented at Ludlow Castle in 1634.

Further development was prevented by the outbreak of civil war and the banning of drama by the Puritans. Almost the last masque of any note before the ban was Davenant's *Salmacida Spolia* (1640). However, when the theatres re-opened all that had been learned of staging techniques was applied to the production of plays. And Davenant's was by no means the last masque. Shirley's *Cupid and Death* was presented in 1653, Cockayne's *The Masque at Brethby* in 1658, Crowne's *Calisto* in 1675, Davison's *The Masque of Proteus and the Adamantine Rock* in 1688, and Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris* in 1701.

Mention should also be made of the following contributions to the genre: Sir Philip Sidney's *The Lady of the May* (1578); Daniel's *The Vision of Twelve Goddesses* (1604); Jonson's *Hymenaei* (1606), *The Masque of Beauty* (1608), *The Masque of Queens* (1609), *The Masque of Augurs* (1621), *Neptune's Triumph for the Return of Albion* (?1624), *The Fortunate Isles and Their Union* (1624); Chapman's *The Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn* (?1613); the anonymous *The Masque of Flowers* (1614); Townsend's *Albion's Triumph* (1632); Shirley's *The Triumph of Peace* (1634); Carew's *Coelum Britannicum* (1634); Kynaston's *Corona Minervae* (1636); and Nabbe's *The Spring's Glory* (1638). Fletcher, Campion, Beaumont and Middleton also composed masques. See ANTI-MASQUE.

**maxim** (L. *propositio maxima* 'greatest theme') A proposition, often barely distinguishable from an *aphorism* (q.v.) and closely related to a *pensée* (q.v.) which consists of a pithy, succinct statement



(usually a sentence or two, though it may run to more) which contains a precept or general truth about human nature and human conduct.

Maxims are to be found scattered about the works of many writers, especially those of Francis Bacon, William Blake, Samuel (Erewhon) Butler, Albert Camus, Sebastian Chamfort, Malcom de Chazal, Chekhov, Lord Chesterfield, Chesterton, Coleridge, Emerson, Goethe, Remy de Gourmont, George Halifax, Hazlitt, Johnson, Kierkegaard, La Bruyère, Lichtenberg, Montaigne, Nietzsche, Ortega y Gasset, Pascal, Cesare Pavese, Pope, Johan-Paul Richter, Santayana, Schopenhauer, Shaw, Stendhal, Thoreau, de Tocqueville, Paul Valéry, Voltaire, Whitehead and Oscar Wilde – to name a handful of the most distinguished makers of maxims. Many maxims are anonymous; not a few echo ancient proverbs (*q.v.*). However, the greatest collection of maxims is unquestionably that of La Rochefoucauld. His work *Maxims* (1665) was the product of a 17th c. salon (*q.v.*) and society 'game'. In this case the diversion took place in the salon of Madame de Sablé in the 1650s and 1660s. At their meetings the members of the *coterie* 'fashioned' these general truths, polished them like gems, and put them into durable shape. They were the result of a group effort, but one may suppose that La Rochefoucauld was the final 'judge' and it was he, it seems, who gave the *Maximes* their discerningly cynical flavour. Here are two instances:

- (a) Old people are fond of giving good advice: it consoles them for no longer being capable of setting a bad example.
- (b) What men have called friendship is merely association, respect for each other's interests, and exchange of good offices, in fact nothing more than a business arrangement from which self-love is always out to draw some profit.

Less well known but extremely interesting is Vauvenargues' collection of maxims published in 1746 under the title *Introduction à la connaissance de l'esprit humain, suivie de réflexions et maximes*. Vauvenargues is much less cynical than La Rochefoucauld. He sees both good and evil, and makes much more of the virtues and the good impulses of man's passions and heart than does La Rochefoucauld. In fact he is an optimist.

The only equivalents to these collections in English literature are George Halifax's *Maxims of State* (33 in all; circulated in manuscript in 1692, published as a broadsheet in 1693 and finally

## maxim

reprinted in the *Miscellanies* of 1700). To these should be added his *Political Thoughts and Reflections*, *Moral Thoughts and Reflections* and *Miscellaneous Thoughts and Reflections*, (none of which was published until 1750, when they came out together).

**maximum scene technique** A jargon term for stream of consciousness (*q.v.*) technique.

**meaning** If we take as an example the following dialogue:

X: Is this a question?

Y: If it is, this is the answer.

we find that in this form it possesses referential or cognitive meaning. If we change it to:

X: Is this a sensible question?

Y: If it is, this is an equally stupid answer.

we introduce an emotive element, and it has what is called emotive meaning.

Under cognitive meaning it is normal to distinguish between two relations: (a) that between a word and the things it names or denotes; hence these things are called the extension or denotation (*q.v.*) of the word; (b) that between a word and certain characteristics; these are the intension of the word, or its connotation (*q.v.*). The word *snake*, for instance, denotes the genus of reptiles; but for many people it also has very strong connotations.

**measure** Another word for meter (*q.v.*). See also LONG MEASURE; POULTER'S MEASURE.

**mechanism** In general, it denotes the construction of a work; the relationship of the parts to the whole. We may also speak of the mechanism of a plot (*q.v.*); that is, how it works.

**medievalism** In a literary work, an emphasis on the attitudes, way of thought, sensibility, themes, style and matter commonly associated with the Middle Ages (c. 800–c. 1450). The Gothic revival, the Romantic revival and pre-Raphaelitism (*q.v.*) were all manifestations of medievalism. Keats, for instance, strongly under the influence of Spenser (and of Milton, who in turn had been much influenced by Spenser, a very 'medieval' poet) exhibits many aspects of medievalism.

**meiosis** (Gk 'lessening') A figure of speech which contains an understatement for emphasis: often used ironically, and also for dramatic effect, in the attainment of simplicity. In everyday speech it is sometimes used in gentle irony, especially when describing something very spectacular or impressive as 'rather good', or words to that effect. In *King Lear*, the old king, having suffered the most dreadful disasters, says 'Pray, undo this button'. Meiosis may even pervade the tone and manner of a work. A particularly good example is Auden's *The Unknown Citizen*. See also IRONY; LITOTES.

**Meistergesang** German poetry for singing to melodies. The Meistersänger were mostly burghers of the 14th, 15th and 16th c. and were organized into guilds on a hierarchical basis. In effect one graduated to the rank of *Meister*. The meetings were formal occasions and the songs were for the most part religious, didactic and moral. In this respect they differed from the Minnesingers (*q.v.*) whose literary descendants they were. Meistersingers were particularly common in southern Germany and in the Rhineland. Two of the most famous were Hans Folz and Hans Sachs.

**meiurus** (Gk 'tapering') An hexameter (*q.v.*) line in which the first syllable of the last foot is short instead of long. Also known as *teliambos*.

**melic poetry** Lyric poetry to be sung and danced to. It was mostly composed by Aeolians and Dorians, and the best work dates from the 7th to the 5th c. B.C. There were basically two kinds: the monodic and the choral. The former was sung by a single voice and expressed one individual's feelings. The principal writers of monody were Sappho, Alcaeus and Anacreon. The latter expressed the feelings of a group and was sung by a chorus. The main practitioners of this kind were Alcman, Stesichorus, Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides. See LYRIC.

**melodrama** (Gk 'song drama') The origins of melodrama coincide roughly with the origins of opera (*q.v.*) in Italy very late in the 16th c. Opera developed from an attempt to revive Classical tragedy, and the mixture of music and drama was either opera or melodrama. In the 18th c. Handel called some of his works opera and some melodrama. Towards the end of the 18th c. French dramatists began to develop melodrama as a distinct genre by

## melodrama

elaborating the dialogue and making much more of spectacle, action and violence. Sensationalism and extravagant emotional appeal became popular. One of the main influences from earlier in the century was very probably the gloomy tragedies of Crébillon (*père*). Some of the more notable examples of inchoate melodrama were Rousseau's *Pygmalion* (1775), Gabiot's *L'Autoe-da-Fé* (1790) and Gilbert de Pixérécourt's *Caelina, ou l'enfant du mystère* (1800). The French influence, plus the Gothic element in the work of Goethe and Schiller, plus, no doubt, the increasing vogue of the Gothic Novel (*q.v.*) and the popularity of Monk Lewis's melodrama *The Castle Spectre* (1797), all contributed to produce a quite extraordinary number of melodramas on the English stage during the 19th c., a period during which a very large number of novels (by Scott, Reade, Dickens, Wilkie Collins and others) were adapted for the stage in the form of melodrama. It can be no coincidence that in this period of decadence in the theatre very little original work of any note was created. Writers had lost their 'ear' for dramatic verse and prose.

The flourishing of melodrama in the 19th c. produced a kind of naively sensational entertainment in which the main characters were excessively virtuous or exceptionally evil (hence the luminously good hero or heroine and the villain of deepest and darkest dye), an abundance of blood, thunder, thrills and violent action which made use of spectres, ghouls, witches, vampires and many a skeleton from the supernatural cupboard, and also (in more domestic melodrama) a sordid realism in the shape of extravagant tales of the wickedness of drinking, gambling and murdering.

Among the hundreds of extant examples of the form, the following are some of the better known: Thomas Holcroft's *A Tale of Mystery* (1802), an unacknowledged translation from Pixérécourt; Douglas Jerrold's *Black-Ey'd Susan* (1829); *Maria Marten*; or, *The Murder in the Red Barn* (c. 1830), a classic story of melodrama which was worked over a number of times; *Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (1842), which, like *Maria Marten*, provided themes for a number of variations; Boucicault's *The Corsican Brothers* (1852); *Ten Nights in a Bar Room* (1858); Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn* (1860); Miss Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1863); Tom Taylor's *The Ticket-of-leave Man* (1853); *East Lynne* (1874), based on Mrs Henry Wood's novel, *The Bells* (1871); William Terriss's *The Bells of Hazlemere* (1887); and many more.



## Menippean satire

Mention should also be made of Shaw's 'intellectual' melodrama *The Devil's Disciple* (1897), and his *Passion, Poison, and Petrification, or The Fatal Gazogene* (1905), a fine skit on some of the more grotesque features of Victorian melodrama. Shaw included this among his *Trifles and Tomfooleries*, but the graver hierophants of the cult of The Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*) have detected in it certain foreshadowings of 'the absurd'.

Since about the 1920s the cinema has largely ousted melodrama from the stage, but the melodramatic can still draw large and appreciative audiences. Memorable successes between the wars were Patrick Hamilton's *Rope* (1929) and *Gas Light* (1938), and Edgar Wallace's *On The Spot* (1930) and *The Case of the Frightened Lady* (1931). Post Second World War varieties of melodrama have been distinguished and include Sartre's 'intellectual' melodrama *Crime Passionel* (1948), the phenomenally successful *The Mousetrap* (1952) by Agatha Christie, and Joe Orton's *Loot* (1967) – a macabre and scintillating burlesque of Victorian melodrama. See also GRAND GUIGNOL; THEATRE OF CRUELTY; THRILLER.

**melopoeia** (Gk 'song making') The musical element in Classical Greek tragedy. Clearly, from its form, it is related to onomatopoeia (*q.v.*) but refers more to the tune and music of the verses, rather than to the specific sounds for certain effects. Tennyson, for instance, achieves some melopoeic effects in the Morphean rhythms of *The Lotus Eaters*. See also LOGOPOEIA; ONOMATOPOEIA; PHANOPOEIA.

**memoirs** See AUTOBIOGRAPHY; DIARY AND JOURNAL.

**Menippean satire** So called after Menippus, its originator, who was a philosopher and a Cynic of the 3rd c. B.C. He satirized the follies of men (including philosophers) in a mixture of prose and verse. He was imitated by Varro (thus this type of satire is sometimes called Varronian) and also by Lucian – especially in his *Dialogues*.

The classic example of this genre in European literature is *Satire Ménippée*, a pamphlet in prose and verse which ridiculed the *États généraux* of 1593 and was published in 1594. It was written by Jean Leroy with the assistance of Jacques Gillot, Nicolas Rapin, Pierre Pithou, Jean Passerat and Florent Chrétien. Its main features were caricature, parody and burlesque (*qq.v.*). It has been suggested by Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy of*

## Menippean satire

*Criticism* that Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) is in the tradition of Menippus and Varro. Other works which perhaps owe something to this tradition of *satura* or medley are Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Voltaire's *Candide*, Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey*, Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* and *After Many a Summer* and a number of other intellectual charades and fantasies which, through debate and dialogue, serve to ridicule different intellectual attitudes and philosophical postures. See SATIRE.

**menology** (Gk 'record of the month') A form of calendar (*q.v.*) used especially in the Greek Orthodox Church, with biographies of the saints and martyrs. See HAGIOGRAPHY; SYNAXARION.

**merde, mystique de la** Not exactly the 'mystique of shit', but a term denoting a preoccupation with the seamier, muddier, bloodier aspects of life, as well as, excessively, with sex and money. The term was first used by Robert E. Fitch in 1956, and is a coarser version of *nostalgie de la boue*. Among modern writers, Joyce, Genet, Hemingway, Tennessee Williams and William Burroughs have all, from time to time, exploited the possibilities of *merde*.

**merismus** (Gk 'division into parts') A rhetorical device in which a subject or topic is divided into its various parts. A fairly well-known instance occurs in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (III, iii, 171):

For beauty, wit,  
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,  
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all  
To envious and calumniating Time.

**mesode** (Gk 'middle ode') In Greek drama, part of an ode (*q.v.*) between strophe and anti-strophe (*qq.v.*). It has an independent existence.

**mesostich** See ACROSTIC.

**messenger** In Classical Greek tragedy action which took place off stage was reported by a messenger or herald. In *Medea*, for example, a messenger entered to report that the princess was dead, and her death was described in some detail. The messenger

often figured in Tudor and Jacobean tragedy and occasionally in comedy. This character was also employed in French Classical drama; or some one performing the function of messenger, like Theramenes, the tutor of Hippolytus, reporting the young man's death at the end of Racine's *Phèdre*.

**mester de clerecía** (Sp 'art of the clerics'). After the *epopeya*, the *cantares de gesta* (*q.v.*) chanted by minstrels or *juglares*, and referred to in contrast as the '*mester de juglaría*', came the scholars with their learned poetry. This last is what is meant by '*mester de clerecía*'. At the beginning of the 8th c. attempts were made by the clerics to improve both style and content of the popular verse. Improvements in form led to the *cuaderna via* (*q.v.*), via the Latin Goliardic verse used by clerics in many countries. But the vehicle was one thing and the intention another. The clerics wished to spread to the ordinary people knowledge of the lives of the saints and other sacred themes. So they used simple methods of composition, a direct style and, so far as possible, the language of the people. The character of the poetry was narrative and real inspiration was rare – as is often the case in didactic poetry (*q.v.*).

**mesur tri-thrawiad** A Welsh dactylic metre, of half lines.

**metalepsis** (Gk 'after taking, substitution'). A form of metonymy (*q.v.*) in which the general idea substituted is considerably removed from the particular detail. As in these lines from *Henry VIII* (II, i):

Go with me, like good angels, to my end;  
And, as the long divorce of steel falls on me  
Make of your prayers one sweet sacrifice,

See EUPHEMISM; PERIPHRAISIS.

**metanoia** (Gk 'after thought, change of mind') A figurative device in which a statement is made, and then withdrawn or lessened in its impact. For example: 'I'll murder you. You will be punished'.

**metaphor** (Gk 'carrying from one place to another') A figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. The basic figure in poetry. A comparison is usually implicit; whereas in simile (*q.v.*) it is explicit. There are several metaphors in these

## metaphor

lines from the beginning of R. S. Thomas's *Song at the Year's Turning*:

Shelley dreamed it. Now the dream decays.  
The props crumble. The familiar ways  
Are stale with tears trodden underfoot.  
The heart's flower withers at the root.  
Bury it, then, in history's sterile dust.  
The slow years shall tame your tawny lust.

See ORGANIC METAPHOR; TELESCOPED METAPHOR; TENOR AND VEHICLE.

**metaphysical** (L *al* suffixed to Gk 'after (Aristotle's work on) physics') A term now generally applied to a group of 17th c. poets; chiefly Donne, Carew, George Herbert, Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, Marvell, Cleveland and Cowley. It appears that one of the first to use the term was William Drummond of Hawthornden in a letter written to Arthur Johnston c. 1630. In his *Discourse of the Original and Progress of Satire* (1692) Dryden said of Donne: 'He affects the metaphysics not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign, and perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy'. Later Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81), established the term more or less permanently as a label. Johnson wrote somewhat disapprovingly of the *discordia concors* in metaphysical imagery, and referred to 'heterogeneous ideas . . . yoked by violence together'.

The marks of 17th c. metaphysical poetry were arresting and original images and conceits (showing a preoccupation with analogies between macrocosm and microcosm), wit, ingenuity, dexterous use of colloquial speech, considerable flexibility of rhythm and meter, complex themes (both sacred and profane), a liking for paradox and dialectical argument, a direct manner, a caustic humour, a keenly felt awareness of mortality, and a distinguished capacity for elliptical thought and tersely compact expression. But for all their intellectual robustness the metaphysical poets were also capable of refined delicacy, gracefulness and deep feeling; passion as well as wit. The following example is Marvell's *The Definition of Love*:

My Love is of a birth as rare  
As 'tis for object strange and high:



It was begotten by despair  
Upon Impossibility.

Magnanimous Despair alone  
Could show me so divine a thing,  
Where feeble Hope could ne'r have flown  
But vainly flapt its Tinsel Wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive  
Where my extended Soul is fixt,  
But Fate does Iron wedges drive,  
And alwaies crouds it self betwixt.

For Fate with jealous Eye does see  
Two perfect Loves; nor lets them close:  
Their union would her ruine be,  
And her Tyrranick pow'r depose.

And therefore her Decrees of Steel  
Us as the distant Poles have plac'd,  
(Though Loves whole World on us doth wheel)  
Not by themselves to be embrac'd.

Unless the giddy Heaven fall,  
And Earth some new Convulsion tear;  
And, us to joyn, the World should all  
Be cramp'd into a *Planisphere*.

As Lines so Loves *oblique* may well  
Themselves in every Angle greet:  
But ours so truly *Paralel*,  
Though infinite can never meet.

Therefore the Love which us doth bind,  
But Fate so enviously debarrs,  
Is the Conjunction of the Mind,  
And Opposition of the Stars.

The Metaphysicals have had a profound influence on the course of English poetry in recent years, thanks, in great measure, to the critical appreciations of Herbert Grierson, T. S. Eliot, Joan Bennett, J. B. Leishman, H. C. White, Rosamund Tuve, Cleanth Brooks, A. Alvarez and Helen Gardner. *See* CONCEIT.

**metastasis** (Gk 'a changing') A cursory treatment of a matter; a glossing over as if it were of no importance.

## metatheatre

**metatheatre** A term coined by Lionel\*Abel in 1963 to classify 'serious' plays which do not qualify as tragedies, such as Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1949), Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar named Desire* (1949), John Arden's *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* (1959) and Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* (1960). *See also* DRAME; TRAGEDY.

**metathesis** (Gk 'transposition') The interchanging of consonant sounds, as in *third* from OE *thridða* (cf. G *dritte*).

**meter** (Gk 'measure') The term refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in verse. In English verse, meter is based on stress rather than quantity (*q.v.*). A line may have a fixed number of syllables and yet have a varying number of stresses. As a rule meter keeps to a basic pattern, within which there are many variations. A common form of variation is substitution (*q.v.*).

In English verse the following meters are the commonest: iambic  $\cup$  /; trochaic /  $\cup$ ; anapaestic  $\cup \cup$  /; dactylic /  $\cup \cup$ ; spondaic / /; paeonic /  $\cup \cup \cup$  (first paeon).

This poem by Coleridge helps to illustrate the first five of these feet:

Tróchéë trípš frö̀m lóng tǒ shórt.  
Frö̀m lóng tǒ lóng ĩn sólěmn sórt  
Slów spóndée stálks; stróng foót yét ĩll áblě  
Ěvěr tǒ cóme ůp wĭth thě dácťyl trĭsýlláblě.  
Íámbĭcs márch frö̀m shórt tǒ lóng.  
Wĭth á léáp ánd á boúnd thě swĭft ánăpăests thróng.

The following terms denote the number of feet per line: monometer – 1; dimeter – 2; trimeter – 3; tetrameter – 4; pentameter – 5; hexameter – 6; heptameter – 7; octameter – 8 (*qq.v.*). *See also* FOOT; FREE VERSE; PROSODY; SCANSION; SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**metonymy** (Gk 'name change') A figure of speech in which the name of an attribute or a thing is substituted for the thing itself. Common examples are 'The Stage' for the theatrical profession; 'The Crown' for the monarchy; 'The Bench' for the judiciary system; 'Dante' for his works. *See also* ANTONOMASIA; METALEPSIS; SYNECDOCHE.

**metrical romance** A story of adventure, love, chivalry, and deeds of derring-do. They quite often contain an element of mystery

## miles gloriosus

and the supernatural. A popular form of entertainment from the Middle Ages until the 19th c. when the prose romance, already established in the previous century, gradually superseded it. Among numerous metrical romances, one might mention: *Roman de Troie* (c. 1160); *Roman de la Rose* (13th c.); *Sir Orfeo* (mid-14th c.); *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (14th c.); Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810); Byron's *Giaour* (1813) and *The Corsair* (1814); Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (1842-85) and *The Lady of Shalott* (1852); William Morris's *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-70). See ROMANCE.

**metrical variations** The term covers various techniques used in achieving contrasts in the rhythm and meter of verse. Variations are only possible when there is a basic metrical pattern. Substitution (*q.v.*) is the commonest variation. See COUNTERPOINT; FOOT; METER.

**metron** In Classical prosody the unit of measurement.

**mezzo-zeugma** (It and Gk 'middle yoke') A figurative device by which a word, usually a verb, refers to two parts of an expression or governs it. As in this example from Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, in which 'ask'd' governs 'Judgment' and 'place':

Receiv'd of Wits an undistinguish'd race,  
Who first his Judgment ask'd, and then a Place:

See ZEUGMA.

**middle comedy** This succeeded Old Comedy (*q.v.*) of which the chief writer was Aristophanes. Middle Comedy flourished from c. 400 B.C. to c. 330 B.C. It contained a good deal of burlesque, parody (*qq.v.*) and literary criticism. Antiphanes and Elixis were the main dramatists in this genre. See COMEDY.

**middle rhyme** See INTERNAL RHYME AND LEONINE.

**miles gloriosus** Originated in a comedy by Plautus (254-184 B.C.). The *miles gloriosus* was a braggart soldier, the prototype of a stock character (*q.v.*) in comic drama; one who is fundamentally a coward yet boasts of valorous deeds and is often made a fool of by other characters. In English drama he first appeared eponymously in Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister* (c. 1533). Bobadill in Ben

## miles gloriosus

Jonson's *Everyman in His Humour* (1598) was another such braggart. So was Captain Brazen in Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (1706). The epitome of the braggart was Shakespeare's Falstaff. See BRAGGADOCIO.

**Miltonic sonnet** A form devised by Milton. He retained the octave (*q.v.*) rhyme scheme of the Petrarchan sonnet (*q.v.*) but dispensed with a change of meaning or a turning point or *volta* (*q.v.*) at the beginning of the sestet (*q.v.*). His rhyme scheme in the sestet was also flexible. His sonnet *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont* is an example.

**mime** (Gk 'imitation') A form of drama in which actors tell a story by gestures, originating in Sicily and southern Italy. Sophron of Syracuse (5th c. B.C.) composed mime plays. So did Herodas (3rd c. B.C.) who later influenced Plautus, Terence and Horace. Dumb acting continued as a very popular form of entertainment throughout the Middle Ages and achieved a considerable revival in Italy in the 16th c. when it was much practised in *commedia dell'arte* (*q.v.*). The influence spread through Europe and in varying degrees mime has been part of the European dramatic tradition ever since.

Nowadays mime denotes acting without words. In France particularly, mime is regarded as an entertainment in its own right. In the 1920s Étienne Decroux encouraged its development and Jean-Louis Barrault aroused much interest in it through his performance in *Les Enfants du Paradis*. Jacques Tatti has also displayed its possibilities in the cinema. Marcel Marceau is regarded as the greatest mimier in the world and has virtually established his own genre of monomime. The 19th c. French mime play *L'Enfant Prodigue* (in three acts) is the best known work of the kind. See DUMB SHOW; PANTOMIME.

**mimesis** It has almost the same meaning as mime (*q.v.*) but the concept of imitation (*q.v.*) in this case has wider connotations. Aristotle, in *Poetics*, states that tragedy (*q.v.*) is an imitation of an action, but he uses the term comprehensively to refer to the construction of a play and what is put into it. We should rather use *mimesis* to mean representation, which relates it to verisimilitude (*q.v.*).

**Minnesinger** (G 'love singer') A German lyric poet who, in the 12th and 13th c., composed poems of courtly love (*q.v.*) or *hohe*



## mixed metaphor

*Minne.* The *Minnesang* was the love song of homage to a lady. The most renowned of these Minnesingers were Hartmann von Aue and Walther von der Vogelweide. *See also* JONGLEUR; MEISTERGESANG; TROUBADOUR; TROUVÈRE.

**minstrel** (Med L *ministerialis* 'pertaining to a minister or servant')

The original minstrels were itinerant musicians, professional entertainers, some of whom had fairly permanent positions in courts. The minstrel was the descendant of the *scop*, the *gleeman*, and the *jongleur* (q.v.). Minstrels flourished especially in the 13th and 14th c., but there were many fewer after the invention of printing. They sang old, traditional stories like the *chansons de geste* (q.v.), short epics and folk ballads: Some composed what they sang, but the art of the minstrel, like that of the Slav *guslar* (q.v.), is such that it is almost impossible to tell where memory ends and invention begins. *See also* ORAL TRADITION; TROUBADOUR; TROUVÈRE.

**miracle play** This dramatic genre was a later development from the Mystery Play (q.v.). It dramatized saints' lives and Divine miracles, and legends of miraculous interventions by the Virgin. Little of note survives in English literature, but in France there is the famous cycle of the *Miracles de Notre Dame*, forty-two plays belonging to the second half of the 14th c. Written in octosyllabic couplets, each dramatizes some aspect of human activity, and each ends with a miraculous intervention by the Blessed Virgin. Other European examples are the German *Marienklage* and the Dutch *Mariken van Nieumeghen* (c. 1500). *See also* INTERLUDE; LITURGICAL DRAMA; MORALITY PLAY; PASSION PLAY.

**miscellany** A medley; a collection of writings in one volume. Probably the most famous in English literature is *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557). *See also* ANTHOLOGY.

**mixed metaphor** It arises when there is an incongruous disparity between the two elements of the implied comparison, as in the journalist's assertion that: 'a bottle neck is strangling the traffic flow' or as in Milton's outcry (*Lycidas* 119) against a venal clergy:

Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold  
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least  
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!

*See also* METAPHOR.

## mock-epic

**mock-epic** A work in verse which employs the lofty manner, the high and serious tone and the supernatural machinery (*q.v.*) of epic (*q.v.*) to treat of a trivial subject and theme in such a way as to make both subject and theme ridiculous. Almost a case of breaking a butterfly upon a wheel. By extension the epic mode is also mocked, but this is a secondary consideration.

The acknowledged masterpiece in this genre is Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1712-14), which he himself describes as an Heroi-comical poem. His subject is the estrangement between two families resulting from Lord Petre's snipping off a lock of Miss Arabella Fermor's hair. With faultless skill Pope minifies the epic scale in proportion to the triviality of his theme:

What dire Offence from am'rous Causes springs,  
What mighty Contests rise from trivial Things,  
I sing – This Verse to *Caryll*, Muse! is due;  
This, ev'n *Belinda* may vouchsafe to view:  
Slight is the Subject, but not so the Praise,  
If She inspire, and He approve my Lays.  
Say what strange Motive, Goddess! cou'd compel  
A well-bred *Lord* t'assault a gentle *Belle*?

Pope had precedents in the Homeric *Batrachomyomachia*, or *The Battle of the Frogs and the Mice* (translated by Thomas Parnell as a contemporary satire in 1717); Alessandro Tassoni's *La Secchia Rapita* or *The Rape of the Bucket* (1622); Boileau's *Le Lutrin* (1674, 1683); Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe* (1682); and Samuel Garth's *The Dispensary* (1699).

The mock-epic tone of Dryden's opening lines differs from Pope's:

All humane things are subject to decay,  
And, when Fate summons, Monarchs must obey:  
This Fleckno found, who, like Augustus, young  
Was call'd to Empire, and had govern'd long;  
In Prose and Verse, was own'd, without dispute  
Through all the Realms of Non-sense, absolute.

*Mac Flecknoe* gave Pope the basic idea for *The Dunciad* (1728-43); also a mock-epic, but more powerful, in a denunciatory manner; and more elaborate than *The Rape of the Lock*. See BURLESQUE; PARODY; SATIRE; TRAVESTY.

**mock-heroic** In the style of mock-epic (*q.v.*), but the term has a

slightly wider application. The heroic manner is adopted to make a trivial subject seem grand, in such a way as to satirize the style and it is therefore commonly used in burlesque and parody (*qq.v.*). Fielding's *Tom Thumb* (1731) is a good example of a mock-heroic play, and John Philips's *The Splendid Shilling* (1705) of a burlesque poem.

**modernism** A jargon term (the adjective is *modernistic*) which describes the element of rebellion and innovation in new work which attempts to break from tradition. A fairly recent modernistic development is the so called 'happening' (*q.v.*); more likely to be found in the interpretive arts than in literature. However, poems written to make bizarre patterns and novels which play tunes when opened and have coloured and blank pages in them to suggest 'mood' display modernistic tendencies. Some aspects of the Theatre of the Absurd and the *nouveau roman* (*qq.v.*) might well come under the heading of modernism.

**modernismo** A term coined by the Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío (1867-1916), it denotes simply 'modernism' (*q.v.*). It was Darío's intention to modernize the language and themes of poetry in the Spanish-American culture. He and his followers were considerably influenced by the Parnassians (*q.v.*).

**molossus** (from a Greek place-name, Molossós) A metrical foot with three stressed syllables: / / /. Very rare and anyway it hardly ever exists as an independent foot. However, some might argue that the last foot in the second of these two lines from Gerard Manley Hopkins' *The Caged Skylark* could be scanned as a molossus:

As a dare-gale skylark scanted in a dull cage  
 | Mán's mounťing, | spírit ín hís | bóne-hóuse, | meán hóuse, dwélls—  
 So the line would scan: palimbacchius/ first paeonic/ spondee/  
 molossus.

**Monk's Tale stanza** A stanza of eight iambic pentameters, rhyming ababbcb used by Chaucer in *The Monk's Tale*, an *A.B.C.*, and some other poems. In origin it is a French *ballade* (*q.v.*) stanza. It was used quite a lot in the 15th c. and may well have been the model from which Spenser developed what is now known as the Spenserian stanza (*q.v.*).

## monodrama

**monodrama** A theatrical entertainment in which there is only one character. Recently Ruth Draper, Cornelia Otis Skinner and Joyce Grenfell have excelled in this genre. However, Tennyson also used the term to describe *Maud* (1855). A recent example is *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958) by Samuel Beckett. See MONOLOGUE; MONOPOLYLOGUE.

**monody** (Gk 'alone song') An ode (*q.v.*) sung by a single actor in Greek tragedy, or a poem which mourns someone's death. In his introduction to *Lycidas* Milton described the poem as a monody. And Arnold called *Thyrsis* a monody. See DIRGE; ELEGY; EPICEDIIUM; LAMENT.

**monogatari** (J 'tales') Japanese legends and stories in collections; mostly dating from the Middle Ages. Notable examples are: *Taketori Monogatari* (c. 850-920), one of the earliest extant works of Japanese fiction; *Utsubo Monogatari* (c. 850-1000); *Ise Monogatari* (c. 939); *Ochikubo Monogatari* (c. 950-999), a novel; *Yamato Monogatari* (c. 950), stories illustrated by poems; *Eiga Monogatari* (c. 1092); *Okagami* (c. 1115); *Hōgen Monogatari* (c. 1156), a story of the civil war of the Hōgen period; *Heiji Monogatari* (1159-60); *Tsutsumi Chūnagon Monogatari* (12th c.); *Heike Monogatari* (c. 1215-50). See NOVEL; SHORT STORY.

**monograph** (Gk 'single writing') An essay or treatise (*qq.v.*) on a particular subject.

**monologue** A term used in a number of senses, with the basic meaning of a single person speaking alone – with or without an audience. Most prayers, much lyric verse and all laments are monologues, but, apart from these, four main kinds can be distinguished: (a) monodrama (*q.v.*), as in Strindberg's *The Stronger*; (b) soliloquy (*q.v.*) for instance, the Moor's self-revelations in *Othello*; (c) solo addresses to an audience in a play; for instance, Iago's explanations to the audience (in *Othello*) of what he is going to do; (d) dramatic monologue – a poem in which there is one imaginary speaker addressing an imaginary audience, as in Browning's *Andrea del Sarto*, *My Last Duchess*, *The Bishop orders his tomb at St Praxed's Church*, *Fra Lippo Lippi* and *The Spanish Cloister*. Browning published these monologues in *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842). Tennyson also wrote two notable dramatic monologues, *Tithonus*, and *St Simeon Stylites*. Among recent poets who



have exploited the possibilities of this form are Thomas Hardy, Kipling, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Conrad Aiken and Robert Frost. *See also* STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

**monometer** A line of verse consisting of one metrical foot, as in Herrick's poem *Upon his departure hence*:

I'm made  
A shade  
And laid  
I'th' grave  
There have  
My cave.

An agreeable humorous example is Ogden Nash's:

Candy  
Is dandy  
But liquor  
Is quicker  
Pot  
Is not.

*See also* DIMETER; TRIMETER; TETRAMETER; PENTAMETER; HEXAMETER; HEPTAMETER; OCTAMETER.

**monopolylogue** An entertainment in which one performer plays many parts, as in some forms of monodrama (*q.v.*).

**monorhyme** A poem or part of a poem in which all the lines have the same end rhyme. It is by no means uncommon in Latin, Italian, Arabic, Welsh and Slav poetry. It is very common indeed in Slav poetry of the oral tradition (*q.v.*). In English verse, because English is not a language rich in easy rhymes, monorhyme is fairly uncommon; but Shakespeare achieved nine such in 'All that glisters is not gold . . .' (*The Merchant of Venice*, II, vii, 67).

**monostich** (Gk 'one line') A single metrical line, or a poem consisting of one line.

**mora** (L 'delay') A unit of metrical time which denotes the duration (*q.v.*) of a short syllable which is usually represented thus: ∪.

## mora

This is called a *breve*. The time occupied by a long syllable in quantitative verse is two *morae*. This is represented by /; and this is called a *macron*. See FOOT; SCANSION.

**moral** The lesson to be learnt from a story, poem, fable (*q.v.*), play – or indeed any work which purports to teach anything either directly or obliquely. Thus, the point in any didactic work. As Johnson put it, grandly, in *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (he was referring to the warrior king, Charles XII of Sweden):

But did not Chance at length her Error mend?  
Did no subverted Empire mark his End?  
Did rival Monarchs give the fatal Wound?  
Or hostile Millions press him to the Ground?  
His Fall was destin'd to a barren Strand,  
A petty Fortress, and a dubious Hand;  
He left the Name, at which the World grew pale,  
To point a Moral, or adorn a Tale.

See DIDACTIC POETRY.

**moral interlude** A form of drama which has something in common with both the Morality Play and the Interlude (*qq.v.*). It tended to be didactic but contained more humour than the Morality. Two well-known examples are *Hyckescorner* (1512) and Wever's *Lusty Juventus* (c. 1550). But both have been taken to be ordinary Morality Plays.

**morality play** Basically, a Morality Play is an allegory in dramatic form. Its dramatic origins are to be found in the Mystery and Miracle plays of the late Middle Ages; its allegorical origins in the sermon literature, homilies, exempla, romances and works of spiritual edification like the *Lambeth Homilies* (12th c.); *Ancrene Riwle* (1200–50); the homily *Sawles Warde* (13th c.); *Chasteau d'Amour* (14th c.); the *Abbey of the Holy Ghost* (14th c.); *Azenbite of Innwyrt* (1340). In essence a Morality Play was a dramatization of the battle between the forces of good and evil in the human soul; thus, an exteriorization of the inward spiritual struggle: man's need for salvation and the temptations which beset him on his pilgrimage through life to death. The main characters in *Everyman* (c. 1500) are God, a Messenger, Death, Everyman, Fellowship, Good Deeds, Goods, Knowledge, Beauty, and Strength. Every-

man is summoned by Death and he finds that no one will go with him except Good Deeds.

In other plays we find the forces of evil (the World, the Flesh and the Devil, The Seven Deadly Sins, and various demons) deployed against Man, whose champions are the forces of good (God and his angels, and the four moral and the three theological virtues). Nearly all the Moralities are didactic illustrations of and commentaries on a preoccupation which dominated Christian thought throughout much of the Middle Ages: namely, the war between God and the Devil.

The writing in the plays is often uneven, the characterization is crude and the psychology naive. Nevertheless, in their simplicity, a number of them have a certain robust and impressive power. The better ones show an increasingly sophisticated analysis of character, and point the way to that examination of human nature and morality in depth which makes the best Tudor and Jacobean drama so remarkable.

The most memorable Morality Plays are: *The Castell of Perseverance* (c. 1425); *Mind, Will and Understanding* (c. 1460); and *Man-kind* (c. 1475). These three are considered as a group because they occur in the *Macro Manuscript*. Then comes *Everyman* (c. 1500), to which there is a slightly earlier Dutch analogue, *Elckerlijck*. To the same period belong the French Moralities *Bien avisé*, *Mal avisé* and *L'Homme juste et l'homme mondain*, and *La Condemnation de Banquet*. To the early years of the 16th c. belong *The World and the Child*; *Hyckescorner* (1512); Skelton's *Magnificence* (1516); Rastell's *Four Elements* (1519); *Mundus et Infans* (c. 1520); Henry Medwall's *Nature* (c. 1530); Sir David Lyndsay's *Satyre of the Three Estaites* (1540), an example of a political Morality Play; and Wever's *Lusty Juventus* (c. 1550). From about the middle of the 16th c. Morality Plays became less popular, but they were still being written and many plays bore unmistakeable marks of their influence, such as Nathaniel Woodes's *The Conflict of Conscience* (1563); Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (c. 1568); Lupton's *All for Money* (c. 1578); Marlowe's *Faustus* (c. 1588). Even as late as 1625 Ben Jonson's *The Staple of News* showed strong Morality influences, especially in the person of Lady Pecunia, an allegorical figure representing Riches.

The long-term influence of the Moralities is discernible in the pageant and masque (*q.v.*), and in the label names or aptronymics (*q.v.*) given to characters in 17th and 18th c. comedy (*q.v.*) and also in the names in novels. A modern example of a Morality Play

## morality play

was Jerome K. Jerome's *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* (1908).  
See ALLEGORY; INTERLUDE; MIRACLE PLAY; MORAL INTERLUDE; MYSTERY PLAY.

**morology** (Gk 'foolish speech') Deliberate foolishness or nonsense for effect. See NONSENSE VERSE.

**morpheme** (Gk 'form') A minimal linguistic unit; like *dis-* as a negative prefix. See also KENEME.

**mosaic rhyme** A rhyme of two or more syllables, with more than one word making a part of the rhyme unit. Common in humorous and satirical verse. Swift provides a good example in these lines from *To Dr Sheridan*:

I went in vain to look for Eupolis,  
Down in the Strand, just where the new pole is;  
For I can tell you one thing, that I can,  
You will not find it in the Vatican.  
He and Cratinus used, as Horace says,  
To take his greatest grandees for asses.  
Poets, in those days, used to venture high;  
But these are lost full many a century.  
Thus you may see, dear friend, ex pede hence,  
My judgment of the old comedians.

**mosaic verse** A patchwork poem made up of lines from other poems. An ingenious modern example by A. Alvarez occurs in the prefatory note to *The New Poetry* (1962).

**mot** (F 'word') Three phrases commonly used as literary terms employ this word: (a) *bon mot* – an adroitly witty remark; (b) *le mot juste* – the exact or appropriate word for the occasion; (c) *le mot propre* – the precisely necessary term for anything.

**mote** (Sp 'motto, device, maxim, catchword, nickname') It may also denote a riddle, an enigma and an emblem. In verse, a poem of one or two lines which expresses a complete thought. Often the thought is glossed in verse. The whole composition is then called a *mote* or a *glosa* (q.v.). One mote may be glossed by several poets, or by one poet in different versions. See GLOSS.

**motet** (F 'little word') A part-song; or harmonized vocal composi-



## mumming play

tion. As used in the Medieval period it denoted a set of words and a melody to which other melodies and words might be added. The melody might be characterized by variations and counterpoint.

**motif** One of the dominant ideas in a work of literature; a part of the main theme. It may consist of a character, a recurrent image or a verbal pattern. *See* CARPE DIEM; LEITMOTIF; UBI SUNT.

**Mozarabic lyric** The Arabic poetic form *muwashshah* was first developed in Spain c. 9th–10th c. Its *kharja* (*q.v.*) or refrain was not in the classical tongue but in Romance or colloquial Arabic, known as the Mozarab dialect. This form was popular during the 11th and 12th c. and may have been the forerunner of the Provençal lyric.

**movement** A term commonly applied to a trend or development in literature. The Pléiade (*q.v.*), for instance, by dint of their innovations in poetry, constituted a movement.

**mudanza** (Sp 'change, alteration, mood') In Spanish verse, a rhymed triplet used in the *zéjel* (*q.v.*) and followed by a fourth line known as the *vuelta* (*q.v.*).

**multiple or polysyllabic rhyme** *See* TRIPLE RHYME.

**mumming play** A primitive form of folk drama associated with funeral rites and seasonal fertility rites, especially the spring festival. As recently as the middle of the 19th c. it was widespread throughout Britain and there is reliable evidence that it has been performed regularly as far afield as the islands of Nevis and St Kitts in the West Indies.

Though the 'texts' stem from oral tradition (*q.v.*) there is a good deal of uniformity in the Mumming Play, which is performed by Mummers. The main characters are St (or Sir) George, a Turkish knight, a doctor, a fool in cap and bells, and a devil (usually Beelzebub). Sometimes there is a Father Christmas and Jack Finney, or Johnny Jack the sweeper. The plot (which is probably not earlier than the 17th c.) and action are very simple: St George introduces himself as a gallant Christian knight and is challenged by the Turk. They duel and one of them (usually St George) is killed. The Doctor then appears and delivers a boastful

## **mumming play**

lity of the ailments he can cure. He finally revives the dead man. There follows a collection of money (often by the devil).

The theme of the Mumming Play is clearly death and resurrection, which suggests that it may be connected with a pagan spring festival rite. But there is no evidence for such rites until long after the Middle Ages. *See* PLOUGH MONDAY PLAY; REVESBY PLAY; SWORD DANCE.

**Münchener Dichterkreis** A group of German poets who flourished in the middle of the 19th c. and were established by Maximilian II, king of Bavaria, in his court at Munich.

**muse** One of nine Greek goddesses who were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (or Memory). Each presided over one activity or art: Calliope, epic poetry; Clio, history; Erato, love poetry; Euterpe, lyric poetry; Melpomene, tragedy; Polyhymnia, songs of praise to the gods; Terpsichore, dancing; Thalia, comedy; Urania, astronomy.

It was the tradition for a poet (especially an epic poet) to invoke the aid of a particular muse to help him with his work. *See* INSPIRATION; INVOCATION; STORM OF ASSOCIATION.

**musical comedy** A form of theatrical entertainment developed in the United States during the 19th c. It combines song, music and spoken dialogue, and descends from light opera, ballad opera, and vaudeville (*qq.v.*). In the last thirty years musical comedies have become spectacular. A famous example is *My Fair Lady* (1956), adapted from Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1912).

**muwashshah** *See* MOZARABIC LYRIC.

**mycterism** (Gk 'turning up of the nose') A subtle form of derision; a sarcasm or irony (*q.v.*) in which the gibe is half hidden.

**mystery play** (L *mi(ni)sterium* 'handicraft') Mystery Plays were not clearly distinguished from Miracle Plays in the Middle Ages, but later the term *Mystery* was associated with biblical themes and the term *Miracle* with the Lives of the Saints.

Mystery Plays developed out of the Liturgy of the Church and in particular out of the *Quem Quaeritis trope* (*q.v.*) of Easter Day. The earliest dramatizations were presented on the greater festivals of the Church: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Corpus

Christi. At first they were in Latin and performed by the clergy in the church. There then came an increasing admixture of the vernacular, and lay folk also performed in them. This gradual secularization of religious drama was accompanied by a corresponding physical move. The drama moved out of the church through the west door. Thus, what had been sacred drama became, literally, profane (*profano* 'before the temple'). From the churchyard to the market place was the next logical step. The dramatization became more and more elaborate, the plays were written more or less exclusively in the vernacular and their presentation became the concern of the trade guilds, each of which became responsible for a particular episode or episodes. For example, the masons' guild might present the Noah story, and the weavers the Crucifixion. The object of the cycle of plays was to dramatize the Bible from the Creation to the Last Judgement.

Each play was mounted on a wagon with a curtained scaffold. The lower part of the wagon was a dressing room. After the play had been performed the wagon moved on to where another play had just been acted. Thus, in the course of a day or days, the population of a city like York was able to see the complete cycle.

In time the presentation and setting became extremely elaborate. Heaven and Hell were represented; all sorts of mechanical contrivances contributed to theatrical effects. Costume became lavish, and even lighting, for evening performances, was spectacular.

Most of the plays are anonymous (at any rate, we do not know the authors) and show considerable variation in the quality of the writing. For the most part the verse is rough and characterization crude. However, in the later work the beginnings of sophistication and psychological realism are clearly discernible, and this development is intensely interesting.

The principal English Mystery cycles were those of York (48 episodes); Coventry (42); Wakefield – also known as Towneley (32); and Chester (25). There were also the Cornish plays and the *Ludus Coventriae*, plus one from Newcastle and one from Norwich. There were other cycles at Beverley, Doncaster, Ipswich and Worcester, but these have been lost.

Mystery Plays were widespread in Europe, and in France they were particularly popular. The French preferred a more fixed setting and the scene for each was erected in an open space and the actors performed their piece at the *sedes* or mansion.

Other well-known examples are: (a) the *Cyprus Passion Cycle*, a group of Greek prose plays depicting the events of Holy Week

## mystery play

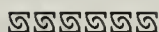
which originated in Cyprus in the 13th c.; (b) the Oberammergau *Passion Play* of Upper Bavaria which dates from 1633; (c) the Spanish *Autos Sacramentales*, a form of religious drama performed on the feast of Corpus Christi. These allegorical plays were still popular in the 17th c., when they were perfected by Calderón. See SACRA RAPPRESENTAZIONE; MORALITY PLAY; PASSION PLAY.

**myth** (Gk *mūthos* 'anything uttered by word of mouth') In general a myth is a story which is not 'true' and which involves (as a rule) supernatural beings – or at any rate supra-human beings. Myth is always concerned with creation. Myth explains how something came to exist. Myth embodies feeling and concept – hence the Promethean or Herculean figure, or the idea of Diana, or the story of Orpheus and Eurydice. Many myths or quasi-myths are primitive explanations of the natural order and cosmic forces.

Classical writers had a 'ready-made' mythology. Others have not been so fortunate and some have felt a great need to invent or somehow contrive a mythology which shall be the vehicle of their beliefs. Poets, especially, have continued to fall back on the Greek and Roman myths and, to a lesser extent, upon Germanic and Scandinavian myths, and in some cases, upon Chinese, Indian, Egyptian and Latin American myths. As Coleridge put it 'the old instinct brings back the old names'. A good example of a poet who has 'invented' a mythology akin to the traditional kind is William Blake. He said that he felt obliged to create a system: otherwise he would be enslaved by someone else's. Accordingly he combined his own visionary gleams with what he 'lifted' from established mythologies, plus elements of Christianity and ideas from Swedenborg and Neoplatonism (*q.v.*). A more recent example is W. B. Yeats who was in the fortunate position of being able to make use of a considerable stock of Celtic lore and legend of a more or less mythical kind. Yeats explained his 'mythology' in *A Vision* (1926). Herman Melville (*Moby Dick*), James Joyce (*Ulysses*) and D. H. Lawrence (*The Plumed Serpent*) have also used a variety of mythical materials, for the most part those which belong to what Jung described as the 'collective unconscious'. See LEGEND; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.



# N



**nadsat** A teenage argot (*q.v.*) devised by Anthony Burgess for his novel *A Clockwork Orange* (1962). The vocabulary comprises about 250 words, many of which are of Slavonic origin. For example: *baboochka* – ‘old woman’; *chellovek* – ‘man’; *kleb* – ‘bread’; *horrorshow* (*horoshoi*) – ‘good’; *malchik* – ‘boy’; *sladky* – ‘sweet’.

**naiv und sentimentalisch** (G ‘naïve and sentimental’) A category or distinction made by Schiller in his essay *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795). Schiller divides poets into two classes: (a) the naïve (e.g. Homer, Shakespeare, Goethe) who attempt to project nature as they embody it; (b) the sentimental (e.g. Schiller, Wordsworth, Southey) who have lost touch with nature and are trying to depict it as a sought-for ideal. Naïve poets create instinctually; the sentimental, formally. Schiller pursued his theory to suggest that sentimental poets try to project an ideal of nature whereas the naïve poet cannot and does not do this. He is concerned with nature *as it is*; *not as it may be conceived*. If we compare the work of, say, John Clare, William Barnes, Thomas Hardy, R. S. Thomas and Ted Hughes, with that of, say, Charles Dyer, Keats, Robert Browning, A. E. Housman and Edmund Blunden, we find that the first group tend to be instinctual in their responses to nature; the second group, formal.

Schiller also elaborated the idea that the poetic genius (*q.v.*) is a sentimental poet by virtue of his feelings and idealisms, and a naïve by virtue of his genius. The combination enables him to convey a total vision of nature: the real and the transcendental. Gerard Manley Hopkins might well come into this category. See ANTINOMY; APOLLONIAN/DIONYSIAN; CLASSICISM/ROMANTICISM.

**narodne pesme** (S ‘peoples’ songs’) The poems (*pesma* also means

## narodne pesme

'poem') belong to the genre of traditional popular narrative poetry based on historical events and created mainly by individual members of an illiterate or semi-literate society and preserved by oral tradition (*q.v.*) in Yugoslavia. They exist in print now because the 19th c. Serbian scholar Vuk Karadžić spent much of his life collecting them from the *guslari* (*q.v.*) while there were still plenty of these itinerant bards in existence.

There are nine epic cycles of these poems. The most famous is the Kosovo cycle, a group of ballads (*q.v.*) and lays which grew up as a result of the battle of Kosovo in 1389 when the Serbs were defeated by the Turks. There is a pre-Kosovo cycle which treats of myth and legend, and a Marko Kraljević cycle which mostly concerns the deeds of a semi-legendary warrior of that name. The fourth main cycle (the most recent) comprises all the poems dealing with the struggles against the Turks in the 19th c. The other five deal with (a) the Serbian nobles and their conflicts after the battle of Kosovo until towards the end of the 15th c.; (b) the exploits of the *hajduks* (bandit-type guerilla soldiers) against the Turks; (c, d and e) Montenegrin, Bosnian and Dalmatian struggles against invading powers.

The nine cycles constitute one of the most remarkable bodies of oral poetry known. Apart from the Homeric ballads they probably have no equals. *See also* EPIC; JUNAČKE PESME; PEVAČI; ŽENSKÉ PESME.

**narrative verse** A narrative poem tells a story. Such poetry is widespread in many literatures. The three main kinds are epic, metrical romance and ballad (*qq.v.*) but there are a very large number of narrative poems which cannot be easily classified and which certainly do not fit into any of the above categories, and there is no genre which subsumes works as varied as Smart's *Song to David*, Arnold's *Sobrab and Rustum* and T. S. Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*.

Early examples of narrative poetry are the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the poems of Homer and Hesiod, the narrative odes of Pindar (c. 522–442 B.C.) and the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes (end of 3rd c. B.C.). Callimachus, an older contemporary of Apollonius, wrote short epics called *epyllia* (*q.v.*). The Romans often used narrative verse. Famous examples are: the *Bellum Punicum* of Naevius (c. 270–c. 199 B.C.), the first historical epic; the *Annales* of Ennius (239–169 B.C.); the *Aeneid* of Virgil (70–19 B.C.) and the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid (43 B.C.–A.D. 18). Narrative

poems continued to be written in the following five hundred years in both Greek and Latin. For instance, the Gospel story was re-told by Juvenius in *Evangeliorum Libri* (c. 330); and early in the 5th c. Sedulius wrote a Paschal Poem. Later, Lives of the Saints in verse were not uncommon; and historical poems in Latin verse appeared during the Carolingian period. In the early Middle Ages we find the beginnings of romance but it is not until the 12th c. that this is an established form: for example, Benoît de Saint-More's *Roman de Troie* (c. 1184), believed to be the first poem in the vernacular (q.v.). Between c. 1000 and c. 1300, for the first time since the 8th c. B.C., oral epics were written down – in Western vernaculars and in Greek. Outstanding examples are *Beowulf*, assigned to the middle of the 8th c. (though the MS dates from c. 1000), the OHG *Lay of Hildebrand* (c. 800), the Greek *Digenes Akritas* (mid-11th c.), the MHG *Nibelungenlied* (c. 1200–05), the Spanish *Cid* (c. 1140), the ON collection known as the *Elder Edda* (the earliest MS c. 1270), plus a large number of *chansons de geste* (q.v.) of which the best known is the *Chanson de Roland* (the earliest manuscript c. 1170).

Throughout the later Middle Ages narrative poems were widely written in Europe and increasingly in the vernacular: Dante's *Divine Comedy* (c. 1300), Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (c. 1387). Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (c. 1360–99), Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (c. 1372–86).

The Renaissance period produced a succession of epic narratives, notably: *Orlando Innamorato* by Boiardo (1441–94); *Orlando Furioso* by Ariosto (1474–1533); *Gerusalemme Liberata* by Tasso (1544–95); and the *Os Lusíadas* by Camoëns (1524–1580). These four works constitute a revival of national epic.

The turn of the 15th c. saw the beginning of considerable poetic activity in Dalmatia and Croatia, especially in narrative verse. The most notable poets were: Marulić (1450–1524), who wrote *Judita* in Croat and an epic, *Davidijada*, in Latin; Petar Hektorović (1487–1572) of the island of Hvar, the author of *Ribanje* ('Fishing') – a group of poems which may be described as pastorals about fishing; Mavro Vetrančić (1482–1576), who wrote an epic called *The Pilgrim*; Petar Zoranić (1508–1569?), the author of a pastoral romance in verse and prose called *Planine* ('The Mountains'); Brno Krnarutić (1520–72) who wrote an epic on a contemporary theme called the *Capture of the City of Sziget*; Juraj Baraković (1549–1628), the author of *Vila Slovinska*, a history of Zadar; and Ivan Gundulić (1588–1638), Dubrovnik's

## narrative verse

most famous poet, the author of the epic *Osman* – again on a contemporary theme, the battle of the Christians against the Turks.

In the 15th and 16th c. in England narrative poetry also flourished. The 15th c. poets are little read now but Lydgate and Hawes were prolific writers. Lydgate's *Falls of Princes* (1494), based on Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*, was a poem of 36,000 lines. Hawes's *Pastime of Pleasure* (1509) was a long allegorical poem concerning the pilgrimage of the soul; a kind of Everyman quest.

Major narrative poems in the 16th c. include Edward Hall's *Chronicle* (c. 1540), Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1589, 1596), Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* (1593), Samuel Daniel's *Civil Wars* (1595), and Drayton's *England's Heroicall Epistles* (1597). By the end of the 16th c. the tendency was to write shorter narrative poems; what may be called *epyllia* (q.v.).

In the 17th c. the two outstanding narrative poems in English literature are Abraham Cowley's unfinished *Davideis* (1656), and the greatest epic in the language – Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). In France in the 17th c. the principal narrative works were Boileau's *Le Lutrin*, a mock-epic (q.v.) written between 1673–83, and Fénelon's prose poem (q.v.) *Télémaque* (1699).

It is noticeable that in the second half of the 17th c. and during much of the 18th c. longer poems tend to be satire (q.v.). In a number of cases these satires were a form of narrative verse. Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) is a case in point. Rather than write anything original on an epic scale poets chose to translate. Notable translations of Classical authors were done by Dryden, Pope and Cowper. However, there was one epic work of some merit, namely Voltaire's *Henriade* (1728), a national epic on the religious wars.

Towards the end of the 18th c. we find a recrudescence of the genre. It is probable that the publication of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* in 1765 revived interest. It is possible that James Macpherson's Ossianic poems (1765) were also an influence. At any rate, towards the turn of the century, and continually thereafter, narrative verse proliferates. In 1785 Cowper published *The Task*. Burns wrote a number of narrative poems and ballads. Scott was very prolific. In 1802–03 he published a collection of Scottish ballads titled *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. This may have encouraged him to write *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), *Marmion* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810). At about the same time George Crabbe made a remarkable contribution to narrative



poetry, as a kind of 'regional' poet, with three long works: *The Parish Register* (1807), *The Borough* (1810), and *Tales* (1812). Crabbe was to East Anglia what Thomas Hardy was, as a novelist, to Wessex. Wordsworth, also, was a prolific writer of narrative verse. Among his minor works one should mention *Goody Blake* and *Harry Gill*; among the major works *Michael* (1800), *The Excursion* (1814), and *The Prelude*, not published until 1850 but written many years earlier. Wordsworth's contemporary Coleridge wrote two of the most famous narrative poems in the language: namely *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) and *Christabel* (1816). Contemporaneously Byron wrote four notable narrative poems of considerable length: *The Giaour* (1813), *Beppo* (1818), *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1809-18) and *Don Juan* (1819-24). Keats's two main narrative poems were *The Eve of St Agnes* (1819) and *Lamia* (1819).

Nearly all the major poets (and many of the minor ones) of the Victorian period (*q.v.*) wrote narrative verse. Here there is only space to mention: Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842), Aytoun's *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers* (1849), Matthew Arnold's *Sobrab and Rustum* (1853), Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (1842-1885), and a very large number of works by Browning - especially: *Through the Metidja to Abd-el-Kadr* (1842), *How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix* (1845), *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister* (1842), *Incident of the French Camp* (1842), *My Last Duchess* (1842), *The Bishop orders his Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church* (1842), *Saul* (1855), *A Grammarian's Funeral* (1855), *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came* (1855), *Fra Lippo Lippi* (1855), *Andrea del Sarto* (1855), *Rabbi Ben Ezra* (1864), *The Ring and The Book* (1868-69), *Hervé Riel* (1871), to mention only some. William Morris was also a distinguished narrative poet. His two main works are: *Jason* (1867) and *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-70).

Since the Victorian period much narrative verse has been written. Of particular note are Kipling's ballads and Masfield's ballads; also Masfield's *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911), *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912) and *Reynard the Fox* (1919). Among the shorter narrative poems written in this century mention should be made of Chesterton's *The Ballad of the White Horse* and *Lepanto*; Francis Brett Young's *North-West Passage A.D. 1497*; Ezra Pound's *Ballad of the Goodly Fere*; Wilfred Gibson's *Flannan Isle*, Wilfred Owen's *Strange Meeting*, Edmund Blunden's *Incident in Hyde Park 1803*, Sir John Betjeman's *A Lincolnshire Tale*, Edward Thomas's *Up in the Wind*, T. S. Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*, C. Day Lewis's

## narrative verse

*Flight to Australia*, Philip Larkin's *Whitsun Weddings*, and a large number of poems by Robert Frost – especially *Death of the Hired Man*, *The Mountain*, *The Black Cottage*, *Blueberries*, *The Code*, *The Fear*, *A Hundred Collars*, *Home Burial* and *Paul's Wife*. Conrad Aiken has also used the narrative form for long, discursive and reflective poems, notably: *Senlin: A Biography*, *Preludes for Memnon*, *Landscape West of Eden*, and *Time in the Rock*. W. H. Auden has also written long narrative poems of a reflective nature, in particular *New Year Letter*, *For the Time Being*, *The Sea and the Mirror*, and *The Age of Anxiety*.

To this brief selection must be added eleven outstanding narrative poems, all long and all different in style, theme, structure and purpose: Hugh MacDiarmid's *On a Raised Beach*; Patrick Kavanagh's *The Great Hunger*; Andrew Young's *A Traveller in Time*; W. H. Auden's *Letter to Lord Byron*; W. S. Graham's *The Nightfishing*; Vernon Watkins's *Ballad of the Mari Lwyd*; George Barker's *Goodman Jackson and the Angel*; Anthony Cronin's *R.M.S. Titanic*; Peter Levi's *The Shearwaters*; Stephen Vincent Benet's *John Brown's Body*; and Kazantzakis's *The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel*.

**narrator** Plato and Aristotle distinguished three basic kinds of narrator: (a) the speaker or poet (or any kind of writer) who uses his own voice; (b) one who assumes the voice of another person or persons, and speaks in a voice not his own; (c) one who uses a mixture of his own voice and that of others. Out of the thousands of examples available to illustrate the three voices the following will serve: In his poem *The Statue* the poet John Berryman speaks throughout in his own voice. In *The Prisoner of Chillon*, Byron assumes the voice of François de Bonnivard who was imprisoned in the castle of Chillon in the 16th c. A good example of the combination of all three can be found in *Paradise Lost*. Milton begins in his own voice in the first person to invoke the 'Heavenly Muse'. In line 34, Book I, the impression is that the Muse (that is the Holy Spirit) responds to Milton's formal invocation (*q.v.*) thus beginning the main narrative. When Satan first speaks (line 84) the third voice is introduced. Thereafter each different character has his own voice, though all, as it were, are Milton's. At the beginning of Book III Milton draws breath and uses his 'own' voice again.

So anyone telling a story may begin, as narrator, by using his own voice; then introduce a narrator who tells the story – in

which there are characters who, in turn, have their own voices and who, in their turn, of course, may narrate. Potentially the progression (or regression) is infinite. Many novelists have employed this technique, one of the most adept being Joseph Conrad.

T. S. Eliot also makes an important distinction in his essay *The Three Voices of Poetry* (1953): 'The first voice is the voice of the poet talking to himself – or to nobody. The second is the voice of the poet addressing an audience, whether large or small. The third is the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking in verse; when he is saying, not what he would say in his own person, but only what he can say within the limits of one imaginary character addressing another imaginary character.' See also VIEWPOINT.

**native tradition** See TRADITION.

**natural school, the** The name given to an early phase of Russian realism. This particular *-ism* was formulated by Belinsky (1811–48) who was the 'interpreter' of Gogol. It was Belinsky's belief that the writer should eschew anything like romanticism and should depict the social evils of his period, especially the injustices of peasant and serf life. The tenets of the *natural'naya shkola* were strongly opposed to anything artificial or idealistic.

**naturalism** In literary criticism, a word sometimes used loosely as a synonym for realism (*q.v.*), and also in reference to works which show a pronounced interest in, sympathy with and love of natural beauty (e.g. much of the poetry of Wordsworth). Properly speaking, it should be used to describe works of literature which use realistic methods and subjects to convey a philosophical form of naturalism; that is, a belief that everything that exists is a part of nature and can be explained by natural and material causes – and not by supernatural, spiritual or paranormal causes.

In literature naturalism developed out of realism. The main influences that went to forming a different point of view were Darwin's biological theories, Comte's application of scientific ideas to the study of society, and Taine's application of deterministic theories to literature. Those in favour of a naturalistic approach to and interpretation of life concentrated on depicting the social environment and dwelt particularly on its deficiencies and on the shortcomings of human beings. The 'naturalist's'



## naturalism

vision of the estate of man tended to be subjective and was very often sombre.

The Goncourt brothers appear to have been the first to establish the naturalistic point of view in literature; namely in *Germinie Lacerteux* (1865). This analytical investigation of the rather squalid life of a servant girl was much admired by Emile Zola, the high priest of the naturalistic movement in literature.

In his preface to *Thérèse Raquin* (1868) he described himself as a *naturaliste*. His method was scientifically clinical, that of the pathologist and physiologist. In his view men's lives and actions were determined by environment and heredity and it was the business of the novelist, as he saw it, to dissect, to perform an autopsy on life. In pursuit of his aims, he 'pulled no punches'. There is much in his work which could be described as sensational and melodramatic, and it has been noted that he concentrated excessively on the seamier aspects of human existence: on the impoverished and underprivileged, on the ugly and the diseased. After *Thérèse Raquin* he planned a cycle of twenty volumes (the cycle is known as *Rougon-Macquart*, 1871-93) which should give the natural and social history of a family. Out of these twenty novels the best known are *L'Assomoir* (1877) and *Germinal* (1885).

Zola's influence has been very considerable and is discernible in many plays and novels of the last hundred years. It is particularly noticeable in the work of de Maupassant and J-K. Huysmans, of George Moore and George Gissing. However, he made his greatest impact in Germany, where naturalism as a movement was concentrated in one literary school in Berlin and another in Munich. Here the principal luminaries of the movement were G. M. Conrad, Holz and Schlaf, the Hart brothers, Bleibtreu and Bolsche. The dramatist Gerard Hauptmann proved to be the most distinguished exponent of German naturalism. Outside France and Germany it was apparent in the works of Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekov, Tolstoy, Gorki, and across the Atlantic in the novels of Theodore Dreiser. *See also* NATURALISTIC DRAMA; THEATRICALISM; THESIS NOVEL.

**naturalistic drama** Drama which seeks to mirror life with the utmost fidelity. It became established and popular late in the 19th c., stemming from the naturalism (*q.v.*) of Zola and his followers, and going beyond the realism (*q.v.*) of Ibsen. The main French dramatist was Henri Becque. In the late 1880s Antoine established naturalistic drama in his *Théâtre Libre*. There Becque and



other playwrights, including Strindberg, had their work performed. The movement of naturalism in the theatre spread to Germany, England, Russia and America. A famous instance of ultra-naturalism is Gorki's *Lower Depths* (1902). Gradually, the leading dramatists, like Strindberg and Hauptmann, forsook this kind of play for a more symbolic form. However, naturalism persisted and in its decadence considerably influenced drawing-room comedy (*q.v.*) and much light theatrical entertainment in the 1920s and 1930s. There was a sustained effort to reproduce everyday speech as exactly as possible, and more and more emphasis was placed on surface verisimilitude – especially in décor and setting where no effort was spared to persuade the audience that it was in fact looking at a 'real' set, such an exact representation of a room that they might well use it themselves. Here art was attempting to deceive nature, not reflect it. Thus the theatre was defeating its own ends and, in the abandonment of traditional dramatic conventions, becoming more and more restrictive. Nevertheless, many dramatists exploited the limitations very skilfully. Galsworthy was an outstanding example, and, later, N. C. Hunter and Terence Rattigan. *See* THEATRICALISM.

**natya** A form of Indian dance drama whose plots for the most part derive from the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

**near rhyme** *See* HALF RHYME.

**nemesis** (Gk 'retribution') In Greek thought a personification of the gods' resentment and anger at man's insolence, *hubris* (*q.v.*), towards themselves. Thus nemesis was punishment; what overtook and befell the tragic hero. *See* TRAGEDY.

**negation** A form of affirmation by denial; sometimes found in *litotes* (*q.v.*). A famous example occurs in Keats's *Hyperion*:

No stir of air was there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feathered grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.

**negative capability** A famous phrase used by Keats when writing to his brothers George and Thomas (Dec. 21st, 1817). The relevant passage is:

## negative capability

I had not a dispute, but a disquisition, with Dilke upon various subjects; several things dove-tailed in my mind, and at once it struck me what quality went to form a man of achievement, especially in literature, and which Shakespeare possessed so enormously – I mean negative capability, that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the penetralium of Mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half-knowledge. This pursued through volumes would perhaps take us no farther than this; that with a great Poet the sense of beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all consideration.

Accept, therefore, the insight into beauty and be cautious of rationalization. In his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, Keats summarized part of his philosophy in this matter:

‘Beauty is truth, truth beauty,’ – that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

See SUBJECTIVITY AND OBJECTIVITY.

**Négritude** The term was coined some time in the 1930s by Aimé Césaire (a French poet and dramatist from Martinique) and the Senegalese poet L.-S. Senghor. It refers to and connotes the attitudes displayed in some recent writing by African authors and, more particularly, by French-speaking Africans. In literature it represents an aesthetic which seeks to maintain and uphold traditional African culture and sensibilities. The idea of Négritude has had considerable vogue since the publication of Césaire’s *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal* (1939), and as a result of Senghor’s work. The latter is now regarded as the chief luminary and he has expressed a part of his philosophy in *Négritude et humanisme* (1964).

**Neoclassicism** The Neoclassic period is usually taken to be the hundred-odd years c. 1660–c. 1780; in other words, from Dryden’s maturity to Johnson’s death (1784). Apart from the dramatists the main English authors in this period were: Dryden (1631–1700), Swift (1667–1745), Addison (1672–1719), Steele (1672–1729), Pope (1688–1744), Lord Chesterfield (1694–1773), Fielding (1707–54), Johnson (1709–84), Goldsmith (1730–74) and Gibbon (1737–94). In literary theory and practice most

writers of this period were traditionalist, and they had a great respect for the Classical authors, and especially the Romans who, they believed, had established and perfected the principal literary genres for all time. Literature was regarded as an art, in which excellence could be attained only by prolonged study. Thus the writers of the period were painstaking craftsmen who had a deep respect for the rules of their art. These rules could best be learnt from close study of the Classical authors (Horace was a favourite) and by careful (if not sedulous) imitation of their works. Their approach was thoroughly professional. They thought that reason and judgement were the most admirable faculties (the 18th c. was, after all, the Age of Reason), and that decorum (*q.v.*) was essential. In prose, as in verse, the most desirable qualities were harmony, proportion, balance and restraint. It follows, therefore, that the Neoclassical writers aimed at *correctness*. This was nowhere more evident than in their use of the heroic couplet.

Neoclassical beliefs and ideals generated a definite vision of man and mankind. Man and his activities were regarded as the main subjects of poetry. As Pope put it in *An Essay on Man*:

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,  
The proper study of mankind is man.

Man, man in society, man in his social environment – these were to be the preoccupations of the poets. The emphasis tended to be on what men possess in common; the general and representative characteristics of mankind. Johnson summarized it all in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*:

Let observation with extensive view,  
Survey mankind, from China to Peru;  
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,  
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life.

There thus evolved a general view of nature and mankind; a general vision of his position and function in the universe, his relationship to the natural order and his relationship with and to God – mid-way in the great chain of being (*q.v.*).

Despite all this the Neoclassicists were not conservative in any pejorative sense. Though they were inclined to settle for the traditional and the typical, they were ready to accept the novel and the particular, and they were much concerned with the importance of invention, and fancy and imagination (*qq.v.*). Johnson often fulminated against the perils of the fanciful, of

## Neoclassicism

letting the imagination run away with one. So long as novelty and invention enhanced the subject, adorned the chosen form, it was acceptable; it was, in a sense, 'safe'. *Aurea mediocritas* was almost a working motto (Horace himself referred to it in one of his *Odes* (II, x, 5)):

auream quisquis mediocritatem  
diligit tutus, caret obsoleti  
sordibus tecti, caret invidenda  
sobrius aula.)

but no one could accuse Pope, Swift or Johnson of lack of originality.

The preservation (as well as the establishment) of order, balance and correctness was dear to them; hence their frequent use of satire (*q.v.*) as a corrective. It was a means of controlling excess (which was especially repugnant to them), folly, stupidity and corruption; indeed, any shortcoming in man and society which threatened to be contrary to the maintenance of good moral order and literary discipline. As Pope wrote, 'Order is Heav'n's first law.' Thus the writer was under some moral and aesthetic obligation to instruct as well as to please. *See also* ABSTRACT; AGE OF REASON; AUGUSTAN AGE; HEROIC COUPLET; POETIC DICTION; ROMANTIC REVIVAL; ROMANTICISM.

**neologism** (NGk 'innovation in language'). A newly coined word. Neologisms are entering languages all the time. Recent examples are *astronaut*, *sputnik* and *hep*. Anybody can invent them and anybody does. My own contributions are *sufferingette* (a plaintive and importunate member of the Womens' Liberation Movement) and *verbocrap* (polysyllabic circumlocutions). *See also* GHOST-WORD; INKHORN TERM; NONCE-WORD; PORTMANTEAU WORD.

**neoteric** (Gk 'new, modern') Cicero named a group of poets *neoterici*, who found their inspiration in the work of the Greek Alexandrians. Catullus is the best known of the *neoterici*. The word was quite often used in the 17th c. to describe writers who turned to the Classics for their ideas. Nowadays the term is rarely used, unless it be to refer to a writer who is experimenting along new lines. *See* NEOCLASSICISM.

**new comedy** Greek comedy which flourished in the 3rd and 4th c. B.C. It differed from the Old Comedy (*q.v.*) in that there was little



or no satire (common in Aristophanes) and both plots and characters were very often stereotyped. The emphasis was on intricate amorous intrigues with a happy ending. Menander, Philemon and Diphilus were the best known playwrights. They were imitated by the Romans Plautus and Terence, who, in turn, had a considerable influence on Tudor comedy. *See also* COMEDY; COMEDY OF MANNERS.

**new criticism** A term which refers to a kind of 'movement' in literary criticism which developed in the 1920s (for the most part among Americans). However, it was not until 1941 that John Crowe Ransom published a book called *The New Criticism*. In it he criticized the critics I. A. Richards, William Empson, T. S. Eliot and Yvor Winters, and made a plea for what he called the 'ontological critic'.

The New Critics advocated 'close reading' and detailed textual analysis of poetry rather than an interest in the mind and personality of the poet, sources, the history of ideas and political and social implications. The application of semantics to this criticism was also important.

Other leading figures were Allen Tate, R. P. Blackmur, Kenneth Burke, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren. The last two, in *Understanding Poetry* (1938), helped to spread the principles of the New Criticism throughout the American academic scene. *See also* NEW HUMANISM.

**new humanism** A movement in American literary and critical circles which flourished between 1915 and 1933. The prime movers were Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More and Norman Foerster. Its programme was intended to uphold human dignity and moral rectitude and extol the importance of the use of reason and the will. New humanists were anti-Romantic, anti-realist and anti-naturalist. Their exemplar and mentor was Matthew Arnold. They had a good deal of influence in their time and some of it was beneficial. In retrospect many of their views seem narrow and bigoted and display the shortcomings of men who, having set themselves up as arbiters, gradually become too big for their books. *See* HUMANISM.

**newsbooks** Also known as *diurnalls*, they succeeded the *coranto* (q.v.). They consisted, first of all, of one printed sheet of eight pages; later of two printed sheets (sixteen pages). They contained

## newsbooks

domestic or home news and were issued by journalists (under various titles) between 1641–65. They were succeeded by the *Oxford Gazette*, which later became the *London Gazette*. See GAZETTE.

**newsletters** Manuscript records of parliamentary and court news sent twice weekly to subscribers from the London office of a man called Muddiman (a famous journalist) in the latter half of the 17th c. A relic of these records is the 'London Letter', which still appears in provincial papers.

**newspeak** A 'language' invented by George Orwell in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). See also EUPHEMISM; JARGON.

**Nibelungenstrophe** The stanza of the 12th c. MHG epic *Nibelungenlied*. It consists of four lines rhyming aabb. The first three lines have six stressed syllables; the last, seven.

**nil volentibus arduum** The name taken by a society of Dutch poets founded at Amsterdam in 1669. Their purpose was to establish French Neoclassical rules in the writing of dramatic verse. Their influence did not last long and by the 1680s was declining.

**Nine Worthies** Caxton, in his preface to Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* (1485) listed the Nine Worthies, or Heroes, of late medieval literature. The pagan heroes are: Hector, Alexander and Julius Caesar; the Jewish: Joshua, David and Judas Maccabeus; the Christian: Arthur, Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon.

**noble savage, the** The concept or title which connotes the exemplar of primitive goodness, dignity and nobility uncorrupted by the evil effects of civilization. The origins of the idea of the noble savage are obscure, but one may suppose that they have to do with the belief that in a primitive and 'free' state there existed innocent, prototypal human beings like Milton's Adam and Eve in Eden:

Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
God-like erect, with native honour clad  
In naked majesty, seemed lords of all,  
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine  
The image of their glorious Maker shone,  
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure.

*Paradise Lost*, IV 288

We find Montaigne touching upon the idea of the noble savage in his essay *Of Cannibals* (1580) but it is not until well on in the 17th c. that it becomes particularly noticeable, especially in Mrs Behn's *Oroonoko: or, The Royal Slave* (1688). The eponymous hero of this 'romance' is an educated as well as a noble savage (he has learnt French and English), and he is virtuous, young, beautiful, brave and a fine warrior; in short, the 'fair rose i' the state' of his native Africa. Mrs Behn dwelt upon primitive innocence and deplored the effects of civilization and man's inventions. She foreshadowed the 'return to nature' philosophy and doctrine which Rousseau was to elaborate seventy years later in *Émile* (1762). 'Everything is well when it comes fresh from the hands of the Maker', wrote Rousseau, 'everything degenerates in the hands of Man'. Chateaubriand also exploited the noble savage idea, and it proved a particularly attractive concept to many writers in the late 18th c. and during the Romantic period (*q.v.*). It was a part of the reaction against the growth of industrialism, materialism and capitalism. See PRIMITIVISM.

**Nō (Noh) drama** This form of Japanese drama evolved in the 14th c., probably from ritual dances associated with Shinto worship. They were lyric dramas (there are believed to be about 300 in all) and were intended for aristocratic audiences. They therefore differed from the 'popular' *kabuki* (*q.v.*). They were traditionally the work of a man named Kwanami and his son Seami. The form became fixed early in the 17th c. It was therefore a 'frozen' or 'fossil' form, like traditional icon paintings, and just about as stylized.

Nō plays are presented on a square stage, raised slightly from the ground, on which the audience sit on two sides. At one side is a balcony accommodating a chorus of ten singers. Upstage there is a smaller platform occupied by four musicians and two stagehands. The actors enter and leave on a long slanting walk, a sort of bridge, from stage left. There is little or no scenery except for a framework with a roof and three symbolic trees in front of the slanting walk which represent heaven, earth and humanity.

There are usually between two and six actors in a Nō play: the hero or leading character, *shite* (or *shitey*); his companion, *tsure*; *waki*, a kind of deuteragonist (*q.v.*), and *waki's* companion. There are also a child, *kokata*, and an extra actor, *abi*. *Waki* introduces the play with a chant and tells the audience what is going to be performed. *Shite* then appears disguised (in mask and elaborate

## Nō (Noh)

costume) and delivers a chant. He then converses with *waki* so that the theme of the play is clear and the real character of *shite* is revealed. The rest of the play consists of a series of stylized dances, usually in five movements, by the first actor. These dances are preceded by an interlude in which an actor in ordinary clothes tells the story of the play. All the actors (except the man playing *waki*) usually wear masks and elaborate costumes and they chant in low or high-pitched voices to a musical accompaniment. To Western ears the chanting is reminiscent of the gentle warbling of slightly dyspeptic doves, and the gestures which go with it are as arcane as Byzantine cricket.

A full Nō entertainment (women never act in it and men take the female roles) lasts about seven hours, and normally consists of five plays separated by three *kyogen* – brief farcical interludes. These are often performed in ordinary costume and actually parody the Nō plays themselves; rather as a satyr play (*q.v.*) served as a comic relief to the trilogy in Classical Greek tragedy.

Nō drama has had some influence in the West. W. B. Yeats was very interested in it. Ezra Pound and Fenollosa adapted some Nō plays. Arthur Waley did some translations and commentaries. Sturge Moore wrote some Nō plays, and Laurence Binyon, Bertolt Brecht and Paul Claudel all used their techniques. Their influence was especially noticeable in the work of Thornton Wilder, particularly in *Our Town* (1938). Two studies by Noel Peri, *Cinq Nō* (1929) and *Le Nō* (1944) have also helped to make Nō drama known in Europe.

**nom de plume** (F 'pen-name') A term used in English but *not* in French, to indicate a fictitious name employed by a writer. For instance: Beachcomber is J. B. Morton; O. Henry was Sidney Porter, George Eliot was Mary Ann Cross. The French use *nom de guerre* for an author's pen-name or pseudonym. A very large number of writers have pen-names. *See also* ANONYMOUS LITERATURE; PSEUDONYMOUS LITERATURE.

**nonce-word** A word invented and used for a particular purpose, expressly; one used for a specific occasion; for the nonce = for that once, temporarily. Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky* is a classic example, but over the centuries numerous neologisms have started life as nonce-words. *See* GHOST-WORD; NEOLOGISM.

**nonsense** There are basically two kinds of nonsense involving the



use of words: (a) the unintentional; (b) the intentional. The former is common in speech and much semi-educated writing (e.g. Malapropisms *q.v.*). The latter has become a minor genre in literature, especially during the last 150 years. Setting aside gibberish (for example: gibbernog floos tink manga-ha ore doog now less and fly high split in west), true or positive nonsense writing (it is usually in verse) is never intended to make sense; nevertheless it often has a kind of lunatic logic of its own. It is a peculiarly English phenomenon (though Germans, especially Heinrich Hoffman, have contributed a share) whose hierophants are Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll. Lear composed a *Book of Nonsense* (1846) which he illustrated, containing a large number of limericks (*q.v.*) of which the following is a representative example:

There was an Old Lady of Chertsey,  
Who made a remarkable Curtsey;  
She twirled round and round  
Till she sunk underground,  
Which distressed all the people of Chertsey.

He is probably better known for his Nonsense Songs, particularly the *Akond of Swat*, *The Courtship of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo*, *The Dong with the Luminous Nose*, *The Jumbles*, *The Owl and The Pussy-Cat* and *The Pobble Who Has No Toes* – of which one stanza reads:

For his Aunt Jobiska said, 'No harm  
Can come to his toes if his nose is warm,  
And it's perfectly known that a Pobble's toes  
Are safe, provided he minds his nose.

The topsy-turvy world of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (1872) contains a form of nonsense in which the logic seems deliberately planned and precise; reason on the spree in a surrealistic funfair. Though Lear and Carroll are the best known exponents of the nonsensical which yet makes, or can be made to make sense, they belong to a long tradition of nonsense makers – particularly in jingles and nursery rhymes (*qq.v.*). There are plenty of examples in *Mother Goose's Melody* (1765) and *Nursery Nonsense, or Rhymes without Reason* (1864) – a collection of well-established nonsense. There are, for instance, many counting jingles like this:

Ah, ra, chickera,  
Roly, poly, pickena,

## nonsense

Kinny, minny, festi,  
Shanti-poo,  
Ickerman, chickerman, chinee-choo.

On the frontiers of nonsense country, we find writers like Hilaire Belloc using the 'approach' of Lear and Carroll to write something very like satire (*q.v.*), as in *Cautionary Tales* (1907). Other notable contributors in the Learic and Carrolline tradition have been Edith Sitwell (*The Bat, When Sir Beelzebub*), Sacheverell Sitwell (*Rio Grande*) and Osbert Sitwell (*On the Coast of Coromandel*, a burlesque of *Rio Grande*). A classic example of nonsense verse is Samuel Foote's *The Great Panjandrum*:

So she went into the garden  
to cut a cabbage leaf  
to make an apple-pie;  
and at the same time  
a great she-bear, coming down the street,  
pops its head into the shop.  
What! no soap?  
So he died,  
and she very imprudently married the Barber:  
and there were present  
the Picninnies,  
and the Joblillies,  
and the Garyulies,  
and the great Panjandrum himself,  
with the little round button at top;  
and they all fell to playing the game of catch-as-catch-can  
till the gunpowder ran out at the heels of their boots.

There have been a number of theories to explain the greater popularity of nonsense and the absurd. An increasing distrust of the rational and a vision of man as a ludicrous figure in a universe without an identifiable point or purpose seem to have contributed. It is as if sense can only be made of man's function and role by seeing them as nonsensical. Witness the crazier elements in the works of G. K. Chesterton (especially *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*), Gertrude Stein, James Thurber, William Saroyan and J. D. Salinger, the surrealistic stories of Edward Upward (e.g. *The Railway Accident*), the zany comedy of Spike Milligan's books, the *farfelu* quality of Jacques Tati's films, the buffoonery of The Goon Show, the 'freakout' (and again surreal) nature of the

highly successful TV show Monty Python's Flying Circus, and, perhaps most remarkable of all, the grotesque logic and 'happenings' in plays belonging to the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*).

In many such works (as in Erasmus's *The Praise of Folly* and Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*) nonsense becomes a kind of therapy and protective charm. A particular kind of mirth is evoked to dispel fear and apprehension, to evade and combat the question: To what end?

As long ago as 1901 G. K. Chesterton, one of the 'philosophers' of nonsense, touched upon the teleological theme in *A Defence of Nonsense*: 'This simple sense of wonder at the shapes of things, and at their exuberant independence of our intellectual standards and our trivial definitions, is the basis of spirituality as it is the basis of nonsense. Nonsense and faith (strange as the conjunction may seem) are the two supreme symbolic assertions of the truth that to draw out the soul of things with a syllogism is as impossible as to draw out Leviathan with a hook'.

The music hall comedians of the 20th c. have interpreted human existence in terms of the nonsensical, and their humour has become darker and more sardonic with the years. The jokes have become sicker, and it may be that the sick joke and witticism (e.g. 'Is there a life before death?' – allegedly a graffito in a Belfast lavatory), the sick lyric (e.g. the clever songs of Tom Lehrer), sick verse (*q.v.*), and, conceivably, black comedy (*q.v.*) all of which have become increasingly popular in the 20th c., are related to and are a development of the phenomenon of nonsense.

Long before (and better than most) Beaumarchais summarized the spirit of nonsense and the paradox inherent in life in *The Barber of Seville*: 'Je me presse de rire de tout, de peur d'être obligé d'en pleurer'. See also BARZELLETTA; DOGGEREL; DOUBLE DACTYL; FOLLY LITERATURE; JABBERWOCKY; JINGLE; NURSERY RHYME; PATAPHYSICS; PATTERN; SUR-REALISM.

**notebook** See DIARY AND JOURNAL.

**nouveau roman** (F 'new novel') This term appears to have become part of critical jargon in France c. 1955 with the publication (in periodicals and reviews) of Robbe-Grillet's essays on the nature and future of the novel (*q.v.*). His theories were later gathered in *Pour un nouveau roman* (1963). The movement, if so it can be called, of the *nouveau roman* was somewhat biblioclastic in the sense that it

rejected much that had gone before. In his evangelical role Robbe-Grillet regarded many earlier novelists as *vieux jeu*. Plot, action, narrative, ideas, the delineation and analysis of character . . . Such things had little or no place in the novel. On the contrary, the novel should be a form of 'res-istenzialism' – to use Paul Jennings's word. It should be about *things*; an individual version and vision of *things*; a systematized and analytical record of objects. And so, in practice, many of the *nouveaux romans* were and are; and hardly anywhere is the practice better displayed than in Michel Butor's outstanding novel *La Modification* (1957).

Such a view of the function of the novel was not entirely new. Long before, Huysmans had suggested what might be done about objects and how the novel might be depersonalized; Kafka had shown that the conventional methods of depicting character were not essential; James Joyce had demonstrated that plot was dispensable; and Louis Ferdinand Céline, in several novels, but especially in *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (1932) had written of themes which later preoccupied the existentialists and the hodjas of the cult of the absurd, and especially those of the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*). Proust, William Faulkner, Samuel Beckett and Albert Camus had also shown that it was possible to break with a number of the traditional conventions of the novel form.

In 1938 Nathalie Sarraute published *Tropismes* and this has come to be regarded as a probable prototype of the *nouveau roman*. Later, in 1952, she published a collection of essays called *L'ère du soupçon* in which she discussed this new form. In the 1940s Maurice Blanchot wrote several *nouveaux romans*: *Aminabad* (1942), *Le dernier mot* (1947), *Les Très-Haut* (1948). These he followed with *Le ressassement éternel* (1951), *Celui qui ne m'accompagnait pas* (1953) and several others. Robbe-Grillet, who has come to be the best known of these novelists, wrote *Les gommes* (1953), *Le voyeur* (1955) and *La jalousie* (1957). Michel Butor has also experimented in *L'emploi du temps* (1956) and *Degrés* (1960). One should also mention other works by Nathalie Sarraute; in particular *Portrait d'un inconnu* (1948), *Le Planétarium* (1959) and *Vous les entendez* (1972). Another prominent member among the experimenters is Claude Simon, some of whose best novels are: *Le tricheur* (1946), *L'herbe* (1958), *Le route des Flandres* (1960), *Histoire* (1967) and *La bataille de Pharsale* (1969). See ANTI-HERO; ANTI-NOVEL.

**nouvelle** The *nouvelle* differs from the *roman* (*q.v.*) or novel (*q.v.*) in



that it deals with a single situation or episode. The event moves to an unexpected climax, and it may be comic or tragic. It is related to the *novella* (q.v.).

The *nouvelle* followed on from the medieval *lais* and *fabliaux* (qq.v.), and the form took definite shape in the collection of tales known as *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* (1462). Notable examples from near the end of the 15th c. were *Arrêts d'amour* and *Jehan de Paris*. In the next century a collection of stories titled *Nouvelles Récréations et Joyeux Devis* was published c. 1558 and ascribed to Des Périers. Thereafter the *nouvelle* was an established form, and in the 19th c. the term *conte* (q.v.) was often used as a synonym. The main authors from this period were Flaubert and De Maupassant, Alfred de Musset, Alfred de Vigny, Prosper Mérimée, Joseph-Arthur Gobineau and Anatole France. *See also* SHORT STORY.

**nouvelle vague** (F 'new wave') A term which appears to have come into regular use in the 1950s and 1960s to describe a new trend in the arts. It was particularly applied to experimental work in the cinema (films by Fellini and Antonioni, for example), and then to experimental novels (for instance, works by Alain Robbe-Grillet, Michel Butor, Nathalie Sarraute, Alan Burns and B. S. Johnson) and also to playwrights like Harold Pinter, Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, Arthur Adamov, Jean Genet, N. F. Simpson and Anne Jellicoe. *See also* ANTI-NOVEL; AVANT-GARDE; BLACK COMEDY; NOUVEAU ROMAN; NOVEL; THEATRE OF THE ABSURD.

**novas rimadas** A Provençal genre of narrative verse. Normally written in octosyllabic rhymed couplets.

**novel** Derived from Italian *novella* 'tale, piece of news', and now applied to a wide variety of writings whose only common attribute is that they are extended pieces of prose fiction. But 'extended' begs a number of questions. The length of novels varies greatly and there has been much debate on how long a novel is or should be – to the *reductio ad absurdum* of when is a novel *not* a novel or a long short story or a short novel or a *novella* (q.v.). There seem to be fewer and fewer rules, but it would probably be generally agreed that, in contemporary practice, a novel will be between 60–70,000 words and, say, 200,000.

As to the quiddity of the novel there has been as much debate. However, without performing contortions to be comprehensive

## novel

we may hazard that it is a form of story or prose narrative containing characters, action and incident, and, perhaps, a plot (*q.v.*). In fact it is very difficult to write a story without there being *some* sort of plot, however vague and tenuous. So well developed is the average reader's need for a plot (at its simplest the desire to know what is going to happen next) that the reader will look for and find a plot where, perhaps, none is intended. Moreover, as soon as the reader is sufficiently interested in one or more of the characters (one can hardly envisage a novel without a character of some kind) to want to know what is going to happen to them next and to ask why, when and where – then there is a plot. Incident and character are almost inseparable. As Henry James pointed out: 'What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?'. Thus, plot, even if slight, is likely to develop however much an author may wish to prevent it.

The subject matter of the novel eludes classification, for it is the hold-all and Gladstone bag of literature. No other literary form has proved so pliable and adaptable to a seemingly endless variety of topics and themes. No other literary form has attracted more writers (or more people who are *not* writers), and it continues to do so despite the oft-repeated cry (seldom raised by novelists themselves) that the novel is dead. If proliferation is a sign of incipient death then the demise of the novel must be imminent.

At the moment it seems unlikely. Apart from dramatic comedy (*q.v.*) no other form has been so susceptible to change and development and the literary taxonomist at once finds himself confronted with a wide range of sub-species or categories. For example, we have the epistolary novel, the sentimental novel, the Gothic novel and the historical novel; we have the propaganda, regional, thesis (or sociological), psychological, proletarian, documentary and time novel; we have the novel of the soil and the saga (or chronicle) novel, the picaresque novel, the key novel and the anti-novel; not to mention the detective novel, the thriller, the novel of adventure and the novellette (*qq.v.*). In French we have various kinds of *roman* especially the *roman-fleuve*, the *roman à tiroirs*, the *roman-feuilleton*, the *roman policier* (the equivalent of the detective novel) the *nouveau roman* (the equivalent of the anti-novel) and the *roman à clef* or key novel (*qq.v.*). In German we find the *Bildungsroman*, the *Künstlerroman*, the *Räuberroman* (the picaresque) and the *Schlüsselroman* (key novel) (*qq.v.*). A number of these classifica-

tions shade off into each other. For example, psychological novel is a term which embraces many books; proletarian, propaganda and thesis novels tend to have much in common; the picaresque narrative is often a novel of adventure; a saga novel may also be a regional novel. And so on. We should also note that in other literatures and languages similar classifications have been established.

The absolute origins of the genre are obscure, but it seems clear that in the time of the XIIth Dynasty Middle Kingdom (c. 1200 B.C.) Egyptians were writing fiction of a kind which one would describe as a novel today. For instance, *The Princess of Backstaw*, *The Predestined Prince*, and *Sinuhe*. From Classical times other works of fiction have come down to us: notably, *The Milesian Tales* (2nd c. B.C.), *Daphnis and Chloe* (2nd c. A.D.) by Longus, *The Golden Ass* (2nd c. A.D.) by Apuleius, and the *Satyricon* (1st c. A.D.) of Petronius Arbiter. Most of these are concerned with love of one sort and another and contain the rudiments of novels as we understand them today. This is especially true of the pastoral (q.v.) romance *Daphnis and Chloe*.

But it is not until towards the end of the first millennium that we find work more recognizably like the novels we have become accustomed to in the last 200-odd years. These works are in Japanese. For example, the *Taketori Monogatari* (c. 850-920), the *Utsubo Monogatari* (c. 850-900), a collection of anonymous stories, the *Yamato Monogatari* (c. 950), the *Ochikubo Monogatari* (late 10th c.), the *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* (c. 1200) a romantic novel, the *Gempei Seisuki* (c. 1200-50), a military novel, and the *Taiheiki* (1367-74) a military novel describing the period 1318-67. However, from this period, the most famous of all Japanese works is the tale of *Genji* (c. 1000) written by a woman under the pseudonym Murasaki Shikibu. This long story of court life relating the adventures of a Japanese Don Juan at the imperial court is an important work in the history of the genre because of its analysis of character and its study of psychology in love.

It is likely that round about this time of the 10th c. that collection of stories subsequently known as the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, or *The Thousand and One Nights* was in embryonic form. However, they were not collected and established as a group of stories until much later, and then probably by an Egyptian professional story-teller at some time between the 14th and 16th c. These tales did not become known in Europe until early in the 18th c., since when they have had a considerable influence.

## novel

In Italy, in the 14th c., there was a vogue for collections of *novelle* or short tales, of which the most famous is Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1348-58), which had much influence on Chaucer and many of which were later translated by William Painter and published under the title *Palace of Pleasure* (1566, 1567). In the 16th c. Bandello published *Le Novelle* (written between 1510 and 1560), and Marguerite of Navarre published *The Heptameron* (c. 1530), following the form of Boccaccio. Originally these stories 'of seven days' were called *Contes de la Reine de Navarre*.

These were all short stories but are extremely important in the history and development of the novel because they were in prose, and because in their method of narration and in their creation and development of character they are forerunners of the modern novel.

Until the 14th c. most of the literature of entertainment (and the novel is usually intended as an entertainment) was confined to narrative verse (*q.v.*), particularly the epic and the romance (*qq.v.*). Romance eventually yielded the word *roman*, which is the term for novel in most European languages. In some ways the novel is a descendant of the medieval romances which, in the first place, like the epic, were written in verse and then in prose (e.g. Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, 1485). Verse narratives had been supplanted by prose narratives by the end of the 17th c.

Spain was ahead of the rest of Europe in the development of the novel form. At the very beginning of the 14th c. we find a novel called *El Caballero Cifar*; and then, c. 1304-12, the *Amadís de Gaula* (publ. 1508), a novel of chivalry which had several sequels and was considerably imitated. The main sequels were *Las sergas de Esplandián* (1510) and *Amadís de Grecia* (1530). Imitations include *Palmerín de Oliva* (1511), *Primaleón* (1512) and *Palmerín de Inglaterra* (1547). Other notable Spanish novels from this period are *La Celestina* (1499-1502), *Abencerraje* (early 16th c.), and two famous Spanish picaresque (*q.v.*) novels, *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599-1604) and *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554). The greatest of all Spanish novels is Cervantes's *Don Quixote de la Mancha* (1605) which satirized chivalry and a number of the earlier novels.

After the death of Cervantes the Spanish novel, having begun so promisingly, went into decline until the 19th c.

Apart from *Don Quixote* the only other major work in European literature at this time which could be called a novel is Rabelais' *Gargantua* (1534) and *Pantagruel* (1532). Both these can be classed as novels of phantasy, or mythopoeic. It is a kind which



has remained popular until the present day. Some notable instances of this 'line' are *Gulliver's Travels* (1736), *Candide* (1759), *The Shaving of Shagpat* (1856), *Zarathustra* (1883-91), *The First Men in the Moon* (1901) and scores of works which may be loosely described as SF (*q.v.*).

In England, at the end of the 16th c., the novel was in its infancy. From the closing years of the century there date two important works in the evolution of the extended prose narrative. They are Lyly's *Euphues* (in two parts, 1578 and 1580), and Sir Philip Sidney's pastoral romance *Arcadia* (1590). Other minor but interesting attempts at prose narrative from this period are Greene's *The Carde of Fancie* (1587), Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), and Deloney's three tales: *Jack of Newbury*, *Thomas of Reading* and *The Gentle Craft* (1596-1600).

In the 17th c. there is still no major advance in prose narrative and the novel form, except for Mme de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678) – a landmark in the history of the novel. Minor works of note in England were E. Foord's *Ornatus and Artesia* (1634) and Mrs Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* (1688). Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1668) can be taken as a kind of allegorical novel. In France there were also D'Urfé's pastoral romance *L'Astrée* (1607-28) which set a vogue satirized by Sorel in *Le Berger extravagant* (1627-8). Minor 17th c. French works were Sorel's *Francion* (1623) and Furetière's *Roman bourgeois* (1666).

Early in the 18th c. Congreve published *Incognita: or, Love and Duty Reconciled* (1713). He called it a novel and in his agreeable preface gives us his conception of what a novel is (an early example of a definition of the genre). First he speaks of romances (*q.v.*) which were generally composed 'of the Constant Loves and invincible Courages of Heros, Heroins, Kings and Queens, Mortals of the first Rank', and of the extraordinary things that happen in romances. But novels, he declares, 'are of a more familiar Nature; Come near us, and represent to us Intrigues in Practice, delight us with Accidents and odd Events, but not such as are wholly unusual or unpresidented, such which being not so distant from our Belief bring also the pleasure nearer us. Romances give more Wonder, Novels more Delight.'

Soon after this (1719) Defoe published his story of adventure – *Robinson Crusoe*; one in a long tradition of desert island fiction (*q.v.*). From now on the novel comes of age and within another seventy years is a major and matured form. Defoe's other two main contributions to the novel form were *Moll Flanders* (1722),

## novel

a sociological novel (*q.v.*) and *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722) – a reconstruction and thus a piece of historical fiction.

No doubt because the novel form was in an embryonic state, and there were few if any rules for it, the range and variety in the 18th c. is remarkable. Here there is space to mention only some of the main European works: Lesage's picaresque *Gil Blas* (1715, 1724, 1735); Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne* (1731–41); Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* (1731); Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1747, 1748) and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754); Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742), his satirical romance *Jonathan Wild* (1743) and *Tom Jones* (1749); Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748), *Peregrine Pickle* (1751) and *Humphry Clinker* (1771); Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760–7); Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761); Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766); Goethe's *Werther* (1774); De Laclos' *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (1782); Diderot's *La Religieuse* (1796). To these should be added Voltaire's philosophical tales *Zadig* (1747) and *Candide* (1759) and Johnson's philosophical tale *Rasselas* (1759). A notable characteristic of the novel in the 18th c. is the use of the letter. Several of the above works are classified as epistolary novels (*q.v.*).

Minor but important works in English literature during this period are: Charles Johnstone's *Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea* (1760); Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), one of the earliest examples of the Gothic novel (*q.v.*); Henry Brooke's *The Fool of Quality* (1766–70); Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771); Richard Graves's *The Spiritual Quixote* (1772); Mrs Clara Reeve's *The Champion of Virtue, a Gothic Tale* (1777); Fanny Burney's *Evelina* (1778); Beckford's *Vathek* (1786); Mrs Charlotte Smith's *The Old Manor House* (1793); William Goodwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794); and Robert Bage's *Hermesprong, or Man As He Is Not* (1796), a very early instance of the propaganda novel (*q.v.*). Four years later Maria Edgeworth produced what is taken to be the first regional novel (*q.v.*) *Castle Rackrent*.

In the early years of the 19th c. two figures dominate English fiction: Sir Walter Scott and Jane Austen. Scott was the greatest single influence on fiction in the 19th c. and in his time was infinitely more famous than Jane Austen. He was a European figure, an immensely prolific writer – and he established the historical novel (*q.v.*). Some of his better known works are: *Waverley* (1814), *Guy Mannering* (1815), *Old Mortality* (1816), *The Antiquary* (1816), *Rob Roy* (1817), *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818), *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819), *Ivanhoe* (1819), *Kenilworth* (1821),

*Quentin Derward* (1823), *Redgauntlet* (1824), *The Talisman* (1825) and *Woodstock* (1826).

Jane Austen was less prolific. Her major works are: *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Emma* (1815) and *Persuasion* (1818).

Minor novelists of note who were active at the beginning of the century were: John Galt (1779-1839) who wrote *Annals of the Parish* (1813), Susan Ferrier (1782-1854) who wrote *Marriage* (1818); Michael Scott (1789-1835) who wrote *Tom Cringle's Log* (1833); and Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866), author of *Headlong Hall* (1816), *Nightmare Abbey* (1818), *Maid Marian* (1822), *Crotchet Castle* (1831) and *Gryll Grange* (1861). A remarkable curiosity from the period is James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824). We should also mention J. J. Morier's *The Adventures of Hajji Baba* (1824), Mary Russell Mitford's *Our Village* (1812-32) and *Belford Regis* (1835), Frederick Marryat's *Peter Simple* (1834) and his popular adventure stories *Mr Midshipman Easy* (1836), and *Masterman Ready* (1841), Bulwer Lytton's *Falkland* (1827), *Pelham* (1828) and *Eugene Aram* (1832). During the first half of the century, also, Disraeli made a name for himself as a writer of distinguished political novels (among the first of their kind), namely *Vivian Grey* (1826), *Coningsby* (1834), *Sybil* (1845) and *Tancred* (1847). He also wrote a *roman à clef* (q.v.), *Venetia* (1837), on the lives of Byron and Shelley.

The middle years of the 19th c. witnessed the most astonishingly prolific output of fiction, especially from Dickens and Anthony Trollope, and it is noticeable that much of this fiction has lasted. The efforts of Dickens included *Sketches by Boz* (1836), *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1837), *Oliver Twist* (1838), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839), *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841), *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844), *Dombey and Son* (1848), *David Copperfield* (1850), and *Bleak House* (1853). Trollope published the *Barsetshire chronicles*, among which the better known are *The Warden* (1855), *Barchester Towers* (1857) and *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867); plus *Dr Thorne* (1858), *Framley Parsonage* (1861), *The Small House at Allington* (1864), *The Belton Estate* (1865), *The Claverings* (1867), *Phineas Finn* (1869), and *The Eustace Diamonds* (1873). Between them Dickens and Trollope produced an English *comédie humaine* to rival that of Balzac.

Thackeray, born a year earlier than Dickens, was active at the same time. His main novels were *Barry Lyndon* (1844), *Vanity Fair* (1847-8), *Pendennis* (1848-50), *Esmond* (1852), *The Newcomes*



(1853) and *The Virginians* (1857). George Eliot, too, began publishing her novels in the 1850s; most famous of which are *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1857), *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Romola* (1862-3), *Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871-2) and *Daniel Deronda* (1874-6).

We should also mention R. S. Surtees, a minor comic novelist of merit who invented two immortal characters of English fiction in the shape of Jorrocks and James Pigg. Some of Surtees's better known books are *Jorrocks' Jaunts and Jollities* (1838), *Hillingdon Hall* (1845), *Hawbuck Grange* (1847), *Mr Sponge's Sporting Tour* (1853) and *Handley Cross* (1854).

To the 1840s belong the classic works of the Brontë sisters: Anne, Emily and Charlotte. In 1847 Emily published *Wuthering Heights*, and in the same year Charlotte published *Jane Eyre* and Anne published *Agnes Grey*, which she followed in the next year with *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

Among minor novelists we should note Mrs Gaskell, who wrote *Mary Barton* (1848), *Cranford* (1853), *North and South* (1855), and *Wives and Daughters* (1864-6); Charlotte M. Yonge, who still has a coterie of devoted readers, who wrote *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853), *Heartsease* (1854) and *The Daisy Chain* (1856); George Borrow, author of *Lavengro* (1851) and *Romany Rye* (1857), who is still supported by 'Old Borrovians'; Charles Kingsley who wrote *Alton Locke* (1850), and his brother Henry Kingsley now chiefly remembered for *Geoffrey Hamlyn* (1859); Sheridan Le Fanu, perhaps better known as a writer of good short stories, but who also produced the novels *The House by the Churchyard* (1863) and *Uncle Silas* (1864); Charles Reade, some of whose best works were *It Is Never Too Late To Mend* (1856), *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861), *Foul Play* (1869) and *Put Yourself in His Place* (1870); George Meredith (whom many consider a major novelist), a prolific writer who is mainly remembered for *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859), *Rhoda Fleming* (1865), *Vittoria* (1866), *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* (1871), and *The Egoist* (1879); Wilkie Collins, practically the first English novelist to write a detective story (*q.v.*), whose three most notable works were *The Woman in White* (1860), *Armada* (1866) and *The Moonstone* (1868).

During approximately the last quarter of the 19th c. the most distinguished English novelist was Thomas Hardy. In 1871 he published *Desperate Remedies*, and in the next twenty-five years wrote the following outstanding novels: *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Return of the*



*Native* (1878), *The Trumpet-Major* (1880), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Woodlanders* (1887), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1896). Hardy is England's most eminent regional novelist.

During the 1880s and 1890s R. L. Stevenson published several novels which have become classics: *Treasure Island* (1883), *Kidnapped* (1886), *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) and the unfinished *Weir of Hermiston* (1896). A contemporary of Stevenson, Mark Rutherford, published two autobiographical type novels: *The Autobiography of Mark Rutherford* (1881) and *Mark Rutherford's Deliverance* (1885). A little later George Gissing, one of the best of English minor novelists and a powerful portrayer of realism, wrote (among numerous other books); *New Grub Street* (1891), *Born in Exile* (1892), *The Odd Women* (1893) and *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* (1903). And in 1885 George Moore, the Irishman, published *A Mummer's Wife*. This he followed with *Esther Walters* (1894), *The Brook Kerith* (1916) and *Aphrodite in Aulis* (1930).

The development of the novel as a popular form in the 19th c. was a European phenomenon, and one of the most remarkable features of its history is the speed with which it matured. From nowhere, so it seemed, great novelists sprang up and produced novels which became and remained classics. Early in the century there were, for example, Chateaubriand's *René* (1802), Benjamin Constant's *Adolphe* (1816), Manzoni's *I Promessi Sposi* (1827), Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830) and his *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839), Pushkin's *Dubrovsky* (1832-3) and his *A Captain's Daughter* (1836) and Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time* (1839-40), and the dominating figure of Balzac who from the 1820s until his death in 1850 produced novel after novel with amazing rapidity; some of the better known being *Le Dernier Chouan* (1829), *La Peau de Chagrin* (1831), *Eugénie Grandet* (1833), *Le Père Goriot* (1834-5) and *Le Cousin Pons* (1847). At approximately the same time Dumas père was achieving immense success with his novels *The Three Musketeers* (1844), *Twenty Years After* (1845), and *The Count of Monte-Cristo* (1844-5). In 1842 Gogol published *Dead Souls*, one of the most outstanding comic novels. In 1846 Dostoevsky published *Poor People*, which he was to follow with *Crime and Punishment* (1866), *The Idiot* (1866), *The Possessed* (1871) and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880). The third most famous Russian writer of the mid years of the century was Turgenev who, as a novelist, is chiefly remembered for *A Nest of Gentlefolk* (1859),

## novel

*Fathers and Sons* (1862), *Smoke* (1867) and *Virgin Soil* (1876). In 1855 Goncharov published *Oblomov* – a masterpiece among comic novels. In the latter part of the 19th c. the dominating figure was Tolstoy whose epic novels *War and Peace* (1865–72) and *Anna Karenina* (1875–6) remained unsurpassed in Russian literature.

In France, during the second half of the 19th c. the leading novelists were Flaubert, Victor Hugo, Zola, Guy de Maupassant, Huysmans and Anatole France. Flaubert made his name with *Madame Bovary* (1856). His other principal works were *Salammbô* (1862), *L'éducation sentimentale* (1869), *La tentation de Saint Antoine* (1874) and the unfinished *Bouvard et Pécouchet* (1881). This last was a severe exposure of human stupidity and incorporated Flaubert's ideas about the *idée reçue* (q.v.). Victor Hugo who, long before, had published *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831), produced three of his finest novels in the 1860s; namely, *Les Misérables* (1862), *Les Travailleurs de la mer* (1866) and *L'homme qui rit* (1869). Zola, apart from Balzac one of the most prolific novelists in 19th c. France, is particularly important in connection with the theories of realism and naturalism (qq.v.). His *magnum opus* was the series of novels *Les Rougon-Macquart*. There were twenty in all and he described them as 'the natural and social history of a family under the Second Empire'. Before embarking on these he wrote *Thérèse Raquin* (1867). Maupassant's two best novels were *Une Vie* (1883) and *Bel-Ami* (1885). Huysmans' two extraordinary novels *A rebours* (1884) and *La-bas* (1891) have become classics of their kind. Huysmans is especially associated with 19th c. theories of aestheticism and the doctrine of art for art's sake (qq.v.). Anatole France, renowned for his irony and wit (qq.v.), wrote many novels among which the following are outstanding: *L'étui de nacre* (1892), *Les Opinions de Jérôme Coignard* (1893), *La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque* (1893), *L'Orme du Mail* (1897), *Le Mannequin d'osier* (1897), *M. Bergeret à Paris* (1901), *L'Ile des Pingouins* (1908) and *La Révolte des Anges* (1914).

During much of the 19th c. the novel form was enriched by diversity of French writers, among whom we should also give special mention to the following: Prosper Mérimée, who excelled at the *nouvelle* (q.v.) and who also wrote *Chronique du règne de Charles IX* (1829); Alfred de Vigny, one of whose best novels was *Cinq Mars* (1826); George Sand, a very prolific novelist, some of whose best novels were *Indiana* (1832), *Lélia* (1833) and *La Mare au Diable* (1846); Alphonse Kerr, author of nearly a hundred novels of varying quality; and Théophile Gautier, author of

*Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835), *Le roman de la momie* (1858) and *Le Capitaine Fracasse* (1863).

Other exceptionally gifted European novelists in the second half of the 19th c. were: the Portuguese Queirós who wrote several fine novels, particularly *O crime do Padre Amaro* (1876), *O primo Bastlio* (1878) and *Os Maias* (1888); the Italian Giovanni Verga whose later work was outstanding, especially *I Malavoglia* (1881) and *Mastro-Don Gesualdo* (1889); and the Pole Sienkiewicz who became famous for his *Quo Vadis* (1896).

After falling into desuetude in the 17th c. the Spanish novel was revived with some splendour in the 19th c. during which period the dominating figure was Pérez Galdós a writer who has often been compared with justice to Balzac and Dickens. He was immensely prolific. In 1873 he published the first of a sequence of forty-six historical novels dealing with the history of Spain from Trafalgar (1805) to the Restoration (1875). The whole series was titled *Episodios nacionales* and is one of the longest novel cycles in existence. Apart from this marathon he is remembered for other individual novels: *Doña Perfecta* (1876), *Fortunata i Jacinta* (1886-7) and *Angel Guerra* (1890-1). Roughly contemporary with Galdós was Juan Valera, author of *Pepita Jiménez* (1874), *El comendador Mendoza* (1893) and *Juanita la Larga* (?). Pereda, born in 1833, was a fine regional novelist. Two of his better known books were *Sotileza* (1884) and *Peñas Arriba* (1894). Born in the same year, Alarcón attained fame with *El sombrero de tres picos* (1874). His *El capitán Veneno* was also impressive. The Countess Emilia Pardo Bazán, famous for her wit, her brains and her ugliness, wrote some distinguished novels about Galician life; in particular *Los Pazos de Ulloa* (1886). Two minor writers, born, like the Countess in the 1850s and who lived on into the 19th c., were Leopoldo Alas y Ureña whose best novel is probably *La regenta* (1884-5), and Palacio Valdés who wrote *La hermana San Sulpicio* (1889) and *La aldea perdida* (1903). The most famous Spanish novelist of the later 19th c. was certainly Vicente Blasco Ibañez who was considerably influenced by de Maupassant and Zola and therefore by the theories of naturalism and realism. He was also influenced by the Spanish schools of *costumbrismo* (q.v.) and *regionalismo*. His major novels were *Flor de Mayo* (1896), *La barraca* (1898) and *Cañas y barro* (1902). He wrote many other novels and is one of the few writers in history to have become a millionaire.

In America, too, in the 19th c. the novel became a popular



## novel

form. The earliest American novelist of merit was James Fenimore Cooper, author of stirring stories of frontier life and the sea. Some of his better-known books are: *The Spy* (1821), one of the earliest of spy novels (*q.v.*), *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Pathfinder* (1840), *The Deerslayer* (1841) and *The Redskins* (1846). In 1851 Herman Melville published *Moby Dick*, a classic of American literature, with many stylistic peculiarities. To the mid-century, also, belong the major works of Nathaniel Hawthorne – particularly *Twice-Told Tales* (1837), *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), *The Blithedale Romance* (1852) and *The Marble Faun* (1860). A contemporary was William Dean Howells, an exponent of realism (*q.v.*). His principal novels were *The Wedding Journey* (1872), *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885), *Indian Summer* (1886), *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890). During the same period Mark Twain produced *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) and *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1894). During the last thirty years of the century and in the opening years of the 20th c. the dominating American novelist was Henry James who spent much of his life in Europe and England. Out of his many novels the following are of especial excellence: *Washington Square* (1881), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Bostonians* (1886), *The Princess Casamassima* (1886), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), *The Spoils of Poynton* (1897), *The Awkward Age* (1899), *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), *The Golden Bowl* (1904). In the opening years of the 20th c. three Englishmen and one Pole writing in English were pre-eminent among British novelists. They were Arnold Bennett, E. M. Forster, H. G. Wells and Joseph Conrad. Of the seventy-odd books that Bennett wrote he is now remembered for six of enduring merit; namely, *Anna of the Five Towns* (1901), *The Old Wives' Tale* (1908), *Clayhanger* (1910), *Hilda Lessways* (1911), *These Twain* (1916) and *Riceyman Steps* (1923). During the same period, E. M. Forster, whose total output was slight, published *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), *A Room with a View* (1908), *Howards End* (1910) and *A Passage to India* (1924). The chief novels of H. G. Wells were *Love and Mr Lewisham* (1900), *First Men in the Moon* (1901), *Kipps* (1905), *Ann Veronica* (1909), *Tono Bungay* (1909) and *The History of Mr Polly* (1910). Conrad had made a name for himself in 1895 with *Almayer's Folly* and then in 1900 produced his first major novel in the shape of *Lord Jim*. This he followed with *Romance* (1903), *Nostromo* (1904), *The Secret Agent* (1907), *Under Western Eyes* (1911), *Chance*



(1914) and *Victory* (1915). A minor novel was *The Rover* (1923).

Lesser works of great quality at this time are many and various and certainly include Kipling's *Kim* (1901), George Douglas Brown's *The House with Green Shutters* (1901), Arthur Morrison's *The Hole in the Wall* (1902), Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* (1903), May Sinclair's *The Divine Fire* (1904), William de Morgan's *Joseph Vance* (1906), Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* (1911), Gilbert Cannon's *Round the Corner* (1913), Compton Mackenzie's *Sinister Street* (1913, 1914), W. L. George's *The Making of an Englishman* (1914), Norman Douglas's *South Wind* (1917) and several novels by J. D. Beresford – especially *Jacob Stahl* (1911), *A Candidate for Truth* (1912), *Goslings* (1913), *The House in Demetrius Road* (1914) and *The Invisible Event* (1915). Some would add Hugh Walpole's *Mr Perrin and Mr Traill* (1911) and G. F. Bradby's *The Lanchester Tradition* (1913) classics among school stories; and Ronald Firbank's *Valmouth* (1919).

While most of these authors were drawing towards the end of their writing careers, three other Englishmen were at the same time in the early stages of theirs and all are major though very different figures in the history of the English novel. They were Somerset Maugham, D. H. Lawrence and Wyndham Lewis. Maugham published *Liza of Lambeth* in 1897, and followed it with *Of Human Bondage* (1915) and *The Moon and Sixpence* (1919). Much later came *Cakes and Ale* (1930) and *The Razor's Edge* (1944). Lawrence, subsequently deified by Dr Leavis and other disciples, has come to be regarded as one of the great English novelists. His principal works were: *The White Peacock* (1911), *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The Rainbow* (1915), *Women in Love* (1920), *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). Very different from these two, but highly original and eccentric, was Wyndham Lewis, the inventor of Vorticism (*q.v.*). His best-known novels are: *Tarr* (1918), *The Childermass* (1928), the first part of the trilogy *The Human Age*, *The Apes of God* (1930), *The Revenge for Love* (1937); and, in 1955, the second and third parts of *The Human Age*.

In 1915 Dorothy Richardson was the first English novelist to introduce the stream of consciousness technique (*q.v.*). Her marathon sequence of novels *Pilgrimage* ran to twelve volumes which came out at intervals from 1915 to 1938.

In 1916 James Joyce published *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in which he also employed the stream of consciousness technique. He perfected this in *Ulysses* (1922). In *Finnegans Wake*

(1939) he pushed it to its probable limits, and also experimented with language to a point where he seemed likely to transcend the limits of his medium. After Joyce the novel was never quite the same again. His influence has been profound and, as one of the great innovators, he has had many imitators.

During the 1920s and 1930s the English novel flourished. So many excellent books were written by so many gifted writers that here there is space to mention only a handful. There was, for example, Ford Madox Ford (in 1915 he had published his admirable *The Good Soldier*) who wrote the Tietjen series: *Some Do Not* (1924), *No More Parades* (1925), *A Man Could Stand Up* (1926) and *Last Post* (1928). There was L. H. Myers, a rare instance of the 'philosopher' novelist, who wrote *The Orissers* (1921), *Clio* (1925), and *The Near and the Far* (1929) – this being the first of a tetralogy. The others were *Prince Jali* (1931), *The Root and the Flower* (1935) and *The Pool of Vishnu* (1940). During roughly the same period, Virginia Woolf, influenced by Joyce and Dorothy Richardson, was experimenting with the stream of consciousness technique and she is chiefly remembered for *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), *The Waves* (1931), and *Between the Acts* (1941). In 1922, John Galsworthy, a prolific and much more conventional novelist, published *The Forsyte Saga*. In the 1920s, too, Aldous Huxley began to publish his novels, among which we should mention *Crome Yellow* (1921), *Antic Hay* (1923) and *Point Counterpoint* (1928). In 1932 appeared his anti-Utopian tour de force *Brave New World* and, in 1948, *Ape and Essence*. In 1928 Evelyn Waugh began his career as a witty satirist with *Decline and Fall*. A succession of novels followed: *Vile Bodies* (1930), *Black Mischief* (1932), *A Handful of Dust* (1934), *Scoop* (1938), *Brideshead Revisited* (1945), *The Loved One* (1948) and the trilogy *Men At Arms*, the first volume of which came out in 1952. Elizabeth Bowen published her first novel *The Hotel* in 1927. Later came *To the North* (1932), *The Death of the Heart* (1938) and *The Heat of the Day* (1949). Another distinguished female novelist who started her career at about the same time was Ivy Compton-Burnett. Some of her many novels were: *Brothers and Sisters* (1929), *Men and Wives* (1931), *Daughters and Sons* (1937), *Parents and Children* (1941), *Elders and Betters* (1944) and *Darkness and Day* (1951).

From the late 1920s and 1930s a number of other novels have stood the test of time and changes of taste. For instance, J. B. Priestley's *The Good Companions* (1929) and *Angel Pavement* (1930);

Richard Aldington's *Death of a Hero* (1929) and *All Men are Enemies* (1933); H. M. Tomlinson's *All Our Yesterdays* (1930); Vita Sackville-West's *All Passion Spent* (1931); Stella Gibbons's *Cold Comfort Farm* (1932), a clever satire on the novels of Mary Webb (e.g. *Precious Bane*, 1924) and on the novel of the soil (q.v.) in general; Lewis Grassic Gibbon's trilogy *A Scot's Quair* (1932, 1933, 1934); Walter Greenwood's *Love on the Dole* (1933), an impressive documentary novel (q.v.); Winifred Holtby's regional novel *South Riding* (1936); V. S. Pritchett's *Dead Men Leading* (1932) and *Nothing Like Leather* (1935); the novels of the Powys brothers, especially T. F. Powys's *Mr Weston's Good Wine* (1927), J. C. Powys's *Wolf Solent* (1929) and his *A Glastonbury Romance* (1932); Robert Graves's *I, Claudius* (1934) and his *Claudius the God* (1934); Christopher Isherwood's *Mr Morris Changes Trains* (1935) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939); Rebecca West's *The Judge* (1922) and *The Thinking Reed* (1932); Charles Morgan's *The Fountain* (1932) and *Sparkenbroke* (1936); Charles Williams's 'metaphysical thrillers' *War in Heaven* (1930) and *The Place of the Lion* (1931).

Perhaps the most famous English novelist to have begun his career in the 1920s and to have published novels consistently for fifty years, is Graham Greene. His first was *Babbling April* (1925). Since then he has published some twenty novels and entertainments (q.v.), two of which have been suppressed by the author. Among the more famous works are: *The Man Within* (1929), *Stamboul Train* (1932), *Brighton Rock* (1938), *The Confidential Agent* (1939), *The Power and the Glory* (1940), *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), *The End of the Affair* (1951), *Our Man in Havana* (1958), *The Comedians* (1966), *Travels with My Aunt* (1969) and *The Honorary Consul* (1973).

Henry Green, a more occasional novelist of great gifts, also began in the 1920s with *Living* (1929), a proletarian novel. This he followed with *Party Going* (1939), *Loving* (1945), *Nothing* (1950) and *Doting* (1952). An even more occasional novelist is Richard Hughes who became famous with *A High Wind in Jamaica* (1929). Later came *In Hazard* (1938), and much later *The Fox in the Attic* (1961), the first part of a trilogy. To these should be added Rosamund Lehmann, one of the best modern novelists. Her main works are: *Invitation to the Waltz* (1932), *The Weather in the Streets* (1936), *The Ballad and the Source* (1944) and *The Echoing Grove* (1953).

Since approximately 1940 several other distinguished writers have enhanced the novel in England. For example, there are



## novel

Arthur Koestler's tour de force *Darkness at Noon* (1940); many novels by H. E. Bates, especially *Fair Stood the Wind for France* (1944), *The Purple Plain* (1947) and *Love for Lydia* (1954); several by P. H. Newby, namely *Agents and Witnesses* (1947), *A Season in England* (1951), *The Picnic at Sakkara* (1955), *A Guest and his Going* (1959) and *The Barbary Light* (1962); Gerald Hanley's *The Consul at Sunset* (1951) and *Drinkers of Darkness* (1955); Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* (1947); L. P. Hartley's *The Shrimp and the Anemone* (1944), *The Sixth Heaven* (1946), *Eustace and Hilda* (1947) and *The Go-Between* (1953); George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949); to these should be added Joyce Cary, one of whose earlier works was *The African Witch* (1936). Later came *Mister Johnson* (1939). Then two major trilogies of exceptional merit: first, *Herself Surprised* (1941), *To Be a Pilgrim* (1942) and *The Horse's Mouth* (1944); second, *A Prisoner of Grace* (1952), *Except the Lord* (1953) and *Not Honour More* (1955).

The trilogy, the tetralogy, the roman fleuve and the saga or chronicle novel have proved particularly attractive schemes in the 20th c. No doubt the influences of Balzac and Zola are discernible here. In recent times, as far as the novel in England is concerned, three instances of chronicle may be cited: C. P. Snow's *Strangers and Brothers* sequence which began in 1940 with *Strangers and Brothers*; Henry Williamson's *Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight* (1951-69) in fifteen volumes; and Anthony Powell's twelve-volume sequence *A Dance to the Music of Time*, which started with *A Question of Upbringing* in 1951.

Since James Joyce the main contributions from Irish novelists have come from Liam O'Flaherty, particularly *The Informer* (1926), *Famine* (1937) and *Land* (1946); from Sean O'Faolain, with *A Nest of Simple Folk* (1933) and *Come Back to Erin* (1940); from Flann O'Brien with his remarkable anti-novel *At Swim-Two-Birds* (1939); and from Samuel Beckett, who was influenced by Joyce. His four main novels are *Murphy* (1938), *Watt* (1944), *Molloy* (1951) and, best of all, *Malone Dies* (1951).

During recent years the life and health of the novel in Britain have been sustained by a wide diversity of gifted writers. Some of the more eminent are: James Aldridge, Laurence Durrell, Angus Wilson, William Golding, Francis King, William Sansom, Colin MacInnes, John Wain, Kingsley Amis, Muriel Spark, Iris Murdoch, John Braine, Vladimir Nabokov, Christine Brooke-Rose, Rayner Heppenstall, Anthony Burgess, V. S. Naipaul, Edna O'Brien, Margaret Drabble and Melvyn Bragg.



Outside Britain something like a small school of Caribbean novelists has established itself. Again, some of the leading names are Samuel Selvon, V. S. Reid, Roger Mais and Wilson Harris. V. S. Naipaul, by virtue of his Trinidad upbringing, might also be included amongst these.

In Australia, apart from Henry Lawson and H. H. Richardson (both of whose works have been somewhat neglected), the main novelist with an international reputation is unquestionably Patrick White, whose most accomplished achievements are *The Aunt's Story* (1948), *The Tree of Man* (1955), *Voss* (1957), *Riders in the Chariot* (1961) and *The Solid Mandala* (1966).

In the 20th c., too, several South African novelists have made a wide impression; especially William Plomer, author of *Turbott Wolfe* (1926), *The Case is Altered* (1932) and *A Shot in the Park* (1955); Stuart Cloete, author of *Turning Wheels* (1937), *Watch for the Dawn* (1939), *Congo Song* (1943) and *The Curve and the Tusk* (1952); Alan Paton, who wrote the best-selling *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948) and also *Too Late the Phalarope* (1953); Doris Lessing, author of *The Grass is Singing* (1950), and a massive five-volume *Bildungsroman* titled *The Children of Violence* (1952-69). Slightly less well known, perhaps, are Dan Jacobson, author of *Dance in the Sun* (1956), *The Beginners* (1966) and *The Rape of Tamar* (1970); and Nadine Gordimer who wrote *A World of Strangers* (1958), *Occasion for Loving* (1963) and *A Guest of Honour* (1971).

In America, during the 20th c., the novel has flourished on the same scale as it has in Britain and Europe. A score or more of distinguished writers have exploited the many possibilities of the form. Early in the century Jack London published *The Call of the Wild* (1903), *White Fang* (1905) and *Iron Hell* (1907). About the same period Upton Sinclair began to make his name with *The Jungle* (1906), *King Coal* (1917) and *Boston* (1928). Also Willa Cather, with *O Pioneers* (1913), *My Antonia* (1918), *A Lost Lady* (1923), and *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927). Contemporary with Willa Cather was Sinclair Lewis whose chief novels were: *Main Street* (1920), *Babbitt* (1922), *Arrowsmith* (1925) and *Anne Vickers* (1933). And in 1925 appeared one of the most distinguished American novels, namely Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*. In that same year was published John Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer*, which he followed with *The Big Money* (1936) and *Adventures of a Young Man* (1939). In the 1920s Scott Fitzgerald spoke for a new generation with *This Side of Paradise* (1920), *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), *The Great Gatsby*

(1925). Later he wrote *Tender is the Night* (1934) and *The Last Tycoon* (1941). In 1929 Thomas Wolfe published a minor masterpiece in the shape of *Look Homeward Angel*. In that year, also, Ernest Hemingway made a great impact with *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway was to write several other impressive novels, particularly *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1950). In 1933 Nathaniel West published a minor masterpiece – *Miss Lonelyhearts*.

In the 1920s perhaps the most famous of all 20th c. American novelists began his long career; namely William Faulkner who, apart from Thomas Hardy, is probably the best regional novelist to date. Some of his better-known books are: *Soldier's Pay* (1926), *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Sanctuary* (1931), *Light in August* (1932), *Wild Palms* (1938), *The Unvanquished* (1938), *The Hamlet* (1940), *The Town* (1957), and *The Mansion* (1959).

Other eminent Americans who began their writing careers between the wars and carried on writing long after the Second World War were: Thornton Wilder, author of *The Bridge of San Louis Rey* (1927), *The Woman of Andros* (1930) and *The Ides of March* (1948); James Gould Cozzens, author of *S.S. San Pedro* (1931), *Castaway* (1934), *The Just and the Unjust* (1942), *Guard of Honour* (1948) and *By Love Possessed* (1956); John Steinbeck, author of *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932), *Tortilla Flat* (1935), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), *Cannery Row* (1944), *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961); William Saroyan, author of *The Human Comedy* (1943); John O'Hara, author of *Appointment in Samarra* (1934), *Butterfield 8* (1935) and *From the Terrace* (1958); and a strange and rather lonely masterpiece by Carson MacCullers called *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940).

In the period after the Second World War most of the established American novelists were still publishing new novels and comparatively few authors have come forward to rival them. Certainly few of those who were intent upon compiling the great American war epic, of which there were some 250. Norman Mailer, who subsequently wrote a picture book about the Marilyn Monroe doctrine, was responsible for what may well prove to be the best of that 250-odd. It was called, appropriately enough, *The Naked and the Dead* (1948). Three years later Herman Wouk published his fine novel *The Caine Mutiny* (1951). In the same year J. D. Salinger produced *The Catcher in the Rye*, an unusually good example of a 'mood-of-the-moment' book. Two years later came *For Esme, with Love and Squalor*. A better novelist

was David Karp whose cautionary tale *One* (1951) rivalled Orwell's *1984*. He also wrote *Day of the Monkey* (1955). Other notable American novelists of the post-war period have been Saul Bellow who wrote *Henderson the Rain King* (1959) and *Herzog* (1964), John Updike who wrote *Rabbit, Run* (1960), and Joseph Heller, author of *Catch 22* (1955) a splendid comic war novel which helped to adjust the balance of the 250 epics. We should also mention Mary McCarthy's clever *The Group* (1963).

In Europe, since the beginning of the century, the novel has proliferated as it has in America, Britain and elsewhere; especially in France where dozens of gifted writers have made it one of their main modes of expression. André Gide, for example, who wrote *L'immoraliste* (1902), *La porte étroite* (1909), *La symphonie pastorale* (1919) and *Les faux-monnayeurs* (1926). During that period Alain-Fournier produced his solitary masterpiece *Le Grand Meaulnes* (1912), Barbusse wrote a fine war novel *Le Feu* (1916), Proust began the long quest *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1917-27), and Romain Rolland created his huge *Bildungsroman* in ten volumes called *Jean-Christophe* (1906-12). Colette had also embarked on her prolific career, and of her many books the following deserve special mention: *L'Ingénue libertine* (1909), *La Vagabonde* (1910), *L'Entrave* (1913), *Chéri* (1920), *Le Blé en herbe* (1923), *La Fin de Chéri* (1926) and *La Chatte* (1933). The early 1920s produced two masterpieces by an infant prodigy: Raymond Radiguet who died aged twenty. They were *Le Diable au corps* (1923) and *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel* (1924). In 1928 another brilliant novel was *Nadja* by André Breton, the surrealist. In the same year André Malraux published *Les conquérants* which he was to follow with a classic, *La condition humaine* (1933), and then *Le temps du mépris* (1935). In the same period De Montherlant was coming to the fore with *Le Songe* (1922) and *Les Bestiaires* (1926). Between 1936-39 he produced his masterpiece of comic fiction – the tetralogy *Les Jeunes Filles*. In 1928 St Exupéry, a rare poet of the skies and of aviation, published *Courrier-Sud*. Later came *Vol de nuit* (1931) and *Pilote de guerre* (1942). In the 1920s, also, François Mauriac, one of the most famous and distinguished of all French novelists, published his early work: *Le Baiser au lépreux* (1922), *Génitrix* (1923), *Le Désert de l'amour* (1925) and *Thérèse Desqueyroux* (1927). *Le Naud de Vipères* followed in 1932. In 1935 came a sequel to *Thérèse* in the shape of *La Fin de la nuit* (1935). Other exceptional novels by Mauriac were *Le Mystère Frontenac* (1933), *La Pharisienne* (1941) and *Le Sagouin* (1950). Two other French novelists born in the



## novel

1880s have made notable contributions towards the study of mankind in the shape of the *roman-fleuve* or *roman cycle*. Like Zola and Balzac they are documentary encyclopaedists. Georges Duhamel published *Vie et Aventures de Salavin* in five volumes (1920–32), and followed this with a ten-volume saga – *La Chronique de Pasquier* (1933–45). An even vaster panoramic work was carried out by Jules Romains with his *Les hommes de bonne volonté*, the generic title of a *roman cycle* in twenty-seven volumes (1932–47). Romains wrote several other novels. Georges Bernanos, born in 1888, was much less prolific and is now best represented by *Sous le soleil de Satan* (1926), *Un Crime* (1935), *Le journal d'un curé de campagne* (1936) and *Monsieur Ouine* (1946). Two fine novelists born near the turn of the 19th c. were Jean Giono and Julien Green. Giono is a good example of a regional novelist and his main early works are: *Colline* (1929), *Un de Baumugnes* (1929), *Regain* (1930), and a trilogy titled *Pan*. There followed *Le grand troupeau* (1931), *Les Vraies Richesses* (1936), *Batailles dans la montagne* (1939), and, more recently, several novels which Giono called 'chroniques'. Green, influenced by Zola, wrote *Adrienne Mesurat* (1927), *Léviathan* (1928), *Épaves* (1932), *Le Visionnaire* (1934), *Minuit* (1936) and *Varouna* (1940). In 1938 Sartre published *La nausée*, which, by virtue of the intensity of its personal vision and its philosophy, is one of the most remarkable novels of the century. In 1945 came the first volume of his tetralogy titled *Les Chemins de la liberté*, namely *L'Âge de raison*. This was followed by *Le Sursis* (1945) and *La Mort dans l'âme* (1949). The last volume will be called *La Dernière Chance*. Sartre's theories of existentialism (*q.v.*) pervade these novels. The other most important philosopher novelist of modern times was Albert Camus, the Mullah of the cult philosophy of the absurd. He wrote three outstanding novels which have had a great influence: *L'Étranger* (1942), *La Peste* (1947) and *La Chute* (1955), this last being a fine example of so called confessional literature (*q.v.*). From the 1950s onwards the novel in France has been largely sustained by a group of talented practitioners of the *nouveau roman* (*q.v.*).

In Germany the most eminent 20th c. novelist is Thomas Mann who came to the fore with his *Bildungsroman*, *Buddenbrooks*, in 1900. In 1924 appeared *Der Zauberberg*, then the huge tetralogy *Joseph und seine Brüder: Die Geschichten Jaakobs* (1933), *Der Junge Joseph* (1934), *Joseph in Aegypten* (1936) and *Joseph der Ernährer* (1944). There were also *Lotte in Weimar* (1939), *Doktor Faustus* (1947) and the unfinished picaresque novel *Felix Krull* (1955),



plus some splendid *novelle*. His brother, Heinrich Mann, wrote *Professor Unrat* (1904), which was made into the film *The Blue Angel* (1932), *Die Kleine Stadt* (1909) and *Der Untertan* (1921). Less well known is Leon Feuchtwanger, author of *Jud Süß* (1925) and *Die hässliche Herzogin* (1923). In 1928 Erich Remarque published his best-seller *In Westen nichts Neues* – translated as ‘All Quiet on the Western Front’. Heinrich Böll, who, as novelist, shares some characteristics with Thomas Mann and François Mauriac, wrote some very fine novels; particularly *Wo warst du, Adam?* (1951), *Billard um halb zehn* (1959) and *Ansichten eines Clowns* (1963). There are also the novels of Hermann Hesse, especially *Das Glasperlenspiel* (1943) and *Magister Ludi* (1949); plus those of the most talented of the younger generation of German novelists – Günter Grass; in particular *Die Blechtrommel* (1959) and *Hundejahre* (1963).

Two Austrian novelists with international reputations are Robert Musil, author of *Die Mann ohne Eigenschaften* in three volumes (1930–33), and Max Brod whose trilogy *Kampf um die Wahrheit* was published in 1916, 1925 and 1948. Brod wrote several other novels, of which *Eine Frau, die nicht enttäuscht* (1933) was especially notable.

Among Italian, Sicilian and Sardinian novelists a handful have achieved world-wide repute in the 20th c. Before turning to the theatre, Pirandello was a prolific novelist, now best represented by *I vecchi e i giovani* (1913) and *Uno, nessuno e centomila* (1926). Italo Svevo was also prolific and is now particularly remembered for *La coscienza di Zeno* (1923). Ignazio Silone’s most successful novels were *Fontamara* (1930), *Brot und Wein* (1937), *Il seme sotto la neve* (1945) and *Il segreto di Luca* (1956). In the last forty-odd years Alberto Moravia has become the leading Italian novelist, with such works as *Gli indifferenti* (1929), *La romana* (1947), *La ciociara* (1957) and *La noia* (1960). Carlo Levi’s reputation appears to depend on his masterpiece *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli* (1945). Quite as famous is Lampedusa’s only novel – the splendid *Il Gattopardo* (1958). Like Pirandello, Lampedusa was a Sicilian. The only Sardinian novelist of renown is Grazia Deledda. A regional novelist, she has been compared to Thomas Hardy. Her chief works were: *Il vecchio della montagna* (1900), *Elias Portolu* (1903), *Cenere* (1904), *Nostalgie* (1905), *Lombra del passato* (1907), *L’edera* (1908), *Canne al vento* (1913). Other Italian novelists of distinction have been Pratolini, Vittorini and Carlo Gadda.

Among well-known Spanish novelists of the 20th c. mention should be made of Ramon del Valle-Inclan who wrote *Flor de*

## novel

*Santidad* (1904), *La corte de los Milagros* (1926) and *Viva mi dueño* (1926). Also Pío Baroja, author of *El árbol de la Ciencia* (1911). Thirdly, José Cela, who had much success with his first novel *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (1942) and scarcely less with *La colmena* (1951).

The two main Czech novelists of the 20th c. are Kafka and Hašek. Kafka wrote in German and achieved world fame with *Der Prozess* (1925) and *Das Schloss* (1926). Hašek's reputation depends on his picaresque, comic masterpiece *The Good Soldier Schweik* (1920-23).

Among many Yugoslav novelists easily the best known is Ivo Andrić who wrote mostly about his native Bosnia. Three of his finest books are *Na Drini ćuprija* (1945), translated as 'Bridge on the Drina', *Travnička kronika* (1945), translated as 'Bosnian Story', and *Gospodjica* (1945), translated as 'The Woman from Sarajevo'.

The only 20th c. Greek novelist of international standing is Kazantzakis who made a great impact with *Zorba the Greek* (1946). This he followed with *Christ Re-crucified* (1954) and *The Last Temptation* (1955). He has written several other accomplished novels.

In Russia the novel has continued to flourish on much the same scale as in the 19th c. The most venerable figure was Maxim Gorki who published *The Mother* (1907), *A Confession* (1908), *The Artamanov's Business* (1925), and then his unfinished cycle of novels *The Life of Klim Samgin* of which four volumes appeared between 1927 and 1936. Later Moscow 'beatified' him when it found that *The Mother* was the first great novel of socialist realism. Five other major Russian novelists belong to the 20th c. Firstly, Ilya Ehrenburg, author of *The Loves of Jeanne Ney* (1923), *A Street in Moscow* (1930), *The Fall of Paris* (1942) and *The Storm* (1949). Next, chronologically, Sholokhov, who wrote *Tales of the Don* (1925), *Quiet Flows the Don* (1928-38) and *The Don Flows Home to the Sea* (1941). In 1957 Pasternak published *Dr Zhivago*, an epic novel often compared to the work of Tolstoy. In the same year Dudintsev produced *Not by Bread Alone*. More recently Alexander Solzhenitsyn has emerged as a novelist of heroic stature. As with Pasternak his reputation has been inflated by political propaganda. Three of his main works are: *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1963), *The First Circle* (1968) and *Cancer Ward* (1968).

Apart from Borges, the inventor of the *ficcion* (q.v.), two of the better known South American novelists of the 20th c. are the Columbian Gabriel Garcia Marquez who wrote *Cien años de*

*soledad* (1968); and the Argentinian Ricardo Güiraldes, author of *Don Segundo Sombra* (1926).

There are many other novelists in many countries who might be mentioned. The following, though not yet with international reputations, have impressive achievements to their names. They are: B. Traven (a Mexican-German who wrote in German); Elias Canetti (born in Bulgaria of a Spanish-Jewish family, he wrote in German); Junichiro Tanizaki (Japanese); Halldor Laxness (Icelandic); Gusztav Rab (Hungarian); Tarjei Vesaas (Norwegian); Mochtar Lubis (Malayan); Balachandra Rajan and R. K. Narayan (Indian); Khushwant Singh (Punjabi); and Chinua Achebe, Cyprian Ekwensi and Amos Tutuola (Nigerian).

**novel of sensibility** *See* SENTIMENTAL NOVEL.

**novel of the soil** A work of fiction whose main theme is the struggle of human beings against the natural forces of the earth as in Ellen Glasgow's *Barren Ground* (1925), the Norwegian O. E. Rolvagg's *Giants in the Earth* (1927), Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* (1932) and *God's Little Acre* (1933), John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* (1939), and Patrick White's *The Tree of Man* (1956). Many would include D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* (1915), the novels of Mary Webb and some of the work of Thomas Hardy, as well as Jean Giono's descriptions of pastoral life in Provence (e.g. *Colline*, 1929; *Un de Baumugnes*, 1929; *Regain*, 1930; *Batailles dans la montagne*, 1939). *See also* NOVEL; THESIS NOVEL.

**novellat** A form of folk-tale of the Semitic tradition which is of a particular time and place. It lacks universality (*q.v.*) and thus differs from the *chimerat* (*q.v.*).

**novelte** A work of fiction shorter than a novel but longer than a short story (*q.v.*). Often used derogatorily of 'cheap' fiction, sentimental romances and thrillers of popular appeal but little literary merit. In America the term applies to a long short story somewhere between the short story and the *novella* (*q.v.*).

**novella** (It 'tale, piece of news') Originally a *novella* was a kind of short story, a narrative in prose of the genre developed by Boccaccio. His *Decameron* (1471) was a collection of such stories. Slightly earlier appeared Tomassa Guardati's *Novellino* (1467). In the 16th c. Bandello published a collection of 214 *novelle*. Tudor

## novella

dramatists often used *novelle* as source books for plots. Thereafter, there was little sign of the *novella* developing for some time; unless one were to include in this category some of the narratives of Deloney and Greene, Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), Emanuel Ford's *Irnatius and Artesia* (1634), Mrs Behn's *Oroonoko* (1688) and Congreve's *Incognita* (1713). But such works may also be regarded as romances (*q.v.*), or embryonic novels. It was not until late in the 18th and early in the 19th c. that the *novella* was fashioned into a particular form according to certain precepts and rules. Then the Germans became the most active practitioners, and the *Novelle* has since flourished in Germany more than anywhere else.

Goethe summarized the matter when he said: 'What else is a *Novelle* about but an event which is unheard of but has taken place?' The general characteristics of the genre were its epic quality and its restriction to a single event, situation or conflict. It concentrated on the single event and showed it as a kind of chance. The event ought to have an unexpected turning point (*Wendepunkt*) so that the conclusion surprises even while it is a logical outcome. Many *Novellen* contain a concrete symbol which is the steady point at the heart of the narrative. The length has varied a good deal, from perhaps a few pages to two or three hundred.

The principal practitioners were Goethe, Kleist, Tieck, Hoffmann, Theodor Storm, Fontane, Paul Heyse and Herman Hesse; the Swiss writers Gottfried Keller and Conrad Meyer; and the Austrian writers Ferdinand Saar and Arthur Schnitzler.

Nowadays the term is often used to distinguish a long short story from a short story (*q.v.*) and a short novel from a full-dress novel (*q.v.*). Stories which might be placed in this middle-distance category are Tolstoy's *The Cossacks* (1852) and *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1886); Thomas Mann's *Tonio Kröger* and *Death in Venice* (1913); Aldous Huxley's *Two or Three Graces* (1926); Alberto Moravia's *Conjugal Love* (1951); Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952); and H. E. Bates's trilogy *The Nature of Love* (1953). Some would also include Conrad's three long short stories *Youth*, *Heart of Darkness* (1902) and *Typhoon* (1903). See FALKENTHEORIE; NOVELETTE.

**novelty** A good deal was made of the importance of novelty in literature by such writers as Addison, Akenside and Dr Johnson. Johnson approved of it so long as it was a means to an end and



provided variation and freshness. Writers of the Romantic period (*q.v.*) were also preoccupied with the matter. Coleridge takes much the same point of view as Johnson. The judicious test of the value of novelty must be whether or not it is an end in itself or a means to an end. Novelty intended solely to shock or surprise will probably run the risk of being meretricious or melodramatic and may, in some cases, have an unbalancing effect. T. S. Eliot's sober observations in his essay *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (1919) show a sense of proportion on this issue. See IMITATION; ORIGINALITY.

**Nudelverse** See MACARONIC.

**number** The term may refer to poems (poetry in general), verses or metrical feet. When Shakespeare writes in the 17th Sonnet:

If I could write the beauty of your eyes  
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,

he is probably using it in the first sense. On the other hand, when Wordsworth, in *The Solitary Reaper*, writes:

Will no one tell me what she sings? –  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,

he may well be referring to verses.

Pope uses 'numbers' at least twice, and in *Essay on Criticism* is almost certainly using the term in the sense of metrical feet, thus:

But most by numbers judge a poet's song,  
And smooth or rough with them is right or wrong.

**nursery rhyme** Such rhymes belong to oral tradition (*q.v.*) of literature. A nursery rhyme consists of a verse or verses recited or sung by a mother (or other adult) to the very young members of the family. The origins of most nursery rhymes are very obscure and are thought to be of considerable antiquity. Certainly a large number of them are known to have been alive in the oral tradition for two or three hundred years. They range from a very nearly meaningless jingle (*q.v.*) like:

Tae titly,  
Little fitty,

## nursery rhyme

Shin sharpy,\*  
Knee knapy.  
Hinchie pinchy,  
Wymie bulgy,  
Breast berry,  
Chin cherry,  
Moo merry,  
Nose nappy,  
Ee winky,  
Broo brinky,  
Ower the croon,  
And awa' wi' it.

to quite a sophisticated poem in semi-ballad form like 'What can the matter be?'

O dear, what can the matter be?  
Dear, dear, what can the matter be?  
O dear, what can the matter be?  
Johnny's so long at the fair.

He promised he'd buy me a fairing  
should please me,  
And then for a kiss, oh! he vowed  
he would tease me,  
He promised he'd bring me a bunch of blue ribbons  
To tie up my bonny brown hair.

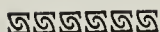
Somewhat more than 800 nursery rhymes are known to exist in English. Many of them are counting jingles, weather rhymes, songs from games, riddles, tongue-twisters and so forth. Apart from these there are ballads, or rhymes in more or less ballad (*q.v.*) form, like: *Aiken Drum*, *Willy Wood*, *Ten Little Nigger Boys*, *The Lover's Tasks*, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, *Tom the Piper's Son*, *Cock Robin*, *The Love-sick Frog*, *The Milk Maid*, *The Derby Ram* and *Bobby Shaftoe*. A score or more of the others could be described as extremely well known and many children are still brought up on them. For example: *Ring-a-Ring o' Roses*, *Humpty Dumpty*, *Goosey Gander*, *Ding, Dong, Bell*, *Old Mother Hubbard*, *Solomon Grundy*, *The Queen of Hearts*, *Miss Muffet*, *Little Jack Horner*, *Jack and Jill*, *Simple Simon*, *The House that Jack Built*, *Sing a Song of Sixpence*, *Old King Cole*, *Little Bo-Peep*, *Oranges and Lemons*, *London Bridge*.

The earliest known collection is *Tom Thumb's Pretty Song Book* (1744). *Mother Goose's Melody* (c. 1765) is another famous compila-

## nursery rhyme

tion. Mention should also be made of *Gammer Gurton's Garland* (1784); *Nursery Rhymes of England* (1842); *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales* (1849); and *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (1951), compiled by Iona and Peter Opie. Another collection by the same editors is *The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book* (1955). See LULLABY.

# O



**obiter dicta** (L 'things said by the way') A vaguely comprehensive term for remarks 'shed' in conversation (or in writing). The aphorism (*q.v.*) or *aperçu* is often an *obiter dictum*. The table talk (*q.v.*) of great men like Goethe contains many examples. Boswell was an assiduous gleaner of Dr Johnson's *obiter dicta*. See - ANA; ANALECT; PENSÉE.

**objective and objectivity** See SUBJECTIVITY.

**objective correlative** A now famous term used by T. S. Eliot in an essay on *Hamlet* (1919). The relevant passage is: 'The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative"'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.' Eliot goes on to suggest that in Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking speech and in the speech that Macbeth makes when he hears of his wife's death, the words are completely adequate to the state of mind; whereas in Hamlet the prince is 'dominated by a state of mind which is inexpressible, because it is in *excess* of the facts as they appear.' These observations have provoked a good deal of debate.

In other (if Thomistic) terms a successful artistic creation requires an exquisite balance between, and coalescence of, form and matter. If the matter (thought, feeling, action) is 'too much', ('in excess of') the form (in this case words) we have a discrepancy, strain, a lack of unity (that is, insufficient correlation; they don't 'fadge'). Vice versa, another kind of discrepancy and strain: the experience is overwhelmed by the words. Colloquially we say 'I was speechless', 'It was indescribable'. In other words we have not found the 'formula'. In reverse, lacking the 'formula' again



we over-describe, say too much. *See* SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**obligatory scene** The English version of the French *scène à faire*. It usually denotes a scene, probably of fairly intense emotional content, which the audience anticipates and which the dramatist feels obliged to include. For instance, one expects, sooner or later, a 'confrontation' between Hamlet and his mother (III, iv). One certainly could hardly expect Shakespeare to have contrived the play without it. When it comes it is an emotional climax.

**oblique rhyme** *See* HALF RHYME.

**obscurity** Obscurity in literature may be deliberate or involuntary. In either case an 'obscure' writer is one whose meaning is difficult to discern. Some 19th c. French poets like Mallarmé and Rimbaud were found obscure, but seem less so now. In this century Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot and David Jones have been charged with obscurity. Marks of obscurity are: an elliptical style (loose syntax; anacoluthon; asyndeton *qq.v.*), recondite allusion and reference, archaic or ornate language, private and subjective imagery, and the use of the words and phrases from foreign languages. A writer who wilfully disguises the fact that he has little or nothing to say is usually found out in the end. *See* HERMETICISM.

**occasional verse** Verse written for a particular occasion, perhaps to celebrate some incident or event. It may be light or serious. The elegy and the ode (*qq.v.*) have been used to produce some memorable occasional verse. The Poet Laureate (*q.v.*) is obliged to write a certain amount of it (e.g. for a coronation or a royal wedding). Notable examples are: Milton's *Lycidas* (1637) and his sonnet *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont*; Marvell's *Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland* (1650); Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* (1697); Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade* (1854); Hopkins's *The Wreck of the Deutschland* (c. 1875); Yeats's *Easter 1916*; and Auden's *September 1st 1939*.

**octameter** A line of eight feet; rare in Classical verse; rarer still in English verse. Swinburne's *March* provides instances; so, in the opinion of some, does Poe's *The Raven*. Tennyson attempted octameters in *Frater Ave atque Vale*:

## octameter

Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!  
So they rowed, and there we landed – ‘O venusta Sirmio!’  
There to me through all the groves of olive in the summer  
glow,  
There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow  
Came that ‘Ave atque Vale’ of the Poet’s hopeless woe,  
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen-hundred years ago,  
‘Frater Ave atque Vale’ – as we wandered to and fro  
Gazing at the Lydian daughter of the Gardy Lake below  
Sweet Catullus’s all-but-island, olive-silver Sirmio!

It can be seen (and heard) at once what a difficult meter it is to manage because of the length of line. The meter is trochaic. Incidentally, the poem also illustrates the use of monorhyme (*q.v.*).

**octastich** (Gk ‘eight rows’) A group or stanza of eight lines. Also *huitain* (*q.v.*). A poem of eight lines. *See also* OCTAVE.

**octateuch** (Gk ‘containing eight books’) Specifically, the first eight books of the Old Testament; namely, the *Pentateuch*, together with *Joshua*, *Judges* and *Ruth*.

**octave** Also known as octet. A group of eight lines – either in stanza form, in which case it is *ottava rima* (*q.v.*), or as the first eight lines of a sonnet (*q.v.*). The octave in a sonnet usually rhymes abbaabba.

**octavo** A book in which the printer’s sheets have been folded three times to produce eight leaves or sixteen pages. Abbr. 8vo. *See also* DUODECIMO; FOLIO; QUARTO.

**octosyllabic verse** A tetrameter (*q.v.*) line containing eight syllables and usually consisting of iambic and/or trochaic feet. Often used in couplets (*q.v.*). In all probability the octosyllabic couplet derives from late medieval French poetry. It was well established in England by the 14th c. when it was used by Chaucer and Gower. Many English poets have since employed it, including Milton, Jonson, Dyer, Collins, Samuel (Hudibras) Butler, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Scott and William Morris. These lines are from Milton’s *Il Penseroso*:

But let my due feet never fail  
To walk the studious cloister’s pale,  
And love the high embowed roof,

With antique pillars massy-proof,  
And storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light.

**octonarius** (L. 'of eight each') In Latin verse a line of eight feet. Also a stanza of eight lines. *See also* OTTAVA RIMA; OCTASTICH; OCTAVE.

**ode** (Gk 'song') A lyric poem, usually of some length. The main features are an elaborate stanza structure, a marked formality and stateliness in tone and style (which make it ceremonious), and lofty sentiments and thoughts. In short, an ode is rather a grand poem; a full-dress poem. However, this said, we can distinguish two basic kinds: the public and the private. The public is used for ceremonial occasions, like funerals, birthdays, state events; the private often celebrates rather intense, personal, and subjective occasions; it is inclined to be meditative, reflective. Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* is an example of the former; Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, an example of the latter.

The earliest odes of any note – or at any rate poems which could be put into the ode category – were written by Sappho (fl. c. 600 B.C.) and Alcaeus (fl. c. 611–580 B.C.). Fragments of Sappho's *Ode to Aphrodite* and Alcaeus's *Ode to Castor and Polydeuces* still survive.

Next, and more important, was Pindar (522–442 B.C.), a native of Thebes, whose odes were written for public occasions, especially in honour of victors in the Greek games. Modelled on the choric songs of Greek drama, they consisted of strophe, antistrophe and epode (*qq.v.*); a patterned stanza movement intended for choral song and dance.

Pindar's Latin counterpart was Horace (65–8 B.C.), but his odes were private and personal. They were stanzaically regular and based on limited metrical patterns, especially Alcaics and Sapphics (*qq.v.*). Between them Pindar and Horace were the begetters of the ode and both influenced the development of the form in Renaissance Europe. Meantime, the Provençal *canço* and the Italian *canzone* came near to the ode. Dante described the canzone as a composition 'in the tragic style, of equal stanzas without choral interludes, with reference to one subject.' This form, as used by Dante, Guinicelli and their contemporaries, survived and flourished into that period known as the High Renaissance, when Spenser's *Epithalamium* (1595) and *Prothalamium* (1596)

## ode

showed the loftiness and majesty of the fully-blown ode. *Epithalamium* consists of twenty-three regularly rhymed eighteen-line stanzas, followed by an *envoi* (*q.v.*). The stanzas are of ten-syllable lines interspersed with six-syllable lines and each concludes with an alexandrine (*q.v.*). Precedents for *Epithalamium* (Gk 'upon the bridal chamber') can be found in the works of Sappho and Catullus. *Prothalamium* (Gk 'before the bridal chamber') is in the same stanzaic form as *Epithalamium* but without the *envoi*.

Late in the 16th c. and early in the 17th William Drummond of Hawthornden, Samuel Daniel and Michael Drayton all attempted odes, but Ben Jonson was the first to write one in the Pindaric tradition; namely, *Ode to Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison* (1629) which contains the following famous lines:

It is not growing like a tree  
In bulk, doth make man better be;  
Or standing long an Oak, three hundred year,  
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sear.  
A Lily of a day  
Is fairer far, in May  
Although it fall and die that night;  
It was the plant and flower of light.  
In small proportions we just beauties see;  
And in short measure, life may perfect be.

Later Andrew Marvell wrote his Horatian *Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland* (1650), and Abraham Cowley published his so-called Pindaric Odes, dispensing with the strophic arrangement. His stanzas were free and varied; so are the lines and meters. This flexibility had much influence on later writers, including Dryden. His four main contributions to the form all come into the Pindaric and public phylum and are among the finest odes in our language. They are: *Threnodia Augustalis* (1685); *Ode to the Memory of Mrs Anne Killigrew* (1686); *Song for St Cecilia's Day* (1687); and *Alexander's Feast* (1697). One would have expected Milton to favour the ode form, but he never described any of his poems as such. Though his *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* is all that one would expect of an ode, and Milton's conception of the grander type of lyric (*q.v.*) had much influence on poets in the 18th c. and during the Romantic period (*q.v.*).

Because of its architectonic possibilities (the elaborate rules, formality and decorum) one would expect the 18th c. poets to



favour the ode form, and indeed that period produced many distinguished examples.

Lady Winchilsea (1661-1720) wrote a Pindaric poem on *The Spleen*, and, early in his life, Pope composed an *Ode on Solitude* in the Horatian style. He also attempted the Pindaric manner in *Ode for Music on St Cecilia's Day*. Congreve, too, surprisingly attempted the ode and even wrote a discourse on the Pindaric Ode. Isaac Watts, Akenside and Young also tried with varying degrees of success, but it was Collins and Gray, and, to a lesser extent, Cowper who wrote the great odes of the Augustan Age. Collins experimented with several metrical arrangements. The main works were: *Ode to Evening* and *Ode to Simplicity* (both in the Horatian mood), *Ode to Fear*, *Ode to Mercy*, *Ode on the Poetical Character*, *Ode to Liberty* (all in the Pindaric tradition and all published in 1747). Gray's odes also showed considerable variety and versatility. Four of them were relatively short and in simple stanza forms. These were the *Ode on Spring* (1742), *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College* (1742), *Ode on Adversity* (1742) and *Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat* (1747). To these should be added his two Pindarics: *The Bard* (1757) and *The Progress of Poesy* (1754).

Then followed: Coleridge's *France* (1798) and *Dejection* (1802); Wordsworth's magnificent *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* (1802-04) and his *Ode to Duty* (1805); Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* (1819); and six superb odes by Keats (c. 1819): *On a Grecian Urn*; *To a Nightingale*; *To Autumn*; *On Melancholy*; *On Indolence*; and *To Psyche*.

After that grand constellation of poems most odes have looked a little pale. However, three notable instances must be mentioned. They are Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* (1854), in the Pindaric manner; and, much more recently, Allen Tate's splendid *Ode to the Confederate Dead*; and Auden's *In Memory of W. B. Yeats* and *To Limestone*, both in the Horatian manner.

Other well-known English poets to have essayed this kind of lyric are: Robert Herrick, Landor, Matthew Arnold, Coventry Patmore, Francis Thompson and Charles Swinburne.

Outside England the ode has flourished particularly in Italy, France and Germany. In Italy experiments in the Pindaric mode were made by Trissinio, Minturno and Alamanni during the Renaissance period; and in France the members of the Pléiade (q.v.) tried the form. The most successful of these poets was Ronsard who, in 1550, published *The First Four Books of the Odes*. Later

## ode

in the 16th c., very probably influenced by Ronsard, the Italian poets Tasso and Chiabrera also published some notable odes. Since their day Manzoni, Leopardi, Carducci and D'Annunzio have all written fine odes. In France the main follower of Ronsard was Boileau (in the 17th c.). In the Romantic period Lamartine, de Musset, and Victor Hugo all attempted this lyric form. So, more recently, did Verlaine and Valéry. In Germany the ode was established by Weckherlin early in the 17th c., with *Oden und Gesänge* (1818)–19). In the following century Goethe, Klopstock and Schiller revived the use of Classical models. Hölderlin, too, wrote some notable odes. *See also* ANTODE; OCCASIONAL VERSE.

**off-broadway.** The term denotes drama produced in New York City away from the main theatre 'stem'. It is often experimental drama. There is also a sub-species known as off-off-Broadway, which is clearly even further removed. Much of this kind of drama is in 'the happening' (*q.v.*) category, and may also be skit and revue (*qq.v.*). Barely professional, some of it is 'freak out'.

**officialese.** A term coined by Sir Ernest Gowers in *Plain Words* (1948) to denote the pompous, abstract, euphemistic, polysyllabic, periphrastic and circumlocutory language often used by officials, bureaucrats, politicians, sociologists, educationists and others. It is a form of verbocrap (*q.v.*), and ranges from semi-literate letters like:

. . . We are in receipt of your esteemed order of the 29th inst. and beg to inform you that the articles in question have been discontinued. We shall cause you to be informed if any such articles are to be found in alternative sources.

to obfuscating 'Whitehallese' like:

The efflorescence of a host of specialists in commerce and industry and the ever widening inroad that the Government is forging into our business lives are carcinogens of effective communication; for the jargon of, on the one hand, such people as computer programmers, systems analysts, cyberneticians, psychologists and, on the other hand, the complex prose of Whitehall constitute an invidious growth which is challenging our ability to express ourselves in clear simple terms.

## one-act play

Other works by Sir Ernest Gowers on the subject are: *The ABC of Plain Words* (1951) and *The Complete Plain Words* (1954). See EUPHEMISM; JARGON; LOGORRHEA; PERIPHRAISIS.

**old comedy** Greek and of the 5th c. B.C., this kind of drama developed from fertility rites in honour of Dionysus. It was fantastic, bawdy and scurrilous, and at times obscene. Invective and satire (*qq.v.*) were essential elements in it. Much of the verse was finely lyrical. The Chorus (*q.v.*) took an important part in the action and represented the dramatist's point of view. In what is known as New Comedy (*q.v.*) the Chorus disappeared. Unhappily only the plays of Aristophanes survive from this period. The best known are *Clouds*, *Knights* and *Frogs*. See COMEDY; MIDDLE COMEDY; PARABASIS.

**Old French (OF) and Provençal forms** Between about 850 to about 1300 most French and Provençal literature was in verse and belonged to oral tradition (*q.v.*). From the 12th c. many of the main forms were becoming established. Metrically elaborate, a great many of them were worked out by the troubadour (*q.v.*) poets. In succeeding centuries most of them were adopted in England and were particularly used by the Victorian poets. The principal forms are: *ballade*, *chant royal*, *conte*, *dit*, *flamenca*, *lai*, *motet*, *rondeau*, *rondel*, *sestina*, *villanelle* and *virelai* (*qq.v.*). See also CHANSON DE GESTE; OCTOSYLLABIC VERSE; ROMANCE.

**Omar Khayyám quatrain** A stanza of four ten-syllable lines rhyming aaba, as used in Edward Fitzgerald's translation from the Persian of *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, first published anonymously in 1859. See also QUATRAIN.

**omnibus edition** Such an edition of an author's works includes in one volume everything that he has written. The works of Oscar Wilde, H. G. Wells and Robert Service, among many others, have been concentrated in such a form.

**one-act play** Self-evidently a dramatic work consisting of only one act. Usually short (a playing time of fifteen to forty minutes is about normal). Very rare before late in the 19th c. though there are many earlier examples of shortish plays which could qualify as one-act plays, and the after-piece popular in the 18th c.,

## one-act play

was a kind of one-act play. However, towards the end of the 19th c. an increasing number of small experimental theatres greatly encouraged the development of the one-act drama as a form in its own right and it was often used as a curtain-raiser (*q.v.*). Since that period it has flourished and is as popular as ever, though seldom used as a curtain-raiser. A more common practice now is to present two or three one-act plays by way of a double or triple bill. Two recent examples of this are Harold Pinter's *Landscape and Silence* (1970) and John Mortimer's *Come As You Are* (1971).

A one-act play is the dramatic equivalent of a short story and tends to concentrate on a single episode or situation and as a general rule has only two or three characters. In theme, mood and subject the range is considerable – from farce to tragedy. Many famous dramatists have attempted the form, including Chekhov, Strindberg, Shaw, Hauptmann, Synge, J. M. Barrie, Eugene O'Neill, Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter. Of the hundreds of examples that exist the following are some of the better known: Chekhov's *The Bear* (1888), *The Proposal* (1889); and *The Wedding* (1890); Strindberg's *The Stronger* (1890), *Playing with Fire* (1892) and *The Link* (1897); Yeats's *The Pot of Broth* (1902); Synge's *Riders to the Sea* (1904); Lady Gregory's *The Gaol Gate* (1906) and *The Rising of the Moon* (1907); O'Neill's group of one-act plays about the sea (1916–18) later produced as *S.S. Glencairn* (1924); J. M. Barrie's *Shall We Join the Ladies?* (1922).

Some more recent ones are: Genet's *The Maids* (1947) and *Deathwatch* (1949); Rattigan's *The Browning Version* (1948); Ionesco's *The Bald Prima Donna* (1950), *The Lesson* (1951) and *The Chairs* (1952); Wolf Mankowitz's *The Bespoke Overcoat* (1953); Ionesco's *The New Tenant* (1955); Harold Pinter's *The Room* (1957); David Campton's *The Lunatic View* (1957); John Mortimer's *Dock Brief* (1958) and *What Shall We Tell Caroline?* (1958); Beckett's mono-drama *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958); Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* (1959); Rattigan's *Separate Tables* (1959), a double one-act bill; David Campton's *Four Minute Warning* (1960). See also QUART D'HEURE.

**onomasticon** A Greek term for a book of names or a vocabulary. Formerly used sometimes for lexicon and dictionary (*qq.v.*).

**onomatopoeia** (Gk 'name-making') The formation and use of words to imitate sounds. For example: *dong*, *crackle*, *moo*, *pop*, *whizz*,



*whoosh, zoom.* It is a figure of speech in which the sound reflects the sense. It is very common in verse and fairly common in prose and is found in many literatures at all times. As a rule it is deliberately used to achieve a special effect, as in these lines from Eliot's *Dry Salvages*:

When the train starts, and the passengers are settled  
To fruit, periodicals and business letters  
(And those who saw them off have left the platform)  
Their faces relax from grief into relief,  
To the sleepy rhythm of a hundred hours.

The whole passage is subtly onomatopoeic; the rhythm of the second line is a beautifully skilful evocation of the clickety-click of wheels on rails.

Pope's obiter dictum that the 'sound must seem an echo to the sense' is profoundly true of poetry in general. The following lines from D. H. Lawrence's poem *Snake* illustrate the point:

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the gloom  
And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied down, over  
the edge of the stone trough  
And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,  
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a small  
clearness,  
He sipped with his straight mouth,  
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack long body,  
Silently.

In the rhythm, motion and length of the lines and in the totality of the sound effects Lawrence has suggested very well the sinuous and slow progression of the reptile. The sound effects are, so to speak, visual as well as aural. This is phanopoeia (*q.v.*). See also ALLITERATION; ASSONANCE; CACOPHONY; CONSONANCE; EUPHONY; LOGOPOEIA; MELOPOEIA; PHANOPOEIA; SYN-AESTHESIA; TONE COLOUR.

**ontology** A philosophical term which denotes the study of being. As a literary term it has a special meaning, thanks to John Crowe Ransom. According to him the texture (*q.v.*) and structure (*q.v.*) of a poem, which, combined, provide the meaning, combine also to give it 'ontology' – that quality or property peculiar to itself which distinguishes it from anything that is *not* poetry.

## open couplet

**open couplet** A couplet (*q.v.*) in which the sense is not completed in the second line, but is carried forward into the third or fourth line; or perhaps for several, though this is rare. This example comes from Pope's *Epistle to Augustus*:

Our rural Ancestors, with little blest,  
Patient of labour when the end was rest,  
Indulg'd the day that hous'd their annual grain,  
With feasts, and off'rings, and a thankful strain.

See CLOSED COUPLET; END-STOPPED LINE; ENJAMBEMENT; HEROIC COUPLET.

**opera** (L *opera* 'exertion, service' collective feminine from plural of neuter noun *opus* 'work') Originally opera was chanted tragedy, and what is generally agreed to be the first, Rinuccini's *Dafne* (1594), was an attempt to revive Classical Greek tragedy – a form which has had a profound influence on opera. The masque (*q.v.*) influenced the development of opera. Surprisingly few writers (and very few poets) have been attracted to opera as writers (except, of course, for those whose expertise and business it is to compose libretti). On the other hand, librettists and composers have drawn freely upon plays and other works for their operas. An interesting example of a collaboration between dramatist and composer is that between Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, which produced *The Threepenny Opera* (1928), *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (1927–29) and *The Seven Deadly Sins* (1933). More recently Auden collaborated with Stravinsky to create *The Rake's Progress* (1951). Some notable modern examples of adaptation are Benjamin Britten's opera from Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* (1953), Herman Melville's *Billy Budd* (1951) and George Crabbe's story of Peter Grimes in his poem *The Borough* (1945). See also BALLAD OPERA; LIBRETTO; MELODRAMA; OPERETTA.

**opere citato** (L 'in the work cited') Often abbreviated to *op. cit.*, it refers to a book to which reference has already been made. See IBIDEM; IDEM; LOCO CITATO.

**operetta** (It 'little opera') A light drama (for all practical purposes synonymous with F *opéra bouffe*, It *opera buffa* and G *Singspiel*). It consists of musical interludes and spoken dialogue, often satirical. Famous examples are Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728), Sheridan's *The Duenna* (1775) and the numerous works of Gilbert and Sullivan. See also BALLAD OPERA; OPERA.

**oral tradition** Poetry belonging to this tradition is composed orally, or made up as the poet goes along. As a rule, it is the product of illiterate or semi-literate societies. It is usually sung or chanted (often to musical accompaniment) and is the earliest of all poetry, in the sense that it precedes written poetry. It is still alive in many parts of the world, and in some regions of Europe: for instance, Sicily, the remoter parts of Greece, and in the central Balkans (especially Bosnia, Serbia and Macedonia). In the upland districts of Yugoslavia it is still possible to find a *guslar* (*q.v.*) reciting verses on recent events. *See also* BALLAD; BYLINA; EPIC; FOLKSONG; NARODNE PESME.

**organic form** The idea of it can be found as far back as Plato's *Phaedrus* where Socrates draws an analogy between making a speech and the growth of a living creature. However, it was the German romantics and Coleridge who really worked out the analogy. In brief the term refers to the subject, essence and materials of a work of literature. The implications are that a work 'grows' from a seminal concept, like a living organism. So declared Henry James and Croce, and many others. *See* DONNÉE; LIGNE DONNÉE.

**organic metaphor** Also known as a functional or structural metaphor; in this figure of speech the vehicle (see tenor and vehicle) is symbolic and carries an implicit tenor. If we examine the following passage from Robinson Jeffers's poem *Hurt Hawks* we may be able to disentangle sense from this thicket of jargon. He has described the wounded hawk and his feelings about it. He comes to the point where he decides that the creature must be put out of its misery:

I gave him the lead gift in the twilight.  
 What fell was relaxed,  
 Owl-downy, soft feminine feathers; but what  
 Soared: the fierce rush: the night-herons by the flooded river  
 Cried for fear at its rising  
 Before it was quite unsheathed from reality.

The periphrasis and euphemism (*qq.v.*) of 'lead gift' clearly denote a bullet. What follows suggests that the released 'spirit' of the hawk soars heavenwards; the reversal of stooping to its prey. 'Unsheathed from reality' suggests parting from this life; the sheath being the heap of 'feminine feathers'. Thus the vehicle is

## organic metaphor

the event of death; the tenor, the image (very nearly abstract in this case) the soaring of the hawk's 'soul'. *See also* METAPHOR; TELESCOPED METAPHOR.

**originality** A work may be said to possess this quality if, as a result of the author's invention (*q.v.*) he innovates a new form or mode; or, perhaps, uses hitherto undiscovered or unexploited themes and subjects. *See* CONVENTION; FANCY AND IMAGINATION; INSPIRATION; NOVELTY; PLAGIARISM.

**orismology** (Gk 'definition of knowledge') The explanation of technical terms, which is what this dictionary is in aid of. *See* LEXICOGRAPHY.

**orta oyunu** (T 'middle play') A kind of Turkish folk drama (*q.v.*) not dissimilar to *commedia dell'arte* (*q.v.*). The characters are Turkish regional 'types' and the actors imitate their dialects while depicting their occupations. The stage is usually an open space with an audience all round. Occasionally a platform is used. Scenery is limited and the actors normally sit with the audience. Each actor has his own piece of music and introduces himself with a song or a dance. There are two main characters – Pişekâr and Kavuklu. The former wears a brightly coloured costume and carries a club which he uses to hit the other actors. Pişekâr is on stage nearly all the time. The latter is the comic character and the dialogues between them form the basis of the play. There is also a woman (Zenne) played by a man, and perhaps one or two other subsidiary characters. Each *orta oyunu* normally consists of two parts. In the first Pişekâr and Kavuklu do their comic turn (reminiscent of Punch and Judy), and in the second the Turkish character types are 'taken off'. *See* KARAGÖZ.

**orthotone** A word which is normally unstressed, but which, because it occupies a certain position in a metrical line, may receive stress. Likely words are: and, but, the, a, an, to. Orthotonic words are fairly common in ballad (*q.v.*).

**Oscan Fable** *See* FABULA.

**Ossianism** Ossian is the name normally given to Oisín, a legendary Gaelic warrior and poet, who is supposed to have lived in the 3rd c. In 1760 James Macpherson (1736–96) published *Fragments of*



*Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language.* In 1762 he produced *Fingal*, and in 1763 *Temora*. Both purported to be translations of epic poems in Gaelic by a poet named Ossian. In fact they were a sort of fabrication of Gaelic ballads mixed with Macpherson's own work. Notwithstanding this, his evocation of a remote past, a Gaelic twilight of myth and legend, had a considerable influence on writers in Europe and made some contribution to Romanticism (*q.v.*). Goethe was particularly interested in the Ossianic poems; so were Herder and Schiller. They were widely translated, and the long-term effects of the so-called 'Ossianic movement' are discernible late in the 19th c.

**ottava rima** (It 'eighth rhyme') An eight-line iambic stanza rhyming abababcc. It is almost certainly of Italian or Sicilian origin, and it may have developed from the *canzone* (*q.v.*) or the *strambotto* (*q.v.*). A number of medieval Italian poets employed it, including Boccaccio who, by using it in *Teseida* (c. 1340) and *Filostrato* (c. 1340), helped to establish it as the main form for Italian narrative verse (*q.v.*). Other poets who developed it were Boiardo, Pulci and Poliziano in the 15th c. Ariosto used it for *Orlando Furioso* (1516) and Tasso for *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1575). Spanish and Portuguese poets followed their example, particularly Ercilla in *La Araucana* (1569, 1578, 1589) and Camoëns in *Os Lusíadas* (1570). The form was introduced into English verse by Sir Thomas Wyatt early in the 16th c. Later Spenser and Drayton used it. It was not favoured much thereafter until Shelley and Keats experimented. It proved the ideal vehicle for Byron's narrative poems. He used it for *Beppo* (1818) and *The Vision of Judgment* (1822), and, most notably, in *Don Juan* (1819–24). From time to time since, other poets have employed the form. Yeats's *Sailing to Byzantium* is an outstanding example. He also wrote *ottava rima* for *Among School Children*, from which the following stanza (the last) comes:

Labour is blossoming or dancing where  
 The body is not bruised to pleasure soul,  
 Nor beauty born of its own despair,  
 Nor blear-eyed wisdom out of midnight oil.  
 O chest-nut tree, great-rooted blossomer,  
 Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?  
 O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,  
 How can we know the dancer from the dance?

## ottava rima

See HUITAIN; SICILIAN OCTAVE; SPENSERIAN STANZA.

outrides See SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**Oxford Movement** Also known as the Tractarian Movement, it originated in July 1833 as a result of a sermon by Keble on the subject of national apostasy; a sermon against the Latitudinarian and Erastian attitudes of the time. Men who shared Keble's views supported him, and in 1833 there appeared the first of the famous *Tracts for the Times*. The most notable figures in the movement were Newman, Froude and Pusey. The main object was to revive the position and role of the Church of England and to re-emphasize its sacramental and Divine mission. Ironically, in the course of this reforming effort, doctrines akin to those of Roman Catholicism were adopted.

The movement caused a very considerable disturbance and involved several leading literary figures – especially Charles Kingsley and Matthew Arnold. Kingsley attacked Newman and the latter replied in *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1864), a major work in English literature. See TRACT.

**oxymoron** (Gk 'pointedly foolish') A figure of speech which combines incongruous and apparently contradictory words and meanings for a special effect. As in Lamb's celebrated remark: 'I like a smuggler. He is the only honest thief'.

It is a common device, closely related to antithesis and paradox (*qq.v.*), especially in poetry, and is of considerable antiquity. There are many splendid instances in English poetry. It was particularly popular in the late 16th c. and during the 17th. A famous example occurs in *Romeo and Juliet*, when Romeo jests about love:

Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:  
Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!  
O any thing! of nothing first create.  
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!  
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!

Other well-known examples are Milton's description of hell in *Paradise Lost*:

No light, but rather darkness visible

And Pope's reference to man in *Essay on Man*:

Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,  
A being darkly wise, and rudely great.

Goldsmith has some striking ones in *The Deserted Village*:

Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired

The toiling pleasure sickens into pain

A particularly well-known example comes in Tennyson's *Lancelot and Elaine*:

The shackles of an old love straiten'd him  
His honour rooted in dishonour stood,  
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Almost as well-known are these lines in Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven*:

I tempted all His servitors, but to find  
My own betrayal in their constancy,  
In faith to him their fickleness to me,  
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal deceit.

And a very arresting one in Gerard Manley Hopkins's *The Wreck of the Deutschland*:

[She] Was calling 'O Christ, Christ, come quickly':  
The cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens her  
wild-worst best.

Probably the most famous instance of sustained oxymoron is Sir Thomas Wyatt's version of Petrarch's 134th sonnet, which begins:

I find no peace, and all my war is done;  
I fear and hope, I burn and freeze like ice;  
I flee above the wind, yet can I not arise;  
And nought I have and all the world I season.

Other English poets who have used the figure extensively are Keats and Crashaw. The Italian Marino and the Spaniard Gongora also had a predilection for it.

**oxytone** (Gk 'sharp strain') A word or line of verse with the accent (*q.v.*) on the last syllable. Every iambic or anapaestic line bears the accent or stress on the last syllable. *See* ANAPAEST; FOOT; IAMB.

□□□□□

**paean** (Gk 'striking' from *paiein* 'to strike') A song or hymn of joy, exultation or praise. In ancient Greece it was an invocation (*g.v.*) or thanksgiving addressed to Apollo the Striker, 'one who strikes blows in order to heal mankind'.

I caught | thís mór|níng mór|níng's mí|níõn, kíng-  
dõm õf dáylight's | daúphín, | dápplë | dáwn-dráwn |  
Fálcõn, ín hís | rídíng  
Õf the róllíng | lévé! | úndër|neáth hím | stéadý | áir, ánd |  
strídíng  
Hígh thère, hõw hë | rúng úpõn the | reín õf á wímp|líng wíng  
Ín hís écsť|sý! thèn õf, | õf fórt h́n swíng,  
Ás á skáte's heél | sweéps smóoth | õn á bów-bënd: | thè  
húrl ánd glídíng



Rěbúffed | thě bíg wínd. | Mý heárt | ĩn híđing  
 Stírred főr ħ bĭrd, | – thě ħchĭeve őf, | thě mástěry | őf thě  
 thĭng.

This is only one of several possible ways of scanning this piece of verse. However it is scanned, it contains pronounced variations. The first line is fairly even iambics with an anapaest to end. The second line scans: paeon c|trochee | trochee | spondee | trochee. 'In his riding' is paeon c. Line three scans: paeon c| followed by six trochees. Line four scans: paeon a| paeon a| choriamb| iamb. Line five scans: paeonic| anapaest| spondee| spondee (but 'off forth on swing', depending on how it is read, might be paeonic in two or possibly three different ways. It might also be antispast: U // U). Line six scans: paeon c| spondee| paeon c |iamb. 'And gliding' is amphibrach. Line seven scans: iamb| bacchius|iamb| amphibrach. Line eight scans: choriambus | paeon c | paeon b | anapaest. *See also* EPITRITE; SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**pageant** Originally the movable stage or platform on which the medieval Mystery Plays (*q.v.*) were presented, it was built on wheels and consisted of two rooms: the lower was used as a dressing room, the upper as a stage. Later, the term was applied to plays acted on this platform. In modern usage it describes any sort of spectacular procession which presents *tableaux* and includes songs, dances and dramatic scenes. This sort of entertainment was fashionable in the early decades of the 20th c., especially in depicting local history. The annual Lord Mayor's Show in London carries on the tradition. A recent and interesting example of a kind of dramatic pageant was John Arden's *Left-Handed Liberty* (1965), a play commemorating the six-hundredth anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. *See also* MASQUE; MORALITY PLAY.

**palaeography** (Gk 'ancient writing') The study of and the art of deciphering ancient manuscripts, inscriptions and writings.

**palilogy** (Gk 'speaking over again') A deliberate repetition of a word or words for emphasis. A common rhetorical device. The following example is from Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot*, and comes from Lucky's long speech in Act I:

. . . so fast I resume the skull to shrink pine waste and concurrently simultaneously what is more for reasons unknown

## palilogy

in spite of the tennis on on the beard the flames the teams the stones so blue so calm alas alas on on the skull the skull the skull in Connemara in spite of the tennis the labours abandoned left unfinished graver still abode of stones in a word I resume alas alas abandoned unfinished the skull the skull in Connemara in spite of the tennis the skull alas the stones Cunard . . .

**palimbacchius** Also known as the anti-bacchius. In Greek prosody a foot of two stressed syllables and one unstressed: // U. In other words, the reverse of bacchius (*q.v.*). Rare in English verse, but occasional examples occur in the work of Tennyson, Swinburne, Browning, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Ezra Pound, W. B. Yeats, and more recent poets.

**palimpsest** (Gk 'again rubbed away') A surface, usually vellum or parchment, which has been used more than once for writing on, the previous writing having been rubbed out or somehow removed. Medieval parchment, being expensive, was often used two or three times.

**palindrome** (Gk 'running back again') A word or sentence (occasionally a verse) which reads the same both ways. Common words are: *civic, level, minim, radar, rotor*. Famous examples of such phrases or sentences are: (a) 'Madam, I'm Adam', to which the reply was 'Sir, I'm Iris'; (b) Able was I ere I saw Elba (attributed apocryphally to Napoleon who, alas, spoke no English); (c) Sums are not set as a test on Erasmus; (d) A man, a plan, a canal – Panama!; (e) 'In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni,' said by Latin-speaking moths in flight; (f) 'Straw? No, too stupid a fad; I put soot on warts!'; (g) "'Deliver desserts", demanded Nemesis, emended, named, stressed, reviled.' There are also numerical palindromes. A simple example is: add 132 to 231 for the total 363.

The best known collection of verses was that produced by one Ambrose Pamperis in 1802. It consists of 416 palindromic verses recounting the campaigns of Catherine the Great. *See also* ACROSTIC.

**palinode** (Gk 'singing over again') A recantation in song or verse. Usually a poem in which a writer retracts or counter-balances a statement made in an earlier poem. The first palinode was a lyric by the Greek poet Stesichorus (*c.* 640–655 B.C.) in which he

withdrew his attack on Helen as the cause of the Trojan war. Ovid is supposed to have written his *Remedia Amoris* in order to retract his *Ars Amatoria*. As a theme the palinode is not uncommon in love poetry. A well-known instance of a palinode in English literature is Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* (c. 1372-86), written to atone for the story of the false Criseyde in *Troilus and Criseyde*.

**palinodic** Adjective of palinode (*q.v.*). It describes a verse where two similar stanzas or stanzaic groups (e.g. strophe *q.v.* and anti-strophe *q.v.*) are interrupted by another matched pair.

**palliata** See **FABULA**.

**pamphlet** A small unbound book, usually with paper covers. Originally a pamphlet was a sort of treatise (*q.v.*) or tract (*q.v.*). It then came to mean a short work written on a topical subject on which an author feels strongly. Many outstanding writers have used the pamphlet to express vigorous political or religious views. The pamphlet has flourished most notably in England in the hands of such authors as Sir Thomas More, Tyndale, Greene, Dekker, Milton, Defoe, Swift and Shelley plus the 19th c. Chartists. During the 18th and 19th c. many political controversies were dealt with by pamphlets. In France, too, the pamphlet has been much used – especially during times of unrest like the Revolutionary period from 1789 to 1848.

**panegyric** (Gk 'pertaining to public assembly') A speech or poem in fulsome praise of an individual, institution or group of people. Originally panegyric was a branch of rhetoric (*q.v.*) whose rules were laid down in the rhetorical works of Menander and Hermogenes. Scaliger also provides its rules in *Poetices Libri Septem* (1561). Two famous examples from Classical times are the festival oration delivered by Isocrates (436-338 B.C.) on the occasion of the Olympic games in 380, and Pliny the Younger's (A.D. 61-c. 113) eulogy on Trajan. Mark Antony's funeral oration in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (1599) could be described as panegyric. See **ENCOMIUM**.

**panoramic method** A term for the omniscient viewpoint (*q.v.*) in authorship, especially in writing fiction.

**pantaloön** The old man in Harlequinade (*q.v.*) who is the butt of the clown's practical jokes. Pantalone was an elderly Venetian in

## pantaloon

*commedia dell'arte* (*q.v.*) renowned for being greedy, suspicious, gullible and amorous. In Elizabethan times, a term applied to an old man. Hence the reference by Jaques to 'the lean and slippered pantaloon' in his speech on the seven ages of man in *As You Like It* (II, vii, 158).

**pantomime** (Gk 'all imitator') It may be merely a synonym for mime (*q.v.*), but its principal modern meaning is an exotic and spectacular entertainment particularly suitable for children. It first became popular in England in the 18th c., when it was a variation on the Harlequinade. By the 19th c. it had become the main item on a bill. Modern pantomime is based on fairy tales, and it will include popular songs and topical comedy. Tradition requires the hero or principal boy to be played by a girl, and the comic older woman, the dame, to be played by a man. Favourite subjects are Cinderella, Aladdin, Dick Whittington, The Babes in the Wood and Jack and the Bean Stalk.

The term has also been used to describe mime plays, dumb show, melodrama (*qq.v.*), and 18th c. mythical ballets. In ancient Rome actors sometimes performed a kind of pantomime, with the aid of masks, in the dramatization of fabulous tales called *fabula Atellana*. See **FABULA**.

**pantun** A verse form of Malayan origin. A poem of no determinate length, composed of quatrains (*q.v.*) with internal assonance (*q.v.*) and rhyming abab. The second and fourth lines of each stanza become the first and third lines of the next. In the last quatrain the first line of the poem re-appears as the last, and the third line as the second. *Pantun bĕrkait* and *pantun bĕrikat* are terms which denote sets of quatrains; and a *pantun sindiran* is an epigram (*q.v.*). The form was introduced into Western poetry by Ernest Fouinet in the 19th c. Some distinguished French poets used it, notably Victor Hugo, Leconte de Lisle and Baudelaire. It never proved popular in England. One of the better known versions is Austin Dobson's *In Town*.

**parabasis** (Gk 'going aside, stepping forward') Part of the choral performance in Greek Old Comedy (*q.v.*). Usually near the end of a play the Chorus, without masks, came forward and addressed the audience directly in a speech which contained the personal views of the author on some topical matter of religion or politics. See **ANTODE**; **EPIRRHEMA**.



**parable** (Gk 'side throwing, comparison') A short and simple story, related to allegory and fable (*qq.v.*), which points a moral. Our Lord's forty parables are recorded in the synoptic Gospels only. *See* EXEMPLUM.

**paradiastole** (Gk 'side separation') A form of euphemism (*q.v.*) where the force and tone of a description is deliberately weakened – often in irony (*q.v.*). For example: 'unattractive' for 'ugly', 'perceptive' for 'sharp', 'uncivilized' for 'savage'. *See* LITOTES.

**paradigm** (Gk 'example') A pattern, exemplar or model which, as a literary device, points up a resemblance, as in Edmund Waller's *On a Girdle*:

It was my heaven's extremest sphere,  
The pale which held that lovely deer:  
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,  
Did all within this circle move.

**paradox** An apparently self-contradictory (even absurd) statement which, on closer inspection, is found to contain a truth reconciling the conflict-opposites. There is a paradox at the heart of the Christian faith: that the world will be saved by failure. As a source of wit and conceit (*q.v.*) the paradox has been much exploited by many writers from Plato to the present day. The metaphysical poets (*q.v.*), particularly Donne and Marvell, abound with paradox. Writers in the Restoration period (*q.v.*) were addicted to it; witness Congreve's neat turn of phrase in *Amoret*:

Careless she is with artful care,  
Affecting to seem unaffected.

In modern times, apart from Bernard Shaw (an incorrigible paradoxer of the more iconoclastic kind), the expert is G. K. Chesterton. He uses the paradox like a comedian who has discovered an almost inexhaustible source of humour, and in his hands the device becomes a stunt in verbal and conceptual acrobatics. In recent verse one of the most remarkable series of paradoxes can be found at the beginning of Eliot's *Little Gidding*:

Midwinter spring is its own season  
Sempiternal though sodden towards sundown,  
Suspended in time, between pole and tropic . . .  
When the short day is brightest, with frost and fire,

## paradox

The brief sun flames the ice, on pond and ditches,  
In windless cold that is the heart's heat,  
Reflecting in a watery mirror  
A glare that is blindness in the early afternoon  
And glow more intense than blaze of branch, or brazier,  
Stirs the dumb spirit: no wind, but pentecostal fire  
In the dark time of the year.

See OXYMORON.

**paragram** (Gk 'letter joke') A play on words by alteration of a letter or letters. Quite often a facetious and low form of humour, of traditional 'schoolboy' kind – for example: 'What's black and creamy?' Answer: 'A woghourt'. However, it may attain respectability and sense on occasion – for example: 'The straw that breaks the *hamal's* back' (author's example). See also PUN; SPOONERISM.

**paragraph** (Gk 'side writing') Originally a short, horizontal stroke drawn below the beginning of a line in which there was a break in the sense. Now, for all practical purposes, a passage, or section, or subdivision in a piece of writing. Usually a paragraph deals with one particular point or aspect of the subject presented. It may vary greatly in length.

**paralipomena** (Gk 'things left out') Matter left out of the main body of a work and included in appendices.

**parallelism** (Gk 'alongside one another') A very common device in poetry (especially Hebrew poetry) and not uncommon in the more incantatory types of prose. It consists of phrases or sentences of similar construction and meaning placed side by side, balancing each other, as in *Isaiah IX, 2*:

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:  
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them  
hath the light shined.

Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy:  
they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men  
rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Parallelism is common in poetry of the oral tradition (*q.v.*) – for instance, in *Beowulf* and the *narodne pesme* (*q.v.*) – and often the effect is that of a litany (*q.v.*). Other interesting examples can be found in the work of Langland, T. S. Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, and especially in the verse of Walt Whitman who probably used the device more than any other poet.

**paraphrase** (Gk ‘tell in other words’) A version in other words of the sense of any passage or text. It may be a free rendering or amplification of a passage (not to be confused with *précis* *q.v.*). As Dryden put it: ‘. . . translation with latitude where the author is kept in view . . . but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense’. Paraphrase is often used nowadays in re-writing technical books and articles in language which the layman can understand.

**para-rhyme** See HALF RHYME.

**parataxis** (Gk ‘beside arrangement’) Co-ordination of clauses without conjunctions; the opposite of hypotaxis (*q.v.*). Common in Latin and not unusual in English. The effect is terseness and compression. Pope was expert in its use within the exacting form of the heroic couplet (*q.v.*), as these lines from his *Epistle IV: to Richard Boyle* suggest:

Still follow Sense, of ev’ry Art the Soul,  
Parts answ’ring parts shall slide into a whole,  
Spontaneous beauties all around advance,  
Start ev’n from Difficulty, strike from Chance;  
Nature shall join you, Time shall make it grow  
A work to wonder at – perhaps a stow.

See ELLIPSIS; POLYSYNDETON.

**parenthesis** (Gk ‘put in beside’) A word, phrase or clause put into a sentence which is grammatically complete without the insertion. Usually marked by brackets, dashes or commas. For example: Parenthesis – usually marked by brackets, dashes or commas – is often used when a writer wishes to qualify a statement.

**Parnassians** Parnassianism was an influential literary movement in France in the second half of the 19th c. It was a kind of reaction against the romanticism (*q.v.*) of Victor Hugo, de Vigny and

## Parnassians

Lamartine, against subjectivism and 'artistic socialism'. Some scholars take Théophile Gautier (1811-72) as the founder and star of the movement. Others hold that Leconte de Lisle (1818-94) was the 'chef d'orchestre'. They both had much influence. In the Preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835) Gautier put forward the belief that art was an end in itself, not a means to an end. In Gautier's view a poet was like a sculptor, a craftsman who must be strictly objective and fashion his poem into something almost tangible. Hence analogies with the plastic arts, and imagery drawn from them. And hence the idea of objective poetry from which the personality of the poet is eliminated. This looks forward to Eliot's dictum that the 'progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality'. *L'art pour l'art* can be taken as one of the slogans of *les Parnassiens*. In other words, poetry was a religion.

Most of the French Parnassians were born round about 1840, and the main movement started with Catulle Mendès and L.-X de Ricard in the early 1860s. At their meetings Leconte de Lisle (1818-94) was the oracular figure (one might say the Lenin of the movement, to Gautier's Marx). Apart from him the important figures were: Theodore de Banville (1823-91), Sully Prudhomme (1839-1907), François Coppée (1842-1908), Léon Dierx (1838-1912), Jean Lahor (1840-1909), and J.-M de Heredia (1842-1905).

By the 1870s the theories of this Parnassian School were beginning to be felt in England, largely through the influence of de Banville whose *Petit traité de poésie française* (1872) was widely known. De Banville corresponded with Austin Dobson, Swinburne, Edmund Gosse and Andrew Lang, and the so-called English Parnassians became enthusiastic followers of the French cult, especially in matters of style and form and in the use of older French forms like *ballade*, *rondeau* and *villanelle* (*qq.v.*). However, the doctrines of 'art for art's sake' (*q.v.*) never really caught on in England. *See also* AESTHETICISM; PERSONAL HERESY; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**parody** (Gk 'beside, subsidiary or mock song') The imitative use of the words, style, attitude, tone and ideas of an author in such a way as to make them ridiculous. This is usually achieved by exaggerating certain traits, using more or less the same technique as the cartoon caricaturist. In fact, a kind of satirical mimicry. As a branch of satire (*q.v.*) its purpose may be corrective as well as derisive.



If an author has a propensity for archaic or long words, double-banked adjectives, long, convoluted sentences and paragraphs, strange names, quaint mannerisms of expression; is sentimental, bombastic, arch or pompous, then these are some of the features that the would-be parodist will seek to exploit.

Parody is difficult to accomplish well. There has to be a subtle balance between close resemblance to the 'original' and a deliberate distortion of its principal characteristics. It is, therefore, a minor form of literary art which is likely to be successful only in the hands of writers who are original and creative themselves. In fact, the majority of the best parodies are the work of gifted writers.

The origins of parody are ancient. Aristotle refers to it in *Poetics* and attributes its invention to Hegemon of Thasos who used an epic style to represent men as being inferior to what they are in real life. Hegemon was supposed to have been the first man to introduce parody in the theatre, in the 5th c. B.C. However, the 6th c. poet Hipponax has also been credited with this.

Aristophanes used parody in the *Frogs* where he took off the style of Aeschylus and Euripides. Plato also caricatured the style of various writers in the *Symposium*. Lucian used parody in his *Dialogues*. It was so common among Latin authors that Cicero listed its varieties. In the Middle Ages parodies of the liturgy, hymns and the Bible were fairly frequent. One of the first and best known English parodies was Chaucer's *Tale of Sir Thopas* (c. 1383), a skit on some of the more absurd characteristics of medieval romances (Chaucer was in turn to be well parodied by Alexander Pope and W. W. Skeat).

Late in the Renaissance period Cervantes parodied the whole tradition of medieval romances in *Don Quixote* (1605, 1615). Erasmus in *Moriae Encomium* (1509) and Rabelais in *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1534, 1532) turned scholasticism upside down. Shakespeare parodied the euphuism (*q.v.*) of John Lyly in *Henry IV* Pt. I (1597), Marlowe's bombastic manner in *Hamlet* (c. 1603) and the general style of Nashe in *Love's Labour's Lost* (c. 1595). Later Sir John Suckling took off Donne splendidly as a love poet, and in 1701 John Philips parodied Milton very cleverly in *The Splendid Shilling*. Somewhat earlier Buckingham produced one of the few dramatic parodies which have survived contemporary interest; namely *The Rehearsal* (1671) which mocked Dryden's *The Conquest of Granada*.

In 1736 Isaac Hawkins's *A Pipe of Tobacco* created a precedent

## parody

because it was the first collection of parodies of various authors' supposed attempts on a single subject. Fielding's burlesque drama *Tom Thumb* ('The Tragedy of Tragedies') appeared in 1730; and Fielding's *Shamela* (1741) was a complete parodic novel at the expense of Richardson's *Pamela* (1740). To the 18th c. also belongs Sheridan's *The Critic* (1779), a successful parody of sentimental drama and the malicious literary criticism of the period.

The Romantic period and the 19th c. provided a succession of ample targets for literary iconoclasts. In 1812 James and Horace Smith published *Rejected Addresses* in which Scott, Wordsworth, Byron, Coleridge, Dr Johnson and others were parodied very successfully. Thereafter, Burns, Byron, Wordsworth, Poe, Longfellow, Tennyson, Browning, William Morris, the Rossettis, Swinburne, Southey, Whitman, Hopkins and Kipling were quite frequently parodied, often by writers equally distinguished. For example, Keats on Wordsworth, Byron on Wordsworth, James Hogg on Wordsworth, Swinburne on Tennyson, C. S. Calverley on Browning, Lewis Carroll on Swinburne, Hogg on Coleridge – and so forth. The favourite victims were Southey, Wordsworth, Browning and Swinburne.

Max Beerbohm refined parody to art, and his collection of his own parodies in *A Christmas Garland* (1912), which includes pieces in the manner of Kipling, Galsworthy, Hardy, Arnold Bennett, Edmund Gosse and others, is generally agreed to have set a standard which may never be surpassed.

In what has been described as the 'post Beerbohm' period of parody there is to be found as much variety as in the 19th c. and often as much skill. James Joyce was a gifted parodist, some of whose best efforts can be found in the 'Oxen of the Sun' episode of *Ulysses*. A classic parody of the 1930s was Stella Gibbons's *Cold Comfort Farm* (1932), a clever caricature of the primitivism (*q.v.*) of Mary Webb's novels – and also, for that matter, of the primitivism of Hardy, J. C. Powys and D. H. Lawrence. More recent and talented instances are C. Day Lewis's parodies in Part V of *An Italian Visit*, Cyril Connolly on Aldous Huxley, Paul Jennings on Resistantialism, Kenneth Tynan on Thornton Wilder – plus a whole school of American parodists much of whose work has appeared in *The New Yorker*. The best known of these are Robert Benchley, Peter De Vries, Wolcott Gibbs, S. J. Perelman, Frank Sullivan, James Thurber and E. B. White. In 1961 Dwight Macdonald published *Parodies: An Anthology from Chaucer to Beerbohm – and After*: an admirable collection of vintage pieces.

See BURLESQUE; LAMPOON; MOCK-EPIC; MOCK-HEROIC; SKIT.

**paronomasia** See PUN.

**paronym** (Gk 'beside word') A word from the same root as another, especially a word taken from another language with slight modifications. For example: Gk *ekstasis* – OF *ecstasie* – Med L. *extasis* – English *ecstasy*.

**paroxytone** A word, or line of verse, with the accent on the penultimate syllable. See OXYTONE.

**partimen** A form of *jeu parti* (*q.v.*) and related to the *tenson* (*q.v.*). A kind of poetic debate in which, for example, a poet presents a proposition. A stock instance is: it is better to love a woman than be loved by her. A second poet then defends or rejects the proposition; after which the first again defends his proposition. The issue is then referred to an arbiter for settlement. There are occasional instances of a triple *partimen* with three poets engaged. See POETIC CONTESTS.

**part-song** A song whose parts are sung by different voices to create a harmony: with or without instrumental accompaniment.

**paso** (Sp 'passage') A procession representing part of the Passion of Christ. The term has also been applied to a short dramatic piece and a comic interlude.

**pasquinade** (It *pasquinata* 'lampoon') *Pasquinata* derives from the name Pasquino or Pasquillo given to a damaged statue discovered in Rome in 1501. The custom developed that it was honoured on St Mark's Day by having satirical Latin verses hung on it. Hence, a lampoon (*q.v.*) hung up in some public place.

**passion play** A religious drama presenting the Crucifixion of Christ, usually performed on Good Friday. The first was performed in c. 1200 at Sienna. In 1244 *The Passion* and *The Resurrection* were presented together at Padua. In some places Passion Plays were incorporated in the Corpus Christi cycle; in others they remained separate. Long after the Reformation they were performed in Southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The most famous

## passion play

survival is at Oberammergau, Bavaria, where the villagers have performed the play every ten years since 1633. See MIRACLE PLAY; MYSTERY PLAY.

**passus** (L 'step') A division in a story or poem; a chapter, a canto (*q.v.*). Langland used the term for the sections of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*.

**pastiche** (It *pasta* 'paste') A patchwork of words, sentences or complete passages from various authors or one author. It is, therefore, a kind of imitation (*q.v.*) and, when intentional, may be a form of parody (*q.v.*). See CENTO; COLLAGE.

**pastoral** (L 'pertaining to shepherds') A minor but important genre which, by convention, is usually concerned with the lives of shepherds. It is of great antiquity and interpenetrates many works in Classical and modern European literature. It is doubtful if pastoral ever had much to do with the daily working life of shepherds, though it is not too difficult to find shepherds in Europe (in Montenegro, Albania, Greece and Sardinia, for instance) who compose poetry, sing songs and while away the hours playing the flute. For the most part pastoral tends to be an idealization of shepherd life, and, by so being, creates an image of a peaceful and uncorrupted existence; a kind of pre-lapsarian world.

The origins of pastoral with many of its conventions are to be found in the works of Theocritus (*c.* 316–*c.* 260 B.C.), a native of Syracuse in Sicily, who wrote pastorals for the sophisticated Greeks of Alexandria. He wrote what are called *Idylls* or *Epyllia* (*qq.v.*), short mythological narratives, and pastoral or bucolic poems: dialogues or monologues which treated of the lives of shepherds, goatherds, neatherds, farmers and fishermen. His shepherds are involved in the contests of piping and the improvisation of songs. They also descant on the attractions of girls. An important figure in his poems was Daphnis, a shepherd who married a nymph and was killed by Aphrodite for being so obstinately faithful to the nymph. Nature mourned the death of Daphnis, and this became the prototype of the pastoral elegy (*q.v.*) of which an outstanding example is Milton's *Lycidas*.

Theocritus's successors were Bion (*c.* 100 B.C.) and Moschus (*c.* 150 B.C.), whose poems were similar. Virgil (70–19 B.C.) modelled his *Eclogues* on Theocritus and in them evoked that



'golden age' in which innocent shepherds and shepherdesses lived in primitive bliss.

The next work of note in the tradition is the Greek pastoral romance *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus (3rd–5th c. A.D.), the model of the romance favoured by writers at the Renaissance. Latin poets of the Middle Ages wrote eclogues but little of note survives except for a poem in dialogue form by Alcuin (735–804). This is an early instance of the medieval form of *débat* (q.v.). In the later Middle Ages we find poems of a dramatic character which are associated with Whitsuntide and May Day games; especially a form known as the *pastourelle* (q.v.). An interesting instance of a pastoral poem in this tradition is Henryson's *Robene and Makyne* (15th c.).

One may suppose that by the late Middle Ages the pastoral imagery which was an important feature of the Christian and Hebrew teaching may well have had some influence on pastoral. After all, Christ was the shepherd and human beings were His flock. Such knowledge enhanced the conviction that the shepherd's life was a paradigm of tranquillity and harmonious love. In this connection one should note that *The Adoration of the Shepherds* was a popular medieval Mystery Play (q.v.).

Petrarch and Boccaccio wrote eclogues in Latin; but more influential than these were the Latin pastorals of Mantuan (1448–1516). These had some vogue throughout Europe and were texts for schoolboys in England in the Elizabethan period. Alexander Barclay's five *Eclogues* (c. 1515–21) were also influential. Two were translations from Mantuan, and three were adaptations from the *Miseriae Curialium* (15th c.) of Aeneas Sylvius who became Pope Pius II.

By this time the pastoral 'novel' was also beginning to be established. In the 14th c. Boccaccio wrote one called *Ameto*, and in 1504 Sannazaro published *Arcadia*. It comprised twelve verse eclogues linked by prose and set a fashion which Montemayor followed with *Diana* (c. 1559), and this in its turn was a kind of model for Sidney's pastoral romance *Arcadia* (1590). Meantime, Spenser's *Shepherd's Calender* was closely modelled on the eclogues of Theocritus, Virgil and Mantuan. It consisted of twelve poems (one for each month of the year) all of which showed great metrical variety and skill. The elements of allegory (q.v.), pastoral elegy (q.v.) and the *débat* (q.v.) were apparent. In this *Calender* Spenser combined the idealized world of Classical pastoral with the everyday world of English shepherds and gave

## pastoral

this combination a unity by projecting the inner world of his own imagination. Pastoral conventions were also noticeable in other works by Spenser, especially in *Colin Clout's Come Home Again*, in *Daphnida* (an elegy on the death of Douglas Howard) and *Astrophel* (an elegy on the death of Sir Philip Sidney).

In the late 16th c. many other works amplified the pastoral tradition, such as Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*, which evoked a memorable reply from Sir Walter Raleigh. Michael Drayton also wrote some eclogues (1593) in which he introduced an earthier and more realistic quality to pastoralism, particularly in *Daffodil*, *The Shepherd's Sirena* and *The Muses' Elysium*.

At about this time pastoral drama appeared in Italy with Tasso's *Aminta* (1581) and Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* (1583). The influence of these works is discernible in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (c. 1599) and *A Winter's Tale* (c. 1609-10); also in Ben Jonson's unfinished play *The Sad Shepherd* (1641). This was a descendant of the Whitsuntide pastorals. James Shirley also wrote a pastoral play called *The Arcadia* (1640) which was a kind of adaptation from Sidney's work. But probably the most distinguished pastoral play in English literature was John Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* (c. 1610). Masques (q.v.) of the period also used pastoral themes. One of the last to do so was Milton's *Comus* (1634).

Pastoral and pastoral drama also flourished in France in the latter part of the 16th c. and during the 17th. We find early traces of Italian influence in the poets of the Pléiade (q.v.) and Belleau wrote a *Bergerie* which used a pastoral framework for some complimentary poems. The first major works are Nicolas Filleul's *Ombres* (1566) and Belleforest's *Pastorale amoureuse* (1569). In 1585 Nicolas de Montreux started the publication of *Bergeries de Juliette*, a pastoral romance which had several sequels. He also wrote pastoral dramas, notably *Diane* (1594) and *Arimine* (1596). From then on pastoral in one form or another proliferated in France. Some of the more important works are: Montchrétien's *Bergerie* (1600); Nicolas Chrestien de Croix's *Les Amantes ou la grande pastourelle* (1613); Honoré d'Urfé's *L'Astrée* (1607-27); Racan's *Bergeries* (1625); Mairet's *Sylvie and Silvanire* (c. 1625-29); Gombauld's *Amaranthe* (1631). Hereabouts pastoral is becoming decadent, as we can see from Pichou's *Folies de Cardenio* (1629) and Mareschal's *Inconstance d'Hylas* (1630), both of which were based on *L'Astrée*. In 1629 Sorel parodied *L'Astrée* in *Berger extravagant*. Some time

later Molière wrote some successful pastoral comedies, notably *Mélicerte* (1666) and *Les Amants magnifiques* (1670).

In England, in the 17th c., broadly speaking, the pastoral undergoes modifications in form and content. Like Raleigh, John Donne 'replied' to Marlowe with *The Bait*. In this poem Donne tilts laconically at the conventions and assumptions of pastoral.

William Browne, on the other hand, a friend of Drayton and Jonson, settled for the well-established Elizabethan tradition. For the most part his pastoralism is 'romantic' (he appealed to poets of the Romantic period *q.v.*, especially Keats), and his main works, *Britannia's Pastorals* (1613, 1616, 1852) and *Shepherd's Pipe* (1614), are rather anaemic and diffuse.

Phineas Fletcher, a contemporary of Browne, also worked in the Spenserian Elizabethan tradition. His *Piscatorie Eclogs* (1633) deal with the lives of fishermen rather than shepherds. Sannazaro had already done this with his piscatory eclogues in 1526, and in 1555 the Dalmatian poet Petar Hektorović had published *Ribanje i ribarsko prigovaranje*, a realistic fishing pastoral.

Apart from these the main name in connection with the pastoral convention in the 17th c. is Milton – who was influenced by Fletcher and Spenser. Pastoral elements occur in his *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, *L'Allegro*, *Arcades*, *Comus*, and, above all, in *Lycidas* (1637). Minor works of note by contemporaries of Milton are those by Marvell, especially his *Damon the Mower*, *The Mower Against Gardens*, *The Mower to the Glow-worms*, and *The Mower's Song*. Marvell's use of the pastoral theme is highly individual.

Later in the 17th c. Sir Charles Sedley and Dryden wrote verses which sustained the pastoral convention. For instance, a slight work by Sedley called *Phyllis Knotting*, and Dryden's *The Lady's Song*. One should note also that Dryden wrote some good pastoral verse for the sub-plot of *Marriage à la Mode*. In this play Leonidas and Palmyra have been brought up as shepherds though they are of noble birth. In these verses they look back to the old days.

Fundamentally, this is what pastoral is about: it displays a nostalgia for the past, for some hypothetical state of love and peace which has somehow been lost. The dominating idea and theme of most pastoral is the search for the simple life away from the court and town, away from corruption, war, strife, the love of gain, away from 'getting and spending'. In a way it reveals a yearning for a lost innocence, for a pre-Fall paradisaical life in which

## pastoral

man existed in harmony with nature. It is thus a form of primitivism (*q.v.*) and a potent *nostalgie du temps perdu*. Hence the myth of the golden age which, in Classical literature, is diffused in Hesiod, Virgil and Ovid. In the Middle Ages Boethius, Jean de Meung, Dante and Chaucer used it as an image or metaphor for the Garden of Eden. During the Renaissance period the expression of a longing for this Arcadian world was worked out in greater detail. But it is probably not entirely a coincidence that, as the mythopoetic attractions of pastoral happiness diminish, so Utopia (*q.v.*) begins to acquire a particular interest for people.

In the 18th c. pastoral was further modified. It remained a popular genre, but too often became effete, precious, 'Dresdenesque'. In 1709 Pope published four pastoral poems in imitation of Spenser. These showed considerable elegance and technical virtuosity. In the same year Ambrose Philips also published some pastorals. Between the two poets there was some rivalry and envy over the respective merits of their poems. John Gay took Pope's part and in *Shepherd's Week* (1714) attempted a parody of Philips's work. This misfired because Gay, in his efforts to show what rustic life was really like, produced a realistic 'home-spun' type pastoral. Gay also composed several ironical eclogues.

Apart from these, most 18th c. poems in the pastoral tradition were descriptions of particular places, and thus were topographical poetry (*q.v.*). One of the earliest examples of this kind of poem was Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642). Others of note were Pope's *Windsor Forest* (1713) and Dyer's *Grongar Hill* (1726). Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* belonged to this kind. Longer and more ambitious descriptive poems were James Thomson's *The Seasons* (1726-30) which derives from Virgil's *Georgics*. A century later John Clare wrote something rather similar in the form of *The Shepherd's Calendar* (1827). Other major minor works, so to speak, of the 18th c. which employ pastoral elements are: Alan Ramsay's pastoral drama *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725); William Shenstone's *A Pastoral Ballad* (1755); William Collins's *The Persian Eclogues* (1742); and Thomas Chatterton's *The African Eclogues* (c. 1777).

In his *Shepherd's Week*, John Gay had shown how it was possible to treat rural subjects in a realistic manner instead of with a stylized and rose-tinted formalism. When George Crabbe published *The Village* in 1783 he painted the cot

As Truth will paint it and as bards will not.



Most of Crabbe's verse annals were outstanding for their realistic treatment of rural scenes.

For Blake the shepherd was still a symbol of an innocent and unspoilt way of life; and for Wordsworth also the country, unblemished nature and the uncorrupted existence of countrymen, were in many ways ideal. However, Wordsworth, like Crabbe, had no liking for the formal pastoral and was realistic in his treatment of rural themes and scenes. In his topographical and narrative poems we have what amounts to a new version of pastoral even though he still stresses the simplicity and innocence of country life. This is evident in *The Pet Lamb*, *The Idle Shepherd Boys* and *Michael*. Wordsworth is fully aware of the pastoral tradition and in *Michael* (1800), which is a kind of narrative idyll, he shows the destruction of the traditional pastoral way of life. It is a mournful, almost tragic poem and is a counterpart to Goldsmith's lament in *The Deserted Village* (1770). In a remarkable passage (lines 173 ff.) in Book VIII of *The Prelude* Wordsworth evoked the whole history of pastoral, contrasting the old idea of the shepherd's 'smooth life' with rough reality. Nevertheless, the 19th c. produced two great pastoral elegies in Shelley's *Adonais* (1821) and Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis* (1867). Moreover Landor returned to the pastoral manner of Theocritus in his *Hellenics* (1846-7).

From about the middle of the 19th c. onwards the pastoral tradition fissiparated, and the main results, as a rule interesting experiments, display much variety. Later attempts at a kind of pastoralism were made by Tennyson in *Dora*, *The Northern Farmer* and *The Princess*; by William Barnes in his dialect *Poems of Rural Life*; by John Davidson in *The Fleet Street Eclogues*; and by Edward LeFroy in *Echoes from Theocritus*, a series of sonnets in the tradition of Theocritus's Idylls. To these we should add a number of poems by the French Parnassians, the poems in A. E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*, miscellaneous poems by W. B. Yeats and Eduardo Marquina's *Églogas*.

Other noteworthy works which, in tenuous ways, are associated with the pastoral, the eclogue and pastoralism are: Ezra Pound's *An Idyll for Glaucus*; Roy Campbell's satirical pastiche *A Veld Eclogue: The Pioneers*, and his *Jungle Eclogue*; Auden's *Eclogue by a Five-barred Gate*, and his *The Age of Anxiety*; MacNeice's *Eclogue for Christmas*; George Barker's long narrative poem in *débat* (q.v.) form, *Goodman Jacksin and the Angel*; Norman Cameron's *Shepherds and Shepherdesses*; and William Bell's *Elegies*.

## pastoral

Though pastoral may die in one form it is likely to be re-incarnated, and the traditional primitivist themes reanimated. To support this one may cite the novels of Jean Giono, and the fine lyrics of R. S. Thomas whose austere compassionately eye has done for the Welsh rural scene what Crabbe, in a totally different way, did for his parish.

**pastourelle** A short narrative poem of the Middle Ages (in Provençal *pastorela*) whose typical subject is a meeting between a knight and a shepherdess. A kind of 'debate' follows, and the shepherdess may or may not succumb; or she may outwit the knight, or be rescued by shepherds. *Pastourelle* was a popular form of entertainment in OF in the 13th c. *See also* DÉBAT; PASTORAL.

**pataphysics** A pseudo-philosophical system devised by Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), and known as the 'science of imaginary solutions'. Jarry was a precursor of Surrealism (*q.v.*), and after the Second World War a number of devotees founded the *Collège de Pataphysique*. With solemn whimsy they invented rules and regulations and in fact produced a sort of parody of the conventional college of learning. The main spirits in this 'joke' were Ionesco, Raymond Queneau, Boris Vian, Jacques Prévert and Jean Dubuffet. Pataphysics are the metaphysics of nonsense (*q.v.*) and the absurd, and are anti-reason. The influence of the ideas can most clearly be seen in the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*).

**patavinity** A rare term which denotes dialect peculiarities in writing. It also denotes a 'provincial' style. The word derives from the place-name *Patavium* – where Livy was born. The historian's writings were said to possess such oddities.

**pathetic fallacy** A phrase invented by John Ruskin in 1856 (*Modern Painters* Vol. III, Pt IV). According to Ruskin a writer was pathetically fallacious when he ascribed human feelings to the inanimate. For Ruskin it was a derogatory term because it applied, so he said, not to the 'true appearances of things to us', but to the 'extraordinary, or false appearances, when we are under the influence of emotion or contemplative fancy'. To illustrate his point Ruskin quotes from Kingsley's *The Sands of Dee*:

They rowed her in across the rolling foam –  
The cruel, crawling foam.

And from Coleridge's *Christabel*:

The one red leaf, the last of its clan  
That dances as often as dance it can.

Such passages are, according to Ruskin, 'morbid', however beautiful they may be.

Such a form of personification (*q.v.*) has been used countless times from Homer onwards, and still is. By Ruskin's criterion, therefore, many of the greatest poets would qualify as morbid. Nowadays the phrase is used in a non-pejorative and therefore neutral way to define this common poetic phenomenon.

**pathopoeia** (Gk 'making of feeling') A scene or passage intended to arouse feelings: anger, grief or passion. For example, Henry V's pre-battle speeches in *Henry V*.

**pathos** (Gk 'suffering, feeling') That quality in a work of art which evokes feelings of tenderness, pity or sorrow. For example: in *Hamlet*, Gertrude's speech describing the death of Ophelia; in *Othello*, the death of Desdemona.

**patois** A word of unknown origin which denotes a local dialect, especially in France and French Switzerland. We find it in OF as *patois* 'rough speech'; perhaps from the OF *patoier* 'to handle roughly'. Often used loosely as an equivalent of cant, lingo, slang (*qq.v.*). See also ARGOT.

**patronage** A patron is a person of wealth and position (often of power and rank, also) who bestows bounty on an artist and thus supports him. In return the artist dedicates his work to the patron and thus honours him. Two of the most famous patrons were the Emperor Augustus, and his friend Maecenas. Both were much celebrated for their patronage of learning and letters. Maecenas was benefactor to Virgil and Horace. Patronage was common in classical times and throughout the medieval and Renaissance periods. As the power of printers and publishers increased, patronage became less frequent. Nevertheless, quite a large number of writers continued to enjoy the advantages of benefactors during the 17th and 18th c. See also POET LAUREATE.

**patter song** Usually a kind of comic lyric (*q.v.*) half spoken, half sung – or chanted. In ancient Greek comedy (*q.v.*) it was known

## patter song

as *pnigos* (*q.v.*). A large number of patter songs developed during service life in the First World War and lasted thereafter. The Cockney tradition of a quick-fire line of guff, and the music hall tradition of a jokey story half sung, half told, were both strong influences. Two famous ones are:

Today is my daughter's wedding day,  
Ten thousand pounds I'll give away. (Three cheers)  
On second thoughts I think it best  
To put it away in the old oak chest.  
You mingy bastard! Chuck him out! etc. etc.

And:

Help, help, there's a woman overboard!  
Who will save her?  
I will!  
Who are you?  
Ballocky Bill the sailor, just returned from sea!

Such more or less nonsense patters might be recited for no reason at all, perhaps only to relieve tension or create a diversion. A famous example of service's patter (still to be heard in training depots) is the drill sergeant's admonitory chant to recruits:

And while you're resting I'll tell you a little tale. When I was a lad I had a box of wooden soldiers. They were beautiful wooden soldiers and I thought the world of them. Well, one day I lost them and the loss nearly broke my poor little heart. So I went to my mother and I told her what had happened. 'Never mind, son, she said,' never mind. You'll find your wooden soldiers again one day.' (Pause for effect, and balefully appraising glance from sergeant.) And, by God, I have, too!!

Not a few of the best patters are bawdy. One of the most famous is *The Showman* (or *The Wild West Show*). It was known before the First World War, but became very popular during it.

Most patter songs belong to the oral tradition (*q.v.*). An instance of a 'written' one is Gilbert and Sullivan's 'nightmare' in *Iolanthe*.

*Patter* probably derives from *Pater Noster*; from the rapid recitation of the prayer when, for example, saying the rosary. See also JINGLE.

**pattern** As a literary term, a model, design, plan or precedent, -



with the implication of being worthy of imitation. Pope's *Imitations* of Horace the Roman's pattern. *See also* ARCHETYPE; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**pattern poetry** Probably Oriental in origin, this kind of poem has its lines arranged to represent a physical object, or to suggest action/motion, mood/feeling; but usually shape and motion. Thus geometric figures are common; other shapes are wings, egg and spear. Pattern poems first appear in the works of Greek bucolic poets, particularly those of Simias of Rhodes (4th c. B.C.). It seems that the Planudean version of the *Greek Anthology* passed on the idea. In English literature pattern poems begin to appear in the 16th c.; for instance, in Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589). George Herbert's *Easter Wings* is one of the most famous examples. Among modern poets to attempt the form are Apollinaire, Mayakovsky, E. E. Cummings and Dylan Thomas. This example comes from Dylan Thomas's series of twelve pattern poems entitled *Vision and Prayer*:

Who  
 Are     you  
 Who is born  
 In the next room  
 So loud to my own  
 That I can hear the womb  
 Opening and the dark run  
 Over the ghost and the dropped son  
 Behind the wall thin as a wren's bone?  
 In the birth bloody room unknown  
 To the burn and turn of time  
 And the heart print of man  
 Bows     no     baptism  
 But     dark     alone  
 Blessing     on  
 The     wild  
 Child.

*See* ALTAR POEM; CONCRETE VERSE; EMBLEM BOOK; PRUNING POEM; RHOPALIC VERSE.

**pause** In prose fiction a kind of resting point which allows the reader to reflect. Trollope uses the device quite often in his recapitulations. In verse, the equivalent of a caesura (*q.v.*). In

## pause

drama, an indication that there is to be a silence – often of no determined length. Some modern dramatists (e.g. Jean-Jacques Bernard, De Montherlant, Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter) have made extensive use of the pause: an exploitation of the dramatic principle that what people do not say may be quite as important as what they do say. *See also* THEATRE OF SILENCE.

**payada** In Spanish-American *una paya* is an improvised song accompanied by a guitar. *Un payo* is 'a rustic', and *un payaso* 'a clown or buffoon'. A *payada* has come to denote a dialogued poetical composition which the *payadores* improvise and accompany on the guitar. Two *payadores* may play in counterpoint; hence *payada de contrapunto*. In the Argentine this is a popular form of contest between *gauchos*. In Argentina the *payador* is akin to our strolling player, and thus related to the *jongleur*, *trouvère* and *troubadour* (*qq.v.*).

**penny dreadful** A novel (*q.v.*) or novelette (*q.v.*) of mystery, adventure, crime and action. Without any literary pretensions. Bound in paper and cheaply printed. A penny, from the cost; dreadful, presumably, because they were regarded as low, vulgar, sensational etc. Known among schoolboys as 'bloods', and the equivalent of the American dime novel (*q.v.*). G. K. Chesterton wrote a celebrated defence of penny dreadfuls. *See also* BLUE BOOK; DETECTIVE STORY; MELODRAMA; ROMAN À DEUX SOUS; THRILLER.

**pensée** (F 'thought') A thought (or reflection) put in literary form. It may be only a short sentence – like the average aphorism or maxim (*qq.v.*) or it may run to several pages. The most famous collection of *pensées* is unquestionably Pascal's. It constituted the notes and framework for an uncompleted *Defence of the Christian Religion* (1670). According to how they are numbered and classified there are between eight hundred and a thousand of Pascal's *pensées*. They display a profoundly original and acute mind and constitute one of the great works of European literature. A brief example is: 'Memory and joy are intuitive; and even mathematical propositions become so. For reason creates natural intuitions, and natural intuitions are erased by reason.'

Many writers keep notebooks, diaries, journals, daybooks and other memoranda in which they jot down thoughts, but relatively few have chosen to make the *pensée* the main vehicle of

their thinking. Indeed, had Pascal lived to complete his work the result would have been an *apology* (*q.v.*) for the Christian faith rather than a diversity of thoughts. However, outstanding examples of those who followed in the Pascal tradition are Diderot, whose *Pensées philosophiques* (1746) were intended as a kind of reply to Pascal's work, and Joseph Joubert (1754–1824) who took the *pensée* as his principal form. His observations on a wide variety of subjects were edited by Chateaubriand as *Recueil des pensées* (1838).

English writers have not been given so much to the *pensée* habit, though many of their journals and notebooks abound in them, and many survive in collections of table talk (*q.v.*). However there have been some notable contributions in the Pascal tradition. First, Ben Jonson's *Timber, or Discoveries made upon Men and Matters* (1640, a collection of *obiter dicta*, *sententiae* and reflections on miscellaneous subjects. Some are only a line or two; some as long as short essays. George Savile, Marquess of Halifax composed three collections of 'thoughts' towards the end of the 17th c. but not published until 1750, when they appeared as *Political, Moral and Miscellaneous Reflexions*.

To these one may add two other notable collections from more recent years: *Speculations* (1924), the result of Herbert Read's editing of T. E. Hulme's notebooks; and *The Unquiet Grave* (1944) by Palinurus, alias Cyril Connolly, an assembly of quotations and sage *aperçus* on a wide range of topics. See also CHARACTER; DIARY; ESSAY; OBITER DICTA; SENTENTIA.

**pentameter** (Gk 'of five measures') The five-foot line and the basic line in much English verse; especially in blank verse and the heroic couplet (*qq.v.*). It was probably introduced by Chaucer, and was certainly established by him. For the next five hundred years it was the line unit commonly favoured by scores of poets. Late in the 19th c. poets began to experiment in freer forms, hence free verse (*q.v.*). It was Ezra Pound, as much as anyone, who helped to loosen its traditional hold ('To break the pentameter,' he said, 'that was the first heave'). In the 20th c. poets have experimented a great deal with lines of varying length, yet the pentameter has remained a most convenient unit.

The first two lines from this poem, *Mr Edwards and the Spider*, by Robert Lowell, are pentameters; the following three are not.

    Tôi sáw | thễ spí|dễrs mάρ|chỉnh through | thễ áir,  
    Swímmỉng | frồm trée | to trée | thất mớl|dễwed dáy

## pentameter

În lăttër | Aúgŭst | whĕn thĕ háŷ  
Căme creáking | tŏ thĕ bárn. | Bŭt whére  
Thĕ wínd | ǐs wéstĕrlŷ . . .

The basic foot in English pentameters is iambic. In antiquity the pentameter was a dactylic-spondaic line of two equal parts: two and a half feet + two and a half feet. Coleridge illustrates this use neatly in *Ovidian Elegiac Meter*:

În thĕ hĕx|ámĕtĕr | rísĕs thĕ | fóuntain's | sílvĕrŷ | cólŭmn,  
În thĕ pĕn|támĕtĕr | áye fáll ǐng ǐn mĕlŏďŷ bák.

See DACTYL; HEXAMETER; IAMB.

**pentapody** (Gk 'five feet') A group or line of five feet.

**pentarsic** (Gk 'five rises') A line with five metrical beats, like an iambic pentameter (*q.v.*). See ARSIS AND THESIS.

**pentastich** (Gk 'five lines') A stanza or poem of five lines. See QUINTET; CINQUAIN.

**penthimimer** (Gk 'of five halves') In Greek and Latin verse a metrical unit consisting of two feet.

**perfect rhyme** Also known as true or full rhyme, it occurs when there is an exact correspondence between vowel sounds and the following consonants, but not of the consonants preceding the vowel. It may be single, double or triple: haunch – launch; dollar – collar; podium – sodium. See also RIMES RICHES; RIMES SUFFISANTES.

**period** A term commonly used in the history of literature for convenient if sometimes arbitrary classification and reference. For example: Renaissance period, Restoration period, Augustan, Romantic and Victorian period (*qq.v.*). Renaissance really derives from the history of art. Restoration has political connotations. Augustan suggests a certain style (*q.v.*) as well as having political connotations. Romantic derives from a literary term and implies a certain attitude and feeling. Victorian is a matter of chronology: roughly coincident with a sovereign's reign. Such classifications have little to do with literary norms, are often misleading, and should be used sparingly.



For the grammatical sense of period: See Loose and Periodic sentence.

**periodical** A magazine or journal published at regular intervals: monthly, quarterly etc. The periodical, as we understand it today, dates from the middle of the 17th c. The exclusively literary periodical is more recent. The first of any note to appear was the French *Journal des Scavans* (*Savants*) in 1665). Then came the Italian *Giornale de Letterati* (1668–81), and the British *Mercurius Librarius* (1668–1711). The *Athenian Mercury* (1690–97) and the *Gentleman's Journal* (1692–94) were then precursors of *The Spectator*. The opening years of the 18th c. were vital in the evolution of the periodical, and the essay (*q.v.*) because of Defoe's *Review of the Affairs of France and All Europe* (1704–12) – and *The Tatler* (1709–11), *The Spectator* (1711–12) and *The Guardian* (1713), all three of which were established by Addison and Steele. In 1731 *The Gentleman's Magazine* first came out and was to last until 1907. Boswell was one of its more famous contributors. Similar publications were *The London Magazine* (1732–84), *The Scots* (1739–1817), which became *The Edinburgh* for seven years after that, *The Oxford* (1768–82), and *The European* (1782–1826). *The Museum* (1746–47) and *The Monthly Review* (1749–1845) were landmarks in the development of the literary periodical. The latter was a Whig journal and from this time politics were to influence the genre for many years. Three important Tory periodicals from about the same period were: *The Critical Review* (1756–1817), *The London Review* (1775–80) and *The British Critic* (1793–1843). In 1802 was published *The Edinburgh Review*, one of the most famous and influential of all periodicals. It lasted until 1929. *The Quarterly Review*, a Tory publication, began in 1809 and is still published. From this period, too, dates the foundation of Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*. From the beginning of the 19th c. there was a steadily increasing number of periodicals until the First World War. Since then, and especially since the Second World War, the number has steadily decreased largely because they are too expensive to produce. Some of the more famous publications in the 19th c. were the *London Magazine*, *Fraser's Magazine*, the *Dublin University Magazine*, the *Cornhill Magazine*, *Longman's Magazine*, the *London Quarterly Review*, *The Athenaeum*, *The Spectator*, *The Saturday Review*, *The Examiner*, *Truth* and *The Speaker*. In the 20th c. some of the landmarks in periodical literature have been the publication of *The Times*

## periodical

*Literary Supplement*, *The Saturday Westminster Gazette*, the *Week-End Review*, *The New Statesman*, *Time and Tide*, *The New Age*, *T. P.'s Weekly*, *G. K.'s Weekly*, and *John o' London's Weekly*. Sir John Squire's *London Mercury* was a literary magazine of prime importance. Also *Horizon*. In more recent years *The London Magazine* has been revived, and *Encounter* has established itself.

Outside England the periodical has flourished also, especially in France, Germany, Italy and America.

**peripeteia** (Gk 'sudden change') Peripety is a reversal of fortune; a fall. In drama, usually the sudden change of fortune from prosperity to ruin; but it can be the other way about. A much debated term, it was first used by Aristotle in *Poetics* (Chap. VI). The relevant passage, in Bywater's translation, is:

[Peripety] is the change from one state of things within the play to its opposite of the kind described, and that too in the way we are saying, in the probable or necessary sequence of events; as it is for instance in *Oedipus*: here the opposite of things is produced by the Messenger, who, coming to gladden Oedipus and to remove his fears as to his mother, reveals the secret of his birth.

See ANAGNORISIS; TRAGEDY; TURNING POINT.

**periphrasis** (Gk 'roundabout speech'). A roundabout way of speaking or writing; known also as circumlocution; thus, using many or very long words where a few or simple words will do. For example: Her olfactory system was suffering from a temporary inconvenience (i.e. her nose was blocked). Much periphrasis comes from an over-nice regard for 'politeness', in the pejorative sense. Semi-literate people are also tempted to this sort of pomp and verbosity. It is also much loved by lawyers, politicians, officials, bureaucrats and verbocrats. What Sir Ernest Gowers described as 'officialese' (*q.v.*) is laden with the periphrastic. It is very often the result of slack thinking, but it may be used deliberately – usually for comic effect, especially in the depiction of character. In the 18th c., particularly, propriety and poetic decorum required periphrastic usage. See DECORUM; EUPHEMISM; HOMERIC EPITHET; JARGON; KENNING; METALEPSIS; PLEONASM; POETIC DICTION; TAUTOLOGY.

**peroration** The concluding part of an oration, speech or discourse; a summing or rounding up of what has gone before. It suggests

## personification

the grand manner favoured by Greek and Roman orators and 18th and 19th c. statesmen. In written works Dr Johnson, Gibbon and Macaulay, for instance, were inclined to perorate.

**persona** (L 'mask') Originally a mask or false face of clay or bark worn by actors. From it derives the term *dramatis personae* (q.v.) and, later, the word *person*. In literary and critical jargon *persona* has come to denote the 'person' (the 'I' of an 'alter ego') who speaks in a poem or novel or other form of literature. For instance, the narrator of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the speaker in Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, the different speakers in Browning's dramatic monologues, the Gulliver of *Gulliver's Travels*, Marlow in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and other stories by him. *See also* AESTHETIC DISTANCE; MONOLOGUE; VIEWPOINT.

**personal heresy, the** In 1934 C. S. Lewis contributed an article on *The Personal Heresy in Criticism to Essays and Studies*. In this he expressed disquiet at and disapproval of the then fairly widely held belief that poetry is or should be the expression of a poet's personality. In the course of this he referred to a book by E. M. W. Tillyard on Milton in which, according to Lewis, Tillyard stated the premise that all poetry is about the poet's state of mind. Tillyard 'replied' to this in an essay. Lewis 'replied' to that. And so on. The two men then decided to publish their three essays apiece in one volume (publ. 1939). *The Personal Heresy*, erudite, urbane, courteous and continuously stimulating, is, in its way, a model of how people should agree to differ in their search after truth. *See also* AESTHETICISM; PARNASSIANS; SINCERITY.

**personification** The impersonation or embodiment of some quality or abstraction; the attribution of human qualities to inanimate objects. Personification is inherent in many languages through the use of gender, and it appears to be very frequent in all literatures – especially in poetry. This example is from Sylvia Plath's *The Moon and the Yew Tree*:

The moon is no door. It is a face in its own right,  
White as a knuckle and terribly upset.  
It drags the sea after it like a dark crime; it is quiet  
With the O-gape of complete despair. I live here.  
Twice on Sunday, the bells startle the sky –  
Eight great tongues affirming the Resurrection.  
At the end, they soberly bong out their names.

## personification

See PATHETIC FALLACY.

**Petrarchan sonnet** Also known as the Italian sonnet, the form originated in Italy in the 13th c. and was perfected by Petrarch (1304-1374). It is a fourteen-line poem divided into two parts: the first eight lines comprise the octave (*q.v.*) or octet and rhyme abbaabba; the following six lines or sestet (*q.v.*) usually rhyme cdecde. Rhyme variations in the sestet are admissible, but rhymes are limited to five. As a rule the octave presents the theme or problem of the poem, the thesis; the sestet resolves it. It was imported to England in the 16th c. This example is by Sir Thomas Wyatt:

The pillar perisht is whereto I leant,  
The strongest stay of mine unquiet mind;  
The like of it no man again can find,  
From East to West still seeking though he went.  
To mine unhap! for hap away hath rent  
Of all my joy the very bark and rind;  
And I, alas, by chance am thus assigned  
Daily to mourn till death do it relent.  
But since that thus it is by destiny,  
What can I more but have a woeful heart –  
My pen in plaint, my voice in woeful cry,  
My mind in woe, my body full of smart,  
And I myself myself always to hate –  
Till dreadful death do ease my doleful state?

Wyatt here has the traditional rhyming couplet to round off the poem. See SONNET.

**Petrarchism** In a broad sense the imitation of Petrarch's style. More particularly, in connection with his verse written in Italian; verse which is characterized by artificial diction, puns, conceits, complex prosody, casuistical argument and, in general, hermetic abstruseness. Petrarch (1304-74) was considerably plagiarized and imitated during and after his life and he had a considerable influence on European poets: Michelangelo, Tasso, Ronsard, du Bellay, Lope de Vega, Gongora, Camoëns, Wyatt, Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare (and some other Elizabethans). The influence was by no means entirely beneficial, as can be seen from the more mannered and elaborate sonnets of Spenser and Shakespeare (especially the former). On the other hand, Petrarch



helped to develop the use of the vernacular and established the sonnet (*q.v.*) form. See BLAZON; PETRARCHAN SONNET.

**pevači** Muslim ballad-singers or chanters in Bosnia, where the ballad tradition was under strong Turkish influence. They were professional minstrels of the oral tradition (*q.v.*) and thus kin to the Greek *rhapsodes*, the Old English *scopas*, the Scandinavian *skalds* and the Serbian *guslari* (*qq.v.*). The *pevači* differed from the Christian *guslari* in that they accompanied their chant or recitation on a *tambura*, whereas the *guslar* used a *gusle* – a one-stringed fiddle.

**phanopoeia** (Gk ‘making something visible’) A figurative or verbal device by which the writer conveys the image of the object (be it fixed or moving) to the visual imagination. In these lines from Philip Larkin’s *The Whitsun Weddings* the rhythm and stress sequences skilfully suggest the physical motion of the train and produce a visual image:

All afternoon, through the tall heat that slept  
For miles inland,  
A slow and stopping curve southwards we kept.  
Wide farms went by, short-shadowed cattle, and  
Canals with floatings of industrial froth;

The heavily stressed paeonic rhythms of the first two lines relax into iambs in the third line (except for the spondaic ‘southwards’). The fourth line is also heavily stressed; the fifth is a relatively brisk combination of two iambs and two anapaests. See LOGOPOEIA; MELOPOEIA.

**phantom word** A word that exists through the error of scribe, printer or lexicographer, or merely through some corruptive influence. Examples are: *willy-nilly* for *will he? nill he?*; *whatnot*; *dacious* for *audacious*; *obstropolous* for *obstreperous*; *brecksus* for *breakfast*. *Bacon and eggs* and *ham and eggs* are inclined to appear on European menus as *bekendecks* and *hemenex*, and in other variations. The OED Supplement has a list of such words.

**phatic language** *Phatic* derives from Greek *phasis* ‘utterance’, and phatic language consists of the noises that human beings make in the communication of feelings rather than of logical and rational thoughts; the kind of noises that a mother makes to her baby,

## phatic language

a lover to his mistress and a master to his dog. Thus, the language of love, reassurance, threat, distaste, hatred, compassion – and so forth. The gibber and squeak of speech, phatic words and phrases have been called ‘idiot salutations’; and, when they generate to a form of dialogue, ‘two-stroke conversations’. ‘Phatic communion’ is jargon for this kind of intercourse. A recent development is ‘freakspeak’.

**Pherecretean** A classical meter named after the poet Pherecrates (5th c. B.C.). It is a catalectic form of the glyconic (*q.v.*). Basically, it allowed a resolved foot only in the first two syllables. It is to be found with one or more glyconics in Anacreon and the choruses of Greek tragedy.

**philippic** A denunciation in speech or writing and couched in vituperative language. The term derives from Demosthenes’s orations in denunciation of Philip of Macedon.

**Philistine** A Philistine is a person devoted to money, material objects, the commonplace, the prosaic and the uncultured. He has little concern for art (of any kind), beauty or the nobler aspirations and achievements of mankind. Matthew Arnold, in his last lecture as Professor of Poetry at Oxford (1867), criticized those whom he regarded as the Philistines of England – namely the bourgeois classes who accepted wealth as the measure of greatness. Arnold argued that culture ‘. . . helps us by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery . . . If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines.’ See AESTHETICISM; DECADENCE.

**philology** (Gk ‘love of speech, or learning’) The study of literature and scholarship. More particularly, now, the science of language and linguistics (*q.v.*).

**phoneme** (Gk ‘speech sound’) A basic sound unit in a language. For example, in English ‘t’ and ‘d’ are separate phonemes; ‘c’ and ‘k’ may be the same or different (compare *cider*, *caulk*, *kirk*) ; ‘c’ and ‘s’ may be the same or different (compare *sump*, *cork* and *civet*); ‘ph’ and ‘f’ in English are the same.

**picaresque novel** (Sp *picaro* 'rogue') It tells the life of a knave or picaroon who is the servant of several masters. Through his experience this picaroon satirizes the society in which he lives. The picaresque novel originated in 16th c. Spain, the earliest example being the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1553). The two most famous Spanish authors of picaresque novels were Mateo Alemán who wrote *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599-1604) and Francisco Quevedo who wrote *La vida del Buscón* (1626). Both books were widely read in Europe. Other picaresque novels included Thomas Nash's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), LeSage's *Gil Blas* (1715), Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1743) and Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748). A more recent example is Thomas Mann's unfinished *Confessions of Felix Krull* (1955). The German term for this kind of story is *Räuberroman*.

**picaroon** See PICARESQUE.

**pie quebrado** (Sp *pie* 'foot', *quebrado* 'broken' – from *quebrar* 'to break') In Spanish prosody a short line of five syllables at the most, but usually four; longer, in certain combinations and thus known as *copla de pie quebrado*. In general *pie* denotes verse, foot or syllable as in English use, and there are therefore many ways in which *pie* + adjective or past participle could be used. See COPLA; REDONDILLA.

**pièce à thèse** See THESIS PLAY.

**pièce bien faite** See WELL-MADE PLAY.

**Pindaric ode** See ODE.

**pivot word** A word or phrase which has the effect of modifying what precedes or follows, especially in repetition. A recent example is the use of the word 'something' by Jon Silkin in *Death of a Son*.

**piyyut** A form of Hebrew liturgical poem especially written to celebrate a festival. They sometimes take an acrostic (*q.v.*) form. They were common between the 3rd and 7th c. Seven are known to have been written by Yose ben Yose, the Hebrew religious poet.

## plagiarism

**plagiarism** (L *plagiarius* 'kidnapper, seducer, literary thief') Hence *plagiary*, a noun; and *plagiarize*, the verb. C. T. Onions defined plagiarism as 'wrongful appropriation and publication as one's own'. As such it is *scelus semper et ubique*. Much plagiarism has been the lifting, filching or pirating of other people's works; a very common practice among dramatists during the Elizabethan period when hackwriters blatantly stole the plays of others and presented them as their own. These days (and for long past) such thieving is rare and authors are now fairly well protected by copyright (*q.v.*).

There are other forms of literary felony and pilfering which have been regarded as less reprehensible. These may be conscious or unconscious borrowing. In his conversations with Eckermann, Goethe once pointed out (on 4 January 1827) that through all art 'there is filiation i.e. descent or transmission from. If you see a great master, you will always find that he has used what was good in his predecessors, and that it was this which made him great. Men like Raphael do not spring out of the ground. They took their root in the antique and in the best that has been done before them.' This is a point of view with which many would agree, from Aristotle onwards. Imitation (*q.v.*) was a practice fully approved by the Classical authors (e.g. Aristotle, Cicero and Quintillian) and it has been legitimate ever since Homer who himself borrowed from the ballads then alive in oral tradition (*q.v.*). In fact, the ballad-maker, almost by definition, is a borrower in the more acceptable sense of the term. The good ballad-maker studies carefully what has already been achieved, learns from it and then attempts to adapt and improve it on his own account. He assimilates, refines, modifies and, if he is gifted, he then produces an original work of his own which will embellish the existing tradition. This is progress. The ballad *The Unquiet Grave* exists in several versions over a considerable period of time and each is equally good. There are no fewer than thirty-nine variants of *Mary Hamilton* – and again many of them are equally good. To support the point we may cite Luther's highly successful re-using of the old Church hymns, and Burns's use of traditional material which he shaped anew to his own purpose.

Ballad-making is a popular art and entertainment. By analogy so are the Punch and Judy show, music hall, proverbs, games, dance songs, festival rituals, fertility rites, folk-songs and folk dramas (e.g. The Mummers' Play and the Plough Monday Play *qq.v.*). All borrow.



Another form of borrowing involves the use of source-books. Shakespeare, for instance, took many of his plots from chronicles and well-established stories. Many of his contemporaries did the same. Very often they transformed the source into an original work.

A less obvious example of the influence of source material can be seen in the plays of Molière, who made such notable use of the traditions and techniques of *commedia dell' arte* (q.v.).

Other kinds of source are legend and myth. The pervasive influence of these, in European literature especially, has been considerable (e.g. Oedipus, Ulysses, Faustus, Don Juan, The Wandering Jew).

There are also innumerable instances of verbal 'borrowing'. Consider, for example, Chettle's

The multitudes of seas dyed red with blood

Munday's

And made the green sea red with Pagan's blood

And Shakespeare's

The multitudinous seas incarnadine  
Making the green one red

All are fine; Shakespeare's the best by half a length.

In general nearly all artists live off each other. They borrow from each other. Ultimately the only true test is whether or not it is justifiable. Occasionally a man appears who is virtually a law unto himself, the genius (q.v.). After him nothing is quite the same ever again. Lesser mortals are content to follow the rules and conventions, but to use them skilfully and with as much originality as they are capable of. Occasionally there appears the literary iconoclast; the man who doesn't want to know about tradition, who wants to make a completely clean start on the fabulous *tabula rasa*. They are nearly always of inferior talents and achieve little that lasts. In fact, literary iconoclasm (like most other forms of iconoclastic activity) usually creates a paltry mess.

In broader senses yet the writer (the artist) is a borrower. Using what Coleridge referred to as 'the hooks-and-eyes of memory' he stores and stocks his mind with the experience and creations of other writers. He teaches himself from them and through them. The creative mind matures this knowledge, allows it to

## plagiarism

macerate, so to speak, in what Henry James described as the 'deep well of unconscious cerebration'. One can detect the results clearly enough in many works. To take a few notable examples: Seneca was much influenced by the Greek tragedians; so was Racine. Hosts of writers of all kinds have 'lived off' Aristotle and Plato. Milton was much influenced by Spenser who owed much to Chaucer who, in turn, had borrowed from French and Italian writers. Keats was much influenced by all three of these Englishmen. Pope, who had a profound knowledge and understanding of the Classical authors, 'imitated' Horace. Dr Johnson, who had a comparable knowledge and understanding, 'imitated' Juvenal. The pre-Raphaelites borrowed extensively from medieval authors (hence Medievalism *q.v.*): And one can hardly imagine Dylan Thomas and Ted Hughes being the fine poets they are if they had not learnt much from Gerard Manley Hopkins. W. H. Auden is an outstanding example of a poet who has used many long-established poetic forms and adapted them to his own individual needs and purposes.

Such men (and there are scores of others) are examples of good borrowers; the kind that Jonson was thinking of (he understood the matter very well) when, in *Discoveries*, he spoke of the writer who learns from his predecessors 'not as a creature that swallows what it takes in, crude, raw, or undigested; but that feeds with an appetite, and hath a stomach to concoct, divide and turn all into nourishment.' Jonson followed precept with practice, and no one could accuse him of lacking originality (*q.v.*).

There are also plentiful examples of bad borrowing. This was particularly common in the 18th c., largely as a result of the influence of Milton. Wordsworth in turn was to exert a great influence for a hundred or more years, and even in the 1930s poets were still writing ponderous 'Wordsworthese'. Another notable example of wholly unsuccessful borrowing was the kind practised by 19th c. verse dramatists who adopted the styles, conventions and even attitudes of the Elizabethan playwrights and attempted to write dramatic blank verse like Shakespeare. Basically, writers like James Sheridan Knowles, Shelley, Tennyson and Browning did not understand the conventions.

Self-plagiarism is not uncommon among writers, and is often unconscious. When conscious, it usually involves the re-working of a poem, as in Collins's *How Sleep the Brave*, which he 'lifted' and re-shaped from *Ode on Colonel Ross*.

Plain thieving has always been fairly rare, probably because

the risks of detection are too great. However, Sterne was often unscrupulous; so was Disraeli. *See* INVENTION; SPONTANEITY.

**plaint** A lament (*q.v.*) in verse. *See* COMPLAINT; DIRGE; ELEGY; PLANH.

**planh** A funeral lament (*q.v.*) in Old Provençal. Some forty-odd are believed to be extant. Most of them are laments for the death of some distinguished person, a patron or patroness. *See* COMPLAINT; DIRGE; ELEGY.

**plateresco** (Sp *platero* 'silversmith') Thus, an ornamental, 'filigreed' style of writing in Spanish 16th c. romances. The English version is *plateresque* 'silversmith-like'. Primarily an architectural term, and applied to an ornate style of architecture popular in Spain during the 16th c. *See also* BAROQUE; GONGORISM; MARINISM.

**platitude** A dull, commonplace statement. A trite and obvious remark. Many proverbial expressions and idioms have become platitudes. For example: 'You cannot have your cake and eat it.'

**Platonism** Paradoxically, Platonism has been a continual, pervasive and powerful influence on poets and poetry (and other forms of literature) down the ages. 'Paradoxically' because Plato would not 'allow' most forms of poetry in his *Republic*. The point is made uncompromisingly clear towards the end of Book X: 'But you will know that the only poetry that ought to be allowed in a state is praise to the gods and paeans to virtuous men; as soon as you go beyond that and admit lyric or epic poetry, then pleasure and pain become your rulers instead of the law and the principles that are commonly accepted as best'. However, Plato believed that poetry might serve the community by helping to educate it, and poetry which praised the gods and good men would show people who and what they should emulate. The didactic virtues of poetry were invoked in late Classical times and medieval times to defend the art against those who objected to it on moral grounds. During the Renaissance (*q.v.*) period such a Platonic idea influenced the belief that the poet had a special role as a kind of 'celebrant' of nationalism. Much epic (*q.v.*) at the Renaissance is national epic. For example, Camoëns in *Os Lusíadas* composed a kind of historical manifesto of Portuguese nationalism, and

## Platonism

Camoëns would have had a passport to the Republic because he sang the praises of noble men.

Plato saw the world as an imperfect imitation of a divine ideal, a shadowy and even distorted simulacrum of a heavenly prototype. It followed that the poet imitated this (because he imitated nature) and thus his work was merely an imitation of an imitation. As such, in the Platonic view, poetry could not arrive at truth. Aristotle attempted to deal with this problem in *Poetics* and advanced the theory that poetry did indeed convey the truth by a form of acceptable imitation or feigning (*q.v.*). Neoplatonic philosophers (whose most distinguished exponent was Plotinus) thought that poetry was the most estimable form of imitation because it 'copied' a divine archetype. Such theories had much influence at the Renaissance and during the Romantic period (*q.v.*).

Plato also claimed that the poet was an inspired person. The idea of inspiration (*q.v.*) found great favour in later ages and there developed the belief that the poet was different from ordinary mortals; that the Muse had visited him; that he had vatic powers; that, in short, in the creation of poetry, he was in an exalted state as the result of divine insufflation. The image of the poet as visionary and prophet (even, according to Shelley, as an unacknowledged legislator) had a considerable vogue during the Romantic period.

Many of Plato's works (especially *Symposium*, *Timaeus*, *Parmenides* and the *Republic*) also included myths, symbols and images through whose similitudes (*q.v.*) he sought to express his ideas of Truth, Beauty and the Good, all of which, in his view, were One: a form of aesthetic and philosophic Blessed Trinity. These concepts were a powerful influence from the early Middle Ages onwards, and especially at the Renaissance when the influence of Platonism was at its greatest, thanks in great measure to Marsilio Ficino's Latin translation of Plato's works towards the end of the 15th c. and his attempted 'reconciliation' of Platonic and Christian philosophy in *Theologia Platonica*. Indeed, it was Ficino who used the term *Amor Platonicus* more or less synonymously with *Amor Socraticus* to denote that kind of interest in young men which was imputed to Socrates. Platonic love has become the best known idea or aspect of Platonism, and the ideal of Platonic love has influenced Western literature and life to such an extent that the most unlettered person may be presumed to have some acquaintance with it. In its origin (and the source is Plato's



*Symposium*) it was the contemplation of the idea of perfect and absolute beauty; separate, simple and infinite beauty. By contrast, terrestrial beauty was a shadowy reflection of it. The Neoplatonists and the Renaissance thinkers developed it into a theory that physical beauty was an outward expression of the inward grace and spiritual beauty of the soul, and this spiritual radiance was an extension of the effulgent beauty of God Himself. The Platonic lover therefore paid devotion and adoration to the physical beauty of his mistress in so far as that beauty reflected her soul. From earthly and physical desire he aspired to the contemplation of the beatific vision. Such an attitude informed much lyric and love poetry of the late Middle Ages and during the Renaissance. Spenser elaborated the idea in his *Hymn in Honour of Beauty*.

During the Romantic period there was a marked revival of interest in the concept of Platonic love, and a great interest in Platonism in general. Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley and Hölderlin especially were strongly influenced by it. This is particularly noticeable in Shelley's *Epipsychidion* and Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*.

Between the end of the 16th c. and the beginning of the Romantic period Platonism as a force and influence is not much marked in Western thought and literature. However, mention should be made of the Cambridge Platonists – a group of philosophers who flourished during the middle of the 17th c. and whose headquarters were at Cambridge University. The main members of the group were Ralph Cudworth, Henry More, John Smith and Nathanael Culverwel. This group reacted against Puritan dogmatism and against the materialistic philosophies of Hobbes and Descartes. They were idealists who believed in the essentially spiritual constitution of the world. Henry More wrote some philosophical poetry which propounded some of the ideas of the group.

Platonism has continued to be a strong fertilizing influence in the minds of various poets, especially Coleridge, Rilke, Yeats and Wallace Stevens. There can be little doubt that Benjamin Jowett's translations of Plato (1871) did much to encourage the study of Platonism throughout the English-speaking world.

**play** A dramatic work designed to be presented on a stage (or in a television studio) and performed by actors and actresses. An exception is a closet play (*q.v.*). See CHRONICLE PLAY; COMEDY;

## play

COMEDY OF MANNERS; HIGH COMEDY; LOW COMEDY; MIRACLE PLAY; MORALITY PLAY; MYSTERY PLAY; PASSION PLAY; THESIS PLAY; TRAGEDY; WELL-MADE PLAY.

**Pléiade** A group of 16th c. French poets named after the constellation of the seven daughters of Atlas. Ronsard originated the term in 1556. Until that time he had used the term *Brigade*. He adopted *Pléiade* from the Alexandrine group of poets who had borne that name. Membership of the group varied over the years but never exceeded seven. In 1556, besides Ronsard, it included Joachim du Bellay, Pontus de Thiard, Jean-Antoine de Baïf, Jacques Pelletier, Etienne Jodelle and Rémy Belleau. They were innovators who wished to abandon the medieval poetic tradition, and their innovations were based on a study of Greek and Latin poetry. They established the sonnet, the ode and the Alexandrine (*q.v.*) in France. Their theories were expounded in du Bellay's *Deffense et Illustration de la langue françoise* (1549), in Ronsard's preface to his *Odes* (1550) and in his *Abrégé de l'art poétique* (1565).

**pleonasm** (Gk 'superfluity') Redundant use of words. It may be deliberate but is usually involuntary. A common fault in much writing. For example: 'In this day and age', instead of 'now', 'to-day' or 'nowadays'. See PERIPHRAISIS; POETIC DICTION; TAUTOLOGY.

**pliego suelto** (Sp 'loose sheet') Sheets of paper used for printing Spanish ballads from early in the 16th c. Collections of them formed *cancioneros* (*q.v.*), nowadays normally in book form. The first (undated) *cancionero de romances* was published in Antwerp; presumably before 1550 – the date of the second. Followed by *romanceros* (*q.v.*), beginning in 1551 with Sepúlveda's. There were also *silvas de romances* and *rosas de romances*.

**plot** The plan, design, scheme or pattern of events in a play, poem or work of fiction; and, further, the organization of incident and character in such a way as to induce curiosity and suspense (*q.v.*) in the spectator or reader. In the space/time continuum of plot the continual question operates in three tenses: Why did that happen? Why is this happening? What is going to happen next – and why? (To which may be added: And – is *anything* going to happen?).

In *Poetics*, Aristotle includes plot as one of the six elements in

tragedy (*q.v.*). For Aristotle it is the 'first principle' and 'the soul of a tragedy'. He calls plot 'the imitation of the action', as well as the arrangement of the incidents. He required a plot to be 'whole' (that is, to have a beginning, a middle and an end) and that it should have unity, namely 'imitate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them is displaced or removed, the whole will be disjointed and disturbed.'

This is the ideal, well-knit plot which Aristotle distinguished from the episodic plot in which the acts succeed one another 'without probable or necessary sequence', and which he thought was inferior. Aristotle also distinguished between simple and complex plots: in the simple the change of fortune occurs without peripeteia (*q.v.*) and without anagnorisis (*q.v.*) whereas in the complex there is one or the other or both. Aristotle also emphasized the importance of plot as opposed to character.

His views will be adequate for some Greek tragedy, some Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedy and some French Classical tragedy, and elements of the application of Aristotle's theories can be found in many plays – and novels.

However, a plot has come to denote something much more flexible than that envisaged by Aristotle. The decline of tragedy, the rise of comedy, the development of the novel – all have contributed to a much looser conception and many varied theories.

A more homely approach than Aristotle's is that of E. M. Forster. In *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) he provided a simple but very serviceable description of plot: 'We have defined a story as a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. 'The king died and the queen died', is a story. 'The king died and then the queen died of grief', is a plot. The time sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it. Or again: 'The queen died, no one knew why, until it was discovered that it was through grief at the death of the king.' This is a plot with a mystery in it, a form capable of high development. It suspends the time-sequence, it moves as far away from the story as its limitations will allow.'

Such a description will suffice to cover a very large number of plots, especially those in which causality among episodes is explicit or implied. It will certainly cover an enormous number of novels. On the other hand no theory or definition of plot can now cover adequately the variety of works by, say, Joyce, Bulgakov,

## plot

Graham Greene, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Heinrich Böll, Michel Butor, William Burroughs, Robe-Grillet and Len Deighton – to take a handful of very different writers at random; or, for that matter, Kafka, Arnold Bennett, Malcolm Lowry, Ivo Andrić, Eric Ambler, Nabokov, Saul Bellow, Grass, Bykov, Claude Simon and V. S. Naipaul. *See* SUB-PLOT.

**Plough Monday play, the** In English folk festivals Plough Monday is the Monday after Twelfth Night. The play (which is related to the Mumming (or St George) Play, survives in a few fragmentary texts from the East Midlands. The play differs from the Mumming Play in several respects. The characters are Tom the Fool, a Recruiting Sergeant, a Ribboner or Recruit, three farm servants, a Doctor and Beelzebub; plus two women, the Young Lady and old Dame Jane. The play (like the St George play) in all probability symbolizes the death and resurrection of the year and may well be the survival of a fertility rite. *See also* MUMMING PLAY; PACE-EGGING PLAY; REVESBY PLAY.

**plurisignation** A term (it means, literally, several or many signs or marks) used by Wheelwright in *The Burning Fountain* (1954) to indicate that a word, a passage or a whole work may have various levels and meanings of what is described as 'semantic thrust'. This instrument of critical jargon can be useful in the work of close analysis. *See* ALLEGORY; ALLUSION; AMBIGUITY; FOUR LEVELS OF MEANING.

**pnigos** (Gk 'strangler') A sort of patter song (*q.v.*) in Greek Old Comedy (*q.v.*). Traditionally in anapaestic dimeters and recited without pause; thus liable to make the reciter run out of breath. *See* ANAPAEST; DIMETER.

**poem** (Gk *poiēma* 'something made, created'). Thus, a work of art. A metrical composition, a work of verse, which may be in rhyme (*q.v.*) or may be blank verse (*q.v.*) or a combination of the two.

In the final analysis what makes a poem different from any other kind of composition is a species of magic, the secret to which lies in the way the words lean upon each other, are linked and interlocked in sense and rhythm, and thus elicit from each other's syllables a kind of tune whose beat and melody varies subtly and which is different from that of prose (*q.v.*) – 'the other harmony'. *See also* POESIE; POETRY.



**poëme** A genre invented by Alfred de Vigny. In 1837 he defined his *poèmes*, in a preface, as compositions in which philosophic thought is presented under an epic (*q.v.*) or dramatic form. Thus, *poèmes philosophiques*.

**poesie** (Gk *poiēsis*, from *poiēin* 'to make') Thus *poiēsis* denotes 'making' in general, but in particular the making of poetry. The word came into the English language in the 14th c. Later in that century the word 'poetrie' (from L *poetria*) was also introduced. They were frequently used synonymously. Eventually *poetry* supplanted *poesy*. The latter produced *posy*, 'a motto in verse'. See POEM.

**poetaster** A hack poet; an inferior versifier. The word is a combination of 'poet' and '-aster'; *aster* being a suffix of substantives and adjectives expressing an incomplete resemblance. The word is always derogatory. Its usage dates from the 16th c.

**poet laureate** The origin of the term lies in the myth of Apollo who tried to seize Daphne, whereupon she turned into a laurel tree. Apollo ordained that the laurel should be the prize for poets and victors. It is likely that the tradition of the court poet and professional entertainer is the forebear of the modern poet laureate. The epithet *laureate* was applied to a number of poets (e.g. Chaucer, Petrarch, Skelton, Ben Jonson, Davenant, and others) before the first official appointment was made, namely Dryden in 1668. Since Dryden's removal (1688) there have been sixteen poets laureate: Thomas Shadwell (1689-92); Nahum Tate (1692-1715); Nicholas Rowe (1715-18); Laurence Eusden (1718-30); Colley Cibber (1730-57); William Whitehead (1757-85); Thomas Warton (1785-90); Henry James Pye (1790-1813); Robert Southey (1813-43); William Wordsworth (1843-50); Alfred Tennyson (1850-92); Alfred Austin (1896-1913); Robert Bridges (1913-30); John Masefield (1930-1968); Cecil Day Lewis (1968-1972); John Betjeman (1973- ). Of these only two can be accounted major poets: namely, Wordsworth and Tennyson.

**poète maudit** A phrase which became current as a result of Verlaine's collection of essays *Les poètes maudits* (1884, 1888), about poets little known at the time. For instance: Corbière, Rimbaud and Mallarmé. Earlier de Vigny had spoken of 'accursed' poets, meaning thereby the victims of a hostile or indifferent society.

## poetic contests

**poetic contests** There are two basic kinds: (a) a formal competition in which poets enter and compete for a prize. This form of competition goes back to the festivals in Athens. In the Middle Ages there were comparable contests, mostly in France at Valenciennes, Arras, Douai, Tournai, Lille, Rouen and Dieppe. In Germany, from the 14th to the 16th c., the Meistersinger guilds held singing contests. The Academy of the Jocs Florals, which originated in Toulouse in the 14th c., still has festivals. Probably the best known of all is the National Eisteddfod (*q.v.*) of Wales, which dates at least from the 13th c. and is still held annually; (b) an imaginary debate or contest in a play or poem. An early example is to be found in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, in which Aeschylus and Euripides argue the merits of their poetry. The device, if such it is, occurs in Latin, Provençal, OF and ME works. One of the most interesting examples of a poetic contest in Europe is to be witnessed at Nuoro in central Sardinia where, at midsummer or later, shepherds compete with one another in the improvisation of poems in dialect. For some time before the final there have been eliminating contests. *See also* BARD; DÉBAT; DIALOGUE; FLYTING; LAUDA; PARTIMEN; TENSON.

**poetic contractions** *See* SYNAERESIS AND SYNCOPE.

**poetic diction** In general, diction denotes the vocabulary used by a writer. Poetic diction usually refers to that rather particular kind of language and artificial arrangement employed by many poets in the 18th c. who were guided by the theory and practice of Neoclassicism (*q.v.*). Thomas Gray observed that 'the language of the age is never the language of poetry', and by this he meant that language must be selected and adapted according to its appropriateness for the work in hand. This is the principle of decorum (*q.v.*). Satire, for instance, a favoured mode of expression in the 18th c., required an urbane, cultivated and somewhat formal language; the style and diction of a gentleman. Pope was the supreme exponent of this. An ode (*q.v.*), on the other hand, or a pastoral (*q.v.*) required a more specialized diction. Probably the most notable characteristic of poetic diction in the 18th c. was periphrasis (*q.v.*) for the sake of elegance and politeness. Stock examples are: 'finny tribe' for 'fish'; 'feathered breed' for 'birds'; 'wingy swarm' for 'bees'; and 'foodful brine' for 'sea'. Taken to extremes this kind of expression could become absurd, a mere contortion. Excessive use of Latinism (*q.v.*) in 18th c. poetic dic-

tion *did* on occasion become absurd, as in these examples: 'purple groves pomaceous' for 'orchards'; 'rich saponaceous loam' for 'good soil'; 'nectareous streams' for 'sheep's milk'; 'hyperborean' for 'belonging to the far north', 'mantling bliss' for 'ale' – and so on. Other features of Neoclassical poetic diction were archaism (*q.v.*) and frequent use of personification (*q.v.*).

At its best the judicious use of poetic diction could produce agreeable results, as in these lines from Gray's *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College* (1747):

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen  
Full many a sprightly race  
Disporting on thy margent green  
The paths of pleasure trace;  
Who foremost now delight to cleave  
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?  
The captive linnet which enthrall?  
What idle progeny succeed  
To chase the rolling circle's speed,  
Or urge the flying ball?

At the turn of the century there set in a strong reaction against poetic diction. This was expressed with vigour by Wordsworth, in his preface to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800). He was for the language of the common man, for everyday colloquial speech in poetry, what Shakespeare meant by 'russet yeas and honest kersey noes'; but even Wordsworth found this difficult to achieve in practice, and the problem of what language is appropriate for poetry and what not has exercised writers ever since Wordsworth and Coleridge addressed themselves to the matter. Throughout the 19th c. we find many poets trying to work out a mode and idiom and, often enough, failing to develop an individual one of their own. Much verse written in that age was laboured and stilted, encumbered by archaism and strange syntax. Gerard Manley Hopkins tried to break free of these clogs and, in his highly idiosyncratic fashion, proved a profoundly influential innovator. But even as late as the 1920s there were poets who had still not solved the problem of how to use colloquial language.

T. S. Eliot asked for an 'easy commerce of the old and new',

The common word exact without vulgarity,  
The formal word precise but not pedantic . . .

## poetic diction

And Wallace Stevens introduced the idea of the 'anti-poetic' as a counter to the concept that there had to be something special about the language of poetry.

It may be argued that any word is a suitable tool for the poet, and that its suitability will depend on how it is used. But this immediately raises the difficulty of technical language, jargon (*q.v.*) and obscure words. Consider the opening lines of Hugh Macdiarmid's *On A Raised Beach*:

All is lithogenesis – or lochia,  
Carpolite fruit of the forbidden tree,  
Stones blacker than any in the Caaba,  
Cream-coloured caen-stone, chatoyant pieces,  
Celadon and corbeau, bistre and beige,  
Glaucous, hoar, enfouledered, cyathiform,  
Making mere faculae of the sun and moon,  
I study you glout and gloss, but have  
No cadrans to adjust you with, and turn again  
From optik to haptik and like a blind man run  
My fingers over you, arris by arris, burr by burr,  
Slickensides, truité, rugas, foveoles . . .

And so forth for a dozen more lines, before the language becomes simpler. The general sense of the passage is clear but the average reader would not know many of the words. Macdiarmid is a poet who has been much preoccupied with finding an ideal diction and idiom. *See also* AUREATE LANGUAGE.

**poetic justice** A term invented by Thomas Rymer in *Tragedies of the Last Age* (1678) to convey the idea that the evil are punished appropriately and the good rewarded as they should be. It was a widely held belief that literature should reflect a moral point of view and that a work of literature should reward the virtuous and punish the wicked. Towards the end of the 17th c. it was going out of fashion. Corneille rejected it; so, later, did Addison. However, it seems that many people still think a work of literature should show *some* sense of justice: at its simplest, that the villain should get his deserts.

**poetic licence** The liberty allowed to the poet to wrest the language according to his needs in the use of figurative speech, archaism (*q.v.*), rhyme (*q.v.*), strange syntax (*q.v.*), etc. But this liberty



depends on the end justifying the means. Dryden defined it as 'the liberty which poets have assumed to themselves in all ages, of speaking things in verse, which are beyond the severity of prose'.

**poetic prose** Prose (*q.v.*) which approximates to verse in the use of rhythm, perhaps even a kind of meter (*q.v.*), in the elaborate and ornate use of language, and especially in the use of figurative devices like onomatopoeia, assonance and metaphor (*qq.v.*). Poetic prose is usually employed in short works or in brief passages in longer works in order to achieve a specific effect and to raise the 'emotional temperature'. Many writers have attempted it. For example: Lyly, Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor, De Quincey, Lautréamont, Melville, Rimbaud, Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner and Laurence Durrell. There are some examples of it in the narrator's parts in Dylan Thomas's radio play *Under Milk Wood* (1954). *See also* EUPHUISM; GONGORISM; MARINISM; POLYPHONIC PROSE; PROSE POEM; PURPLE PASSAGE.

**poetry** (Med L *poetria* based on Gk *poētēs* 'doer, creator') It is a comprehensive term which can be taken to cover any kind of metrical composition. However, it is usually employed with reservations, and often in contra-distinction to verse. For example, we should describe Shakespeare's Sonnets as poetry, and the wittily ingenious creations of Ogden Nash as verse; though both are *in* verse. We speak of 'light verse' rather than 'light poetry'. The implications are that poetry is a superior form of creation; not necessarily, therefore, more serious. Aristophanes, Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Donne, Marvell, Pope, Byron and Auden, to name a few, have all written witty and humorous poems.

**point of attack** The moment in a play or story when the main action begins.

**point of rest** *See* PAUSE.

**point of turning** *See* CLIMAX.

**polemic** (Gk 'pertaining to war') A vigorous dispute. A controversy, especially in politics and religion. A famous example of a polemic is Milton's *Areopagitica* (1664). British polemicists of note are

## polemic

Richard Bentley, Jonathan Swift,\* Sydney Smith, Cardinal Newman, Bernard Shaw, Hilaire Belloc and G. K. Chesterton.

**polyphonic prose** A kind of poetic prose (*q.v.*) developed by Amy Lowell (1874–1925) and named by John Gould Fletcher (1886–1950). Amy Lowell got the idea from the *Ballades* (1886) of the French poet Paul Fort. Her most notable work is *Can Grande's Castle* (1918). Fletcher also used this style in *Breakers and Granite* (1921). This sort of prose has many of the attributes of verse: elaborate cadences and tuneful rhythms, assonance, alliteration and rhyme (*qq.v.*). *See also* FREE VERSE; PROSE POEM; VERS LIBRES.

**polyrhythmic** (Gk 'of many rhythms') Applied to a poem which has different metrical patterns. Pindar was well known for his polyrhythms.

**polyschematic** (Gk 'of many forms') In Classical prosody, varying combinations of the trochee and the choriambus (*qq.v.*).

**polysyllabic rhyme** *See* TRIPLERHYME.

**polysyndeton** (Gk 'much compounded') The opposite of asyndeton (*q.v.*) and thus the repetition of conjunctions. Common in poetry and prose. The most frequently used conjunction in English is 'and'. Ernest Hemingway, for instance, was particularly addicted to this device in the use of 'and'. In the more extreme instances of his pseudo-Biblical style it becomes the equivalent of a verbal tic. *See* HYPOTAXIS; PARATAXIS.

**pornography** (Gk 'writing of harlots') In all probability the term derives from the sign hung outside a brothel or whore's establishment.

A pornographer is a writer of pornography, and a *pornograph* is a work of fiction (in the broadest sense of that term) in which there is a considerable emphasis on sexual activity and which is, as a rule, written in such a way as to arouse sexual lust. It may be funny, serious, bizarre or horrific, and, like any other kind of fiction, it may be well or badly written.

We may distinguish two basic sorts of pornography: (a) *erotica* – this concentrates on the physical aspects of heterosexual love and may describe them in great detail; (b) *exotica* – this concen-

trates on what are known as abnormal or deviationist sexual activities, and thus the emphasis is on sexual perversion. Common subjects for this kind of pornography are: sadism, masochism, fetishism, transvestism, voyeurism (or scopophilia), narcissism, pederasty, lesbianism and necrophilia. Less common subjects are: coprophilia, kleptophilia, tribadism, zoophilia and pyrophilia.

Under phylum (a) we can put such classics as Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (1st c. B.C.); Vatsyana's *Kama-Sutra* (4th c. A.D.) and other Indian love manuals; and Casanova's *Memoirs* (1726-38). Under phylum (b) de Sade's *Justine* (1781) and his *The 120 Days of Sodom* (1785), von Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs* (?) and *The Whippingham Papers* (late 1880s).

As society has become more 'permissive', so the conception of what is obscene (and pornographic) has become more flexible. There was a time when Joyce's *Ulysses* (first published in a limited and numbered edition in 1922) and Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) and Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) were regarded as obscene and pornographic. They provoked abusive and scandalized comment and legal action. Laurence Durrell's *Black Book* (1936) was also thought pornographic; so, in 1955, was Nabokov's *Lolita*. Anyone who now described these books as pornographic would be regarded as loudly ridiculous.

In the final analysis judgement must depend on the individual, on his moral and aesthetic conscience, because pornographic elements (or what some would describe as such) are to be found in many books. As a serviceable guide in the matter one can hardly do better than take Lehmann's precept that we must distinguish between works which have an *intent* to corrupt and those which have a *tendency* to do so.

The subject is further complicated by such terms as 'straight porn', 'hard porn,' and 'soft porn'. And works like *The Pearl*, *A Monthly Journal of Facetiae and Voluptuous Reading*, *The Naked Lunch* and *Last Exit to Brooklyn* might be put under any of those subheadings according to taste and differing criteria.

Discounting for the moment the enormous quantities of 'pulp' literature (illustrated and otherwise) which explores and exploits most conceivable aspects of sexual behaviour, especially the deviant and perverted, and much of which must be accounted obscene if only because it is aesthetically crude, we can find some kinds of pornography which either are literature (*q.v.*) or have pretensions to being so.

## pornography

In general the literature of pornography is vast, and some of it is of considerable antiquity. At the outset, however, we must distinguish between pornography and the pornographic. Actually it is only since the second half of the 18th c. that pornography has been produced on a large scale and much of this has been the pornography of *exotica*. Pornographic elements, however, are to be found much earlier and in many literatures.

There is plentiful material in the Old Testament on the subject of pornography in its original sense. There are pornographic elements in the plays of Aristophanes (especially *Lysistrata*), in *The Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter (1st c. A.D.), in *The Letters of Alciphron* (c. 200 A.D.), the *Deipnosophistai* of Athenaeus (2nd c. A.D.), and the *Dialogues* of Lucian (2nd c. A.D.). The *Milesian Tales* of Aristides of the 2nd c. B.C. were also believed to be pornographic, but they do not survive.

In Europe, after the fall of the Roman Empire, there appears to be no pornography and no literature with pornographic elements, though there is quite a lot of erotic poetry (*q.v.*) until late in the Middle Ages. Then, we find bawdy or innocuously obscene elements in, for instance, the *fabliaux* (*q.v.*) and some of Chaucer's tales.

The first major work of modern pornography is Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1371). Other works of note in the Renaissance period which have been described as pornographic are: Poggio's *Facetiae* (15th c.), Rabelais' *Gargantua* (1534) and *Pantagruel* (1532), Cellini's *Memoirs* (begun in 1558), Aretino's *Ragionamenti* (1600), Brantôme's *Vies des dames Galantes* (1665-66), and Beroalde de Verville's *Le Moyen de parvenir* (1610). There are also, of course, abundant instances of pornographic scenes in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, and scurrilous or bawdy elements in much verse (e.g. Skelton's poetry).

The same could be said of much Restoration comedy (*q.v.*) and particularly of Rochester's play *Sodom* (1684), and several 18th c. novels. From the 18th c. dates what many have regarded as the first masterpiece of English pornography, namely John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, or *Memoirs of the Life of Fanny Hill* (1749). After that, an increasing number of pornographic works were published. The full details and titles are to be found in H. S. Ashbee's *Notes on Curious and Uncommon Books* (1877-85) and the *Register Librorum Eroticorum* by R. S. Reade (1936). Some notable examples are: *New Atlantis for the Year* (1762), *Useful Hints to Single Gentlemen respecting Marriage, Concu-*



*binage and Adultery. In Prose and Verse. With Notes Moral, Critical and Explanatory* (1792); *The Merry Muses of Caledonia, a Collection of Favourite Scots Songs, ancient and modern, selected for us of the Chrochallan Fencibles* (c. 1800); *The Voluptuarian Cabinet* (c. 1820).

Between 1820 and 1840, and then from c. 1860 onwards a colossal amount of erotic pornography was published (much of it illustrated). Some notable examples are: *The Bedfellows: or Young Misses' Manual* (1820); *The Adventures, Intrigues and Amours of a Lady's Maid* (1822); *The Modern Rake* (1824); *The Lustful Turk* (1828); *The Seducing Cardinale* (1830); *The Favourite of Venus* (1830); *The Festival of Love, or Revels at the Fount of Venus* (1860); *Intrigues and Confessions of a Ballet Girl* (1868-70); *The Romance of Lust* (1873); *The Power of Mesmerism, a highly erotic narrative of Voluptuous Facts and Fancies* (1880); *Laura Middleton, her Brother and her Lover* (1890); *Venus in India, or Love Adventures in Hindustan* (1890); *Raped on the Railway: A True Story of a Lady who was first ravished and then flagellated on the Scotch Express* (1894); *Flossie, A Venus of Fifteen: By one who knew this Charming Goddess and worshipped at her shrine* (1897).

Other well-known curiosities of erotic pornography are *A Night in a Moorish Harem* by 'Lord George Herbert' (late 1890s); the works of Edward Sellon, one of the most famous English pornographers – particularly *The New Epicurean* (1865), *The Ups and Downs of Life* (1867), and *Letters from a Friend in Paris* (1874). To these should be added the anonymous *My Secret Life* (c. 1885) and *My Life and Loves* (1925-29) by Frank Harris. There are also many works in German and French dating from the 19th c.

Most of these could be placed in the category of *erotica*. There are quite as many under *exotica*, or the pornography of perversion. Many are concerned with flagellation practices, lesbianism, homosexuality, incest and various forms of fetishism. Two celebrated names are always associated with this kind of pornography, namely the Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch from whom derive the words *sadist* and *masochist*. De Sade's principal works are: *Justine* (1781); *The 120 Days of Sodom* (1785); *Aline and Valcour* (1788); *The Philosopher in the Boudoir* (1795); *Juliette* (1796); and *The Crimes of Love* (1800). Von Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs* is his masterpiece.

Other notable works connected with flagellation practices are *Venus School-Mistress; or Birchen Sports* (c. 1810); *The Romance of Chastisement* (1866); *The Whippingham Papers* (late 1880s) to which Swinburne contributed; *Gynecocracy* (1893); *The Memoirs of Dolly Morton* (c. 1900).

## pornography

In the 20th c. so much pornographic literature of every kind has been published that there is not space to give an account of it. Innumerable works, especially novels, contain pornographic elements. Much of it is to be found in the 'girlie' and 'cutie' magazines and glossy periodicals like *Knave*, *Probe*, *Curious*, *Penthouse*, *Fiesta* and others; and in 'inquiry' or 'register' publications like *Search*, *Forum*, *Janus*, and *Relate*. Plus those which cater for particular needs like *High Heels*, *Stocking Parade*, *Naughty Nylons*, *Bondage*. Most such publications combine articles and stories, case histories, diaries and so forth with a variety of photographs. For many of these one might coin a portmanteau word (*q.v.*) like *phorntography* or *porntography*.

As a rule the subject is taken seriously, and good comic pornography is rare. A distinguished exception in recent times is D. D. Bell's novel *Dicky or the Midnight Ride of Dicky Vere* (1970).

A minor and innocuous branch of pornography (or perhaps more accurately scatology) is the bawdy ballads of the oral tradition (*q.v.*) kept alive in the Services and among sporting fraternities (especially rugby clubs). Many of them are 'shit without wit', as has been remarked, but some have style and originality and only in the perfervid minds of Puritans could they be described as potentially corruptive.

Whether such verses are obscene or merely bawdy is again largely a matter of opinion and taste, and it is next to impossible (and perhaps not particularly useful) to categorize them. However, one might suggest as a general pointer that those in category (a) are obscene and those in (b) bawdy: (a) *Eskimo Nell*, *The Wheel*, *The Great Plenipotentiary*, *The Whole World Over*, *The One-Eyed Riley*, *The Ball of Kerriemuir*, *The Good Ship Venus*, *The Street of the Thousand Arseholes*, *The Cowpuncher's Whore*, *The Rajah of Astrakhan*, *The Harlot of Jerusalem*, *Nightfuck*, *The Great Farting Contest*, *Diamond Lily*, *The Keyhole in the Door* and *The Travelling Man*. (b) *Abdul Abulbul Emir*, *Arseholes are Cheap Today*, *The Virgin Surgeon*, *Sonia Snell*, *The Portions of the Female*, *The Hedgehog Song*, *A Clean Story*, *If I were the marrying sort*, *The Happy Family*, *Father's Grave*, *The Farmer's Dog* and *My Jenny Wren Bride*. See also LOW COMEDY.

**portmanteau word** (F *porter* 'to carry' + *manteau* 'cloak') A word formed by combining two or more words. Also known as a telescope word. Lewis Carroll applied this term to combined words in *Through the Looking Glass* in explanation of some words

## poulter's measure

in *Jabberwocky* (q.v.). James Joyce, in *Finnegans Wake*, coined a large number of such words. The following passage suggests how Joyce did it:

Hence when the clouds roll by, jamey, a proudseye view is enjoyable of our mounding's mass, now Wallinstone national museum, with, in some greenish distance, the charmful water-loose country and the two quitewhite villagettes who hear show of themselves so gigglesomes minxt the follyages, the prettilees! Penetrators are permitted into the museomound free. Welsh and the Paddy Patkineses, one shelenk! Redis-members invalids of old guard find poussepousse pousseypam to sate the sort of their butt. For her passkey supply to the janitrix, the mistress Kathe. Tip.

See also GHOST-WORD; NEOLOGISM; NONCE-WORD.

**potboiler** A work written merely to gain a livelihood. The term is at least as old as the 18th c. A classic example of the potboiler that transcends its immediate end is Johnson's philosophical 'novel' or didactic 'romance' (qq.v.) *Rasselas* (1759), which was written in the evenings of a week to defray the expenses of his mother's funeral and to pay her debts. See KITSCH.

**poulter's measure** Rhyming couplets consisting of one iambic hexameter (q.v.) followed by an iambic heptameter (q.v.). To be found in the *Towneley Mystery Plays* and some Morality Plays (q.v.) and used quite frequently in the 16th c. (by Sir Thomas Wyatt, Surrey and Sir Philip Sidney, among others) but little thereafter because it was found that the hexameter and the heptameter are lines too long to be easily manageable. The term derives from the poulterer's traditional practice of giving fourteen eggs in the second dozen, a point recorded by Gascoigne in *Steele Glas* (1576). These lines come from the Earl of Surrey's *Youth and Age*:

Laid in my quiet bed, in study as I were,  
I saw within my troubled head a heap of thoughts appear.  
And every thought did show so lively in mine eyes,  
That now I sigh'd, and then I smiled, as cause of thought did  
rise.

I saw the little boy in thought how oft that he  
Did wish of God to scape the rod, a tall young man to be.

power, literature of

**power, literature of** In an essay titled *The Poetry of Pope* (published in the *North British Review*, August 1848), Thomas de Quincey made an interesting distinction between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power:

There is, first, the literature of *knowledge*; and, secondly, the literature of *power*. The function of the first is – to *teach*; the function of the second is – to *move*: the first is a rudder, the second an oar or a sail. The first speaks to the *mere* discursive understanding; the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding or reason, but always *through* affections of pleasure and sympathy.

De Quincey elaborates the idea at some length. What he is getting at is that an encyclopaedia instructs and is therefore didactic; a great play, on the other hand, moves by appealing to the emotions – and thereby also instructs but in a totally different way.

**praxis** A term used by Aristotle in *Poetics* (it is normally rendered by the word ‘action’) to denote the first principle and soul of tragedy (*q.v.*).

**préciosité, la** The term denotes that refinement of language and manners which became the concern of civilized and sophisticated French men and women early in the 17th c. The Marquise de Rambouillet appears to have been one of the prime movers in this matter. From 1608, and for fifty years thereafter, she established *salon* (*q.v.*) life at her *hôtel* (or *alcove*). To this venue came many of those who wished to refine and polish manners and literary style. Honoré d’Urfé’s pastoral (*q.v.*) novel *L’Astrée* (1607) inspired many aspects of their urbane code. The main sources for a knowledge of *les précieuses* are A.B. de Somaize’s *Dictionnaire des précieuses* (1660), Madeleine de Scudéry’s *Le Grand Cyrus* (1649–53) and *Clélie* (1654–60), and Tellemant des Réaux’s *Historiettes*. The pursuit of elegance was a civilizing influence, but it also led to affectation. Some of the *habitués* of this *salon* helped to found the *Académie Française* (*q.v.*) in 1635. Their affectations were satirized by Molière in *Les Précieuses Ridicules* (1659). See also BLUE-STOCKING; SECENTISMO.

**précis** A summary or synopsis of a work. A shortened version of a passage.



**preface** An introduction to a literary work. Some famous examples are: Johnson's *Preface* to his *Dictionary* (1755), one of the finest pieces of prose in the language; Shaw's prefaces to many of his plays (in some cases they were much longer than the plays and contained all that he could not express dramatically); Harley Granville Barker's *Prefaces to Shakespeare* (5 vols. 1927-47), a most valuable contribution to an understanding of the plays. *See also* FOREWORD.

**pregunta** (Sp 'question', from *preguntar* 'to ask') A form of poetic debate practised by Spanish court poets in the late 14th c. and in the 15th c. A poet put a question (*requesta*) on some theme concerned with morals, love, philosophy or religion, and a second poet provided an answer (*respuesta*) in exactly the same form and using the same rhymes.

**Pre-Raphaelites, the** A mid-19th c. brotherhood of London artists, all young, who united to resist current artistic conventions and to create, or re-create, art forms in use before the period of Raphael (1483-1520). They expressed their views in *The Germ* (1850). The members of the group were John Millais, Holman Hunt, D. G. Rossetti, William Rossetti, Thomas Woolner, Frederick Stephens and James Collinson. Their 'movement' subsequently influenced the writers William Morris, Christina Rossetti, and Swinburne, and the artist Burne-Jones. The poetry of the Pre-Raphaelites showed a distinct liking for medievalism (*q.v.*), 18th c. ballads, archaic diction, symbolism and sensuousness. The poets were considerably under the influence of Spenser. Tennyson had already stimulated their interest in medievalism. Rossetti and his followers were dubbed 'the fleshly school of poetry' (*q.v.*). *See also* AESTHETICISM; PARNASSIANS; PRIMITIVISM; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**priamel** (L *praeambulum* 'preamble'). It denotes a form of German folk verse which had some vogue from the 12th to the 16th c. It appears to have developed from a kind of improvised epigram (*q.v.*). Basically a *priamel* comprised a variety of disconnected ideas and observations with a surprise conclusion.

**priapean** From the god Priapus, a god of fertility often represented as a grotesque figure with a phallic symbol. He gives his name to a classical Greek meter comprising a glyconic and a pherecretean

## priapean

(*qq.v.*). Anacreon used the measure, and it was also used for the choruses in satyr plays (*q.v.*).

**primary accent and secondary accent** The primary accent or 'primary' falls clearly on the first or main syllable of a word. The secondary tends to come on the third syllable. As in *secondary*, where the 'a' is not so heavily stressed. *See also* STRESS.

**primer** Originally a prayer-book for the laity before the Reformation, and for some time after it. The medieval Primer consisted of translations and/or copies from various sections of the Breviary (*q.v.*). In the 16th c. the name was given to similar works. After the Reformation the name was used of books in which the offices for daily prayers had been based on orders in the *Book of Common Prayer*. Gradually there developed the sense of an elementary school-book. In his *Dictionary* (1755) Johnson defined a primer as a small prayer-book for teaching children to read.

**primitivism** In the history of art the 'primitives' are taken to be those painters of the Netherlandish and Italian schools who flourished before c. 1500. That is to say, all the Netherlandish painters of the late 14th c. and the 15th c., and all Italian painters between Giotto (1276–1337) and Raphael (1483–1520). The term 'primitive' is also applied to the work of many artists belonging to many periods and *milieux* which displays a naïve vision, a technically 'simple' conception and presentation of reality, even a certain crudeness of style. Perhaps a kind of untutored art.

As far as literature is concerned primitivism has very different connotations. Fundamentally, the so-called 'primitivist' writer is, in Horace's words, a *laudator temporis acti* (though neither testy nor querulous), and primitivism is, and expresses, a form of nostalgia for a primitive (or pre-civilized) way of life. The *laudator temporis acti* is an observably common phenomenon since there seems to be a deeply rooted awareness and conviction in mankind that once upon a time there was a paradisaical era, a 'golden age' (to which there are plentiful allusions in Classical literature). At its simplest, such an awareness is expressed in clichés like: 'It wasn't like that in my day'; 'In the old days'; 'In good King Charles's golden days'. Thus, in the past, in youth, in a time when all was well, in that 'never never land'. In jargon language these are barely concealed allusions to a pre-lapsarian

state, the awareness of which is heightened by the burden of post-Fall guilt. The Bible and many writers of antiquity exalt this hypothetical *saturnia regna*; so do many works of the Renaissance period when there was a remarkable resurgence of interest in Classical learning and literature.

The kind of atavistic nostalgia to which I have referred has impelled man to look for his origins, for that lost 'innocence', for 'the good old days'. Such impulses moved the Italian primitives and, later, the Pre-Raphaelites (*q.v.*). In fact the apotheosis or glorification of this mythical state of well-being is common in art and literature; and primitive themes are even commoner, as is evident from a study of Utopianism (see Utopia), the pastoral (*q.v.*) tradition and convention, and what may be called 'desert island fiction' (*q.v.*).

Basically, then, the primitivist is anti-civilization, anti-materialism, anti-industrialism, anti-progress and pro-Nature; pro- , at its crudest, a getting back to 'grass roots'. Thus he yearns for that time when he would have been:

'As free as Nature first made man',

And the cultural primitivist, as he has been called, finds that peoples isolated from civilization ('wild in woods') are preferable to those living in civilized and urbanized *milieux* (under the 'base laws of servitude'). The cult of 'The Noble Savage' (*q.v.*) in European and American literature (a cult closely associated with some aspects of romanticism *q.v.*), is part of the primitivist's ideal.

Primitivist themes are found in many literatures of the world; they are plentiful in Classical and medieval literature. As far as Europe is concerned it is very noticeable that, with the growth of civilization, with the advance of technology, and with the development of an urban and industrialized way of life, so these themes become more frequent and obvious; just as, with the decline of orthodox Christian beliefs in an afterworld, Utopian schemes proliferate.

Here there is space to mention only a few instances. Montaigne's observations on the life of savages in his essay *Des Cannibales* (1580), is one of the earlier suggestions of an interest in a more natural way of life. Sir Philip Sidney's pastoral romance *Arcadia* (1590) is a fine evocation of 'the golden age'. In general, pastoral verse contains strong undertones of nostalgia for bucolic bliss. Pastoral (*q.v.*) drama, also, of the Tudor and Jacobean periods

## primitivism

depicts on occasions the ideal existence. This is particularly noticeable in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* and *As You Like It*. In fact, in the latter play Shakespeare refers to the whole idea (or primitivist syndrome, again to use the current jargon) at the very beginning of the piece when Charles the wrestler speaks of the old Duke in exile in the forest of Arden: ' . . . they say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world'. In both plays Shakespeare contrasts the sophistications (and corruptions) of court life with the simpler and healthier life of the countryside. In other words, the young gentlemen have 'opted out' – a common phenomenon today.

The primitivist concept of simplicity and felicity is even better expressed in Traherne's lyric *Eden*:

Only what Adam in his first estate  
Did I behold;  
Hard silver and dry gold  
As yet lay underground; my happy fate  
Was more acquainted with the old  
And innocent delights which he did see  
In his original simplicity.

Those things which first his Eden did adorn,  
My infancy did crown; simplicity  
Was my protection when I first was born.

Here we have a notable synthesis of the myth of the pre-Fall childhood innocence, the myth of the golden age and the myth of the paradisaical garden. Dante, Tasso, Guarini, Spenser, Marlowe, Milton and many other poets, expressed similar ideas.

The primitivist yearning is implicit in much 18th c. pastoralism and in the 18th c. interest in peasant poetry and also in the cult of Ossianism (*q.v.*) late in that century. It is implicit in Goldsmith's fine lament for a vanishing way of life in *The Deserted Village* (1770). And though in the 18th c. there was not much sympathy with or understanding of the academic, old-fashioned pastoral, a strong feeling of nostalgia pervades much of the poetry written in that age. This is especially noticeable in the minor poets, and a pre-Romantic feeling for Nature is apparent early in the century (e.g. a number of poems by Lady Winchilsea).

Critical theory, too, of that period underlines a taste for



primitivism. This is clear in the work of Vico, Blair, Blackwell and others who reacted against Neoclassicism (*q.v.*) and admired the work of 'primitives' like Homer, Shakespeare, Ossian and the peasant poets.

Rousseau, perhaps more than anyone, was responsible for a powerful resurgence of primitivist feelings. With him the 'Noble Savage' cult is fully grown. In *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) Rousseau attempted to reconcile heterosexual relationships with the natural order. In *Émile* (1762) he expounded his theories of natural education. In *Du contrat social* (1762) he gave his blueprint for the organization of an ideal society. In his *Confessions* (published posthumously) he elaborated many primitivist needs and desires. His influence was very great.

Apart from the nostalgia for a simple rustic life and for the putative *saturnia regna*, primitivism has other manifestations in literature. A number of writers have 'tapped' the primitive response in attempts to locate or re-locate the primitivist world, not in some remote retreat or paradise, but in the individual. This has involved the re-creation of different modes of feeling and different attitudes; in other words, animistically; by the use of symbol (*q.v.*) and mythopoeia.

This is apparent in the way Wordsworth feels about and responds to Nature. In his mode of sensibility he vivifies and re-vivifies the natural scene and re-animates the thoughts and feelings in communal myths and folk-lore. This re-animation is also apparent in Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), in Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* (1826-41), in Melville's stories *Typee* (1846), *Omoo* (1847) and *Mardi* (1849), and above all in that author's *Moby Dick* (1851).

In the 20th c. animistic and mythopoeic primitivism can be profitably and extensively studied in many poems by W. B. Yeats, in T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, in a number of poems by Robert Frost and in a few by D. H. Lawrence (particularly *The Ship of Death*).

As far as fiction is concerned a number of works by novelists should be cited: Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900) and his *Heart of Darkness* (1902); Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922); Mary Webb's *Gone to Earth* (1917) and *Precious Bane* (1924); D. H. Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) and *The Rainbow* (1929), most of William Faulkner's novels and those of the French regional novelist Jean Giono (pre-eminently in his work); Saul Bellow's *Henderson The Rain King* (1959); William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954),

## primitivism

*The Inheritors* (1955) and *Pincher Martin* (1956); Patrick White's *Voss* (1957).

**private press** Such a press is usually set up and run by an individual or a small group in order to publish works which might not otherwise get into print. The most famous in England have been: the Strawberry Hill Press established by Horace Walpole in his home in 1757; Dr Daniel's press at Oxford in 1845; the Kelmscott Press founded by William Morris, in 1890; the Golden Cockerel Press (1921); the Nonesuch Press established by Francis Meynell in 1923; and finally Eric Gill's press set up in 1933. There have been few outside England. The best known is probably the Cranach founded at Weimar in 1913.

**problem play** See THESIS PLAY.

**proceleusmatic** (Gk 'arousing to action in advance') A metrical foot comprising four unstressed syllables: ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪. Rare in Greek lyric poetry and tragedy; but not uncommon in Latin comedy. *Very* occasional as an isolated foot in English verse.

**prochronism** See ANACHRONISM.

**proem** (Gk 'prelude') Colloquially a 'limbering up' or 'warming up'; a preface; an introduction; a preamble. Milton sounds his proem at the beginning of *Paradise Lost*. It is the literary equivalent of an overture.

**prohemio** A Spanish term denoting an introduction to a collection of poems. There is a well-known example by Santillana (1398-1458), addressed to the Constable of Portugal and giving a personal view of Spanish poetry to date.

**prolegomenon** (Gk 'something said in advance') A preface (*q.v.*) or introduction; perhaps an introductory treatise. The equivalent of clearing the ground in preparation for building. A good recent example is A. J. Ayer's *Introduction to Language, Truth and Logic* (1936).

**prolepsis** (Gk 'a taking beforehand, anticipation') A figurative device by which a future event is presumed to have happened. A very famous example occurs in Keats's *Isabella* (stanza 27):

So the two brothers and their *murder'd man*  
 Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream  
 Gurgles through straitened banks . . .

Lorenzo, the 'murder'd man' has not yet been murdered but he is being taken into a forest by Isabella's two brothers where he *will* be murdered.

The term also denotes a pre-emptive strike in argument in the shape of raising an objection beforehand in order to dispose of it. Also the summary of a detailed account of something to come. *See also* HYPALLAGE.

**proletarian novel** A novel (*q.v.*) about the working classes and working class life; perhaps with the intention of making propaganda (*q.v.*) in pointing out poor economic conditions. An excellent example is Walter Greenwood's *Love on the Dole* (1933). *See also* DOCUMENTARY NOVEL; THESIS NOVEL.

**proletarskaya kul'tura** (R 'proletarian culture') Abbreviated to the rather barbarous *proletcult*, which refers to a Soviet movement started by Bogdanov in 1917. The group was made up of militant writers strongly in favour of a proletarian culture. The results of such organizations (the Smithy Group (*q.v.*) was another) are only too apparent in some Communist states today, including the renegade Albania. Many of the contributors to their publications were pick and shovel hack-writers. *See also* CONSTRUCTIVISM; SOCIAL REALISM.

**prologue** (Gk 'before speech') The opening section of a work; a kind of introduction which is part of the work and not prefatory. It was common in drama in the 17th and 18th c., when it was often in verse. Occasionally found in novels. In plays the prologue is usually a chorus (*q.v.*). The most famous example in English is Chaucer's *General Prologue* to *The Canterbury Tales*. *See also* EPILOGUE; INDUCTION.

**promythium** *See* EPIMYTHIUM.

**pro-ode** In Greek dramatic and lyric poetry a strophe (*q.v.*) without a matching antistrophe (*q.v.*) which preceded the strophe and

## pro-ode

antistrophe of a choral ode (*q.v.*). It may also denote a short verse before a longer one.

**propaganda** A term 'lifted' from the title *Congregatio de propaganda fide* (now the A.P.F – Association for the Propagation of the Faith), a committee of the Roman Church responsible for foreign missions and the dissemination of the faith. It was set up in 1622.

When literature is propaganda and when it is not is a much debated issue. If an author sets out to make a case for a particular religious, social or political point of view, through the medium of a play or a novel, for example, and he is *seen* to be doing this, and perhaps in the process he sacrifices verisimilitude (*q.v.*) by contriving character and situation to suit his thesis, then it might be said that the result is a work of propaganda. If what he has to say is worth reading or listening to long after the issue which provoked the propaganda is dead, then his art has transcended the contingent needs of the propagandist.

Basically propaganda is devoted to the spreading of a particular idea or belief. Much pamphlet (*q.v.*) literature and journalism (*q.v.*) has precisely this purpose. It is partial. Pamphleteering in the 18th c., for instance, was openly propagandist. Later, notable polemicists like H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Hilaire Belloc and G. K. Chesterton wrote a lot of propaganda to support and promulgate their political, social and religious beliefs. Though proselytizing is forbidden to the layman, Belloc and Chesterton came very near it at times. Ibsen might fairly be described as propagandist in some of his plays; so might Galsworthy. And Brecht certainly was. There have also been a number of plays presented to spread the doctrines of Moral Re-Armament. Many writers in the Communist bloc have been overtly propagandist in aid of socialism, in novels, as well as in plays and verse. *See* COMMITMENT; COMMUNICATION FALLACY; THESIS PLAY; THESIS NOVEL.

**propaganda novel** *See* THESIS NOVEL.

**propaganda play** *See* THESIS PLAY.

**propos** (F 'chat') A minor form invented by Emile-Auguste Chartier (1868–1951), whose pen-name was 'Alain'. In 1906, this distinguished teacher started a daily series of *Propos d'un Normand* in the *Dépêche de Rouen*. They were short essays of about



## prose poem

800–1000 words on a wide variety of subjects. He continued them for many years and in 1933 published *Propos de littérature*. See CAUSERIE; ESSAY.

**proposition** That part of a work in which the author states his theme (*q.v.*) or intention, and introduces the burden of the work. It may be explicit or implicit and is likely to come at or near the beginning. Some famous examples of propositions are: (a) the opening lines of Milton's *Paradise Lost*; (b) the first sentence of Rousseau's *Du Contrat Social*; (c) the opening sentences of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. See PROEM.

**propriety** The canons of propriety are the canons of good taste, good manners and correctness; thus, in writing, conformity with what is suitable and appropriate. A virtue especially prized in the 18th c. when the suiting of style and form to subject matter was studied with more than usual care. Hence the regard for decorum (*q.v.*). See also POETIC DICTION.

**prose** The word derives from the Latin *prosa* or *proversa oratio* 'straightforward discourse'. Thus, a direct, unadorned form of language, written or spoken, in ordinary usage. It differs from poetry (*q.v.*) or verse (*q.v.*) in that it is not restricted in rhythm, measure or rhyme (*qq.v.*). However, there are such things as poetic prose (*q.v.*) and the prose poem (*q.v.*).

In theory there are as many different kinds of prose as there are people to write it, as becomes plain from a cursory study of such different practitioners as: Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Bacon, Sir Thomas Browne, Hobbes, George Halifax, Swift, Locke, Addison, Johnson, Fielding, Goldsmith, Hume, Berkeley, Macaulay, Jane Austen, Gibbon, Coleridge, Scott, Dickens, Carlyle, George Eliot, Hardy, Lytton Strachey, Jack London, Henry James, Conrad, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Graham Greene, Nabokov and Samuel Beckett.

**prose poem** A composition printed as prose (*q.v.*) but distinguished by elements common in poetry (*q.v.*): such as elaborately contrived rhythms, figures of speech, rhyme (*q.v.*), internal rhyme (*q.v.*), assonance (*q.v.*), consonance (*q.v.*) and startling images. Aloysius Bertrand (1807–41) appears to have been one of the first writers to

## prose poem

establish it as a minor genre. His *Gaspard de la Nuit* (1842) was a collection of fantasies in the manner of Rembrandt and Callot written in very ornate and rhythmical language. It contains many dazzling images, a number of which are grotesque. Later, Baudelaire was influenced by this work, as is apparent from his *Petits Poèmes en prose* (1869). It is likely that Bertrand's work had some influence on the Symbolist poets and on the Surrealists. Other writers of note to have attempted the prose poem are Rimbaud, Oscar Wilde, Amy Lowell and T. S. Eliot; plus, latterly, Peter Redgrove and David Wevill. *See also* POETIC PROSE; SURREALISM; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**prose rhythm** What Dryden called the 'other harmony of prose' has its own rhythms which vary from writer to writer, according to their nature, style, subject matter and purpose.

**prosodion** A form of religious song used in devotions to the god Apollo in ancient Greece. It was sung by a Chorus (*q.v.*) to the accompaniment of music.

**prosody** The study or science of versification, and every aspect of it. It thus includes meter, rhythm, rhyme and stanza (*qq.v.*) forms.

**prosopopoeia** (Gk 'face making') The term is still used sometimes for personification (*q.v.*).

**protagonist** (Gk 'first combatant') The first actor in a play; thence the principal actor or character. In Greek tragedy (*q.v.*) the playwright was limited to the protagonist (first actor), deuteragonist (second actor) and tritagonist (third actor). It is probable that in the first place Greek drama consisted of a Chorus (*q.v.*) and the leader of the Chorus. Thespis (6th c. B.C.) is believed to have added the first actor to give greater variety to the dialogue and action. The second and third were added by Aeschylus and Sophocles respectively. The protagonist has come to be the equivalent of the hero (*q.v.*). *See* AGON; ANTAGONIST.

**protasis** (Gk 'stretching forward') Thus, a proposition or something put forward. In Greek drama the opening section of a play in which the characters are introduced and the situation explained. The protasis is followed by the epitasis and the catastrophe (*qq.v.*). *See* CATASTASIS; FREYTAG'S PYRAMID.

## proverbe dramatique

**protatic character** A character introduced at the beginning of a play, usually for the purpose of exposition (*q.v.*). Probably a development of the Chorus (*q.v.*). In drawing-room comedy often a servant.

**prothalamium** A term invented by Spenser (by analogy with epithalamium *q.v.*) for his poem (1596) in celebration of the double wedding of the Lady Elizabeth and the Lady Katherine Somerset. It thus means a 'spousal verse' or something written 'before the bridal chamber'.

**protozeugma** See ZEUGMA.

**protreptic** A kind of discourse designed to persuade or hortate. Not unusual in Classical literature. Aristotle wrote one called *Protreptikos*.

**proverb** A short pithy saying which embodies a general truth. It is related in form and content to the maxim and the aphorism (*qq.v.*). Common to most nations and peoples, it is a form of expression of great antiquity. Many writers have made use of them. The best known collection is *The Book of Proverbs* which follows the Psalms in the Old Testament. The following examples indicate the nature of a proverb: Send a fool to close the shutters and he'll close them all over the town (Yiddish); We cannot step twice into the same river (Classical Greek); When you want a drink of milk you don't buy the cow (Cretan); If vinegar is free it is sweeter than honey (Serbian); An uninvited guest is worse than a Tatar (Russian); There is but an hour a day between a good housewife and a bad one (English); It is better to wear out one's shoes than one's sheets (Genoese); The wife carries her husband on her face; the husband carries the wife on his linen (Bulgarian); Watch the faces of those who bow low (Polish); If it is not in the head it is in the feet (Czech); Visits always give pleasure – if not the arrival, the departure (Portuguese); To tell a woman what she may not do is to tell her what she can (Spanish); Every invalid is a physician (Irish). A fine collection of English proverbs is the *Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* (1935).

**proverbe dramatique** A short dramatic sketch which illustrates a proverbial saying. The genre had some vogue in the French salons of the 17th and 18th c. Their precursors were *jeu des*

## proverbe dramatique

*proverbes* – a parlour game in which a conversation had to be sustained by using proverbs. *Proverbes dramatiques* were then written for private theatricals. In the first place these were much the same as charades and the audience had to guess the proverb. Then writers disclosed the proverb and illustrated it in their little play, which was normally a one-act comedy.

Towards the end of the 17th c. a collection of *Proverbes* by Mme Durand was published. About this time Mme de Maintenon composed *proverbes* to be acted by the young ladies of Saint-Cyr. Such pieces had their greatest vogue in the mid-18th c. Collé, Carmontelle and Moissy were the main authors in this period. After the Revolution the *proverbe* tradition was revived in salons. In the 1820s and 1830s the best-known authors were Antoine-Marie, Baron Roederer, Hyacinthe de Latouche and Octave Feuillet. However, it was Alfred de Musset who mastered this genre in the middle of the 19th c. Two well-known works by him are: *On ne badine pas avec l'amour*, and *Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée*.

**pruning poem** More accurately a 'pruned' poem. In this verse form, which is very rare, the second and third rhymes of each stanza are formed by pruning the first consonant of the preceding rhyme. George Herbert's *Paradise* is an example. The first two stanzas are:

I blesse thee, Lord, because I GROW  
Among thy trees, which in a ROW  
To thee both fruit and order OW.

What open force, or hidden CHARM  
Can blast my fruit, or bring me HARM  
While the inclosure is thine ARM.

*See also* ALTAR POEM; PATTERN POETRY; RHOPALIC VERSE.

**psalm** A sacred song or hymn (*q.v.*), especially one of the collection in the Bible: *The Book of Psalms*.

**psalter** A book which contains psalms; a psalm-book; also known as a psaltery. *See* PSALM.

**pseudepigrapha** (Gk 'false inscription') A term for books or writings which have a false title or are ascribed to an author who is not the real one. *See also* FORGERY.



## psychological novel

**pseudonym** (Gk 'false name') A name other than his own taken by a writer. Also known as a pen-name and a *nom de plume* (q.v.).

**pseudonymous literature** The use of a pseudonym, pen name or nom de plume (q.v.) is a well established practice; as well established as publishing work anonymously. Here are just a few: Montcorbier – François Villon; Gerard – Desiderius Erasmus; François-Marie Arouet – Voltaire; Jean Baptiste Poquelin – Molière; Friedrich von Hardenberg – Novalis; Marie Henri Beyle – Stendhal; the Brontë sisters – Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell; Thackeray – Michael Angelo Titmarsh; Dickens – Boz; Mary Ann Evans – George Eliot; Edward Bradley – Cuthbert Bede; Samuel Clemens – Mark Twain; Louis Marie Julien Viaud – Pierre Loti; Jacques Anatole François Thibault – Anatole France; William Sydney Porter – O. Henry; Edgar Allison Peers – Bruce Truscot; H. H. Munro – Saki; C. Day Lewis – Nicholas Blake; J. I. M. Stewart – Michael Innes.

**pseudo-statement** A term used by I. A. Richards to distinguish 'scientific' from 'poetic' truth. By 'statement' Richards means a scientific expression of fact which is verifiable as such. A pseudo-statement, on the other hand, is found in poetry and is not necessarily verifiable or even logical. Such statements have the function of ordering and organizing the receptor's (q.v.) attitudes and feelings. The implications of this concept and distinction are that poetry tells the truth and its own truth in its own way, by feigning (q.v.). In other words, verisimilitude (q.v.) and a kind of truth can be attained and conveyed by emotive as well as referential language (qq.v.). The idea that poetry can convey a particular kind of knowledge not conveyable by any other means is of great antiquity.

**psittacism** (L 'parrot-like speech') Meaningless and repetitive speech. Mosque servants who memorize thousands of *suras* (q.v.) of the *Koran* and repeat them suffer from psittacism.

**psychic distance** See AESTHETIC DISTANCE.

**psychological novel** A vague term to describe that kind of fiction which is for the most part concerned with the spiritual, emotional and mental lives of the characters and with the analysis of character rather than with the plot and the action. Many novelists during the last 200 years have written psychological novels.

## psychography

**psychography** (Gk 'writing of souls') A term apparently applied by George Saintsbury to Sainte-Beuve who described himself as a 'naturalist of souls'. As a jargon term it refers to the importance of an author's life in a work of art. The psychographer, therefore, will be in search of revealing details in the life of an author in order to see what bearing they may have on his art.

**puffery** The kind of criticism which is the product of literary cliques. Authors who belong to such cliques laud one another's works. 'To puff' is to overpraise, to 'blow up'. The term no doubt derives from the character Mr Puff, the bogus and verbose critic of Sheridan's play *The Critic*. In publishers' jargon a puff is the equivalent of a blurb (*q.v.*). See LOG-ROLLING.

**pun** A figure of speech which involves a play upon words. The Greek term is paronomasia. One of the earliest types of word-play, the pun is widespread in many literatures and gives rise to a fairly universal form of humour. Puns are very often intended humorously but not always. Donne, for example, puns elaborately and quite seriously in his *Hymn to God the Father* thus:

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun  
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;  
But swear by Thy self, that at my death Thy Son  
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;  
And having done that, Thou hast done;  
I fear no more.

Here 'Son' means both Christ and 'the sun', and the word 'done' is a pun on the poet's name.

A famous pun in dramatic literature is Mercutio's laconic crack as he is dying: 'Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man'. (*Romeo and Juliet*, III, i).

A pun form known as *asteismus* involves a reply to earlier words used in a different sense. This example occurs in *Cymbeline* (II, i):

CLOTEN: Would he had been one of my rank!  
LORD: To have smell'd like a fool.

A kind of sylleptic pun is contained in the following admonitory notice seen by the author outside a London church: 'Are you going to sleep with the wise virgins, or wake with the foolish ones?'

James Joyce is generally regarded as one of the most compulsive and incorrigible of punners in English literature. *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* abound in them. See PARAGRAPH.

**pure poetry** A question-begging term because of the ambiguities and connotations of 'pure', and very nearly as loose, at times, as the banality of 'sheer poetry'. However, if, in Valéry's words, we 'cleanse the verbal situation', we can say with a degree of truth that poetry aspires to the state of purity in the sense that it aspires to an excellence and by so doing is refined of all dross and impurity.

It may also be said to aspire 'towards the condition of music', as Walter Pater, in an essay on Giorgione in 1873, said all art does. If poetry does this, then the idea is suggested that the beauty of the poem's words and its content would be in unsurpassable harmony with the melody and sound the words conveyed.

As it happens, the theory and idea of pure poetry manifests itself in the middle of the 19th c. Edgar Allan Poe was hinting at it in *The Poetic Principle* (1850). Baudelaire, who was much influenced by Poe, was referring to it in his *Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe* (1857). Hereafter there seems gradually to have developed the idea that pure poetry was a form of music; that it expressed the essence of whatever it was the poet needed to express. Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Rimbaud, and, later, Valéry, all explored the possibilities of this kind of purity in verse. Thus, the theories of pure poetry are closely associated with Symbolism and the Symbolist poets.

In the 20th c. the most notable advocates of pure poetry were George Moore and the Abbé Bremond. In an introduction to his anthology of *Pure Poetry* (1924) Moore esteemed the works of Poe because they were 'almost free from thought'. In 1926 Abbé Bremond published *La Poésie Pure*. The Abbé associated poetry with prayer. For him pure poetry was a kind of mystical expression; it aspired to an ineffable and incantatory condition.

T. S. Eliot also regarded pure poetry as a notable development in 19th c. verse, as he pointed out in his essay *From Poe to Valéry* (1949). See AESTHETICISM; CREATIONISM; HERMETICISM; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**purism** At its worst the doctrine of precisionists and pedagogues who, to a fault, are devoted to the maintenance of absolute standards of correctness in writing; and an absolute observance

## purism

of the rules of expression. However, the letter killeth and in the end such purism defeats its own object because words, as instruments, are as imperfect as the human beings who use them.

In a wider sense purism refers to those periodic efforts that have been made to purify languages – especially in the exclusion of foreign terms. In this respect the Greek Atticists were purists. The Romans, too, were not sympathetic to Greek coinages. The most notable attempt ever at purism was that made by the *Académie Française* who received a commission in 1635 to purify the French language. This task they undertook and their dictionary was published in 1694. Fortunately, the English language, like many others, has not been subjected to the misguided proprietorship, however well-meaning, of similar custodians. It has remained, to its great advantage, a permeable and assimilative language of whose usage and abuse the common man and the pundit are co-equal arbiters.

It was Johnson who, in the preface to his *Dictionary* (1755), entered the most eloquent of all claims for a language to be free of legislators:

When we see men grow old and die at a certain time one after another, from century to century, we laugh at the elixir that promises to prolong life to a thousand years; and with equal justice may the lexicographer be derided, who, being able to produce no example of a nation that has preserved their words and phrases from mutability, shall imagine that his dictionary can embalm his language and secure it from corruption and decay, that it is in his power to change sublunary nature, and clear the world at once from folly, vanity, and affectation.

With this hope, however, academies have been instituted to guard the avenues of their languages, to retain fugitives, and repulse intruders. But their vigilance and activity have hitherto been vain: sounds are too volatile and subtle for legal restraints; to enchain syllables, and to lash the wind, are equally the undertakings of pride, unwilling to measure its desires by its strength.

**purple patch** In *Ars Poetica* (2, 3, 14–19) Horace refers to *purpureus* ... *pannus* the purple piece of cloth which is an irrelevant insertion of a grandiloquent passage into a work. Thus the term now denotes an ornate, florid or over-written piece of writing which is incongruous. It is nearly always used pejoratively.



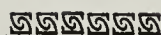
## pythian meter

**pyrrhic** (Gk 'war dance') A metrical foot comprising two short syllables: U U. Also known as a dibrach. The shortest metrical foot in Classical verse. In English prosody the pyrrhic of two unstressed syllables often occurs but it is regarded as belonging to adjacent feet or as a substitution (*q.v.*).

**pythiambic verse** A combination of dactylic hexameters (*q.v.*) and iambic dimeters or trimeters (*qq.v.*). There are some examples in Horaces *Epodes*. See PYTHIAN METER.

**pythian meter** Also known as *versus pythius*. A name given to the dactylic hexameter (*q.v.*) because it was the meter used in the Pythian or Delphic oracles. See PYTHIAMBIC VERSE.

# Q



**qasida** A type of formal ode (*q.v.*) believed to have originated in the 6th c., and used by Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Urdu poets. The themes were varied: elegy, eulogy, panegyric or satire (*qq.v.*). The length varied also – between thirty to two or three hundred lines. The form was imitated by Tennyson in *Locksley Hall*, using couplets in octameters (*q.v.*), for the most part trochaic. Also used by Flecker in his poetic drama *Hassan*.

In Spanish verse the *qasida* is probably of Bedouin Arab origin, and was a kind of elegy in which the meter might vary whereas the subjects (and their order) were fixed. The poet began with a nostalgic reference to a re-discovery of a place which recalled his love; then dwelt on this love; then of the ensuing sufferings it caused. There followed a lengthy account of the various journeys he had undertaken. Finally, he sang the praises of one who, he hoped, would become the patron of his efforts. The verses were transmitted orally at first; later they were written down.

**quadrivium** In the Middle Ages the seven liberal arts were divided into the *quadrivium* and the *trivium*. The former, being the more advanced, comprised the mathematical sciences, namely: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music; the latter, grammar, logic and rhetoric (which included oratory).

**quantity** The duration (*q.v.*) of the sound of a syllable; thus, the time needed for its pronunciation. Most Classical verse is based on quantities in accordance with certain rules. In English verse the duration of the vowels and syllables is important aesthetically but is of no metrical importance. Compare the first line of Virgil's *Aeneid* with the first line of Milton's *Paradise Lost*:

Ărmă vîrúmquê cănó, Troíaë qûi primûs ăb órîs  
Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit

## quatrain

The quantities of Virgil's dactylic hexameter (*q.v.*) are fixed; those of Milton's pentameter (*q.v.*) are flexible and the line might be read in more ways than one according to different degrees of emphasis. *See also* ACCENT; BEAT; HOVERING ACCENT; STRESS; VARIABLE SYLLABLE.

**quart d'heure** (F 'quarter of an hour'). A short one-act play (*q.v.*); a curtain-raiser (*q.v.*), common in the French theatre, rare in England.

**quartet** Four lines of verse, either as a separate quatrain (*q.v.*) or as a non-separate part of a poem. For example, the Shakespearian sonnet (*q.v.*) which consists of three groups of four lines concluded by a 'binding' couplet.

**quarto** (Short for Latin *in quarto* 'in fourth') (a) a book made from printer's sheets folded twice to form four leaves or eight pages. Abbreviated to: 4to; (b) the form in which about twenty of Shakespeare's plays were printed. Such versions are known as First Quarto, Second Quarto, and so forth. *See* DUODECIMO; FOLIO.

**quaternarius** *See* IAMB.

**quatorzain** Any poem of fourteen lines, which usually follows the sonnet (*q.v.*) pattern, but not always regularly.

**quatrain** A stanza of four lines, rhymed or unrhymed. The commonest of all stanzaic forms in European poetry, it lends itself to wide variation in meter and rhyme. Most rhyming quatrains fall into the following patterns:

(a) abab, as in Charles Causley's *The Prisoners of Love*:

Trapped in their tower, the prisoners of love  
Loose their last message on the failing air.  
The troops of Tyre assault with fire the grove  
Where Venus veils with light her lovely hair.

(b) xbyb, as in the same writer's *The Life of the Poet*:

Lock the door, Schoolmaster,  
Keep the children in.  
The river in spate at the schoolyard gate  
Roars like original sin.

## quatrain

(c) aabb, as in Causley's *Timothy Winters*:

Timothy Winters comes to school  
With eyes as wide as a football pool,  
Ears like bombs and teeth like splinters:  
A blitz of a boy is Timothy Winters.

(d) abba, the so-called 'envelope stanza' (*q.v.*) which Tennyson used in *In Memoriam*:

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove;

(e) aaxa, a form which is less common but well known as the Omar Khayyám stanza:

Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night  
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to flight:  
And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught  
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of light.

It is also possible to have a monorhymed stanza. Other complexities are: alternate use of masculine and feminine rhymes and irregular line lengths. Some special names have been acquired by some quatrains. The heroic or elegaic stanza (*q.v.*) used by Gray in his *Elegy*, consists of iambic pentameters rhyming abab. Ballad (*q.v.*) meter consists of iambic tetrameter (*q.v.*), trimeter (*q.v.*), tetrameter, trimeter, usually rhymed abcb or xbyb. Hymn (*q.v.*) forms have also received special names: common meter which is the same as ballad meter, or 'eights-and-sixes'; long meter which is iambic tetrameters; short meter, which is trimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, trimeter.

The quatrain has been used a great deal in European poetry, usually in long and narrative poems. The term can also be applied to the two components of the octave (*q.v.*) of a sonnet (*q.v.*). In epigrammatic utterance the quatrain has been used successfully as a poem by itself by many writers, for example: Prior, Landor, Yeats and Ogden Nash. Nash wrote a lot of them, like:

Sure, deck your lower limbs in pants;  
Yours are the limbs, my sweeting.  
You look divine as you advance –  
Have you seen yourself retreating?



Not a few are anonymous. For example:

Mary Ann has gone to rest,  
Safe at last on Abraham's breast,  
Which may be nuts for Mary Ann,  
But is certainly rough on Abraham.

*See also* QUARTET; TETRASTICH.

**quem quaeritis trope** A trope (*q.v.*) of vital importance in the evolution of European drama. Part of the Easter *Introit*, it was adapted and elaborated into a dialogue and so became the source of liturgical drama. E. K. Chambers goes into the matter in great detail in his classic work *The Medieval Stage* (1903).

**question, epic** A device in epic poetry by which the poet invokes the aid of a muse, patroness or superior power to explain what has happened. Milton uses it to considerable effect at the beginning of Books I, VII and IX of *Paradise Lost*.

**questione della lingua** (It 'dispute, problem, question or quarrel of the language'). A controversy or debate about the suitability of the vernacular as opposed to Latin as the language of literature. It also raised the problem of which Italian dialect should be used. This was a medieval debate in origin to which Dante contributed. In *De vulgari eloquentia* he rejected all dialects and argued for an eclectic language composed from the best elements of all the dialects. In his *Divine Comedy* he used the Florentine dialect; which Petrarch and Boccaccio also used. The argument went on long after this, even though Florentine had become the literary language of Italians. In the 16th c. Castiglione was in favour of the language spoken in courts; others reverted to Dante's eclectic theory. Two schools of thought developed, and produced an 'ancients versus moderns' conflict. Bembo insisted on 14th c. Florentine in his *Prose della volgar lingua* (1525). Castelvetro and Machiavelli opted for the contemporary Florentine. The debate was still going on in the 19th c. when Leopardi favoured 14th c. Florentine. In the 19th c. Manzoni also tackled the problem.

**quidproquo** (L *quid pro quo* 'something for something') A term usually limited to the drama in reference to some kind of blunder or misunderstanding on the part of the characters, perhaps from the misinterpretation of a word or situation. Frequent in comedy;

## quidproquo

for example: situations in Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*, Jonson's *The Alchemist*, Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* and Sheridan's *School for Scandal*.

**quinary** A metrical line of five syllables, as in William Blake's *The Sick Rose*:

O Rose! thou art sick!  
The invisible worm,  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm . . .

**quintain** A stanza or verse group of five lines, as in Jack Clemo's *The Plundered Fuchsias*:

They lie all around the lawn  
And on the furrowed wall  
Like little red bombs winged and splayed.  
No gale has made them fall:  
A child's whim, that is all.

*See also* QUINTET.

**quintet** A five-line stanza of varying rhyme scheme and line length. A common rhyme scheme is ababb. Shelley, for instance, used this in *To a Skylark*:

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!  
Bird thou never wert,  
That from Heaven, or near it,  
Pourest thy full heart  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

*See also* QUINTAIN.

**quintilla** (Sp 'little fifth') A five-line stanza of eight syllables and two rhymes; or any five-line stanza with two rhymes. Verses or lines with other numbers of syllables do exist. In Castilian, the *quintilla* is one of the commonest octosyllabic strophes. It was used by dramatists (e.g. Lope de Vega), but perhaps the most famous instance is Fernández de Moratín's *Fiesta de toros en Madrid* of the 18th c. *See also* REDONDILLA.

**quinzain** A fifteen-line stanza. Rare because of its length.

**quod semper quod ubique** (L 'which always and which everywhere') This remains the hallmark of great literature in time and place. The words occur in the so-called Vincentian canon framed by St Vincent of Lérins (near Cannes) in the 5th c. The sentence runs: *Id teneo quod semper quod ubique et quod ab omnibus creditum est*. It applies the test of eternity, ubiquity and consensus. See *Commonitorium ii* in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 50. See UNIVERSALITY.

**quotation titles** Titles of books echoing famous phrases from earlier literature and evoking known associations in the mind of the reader. This kind of title has achieved considerable popularity in the 20th c. when the fashion was set by E. M. Forster in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), recalling Pope's *Essay on Criticism* 625:

No place so sacred from such fops is barr'd,  
Nor is Paul's church more safe than Paul's churchyard:  
Nay, fly to altars, there they'll talk you dead;  
For fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

But this practice was by no means new to our century. After all, Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1848) reproduced that fair in Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* which was held in Vanity town by Beelzebub, Apollyon and Legion, and through which all pilgrims passed on their way to the Eternal City. *Household Words*, a weekly periodical launched by Dickens only two years later (1850), harked back to King Harry's speech before the Battle of Agincourt in Shakespeare's *Henry V* (IV, iii, 52). Robert Louis Stevenson's *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881) was taken direct from the third book of Horace's *Odes*.

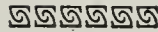
In the 20th c., however, Forster has had so many followers in this respect that space allows us to select only a few: Ford Madox Ford's *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes* (1911) from Milton's *L'Allegro* 121; A. S. M. Hutchinson's *If Winter Comes* (1921) from Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* 57; Rose Macaulay's *Told by an Idiot* (1923) from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* V, i, 26; Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* V, i, 183; and that same author's *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936) from Milton's *Samson Agonistes* 41; Anthony Powell's *From a View to a Death* (1933) from John Woodcock Graves's hunting song *John Peel*; Eric Linklater's *Ripeness is All* (1935) from Shakespeare's *King Lear* V, ii, 9; John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) from Julia Ward Howe's *Battle Hymn of the Republic*; Ernest Hemingway's

## quotation titles

*For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) from Donne's *Meditation* 17; Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory* (1940) from St Matthew's Gospel VI, 13; Joyce Cary's *To be a Pilgrim* (1942) from Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*; H. E. Bates's *Fair Stood the Wind for France* (1944) from Michael Drayton's *Agincourt*; Iris Murdoch's *Unofficial Rose* (1962) from Rupert Brooke's *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*; Anthony Burgess's *Nothing Like the Sun* (1970) from Shakespeare's Sonnet 130.



# R



**Rabelaisian** From the name of François Rabelais (c. 1490–1553). The term usually denotes ribald humour, but can also cover fantastical and exuberant writing.

**Rahmenerzählung** (G ‘frame story’) Some of the better known are Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, *The Arabian Nights*, Boccaccio’s *Decameron* and Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. Goethe, Hoffmann and Tieck all used the frame story, or stories within a story. The Swiss writers C. F. Meyer and Gottfried Keller are regarded as the most accomplished users of the frame story in recent times. Among their main works are: Meyer’s *Der Heilige* (1880) and *Die Hochzeit des Mönchs* (1884); Keller’s *Züricher Novellen* (1876) and *Das Sinngedicht* (1881). See also NOVELLA; STORY WITHIN A STORY.

**raisonneur** (F ‘reasoner’) An equivalent of confidant (q.v.).

**rasa** A Sanskrit term for one of the nine so-called ‘flavours’ of a work of art. The desirable nine are: the erotic, heroic, furious, piteous, comic, fearful, repulsive, marvellous and peaceful.

**rationalism** At least three basic meanings may be distinguished: (a) the theory or doctrine that human reason can provide *a priori* knowledge without intermediary sense data; (b) the theory or doctrine that reason can pursue and attain truth for its own sake; (c) the idea or conviction that a rational order can be found in reality; and, alternatively, that reason can impose an order on reality.

Rationalism, rationalist and rational are often used fairly loosely. For example, the 18th c. is referred to as a period of rationalism; a rationalist may be a person who depends on reason

## rationalism

rather than feeling and intuitive perception; being rational may mean using the brain and ratiocinative processes rather than any others. All three terms are occasionally used pejoratively.

## Räuberroman *See* PICARESQUE.

**realism** An exceptionally elastic critical term, often ambivalent and equivocal, which has acquired far too many qualifying (but seldom clarifying) adjectives, and is a term which many now feel we could do without.

Philosophy distinguishes two basic concepts concerning reality: correspondence- and coherence. The correspondence theory suggests that the external world is knowable by scientific inquiry, by the accumulation of data, by documentation, by definition. The coherence theory suggests that the external world is knowable (or perhaps can be understood) by intuitive perception, by insight. Thus, correspondence will require referential language; coherence, emotive language. The former will imply an objective point of view; the latter a subjective. But, as language interpenetrates, no absolute divisions are possible.

To simplify here are two approximations to reality on the subject of a song thrush:

### 1. SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Identification: 9". A brown-backed bird, with a spotted breast. Distinguished from Mistle Thrush and Fieldfare by much smaller size, uniform *brown* upper-parts and yellowish-buff breast and flanks with *small spots*; from Redwing by lack of chestnut on flanks and beneath wings and lack of prominent supercilium. Shows *buff* beneath wings. Often feeds on open ground, running spasmodically.

Voice: a loud "*tchuck*," or "*tchick*," repeated rapidly as alarm; flight-call a soft "*sip*" (shorter than Redwing's call). Song loud and musical, the short, varied phrases *repeated 2-4 times*, between brief pauses.

Habitat: Around human habitations, parks, woods and hedges. Nests in bushes, hedges, ivy, etc., occasionally in buildings.

2. Terrifying are the attent sleek thrushes on the lawn,  
More coiled steel than living – a poised  
Dark deadly eye, those delicate legs

Triggered to stirrings beyond sense – with a start, a bounce,  
a stab

Overtake the instant and drag out some writhing thing.

No indolent procrastinations and no yawning stares,

No sighs or head-scratchings. Nothing but bounce and stab

And a ravening second.

The first is an extract from Collins's *Field Guide to Birds of Britain and Europe*; the second is a quotation from Ted Hughes's poem *Thrushes*. Each is concerned with reality. Each is realistic within the limits of what it sets out to achieve: to give an impression or idea of a thrush to the receptor (*q.v.*). So different are the methods employed that it would be superfluous to point them out.

Fundamentally, in literature, realism is the portrayal of life with fidelity. It is thus not concerned with idealization, with rendering things as beautiful when they are not, or in any way presenting them in any guise as they are not; nor, as a rule, is realism concerned with presenting the supranormal or transcendental, though, of course, the writings of Richard Rolle of Hampole, for example, or the mystical poems of St John of the Cross, are realistic enough if we believe in God and the spiritual order. The writings of the mystic and the visionary perhaps belong to a rather special category which might be called 'super-reality'. On the whole one tends to think of realism in terms of the everyday, the normal, the pragmatic. More crudely, it suggests jackets off, sleeves rolled up, a 'no nonsense' approach.

One may suppose that most writers have been concerned with reality (and therefore with some attempt at some form of realism) since the year dot. Much of the world's literature can be accounted realistic; much epic (*q.v.*) for example, though it is often about supermen and improbably heroic deeds; most drama, even when it is very stylized, as in *No* (*q.v.*); a great deal of lyric (*q.v.*) poetry; the vast majority of fictional works . . . and so forth. In general this enormous body of literature displays what H. Levin has described as that 'willed tendency of art to approximate reality'. However, one can suggest that some literature is *more* realistic than other literature. For instance, most of the poetry written by George Crabbe, Kipling and Robert Frost is more realistic than most of the poetry written by, say, Spenser, Keats and Conrad Aiken. The novels of Zola, Gissing and Theodore Dreiser are much more realistic than the works of Huysmans, Firbank and Ivy Compton-Burnett. 'More realistic' in the sense of more down

to earth, closer to everyday life, and thus well within the experience of the legendary man on the Clapham bus, or Clapham Man.

The use of the terms real and realistic clearly implies their antitheses, like unreal, unrealistic, fantastic, improbable, fanciful, of the dream world. The imaginative flights of bizarre invention that we find in some of Lucian's works, in Rabelais, in Voltaire's *Candide*, in H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds*, in Ray Bradbury's SF (*q.v.*) stories, are not realistic, though they are excellent fantasy based on reality. Occasionally a writer (e.g. Roald Dahl) manages to keep a beautiful and breathtaking balance on that high wire that joins both worlds.

In the end realism, as a literary term, is about as clear and bendable a term as, say, Romanticism (*q.v.*) and, as it happens, they are the -isms of two very different camps – if not campuses. In the last hundred years or so there have developed a large number of theories about realism, and about what is to be regarded as realistic or not. We can hardly avoid using the term on occasions, particularly when we mean to state or suggest that a work of literature has verisimilitude (*q.v.*) or in some way possesses that kind of authenticity which is generally believed to be an essential quality in a work of literature, however fantastic or improbable (in some cases) it may be – or *seems* to be.

The issue has been much confused by the fact that in the 19th c. – a period almost too fertile in antinomies, schools, movements and, to use the current jargon, 'cultural fission' – there was a recognizable and conscious movement in literature which was subsequently tagged 'realism'. As is often the case the French were responsible for this movement. It began some time in the 1830s and had gathered momentum by the 1850s. During the latter part of the century realism was a definite trend in European literature.

One of the earlier instances of the use of the term *le réalisme* is to be found in the *Mercure français du XIXe siècle* (1826). Here it refers to a point of view or doctrine which states that realism is a copy of nature and reveals to us the literature of truth. Realism rejects Classicism (*q.v.*), Romanticism (*q.v.*) and the doctrine of art for art's sake (*q.v.*).

It is clear that the realist thought an artist should concern himself with the here and now, with everyday events, with his own environment and with the movements (political, social etc.) of his time. The anti-Romantic movements in Germany also concentrated attention on the lot of the common man and on the



need to present life with all its warts. In general we can see clearly enough in the works of Immermann, Balzac and Dickens, for instance, what forms the realist attitude was likely to take.

Theory combined with practice in the 19th c. to produce a large body of literature which presented an altogether different view of the so-called '*condition humaine*'. The practice was almost certainly influenced by philosophical thought, and most notably by Comte's *Cours de philosophie positive* (1830). Comte's positivism made sociology a prime science. Later, the inquiries of Feuerbach and Darwin induced many people to re-appraise assumptions about their origin and to take a very different view of the environment. Later, also, Comte's theories were applied by Taine to the sphere of literature, especially in *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise* (1863-64) and in *Nouveaux Essais de Critique et d'Histoire* (1865). One may also suppose that the invention of photography in 1839 had an immense effect on the way people looked at the world and existence in general. Here was precision; the scene, the fact, the episode were faithfully recorded. The paintings of Courbet, too, had an incalculable influence. Courbet was strongly opposed to any kind of idealization in art. He rejected both Classical and Romantic precepts and tastes, and maintained that only realism was democratic. For him the peasant and the worker were the fittest and most estimable subjects for a painter. Champfleury, in *Le Réalisme* (1857), applied Courbet's point of view to literature and suggested that the hero in the novel should be an ordinary man. Here, no doubt, we have the egg of the so-called anti-hero (*q.v.*) whose genesis *appears* to have been of a later date.

It is a noteworthy curiosity of this realistic movement that in the first place realism was either defined negatively or rejected as undesirable. Courbet himself did not like it as a label though he used it himself. Champfleury expressed disapproval of it in his essays *Le Réalisme* (1857). Baudelaire described it as an '*injure dégoûtante*' and as a '*mot vague et élastique*'. Edmond de Goncourt also expressed dislike of it in his preface to *Les Frères Zemganno* (1879). Distaste for the term seems to have arisen from a fear that realism would be regarded as a school or movement, which is how we are inclined to think of it now. As it happened Champfleury was the prime mover behind a trend already very apparent in the novels of Balzac and Stendhal. Champfleury's *Le Réalisme* was virtually a manifesto of a new doctrine.

In the same year in which Champfleury published this, Flaubert produced *Madame Bovary* which was greeted as a great work

## realism

of realism (later it was greeted as a great work of naturalism *q.v.*). Flaubert, too, disliked the label. Other so-called realistic novels to appear at this period were *Germinie Lacerteux* (1865) by Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, and minor works by Ernest Feydeau who wrote *Fanny* (1858), and Duranty who wrote *Le Malheur d'Henriette Gérard* (1860).

The realist novelists paid particular attention to exact documentation, to getting the facts right, and in many ways were continuing in a more intensive and conscientious fashion what Balzac had been doing years before in *La Comédie Humaine*. Balzac regarded man (and analysed character) as a zoologist might and he expressed the intention of following Buffon's work on zoology in order to write a natural history of man. This was a scientific approach which, at times, came near to the method of the field guide quoted above.

Zola and de Maupassant have also been taken as exponents of realism but it is perhaps more correct to regard them as the supreme analysts of the school of naturalism. Zola's essays in *Le Roman Expérimental* (1880) are one of the main statements about naturalism (*q.v.*).

Outside France the effects of realism are to be seen in the works of Tolstoy, Gogol and Gorki, and, to a lesser extent, in Turgenev. Also in the work of Gissing and the American novelist William Dean Howells.

The long-term effects of what the French writers achieved are difficult to assess. In recent years attempts at more acute realism have quite often led to the kind of excesses to which Zola himself proved vulnerable in, for example, *Thérèse Raquin* (1868) and *Germinal* (1885). In fact the quest for truth and accuracy has degenerated on occasions into mere sensationalism, as in Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* (1948) and James Jones's *From Here to Eternity* (1951). The chimeric vomit of William Burroughs's 'junky' novels and the masturbatory fantasies of Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969) provide other instances of realism carried to extremes. There are scores of other works of less merit but comparable pretensions.

As far as drama is concerned, realism in the 19th c. was a less extreme form of naturalism. Playwrights who favoured realism – Ibsen is a key figure – rejected the concept of the well-made play (*q.v.*) with its mechanical artifices and its altogether too slick plotting, and rejected also exaggerated theatricalism. Ibsen's influence was very great, especially on Shaw and Strindberg, and

subsequently on a whole generation of prominent 20th c. dramatists; not to mention Stanislavsky and the various adaptations of his teachings in method acting.

What is known as social realism (*q.v.*) in the theatre is largely a Russian phenomenon. Anatoli Lunacharsky (1875–1933) invented the theory of it. This involved the development of specifically Soviet theatre. Classics were to be interpreted in contemporary terms so that they became more relevant to the people. New plays should be about life lived by ordinary people. The effects of his teachings in Communist countries have been considerable, even where the Kremlin faith has been thrown over with consequent excommunication – as in Albania. Now, socialist realism suggests the committed propaganda (*q.v.*) of writers submissive to a particular political régime.

Realism occurs in another important context, namely psychological realism. This denotes fidelity to the truth in depicting the inner workings of the mind, the analysis of thought and feeling, the presentation of the nature of personality and character. Such realism also requires a fictional character to behave *in* character. The ultimate in psychological realism is the use of the stream of consciousness (*q.v.*) method. This kind of realism, too, has often resulted in a kind of decadence (*q.v.*) as authors dig deeper and further and with greater relish into the scatological and orectic chaos of the conscious and subconscious territories. *See also* SLICE OF LIFE; VERISM.

**recension** A critical revision of a literary work.

**receptor** A jargon term for the person (or group of persons) experiencing a work of art.

**recessive accent** This occurs when a word usually accented on its final syllable is followed by another heavily accented word. For the sake of meter and rhythm the accent is shifted to the beginning of the preceding word. A common practice in writing blank verse.

**recognition** *See* ANAGNORISIS.

**recoil** A term used when speaking of tragedy (*q.v.*) to indicate that the protagonist has brought about his own doom.

**recto and verso** The *recto* is the right-hand page in a book; the *verso* the left-hand page.

**recuesta**

**recuesta** (Sp 'request') a type of poetry written on request or commission by a *trovador*, the Spanish equivalent of the troubadour (*q.v.*).

**redaction** The editing or revising of a work for publication.

**rederijkers** Members of the chambers of rhetoric in the Netherlands in the 15th and 16th c. They were poets and students of poetry and are comparable to the Meistersingers (*q.v.*). Their main interests were dramatic and lyric poetry. See REFREIN; RHÉTORIQUEURS; STOCK.

**redondilla** (Sp 'little round', diminutive of *redondo* 'round, clear, straightforward'; or 'a round, ring, circle') An eight-syllable quatrain (*q.v.*) rhyming either abba or abab, but in the latter rhyme scheme is usually called *serventesio*. Sometimes *redondilla* is referred to as *redondilla mayor*, *cuarteta* and *cuartilla*. Formerly the term included the *quintilla* (*q.v.*) and was also applied to any eight-syllable strophe in which all the verses rhymed in consonance. This is an important form because it was adapted by one poet after another until Lope de Vega and Calderón used it very widely and often for specific purposes (for example, to create mood) in drama. In the verses of King Alfonso the Wise *redondillas* of *pie cruzado* are also to be found.

**redundant verse** See ACATALECTIC.

**reference, point of** An idea developed by Coventry Patmore (*Principle in Art*, 1889) and first applied to painting. It was gradually adopted as a literary term, partly owing to Quiller Couch, and as such now denotes a figure, a character, who may be regarded as 'normal' or balanced in the sense that he keeps a sense of proportion amidst excesses. A sound example is the sane, good and pragmatic Kent in *King Lear*. See also IDEAL SPECTATOR.

**referential language** See EMOTIVE LANGUAGE.

**refrán** (Sp 'refrain') But not a refrain in the English sense. It is, rather, equivalent to a saying, proverb (*q.v.*), saw, or popular maxim (*q.v.*); and synonymous with the French *dicton*. In Spanish



verse it often comprises two short phrases rhyming in consonance or assonance (*qq.v.*) and containing alliteration. Usually, too, it has some sonic device which makes it easily memorable (like the alliteration and assonance in the English phrase 'as cool as a cucumber'). The word may be of French provenance and came into general use in the 15th c. Much Spanish literature of that period stemmed from *refranes*, which dealt with many subjects and aspects of life. The poet the Marqués de Santillana (1398–1458), at the king's request, made a collection of these nuggets of wisdom.

**refrain** A phrase, line or lines repeated at intervals during a poem and especially at the end of a stanza. A device of great antiquity, it is found in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, the Bible, Greek and Latin verse, in Provençal and Renaissance verse and in many ballads (*q.v.*). Very often it is an exact repetition. Sometimes it serves to work out an 'argument' (*q.v.*) in a poem, in which case it will undergo slight modifications, as in this fine lyric by Sir Thomas Wyatt:

Disdain me not without desert,  
Nor leave me not so suddenly;  
Since well ye wot that in my heart  
I mean ye not but honestly.  
Disdain me not.

Refuse me not without cause why,  
Nor think me not to be unjust;  
Since that by lot of fantasy  
This careful knot needs knit I must.  
Refuse me not.

Mistrust me not, though some there be  
That fain would spot my steadfastness;  
Believe them not, since that we see  
The proof is not as they express.  
Mistrust me not.

Forsake me not till I deserve  
Nor hate me not till I offend;  
Destroy me not till that I swerve;  
But since ye know what I intend,  
Forsake me not.

## refrain

Disdain me not that am your own:  
Refuse me not that am so true:  
Mistrust me not till all be known:  
Forsake me not ne for no new.  
Disdain me not.

*See* REPETEND; REPETITION.

**refrein** A poetic form very popular among the *rederijkers* (q.v.) in the Netherlands. It consists of four or more stanzas of the same length and rhyme scheme, each of which concludes with an identical line. It derives from the French *refrain* (q.v.) and very probably originates in the French *ballade* (q.v.). *See* STOCK.

**regional novel** A regional writer is one who concentrates much attention on a particular area and uses it and the people who inhabit it as the basis for his or her stories. Such a locale is likely to be rural and/or provincial. Among the earliest of regional novelists was Maria Edgeworth (1767–1849), an Anglo-Irish woman who was one of the first to perceive the possibilities of relating character to a particular environment. Her most notable novels were *Castle Rackrent* (1800), *Belinda* (1801) and *The Absentee* (1812).

Three supremely good regional writers were Thomas Hardy, who re-created the West Country (especially Hampshire and Dorset) in many of his novels and short stories and revived the name Wessex; Arnold Bennett who centred many of his stories on the Potteries – ‘the five towns’; and William Faulkner whose main focus was the Deep South.

Other distinguished but slightly less famous writers of this kind were the Spanish Countess Emilia Pardo Bazán who wrote about Galician life in the 19th c.; Grazia Deledda (1871–1936) who wrote mostly about Sardinia and its people; Ivan Cankar (1876–1918) the Slovene dramatist and writer of short stories whose native Slovenia was the scene of much of his work; Ivo Andrić (1892–1975) a number of whose novels and short stories are about his native Bosnia, and in particular the small townships of Travnik and Višegrad; and Jean Giono (1895– ) who re-created the region of Provence in several of his books. *See* COSTUMBRISMO; LOCAL COLOUR; NOVEL; REALISM.

**register** A list of facts or names. A precise record. A volume into

## Renaissance

which information is entered systematically. Early examples of register were the *Doomsday Book* and a bead-roll. See ROLL.

**rejet** A term in French prosody which denotes that the sense in one line of verse is completed in the next; that part 'run over' is the *rejet*. See also ENJAMBEMENT; RUN-ON LINE.

**relativism** In aesthetics the term refers to a situation in which it is logically possible for two contradictory 'value judgments' to be true and known to be true. For instance: (a) this is a good novel; (b) this novel is bad. Apart from the subjective nature of the critic's opinion and tastes it must be remembered that sensibility changes from age to age, and what was regarded as a good novel in 1900 may be thought much otherwise fifty years later. See ABSOLUTISM.

**remate** (Sp 'end, finish, finishing touch', from the verb *rematar* 'to end, to stop, to finish off') The last and shortest stanza of a *canción* or song. It goes under other names: *commiato*, *despido*, *envio*, *contera*, *vuelta*, *ripressa*. See also ENVOI.

**Renaissance** (F 're-birth') The term was originally applied to the 're-discovery' and 'revival' of Classical literature and studies which began in Italy in the late Middle Ages and spread to Northern Europe and Britain in the 16th c. This period was characterized by an amazing upsurge of energy, curiosity and creative effort. In no other period have the arts of painting, literature, sculpture and architecture attained such an eminence. In no other period have man's opinions and theories about the nature and structure of the universe and the role of man in it brought about such profound and far-reaching changes. But the gradualness of these changes must be emphasized. Many attitudes, beliefs and conviction which were commonplace in the 15th c. were still widespread in the 17th. Whether these changes were for good or evil can be argued endlessly.

During this period many great writers flourished. Some of the better known and most influential were Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Machiavelli and Sanazzaro in Italy; Erasmus in the Netherlands; Montaigne, Rabelais and the poets of the Pléiade (*q.v.*) in France; Lope de Vega and Cervantes in Spain; Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Shake-

## Renaissance

speare and Sir Francis Bacon in England. See HUMANISM; SCHOLASTICISM.

**repatee** A witty or clever rejoinder, as in the story of Bernard Shaw meeting a very fat man on a narrow staircase. Shaw shoved his way past him. 'Pig!' said the fat man angrily. Shaw raised his hat and replied: 'Shaw. Good afternoon.'

**repetend** A repeated element in a poem; a word, a phrase or a line. The term can be used as a synonym for a refrain (*q.v.*), but a repetend is usually more varied than a refrain and occurs at different and unexpected points in a poem. It is a kind of echo and a common device. A number of excellent examples are to be found in T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*. See INCREMENTAL REPETITION; REPETITION.

**repetition** An essential unifying element in nearly all poetry and much prose. It may consist of sounds, particular syllables and words, phrases, stanzas, metrical patterns, ideas, allusions and shapes. Thus refrain, assonance, rhyme, internal rhyme, alliteration and onomatopoeia (*qq.v.*) are frequent in repetition. *Hoarding* by Roger McGough contains some ordinary repetitive elements:

all too busy boarding  
thirty year old numbskull  
with a change of dirty coats  
every single day gets porridge  
but never gets his oats  
all too busy boarding  
the xmas merry-go-round  
old lady sits by the firegrate  
knitting a pudding with twine  
dreams of brandy sauce  
drinks methylated wine  
all too busy boarding  
the xmas merry-go-round  
hoarding hoarding hoarding  
girl in the secondhand nightie  
with bruises on her brain  
dips her thumb in the coldcream  
sucks it over again



## Restoration comedy

all too busy boarding  
the xmas merry-go-round  
hoarding hoarding hoarding  
forgodssake      giveusapound

This example in prose comes from the closing pages of Samuel Beckett's novel *Malone Dies*:

This tangle of grey bodies is they. Silent, dim, perhaps clinging to one another, their heads buried in their cloaks, they lie, together in a heap, in the night. They are far out in the bay. Lemuel has shipped his oars, the oars trail in the water. The night is strewn with absurd

absurd lights, the stars, the beacons, the buoys, the lights of earth and in the hills the faint fires of the blazing gorse. Macmann, my last, my possessions, I remember, he is there too, perhaps he sleeps. Lemuel.

Lemuel is in charge, he raises his hatchet on which the blood will never dry, but not to hit anyone, he will not hit anyone, he will not hit anyone any more, he will not touch anyone any more, either with it or with it or with it or with or

or with it or with his hammer or with his stick or with his fist  
or in thought in dream I mean never he will never  
or with his pencil or with his stick or  
or light light I mean  
never there he will never  
never anything

**replevin** (OF *replevir*, from *plevir* 'to pledge'). Of legal origin, it denotes an inquiry intended to restore to the owner goods which have been in some way wrongfully distrained. As a literary term it denotes an inquiry intended to secure for a writer recognition which has been denied.

**resolution** Those events which form the outcome of the climax of a play or story. The equivalent of falling action (*q.v.*).

**rest** A metrical term adopted from music. It indicates where a pause seems to compensate for the absence of an unstressed syllable (or syllables) in a foot.

**Restoration comedy** That kind of drama which prevailed between the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 and the advent

## Restoration comedy

of sentimental comedy (*q.v.*) early in the 18th c. It is also referred to as artificial comedy or comedy of manners (*q.v.*) and was chiefly concerned with presenting a society of elegance and stylishness. Its characters were gallants, ladies and gentlemen of fashion and rank, fops, rakes, social climbers and country bumpkins. Witty, urbane and sometimes licentious, it dealt with the intricacies of sexual and marital intrigue and therefore also with adultery and cuckoldry. A five-star constellation of gifted playwrights were largely responsible for this resurgence of theatrical life after the Puritan period. They were Wycherley, Etherege, Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar. The main plays were: Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1672 or 1673) and *The Plain Dealer* (1674); Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676); Congreve's *The Double Dealer* (1694), *Love for Love* (1695) and *The Way of the World* (1700); Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1697) and *The Provoked Wife* (1697); Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) and *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707). These last two were somewhat less mannered and artificial than their predecessors. See COMEDY; RESTORATION PERIOD.

**Restoration period** It is usually taken to apply to the period from 1660 (the year Charles II re-established the monarchy) to the end of the century. The outstanding writers in this age were John Aubrey, Dryden, Congreve, Sir John Vanbrugh, Farquhar, Etherege, Wycherley, Pepys, George Halifax, Otway, Samuel Butler, the Earl of Rochester, and Sir William Temple. Dryden was the major writer of the period in both verse and prose. See also RESTORATION COMEDY.

**retroencha** A Provençal lyric form which had a refrain (*q.v.*) at the end of each stanza.

**revenge tragedy** A form of tragic drama in which someone (usually a hero or a villain) rights a wrong. Probably the earliest instance of a kind of revenge tragedy is the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus. During the Renaissance period two main 'revenge' traditions are discernible: first, the French-Spanish tradition, best exemplified in the work of Calderón, Lope de Vega and Corneille. Here the emphasis is on the point of honour and the conflict between love and duty. Second, the English tradition which owes much to the plays of Seneca. In fact the Elizabethans took him as a model and developed what has been described as 'Senecal man'. The first

outstanding work in the genre was Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1586), a melodramatic, blood-and-thunder play which was much imitated – most notably by Shakespeare in *Hamlet*. (Shakespeare may have been influenced by what is known as the *Ur-Hamlet*, a play ascribed to Kyd but not extant).

In its decadence Elizabethan and Jacobean revenge tragedy became more and more sensational and macabre. Ghosts, apparitions, graveyards, charnel houses, incest, insanity, adultery, rape, murder, infanticide and suicide were commonplace elements. The plotting villains went about their work with sardonic relish, devising ever more bizarre methods of destroying people. Death was the only subject on their syllabus, and murder their hobby.

Among the other major works which have revenge themes mention should be made of: Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1592); Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (1594); John Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* (1600) and *The Malcontent* (1604), a rare instance of a comedy involving revenge in the tragic tradition; George Chapman's *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* (1607); Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1607) and *The Atheist's Tragedy* (1611); Webster's *The White Devil* (1609–12) and *The Duchess of Malfi* (c. 1613). Though not usually classified as a revenge tragedy, Shakespeare's *Othello* (1604) is very largely concerned with the way in which Iago takes his revenge on the Moor; and Iago is the supreme villain of the period.

Among many minor works in this tradition, some of the more outstanding are: Henry Chettle's *Hoffman* (1602); John Fletcher's *The Bloody Brother* (1616–24); Thomas Drue's *The Bloody Banquet* (1620); Massinger's *The Duke of Milan* (1620); James Shirley's *The Maid's Revenge* (1626); and Henry Glapthorne's *Revenge for Honour* (1640).

This kind of drama did not become wholly extinct. Shelley's closet drama (*q.v.*) *Cenci* (1819) is in the revenge tradition. So are Victor Hugo's *Hernani* (1830) and his *Ruy Blas* (1838). In more recent times Lorca's *Blood Wedding* (1933) continued the form. Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge* (1955) treated of the Sicilian point-of-honour revenge in a modern setting. David Rudkin's *Afore Night Come* also contained revenge elements. See DUMBSHOW; SENECA TRAGEDY; TRAGEDY; VILLAIN.

**reverdie** An OF dance form which celebrated the advent of spring. In structure it is similar to the *chanson* (*q.v.*) and has five or six stanzas without a refrain (*q.v.*).

**reversal**

**reversal** *See* PERIPETEIA.

**Revesby play** A remarkable example of English folk drama which comes from Revesby, Lincolnshire. It is akin to the Mumming Play and the Plough Monday Play (*qq.v.*). The characters are the Fool and his sons (Pickle Herring, Blue Breeches, Pepper Breeches and Ginger Breeches) and Mr Allspice and Cicely. The Fool has a battle with a hobby-horse and a dragon. The sons perform a ritual killing of the Fool. But the Fool is revived and there follows a sword-dance (*q.v.*) and the wooing of Cicely by the Fool and his sons. In all probability this is a dramatic survival of a fertility rite which symbolizes the death of the old year and the resurrection in the spring. *See also* PACE-EGGING PLAY.

**review** (a) A short notice or discussion or critical article in a paper, journal or periodical; (b) a journal or periodical containing articles on literature, art and philosophy. *The Edinburgh Review* is a famous example; so is *The Quarterly Review*. Publications like *Horizon*, *Scrutiny*, *The London Magazine*, *Essays in Criticism* and *Encounter* might well be placed in this category. *See also* PERIODICAL.

**revue** A theatrical entertainment comprising dance, song, sketches, mime (*q.v.*) and improvisation. It is usually satirical and topical. Reference to the form is first found in Planché's *Recollections* (1872) when he claims to have been responsible for the first revue on the English stage: a work called *Success: or, a Hit if You Like It* (1825). But this was no more than a review (*q.v.*) of productions in the previous season. The first revue in the modern sense of the term was *Under the Clock* (1893), by Seymour Hicks and Charles Brookfield. In the early 20th c. this kind of entertainment became very popular, and so it continued to be during the First World War. In America revue started up with the *Ziegfeld Follies* in 1907. Since then the vogue for revue has waned little. Famous names associated with it have been C. B. Cochran, Noel Coward and Herbert Farjeon. Notable successes have been *Apple Sauce* (1940); *New Faces* (1940); *Rise Above It* (1941); *Sweet and Low* (1943); *Oranges and Lemons* (1949); *Airs on a Shoestring* (1953).

In 1961 was produced *Beyond the Fringe*, a highly successful attempt at satirical revue which had considerable influence; especially, for instance, on *The Royal Commission Revue* (1964).

Other well-known instances have been *At The Drop of a Hat*



(1956) and *At the Drop of Another Hat* (1962), both devised and performed by Michael Flanders and Donald Swann. *See also* EXTRAVAGANZA.

**rhapsody** (Gk 'stitch song') In ancient Greece a rhapsodist was an itinerant minstrel who recited epic poetry. Part came from memory: part was improvised. A rhapsodist was thus a poet who 'stitched' together various elements.

In a more general sense a rhapsody may be an effusive and emotional (perhaps even ecstatic) utterance in verse or, occasionally, in prose. *See also* GUSLAR; SCOP; SKALD; TROUBADOUR; TROUVÈRE.

**rhetoꝛic** (Gk *rhêtôr* 'speaker in the assembly'). Rhetoric is the art of using language for persuasion, in speaking or writing; especially in oratory. The Classical theoreticians codified rhetoric very thoroughly. A knowledge and command of it was regarded as essential. The major textbooks included Aristotle's *Rhetoric*; Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*; Cicero's *De Inventione*, *De Optimo Genere Oratorum* and *De Oratore*. Cicero himself was an accomplished rhetorician. So great was the influence of these men (and, later, of Longinus) that in the Middle Ages rhetoric became part of the *trivium*, together with logic and grammar.

The rules for oral and written composition (these rules altered little from Cicero's day until well on in the 19th c.) were divided into five processes in a logical order: invention, arrangement (or disposition), style, memory and delivery (each had a large number of sub-divisions). 'Invention' (*q.v.*) was the discovery of the relevant material; 'arrangement' was the organization of the material into sound structural form; under 'style' (*q.v.*) came the consideration of the appropriate manner for the matter and the occasion (e.g. the grand style, the middle and the low or plain); under 'memory' came guidance on how to memorize speeches; the section devoted to 'delivery' elaborated the technique for actually making a speech.

**rhetoꝛical figure** An artful arrangement of words to achieve a particular emphasis and effect, as in apostrophe, chiasmus and zeugma (*qq.v.*). A rhetorical figure does not alter the meanings of words, as a metaphor (*q.v.*) may do. The repetitions in these lines from Gerard Manley Hopkins's *St. Winefred's Well* are rhetorical in their emphasis and echoing:

## rhetorical figure

T. What is it, Gwen, my girl? <sup>•</sup> why do you hover and haunt me?

W. You came by Caerwys, sir? <sup>1</sup>

V. I came by Caerwys.

W. There

Some messenger there might have <sup>1</sup> met you from my uncle.

T. Your uncle met the messenger – <sup>1</sup> met me; and this the message:

Lord Beuno comes to-night. <sup>1</sup>

W. To-night, sir!

See RHETORIC.

**rhetorical irony** A form of irony (*q.v.*) in which the attitude and tone of the speaker or writer is the exact opposite of what is expressed. Such irony is common in the work of Swift, Voltaire, Samuel (Erewhon) Butler and Anatole France.

**rhetorical question** Basically a question not expecting an answer, or one to which the answer is more or less self-evident. It is used primarily for stylistic effect, and is a very common device in public speaking – especially when the speaker is trying to work up the emotional temperature. For example (a politician on the hustings):

Are we going to tolerate this intrusion upon our freedom?  
Are we going to accept these restrictions? Are we to be  
intimidated by time-serving bureaucrats? Are we to be sup-  
pressed by sycophantic and supine jackals waiting for dead  
men's shoes?

Or the writer may argue with himself (and in a different way work upon the emotions of the reader) as Sir Philip Sidney does in the 47th sonnet of the sequence *Astrophel and Stella*:

What, have I thus betrayed my libertie?  
Can those blacke beames such burning markes engrave  
In my free side? or am I borne a slave,  
Whose necke becomes such yoke of tyranny?  
Or want I sense to feele my miserie?  
Or sprite, disdained of such disdaine to have?

Another fundamental form of rhetorical question is that to which an answer is at once supplied. A particularly good example

of this is Falstaff's disquisition on 'honour' in *King Henry IV*, Part I, V, i, 131.

Two other kinds of rhetorical question (both having something in common with the above) are: (a) a series of questions in quick succession for emphasis (e.g. 'Can we make it? If so, will it work? Where can we market it? Where can we market it cheaply?' and so on); (b) a question put to another person or oneself which expresses surprise, astonishment or anger and which is not easily answered. A good example is Bolingbroke's outburst in *Richard II*, I iii 294, after he has been banished:

O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite  
By bare imagination of a feast?  
Or wallow naked in December snow  
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?

See also RHETORIC; RHETORICAL FIGURE; RHETORICAL IRONY.

**rhétoriciens** A group of French poets who flourished late in the 15th and early in the 16th c. at the court of Burgundy and in Paris. They were obscure, difficult poets who went in for complex allegory, intricate rhyme and meter, involved rhetoric and a high degree of formalism. Among the better known are Alain Chartier, Jean Lemaire de Belges, Molinet, Crétin and Jean Marot. They have no counterparts in England or elsewhere.

**rhopallic verse** (Gk *rhopalon* 'cudgel') Thus, verse thicker at one end than the other, by dint of each word being a syllable longer than its predecessor, or each line a foot longer. So, for example, Crashaw's *Wishes To His Supposed Mistress* begins:

Whoe'er she be  
That not impossible She  
That shall command my heart and me; . . .

The first line is a dimeter, the second a trimeter, the third a tetrameter (*qq.v.*) – and so the poem continues for forty-two stanzas in all. See also PATTERN POETRY; PRUNING POEM.

**rhyme** (OF *rime* 'series') Rhyme has two main functions: (a) it echoes sounds and is thus a source of aesthetic satisfaction. There is

## rhyme

pleasure in the sound itself and in the coincidence of sounds, and this pleasure must be associated with the sense of music, of rhythm (*q.v.*) and beat; the pulse sense which is common to all human beings. Part of the pleasure often consists of the surprise that a successful and unexpected rhyme evokes; this is especially true of comic verse where ingenious rhymes make an important contribution to the humour; (b) Rhyme assists in the actual structure of verse. It helps to organize the verse, simultaneously opening up and concluding the sense. Thus it is a rhythmical device for intensifying the meaning as well as for 'binding' the verse together. The rhythmical effects are particularly noticeable with head and internal rhyme (*qq.v.*). Rhyme also helps to make verse easier to remember. Though many poets have not used rhyme – and some have spoken against it – it is unquestionably the commonest and most ancient form of metrical devices. *See also* RIME.

**rhyme counterpoint** A poetic device in which line length is opposed to rhyme scheme. The rhymed lines are of unequal length; the unrhymed of equal length.

**rhyme royal** A stanza form of seven decasyllabic lines rhyming ababbcc and so called, in all probability, from its use by James I of Scotland in *Kingis Quair* (1423). Because Chaucer was the first to use it in *Complaint unto Pity* it is also known as the Chaucerian Stanza. Chaucer employed it in *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The Parlement of Foules* and several of *The Canterbury Tales*. Other poets who have experimented with it include Sir Thomas Wyatt, Edmund Spenser, Shakespeare, Michael Drayton, William Morris and John Masefield. *See* HEPTASTICH; RHYME; SCOTTISH CHANCERIAN; SEPTET.

**rhyme scheme** Used to denote the pattern of rhymes in a stanza or poem. It is usually represented by small letters, thus: ababbcc (the rhyme royal (*q.v.*) scheme). *See* RHYME.

**rhyming slang** A form of cryptic speech devised and used by Cockney people. It is based on a trick rhyme, in which a phrase is substituted for the word; as in, 'apples and pears' for 'stairs'. Occasionally the word is twice removed from its name in rhyming slang, as in 'use your loaf' from 'use your head' which rhymes with 'bread'. Other well-known examples are: trouble and strife/



wife; plates of meat/feet; Hampstead Heath/teeth; titfor (titfortat)/hat; tea-leaf/thief; north and south/mouth. There are hundreds of such phrases, many of which have been gathered in Julian Franklyn's *A Dictionary of Rhyming Slang* (1960). See also BACK SLANG; CANT; SLANG.

**rhythm** (Gk 'flowing') In verse or prose, the movement or sense of movement communicated by the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables and by the duration (*q.v.*) of the syllables. In verse the rhythm depends on the metrical pattern. In verse the rhythm is regular: in prose it may or may not be regular. See CADENCE; FALLING RHYTHM; RISING RHYTHM; ROCKING RHYTHM; SPRUNG RHYTHM; METER.

**rhythmical pause** By some used as the equivalent of a caesura (*q.v.*), and thus it occurs during a line of verse rather than at the end of it.

**riddle** (OE 'opinion, advice') An ancient and universal form of literature, in its commonest form it consists of a puzzle question: the equivalent of a conundrum or an enigma. For example:

Brothers and sisters have I none.  
This man's father is my father's son.  
Who am I?

The earliest known English riddles are recorded in the *Exeter Book* (8th c.). Some are brief, while others run to many lines of verse. The solutions are various. For example: storm, sun shield, swan, night, horn, badger, plough, month, bow, beer, iceberg, soul and body, bookworm, chalice, reed, weathercock.

There are collections of riddles also in Sanskrit, Hebrew, Arabic and Persian literature, not to mention Greek riddles in the *Greek Anthology* and the Latin riddles of Symphosius. Other authors of Anglo-Latin riddles were Aldhelm of Sherborne, Tatwine, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Eusebius, Abbot of Wearmouth. One of the largest collections is Nicolas Reusner's *Aenigmatographia* (1602).

**riding rhyme** A term for the heroic couplet (*q.v.*) and its meter. So named in all probability because Chaucer used it for *The Canterbury Tales*, related by the pilgrims while riding to the shrine at Canterbury.

## rime

**rime** The word derives from the Greek *rhythmos*. In Late Latin the word *rithmi* was used of accented verse and *metra* of quantitative verse. The word *rithmus* (conceivably influenced by the OHG word *rim*, 'number') became *rime*. By the 17th c. there was a clear distinction between rhyme and rhythm. But the term *rime* is by no means defunct. See RHYME.

**rime couée** See TAIL-RHYME STANZA.

**rimes riches** In French (and later English) prosody rhyming syllables in which accented vowels and the consonants before and after them sounded identical. When spelt the same they are homographs (e.g. well/well); when spelt differently they are homophones (e.g. stare/stair). A famous example in English verse occurs in the *General Prologue* to *The Canterbury Tales*:

And specially from every shires ende  
Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,  
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.

Also known as identical rhyme. See PERFECT RHYME.

**rimes suffisantes** In French prosody, rhyming syllables in which the accented vowel and one identical consonant sound. See RIMES RICHES.

**rimur** A form of Icelandic metrical romance (*q.v.*) which originated in the 14th c. They were narrative poems based on heroic tales and composed, for the most part, in alliterative four-line stanzas. They were complex in meter and the kenning (*q.v.*) occurs frequently.

**rising action** That part of a play which precedes the climax (*q.v.*).

See FALLING ACTION; FREYTAG'S PYRAMID.

**rising rhythm** This occurs when the stress pattern is thrown *forward* in a line of verse, so that it falls on the last syllable of the feet. Iambic and anapaestic feet are basic to rising rhythm. Most English verse is composed in it. The following example comes from the Prologue to Vernon Watkins's *Ballad of the Mari Lwyd*.

'Midnight' is trochaic, then he moves into a mixture of iambics and anapaests:

Midnight. | Mídníght. | Mídníght. | Mídníght.  
 Hárk | át the hánds | ǒf the clóck.  
 Nǒw déad | mǝn ríse | ín the fróst | ǒf the stárs  
 Ānd fists | ǒn the cǒf | fíns knóck.  
 Thěy drǒpped | ín theír gráves | wíthout | óne sǒund;  
 Thén theý wǝre | steáďý | ānd stíf.  
 Bǔt nów | theý téar | thrǒugh the fróst | ǒf the grǒund  
 Ās hérētíc, drún | kǎrd ānd thíef.

See ANAPAEST; FALLING RHYTHM; IAMB; TROCHEE.

**rispetto** (It 'respect') An eight-line stanza, usually rhyming abababcc. Probably of Tuscan origin, it is now general in Italy. Well-known Italian poets who have used this form (the themes are often related to love, honour and respect) are Lorenzo de Medici, Carducci and Pascoli. See SICILIAN OCTAVE (OR STRAMBOTTO).

**ritornello** (It 'little return') Two lines (occasionally three) which have the function equivalent to a refrain (*q.v.*) at the end (or beginning) of a stanza.

**rococo** (F *rocaille* 'rock work') An architectural term used to describe decorative scroll-work. As a literary term it may be used judiciously to describe something which is light, gay and graceful, and perhaps embellished by elegant twirls and flourishes of wit, image or verbal dexterity. The rococo period belongs to the 18th c. Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* might qualify as a specimen.

**rocking rhythm** A term used by Gerard Manley Hopkins in his preface to *Poems* (1918). A metrical device which occurs when a stressed syllable comes between two unstressed syllables, as in the first of these two lines from the poet's *The Wreck of the Deutschland*:

Bǔt hě scǒres ít ín scárlět hǐmsǝlf ǒn hǐs ówn bǝspǒkĕn,  
 Bǝfǒre-tíme-tákĕn, déárĕst prízĕd ānd prícĕd –

See RUNNING RHYTHM; SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**rodомontade** The term derives from a character called Rodomonte

## rodomontade

(literally 'roll-mountain'), a bragging Saracen king in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. As a literary term it *can* be applied to a style which is inflated, bombastic and generally strives for exotic or meretricious effect. *See also* BOMBAST.

**roll** A piece of parchment made into a cylindrical form which usually bears official records. Thus, a kind of register (*q.v.*). Rolls are to be found in the Public Record Office. Famous examples are: *The Ragman Roll*, the *Pipe Rolls*, and the *Rolls Series* (or 'Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland from the Invasion of the Romans to the Reign of Henry VIII').

**roman à clef** *See* LIVRE À CLEF.

**roman à deux sous** French equivalent of a penny dreadful (*q.v.*).

**roman à tiroirs** (F 'novel with drawers') A novel (*q.v.*) which consists of a series of episodes which have no very obvious connecting link or theme. A noteworthy instance is Lesage's *Gil Blas de Santillane*, a picaresque (*q.v.*) romance which came out in four volumes between 1715 and 1735.

**roman cycle** A term used in modern fiction for a series of novels, each of which exists as a separate novel in its own right but all of which are inter-related because the characters (some or all) reappear in each succeeding work. The vogue for this kind of encyclopedic and epic chronicle was established in the 19th c. Balzac planned and in part executed his vast scheme of *la comédie humaine*; Zola wrote his twenty-volume series *Les Rougon-Macquart* (1871-93) to demonstrate his theories of naturalism; and the Spaniard Pérez Galdós produced his monumental *Episodios nacionales* (1873-1912), a cycle of historical novels covering the history of Spain from Trafalgar (1805) to the Restoration (1875). In the 20th c. two Frenchmen have undertaken works on a similar scale. Georges Duhamel began with the *Vie et Aventures de Salavin* (1920-32) in five novels, and followed this with *Chronique de Pasquier* (1933-45) in ten volumes. Jules Romains was even more ambitious with his *Les Hommes de bonne volonté* (1932-47), the generic title of a series of twenty-seven novels covering a wide range of French life from 1908 to 1933. Galsworthy attempted the same sort of thing with *The Forsyte Saga*



(1922). More recently there have been C. P. Snow's *Strangers and Brothers* sequence (1940-70) which gives a documentary chronicle of English social history from 1925; Henry Williamson's *A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight* (1951-69) in fifteen volumes; and Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time* (1951-76) in twelve volumes. A number of other novelists have used the trilogy and the tetralogy (*qq.v.*) to achieve a comparable continuity. See BILDUNGSROMAN; NOVEL; ROMAN-FLEUVE; SAGA NOVEL.

**roman-feuilleton** A novel published in instalments in a daily paper. The fashion began *c.* 1830. In 1836 a translation of the Spanish picaresque novel *Lazarillo de Tormes* first appeared in the newspaper *Le Siècle*. In the late 19th c. many authors took advantage of such serialization. It is still done occasionally when a newspaper is absolutely sure that an author's book is going to sell well.

**roman-fleuve** Akin to *roman cycle* (*q.v.*), a *roman-fleuve* is a continuous series of novels (each of which may be complete in itself) which pursues the life and development of a single character or a group of characters. Examples of this kind of fictional chronicle in this century are Romain Rolland's *Jean-Christophe* (1906-12), Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-27) and, more recently, Doris Lessing's *Children of Violence* (1952-69). See also BILDUNGSROMAN; SAGA NOVEL.

**roman noir** (F 'black novel') The equivalent of the English gothic novel (*q.v.*).

**roman policier** The French term for a detective story (*q.v.*). The outstanding modern exponent is Georges Simenon.

**romance** (MedL *romanice* 'in the Romanic tongue') In OF *romaunt* and *roman* meant, approximately, 'courtly romance in verse' or a 'popular book'. Thus romances in verse (and to start with most of them were in verse) were works of fiction, or non-historical. In the 13th c. a romance was almost any sort of adventure story, be it of chivalry or of love. Gradually more and more romances were written in prose.

Whatever else a romance may be (or have been) it is principally a form of entertainment. It may also be didactic but this is usually

incidental. It is a European form which has been influenced by such collections as *The Arabian Nights*. It is usually concerned with characters (and thus with events) who live in a world somewhat remote from the everyday. This suggests elements of fantasy, improbability, extravagance and naiveté. It also suggests elements of love, adventure, the marvellous and the 'mythic'. For the most part the term is used rather loosely to describe a narrative of heroic or spectacular achievements, of chivalry, of gallant love, of deeds of derring-do.

In medieval romance there were three main cycles: (a) the matter of Britain, which included Arthurian matter derived from Breton lays; (b) the matter of Rome, which included stories of Alexander, the Trojan wars and Thebes; (c) the matter of France, most of which was about Charlemagne and his knights.

The medieval metrical romances were akin to the *chansons de geste* (q.v.) and to epic (q.v.). There were a very large number of them, as we might expect in a form of popular literature. Chrétien de Troyes, who flourished in the latter half of the 12th c., was one of their most distinguished composers. His works were widely translated and imitated and he showed remarkable skill in combining the love story with the adventure story. His characterization was subtle and his style graceful. He wrote for a well-educated and mostly aristocratic audience, in which women played an important role. Courtly love was the main theme of his poems: *Erec*, *Cligès*, *Chevalier à Charrette*, *Lancelot*, *Yvain* and *Perceval*.

Three 13th c. German poets produced one notable romance each: Hartmann von Aue's *Iwein* (c. 1203); Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan und Isult* (c. 1210); and Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* (c. 1210).

England produced two great romances in the 14th c.: the popular *Lay of Havelok the Dane* and the aristocratic romance of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Later came Sir Thomas Malory's noble prose work *Le Morte Darthur* in the latter half of the 15th c., printed by Caxton in 1485. By this time prose had become increasingly the medium for romance.

The traditions and codes of romance remained evident during the Renaissance period, in the poems of Ariosto and Tasso, in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and in numerous other works. The Elizabethans had a penchant for stories of all kinds, especially the folk-tale sort, and the many different rather debased varieties of romance. A major pastoral (q.v.) romance of the period is Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590), in prose; a minor work of im-

portance is Greene's *Pandosto* (1588), also in prose. Romance elements are also to be found at this time in some drama, particularly romantic comedy (*q.v.*).

Near the end of the 14th c. Chaucer satirized romance by means of burlesque (*q.v.*) in his *Tale of Sir Thopas*. Occasionally, after Chaucer, we find examples of satire on the conventions and sensibilities of the romance, but not until Cervantes' *Don Quixote* was the whole idea and tradition 'sent up'. The first part of *Don Quixote* was published in 1605, the second in 1612. It was published in English 1612–20; in French 1614–18; in Italian 1622–5; in German 1683. This suggests its wide popularity and helps to explain its influence. Though the book is many other things besides being a satire it is unquestionably the principal work to display the incongruities of romance. It does so by making fun of the conventions of chivalry and contrasting them with the realities of ordinary life.

Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1613) may well have been influenced by it. At any rate this play is a burlesque of knight-errantry (the Grocer Errant has a burning pestle on his shield and is involved in absurd adventures) and is very probably the first play meant as a parody of another play – namely Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London*. Later in the 17th c. Samuel Butler modelled his splendid mock-heroic (*q.v.*) poem *Hudibras* (1663, 1664, 1678) on *Don Quixote*. And in the following century Fielding described his novel *Joseph Andrews* (1742) as an imitation of *Don Quixote*. In fact, Cervantes' masterpiece had a considerable influence on the picaresque (*q.v.*) narrative of adventure and on the novel in general during the 19th c. In many ways the Knight of the Rueful Countenance is an early example of the anti-hero (*q.v.*) – or non-hero.

After *Don Quixote* romance could never be quite the same; nevertheless, the appetite for the old-fashioned knight-errantry type of story has remained unsatiated, as much fiction of the 20th c. clearly proves. And the traditional kind of romance remained popular in the 17th c., especially in France and England. A notable instance in French literature is *Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus* (1649–53) by Madeleine Scudéry.

In the 18th c. romance elements are still evident, but the novel is already tending to concentrate on the everyday, the social and the domestic – except when picaresque. With the advent of the Gothic Novel (*q.v.*) a new kind of romance appears, one which

makes use of the more bizarre and extravagant characteristics of the medieval romance

During the Romantic period (*q.v.*), a more metastable and, at times, turbulent age, the concept of the romance (and what is romantic) underwent a further modification. In the 18th c. the term 'romantic' meant something that could happen in a romance (or, to use the French word, it was *romanesque*) but towards the end of the 18th c. and at the beginning of the 19th it becomes clear that romance connotes those flights of fancy and imagination (*q.v.*) which had been regarded with suspicion in the Augustan Age (*q.v.*). Hence the renewed interest in ballads, especially the Border ballads, the popularity of Chatterton's work and Macpherson's Ossianic poems, the interest in folk-tales and fairy tales and in *The Arabian Nights*, and the rather conscious revival of Medievalism (*q.v.*) – a revival that was to gather momentum during the 19th c. It may well be that the modern connotations of 'to romance' and 'romancing' (i.e. the telling of stories or tales of a tallish kind in which there is a strong element of make-believe) were established during the Romantic period.

At this time a number of major works illustrate a new conception of the romance as a revitalizing force. The poets recreate a remote past, an 'old world' of romance which reveals a potent nostalgia and the considerable influence of Spenser. It is almost as if romance has come to symbolize something which is at once ancient, ideal and liberating, and, periodically, an evocation of lost youth. We can hardly read Keats's *The Eve of St Agnes* or Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* or Sir Walter Scott's *Marmion* (or indeed any of Scott's long poems) or Shelley's *Queen Mab* without receiving a strong impression of an introspective and imaginative world, a *paysage intérieur*, reminiscent at times of the illustrations to be found in medieval books of hours, the world of 'golden-tongued' romance and all that resounds (to use Milton's words in *Paradise Lost*):

In fable or romance of Uther's son,  
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;  
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,  
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,  
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,  
 Or who Biserta sent from Afric shore  
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell  
 By Fontarabbia.



Later in the 19th c. we find other evidence of the long-term influences of the medieval romance, more especially in Tennyson, who re-worked the matter of Arthur in *The Idylls of the King* – a labour which occupied him on and off for forty years. William Morris, a distinguished translator of Icelandic sagas and old French romances, also turned to the traditional sources of romance in *The Earthly Paradise* (1868–70). Morris, like the other Pre-Raphaelites (*q.v.*), was a kind of *laudator temporis acti*, and much of his work was an attempt to re-create the Medieval as a corrective and alternative to 19th c. industrialism and materialism.

In the 19th c. three very different novelists wrote a large number of works which can be variously classified as kinds of romance. They were Sir Walter Scott, Nathaniel Hawthorne and George Meredith. Most of Scott's historical novels had their roots in the kind of material of which older forms of romance were composed but Scott's approach was realist and he sought to make his characters permanent. Hawthorne and Meredith set their romances in the contemporary scene. Hawthorne's more notable works are *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and *The Marble Faun* (1860). A good representative example of the kind of romance Meredith wrote is *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* (1871).

By this time realism, to be followed by naturalism (*qq.v.*), was the main trend in fiction, and romance was scarcely compatible with it. The more popular kinds of 'romance', an entertainment and form of escapist literature, remained in demand, but more serious novelists, like H. G. Wells, for example, attempted a reconciliation between romance and realism. *Kipps* (1905), *Tono-Bungay* (1909) and *The History of Mr Polly* (1910) show an acute awareness of the qualities that enable the circulating library romance to survive, but are also didactic and 'socially realistic' novels.

There is nothing airy or 'faery' about Conrad's novels but many would probably agree that Conrad was a supreme 'romancer', especially in *Lord Jim* (1900), *Romance* (1903) and *The Shadow Line* (1917). No one knew better than Conrad how to relate an extraordinary and improbable tale of adventure. He is an expert in dealing with the exotic, the remote and the extravagant.

A score of other writers in the last 80-odd years might be cited as romancers. Much of their work may be regarded as ephemeral, and much of it would more or less fit Congreve's description of romances which he wrote in the preface to his novel *Incognita* (1713):

## romance

Romances are generally composed of the Constant Loves and invincible Courages of Hero's, Heroins, Kings and Queens, Mortals of the first Rank, and so forth; where lofty Language, miraculous Contingencies and impossible Performances, elevate and surprize the Reader into a giddy Delight whenever he gives of, and vexes him to think how he had suffer'd himself to be pleased and transported, concern'd and afflicted at the several Passages which he has Read, viz. these Knights Success to their Damozels Misfortunes, and such like, when he is forced to be very well convinced that 'tis all a lye.

*See also* CHANTE-FABLE; GESTA; LAI.

**romance** This Spanish term should not be confused with the English and French words similarly spelled (though the same derivation is common to all three). In Spanish it is pronounced approximately *ro - mahn - thay*, with the middle syllable stressed and the last very short.

In Spanish the original use of the word was for the language, as in the English 'romance languages'. When literary poetic forms of Provençal or French or other Latin-language origin arrived in Spain they were referred to as *romance* for that reason. The term can also refer to the type of meter used in the medieval poems.

The background to the *romance* is essentially popular, being generally connected with oral tradition (*q.v.*), and there is some similarity with the English ballad and the French *ballade* (*qq.v.*). As to the origin of the first romances, there are two main schools of thought. Both Menéndez y Pelayo and Menéndez Pidal support the suggestion put forward in 1874 by Milá y Fontanals that they are surviving fragments of medieval epic songs. This fits in with the lack of division into strophes, as well as with the type of assonance. Before 1874 it was thought that the romances had been the precursors of the *cantares de gesta* – the counterpart of the French *chansons de geste* (*qq.v.*). It seems probable that the form developed concurrently with the Spanish language itself, yet the first mention of the term appears to be c. 1445–8 when the Marqués de Santillana referred to 'those songs and romances the lower classes so much enjoy'. It may well be that the romances developed along with the growth of Spanish national feeling. From the second half of the 16th c. onwards a number of poets have composed romances. They can be broadly classified as follows:

*romance viejo* (the popular type); *romance artístico* (those composed by cultured poets); *romance histórico* (on various historical periods, in cycles); *romance fronterizo* (concerned with the 'frontier wars' in which the Arabs were beaten back from Granada); *romance morisco* (similar to the preceding); and *romance juglaresco* (on subjects about which the *juglares* sang). Some of the better known writers have been Castillejo, Montemayor, Silvestre and Espinel. Lope de Vega, Cervantes, Quevedo and, later, the Duque de Rivas and Zorrilla, also composed romances.

**romance languages** A collective term for the group of languages descended from Latin. The main ones are: French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Provençal, Rumanian and Romansch.

**romance-six** A six-syllable line acting as a tail to the octosyllabic couplet of the OF romance.

**romancero** (Sp 'collection of romances') A collection of ballads which had previously been gathered on loose sheets known as *pliegos sueltos* (q.v.). The first of these was Sepúlveda's in 1551. There were many different types of collection from the highly specialized (e.g. *Romancero del Cid*) to *romanceros generales* (1600 onwards).

**romans Bretons** Romances (usually in octosyllabic couplets) composed in the period c. 1150–1250. Their subjects for the most part are 'the matter' of Brittany. Two of the most famous authors were Marie de France and Chrétien de Troyes. *See also* METRICAL ROMANCE; ROMANCE; ROMANS COURTOIS; ROMANS D'ANTIQUITÉ; ROMANS D'AVENTURE.

**romans courtois** A general term which denotes medieval romances, *romans bretons*, *romans d'aventure* (qq.v.). Such works were nearly always in verse and composed in octosyllabic couplets. They were usually intended to be read aloud. *See also* METRICAL ROMANCE; ROMANS D'ANTIQUITÉ.

**romans d'antiquité** Medieval metrical romances (q.v.) whose themes and subjects were mostly taken from the works of Roman authors. Notable examples from the 12th c. are *Roman de Troie*, *Roman de Thèbes* and *Eneas*. *See also* ROMANS BRETONS; ROMANS COURTOIS; ROMANS D'AVENTURE.

## romans d'aventure

**romans d'aventure** Fictional narratives of the 12th and 13th c.

They were usually in verse (commonly octosyllabic couplets), but were sometimes composed in prose, or in a mixture of prose and verse. The principal themes were love and chivalry and, like most romances (*q.v.*), they were intended solely as entertainment (largely for women). In this period some of the more distinguished works were: *Ipomedon*; *Partenopeu*; *Guillaume de Dole*; *Aucassin et Nicolette*; *Le Châtelain de Coucy*; *Guillaume de Palerme*; *Floire et Blancheflor*; *Robert le Diable*. *Aucassin et Nicolette* is an outstanding instance of the mixture of prose and verse. Two well-known prose romances were *Conte du roi Constant l'empereur* and *Le Roi Flore et la belle Jeanne*. See also METRICAL ROMANCE; ROMANS BRETONS; ROMANS COURTOIS; ROMANS D'ANTIQUITÉ.

**romantic comedy** A somewhat vague term which denotes a form of drama (it may, occasionally, be applied to a novel) in which love is the main theme – and love which leads to a happy ending, as in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. See COMEDY.

**romantic irony** Novalis (alias Friedrich von Hardenberg 1772–1801) described irony as 'genuine consciousness, true presence of mind'. The writer who employs what is called romantic irony (a concept for which Schlegel was largely responsible) exhibits true presence of mind by showing an awareness, a sensibility, that he does not expect his work to be taken wholly seriously – and does not wish it to be. He conveys this tone and attitude (thus inviting a complementary tone and attitude in his reader) by being at once critically aware of what he is doing and why he is doing it even while he may be impelled by a strong dynamic creative purpose. Thus he is fully conscious of the comic implication of his own seriousness.

This form of irony is often at its best when the author is *showing* us what he is doing while he is doing it, so to speak. It may occur, for instance, when he comments on literary composition and perhaps also on the composition in hand. The novel is the main vehicle of romantic irony, but dramatists and poets have also used it. Notable examples are: (a) Fielding's interruptions and comments as author in *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews*; (b) Pirandello's awareness of the ambivalent nature of drama in *Six*



*Characters in Search of An Author*; and (c) Byron's continual breaking of the serious tone in *Don Juan*.

Among other outstanding exponents of this kind of irony are Aristophanes, Chaucer, Cervantes, Marivaux, Sterne, Diderot, Goethe, Hoffman, Heine, Henry James, Gide and Nabokov. Perhaps the most accomplished of all is Thomas Mann, especially in *Joseph and His Brothers* and *The Magic Mountain* where the ironic tone produces a gradual and cumulative joke, a growing sense of comic innuendo. It is mirth brought about by subtle and elaborate teasing. See COMEDY; DRAMATIC IRONY; IRONY; SATIRE.

**romantic period** At its narrowest this is usually taken to run between 1798, the year in which Coleridge and Wordsworth published the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, and 1832, when Sir Walter Scott and Goethe died and the Reform Bill was passed. The major English writers in this period, apart from Coleridge, Wordsworth and Scott, were Byron, Shelley, Keats, Jane Austen, Hazlitt and De Quincey. Abroad, the movement was widely embracing: Goethe, Schlegel, Wackenroder, Tieck, Schelling, Novalis and Hölderlin in Germany; Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël in France; Leopardi, Manzoni and Foscolo in Italy; Espronceda in Spain; Slowacki in Poland; Pushkin and Lermontov in Russia; Petöfi in Hungary; and Oehenschläger in Denmark. See ROMANCE; ROMANTICISM.

**romantic revival** A term loosely applied to a movement in European literature (and other arts) during the last quarter of the 18th c. and the first twenty or thirty years of the 19th c. It was marked by a rejection of the ideals and rules of classicism and neoclassicism (*qq.v.*) and by an affirmation of the need for a freer, more subjective expression of passion, pathos and personal feelings. See ROMANTIC PERIOD; ROMANTICISM.

**romanticism** The American scholar A. O. Lovejoy once observed that the word 'romantic' has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing at all. It may seem that repetition has wrung the life out of the term, yet it still appears to be as potentially sustaining as a twist of pemmican. It is a word at once indispensable and useless. The variety of its actual and possible meanings and connotations reflect the complexity and multiplicity of European romanticism. In *The Decline and Fall of the*

## romanticism

*Romantic Ideal* (1948) F. L. Lucas counted 11,396 definitions of 'romanticism'. In *Classic, Romantic and Modern* (1961) Barzun cites examples of synonymous usage for *romantic* which show that it is perhaps the most remarkable example of a term which can mean many things according to personal and individual needs. Barzun gives: 'attractive', 'bombastic', 'conservative', 'emotional', 'exuberant', 'fanciful', 'formless', 'futile', 'heroic', 'irrational', 'materialistic', 'mysterious', 'nordic', 'ornamental', 'realistic', 'stupid', 'unreal', and 'unselfish'. To which one might add: 'adventurous', 'daring', 'extraordinary', 'gallant', 'melodramatic', 'passionate' and 'wild'.

We are 'stuck' with the words *romantic* and *romanticism* which, today, as much as ever before, evoke all manner of varied responses ranging from repugnance to enthusiastic approval. In the same way we are 'stuck' with the closely allied terms *classic*, *classicism* and *neoclassicism* (qq.v.).

The word *romantic (ism)* has a complex and interesting history. In the Middle Ages 'romance' denoted the new vernacular languages derived from Latin – in contradistinction to Latin itself, which was the language of learning. *Enromancier*, *romancar*, *romanz* meant to compose or translate books in the vernacular. The work produced was then called *romanz*, *roman*, *romanzo* and *romance* (q.v.). A *roman* or *romant* came to be known as an imaginative work and a 'courtly romance'. The terms also signified a 'popular book'. There are early suggestions that it was something new, different, divergent. By the 17th c., in England and France, 'romance' had acquired the derogatory connotations of fanciful, bizarre, exaggerated, chimerical. In France a distinction was made between *romanesque* (also derogatory) and *romantique* (which meant 'tender', 'gentle', 'sentimental' and 'sad'). It was used in the English form in these latter senses in the 18th c. In Germany the word *romantisch* was used in the 17th c. in the French sense of *romanesque*, and then, increasingly from the middle of the 18th c., in the English sense of 'gentle', 'melancholy'.

Friedrich Schlegel is generally held to have been the person who first established the term *romantic* in literary contexts. However, he was not very clear as to what he meant by it. That which is romantic depicts emotional matter in an imaginative form, he said. It would not be easy to be much vaguer than that. At the same time, in fairness, it should be said that the baffling and, very often, irritating part about anything to do with the romantic and romanticism is that it *is* vague and formless. Schlegel also equated

'romantic' with 'Christian'. His brother August implied that romantic literature is in contrast to that of classicism, thus producing the famous antinomy (*q.v.*).

Madame de Staël knew the Schlegels and she appears to have been responsible for popularizing the term *romantique* in literary contexts in France. She made a distinction between the literature of the north and the literature of the south. The northern was medieval, Christian and romantic; the southern, Classical and pagan.

Many hold to the theory that it was in England that the romantic movement really started. At any rate, quite early in the 18th c. one can discern a definite shift in sensibility and feeling, particularly in relation to the natural order and Nature. This, of course, is hindsight. When we read Keats, Coleridge and Wordsworth, for instance, we gradually become aware that many of their sentiments and responses are foreshadowed by what has been described as a 'pre-romantic sensibility'.

The English influence travelled to the continent via Thomson's *Seasons* (1726–30), Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742–5), Blair's *The Grave* (1743), Hervey's *Meditations among the Tombs* (1748), Gray's *Elegy* (1750), Macpherson's Ossianic poetry, much of which was published in the 1760s, and Percy's *Reliques* (1765). Most of these works (and especially Young's *Night Thoughts*) show a pre-occupation with death and decay, with ruins and graveyards; they display a grieving melancholy, a mournful reflectiveness and a quantity of self-indulgent sentimentality. Hence the title 'Graveyard School of Poetry' (*q.v.*).

New modes of feeling are also evident in sentimental comedy, *comédie larmoyante* and the sentimental novel (*qq.v.*). The novel is particularly important in tracing the history of romanticism. Especially the following works: Richardson's *Pamela* (1750), *Clarissa Harlowe* (1747) and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754); Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766); Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1768); Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771); and Henry Brooke's *Juliet Grenville; or the History of the Human Heart* (1774). On the continent three major works of fiction are a counterpart – namely: Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* (1735) Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) and Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774). One should add that the Gothic Novel (*q.v.*) and a considerable revival of Shakespeare's plays round about the middle of the 18th c. also contributed to the movement subsequently known as 'romantic'.



Other aspects of romanticism in the 18th c. are: (a) an increasing interest in Nature, and in the natural, primitive and uncivilized way of life; (b) a growing interest in scenery, especially its more untamed and disorderly manifestations; (c) an association of human moods with the 'moods' of Nature – and thus a subjective feeling for it and interpretation of it; (d) a considerable emphasis on natural religion; (e) emphasis on the need for spontaneity in thought and action and in the expression of thought; (f) increasing importance attached to natural genius and the power of the imagination; (g) a tendency to exalt the individual and his needs and emphasis on the need for a freer and more personal expression; (h) the cult of the Noble Savage (*q.v.*).

In all these connections Rousseau is the major figure in the 18th c. and his influence in the pre-Romantic period was immense; especially through the following works: *Discours sur l'Origine de l'Inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755); *Du Contrat social* (1762); *Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire* (1778); and *Les Confessions* (published after his death in 1781 and 1788). *La Nouvelle Héloïse* has been mentioned above.

Notable works by other authors which expressed a new vision of man and his role in the world are: Goethe's *Gotz von Berlichingen* (1773); Herder's *Stimmen der Völker* (1778); Schiller's *Die Räuber* (1781); Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *La Chaumière Indienne* (1790) and *Paul et Virginie* (1788); Chateaubriand's *Atala* (1801) and his *René* (1805).

To these should be added the extremely influential *Conjectures on Original Thoughts* by Young, which were published in 1759 and published in a German translation the following year. Young's aesthetic theories considerably affected the so called *Sturm und Drang* (*q.v.*) movement.

The German romantics belong to roughly two generations known as the *Frühromantik* ('Early Romantics') and the *Hochromantik* ('High Romantics'). The *Frühromantik* formed a group from the late 1790s until early in the 18th c. which was based first on Berlin and then on Jena. The two central figures of the group were the brothers Schlegel: Friedrich (1759–1805) and August Wilhelm (1767–1845). The other main personalities in the group were Wackenroder (1773–98), Tieck (1773–1853) and Novalis (1772–1801). These were all poets. There were also the philosophers Schelling and Baader, the theologian Schleiermacher and the physicist Ritter.

The *Hochromantik* group comprised principally Arnim (1781–



1831), Brentano (1778–1842), Chamisso (1781–1838), Eichendorff (1788–1857), Fouqué (1777–1843), Heine (1797–1856), Hoffmann (1776–1822) and Mörike (1804–75).

Grossly to simplify the matter one can say that the earlier group were the philosophers and aestheticians of the new movement and revolution; while their followers practised as poets and writers of stories more than they preached. Both were movements of intense activity and national importance.

In England romanticism was much more diffused and never really associated with a movement, but then literary movements have been rare in England. There was no English romantic campaign and the literary and cultural revolution was a much more gradual and informal affair than on the continent. The main figures associated with it are primarily Coleridge and Wordsworth, plus Keats, Shelley, Byron and Sir Walter Scott.

Partly because of the Revolution and partly because of the French devotion to Classicism and Neoclassicism, the Romantic movement came considerably later to France. There the works of Lamartine, Victor Hugo and de Vigny were the main influence to start with; later came de Musset and Dumas *père*.

As to the long-term after-effects of romanticism, there is scarcely more agreement about these than there has been about what it actually was. Greatly to simplify two opposite points of view – there are those who in general support Goethe's attitude that it was a sickness of the spirit and a disorganizing irruption of subjectivism; others who hold that it was a kind of renaissance, a re-discovery, a wholly beneficial upheaval, and a much-needed rejection of defunct standards and beliefs which resulted in a creative freedom of mind and spirit. No doubt the truth, as usual, lies somewhere in between: yet unattainable in the ideal reconciliation of opposites. See PARNASSIANS; PRE-RAPHAELITES; REALISM.

**romería** Of 12th c. Galician origin, a kind of festival at a local shrine. The *cantiga de romería* is a type of *cossante* (*q.v.*) composed by local minstrels in honour of their shrine.

**rondeau** (OF *rond* 'round') An OF form, consisting of a thirteen- or fifteen-line poem, usually octosyllabic, in three stanzas. The opening words became the refrain (*q.v.*). Usually there were only two rhymes. It was popular in 16th c. France. Among distinguished French poets who have since used it one may mention

## rondeau

Clément Marot, Alfred de Musset and Théodore de Banville. The form did not catch on in England until late in the 19th c. when Dobson and Swinburne, among others, experimented extensively with it. The following example, *In Rotten Row*, by W. E. Henley, illustrates the basic principles:

In Rotten Row a cigarette  
I sat and smoked, with no regret  
For all the tumult that had been.  
The distances were still and green,  
And streaked with shadows cool and wet.  
Two sweethearts on a bench were set,  
Two birds among the bows were met;  
So love and song were heard and seen  
In Rotten Row.

A horse or two there was to fret  
The soundless sand; but work and debt,  
Fair flowers and falling leaves between,  
While clocks are chiming clear and keen,  
A man may very well forget  
In Rotten Row.

*See also* RONDEAU REDOUBLÉ; RONDEL.

**rondeau redoublé** A rare poetic form akin to OF forms but little used, apparently, before the 16th c. It consists of six quatrains and only two rhymes are worked, as in the *rondeau* (*q.v.*). Marot, La Fontaine and Théodore de Banville are among the few poets known to have experimented with it.

**rondel** A French fixed form of considerable antiquity and known from the 13th c. In its earliest form it appears to have been an eight-line poem rhyming AB aA ab AB (A and B represent repeated lines). A variation was the *rondel doublé* rhyming ABBA abBA abba ABBA. The most usual *rondel* form consisted of three stanzas working on two rhymes, thus: ABba abAB abba (B); a thirteen-line poem in which the refrain came twice in the first eight lines and the opening line was repeated as the last line. If it was of fourteen lines, the refrain was repeated three times. Among English poets who attempted the form were W. E. Henley, Edmund Gosse, Austin Dobson and R. L. Stevenson. *See also* RONDEAU; ROUNDEL.

**rondelet** A short fixed form, usually consisting of one stanza of five or seven lines, on two rhymes. If of seven lines, the first part of the opening line is used as a refrain (*q.v.*) thus: abRabbR (R is the refrain).

**round character** See FLAT AND ROUND CHARACTERS.

**roundel** As developed by Swinburne and published in his *A Century of Roundels* (1883), this form was an eleven-line poem in three stanzas, the twice repeated refrain consisting of the opening lines of the poem, and rhyming thus: abaR, bab, abaR (R is the refrain). Swinburne at once described and illustrated the form in *The Roundel*:

A Roundel is wrought as a ring or a starbright sphere,  
With craft of delight and with cunning of sound unsought,  
That the heart of the hearer may smile it to pleasure his ear  
A roundel is wrought

See also RONDEAU; RONDEL.

**roundelay** A short simple song with a refrain. A kind of ditty (*q.v.*) popular in medieval times, to which people danced. The term also covers, variously, fixed forms like *rondeau*, *rondel* and *villanelle* (*qq.v.*) where refrain and repetition are used extensively.

**roundlet** A short form of roundel (*q.v.*).

**rubáiyát** (A *rubai* 'quatrain') A name given to a collection of quatrains. The best known example is the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, translated by Edward Fitzgerald. See QUATRAIN.

**rules** In literary theory and history, those precepts and conventions which by custom and usage have come to be regarded and accepted as norms, if not actually ordained and thus taken as a body of dogma. For instance, those concerned with the dramatic unities (*q.v.*), with the composition of epic and tragedy, eclogue and sonnet (*qq.v.*), with the kind of subject matter suitable for, say, comedy, with the appropriateness of style to subject matter (e.g. the grand and fully canonical manner for epic; a much 'lower' style for farcical comedy).

Many of the rules originated in Classical theory: for instance, Aristotle's *Poetics*, Horace's *Ars Poetica*; and, later, in that work often ascribed to Longinus called *On the Sublime*. The 'rules' of many forms and genres were established during the Middle

## rules

Agnes and in the 16th c., but it was during the 17th c. especially and in the first half of the 18th, that writers paid particular attention to the 'rules'. Witness Racine's devotion to the conventions governing the Classical form of tragedy, or Pope's exacting and professional regard for decorum (*q.v.*) in language and genre (*q.v.*).

Since the end of the 18th c. fidelity to the rules has been taken to be of less and less importance. However, the best writers still tend to be those who have learnt the rules so thoroughly (this is particularly true of poets) that they are then in a position to modify them (and break them) and make rules of their own.

**rune** (ON and OE *run* 'whisper, mystery') A character of the earliest Germanic alphabet, *run* denoted a cryptic sign signifying something secret, mysterious or pertaining to hidden lore. It thus had associations with magic. The Runic alphabet, consisting of twenty-four letters, was adapted from Greek and Latin and devised by the Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons for carving on slabs of beechwood. The 9th c. poet Cynewulf 'signed' his name by means of runes in four of his poems. The rune names were: *cen* 'torch', *yr* 'bow', *ned* 'need', *eoh* 'horse', *wyn* 'joy', *ur* 'bison', *lagu* 'sea', *feoh* 'wealth'.

**running rhythm** A term used by Gerard Manley Hopkins in his preface to *Poems* (1918). It denotes a rhythm measured by feet of two or three syllables (excluding imperfect feet at the beginning and end of lines, and feet which seem to be paired together and double or composite feet which seem to arise). Each foot has one main stress or accent. The remaining one or two unaccented syllables are known as 'the slack'. The term is synonymous with common English rhythm. Hopkins distinguishes this from sprung rhythm (*q.v.*). See FALLING RHYTHM; RISING RHYTHM; ROCKING RHYTHM.

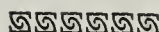
**run-on line** A line of verse which runs into the next line without any grammatical break. Also known as *enjambement* (*q.v.*) it is common in English poetry. This example is from Auden's *Letter to Lord Byron*:

It is a commonplace that's hardly worth  
A poet's while to make profound or terse,  
That now the sun does not go round the earth,  
That man's no centre of the universe.

See also REJECT.



# S



**saber** A Provençal term which, in origin, probably meant 'wisdom' and then came to mean 'poetic skill'. It refers to the art of the troubadour (*q.v.*) which was codified in the Toulouse treatise *Leys d'amours* of the 14th c. See GAISABER; TROUVÈRE.

**sacra rappresentazione** (It 'sacred representation') A dramatic form originating in medieval Italy, and akin to the Mystery Plays (*q.v.*) in England and elsewhere. Its usual subjects were the passion of Christ. It was a devotional entertainment or diversion which was presented after Mass and might be accompanied by sermons.

**sacred books** Literature connected with any specific religion; works of spiritual guidance, rules, hymn books, liturgies, any kind of record made of the utterances of holy men, prophets or sages. Obvious and well-known examples are: The Old and New Testaments; *Vedas*, *Brahmanas* and *Upanishads*; the *Kijoki* and *Nihongi*; the *Talmud*; the *Qur'an* (or *Koran*); the *Analects* of Confucius; *The Rule of St Benedict*; Walter Hilton's *The Scale of Perfection*; Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*. To which might be added *The Confessions* of St Augustine, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, *The Steps of Humility* by St Bernard of Clairvaux, the works of Meister Eckhart and Jakob Boehme, Nicolas of Cusa's *Vision of God*, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Thomas Traherne's *Centuries of Meditation*, and the works of St François de Sales and William Law. See also HAGIOGRAPHY.

**saga** (ON 'saw, saying'). The sagas were medieval Icelandic and Scandinavian prose narratives usually about a famous hero or family or the exploits of heroic kings and warriors. Until the 12th c. most of them belonged to the oral tradition (*q.v.*) and thereafter scribes wrote them down. They can be divided into

## saga

approximately five groups: (a) Sagas of the Kings, mainly about the early Norwegian kings; for instance, *Heimskringla* and *Sverris saga*. But there are some about the earls of Orkney known as the *Orkneyinga saga*. Others are about the Danish kings, like *Skjöldunga saga* and *Knytlinga saga*. One, the *Jómsvíkinga saga* treats of both Danish and Norwegian kings; (b) The Icelandic sagas, concerned with the period when Iceland was first settled; that is c. 930–c. 1030. Some of the more famous Icelandic sagas are: *Gísla saga Súrssonar*; *Víga-Glúms saga*; *Grettis saga*; *Hallfredar saga*; *Egils saga*; *Laxdæla saga*; *Vatnsdæla saga*; *Njáls saga*; *Eyrbyggja saga*; *Hrafnkels saga*; and *Bandamanna saga*. These are anonymous works and are believed to have been first written down in the first half of the 12th c.; (c) Contemporary Sagas, about Icelandic chieftains and bishops. They date from the end of the 12th c. and later, and in some cases the authors are known. Moreover the authors were contemporaries of the people they wrote about. The main works are: the *Sturlunga saga*, the *Íslendinga saga* and the *Hungrvaka*. There are also separate sagas devoted to several bishops whose episcopal reigns covered the period of c. 1178 to c. 1330; (d) What are known as the Fornaldarsögur, about legendary times, with little historical basis. The best known is the *Völsunga saga*; (e) During the 12th and 13th c. a number of romances were translated into Norse. The main works are: *Alexander's saga* (a version of a Latin poem on Alexander the Great; the *Þidriks saga* (from a German original); and *Karlamagnús saga* (which stems mostly from stories in French about Charlemagne). There have been many versions of these sagas in English literature, especially by William Morris. Longfellow, too, used the *Heimskringla saga* as a basis for his *Saga of King Olaf*. See also SCOP; SKALD.

**saga novel** So called from the Icelandic sagas (*q.v.*) because it is a narrative about the life of a large family. The most notable example in English literature is Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*, a series of novels – written over a long period – which are all linked together by the Forsyte family. The main ones are: *The Man of Property* (1906), *In Chancery* (1920), *To Let* (1921), and *A Modern Comedy* (1929). The most remarkable saga novel of European literature is Thomas Mann's tetralogy (*q.v.*) *Joseph and his Brethren* (1933, 1934, 1936, 1948). See also BILDUNGSROMAN; ROMAN CYCLE; ROMAN FLEUVE.

**salon** (F 'reception room') A social gathering *and* the place where it

## Sapphic ode

occurs. An informal meeting of writers, artists, scientists *et al.* at a private house. The *salon* was particularly popular in France in the 17th and 18th c. The prototype was very probably the Hôtel de Rambouillet, where, between 1610 and 1650, literary men and aristocrats were wont to assemble in the 'Blue Room' of the Marquise de Rambouillet. Other famous *salons* were run by Mesdames de Scudéry, Scarron, de Tencin and Récamier. After the French Revolution the influence and importance of the *salon* declined. In England it was never a popular institution, though Mrs Vesey and Mrs Elizabeth Montagu tried to establish it. In England the pub, the club and the coffee house were preferred.

**Sapphic ode** Named after the poetess Sappho (7th c. B.C.). An ode (*q.v.*) written in regular stanza form. Sapphics, as they are called, are written in a quatrain (*q.v.*) stanza with a particular metrical scheme thus:

/ u | / ǃ | / u u | / u | / ǃ |

repeated thrice, and a fourth line:

/ u u | / ǃ |

In the fourth and eleventh syllables of the first three lines the foot may be trochaic or spondaic; and on the last syllable of the fourth line the same applies.

Despite (or, perhaps, because of) the difficulties of this form a large number of European poets have used it. Among Englishmen the best known are Sir Philip Sidney, Cowper, Watts, Southey, Tennyson, Swinburne and Ezra Pound. This example is Pounds *Apparuit*, and it shows the strain of using dactyls and trochees as the basic feet in English verse:

Góldēn | róse thě | hóuse, ĩn thě | pórtāl Í sáw |  
 theé, ǎ | márvĕl, | cárvěn ĩn | súbtĕ | stúff, ǎ |  
 pórtēnt. | Life díed | dówn ĩn thě | lámp ǎnd | flíckĕred, |  
           caught ǎt thě | wóndĕr. |

Crimson, frosty with dew, the roses bend where  
 thou afar, moving in the glamorous sun,  
 drinkst in life of earth, of the air, the tissue  
       golden about thee.

## Sapphic ode

Green the ways, the breath of the fields is thine there,  
open lies the land, yet the steely going  
darkly hast thou dared and the dreaded aether  
parted before thee.

Swift at courage thou in the shell of gold, casting  
a-loose the cloak of the body, camest  
straight then shone thine oriel and the stunned light  
faded about thee.

Half the graven shoulder, the throat aflash with  
strands of light inwoven about it, loveliest  
of all things, frail alabaster, ah me!  
swift in departing.

Clothed in goldish weft, delicately perfect,  
gone as wind! The cloth of the magical hands!  
Thou a slight thing, thou in access of cunning  
dar'dst to assume this?

*See also* ALCAICS; ODE.

**satanic school** The term was originated by Southey in his preface to *A Vision of Judgment* (1821), a poem which made a fairly violent attack on Shelley and Keats and, especially, on Byron. In the preface Southey refers to 'monstrous combinations of horrors and mockery, lewdness and impiety' in Byron's works. Southey attacked these poets because he thought them immoral (in their lives as well as in their work), because they rejected orthodox Christianity and because he strongly disapproved of their interest in the exotic and passionate. Byron got his own back with a splendid satirical parody (*q.v.*) called *The Vision of Judgment* (1822).

**satire** (L *satira* later form of *satura* 'medley') It may be a cooking term in origin or, as Juvenal called it, *ollapodrida* 'mish-mash', 'farrago'. Quintillian used the term to refer to the kind of poem written by Lucilius – a poem in hexameters (*q.v.*) on various themes; a poem with the tone of the work of Lucilius and Horace. Later the term widened its meaning to include works that were satirical in tone but not in form. At some stage a confusion came about between the Greek *satyros* and *satura* which led to the word being written *satyra* and then, in English, *satyre*. Elizabethan writers, misled by the etymology, supposed that it derived from the Greek *satyr* 'woodland demon'. The situation was finally



cleared up in 1605 by the French Huguenot scholar, Isaac Casaubon.

In his dictionary Johnson defined *satire* as a poem 'in which wickedness or folly is censured'. This, clearly, is limiting. Dryden claimed that the true end of satire was 'the amendment of vices'; and Defoe thought that it was 'reformation'. One of the most famous definitions is Swift's. 'Satire', he wrote, 'is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own, which is the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets in the world, and that so very few are offended with it.' In *Epilogue to the Satires* (1738), Pope apostrophized satire thus:

O sacred Weapon! left for Truth's defence,  
Sole dread of Folly, Vice, and Insolence!  
To all but Heav'n-directed hands deny'd,  
The Muse may give thee, but the Gods must guide.  
Rev'rent I touch thee!

The satirist is thus a kind of self-appointed guardian of standards, ideals and truth; of moral as well as aesthetic values. He is a man (female satirists are *very* rare) who takes it upon himself to correct, censure and ridicule the follies and vices of society and thus to bring contempt and derision upon aberrations from a desirable and civilized norm. Thus satire is a kind of protest, a sublimation and refinement of anger and indignation. As Ian Jack has put it very adroitly: 'Satire is born of the instinct to protest; it is protest become art.'

In *Essays in Satire* (1928) Ronald Knox likened the satirist to a small boy who goes about with a water pistol charged with vitriol. He also suggests that the satirist is a kind of spiritual therapist whose function is to destroy the root causes of the major diseases of the spirit, like hypocrisy, pride and greed. But the satirist does not necessarily confine himself to such moral cancers. Juvenal had taken a much wider view in *Satires* I (85-6):

quidquid agunt homines, votum timor ira voluptas  
gaudia discursus, nostri farrago libelli est.

Juvenal was particularly severe on the Roman society of his time. However, very often the satirist does attack on a narrow front (is highly selective rather than going in for the 'saturation bombing' of Juvenal), but his chosen targets are sufficiently representative to give his satire universality (*q.v.*) and this is all-important. Good examples are Jonson's ferocious exposure of the evils of cupidity

in *Volpone*, Molière's sardonic ridicule of religious hypocrisy in *Tartuffe*, Pope's scathing epistle *Of The Characters of Women* and Samuel Butler's ironical condemnation of complacency and materialism in *The Way of All Flesh*.

The history of satire begins with the early Greek poets. With Archilochus, for example (7th c. B.C.), and with Hipponax (6th c. B.C.). The former is said to have been so savage that one, Lycambes, and his daughters hanged themselves. Pliny tells us that Hipponax was so maliciously cruel at the expense of two artists who had made a statue which ridiculed his ugliness that they, too, hanged themselves in despair. But the great satirist of Greece was Aristophanes (c. 448–c. 380 B.C.) who used invective, ridicule and abuse to excellent effect in several plays.

In Rome satire began, as suggested above, with Lucilius (180–102 B.C.), while Varro, Horace, Petronius and Seneca practised the other kind, *satura*, of whom the first composer was probably Ennius (239–169 B.C.). There appears to be no satire in the modern sense in his *Saturae*. On the other hand we do find some elements of *satura* in Lucilius, who had a considerable influence on Horace, who in turn influenced Persius – the acknowledged 'master' of Juvenal. Grossly to simplify the complex development of a genre, we can say that Horace and Juvenal between them are the 'father' figures of two basic classes of satire. Horace is the tolerant, urbane and amused spectator of the human scene; Juvenal is bitter, misanthropic and consumed with indignation. Pope's *Moral Essays* are in the tradition of Horace; his *Dunciad* in that of Juvenal.

From the 1st c. A.D. until near the end of the 12th there appears to be little satire of any note in European literature, though one can detect satirical elements and tones here and there in the occasional work. In medieval literature and thereafter it becomes quite plentiful; in, for instance, *Livre des Manières* (c. 1170) and in fabliaux (q.v.); and in such works as *Reynard the Fox* and *Till Eulenspiegel*. It is plentiful, also, in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (late 14th c.) and Langland's *Piers Plowman* (late 14th c.), in Goliardic verse (q.v.) and in Villon's *Ballades*. We find it becoming more overt later in, for example, *satire bernesque* (q.v.), in Brant's *Narrenschiff* (1494), Erasmus's *Moriae Encomium* (1509) and Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). Quite sustained satire, though rough and swingeing, and perhaps better described as invective, is a feature of much verse by Dunbar and Skelton.

The first adaptation of Classical satire appears to have been

Thomas Drant's *Medicinal Morall* (1566), two books of translations from Horace; which he followed in the next year with *Arte of Poetrie*, further translations from Horace.

From late in the 16th c. and early in the 17th we find an increasing propensity towards satirical modes and means, rather than the *occasional* satire of Dante, Barclay or Cervantes. Examples in English literature are Thomas Lodge's *A Fig for Momus* (1595), a collection of satires in the Horatian manner. The satires of Donne, Marston and Hall are more bitter and sardonic and thus nearer to Juvenal. Marston's pessimism produced some notable satire, particularly in *The Scourge of Villainie* (1598). Hall claimed to be the first English satirist, but this now seems presumptuous on his part. From this period too we should mention the satirical comedy (*q.v.*) of Ben Jonson.

From round about the middle of the 17th c. the closed or heroic couplet (*q.v.*) tends to be the favourite form of the verse satirist. The couplet was developed by Sir John Denham and Edmund Waller and perfected, in turn, by Marvell, Dryden and Pope. Marvell's satires are vigorous and denunciatory to the point of being savage. *The Last Instructions to a Painter* (not published until 1689 but written much earlier) is one of his most notable works. Milton only very occasionally wrote satirical verse.

The major English satirist of the second half of the 17th c. was Dryden whose most notable satires were *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), *The Medal* (1682), *Mac Flecknoe* (1682) and *The Hind and the Panther* (1687); plus his admirable translations of satires by Persius and Juvenal (1693) to which he wrote an important preface called 'Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire'.

John Oldham, a younger contemporary of Dryden, wrote some satires and so, later, did Rochester. During approximately the same period Samuel Butler published his mock-heroic poem *Hudibras* (1663, 1664, 1678). In France Molière was producing a succession of satirical comedies which have become classics. The finest satire of the period in verse was written by Boileau. From 1660 onwards he published a large number of satires. One of his main works was *Le Lutrin* (1674, 1683), a mock-heroic (*q.v.*) poem.

In European literature, the last part of the 17th c. and much of the 18th is generally regarded as the golden age of satire. Various reasons are adduced for this. Those commonly put forward are that it was a period of fairly highly developed civilization and culture (at any rate, for a minority) which bred the

satirists whose need and purpose was to protect this culture from abuse, aberration and corruption. The satirist's aim was to keep it intact by ridiculing and bringing scorn upon those who threatened to impair it. Thus we find Pope satirizing materialism, excess and bad writing; Swift ferociously attacking hypocrisy, pride, cruelty and political expedience; Voltaire ridiculing credulity, religious humbug and naive optimism; and Dr Johnson, with sombre magnificence, arraigning the world with folly, vanity and affectation. With their moral weight and unblinking scrutiny of the truth, such men sought to be the cleansers and guardians of civilization – such as it was; for there can be no doubt that the 18th c. (like any other century) was, for the majority, from China to Peru, an era of poverty, misery and pain.

One could say that during the period in question one of the major preferred modes of expression, in prose and verse, was satire. The debate as to whether versé or prose is the most suitable vehicle for satire is unresolved. On balance it seems that both have equal claims, but satirists have tended to use prose more – very probably because it is very difficult indeed to write good satire in verse.

In the first half of the 18th c. there flourished the two greatest satirists in the history of literature; namely, Swift and Pope. Swift excelled in prose, Pope in verse. The Dean's principal works were *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), *The Battle of the Books* (1704), *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) and *A Modest Proposal* (1729). He was also an accomplished verse satirist, as he showed, for example, in *Verses on the Death of Dr Swift* (1739). Pope's main works were *The Rape of the Lock* (1714), miscellaneous *Satires*, *Epistles* and *Moral Essays* published during the 1730s and *The Dunciad* (1728, 1729, 1742 and 1743). Other notable instances of satire in English literature from the mid-18th c. onwards were Fielding's burlesque play *Tom Thumb* (1730) – burlesque (*q.v.*) was a particularly favoured means of satire at this time – his *Shamela* (1741) and his *Jonathan Wild* (1743). To these examples one should add Johnson's great poems *London* (1738) and *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749), Charles Churchill's *Rosciad* (1761) and *The Prophecy of Famine* (1763) and other works, and the anonymous *Letters of Junius* (1769–71). In France the greatest prose satirist of the period was unquestionably Voltaire. Minor verse satirists of the later 18th c. were John Wolcot, Christopher Anstey, Allan Ramsay and Robert Burns.

Most of the major poets who flourished at the turn of the



century and during the Romantic period (*q.v.*) wrote satire occasionally. Crabbe, for instance, in his narrative poems; Shelley in *Masque of Anarchy* (1832); Keats in his unfinished *The Cap and Bells* (1848). However, the major satirist of this period was undoubtedly Byron, who was outstandingly successful in the satiric mode in *Don Juan* (1819–24) and *The Vision of Judgment* (1822).

Many 19th c. poets wrote satire on occasions, notably Praed, Bulwer-Lytton, Tennyson, Browning, Coventry Patmore, and Alfred Austin. In France the main verse satirist was Victor Hugo whose collection *Les Châtiments* (1853) is a major work. For the most part, during the 19th c. (and thereafter) prose was the chosen medium for satire. The principal writers were Thackeray, Flaubert, Anatole France and Samuel Butler. Thackeray's main achievements were *Barry Lyndon* (1844) and *Vanity Fair* (1847–48). Flaubert's chief satire was *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (1881). Anatole France wrote *L'Histoire contemporaine* (1896–1901) and *L'Ile des Pingouins* (1908). Butler's most famous works were *Erewhon* (1872), *Erewhon Re-Visited* (1901) and *The Way of all Flesh* (1903).

During the 20th c. satire has been rare. Two of the main reasons for this lack are that it has been a period of much instability and violent change, and the humour industry has grown to such an extent that the satirist can hardly make himself felt except in the caricature and the cartoon. Sustained verbal satire of merit has been very unusual. Verse satire is very uncommon, though we find occasional instances in Belloc, Chesterton, Wyndham Lewis, W. H. Auden, Julian Bell and Hugh MacDiarmid. The only poet to attempt satire on a considerable scale was Roy Campbell in *The Georgiad* and *The Wayzgoose*.

To these instances we should add some of Aldous Huxley's early novels (e.g. *Antic Hay*), several novels by Evelyn Waugh (e.g. *Vile Bodies*, *Black Mischief*, *A Handful of Dust*, *Scoop*, *Put Out More Flags* and *The Loved One*), and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* – a political satire in the beast-fable tradition. Anti-Utopianism or dystopianism have also produced a kind of satire: the creation of a futuristic society whose shortcomings and evils are then exposed. The most famous examples of these in English literature are Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's 1984. See also CARICATURE; INVECTIVE; LAMPOON; MENIPPEAN SATIRE; UTOPIA.

**satire berneseque** A type of satire (*q.v.*) named after the Italian poet Berni (1490–1536). Its main feature is grotesque caricature of

## satire bernesque

manners, in which paradox, fantasy, and bizarre comparisons are the commonest elements.

**satirical comedy** A form of comedy (*q.v.*), usually dramatic, whose purpose is to expose, censure and ridicule the follies, vices and shortcomings of society, and of individuals who represent that society. It is often closely akin to burlesque, farce and comedy of manners (*qq.v.*). Some of the best and earliest examples of satirical comedy are to be found in the plays of Aristophanes, especially his *Archonians*, *Knights*, *Clouds*, *Wasps*, *Birds*, *Frogs* and *Lysistrata*. In English literature classic examples of the genre are Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1606) and *The Alchemist* (1610); Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* (1777); Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906). Apart from Aristophanes and Jonson, the supreme exponent of satirical comedy in the theatre is Molière, as in *Les Précieuses ridicules* (1659); *Le Misanthrope* (1666); *Le Médecin malgré lui* (1666); *Tartuffe* (1669); *L'Avare* (1669); *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (1670); *Le Malade imaginaire* (1673). Other such works include Machiavelli's *Mandragola* (c. 1520); Gogol's *The Government Inspector* (1836); Benavente's *Gente conocida* (1896), *La Noche del sábado* (1903), *Los intereses creados* (1907); Kanin's *Born Yesterday* (1946); and Sartre's *Nekrasov* (1955). Two minor attempts at satirical comedy since the Second World War have been Nigel Dennis's *Cards of Identity* (1956) and *The Making of Moo* (1957).

**satura** See SATIRE.

**Saturnian metre** An early Latin meter chiefly used by Livius Andronicus and Naevius, and so called because Roman writers related it to the age of Saturn. There are about 160 examples of it. Whether it was scanned accentually or by quantity is not certain.

**satyr play** The Greek tragic poet was expected to present four plays at once: three tragedies (whether a trilogy (*q.v.*) or not) and a satyr play, which came as a kind of after-piece. It was a form of burlesque (*q.v.*) in which a mythical hero (perhaps the hero of the foregoing tragedies) was presented as a ridiculous personage with a chorus of satyrs: creatures half man and half goat, or half man and half horse. The satyr plays were ribald in speech, action and costume, and their dramatic function was clearly a form of comic relief (*q.v.*) after matters of high seriousness. Their origin is obscure, though Aristotle contends that tragedy developed out of the satyric. It is possible that the satyr play first formed part of the

tragic contest instituted by Pisistratus at the festival of Dionysus. Pratinas and Aeschylus were regarded as the masters of the form. Only one survives complete, namely the *Cyclops* of Euripides. Some of Sophocles's *Ichneutae* has come down to us. There is *no* connection of any kind between satyric drama and satire (*q.v.*); or, apparently, between it and Greek comedy. See TETRALOGY.

**savoyard** In the 18th c. natives of Savoy (near Lake Geneva) were well known as itinerant musicians with hurdy-gurdy and monkey. Today the term is more likely to denote a devotee of Gilbert and Sullivan operas, for which, in 1881, D'Oyly Carte built the Savoy Theatre in London. He opened it with a production of *Patience*.

**scansion** (L *scandere* 'to climb') The analysis of the metrical patterns of verse. It includes the arrangement of accented and unaccented syllables into metrical feet and the grouping of lines according to the number of feet. Also, the classification of stanza according to rhyme scheme and the number of lines per stanza.

There are three basic methods of scanning English verse: graphic, musical and acoustic. The graphic is the most commonly used. The convention symbols are: × or ∪ to denote a syllable which is unstressed (or short); / or — to denote a stressed (or long) syllable; | to indicate a foot division; || to indicate a caesura (*q.v.*).

When scanning, the normal practice is to mark in the stressed and unstressed syllables according to the natural emphasis in the words. Thus, this first stanza from Kingsley Amis's *Beowulf* reads:

Só, || bóred with drágöns, || hě láy dówn tǒ sleép,  
 Lóckíng fǒr góod || hís mássíve hóard öf wórds  
 (Díscúss ánd íllüstráte), || fǒrgétting nów  
 Thě hópe öf heáthěns, || múddlěd thóughts ön fáte.

Scansion helps to reveal rhythm and gives the reader a representation of the 'tune' underlying and supporting the words.

Stanzaic structure may be analyzed by indicating the rhyme scheme in letters and by the number of feet per line in numbers. For example, the following stanza from Thomas Hood's *A Reflection*:

When Eve upon the first of Men  
 The apple press'd with specious cant,  
 Oh, what a thousand pities then  
 That Adam was not Adamant.

may be notated thus: abab — a<sup>4</sup>b<sup>4</sup>a<sup>4</sup>b<sup>4</sup>.

## scansion

Some prosodists prefer musical symbols, using an eighth for unstressed syllables and quarter or half notes for stressed syllables. Caesuras may be indicated by musical rests of varying lengths. The acoustic method has been developed by linguists using the kymograph and the oscillograph. A small minority prefer to indicate rhythmical movements and sound units by wavy lines and brackets. *See* FOOT; METER; SPRUNG RHYTHM.

**Scapigliatura** Derived from the Italian word *scapigliati* 'dishevelled', it refers to a group of artists and writers who flourished in Milan and Turin in the 1860s. They led an excessively Bohemian life and rebelled against prevailing literary and artistic modes and conventions. Their vitality and experimental approach had a considerable influence on the immediate course of Italian literature.

**scatology** (Gk 'dung knowledge') In 'pathology, diagnosis by a study of the faeces. As a literary term used occasionally for obscene or bawdy literature. *See* LOW COMEDY; PORNOGRAPHY.

**scazon** *See* CHOLIAMBUS.

**scenario** An outline of a theatrical or cinematic work, giving the sequence of scenes, the characters involved and so forth.

**scène à faire** French for 'obligatory scene' (*q.v.*).

**Schlüsselroman** A German term for a 'key novel' or *roman à clef*. *See* LIVRE À CLEF.

**scholasticism** The teachers of the liberal arts in the medieval schools were known as *doctores scholastici*; theologians and philosophers were also so called. Scholasticism now refers, loosely, to the methods and matter of theological and philosophical thought in the Middle Ages. St Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Peter Lombard and Albertus Magnus were all scholastics – the principal luminaries in an exceptional constellation of metaphysicians. The influence of scholasticism since the Middle Ages has been enormous, and its spirit has been kept alive in more recent times by T. E. Hulme, Jacques Maritain, Étienne Gilson and Gabriel Marcel. *See also* HUMANISM; RENAISSANCE.

**school** The term may be applied to a group of writers who combine



## **school of night**

as an influential unit and who are broadly agreed on the principles upon which their work should be based. Sometimes the principles are published as a manifesto (*q.v.*). A school may produce a movement whose influence spreads to several countries. Schools are usually shortlived but their fertilising impact may last many years, especially when the principles which guided them have been of a revolutionary nature. Well-known examples of literary schools are: the Pléiade, the Göttingen Dichterbund, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the *école parnassienne*, the School of Night, the School of Spenser and the Bloomsbury Group (*qq.v.*).

**school drama** A term applied to an academic and educational genre of plays which were written by scholars and performed by school-boys. Early in the 16th c. there was a great deal of dramatic activity in schools and colleges in England. In 1553 *Ralph Roister Doister* was written by Nicholas Udall or Uvedale, headmaster of Westminster, and performed by the boys of the school. In 1566 *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, ascribed to John Still, a fellow of Christ's College Cambridge, was acted at the college. The tradition of the annual school play very probably derives from school drama. One of the best known examples is the annual Greek play at Bradfield. Originally the plays were in Latin; then the vernacular was used more and more. The Jesuits, above all, were responsible for the popularization of this form in Europe and were the major influence in the 17th c. Jesuit drama (*q.v.*) is a genre of its own. See ACADEMIC DRAMA; JESUIT DRAMA.

**school of night** Shakespeare may have been referring to the School of Night in *Love's Labour's Lost* (IV, iii):

O Paradox! Black is the badge of hell  
The hue of dungeons, and the school of night.

So far as is known the school was a group of Elizabethan intellectuals whose main 'star' was Sir Walter Raleigh (its alleged founder). Others believed to have been members were the poets Marlowe, Chapman, Matthew Roydon and William Warner; the scholar and mathematician Thomas Harriot; and the Earls of Derby and Northumberland. The group had a reputation for atheism. This might in part explain Shakespeare's uncomplimentary reference. However, it is by no means certain that this society existed.

## **school of Spenser**

**school of Spenser** A group of English poets who, in the earlier part of the 17th c., were considerably under the influence of Edmund Spenser. The main poets were: Browne, Wither, Giles and Phineas Fletcher, and the Scots Drummond of Hawthornden and Sir William Alexander. In imagery, meter and diction, as well as in theme and subject matter, they were imitators of Spenser. Like Milton they can be described as belonging to the Italianate rather than to the native tradition (*q.v.*) of English poetry.

**Schüttelreim** (G 'jolting verse') The German equivalent of the Spoonerism (*q.v.*) which depends for its comic effect on the transposition or 'jolting' of initial letters.

**Schwank** A German term for an anecdote or tale in a rather simple literary form. They became popular in the late Middle Ages and proliferated in collections after the invention of printing. Hans Sachs composed many in verse. The jest book (*q.v.*) is an example. *Schwänke* are by no means extinct.

**Schwellvers** A German term for what are known as expanded lines in OE alliterative verse (*q.v.*). The verse 'swells' when the normal metrical scheme is departed from and extra syllables and words are put in. In these lines from the OE poem *The Seafarer* the last three are clearly different from the first two, which are in the basic metre:

sē gestaþelade    stiþe grundas,  
eorþan scēatas    and ūprodor.  
Dol biþ sē þe him his Dryhten ne ondrædeþ: cumeð him sē  
    dēað unþinged.  
Ēadig bið sē þe ēaþmōd leofað: cymeð him sēo ār of  
    heofonum:  
Meotod him þaet mōd gestaþelað, for þon hē in his meahte  
    gelyfeð.

**science fiction** No one has defined SF to everyone's satisfaction. One way of approaching the genre is to say that it is a popular Anglo-American form with technological interests that has developed in the 20th c. However, it has some notable and remarkable ancestors. For example, the *Vera Historia* or 'True History' (c. A.D. 150) of Lucian of Samosata, a parody (*q.v.*) of the tall adventure stories presented as truth by former historians. The

hero of this work visits the moon and sun and is involved in inter-planetary warfare (very early Bond). There are also the fantastic stories of Cyrano de Bergerac written in the 17th c., namely *Histoire comique des états et empires de la Lune* (1656) and *Histoire comique des états et empires du Soleil* (1661). Some of Edgar Allan Poe's stories also anticipate modern SF, but the true 'father figures' of the genre were Jules Verne and H. G. Wells. Verne wrote several extraordinary stories of adventure, among which the better known are: *Cinq Semaines en ballon* (1863), *Voyage au centre de la terre* (1864), *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers* (1869) and *Nautilus: Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours* (1873). Part of Verne's popularity depends on the fact that he tried to make the scientific elements in his tales plausible. This is truer still of H. G. Wells who had a wide knowledge of scientific subjects. His fame in SF rests mainly on *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Wonderful Visit* (1895), *Island of Dr Moreau* (1896), *The War of the Worlds* (1898) and *The First Men in the Moon* (1901).

However, the year 1926 is the most convenient starting point for this was the first date of the publication of *Amazing Stories* edited by Hugo Gernsback. This magazine was so influential on everything that followed that the annual SF award is called the 'Hugo' as a mark of respect. SF became enormously successful and the result was an unfortunately large number of pulp magazines, 'B' films and so forth which gave SF the bad name which persists even now. The extent to which it dominated people's minds is perhaps demonstrated best by the reaction to Orson Welles's notorious broadcast of H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*; and also by the development of the new 'mythology' of Flying Saucers.

If we take the narrow view of SF suggested above in the second sentence then there are four major names in the 'mainstream', namely Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov and Robert A. Heinlein. Bradbury, who is also a distinguished writer of non-SF stories, plays and verse, is probably the best of 'the big four'. Among his many works these are especially notable: *The Silver Locusts* (1951), *The Golden Apples of the Sun* (1953), *The Illustrated Man* (1952), *Fahrenheit 451* (1954). Two of Arthur C. Clarke's best known works are: *Childhood's End* (1954), and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). Asimov is a very prolific writer, two of whose better known works are: *I, Robot* (1950) and *The Foundation Trilogy* (*Foundation* (1957); *Foundation and Empire* (1952); *Second Foundation* (1953)). Heinlein is also a prolific writer,

and perhaps his best are *The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag* (1959) and *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961).

To these major authors and their works one should add: E. E. Smith's *Lensman* series of the 1930s, which are bad but important in the history of the genre; Fritz Leiber's *Conjure Wife* (1953) and *The Wanderer* (1964); Walter M. Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* (1960); Frank Herbert's *Dune* (1965); and Roger Zelazny's *A Rose for Ecclesiastes* (1967) and *Lord of Light* (1967).

There are many other practitioners of more or less 'orthodox' SF. They are E. R. Burroughs, Henry Kuttner, A. E. Van Vogt, Kornbluth, Nourse, James Blish, C. S. Lewis, Samuel R. Delany, William Tenn, Frederick Pohl, Damon Knight, Theodore Sturgeon, John Wyndham, Clifford Simak, Paul Anderson, Michael Crichton and Kurt Vonnegut.

To put the widest possible definition to the term SF would be to say that it deals wholly or in part with exotic, supernatural or speculative topics. This allows the inclusion of such writers as Borges, Kafka and others. But, as various people have pointed out, it also means that SF, a basically modern and popular form, has to be related to a great many works from the past three thousand years. For example: Homer's *Odyssey* would qualify very well as SF under this definition; so would the *Divine Comedy* and many instances of dream vision (*q.v.*) literature of the Middle Ages; so would Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, some forms of Utopia (*q.v.*), *Gulliver's Travels*, *Candide*, *Faust* and many more. This suggests how unsatisfactory such a broad definition is, though it also shows that SF does have some sort of ancestry prior to Jules Verne and H. G. Wells.

If we confine ourselves to the 20th c. – a restriction which still allows the relationship of SF to other genres (e.g. Theatre of the Absurd *q.v.*) to be pointed out – various works may be put in this hazier peripheral classification. For example: Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1916); Herman Hesse's *Steppenwolf* (1927) and *The Glass Bead Game* (1943); Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932); Charles G. Finney's *The Circus of Dr Lao* (1935).

In very recent years, some writers have been trying to revolutionize SF, but their qualities are difficult to judge. They are generally referred to as the 'New Wave'. The most notable is J. G. Ballard whose *The Terminal Beach* (1964) and *The Atrocity Exhibition* (1971) are outstanding achievements. Mention should also be made of Brian Aldiss's *Report on Probability*, John Sladek's *The Muller-Fokker Effect*, and various works by Michael Moor-



cock, Langdon Jones, Thomas Disch, John Brunner, Harlan Ellison, Harry Harrison and Philip K. Dick. Some excellent work has been published in *New Worlds*, *Dangerous Visions* and *The New SF*; also in *Best SF*, short story anthologies of which there have been six different collections edited by Edmund Crispin. A critical literature on the subject is gradually developing and among recent works of note mention should be made of Kingsley Amis's *New Maps of Hell* (1967).

**scolion** A type of Greek lyric poetry. Its etymology and origin are uncertain, but it seems to have been a kind of drinking song, sung by choruses and accompanied by a lyre or lute. Tradition ascribes the invention of the *scolion* to a famous musician called Terpander, a native of Lesbos, who lived in the first half of the 7th c. B.C.

**scop** (OE 'jester, one who scoffs') An Anglo-Saxon minstrel; also known as a gleeman. A professional entertainer (poet and singer) of an ancient and honoured calling. The *scopas* were the conservers of the OE oral tradition (*q.v.*) and they were makers of poetry as well as reciters. A number of them were members of royal households, like the *skalds* (*q.v.*). Few are known by name, but in the OE poem *Widsith* 'far traveller' we see the *scop* travelling from court to court and reciting his lays. The poem *Deor* 'animal brave' also affords us glimpses of the *scop*'s life. The art of the *scop* is still perpetuated by ballad makers in many parts of the world, and especially by the *guslar* (*q.v.*) in the South Slav lands. See also EPIC; SAGA; TROUBADOUR; TROUVÈRE.

**Scottish Chaucerians** A term applied to a group of 15th and 16th c. Scottish poets who were considerably influenced by Chaucer. They were fine poets in their own right. The leading ones were Robert Henryson, William Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, Sir David Lindsay and King James I of Scotland. They made extensive use of rhyme royal (*q.v.*).

**Scriblerus Club** A club founded c. 1713 whose principal members were Pope, Swift, Gay, Congreve, Arbuthnot, Parnell and Lord Oxford. It was so called after an imaginary antiquarian Martinus Scriblerus, a German of Münster, who had the reputation of being a man who had read almost everything but who had no judgement at all. He became the subject of 'memoirs', mostly written by Dr John Arbuthnot, and published in 1741. The

'memoirs' were a kind of satire (*q.v.*) against pretentious learning and false tastes.

**scriptorium** (L 'writing room') A room in a monastery or abbey which is devoted to the writing and copying of books.

**sea shanty** (F *chantez* (imperative) 'sing!') Sea shanties were the working songs of sailors aboard the old square-rigged sailing vessels. Their origins are not known, but it would not be too fanciful to suppose that sailors have chanted songs to ease their labour since early times. One can easily imagine the Vikings doing so. The shanty *Haul on the Bowline* dates from Tudor times. Most of the best shanties date from the 19th c. and the age of the clippers. Their function was to co-ordinate group activity and to maintain morale. Their rhythms and words are therefore dictated by the kind of work being done. Negroes and Irishmen were particularly good at devising them. Some famous examples are *Hanging Johnny*, *Blow the Man Down*, *Boney*, *Haul Away*, and *The Fair Maid of Amsterdam*. See also ORAL TRADITION.

**secentismo** (It '17th c. mannerism') An Italianism (from *seicento* 'six hundred') connoting a reaction against Classicism and a taste for the elaborate conceit (*q.v.*). It was the counterpart of baroque (*q.v.*) and its literary relations are Gongorism, *préciosité* and Euphuism (*qq.v.*). In Italian *secentismo* is more or less synonymous with Marinism (*q.v.*) – from Marino (1569–1625) who wrote *L'Adone*, a long poem full of flamboyance and stylistic conceits; a bizarre work in every respect. Marinism is evident in the work of English writers like Richard Crashaw and Sir Thomas Browne.

**seci** A Turkish term for a feature of prose style in which the last words of a clause or sentence rhyme. The *Koran* contains a number of examples of it.

**secondary accent** In a four-syllable word, for example, like *calculá-tion*, the secondary accent is on the third syllable. See PRIMARY ACCENT.

**seer** One who sees visions of divine things; and, in a broader sense, a person endowed with precognitive and prophetic powers. Virgil was credited with the vatic gift because he would seem to have foretold the birth of Christ in his *Fourth Eclogue*: 'Iam redit et

## Senecan tragedy

virgo' (line 6). William Blake was often vouchsafed a visionary gleam of the supranormal and the divine. H. G. Wells was a prophet in his writings in a more literal sense. One of the most remarkable of all prophetic writers (at any rate outside the Old Testament) was Nostradamus (1503-66) the Provençal astrologer. His work in verse named *Centuries* achieved considerable popularity in his time, and because of the fulfilment of some of his forecasts of major events in the 20th c. (e.g. the rise of Hitler, the assassination of the Kennedys and the flight of yellow men over London – no doubt from Albanian air-strips) his predictions are again under scrutiny.

**segrel** A Galician term for Castilian *juglar*, the equivalent of the French *jongleur* (q.v.) and the English minstrel.

**seguidilla** (Sp 'little series', diminutive of *seguido* 'series') A Spanish poetic form of popular origin which may have begun life as a dance song. To start with it probably consisted of a four-line strophe with alternating long and short lines (seven or eight syllables in the long lines; five or six in the short). Later, very probably during the 17th c., three lines were added and it became established as a seven-line form, alternating seven and five syllables in the first part, and five, seven, five in the second. It is regarded as the most elegant of the popular Spanish metrical forms and is the only generalized form of the seven-line verse. See FOLÍA.

**semantics** A branch of linguistics (q.v.) which deals with the meanings of words, and particularly with changes in the meanings. It involves, moreover, the study of the relationship between words and things; and between language, thought and behaviour. That is, how behaviour is influenced by words uttered by others or to oneself.

**Senecan tragedy** The tragedies of Seneca (4 B.C.–A.D. 65) had a considerable influence on the Elizabethan dramatists who accepted them as stage plays – which, in all probability, they never were.

The themes of Seneca's plays *Hercules Furens*, *Medea*, *Troades*, *Phaedra*, *Agamemnon*, *Oedipus*, *Hercules Oetaeus*, *Phoenissae*, and *Thyestes* were taken from the whole field of Greek drama and contained little or no action in the true sense of the word. The

## Senecan tragedy

characters rarely voiced real sentiments, and Seneca was better fitted to express ideas than put life into his characters. The illusion of action was evoked by words, and the whole burden was thrown on to the language. Rhetorical devices were plentiful: stichomythia (*q.v.*) was a favourite device.

The plays had a five-act structure with a Chorus (*q.v.*) marking the end of each act. The subject matter of these choric speeches, often little more than mythological catalogues, was often remote from the action of the play.

Other and important features were: the theme of revenge, usually introduced by the ghost of a wronged person (obvious Shakespearian parallels are Hamlet's father and Banquo's ghost in *Macbeth*); the messenger figure whose speeches usually report the culminating activity or disaster and fall into a stereotyped pattern; and a striving to extract the utmost effect from the spoken word.

One of the earliest Senecan tragedies was *Gorboduc* (1561) by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville. With its bloody plot, long, static and declamatory speeches, sensational events and high emotions its debt to Seneca was obvious; and nowhere more so than in the purely mechanical juxtaposition of speeches and the constant striving for balance and counterbalance in language. Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1586) also owed much to Seneca. But Kyd did not allow Seneca's influence to overcome his own sense of theatrical technique. The Senecan elements were all present: the revenge theme was supplied by the death of Horatio, though other characters also called for revenge; the characters were disproportionate and the emotions were taken too far (Hieronimo kills innocent people as well as those deserving death); the language was heavily rhetorical. Unlike Seneca, Kyd presented his atrocities on stage, and he had a good instinct for ironic juxtapositions.

Tudor and Jacobean dramatists owed many other debts to Seneca, whose influence extended through Marlowe and Shakespeare to Webster, who, like him, was fascinated by states of extreme suffering and by stoic virtues. For example, in *The Duchess of Malfi* (c. 1614) Webster followed Seneca in investigating the role of madness in society; as did Middleton and Rowley in *The Changeling* (1622). See REVENGE TRAGEDY; TRAGEDY; VILLAIN.

**senarius** A metrical line which has six feet or six stresses. The Roman



equivalent of the Greek iambic trimeter (*q.v.*) and the meter commonly used for dramatic dialogue. The alexandrine (*q.v.*) is its 'descendant'. See also HEXAMETER.

**senhal** A fanciful name used to address people in Old Provençal poems. Perhaps we should now call it a pet name.

**sense** In the first place it concerns what is said and the meaning of what is said (e.g. 'What is the sense?'; 'Does it make sense?'). In critical terminology 'sense' has acquired some more flexible connotations or 'in-load'. When we speak of a 'man of good sense' we imply someone whose judgement is sound, a man who has some capacity for appreciation. Good sense equals more or less the French *bon sens*. Jane Austen contrasted sense with sensibility (*q.v.*), in *Sense and Sensibility*, which she confused with sentimentality (*q.v.*).

The 18th c. has been described as 'the age of good sense' – for its balance, its feeling for proportion, its regard for the superiority of reason, its good taste and awareness of decorum (*q.v.*). See also NEOCLASSICISM; PROPRIETY.

**sensibility** The term became popular in the 18th c., when it acquired the meaning of 'susceptibility to tender feelings'; thus, a capacity not for feeling sorry for oneself so much as being able to identify with and respond to the sorrows of others – and to respond to the beautiful. This quality of empathy was probably a reaction against 17th c. stoicism and Hobbes's theory that man is innately selfish and motivated by self-interest and the power drive. In sermon, essay (*qq.v.*), fiction and philosophical writing (in the early 18th c.) it was averred, on the contrary, that man was innately benevolent and thus wished others well. The Earl of Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks* (1711) proclaimed this view. In the periodical *The Prompter* (1735) a writer defended the human attitude that is not content merely with good-natured actions 'but feels the misery of others with inward pain'. This was deservedly termed 'sensibility'. By mid-century such feelings were an accepted part of social ethics and public morality. It was a sign of good breeding and good manners to shed a sympathetic tear, as indeed in Gray's *Elegy* (1750), Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village* (1770) and Cowper's *The Task* (1785), not to mention the various odes to Sensibility from the 1760s onwards. Two other relevant works

## sensibility

in the history of this attitude were Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768) and Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771). 'Dear sensibility!' writes Sterne (in an almost ode-like tone), 'source in-exhausted of all that's precious in our joys, or costly in our sorrows!' In *The Man of Feeling* sensibility became self-indulgent. It declined into sentimentalism, and showed a propensity for 'the luxury of grief'. Jane Austen and Dr Johnson both criticized it; particularly Jane Austen in *Sense and Sensibility* (1811).

In the 19th c. the term was more or less replaced by 'sensitivity', but the latter never established itself as a literary term. In fact, sensibility received a renewed and vigorous life in the critical essays of T. S. Eliot, for whom it represented the creative faculty and the quality of temperament in a poet. *See also* SENTIMENTALITY; SENTIMENTAL COMEDY; SENTIMENTAL NOVEL.

**sententia** (L 'feeling, opinion, judgement') Closely related to, if not actually synonymous with, the apophthegm, maxim and aphorism (*qq.v.*), a *sententia* is customarily a short, pithy statement which expresses an opinion; hence the term 'sententious', now as a rule used pejoratively. One of the most famous collections of *sententiae* is that by Peter Lombard, who was known as *Magister sententiarum*. His *Sententiae* (12th c.) was an important theological textbook in the later Middle Ages. *See also* PENSÉE.

**sentimental comedy** Also known as the drama of sensibility, it followed on from Restoration Comedy (*q.v.*) and was a kind of reaction against what was regarded as immorality and license in the latter. Jeremy Collier (1650-1726) severely criticized Restoration Comedy in *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698). Sentimental comedy was rather anemic by comparison and is seldom produced now. It arose because a rising middle class enjoyed this kind of drama, in which, as Goldsmith put it, 'the virtues of private life are exhibited, rather than the vices exposed, and the distresses rather than the frailty of mankind. . .'. The characters, both good and bad, were luminously simple; the hero was ever magnanimous and honourable and hypersensitive to the sensibilities of other people - rather like the hero in Crampton's *The Philanthropist* (1971). Good representative examples from the period are Hugh Kelley's *False Delicacy* (1768), and several works by Richard Cumberland - notably *The Brothers* (1769) and *The West Indian* (1771). *See also* COMÉDIE LARMOYANTE; SENSIBILITY; SENTIMENTAL NOVEL.

**sentimental novel** A form of fiction popular in 18th c. England. It concentrated on the distresses of the virtuous and attempted to show that a sense of honour and moral behaviour were justly rewarded. It also attempted to show that effusive emotion was evidence of kindness and goodness. The classic example was Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740), the story of a servant girl who withstood every attack on her honour. Comparable but more readable novels in this category were Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) and MacKenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771). Sentimentality (*q.v.*) was very apparent in Sterne. *See also* BATHOS; COMÉDIE LARMOYANTE; PATHOS; SENSIBILITY; SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

**sentimentality** For the most part a pejorative term to describe false or superficial emotion, assumed feeling, self-regarding postures of grief and pain. In literature it denotes overmuch use of pathetic effects and attempts to arouse feeling by 'pathetic' indulgence. It was not often found earlier than the 18th c., though Crashaw might fairly be described as sentimental at times. It showed itself in Cowper and Gray and, later, in Shelley. It was also evident in sentimental comedy (*q.v.*) and in *comédie larmoyante* (*q.v.*) and in the sentimental novel (*q.v.*). It was particularly apparent in the thinking and attitudes of Rousseau and Shaftesbury. Cowper's poem *To Mary* illustrates some of its more obvious characteristics:

The twentieth year is well-nigh past,  
 Since our first sky was overcast;  
 Ah would that this might be the last!  
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,  
 For my sake restless heretofore,  
 Now rust disus'd, and shine no more,  
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,  
 Thy hands their little force resign;  
 Yet, gently prest, press gently mine,  
My Mary!

**septenarius** (L 'of seven each') A metrical line consisting of seven feet or seven stresses. More commonly known as the septenary, which is the same as the heptameter and fourteener (*qq.v.*). The

## septenarius

term is now usually restricted to MedL verse and to ME poems like *Orm*, *Poema Morale* and Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle*.

**septet** A seven-line stanza (Italian *septette* and French *septain*) of varying meter and rhyme. A large number of English poets have used it, including Chaucer, Lydgate, Hoccleve, Skelton, Sir Thomas Wyatt and William Morris – plus the Scot, Dunbar. See RHYME ROYAL.

**sequence** A composition sung after the Epistle at Mass. Sequences were incorporated into the Liturgy at an early stage and certainly by the end of the 9th c. Many sequences were of impressive beauty, especially when set to music by well-known composers.

**Serapionovy bratya** (R 'Serapion brothers'). A group of young Soviet writers formed in 1921. They were followers of Zamyatin (author of *We*) and took their name from E. T. A. Hoffmann's story *The Serapion Brothers*, about an individualist who dedicates himself to non-conformist art. The Serapion fraternity claimed a right to create literature independent of political ideology. Their articles of faith were drawn up by Lev Lunts in 1922. Other members of the group were Zoshchenko, Tikhonov, Fedin, Vsevolod Ivanov, Nikolay Nikitin, and Slonimski.

**serenade** (It *serenata* 'made serene, purified', associated with *sera* 'evening') Traditionally a song sung at night beneath a lady's window; or an imitation of such a song, like Shelley's *Indian Serenade*. Its meaning has now become vague, but it is a musical rather than a literary term. One should mention Haydn's 'Serenade' Quartet, Mozart's *Serenata Notturna*, Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music*, and Benjamin Britten's *Serenade* song cycle.

**sermon** (L *sermo* 'talk, discourse') As a form of literature the sermon dates from the sub-Apostolic age. One of the earliest examples is the so-called *Second Epistle* of Clement (c. 100–200). Throughout the Middle Ages many of the Fathers (Origen, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine *et al.*) helped to develop the sermon into something like a work of art, with definite rules of composition. By the late Middle Ages the *ars predicandi* was something which had to be learnt and worked at (as Chaucer's Pardoner implied). Hence, in part, the growth of the preaching orders, like the Dominicans and Franciscans; and also the number of manuals for preachers. John Bromyard's *Summa*



*Praedicatorum* (printed in 1485), for instance, was an encyclopedic reference work for the preacher.

The sermon became one of the principal sources of instruction and 'entertainment' in a period when the Church had much control over the diversions available to the public. The great age of sermon literature runs from the 13th to the 17th c., and throughout Europe the 'literature of the pulpit' had considerable influence on the establishment of ethnic languages and the development of allegory, exemplum, fable, dialogue (*qq.v.*) verse and drama. Religious reformers like Wycliffe and Luther used the sermon to publicize their beliefs. The invention of printing allowed countless volumes of sermons to be published, though there are still vast collections of manuscript sermons still lying unread in the cathedral libraries of Europe.

Between 1550 and 1700 the sermon attained its apogee in England and France. Notable preachers of the period were Latimer, Lancelot Andrewes, Joseph Hall, John Donne and Jeremy Taylor in England; Bossuet, Bourdaloue and Massillon in France. John Donne, as Dean of St Paul's Cathedral in London, could command an audience of perhaps 10,000 at St Paul's Cross, in the open air, with an extremely learned and closely argued sermon lasting up to two hours or more.

Since these times sermons have been published in large quantities and have been much read. Among many famous preachers one should mention Wesley (reputed to have preached over 40,000 sermons), Frederick Robertson, Cardinal Newman and Cardinal Manning. As a literary form the sermon is almost defunct today, and the extent to which the art of preaching has deteriorated is shown by the fact that the average contemporary preacher has difficulty in keeping the interest of a few hundred people for ten minutes in a church equipped with a microphone and a public address system. *See* HOMILY.

**serpentine verse** A line or a stanza of poetry which begins and ends with the same word.

**serranilla** (Sp 'little highland, mountain') A lyric song which may have had its origin among highlanders in Spain. Usually composed in *arte mayor* (*q.v.*) and the theme was normally the meeting of a gentleman and a country wench. Such lyrics were common in the late medieval period. The best known were composed by the Archpriest Hita (c. 1283-c. 1350) and the Marqués de Santillana.

## sesquipedalian

**sesquipedalian** (L 'of a foot and a half') A term used humorously of polysyllabic words or verses.

**sestet** The sub-division or last six lines of the Italian sonnet (*q.v.*) following the octet or octave (*q.v.*). Sometimes the sestet resolves the proposition made in the octave, just as the final couplet in the Shakespearean sonnet (*q.v.*) rounds off the propositions in the three preceding quatrains (*q.v.*). See SESTINA; SEXAIN; HEXASTICH.

**sestina** A complex verse form first worked out by the troubadours (*q.v.*), it consists of six stanzas of six lines apiece with an *envoi* (*q.v.*) of three lines. The rhyming scheme requires that the same six end words occur in each stanza but in a different order according to a fixed pattern. The invention of the form is attributed to Arnaut Daniel (*c.* 1200). It was practised by many Provençal poets and also by Dante and Petrarch. From time to time since then various European and English poets have used it. One of the best known examples in English verse is Swinburne's *Complaint of Lisa*. Ezra Pound, Eliot and Auden have also cultivated it. See HEXASTICH; SESTET; SEXAIN.

**setting** The where and when of a story or play; the locale. In drama the term may refer to the scenery or props.

**sevdalinke** Bosnian love-songs. The word is Serbian, based on the Turkish *sev* 'love'. In Turkish *sevdah* means 'one who is in love'. Reminiscent of the Moorish love-songs, *sevdalinke* are fatalistic in mood and tone, and sometimes bitter. They often express a helpless yearning and lament the pangs of unrequited or disprized love. Their influence on music and song in the Balkans has been considerable.

**seven arts, the** See QUADRIVIUM.

**sexain** A six-line stanza, also known variously as a sixain, sextain, sextet, sestet (*q.v.*) and hexastich.

**sextilla** A Spanish verse form of six octosyllabic or shorter lines with a varying rhyme scheme.

**shadow show** A puppet show in a shadow theatre. The puppets are

## Shakespearean sonnet

manipulated between a strong light and a translucent screen. See also KARAGÖZ.

**shaggy dog story** An improbable kind of yarn, often long and spun out, which, as a rule, does *not* have a witty or surprise ending; but comes, rather, to a deflating and quasi-humorous conclusion. Colloquially, 'a groaner'. A tolerably well-known example concerns the Australian bee which had a consuming ambition to become a ballet dancer. It presented itself to the authorities at Sydney and was advised to go to Covent Garden, London. But how was it to get there? Eventually it persuaded a racing pigeon bound for London to transport it. After many hazards (all detailed in the story) they arrived and the bee made a 'bee-line' for Covent Garden Theatre. It explained its ambition and the powers that be were so impressed that they decided that a 'pigeon-towed' bee would be a unique addition to the corps.

**Shakespearean sonnet** A fourteen-line poem in iambic pentameters (with subtle variations on the iambic pattern) consisting of three quatrains (*q.v.*) and a concluding couplet. Also known as the English sonnet, it is a variant of the Petrarchan sonnet (*q.v.*). It was developed, particularly, by Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey during the Tudor period. The rhyme scheme is normally (a) abab, cdcd, efef, gg; or (b) abba, cddc, efef, gg. The following example is Shakespeare's 46th Sonnet:

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,  
How to divide the conquest of thy sight,  
Mine eye, my heart thy picture's sight would bar,  
My heart, mine eye the freedom of that right,  
My heart doth plead that thou in him dost lie  
(A closet never pierc'd with crystal eyes),  
But the defendant doth that plea deny,  
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.  
To 'cide this title is impannelled  
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart,  
And by their verdict is determined  
The clear eye's moiety, and the dear heart's part.  
As thus, mine eye's due is thine outward part,  
And my heart's right, thine inward love of heart.

It will be seen from this that each quatrain deals with a separate aspect of the theme introduced in the first line, and that the 'argument' (*q.v.*) is resolved in the final couplet. See SONNET.

**sharacans** (Ar 'rows of gems') Armenian verse forms which consist of chants and hymns. Composed in either free verse (*q.v.*) or according to metrical schemes, they constitute the main part of Armenian church music. Most of them were composed between the 5th and the 7th c. but occasional additions were made up until c. 1500. Some of the poets are known by name.

**shelta** A term of unknown origin, it denotes a kind of cryptic language used by Irish tinkers and gipsies. Also known among them as *sheldrū* and *shelter*. See also ARGOT; CANT; PATOIS; SLANG.

**shih** (Ch 'songs') In Chinese there is no word for poetry, but there are words for different kinds of poetry. *Shih* is the basic Chinese verse, and the term was first used to designate folksongs, hymns and libretti. The earliest examples of *shih* in regular five-word lines date from c. 1st c. B.C.

**short couplet** A tetrameter (*q.v.*) couplet, usually either iambic or trochaic, like the following from Belloc's *Henry King*:

The Chief Defect of Henry King  
Was chewing little bits of String.  
At last he swallowed some which tied  
Itself in ugly Knots inside.

**short measure** Often abbreviated to S.M., it consists of a quatrain (*q.v.*) rhyming abab or abxb. The first, second and fourth lines are iambic trimeters (*q.v.*), the third an iambic tetrameter (*q.v.*), as in the opening stanza of this hymn by Edwin Hatch (1835-89):

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Fill me with life anew,  
That I may love what thou dost love,  
And do what thou wouldst do.

See also HYMNAL STANZA; POULTER'S MEASURE.

**short meter** See SHORT MEASURE.

**short novel** A work of fiction which is longer than a short story (*q.v.*) and shorter than a novel (*q.v.*). We tend to use the Italian word *novella* (*q.v.*) for this 'middle-distance' type of book. Novelette is another term sometimes used. Examples are:



Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Aldous Huxley's *Two or Three Graces*. However, many people would classify these as merely long short stories.

**short story** When it comes to classification this is one of the most elusive forms. It is doubtful, anyway, whether classification is helpful. Certainly there seems to be no point in measuring it. In athletic terms, if we take the *novella* (*q.v.*) as a 'middle-distance' book, then the short story comes into the 100/200 meter class. Nevertheless, there are extremely long short stories (longer than the average *novella*) and very short ones.

It may be argued that the forefathers of the short story, however rude in some cases, are myth, legend, parable, fairy story, fable, anecdote, exemplum, essay, character study, *Märchen* – not to mention the *lai* and *fabliau* and even the ballad (*qq.v.*). The accounts of Cain and Abel, the Prodigal Son, Ruth, Judith and Susannah are all short stories; so are Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Boccaccio's *Decameron*. There are 'detachable' short stories in *Don Quixote* and *Zadig*. And so forth.

However, it is not really until the 19th c. that the short story, more or less as we understand it today (that is, a work of prose fiction of indeterminate length) was developed and established. In 1842, Edgar Allan Poe (reviewing Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*), expressed some serviceable general precepts on the short story, by which he meant a prose narrative requiring anything from half an hour to one or two hours in its 'perusal'; a story that concentrates on a unique or single effect and one in which the totality of effect is the main objective. In the end the form has shown itself to be so flexible and susceptible of so much variety that its possibilities seem almost endless. For example, it may be concerned with a scene, an episode, an experience, a 'happening', an action, the exhibition of a character or characters, the day's events, a meeting, a conversation, a fantasy . . .

If we discount the attempts of a few Elizabethans like Nashe to write a short story, we can say that the early pioneers of the form (in this respect one should mention Sir Walter Scott and Washington Irving as well as Hoffman and Hawthorne) set the stage, so to speak, for Edgar Allan Poe who, anyway, is regarded by many as the originator of the modern short story. As a practitioner Poe excelled – especially in the detective story (e.g. *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*), the Gothic spine-chiller (e.g. *The Pit and the Pendulum*) and a kind of early SF (*q.v.*) tale (e.g. *The Gold*

Bug). Poe was influenced by the German Romantics and their Gothic stories, and particularly by Hoffman (other Germans to experiment with the form were Goethe, Keller and Meyer) but Poe was the major early influence in the 19th c. *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* appeared in 1839 and *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* in 1841. *The Gold Bug* followed in 1843. Among his other remarkable stories were *The House of Usher* (1839), *A Descent into the Maelstrom* (1841), *The Masque of the Red Death* and *The Mystery of Marie Roget* (1842), and *The Cask of Amontillado* (1846).

Another major influence was Gogol whose story *The Overcoat* profoundly affected later Russian writers (Gorki is reputed to have said that they all came out from underneath Gogol's overcoat). Between the 1830-40 period and the end of the 19th c. three other Russian writers (Turgenev, Chekhov and Tolstoy) and four Frenchmen (Merimée, Flaubert, Daudet and de Maupassant) exploited the possibilities of the form to a remarkable degree and ensured that it would be one of the most important media for the story teller. The main works of these writers are as follows: Turgenev: *A Sportsman's Sketches* (1847-51); Chekhov: *Motley Stories* (1886) and *In The Twilight* (1888); Tolstoy: *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1884), *The Kreutzer Sonata* (1890), *The Cossacks* (1863) and *Happy Ever After* (1859); Merimée: *Mosaique* (1833), *Colomba* (1841), *Nouvelles* (1853), *Dernières Nouvelles* (1873); Flaubert: *Trois Contes* (1877); Daudet: *Lettres de mon Moulin* (1868); the *Tartarin* burlesques (1872-90), *Les Contes du Lundi* (1873); Maupassant: *La Maison Tellier* (1881), *Mademoiselle Fifi* (1882), *Contes de la bécasse* (1883), *Les Soeurs Rondoli* (1884), *Miss Harriet* (1884), *Contes du jour et de la nuit* (1885), *Toine* (1885), *Yvette* (1885) and several other collections. Chekhov and de Maupassant are generally accounted the masters of the short story in this period.

Towards the end of the 19th c. a group of American writers (the short story has flourished in North America) made a very considerable name for themselves in this genre. The five main ones in chronological order were: Ambrose Bierce, O. Henry, Stephen Crane, Jack London and Sherwood Anderson. Their main collections are as follows: Ambrose Bierce: *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians* (1891); O. Henry: *Cabbages and Kings* (1904), *The Four Million* (1906), *The Trimmed Lamp* (1907), *Roads of Destiny* (1909) and several other collections; Stephen Crane: *The Open Boat and Other Tales of Adventure* (1898), *The Monster and Other Stories* (1899), *Wounds in the Rain* (1900); Jack London: *The Son of the Wolf*,

*Tales of the Far North* (1900); Sherwood Anderson: *The Triumph of the Egg* (1921), *Horses and Men* (1923).

During approximately the same period a number of other writers in Europe were making notable contributions to the genre: namely, Ivan Cankar (the Slovene): *Vignettes* (1899), and several other collections; Joseph Conrad: *Tales of Unrest* (1898); *Youth, Heart of Darkness* and *Typhoon* (1902); R. L. Stevenson: *The Merry Men and Other Tales* (1887); W. W. Jacobs: *Many Cargoes* (1896); *Sea Urchins* (1898); *The Lady of the Barge* (1902); *Night Watches* (1914); George Moore: *The Untilled Field* (1903); Rudyard Kipling: *Traffics and Discoveries* (1904); *Actions and Reactions* (1909); *A Diversity of Creatures* (1917); 'Saki': *Reginald* (1904); *Reginald in Russia* (1910); *The Chronicles of Clovis* (1911); *Beasts and Superbeasts* (1914); Henry James: *A Passionate Pilgrim* (1875); *Daisy Miller* (1879); *Tales of Three Cities* (1884); *The Aspern Papers* (1888); *The Turn of the Screw* (1898); Kafka: *Metamorphosis* (1937); *A Hunger Artiste* (1924); *In the Penal Settlement* (1919).

In the 1890s Conan Doyle established the short story of detection with *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1891) and *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1894). In the 1890s, too, H. G. Wells burst upon the scene with *The Time Machine* (1895), and, later, with *The Country of the Blind* (1911). In the same year Chesterton published his detective stories *The Innocence of Father Brown*. In 1911, as well, Katherine Mansfield, one of the most important influences in the evolution of the short story, published *In a German Prison*; which she followed with *Prelude* (1918), *The Garden Party* (1922), *The Aloe* (1930), plus several other collections. In 1914 James Joyce published *Dubliners*, a landmark in the history of the genre. In 1899 Somerset Maugham, writing very much in the tradition of de Maupassant, produced his first collection of short stories – *Orientations*. Three other major collections of his are: *The Trembling of a Leaf* (1921), *The Casuarina Tree* (1926) and *Cosmopolitans* (1936). Between 1914 and 1934 D. H. Lawrence wrote and published a large number of short stories which were presented as a collection in 1934. Some of his main works were *The Prussian Officer*, *Odour of Chrysanthemums*, *The White Stocking*, *England, My England*, *The Fox*, *The Woman Who Rode Away*. Apart from Moore and Joyce, three distinguished Irish writers have made contributions. They are: Liam O'Flaherty (*Spring Sowing*, 1926); Frank O'Connor (*Guests of the Nation*, 1931); and Sean O'Faolain (*Midsummer Night's Madness*, 1932). In 1922 Aldous Huxley published a collection of five stories titled *Mortal Coils*,



which contained two of his best – namely *The Gioconda Smile* and *The Tillotson Banquet*. In 1926 Huxley published his very long short story (or *novella*, *q.v.*) *Two or Three Graces*, in company with three other stories. In the 1920s, also, A. E. Coppard published *The Black Dog and other Tales* (1923) and David Garnett produced his well-known *Lady into Fox* (1922). In 1931 a distinguished collection of ghost stories was published by M. R. James – *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*. From the 1920s a number of writers sustained the short story in America. Among the more famous are Scott Fitzgerald: *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920); *Tales of Jazz* (1922); *All the Sad Young Men* (1926); William Faulkner: *These 13* (1931); *Idyll in the Desert* (1931); *Go Down, Moses, and Other Stories* (1942); Katherine Anne Porter, one of the ablest of all short story writers: *Flowering Judas* (1930); *Hacienda* (1934); *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (1939); *The Leaning Tower* (1944); James Thurber: *The Middle-Aged Man on the Flying Trapeze* (1935); William Saroyan: *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze* (1934); *Little Children* (1937); *A Native American* (1938); *The Bicycle Rider in Beverly Hills* (1953); John O'Hara: *The Doctor's Son and Other Stories* (1935); *Pal Joey* (1940); *Pipe Night* (1945); Carson MacCullers: *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1952): a collection which contains the *novella* length story *The Member of the Wedding*; Ernest Hemingway: *The Fifth Column and the First 49 Stories* (1938). One of the finest exponents of the form in England in the last forty years has been H. E. Bates whose main collections are: *The Woman Who had Imagination* (1934); *The Flying Goat* (1939); *The Beauty of the Dead* (1940); *Country Tales* (1940); *The Daffodil Sky* (1955). Among the many other writers who have enriched the form the following should be mentioned: T. F. Powys, L. A. G. Strong, Dorothy Edwards, V. S. Pritchett, Elizabeth Bowen, Alberto Moravia, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Albert Camus, Pierre Gascar, Graham Greene, Isak Dinesen, Roald Dahl, Ray Bradbury, V. S. Naipaul and Daniel Keyes. *See* **CONTE**.

**Short-Title Catalogue** Published by the Bibliographical Society in 1926; an indispensable guide and reference work to English books published between 1475 and 1640.

**sic** (L 'so') Put in brackets after a word or expression or even perhaps a sentence from a quoted passage to indicate that it is quoted accurately even though it may be incorrect, absurd or grotesque.



The author once saw this on a poster outside a Bulgarian cinema: 'Buch Kassidy and the Sun Dace Kid' (*sic.*).

**Sicilian octave** An eight-line Italian stanza (rhyming abababab) of hendecasyllabic (*q.v.*) verses. Also called *strambotto* (*q.v.*) *popolare*, it is believed to have been used in Southern Italy and Sicily in the 13th c., and also in Tuscany. It is related to the medieval French *estrabot* and to *ottava rima* (*q.v.*) which may have developed from it. It was in fairly general use in the 15th c. See also RISPETTO; SONNET.

**Sicilian school** A term applied to a group of poets associated with the court of Emperor Frederick II (1220-50) in Palermo. The poets used the vernacular and were very probably the first to establish Italian as a literary language. The school flourished for about fifty years.

**sick verse** Sick verse is kin to black comedy (*q.v.*); it is queasily, uneasily funny, mordant, sardonic and occasionally macabre. Its themes are misfortune, death, disease, cruelty, love-sickness and morbid preoccupations related to mental illness (sometimes masochistic and sadistic). It is the product of melancholy, ennui, despair and nausea of the world. At its strongest it displays horror and necrophiliac urges. It ranges from the apocalyptically sombre vision of James Thomson's *City of Dreadful Night* to the comparatively light-hearted jingle of W. S. Gilbert's *Nightmare*.

A very large number of poets have written verse which qualifies as sick. Some would find parts of Juvenal's more misanthropic satires fairly sick, but there is little of note until the 15th c. when the disastrous wars and plagues which devastated Europe inspired poets to express disgust and regret. The most notable works of this period were written by three Frenchmen: Villon (*Regrets de la belle heaulmière*; *Ballade des dames du temps jadis*; *Ballade despendus*); Chastellain (*Le Pas de la Mort*); Olivier de la Marche (*Parement et Triumphe des Dames*). A strong elegiac note and a preoccupation with the transience of life and the ubiquity of death pervades much lyric poetry in the 16th and 17th c. It is also apparent in the plays of Webster and Tourneur. Sick verse becomes rare after the middle of the 17th c., but a certain blackness of spirit and a dwelling upon the gloomy and horrific re-appears towards the middle of the 18th c. in the Graveyard School of poetry (*q.v.*), and during the 19th c. sick verse of one kind and another is common. Out of

the many examples available one should mention George Crabbe's *Peter Grimes* and *Sir Eustace Grey*; many works by Thomas Lovell Beddoes (especially his play *Death's Jest-Book*); *The City of Dreadful Night* by James Thomson, already referred to, and the same author's *Insomnia*; Edgar Allan Poe's poems *The Raven*, *The Bells*, *The Conqueror Worm*, *The Sleeper*; Robert Browning's poems *Madhouse*, *Cells*, *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister*, *The Laboratory*, *Sibrandus Schafnaburgensis* and *Childe Harold to the Dark Tower Came*; Swinburne's *Faustine* and *After Death*. The works of some 19th c. French poets also qualify as sick. For instance, Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* and *Spleen*; Rimbaud's *Le Bateau Ivre* and *Une Saison en enfer*. In more recent years some of the more notable contributions have been made by Robert Graves (*The Halls of Bedlam*, *The Castle*, *The Suicide in the Copse*); Robert Service (*The Cremation of Sam McGee*); W. H. Auden (*Miss Gee*); John Betjeman (*Death in Leamington*; *Late-Flowering Lust*); Sylvia Plath (*Surgeon at 2 a.m.*, *In Plaster*). One should also mention Tom Lehrer's witty 'sick' lyrics. *The Penguin Book of Sick Verse* (1963) is a sufficiently emetic collection. See also NONSENSE.

**sigmatism** A term deriving from the Greek *sigma* 's'. It denotes the marked use (or repetition) of the letter 's'. In English it is a very common letter and the use of sibilance, especially in verse, in order to achieve certain effects is also very common. From among many well-known instances one may cite Wordsworth's celebrated description of skating in *The Prelude*:

All shod with steel,  
We hissed along the polished ice in games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase  
And woodland pleasures, – the resounding horn,  
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.  
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,  
And not a voice was idle; with the din  
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;  
The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars  
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west  
The orange sky of evening died away.  
Not seldom from the uproar I retired

Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,  
To cut across the reflex of a star  
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed  
Upon the glassy plain.

See ONOMATOPOEIA.

**signature** The printer's original sheet with four or more pages printed on it. Folded and bound, this forms a section. See GATHERING

**sijo** (K 'melody of the times') A Korean verse form, originally sung or chanted to the accompaniment of music. A complex form, the conventional *sijo* comprises three lines, each being composed of four groups of syllables. The first two lines had either fourteen or fifteen syllables, the third fifteen. There were slight variations, but a *sijo* was usually of forty-three, forty-four or forty-five syllables. Head rhyme (*q.v.*) is common. The *sijo* is of great antiquity and dates back at least to the 14th c. It is still used by Korean poets.

**sillographer** A writer of *silloi* ('squint-eyed') pieces: poems which satirize particular schools of thought or an individual's doctrines. A famous sillographer of antiquity was Xenophanes of Colophon who satirized the mythology of Homer and Hesiod. Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663-78) might be described as a sillographic work. So might Pope's *Dunciad* (1728). Belloc and Chesterton were other writers who excelled at trenchant debunking of this kind. See also SATIRE.

**silva** A Spanish poetic form, apparently first developed in the 16th c. and related to the *canción* (*q.v.*). It consisted of hendecasyllabic or heptasyllabic lines arranged in strophic form and with a variable rhyme scheme. Lope de Vega wrote a number of them.

**simile** (L neuter of *similis* 'like') A figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, in such a way as to clarify and enhance an image. It is an explicit comparison (as opposed to the metaphor (*q.v.*) where the comparison is implicit) recognizable by the use of the words 'like' or 'as'. It is equally common in prose and verse and is a figurative device of great antiquity. The following example in prose comes from Graham Greene's *Stamboul Train*:

## simile

The great blast furnaces of Liège rose along the line like ancient castles burning in a border raid.

And this instance in verse from Ted Hughes's poem *February*:

The wolf with its belly stitched full of big pebbles;  
Nibelung wolves barbed like black pine forest  
Against a red sky, over blue snow . . .

See also EPIC SIMILE.

**similitude** (L 'likeness') For all practical purposes a synonym for parable and allegory (*qq.v.*); and thus in the sense 'in the guise of'. As the prophet Hosea put it (XII, 10): 'I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes'. Occasionally it is used to mean a simile (*q.v.*), as Macaulay intended in his attack on Robert Montgomery's poems (1830), where he derides the poet for a comparison: 'We take this to be, on the whole, the worst similitude in the world'.

**sincerity** A term commonly used in the 19th c. to denote a criterion of aesthetic excellence and truthfulness, even of moral integrity. Matthew Arnold, for example, held that the test of greatness in poetry was whether or not it possessed the 'high seriousness which comes from absolute sincerity'. Later critical thinking dispensed with the term as being too vague, and because it implied or presupposed a knowledge of the author's intentions and feelings which no one but the author himself could be fully aware of. See PERSONAL HERESY; SPONTANEITY.

**single rhyme** A one-syllable or masculine rhyme (*q.v.*). For instance: stuff/muff.

**single-moulded line** An end-stopped line, fairly frequent in early blank verse (*q.v.*). Three of the following lines (III, iv) from Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* (c. 1572) are end-stopped:

Barabas: O trusty Ithamore! no servant, but my friend!  
I here adopt thee for mine only heir,  
All that I have is thine when I am dead,  
And, whilst I live, use half; spend as myself;  
Here take my keys, I'll give 'em thee anon.  
Go buy thee garments: but thou shalt not want:  
Only know this, that thus thou art to do:  
But first go fetch me in the pot of rice  
That for our supper stands upon the fire.



**Singspiel** *See* OPERETTA.

**sirventes** A Provençal poetic form (not fixed) used by the troubadours (*q.v.*). It is like a *canço* (*q.v.*) but the themes were usually political or moral, and the intention was very often satirical. Also used for personal lampoon (*q.v.*).

**skald** An ON word of unknown origin. A Scandinavian bard or court singer. Many of them were Icelanders who settled in Norway. Skaldic poetry differs from the Elder Edda lays because most of the authors are known by name. Much of the poetry deals with the deeds of contemporary chieftains and kings. The verse forms are complicated; mostly the *dróttkvaett* (*q.v.*). The *kenning* (*q.v.*) was used liberally. Among the better known skalds are: Bragi Boddason (c. 800–50); Þjóðólfr ór Hvini (9th c.); Þorbjörn hornklofi (c. 900); Eyvindr Finnson (10th c.); Egill Skallagrímsson (19th c.); Kormákr Ögmundarson (10th c.); Gunnlaugr ormsunga Illugason (10th–11th c.); Hallfreðr Óttarsson vandrae askald (10th–11th c.); Þórmóðr Kolbrúnarskáld (11th c.); Sigvatr Þórðarson (c. 995–1045); Arnórr Þórðarson jarlaskáld (11th c.). From late in the 11th c. the *skald* became less and less important. The oral tradition (*q.v.*) declined and poetry came to be *written* down more and more. *See also* GUSLAR; SAGA; SCOP; TROUBADOUR; TROUVÈRE.

**skaz** A Russian term (from *skazat* ‘to tell’) applied to a genre of folklore literature. It usually consists of an eyewitness account of an episode in peasant or provincial life. Its best known practitioners were Leskov, Remizov, Zoshchenko and Zamyatin.

**Skeltonics** Or Skeltonic verse (also known as ‘tumbling verse’ (*q.v.*)), named after John Skelton (1460–1529) a poet of the Tudor period. It is a headlong, kettle-drum, tumultuous verse related to doggerel (*q.v.*) whose chief stylistic features are short lines, multiple rhyme, alliteration and parallelism (*qq.v.*). Pejoratively called ‘rude rayling’, Skeltonics have become admired and respectable. The following lines come from *The World Nowadays* (c. 1512):

So many newès and knackès,  
So many naughty packès,  
And so many that money lackès,  
Saw I never:

## Skeltonics

So many maidens with child  
And wilfully beguiled,  
And so many places untiled,  
Saw I never.

So much striving  
For goodès and for wiving,  
And so little thriving,  
Saw I never:  
So many capacities,  
Offices and pluralities,  
And changing of dignities,  
Saw I never:

Various influences have been adduced to explain Skelton's highly individual style: some of them may have been the OE rhyming poem and alliterative verse (*q.v.*), and medieval rhymed accentual verse.

**sketch** Two basic categories of sketch may be distinguished: (a) a short piece of prose (often of perhaps a thousand to two thousand words) and usually of a descriptive kind. Commonly found in newspapers and magazines. In some cases it becomes very nearly a short story (*q.v.*). A well-known example is Dickens's *Sketches by Boz* (1836-37), a series of sketches of life and manners; (b) a brief dramatic piece of the kind one might find in a revue (*q.v.*) or as a curtain-raiser (*q.v.*) or as part of some other kind of theatrical entertainment. A good example is Harold Pinter's *Last Bus*.

The sketch has also been developed into a particular dramatic form, as a kind of monodrama (*q.v.*) by monologists like Hetty Hunt, Ruth Draper and Joyce Grenfell. The solo mimist Marcel Marceau has worked out his own form of dramatic sketch. *See also* CHARACTER.

**skit** (ON 'shooting') A skit aims to 'shoot' or caricature a person or a style of writing or a mode of performance and interpretation. It is thus very closely related to, if not actually synonymous with, parody and burlesque (*qq.v.*). It is common in musical revue (*q.v.*) and comparable entertainments where famous people are 'taken off' by humorous impersonation, or where the style of a composer or author is 'guyed'.

**slack** The unaccented syllable(s) in a metrical foot. In a dactyl (*q.v.*) like *métricál*, the slack consists of the second and third syllables.

**slang** (ON *slyngva* 'to sling') The present meaning comes close to Norwegian dialect *slengeord* 'offensive language'. *Slengjenamn* means 'nickname', and the phrase *slengje kjæften* means 'to sling the jaw' – or utter offensive language – which smacks of slang.

'The world of slang', wrote G. K. Chesterton, 'is a kind of topsy-turvydom of poetry, full of blue moons and white elephants, of men losing their heads, and men whose tongues run away with them – a whole chaos of fairy tales.'

Common to many languages, it is the lingo of the gutter, the street, the market place, the saloon, the stable, the workshop, the theatre, the fo'c'sle, the barrack room and the ranch – indeed almost anywhere where men work or play. Women seldom invent it, and they use it far less than men. It is the poetry of the common man, the tuppence-coloured of everyday life and is indispensable to the well-being of a language. A thriving and developing language has plentiful slang. Slang provides its calories, its energy and its vigour.

One can readily distinguish between slang, formal language and colloquial (*q.v.*) language: 'He dresses in a contemporary fashion' is formal; 'He's always got the latest clothes' is colloquial; 'He's a groovy dresser' is slangy.

Again: 'We have had a week of many misfortunes'; 'It's been a bad week'; 'It's been a dark seven'. In the growth of language the movement is thus: – colloquialism > standard speech > idiom > cliché > archaism (*qq.v.*). Take the phrase 'our withers are unwrung' which Shakespeare uses in *Hamlet* (III, ii, 255). Shakespeare may have heard this (perhaps in a stable yard) or invented it himself. It could have been a slang phrase. At any rate, as a result of his usage it became colloquial and passed into standard speech. Persistent usage gave it the rank of idiom; over-usage has put it in the cliché class; and it may soon become a dead metaphor (*q.v.*) or an archaism (*q.v.*).

So slang is the language of intimacy, of everyday conversation, and much of it is ephemeral. However, if it passes the hard tests of vitality and originality it may survive for centuries. It *can* date very rapidly, like fashions in clothes, and the writer, therefore, is obliged to be judicious in his use of current slang in order to remain natural and unaffected. So, for example: smudge = plumber's black; chancellor's egg = a day-old barrister; bear =

## slang

broker who works to lower the price of stock; haggis debate = discussion on Scottish affairs; sea pheasant = bloater or kipper; resistance piece = chief attraction; butter boys = fledgling cabbies; yell play = a bad play which relies on jokes to keep it going; a man with muscles on his eyebrows = a strong man.

Sex, money, food and drink are responsible for a large proportion of slang terms. Those relating to sex are so plentiful and many of them so commonly used that most people may be expected to know them. One may refer to money as: cash, dough, rhino, folding, green, cabbage, ready, bread, spondulicks, blunt, off, splosh, chink, dibs, plunks, bucks, bones, siller, dust, tin, the necessary, the needful, the wherewithal, lolly or jack; plus, greenbacks (£1 notes), bluebacks (£5 notes), brownbacks (old 10/- notes). And to food as: nosh, grub, scoff, chop, prog, chow, chuck, toke, belly-timber, prov. A man may be intoxicated or drunk, or he may be: canned, smashed, stoned, squiffy, foxed, blotto, pissed, plastered, sloshed, sozzled, pickled, corned, raddled, boiled, tiddly, stinking, lit up, groggy, top-heavy, whiffled, screwed, lushy, oiled, muzzy, tight, stewed to the eyeballs, half-seas over, three sheets in the wind, with back teeth awash, under the table, drunk as a piper, drunk as a fiddler's bitch, or drunk as a lord.

Much slang from trades and professions 'graduates' from being private and esoteric to becoming public and open. However, school slang has a habit of remaining private. Among English schools, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Bradfield and Winchester are well known for their domestic or parochial slang. *See also* ARGOT; BACK SLANG; CANT; EUPHEMISM; JARGON; KING'S ENGLISH; PATOIS; RHYMING SLANG; STANDARD ENGLISH.

**slant rhyme** A rhyme that is not true. It may be deliberate or the result of incompetence. In this stanza from Peter Redgrove's *The Archaeologist* the second and third line contain a form of slant rhyme, and the first and fourth have pure rhymes:

So I take one of those thin plates  
And fit it to a knuckled other,  
Carefully, for it trembles on the edge of powder,  
Restore the jaw and find the fangs their mates.

**slapstick** Low, knockabout comedy, involving a good deal of physical action and farcical buffoonery like the throwing of



custard pies. A slapstick consisted of two flat pieces of wood which, when applied, for instance, to somebody's buttocks, produced a cracking or slapping sound. It was used by the Harlequin in *commedia dell' arte* (q.v.). There *may* be some connection between this and the tradition of the Vice (q.v.) cudgelling the devil; and, further back, the demons of the medieval Mystery Plays (q.v.) coming on with fire-crackers exploding from their tails. *See also* FARCE; LOW COMEDY.

**slice of life** A direct translation of the French phrase *tranche de vie* (attributed to the French playwright Jean Jullien, 1854-1919), and applied to the works of Zola and other 'realistic' writers. It suggests that a work presents life 'in the raw', factual, visceral and unadulterated by art. It is not a particularly helpful or clear term since it might be variously applied to Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*, Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* or William Burroughs's *The Naked Lunch* without telling us very much about any of them. *See* NATURALISM; REALISM.

**Slipslop** After Mrs Slipslop, a character in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742). She had a habit of misusing words in a ridiculous way: 'delemy' for dilemma; 'confidous' for confident; 'indicted to wenching' for addicted to wenching; and 'ragmaticallest mophro-dites' - which is anyone's guess. This is better known as a Malapropism (q.v.).

**slogan** The term derives from the Gaelic compound *sluagh-ghairm*; *sluagh* 'host' or 'army' *ghairm* 'cry' or 'shout'. Thus, a war-cry; the cry of a political party. It is related to watchword and motto.

**śloka** A Sanskrit verse form consisting of two hemistichs (q.v.), each of sixteen syllables organized in four units of four syllables each. It was used in many epic Sanskrit works.

**smithy poets** A pejorative term applied to a group of Soviet poets (formed about 1920) who wrote crude verse as a sort of jingoistic propaganda (q.v.) on behalf of the proletariat. The *kuznitsa* 'the smithy' was a branch of the *proletarskaya kul'tura* (q.v.). There were also 'Cosmists' who believed in universal power for the 'proles'. The smithies could be better described as 'hammer and tong' poets.

**s.m.** An abbreviation for short measure (q.v.).

## social realism

**social realism** A kind of artistic credo, developed in Russia to implement Marxist doctrine, which has spread into other communist countries. It requires art to promote the cause of the socialist society and looks upon the artist (whatever his medium) as a kind of servant of the state, or, in Stalin's emetic phrase, as 'the engineer of human souls'. At its worst it has produced the so-called Smithy Poets (*q.v.*) and the *proletarskaya kul'tura* (*q.v.*); at its best some writers who have succeeded in transcending many of its impositions (e.g. Alexander Fadeyev and Mikail Sholokov). It has also produced the notorious colonies of writers, artists, composers etc. who are dedicated to the propaganda (*q.v.*) of social realism which in Russia has been regarded as a reaction against naturalism (*q.v.*) or what is described as bourgeois realism. Opponents maintain that to force the artist to commit himself to an ideology is to impugn his freedom. Two famous Russian rebel writers have been Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn, both of whom were used unashamedly for propaganda purposes by the Western press. *See also* COMMITMENT; THESIS NOVEL.

**society verse** *See* VERS DES SOCIÉTÉ.

**sociological novel** *See* THESIS NOVEL.

**sociometry** The study and measurement of attitudes in various groups. As far as literature is concerned, study of what sort of readers buy particular books and why.

**Socratic irony** So called after Socrates whose favourite device was to stimulate ignorance in discussion, especially by asking a series of apparently innocuous questions in order to trap his interlocutor into error. *See* IRONY.

**solecism** (Gk *soloikismos*, from *soloikos* 'barbarous') A deviation from conventional usage in grammar, syntax or pronunciation. For example: 'I ain't done nothing'; 'I never ought to have come'; 'You didn't ought to do it'.

**soliloquy** It is possible that St Augustine of Hippo coined this compound in Latin: *soliloquium*, from *solus* 'alone' and *loqui* 'to speak'.

A soliloquy is a speech, often of some length, in which a character, alone on the stage, expresses his thoughts and feelings. The soliloquy is an accepted dramatic convention (*q.v.*) of great

importance and the various uses it has been put to show the strengths and advantages of such a convention. Its advantages are inestimable because it enables a dramatist to convey direct to an audience important information about a particular character: his state of mind and heart, his most intimate thoughts and feelings, his motives and intentions.

In Classical drama the soliloquy is rare, but the playwrights of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods used it extensively and with great skill. They achieved an excellence in the use of this convention which has not been equalled. *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Othello* all have major soliloquies (those in *King Lear* are somewhat less important), and so does Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*.

A particular use of the convention is to be found in the development of the villain (*q.v.*) at this time. The soliloquies given to the villains are more like prolonged asides and often take the form of a direct address to the audience. The villains are manipulators of the plot and commentators on the action. Often they deliver these self-revelatory statements of intention rather in the manner of the devils in the Morality Plays (*q.v.*). Examples are to be found in *Othello* (from Iago), *The Jew of Malta* (from Barabas), in *Titus Andronicus* (from Aaron), *Richard III* (from Gloucester), *The Duchess of Malfi* (from Bosola), *The White Devil* (from Flamineo), *The Revenger's Tragedy* (from Vendice), *Antonio's Revenge* (from Piero) and *Lust's Dominion* (from Eleazar).

In a modified form dramatists continued to use the soliloquy during the Restoration Period and during the 18th and 19th c. With the advent of a more naturalistic drama towards the end of the 19th c. it was no longer feasible, though dramatists who persisted in writing verse plays still exploited its possibilities. In the last eighty-odd years it has been very rare. However, fairly recent exceptions may be found in Auden's *The Ascent of F 6*, Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* and Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*. See MONOLOGUE.

**song** Many poems, even if not set to music, may be called songs (e.g. Smart's *A Song to David*; Blake's *Songs of Innocence*; Robert Service's *Songs of a Sourdough*), but the term, in its literary sense, usually denotes a poem and its musical setting; a poem for singing or chanting, with or without musical accompaniment. Music and words may be composed together; or the music may be 'fitted' to the words and vice versa.

It seems that in the earlier stages of civilization (in many parts

## song

of the world) much of the poetry created was designed to be sung or chanted (much of it still is) and the oral tradition (*q.v.*) sustained the union of music and poetry. In fact, up until the 16th c., in Europe, poet and composer/musician were often one and the same. The epic (*q.v.*), the war-song, the ballad (*q.v.*), the madrigal (*q.v.*) and the lyric (*q.v.*) were in many cases the works of professional musician poets who were also composers (for example, the *skalds*, *scops*, troubadours, *trouvères* and *Minnesänger* (*qq.v.*). During the 16th c. (or perhaps a little earlier) a kind of fissiparation took place. The poet and composer/musician began to part company, and the classifying of literary forms or genres put the song in an individual category. Lyrics were written in the expectation of their being set to music and composers made extensive use of the great variety of poetry available.

Paradoxically, though the poet and composer/musician were parting company (and the term 'song' increasingly meant a literary composition in verse form rather than words for music) the 16th and 17th c. in England produced a great many good songs for music. Sir Thomas Wyatt, for example, an important innovator in the Tudor period, wrote some beautiful songs for the lute. These two stanzas are from one of his better known works:

My lute awake! perform the last  
Labour that thou and I shall waste,  
The end that I have now begun;  
For when this song is sung and past,  
My lute be still, for I have done.  
  
As to be heard where ear is none,  
As lead to grave in marble stone,  
My song may pierce her heart as soon;  
Should we then sigh or sing or moan?  
No, no, my lute, for I have done.

Much of Wyatt's work (and Surrey's) was published with other poems in *Songs and Sonnets*, a collection made by Richard Tottel the publisher and published in 1557 (this is better known as *Tottel's Miscellany*).

Many of the poets of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods wrote fine songs as well as poems that might be set to music. The two most famous composer poets of the period were Thomas Campion (1559?–1634) and John Dowland (1563?–1626?). Campion, who was a theoretician as well as a practitioner (he



wrote an interesting treatise called *Observations in the Art of English Poesie* 1602), published four *Books of Ayres* (1610–12). The fourth one contained one of his best known songs 'There is a Garden in Her Face'. Dowland, one of the most famous musicians and composers of his time, published three volumes called *Songes or Ayres of Foure Parties* (1597, 1600, 1603). The third book contained the anonymous 'Weep You No More, Sad Fountains', an exquisite piece which illustrates many of the merits of the song lyric of the period:

Weep you no more, sad fountains:  
 What need you flow so fast?  
 Look how the snowy mountains  
 Heaven's sun doth gently waste.  
 But my son's heavenly eyes  
 View not your weeping,  
 That now lies sleeping  
 Softly, now softly lies  
 Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,  
 A rest that peace begets.  
 Doth not the sun rise smiling  
 When fair at ev'n he sets?  
 Rest you then, rest, sad eyes,  
 Melt not in weeping  
 While she lies sleeping  
 Softly, now softly lies  
 Sleeping.

The period immediately each side of 1600 saw a number of other publications besides those of Campion and Dowland. Among the more notable were: William Byrd's *Songs of Sundry Natures* (1589); Thomas Morley's *Canzonets or Little Short Songs to Three Voices* (1593); John Mundy's *Songs and Psalms* (1594); Thomas Morley's *First Book of Ballets to Five Voices* (1595); Thomas Weelkes's *Madrigals of 6 Parts* (1600); Robert Jones's *First Book of Songs and Aires* (1600); Tobias Hume's *The First Part of Aires* (1605); and J. Wilbye's *Second Set of Madrigals* (1609).

In the 17th c. many poets composed songs. Suckling, Herrick, Lovelace, Jonson, Milton and Dryden created some of the best known of all. In *Arcades* (1633) and *Comus* (1634) Milton produced some outstanding songs. These lines come from the masque (*q.v.*) of *Comus* – the song to Echo:

## song

Sweet Echo, sweetest Nymph that liv'st unseen  
 Within thy airy shell  
 By slow *Meander's* margent green,  
 And in the violet imbroider'd vale  
 Where the love-lorn Nightingale  
 Nightly to thee her sad Song mourneth well.  
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle Pair  
 That likest thy *Narcissus* are?  
 O if thou have  
 Hid them in some flowry cave,  
 Tell me but where  
 Sweet Queen of Parly, Daughter of the Sphear  
 So maist thou be translated to the skies  
 And give resounding grace to all Heav'ns Harmonies.

The dramatists of the period 1580-1640 often used songs in their plays to sustain or create a particular mood. In many cases the song was an integral – one might say an essential – part of the dramatic structure (e.g. Desdemona's 'Willow' song in *Othello*; Ophelia's songs in *Hamlet*; Iago's drinking song in *Othello*). A large number of the best and most famous Elizabethan and Jacobean songs are to be found in the drama. The following are notable instances (I give the first line in each case): 'Who is Silvia? what is she?' (*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 1594-5); 'When icicles hang by the wall' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, c. 1595); 'Over hill, over dale' and 'You spotted snakes, with double tongue' and several others in (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1595-6); 'Tell me where is fancy bred' (*The Merchant of Venice*, 1596); 'Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more' (*Much Ado about Nothing*, 1598-9); 'Blow, blow thou winter wind' and 'It was a lover and his lass' (*As You Like It*, c. 1599); 'O Mistress mine! where are you roaming' and 'Come away, come away, death' (*Twelfth Night*, 1600); 'Take, O take those lips away' (*Measure for Measure*, c. 1604); 'Fear no more the heat o' the sun' (*Cymbeline*, 1610-11); 'When daffodils begin to peer' and 'Jog on, jog on, the footpath way' (*The Winter's Tale*, 1609-10); 'Full fathom five thy father lies' (*The Tempest*, 1611); 'Orpheus with his lute made trees' (*Henry VIII*, 1613).

To this selection from Shakespeare one may add: 'Golden slumbers kiss your eyes' (Thomas Dekker's *Patient Grissell*, 1603); 'Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving' (Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Woman-Hater*, 1607); 'Weep no more, nor

sigh, nor groan' (Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Queen of Corinth*, ?); 'Still to be neat, still to be drest' (Ben Jonson's *Epicæne*, 1609); 'Take, O take those lips away' (Fletcher's *The Bloody Brother*, 1616); 'Why so pale and wan, fond lover?' (Sir John Suckling's *Aglaure*, 1638); 'Hence all you vain delights' (Fletcher and Middleton's *The Nice Valour*, printed in 1647); 'The glories of our blood and state' (James Shirley's *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses*, 1659).

The influence of the masque (*q.v.*) on song-writing in the 1620s and 1630s was considerable. Many masques contained good songs (or lyrics) and the authors were fortunate in having two English composers who well understood the techniques of allying music and words. They were Henry Lawes (1596-1662) and his brother William (1602-45). Later Purcell was to make an even greater contribution in setting words to music.

When the theatres re-opened after the Puritan ban, Dryden sustained the tradition of the Elizabethans and Jacobean in song writing. A notable example is 'Beneath a myrtle shade' (*The Conquest of Granada*, 1670). And his *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* is one of the great songs in English literature. However, by the end of the 17th c. the poet no longer used the theatre. Dramatic prose was the desired medium for comedy of manners (*q.v.*) and the art of song writing very nearly died in the 18th c., except, of course, in opera and ballad opera (*qq.v.*) at which Gay and Dibdin excelled, and in the occasional play: for instance, Goldsmith wrote a successful song 'Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain' for *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773), and another one for his novel *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) which begins 'When lovely woman stoops to folly.' Sheridan, too, showed that he still had the knack with his rousing catch 'Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen' in *School for Scandal* (1777). This might have been expected of Sheridan for he had showed considerable aptitude for the sung lyric in his comic opera *The Duenna* (1775). Thereafter there is almost nothing of note, for a long time, in drama. When Robert Bell published his *Songs from the Dramatists* (1854) he printed over three hundred songs, and Sheridan was the last author to be represented. In fact, Sheridan's last song 'Yes, yes, be merciless thou tempest dire' in his unsuccessful tragedy *Pizarro* (1799) shows how the art of song-making had declined.

This is not to say that the song in general was defunct, but if we compare the 18th with the 17th c. the former has little to show for its efforts - except two major collections of earlier songs: namely, Thomas D'Urfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719) which

## song

contained over a thousand songs, and Bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765).

A handful of poets, only, kept the tradition of song writing alive. Notable examples are Thomas Moore, Robert Burns, William Blake, Thomas Haynes Bayly, plus the anonymous makers of ballad and folk-song (*qq.v.*). Of the poets just mentioned the two most important are Moore and Burns. Thomas Moore (1779–1852) was a musician as well as a poet, and became the national lyricist of Ireland through the publication of his *Irish Melodies* (1807–35). He also published *National Airs* (1815) and *Sacred Songs* (1816). Burns (1759–96) did for Scotland what Moore did for Ireland, and wrote some of the finest songs ever created. Many of them were published in James Thomson's *Scots Musical Museum* (1787–1803) and George Thomson's *Select Collection of Scottish Airs* (1793–1805).

In the 19th c. there was no revival of song-writing in England, though Thomas Lovell Beddoes and Thomas Hardy both showed a considerable gift for the song lyric. In more recent times dramatists have again become aware of the importance of songs in plays. The work of W. B. Yeats, Sean O'Casey, T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Brendan Behan and John Arden – among a number of others – illustrates the point. See DITTY; LYRIC.

**songbook** As a rule a collection of verses set to music. A famous instance is the *Carmina Burana* (*q.v.*). Scores of manuscript collections survive in Europe and many have been printed. See AIR; CANCIONEIRO; CAROL; DITTY; LAUDA; MADRIGAL; MINNESÄNGER; SONG; TROUBADOUR.

**sonnet** The term derives from the Italian *sonetto* a 'little sound' or 'song'. Except for the curtal sonnet (*q.v.*) the ordinary sonnet consists of fourteen lines, usually in iambic pentameters (*q.v.*) with considerable variations in rhyme scheme. The three basic sonnet forms are: (a) the Petrarchan (*q.v.*) which comprises an octave (*q.v.*) rhyming *abbabba* and a sestet (*q.v.*) rhyming *cdecde* or *cdcdcd*, or in any combination except a rhyming couplet (*q.v.*); (b) the Spenserian (*q.v.*) of three quatrains and a couplet, rhyming *abab, bcbc, cdcd, ee*; (c) the Shakespearean, again with three quatrains and a couplet, rhyming *abab, cdcd, efef, gg*.

The Italian form is the commonest. The octave develops one thought; there is then a 'turn' or *volta*, and the sestet grows out of the octave, varies it and completes it.



In the other two forms a different idea is expressed in each quatrain; each grows out of the one preceding it; and the argument (*q.v.*), theme (*q.v.*) and dialectic (*q.v.*) are concluded, 'tied up' in the binding end couplet.

The Petrarchan sonnet probably developed from the Sicilian *strambotto* (*q.v.*) which consisted of two quatrains to which were added two tercets (*q.v.*). The earliest sonnets are attributed to Giacomo da Lentino (*c.* 1215-33) of the Sicilian School. But the form may have been invented by another poet at the court of the Emperor Frederick II in Sicily. At any rate, throughout the later Middle Ages, the form was used by all the Italian lyric poets, notably Guinicelli, Cavalcanti and Dante. They usually used it for love-poetry and more particularly for that semi-Platonic and semi-religious devotion to the Lady or *Donna* which subsequently became a cliché of love poetry. It was Petrarch, more than anyone, who established the sonnet as one of the major poetic forms. His *Canzoniere* were a kind of encyclopedia of love and passion.

The sonnet came into the English language via Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey early in the 16th c. and it was the Petrarchan form which they imported. However, it was not until the last decade of the 16th c. that the sonnet was finally established in England. Before that event there was an outburst of sonneteering in France where the most notable sequences were Du Bellay's *Olive* (1549) and his *Regrets* and *Antiquités de Rome* (1558), and Ronsard's *Amours* (1552) and his *Sonnets pour Hélène* (1578).

Surrey established the rhyming scheme of abab, cdcd, efef, gg and it was this form that was most used in England in the later 16th c. George Gascoigne described it succinctly in 1575:

Sonnets are of fourteene lynes, every lyne conteyning tenne syllables. The first twelve do ryme in staves of foure lynes by crosse metre, and the last two ryming together do conclude the whole.

The first major sonnet cycle was *Astrophel and Stella*, written by Sir Philip Sidney (*c.* 1580-3) and printed in 1591. There followed in rapid succession Daniel's *Delia* (1592), Lodge's *Phyllis* (1593), Constable's *Diana* (1594), Drayton's *Idea's Mirror* (1594), and Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595). There were many other sequences of lesser note.

The greatest sequence of all was Shakespeare's sonnets not printed until 1609; but circulated in manuscript for at least eleven years before. Shakespeare's love was the famous so called 'Dark

Lady of the Sonnets' about whom there has been much speculation and debate. He wrote 154 sonnets, from which I choose No. 94 to illustrate the form:

They that have power to hurt, and will do none,  
 That do not do the thing, they most do show,  
 Who moving others, are themselves as stone,  
 Unmovèd, cold, and to temptation slow:  
 They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,  
 And husband Nature's riches from expense,  
 They are the lords and owners of their faces,  
 Others, but stewards of their excellence.  
 The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,  
 Though to itself, it only live and die,  
 But if that flower with base infection meet,  
 The basest weed outbraves his dignity:  
 For sweetest things turn sourèst by their deeds,  
 Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

By early in the 17th c. the vogue for love sonnets was already over. Ben Jonson was not interested in the form, and hardly any lyric poet in the Jacobean and Caroline periods (*q.v.*) wrote a sonnet of note. However, Donne did write nineteen very fine sonnets on religious themes, grouped together under the title of *Holy Sonnets*.

Thereafter it was not until Milton that the sonnet received much attention. Milton did not write a sequence and he did not write about love. His sonnets belong to the genre of occasional verse (*q.v.*), and thus are about a particular event, person or occasion, like *When the Assault was Intended to the City*, *To the Lord General Cromwell* and *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont*.

After Milton the sonnet was virtually extinct for well over a hundred years. In the whole of the 18th c. there were few of merit, apart from Thomas Gray's *Ode on the Death of Richard West*, Thomas Warton's *To the River Lodon* and William Bowles's *At Ostend*.

There was a very considerable revival of interest during the Romantic period (*q.v.*). Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley all wrote splendid sonnets. Wordsworth's are generally thought to be the best, especially his *Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802*, *To Toussaint L'Ouverture*, and *On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic*. Wordsworth wrote two sequences titled *The River Duddon* and *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* – but these must be accounted almost

complete failures. Keats's most distinguished sonnets are *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, and his last poem of all: *Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art*. Coleridge also wrote two splendid sonnets: *Ozymandias* and *England in 1819*.

During the Victorian period (*q.v.*) a large number of poets re-established the sonnet form, and in particular the sonnet-sequence about love. The major works are: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1847-50), Robert Bridges's *The Growth of Love* (1876), D. G. Rossetti's *The House of Life* (1881). Rossetti's sister Christina also wrote some very fine sonnets, especially a sequence of three on her unhappiness. There was also George Meredith's sequence *Modern Love* (1862). Meredith used a sixteen-line form, and this was a departure; but the main innovator in Victorian times was Gerard Manley Hopkins whose poems were not published until 1918. His experiments with the sonnet are extremely interesting and he made something new in the form. Particularly remarkable works of his are *Spelt from Sybil's Leaves* (an experiment in combining the alexandrine with sprung rhythm *qq.v.*), and four poems whose first lines are respectively:

No worst, there is none. Pitched past grief,  
I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.  
Patience, hard thing! the hard thing but to pray,  
My own heart let me more have pity on; let

Since the Edwardian period few poets have shown much interest in the sonnet. If we discount the over-rated works of Rupert Brooke, only three names stand out: Robert Frost, John Crowe Ransom and Wystan Hugh Auden. Auden's best sonnets are on public affairs and famous men: for instance, *The Ship*, and his sonnets on A. E. Housman, Rimbaud and Edward Lear. See CROWN OF SONNETS; QUATORZAIN.

**sonnet cycle** A series of sonnets on a particular theme to a particular individual. Love is the commonest theme and the advantages of the cycle are that they enable the poet to explore many different aspects and moods of the experience, to analyse his feelings in detail and to record the vicissitudes of the affair. At the same time each individual sonnet lives as an independent poem. Of the many cycles the following are the most famous: Dante's *Vita Nuova* (1292-94); Petrarch's *Canzoniere* (c. 1328); Du Bellay's

## sonnet cycle

*L'Olive* (1549); Ronsard's *Amours* (1552); Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (1591), the first English cycle; Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595); Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (1609); Donne's *Holy Sonnets* (1635-39); Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* (1822); Rossetti's *The House of Life* (1881); Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850); Rilke's *Sonette on Orpheus* (1922). See also CROWN OF SONNETS; CURTAL SONNET; SONNET.

**soraismus** (Gk 'mingle-mangle') A mixture of terms from various tongues, usually used for comic effect. A particularly good example is Skelton's *Speak, Parrot* (1521), from which this example comes:

*Moderata jwant,* but *toto* doth exceed:  
Discretion is mother of noble virtues all.  
*Myden agan* in Greeke tongue we read.  
But reason and wit wanteth their provincial  
When wilfulness is vicar general.  
*Haec res acu tangitur*, Parrot, *par ma foy*:  
*Taisez-vous*, Parrot, *tenez-vous coy!*

See FATRASIE; MACARONIC.

**sotadean** A verse form named after Sotades, an Alexandrian poet of the 3rd century B.C. Basically an ionic (*q.v.*) tetrameter (*q.v.*).

**sotie** (or *sottie*) The term derives from the French *sot*, *sotte* 'fool', and applies to a kind of dramatic entertainment which was popular in France in the late Middle Ages. Not genuine farce (*q.v.*) but a knockabout satirical jollification which sometimes served as a curtain-raiser (*q.v.*) to Mystery and Morality Plays (*qq.v.*). The actors wore fool's costume and derided society, manners and political events. Two well-known *soties* were: *Le Jeu du Prince des Sots et Mère Sotte* (1512) and *Les Trois Pèlerins* (c. 1521).

**source-book** Any work from which an author has 'lifted' or borrowed an idea, plot or story. Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577?) was a much-used source-book for Elizabethan dramatists. See also PLAGIARISM.

**spasmodic school** A group of minor 19th c. poets who achieved considerable popularity in England and America in the 1840s and



## Spenserian sonnet

1850s. The three main ones were P. J. Bailey, Sydney Dobell and Alexander Smith. Among their better known works are Bailey's epic drama *Festus* (1839), Dobell's *The Roman* (1850) and Alexander Smith's *A Life Drama* (1853). These turgid verse plays of inordinate length were written in an extravagant, bombastic 'neo-romantic' verse and they had little formal discipline or structure. In 1853 Charles Kingsley described their work as 'spasmodic'. Later William Aytoun parodied and derided them successfully in *Firmilian, or, The Student of Badajoz: A Spasmodic Tragedy* (1854). He also attacked them in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

**speech, divisions of** These divisions were first laid down by the Classical rhetoricians. They did not all agree, but the basic parts are: (a) introduction – (proem or exordium); (b) statement of the case; (c) argument (or agon); (d) conclusion (epilogue or peroration). Some sub-divided 'statement' into: (i) agreed points; (ii) points in controversy; (iii) points the speaker intends to establish. 'Argument' is sometimes sub-divided into: (i) proof; (ii) refutation. These divisions are still taught today. See ARGUMENT.

**Spenserian sonnet** Developed by and named after Edmund Spenser, it has a rhyme scheme abab, bcbc, cdcd, ee. It is also known as the link sonnet – because of the rhyme scheme. It has the binding couplet of the Shakespearean sonnet (*q.v.*) at the end. This example is No. LXX from Spenser's sonnet cycle *Amoretti* (1595):

Fresh spring, the herald of love's mighty king,  
In whose coat-armour richly are displayed  
All sorts of flowers, the which on earth do spring,  
In goodly colours gloriously arrayed;  
Go to my love, where she is careless laid,  
Yet in her winter's bower not well awake;  
Tell her the joyous time will not be stayed,  
Unless she do him by the forelock take;  
Bid her therefore herself soon ready make,  
To wait on Love amongst his lovely crew;  
Where every one, that misseth then her make,  
Shall be by him amerced with penance due.  
    Make haste, therefore, sweet love, whilst it is prime;  
    For none can call again the passèd time.

See PETRARCHAN SONNET; SONNET; SONNET CYCLE.

## Spenserian stanza

**Spenserian stanza** A form invented by Edmund Spenser and an important innovation in the history of English poetry. It consists of nine iambic lines, the first eight being pentameters and the last a hexameter or alexandrine (*qq.v.*), with a rhyme scheme *ababbcc*. Spenser invented it for his long allegorical poem *The Faerie Queene* (1589, 1596). This is the first stanza from Canto III in Book I:

Nought is there under heav'ns wide hollownesse,  
That moves more deare compassion of mind,  
Then beautie brought t'unworthie wretchednesse  
Through unvies snares, or fortunes freakes unkind.  
I, whether lately through her brightnes blynd,  
Or through alleageance, and fast fealty,  
Which I do owe unto all womankynd,  
Feele my hart perst with so great agony,  
When such I see, that all for pittie I could dy.

Oddly enough, this stanza form, which is related to *ottava rima* (*q.v.*), and the octave used by Chaucer in *The Monk's Tale*, was little used in the 17th c., though the Fletcher brothers, Giles and Phineas, attempted it; and it was not until the 18th c. that its possibilities in narrative were fully appreciated. Three works from that period display notable use of it: namely, Shenstone's *The Schoolmistress* (1742), James Thomson's *Castle of Indolence* (1748) and James Beattie's *The Minstrel* (Book I, 1771; Book II, 1774). The Romantic poets proved its most successful exponents, their major works being Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812, 1816); Keats's *Eve of St Agnes* (1820); Shelley's *Revolt of Islam* (1818) and *Adonais* (1821). See also MONK'S TALE STANZA.

**spondee** (Gk 'libation') A metrical foot of two stressed or long syllables, so named because it was used in Greek melodies accompanying libations. Not particularly common in accentual verse (poems written wholly or mostly in spondaics are very rare), but often used sparingly to slow the rhythm of a line, thus making it 'heavier' for a particular effect. There is skilful use of spondees to suggest dead weight in this extract from Ted Hughes's *View of a Pig*:

Thě píg | láy ōn ă | bárrōw deád.  
Īt wéighed, | thěy saíd, | ăs múch | ăs thrée mén.  
Īts éyes | clósed, pínk | whíte éye | lášhēs.

Īts trót|těrs stúck | stráight óut.  
 Sűch weíght | ănd thűck | pínk búlk  
 Sét ĩn deáth | seėmed nót | jűst deád.  
 Īt wăs léss | thăň lífelěss, | fűrthěr óff.  
 Īt wăs líke | ă săck | óf wheát.

*See also* DISPONDEE; FOOT; SCANSION.

**spontaneity** As a critical term, linked with the idea that the creative act is (or should be) unpremeditated, a sudden precipitation of verse or prose. Perhaps what Shelley had in mind when he described the skylark pouring forth its full heart in 'profuse strains of unpremeditated art'. In fact, poets of the Romantic period (*q.v.*) regarded spontaneity as one of the more reliable marks of the true poet. The most celebrated remark on the matter was Wordsworth's, that 'Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings'. Coleridge, rather more cautiously, distinguished between poets who write from inspiration and those who do it by an act of will. Keats felt that poetry must be born as naturally as leaves falling from a tree.

This attitude has long been unfashionable and has been replaced by the view that the poet is much more like a patient and painstaking artificer or craftsman; that the poem is shaped, worked at, revised over and over again until it is well wrought. Auden averred you may have a few lines 'given' to you, but the rest is just 'plugging away': a point of view that Shelley would have deplored. It was error, Shelley claimed, to assert that 'the finest passages of poetry are produced by labour and study'.

The term may still be used judiciously, perhaps to describe what *appears* to be unpremeditated. *See* DONNÉE; INSPIRATION; LIGNE DONNÉE; SINCERITY.

**spoof** A neologism (*q.v.*) invented by the comedian Arthur Roberts (1852–1933). Originally it described any sort of hoaxing game, or jape. Also applied to a round game of cards in which certain cards when occurring together are called 'spoof'. As a literary term it may be used of the sort of hoax that pokes fun by use of parody, satire and burlesque (*qq.v.*). Well-known examples are: *1066 and All That* (1931) by W. C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman; Richard Armour's *It All Started with Columbus* (1953), and several other 'it all started' books by that author; R. M. Myer's *From Beowulf to Virginia Woolf* (1952); Robert Nathan's *The Weans* (1960); and Nabokov's novel *Pale Fire* (1962).

## Spoonerism

**Spoonerism** So called after the Rev. W. A. Spooner (1844–1930), dean and warden of New College, Oxford. It consists of a transposition between the consonant sounds (especially the initial sounds) of two words; a practice to which Spooner was addicted. ‘The queer old dean’, for ‘the dear old queen’ is a famous example attributed to him. So are these valedictory words he is alleged to have addressed to an undergraduate pupil: ‘You have tasted your worm, hissed my mystery lectures, and you must catch the first town drain.’

**Sprechspruch** *See* SPRUCH.

**Spruch** (G ‘saying, epigram’) A short lyrical poem set to music. Walther von der Vogelweide (c. 1170–1230), generally regarded as the best of the Minnesingers (*q.v.*), wrote a number of them.

The *Spruch* has to be distinguished from the *Sprechspruch*, a form of gnomic verse (*q.v.*) designed to be spoken and read. The *Sprüche* first appear in the 12th c., and there was a 13th c. collection called *Bescheidenheit* ‘modesty’, which remained popular until the 16th c. Other poets who composed *Sprüche* were Goethe and Stefan George.

**sprung rhythm** The thing is old but the term is comparatively new. The term was invented by Gerard Manley Hopkins to describe his own metrical system, and his re-discovery of the techniques involved in sprung rhythm have had a wide influence on the development of English poetry. Hopkins’s own words on the subject (in *Preface to Poems*, 1918) can hardly be improved upon:

[It] is measured by feet of from one to four syllables, regularly, and for particular effects any number of weak or slack syllables may be used. It has one stress, which falls on the only syllable, if there is only one, or, if there are more, then scanning as above, on the first, and so gives rise to four sorts of feet, a monosyllable and the so-called accentual Trochee, Dactyl, and the First Paeon [*qq.v.*]. And there will be four corresponding natural rhythms; but nominally the feet are mixed and any one may follow any other. And hence Sprung Rhythm differs from Running Rhythm [*q.v.*] in having or being only one nominal rhythm, a mixed or “logaoedic” one, instead of three, but on the other hand in having twice the flexibility of foot, so that any two stresses may either follow one another



running or be divided by one, two, or three slack syllables . . . It is natural in Sprung Rhythm for the lines to be *rove over*, that is for the scanning of each line immediately to take up that of the one before, so that if the first has one or more syllables at its end the other must have so many the less at its beginning . . . Two licences are natural to Sprung Rhythm. The one is rests, as in music . . . The other is *hangers* or *outrides*, that is one, two, or three slack syllables added to a foot and not counted in the nominal scanning. They are so called because they seem to hang below the line or ride forward or backward from it in another dimension than the line itself . . .

Some analysis of his poem *Harry Ploughman* will help to clarify the main points:

Hárd as hurdľéärms, with a bróth of góldish flúe  
 Breáthed róund: the ráck of ribs; the scoóped flank; lank  
 Rópe-over thígh; knée-nave; and bárrelled shánk –  
                                     Héad and fóot, shóuldér and shánk –  
 By a gréy eye's heed stéered wéll, one créw, fall to;  
 Stánd at stréss. Each límb's bárrowy bráwn, his théw  
 That onewhere cúrded, onewhere súcked or sánk –  
                                     Sóared ór sánk –,  
 Though as a beéchbóle firm, finds his, as at a róll-cáll, rank  
 And feátures, ín flesh, whát deéd hé each must dó –  
                                     His sínew-sérvice where dó.  
 He leans to it, Harry bends, look. Back, elbow, and liquid waíst  
 In him, all quail to the wallowing o' the plough: 's cheék  
                                     crímsons; cúrls  
 Wág or cróssbrídle, ín a wínd lífted, wíndláced –  
                                     Seé his wínd-lilylocks -láced;  
 Chúrľsgrace, too, chıld of Amansstrength, how it hangs or húrls  
 Them – bróad ín bluff híde his frówníng feét láshed! raced  
 With, along them, crágíron under and cóld fúrls –  
                                     With-a-fountain's shíníng-shót fúrls.

The symbols used by Hopkins indicate the following:

- (a) / = metrical stress.
- (b) ^ = strong stress.
- (c) ∪ = a pause or dwelling on a syllable.
- (d) ~ = a quiver or circumflexion; a drawing out of one syllable to make it almost two.

## sprung rhythm

- (e)  $\neg$  = slur; a tying or binding together of syllables into the time of one.  
(f)  $\smile$  = hanger or outride.

This re-discovery of Hopkins (Sprung Rhythm was not unknown in OE and ME alliterative verse) has had a considerable influence on the work of, among others, T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas and Ted Hughes. *See also* FOOT; ICTUS; INSCAPE AND INSTRESS; SCANSION.

**spy story** A form of fiction devoted to various kinds of espionage. Since late in the 19th c., and increasingly so since the 1920s, it has been kin to novels of adventure (e.g. Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda*, 1894; Baroness Orczy's *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, 1905), the thriller (e.g. the stories of Edgar Wallace), and the politico-military thriller (e.g. some works by Eric Ambler, some of Graham Greene's 'entertainments' (*q.v.*) and novels by Lionel Davidson, Frederick Forsyth and Francis Clifford). In fact, the spy story has subsumed many of the best elements of such tales, and has evolved into a specialized and sophisticated form of fiction which, at its best, is skilfully plotted, contains well-drawn characters, exciting action and a high degree of suspense and tension, and is extremely authentic in all technical detail. In the hands of an accomplished writer like Len Deighton it becomes a distinguished sub-species of the novel (*q.v.*).

The use of spies is an ancient practice. There is evidence of it in the Bible, in Classical and Byzantine history; and it becomes more evident in the history of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance period. For example, the rival states of Renaissance Italy used spies continually for military and political purposes. The diplomatic corps of Europe then (as now) were frequently involved in espionage. Ambassadors, legates and envoys were known to be agents for their governments and accepted as such. In England, in the 16th c., Walsingham built up a very efficient and ruthless secret service organization. The Church, too, used priests as spies and these in turn were spied upon by anti-papal agents. It became a commonplace for people to spy upon each other. Kings, princes and tyrants, guided by the needs of expediency, employed agents to watch their enemies. Like Macbeth, in every house they kept an agent fee'd.

From that time forwards espionage of all kinds has proliferated in most countries, until, in the 20th c., we find huge secret

service agencies and secret police organizations operating all over the world. A most influential pioneer of such organizations was Fouché, Napoleon's chief of police. He was a gifted secret agent and built up a powerful system of espionage.

The industrial revolution, a succession of wars in the 19th c., and more and more wars in the 20th c. have meant the development of ever more sophisticated weapons and lethal substances. Inevitably there has been a genuine threat of secret documents being stolen: a favourite theme in espionage novels. In fact, to adapt Parkinson's law, one could say that spies have accumulated to fill the roles that technology requires of them. It is not surprising, therefore, that the spy story has matured concurrently.

One of the earliest examples of such a story is *The Spy* (1821) by James Fenimore Cooper. It is not of much merit, but it made clear that spying was a hazardous activity for which the penalty was very likely to be execution – usually without trial. After Cooper, there is little of note until the tales of William Le Queux (1864–1927), who was probably a spy himself. His first book, *Guilty Bonds* (1890), described the intricacies of political conspiracy. His second, *A Secret Service* (1896), dealt with anti-Jewish activities after the assassination of Alexander III. Other works included *England's Peril* (1899), *The Invasion of 1910* (1905) and *Spies of the Kaiser* (1909); in this last he warned of a German invasion in the near future. Out of the hundred odd books which Le Queux wrote, some thirty were concerned with espionage, but they are seldom read now and most of them are poor stuff. However, he was a pioneer of the spy story.

A more distinguished writer was Erskine Childers who wrote *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), one of the first spy stories to gain respect in literary circles. In the same period Joseph Conrad published two books about revolutionary agents both of which involved espionage and secret service activities. The first was *The Secret Agent* (1907), an anfractuious and turgid account of anarchist activities in London; the second was *Under Western Eyes* (1911). The spies in both books (Verloch and Ramuzov) were Russians and double agents; and in both books Conrad was more interested in the depiction of 'the very soul of things Russian' than in spying.

The First World War produced a number of spy stories of a nationalistic and right wing tone in England, in which, inevitably, the Germans were the 'baddies'. This is especially noticeable in the books of Buchan and 'Sapper'. Buchan's best known spy

## spy story

stories were *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915) and *Greenmantle* (1916). 'Sapper's' *Bulldog Drummond* (1920) is still readable.

In 1928 Somerset Maugham published his *Ashenden* stories, something of a landmark in the genre. They were based on the author's experiences as an intelligence officer and are notable for their detachment and neutrality. Maugham presented spies who were ordinary and quite amiable people doing a job. There is a complete absence of anything sensational in them.

Between the wars some of the best spy stories were those by Eric Ambler, especially *The Dark Frontier* (1936), *Epitaph for a Spy* (1938) and *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1939). Ambler was original because of his detachment and his exceptional gift for creating and sustaining tension without being melodramatic.

As good, but different in his approach, was Graham Greene who classified his spy stories (like some other books of his) as 'entertainments' (q.v.). *England Made Me* (1935) contains some espionage. *The Confidential Agent* (1939) was more successful, and *Ministry of Fear* (1941) showed Greene as a supremely capable contriver of a wholly realistic spy story. Between them Ambler and Greene de-glamorized the spy and the whole business of espionage, but even so the realism begun by Maugham was somewhat reversed during the Second World War, which produced much third-rate 'nationalistic' spy fiction. An exception to this generalization was Michael Innes's *The Secret Vanguard* (1940).

In the 1950s began the James Bond era of spy fiction. In many ways unreadable, Ian Fleming's Bond stories achieved enormous success. Some of his books were *Casino Royale* (1953), *Moonraker* (1955), *Diamonds are Forever* (1956), *From Russia with Love* (1957), *Doctor No* (1958) and *Goldfinger* (1959). In 1958 a salutary contrast to these excesses was Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*, an exquisite piece of droll comedy which 'sent up' the secret agent business.

During the 1960s an anti-Bond image developed in the novels of Len Deighton and John Le Carré. Both excellent writers, they between them established an even more realistic form of spy story than that conceived by Maugham, Ambler and Greene, revealing the squalor, cynicism and expediency of espionage. Some of Len Deighton's best known books are: *The Ipcress File* (1963), *Funeral in Berlin* (1964), and *Billion Dollar Brain* (1966). John Le Carré made his name with *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold* (1963), and followed up this success with *The Looking-Glass War* (1965) and *A Small Town in Germany* (1968).



To these we should add a very good spy thriller by Adam Hall called *The Quiller Memorandum* (1965). A number of other English authors have excelled in this genre in the 1960s and 1970s. See THRILLER.

**stage directions** Notes incorporated in or added to the script of a play to indicate the moment of a character's appearance, character and manner; the style of delivery; the actor's movements; details of location, scenery and effects. The Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists, like their predecessors, kept them to an absolute minimum (e.g. Enter two servants; Music; Aside; Exit; Sings; *Manet*; *Exeunt omnes*; A sea shore). Over the years they became more detailed and complex and by the end of the 19th c. dramatists were providing elaborate directions and instructions. Shaw, perhaps more than anyone, exploited their possibilities very skillfully and usually at considerable length, often indicating *exactly* how he wanted anything to be said or done. In recent years there has been a reaction against this kind of elaboration. Some dramatists have gone to the other extreme and pared direction to an austere simplicity. A notable exponent of such frugal practice is Harold Pinter.

**standard English** That English, spoken or written, which is regarded as generally accepted and correct in grammar, syntax and spelling, and which is a fit model for imitation. See COLLOQUIALISM; KING'S ENGLISH; SLANG.

**stanza** (It 'standing, stopping place') A group of lines of verse. It may be of any number but more than twelve is uncommon; four is the commonest. A stanza pattern is determined by the number of lines, the number of feet in each line and the metrical and rhyming schemes. The stanza is the unit of structure in a poem and most poets do not vary the unit within a poem. Exceptions can be found in Spenser's *Epithalamion* and Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Earlier English terms are batch, fit and stave (*qq.v.*). See also CANTO; OTTAVA RIMA; QUATRAIN; RHYME ROYAL; SPENSERIAN STANZA; TERZA RIMA; VERSE PARAGRAPH.

**stasimon** (Gk 'stationary song') An ode (*q.v.*) sung by the Chorus (*q.v.*) in a Greek play after taking its position in the orchestra. The *stasima* alternated with dialogue delivered by other actors.

## statement

**statement** A division of a speech (*q.v.*). \*Also used by I. A. Richards in a special sense to refer to a scientifically verifiable discourse. See PSEUDO-STATEMENT.

**stave** A back formation from *staves*, plural of *staff*. A synonym for stanza (*q.v.*). See BATCH; CANTO; FIT; VERSE PARAGRAPH.

**stichomythia** (Gk 'line talk'). Dialogue of alternate single lines, especially in drama. Usually a kind of verbal parrying accompanied by antithesis (*q.v.*) and repetitive patterns. It is highly effective in the creation of tension and conflict. It is frequent in Classical drama, not so common since. Well-known examples occur in *Hamlet* (III, iv) and *Richard III* (IV, iv) and in many scenes in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Molière used it several times in *Les Femmes Savantes* (III, v) and he sometimes used double lines. The following example comes from Milton's *Comus* (1634):

Comus: What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lady: Dim darkness and this leavy Labyrinth.

Comus: Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

Lady: They left me weary on a grassy turf.

Comus: By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

Lady: To seek i' the valley some cool friendly Spring.

Comus: And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

Lady: They were but twain and purpos'd quick return.

Comus: Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.

See AMOEBEAN; ALTERCATIO; HEMISTICH; SENECA TRAGEDY.

**stichos** (Gk 'line, row') A line of Greek or Latin verse. A single line or a poem of one line. Verse is stichic when composed in homogeneous lines (e.g. iambic pentameters) in which case it is not stanzaic. See STANZA.

**stock** The identical line which ends each stanza of the *refrain* (*q.v.*) in the poetry of the *Rederijkers* (*q.v.*). It contains the main theme of the poem.

**stock character** A recurrent type, like the *miles gloriosus* in Roman drama, the characters in *commedia dell' arte* (*q.v.*) and the villain and heroine in melodrama (*q.v.*). Other examples are the golden-hearted whore, Colonel Blimp, the oaf, the clown, the coward,

the hypochondriac, the procrastinator, the nagging wife, the absent-minded professor and the man whose life is always beset with misfortune. A writer of creative originality can take such stock figures and transform them into individuals. Falstaff was the outstanding example of the braggart soldier; the braggadocio (*q.v.*). Jonson's Volpone was the supreme instance of the miser. *See also* ARCHETYPE; FABULA; FLAT AND ROUND CHARACTERS.

**stock response** A reaction on the part of a reader or spectator according to a standard pattern of behaviour. No critical judgement is involved. Obvious examples are cheering the hero and booing the villain.

**stock situation** A well-tried, recurrent pattern in fiction or drama. For example: mistaken identity; the eternal triangle; dramatic irony (*q.v.*); deception based on disguise; imposture. *See also* ARCHETYPE.

**storm of association** A phrase used by Wordsworth in connection with the power of inspiration (*q.v.*). He suggests that a kind of external force impels or compels the poet to write. In this respect he believes in the traditional idea of the Muse (*q.v.*).

**storm and stress** *See* STURM UND DRANG.

**stornello** (It 'turning aside') An Italian folk verse form of three lines, often beginning with an invocation to a flower. It originated in Tuscany in the 17th c. and thereafter spread through much of Italy. *See also* FOLK SONG.

**stracittà** (It 'over or across city') A form of literary movement in Italy which developed after the First World War. The leader of the movement was Massimo Bontempelli (1878-1960) who elaborated a literary creed known as *novescentismo*. He advocated a break with traditional 19th c. forms and attitudes and sought for what he called 'magic realism'. Yet another attempt to elucidate the essence of reality. *See also* STRAPAESE.

**strambotto** (It *strambo* 'eccentric, queer, whimsical') One of the oldest of Italian verse forms, it is a one-stanza composition in hendecasyllables (*q.v.*); usually either an octave (*q.v.*) or a sestet

**strambotto**

(*q.v.*). See OTTAVA RIMA; RISPETTO; SICILIAN OCTAVE; SONNET.

**strapaese** (It 'across, over country') An Italian literary movement which attained some prominence in the 1920s. Its origins appear to have been related to the Nationalist Party manifesto of 1904 by Giovanni Papini. Its principal periodical was *Il Selvaggio*, and one of its leading lights was the Roman novelist Curzio Malaparte (1878–1957). See also STRACITTÀ.

**strategy** A jargon (*q.v.*) term which appears to have come into literary criticism some time in the 1930s. It can mean either (a) an author's attitude towards his theme and subject; or (b) his method or technique of dealing with it. See SYMBOLIC ACTION.

**street songs** Most of these are anonymous and some are very old, though not many are extant from earlier than the 17th c. Unhappily, they are also dying out though traditional ones may still be heard very occasionally in markets or in the old-fashioned pub where locals gather for a sing-song. Cockneys tend to know them more than most people. At their best they are racy, witty and slangy, as this first stanza from *A Leary Mot* suggests.

Rum old Mog was a leary flash mot, and she was round and fat,  
With twangs in her shoes, a wheelbarrow too, and an oilskin  
round her hat;  
A blue bird's-eye o'er dairies fine – as she mizzled through  
Temple Bar,  
Of vich side of the way, I cannot say, but she boned it from a Tar –  
Singing tol-lol-lol-lido

Other fairly well-known ones are *The Ploughman's Wooing*, *Unfortunate Miss Bailey*, *The Ratcatcher's Daughter*, *She was poor but she was honest*, *Under the Drooping Willow Tree*, *Bung Your Eye*, *Polly Perkins*, *Darkey Sunday School*, *The Man on the Flying Trapeze* and *Wot Cher! or, Knocked'em in the Old Kent Road*.

See BALLAD; FOLKSONG; JINGLE; NONSENSE VERSE; PATTERN.

**strict meter poetry** A 14th c. Welshman, Einion the Priest, is regarded as the first person to have analysed the meter of Welsh poetry. He defined twenty-four different meters and classified



them under three categories: *awdl*, *cynydd*, *englyn* (qq.v.). These are known as strict meter poetry. See FREE METER.

**story within a story** An enclosed narrative; a story which occurs as part of, or as a digression in, a longer story. Of many examples one may mention *The Arabian Nights*, Voltaire's *Zadig* and Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby*. See FRAME STORY; RAHMENER-ZÄHLUNG.

**stream of consciousness** A term coined by William James in *Principles of Psychology* (1890) to denote the flow of inner experiences. Now an almost indispensable term in literary criticism, it refers to that technique which seeks to depict the multitudinous thoughts and feelings which pass through the mind. Another phrase for it is 'interior monologue'. Something resembling it is discernible in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760-67), but it was a minor French novelist, Edouard Dujardin, who first developed the technique, in a way that was to prove immensely influential, in *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (1888). James Joyce, who is believed to have known this work, exploited the possibilities and took the technique almost to a point *ne plus ultra* in *Ulysses* (published 1922 but completed much earlier) which purports to be an account of the experiences (the actions, thoughts, feelings) of two men, Leopold Bloom and Stephen Daedalus, during twenty-four hours in Dublin. The following lines give some idea of the method:

Yes. Thought so. Sloping into the Empire. Gone. Plain soda would do him good. Where Pat Kinsella had his Harp theatre before Whitbred ran the Queen's. Broth of a boy. Dion Boucicault business with his harvestmoon face in a poky bonnet. Three Purty Maids from School. How time flies eh? Showing long red pantaloons under his skirts. Drinkers, drinking, laughed spluttering, their drink against their breath. More power, Pat. Coarse red: fun for drunkards: guffaw and smoke. Take off that white hat. His parboiled eyes. Where is he now? Beggar somewhere. The harp that once did starve us all.

The climax to this extraordinary work is the forty-odd page interior monologue of Molly Bloom, a passage which has only one punctuation mark.

The beginning of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) is an early indication of his interest in this technique.

Meantime, Dorothy Richardson had begun to compile her

## stream of consciousness

13-volume *Pilgrimage* (1915-38) and Marcel Proust was at work on the equally ambitious *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-27). Henry James and Dostoievski had already indicated, through long passages of introspective writing, that they were aware of something like the stream of consciousness technique. So it seems that several original minds had been working, independently, towards a new method of writing fiction.

Since the 1920s many writers have learnt from Joyce and emulated him. Virginia Woolf (*Mrs Dalloway*, 1925; *To The Lighthouse*, 1927) and William Faulkner (*The Sound and the Fury*, 1931) are two of the most distinguished developers of the stream of consciousness method. There have been hundreds of others and it has long been a commonplace literary technique. *See also* ANTI-NOVEL; FREE ASSOCIATION; IMPRESSIONISM; NOUVELLE VAGUE; VIEWPOINT.

**stress** As a metrical term, stress is interchangeable with accent (*q.v.*). A metrical foot usually comprises one stressed syllable and one or more unstressed syllables; for example, the dactyl (*q.v.*) — U U. *See* BEAT; FOOT; ICTUS; PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ACCENT; QUANTITY; SCANSION.

**strophe** (Gk 'turning') Originally the first part of a choral ode (*q.v.*) in Greek drama which the Chorus chanted while moving from one side of the stage to the other. It was followed by the anti-strophe (*q.v.*), a reverse movement, and then by the epode (*q.v.*) of a different metrical structure which was chanted by the chorus when standing still. The term came to be used as a synonym for stanza (*q.v.*) especially in the ode (*q.v.*). More recently it has been applied to a unit or verse paragraph (*q.v.*) in free verse (*q.v.*).

**structural metaphor** *See* ORGANIC METAPHOR.

**structure** The sum of the relationships of the parts to each other; thus, the whole. Even as the Germans speak of *Gestalt* (*q.v.*), we can speak of the structure of a word, a sentence, a paragraph, a chapter, a book, and so forth. The formal structure of a play consists of its acts and scenes and their interdependent balance. The non-formal structure comprises the events and actions which take place. John Crowe Ransom makes a distinctive use of the term when he holds that the structure of a poem is its central

statement or argument (its logical structure) while everything else (the words, their sounds, the images, the connotations suggested by the 'in-load' of the words, etc.) is texture (*q.v.*) or 'local texture'. See FORM; STYLE.

**Stuart period** 1603–1714, during which time the Stuart family ruled England (except for the Cromwellian period). See CAROLINE; CAVALIER; JACOBAN; RESTORATION (PERIODS).

**Sturm und Drang** (G 'storm and stress') The phrase first occurred in the title of the play *Der Wirrwarr, oder Sturm und Drang* (1776) by Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger (1732–1831). It gave its name to the revolutionary literary movement which was stirring in Germany at that time. Adherents of anti-Enlightenment and anti-Classicism, its supporters preferred inspiration to reason. They were also unduly nationalistic. A number of famous German authors were influenced by the movement, including Goethe, Schiller, Herder and Lenz. See CLASSICISM/ROMANTICISM; ENLIGHTENMENT; GÖTTINGER DICHTERBUND; ROMANTICISM.

**style** The characteristic manner of expression in prose or verse; how a particular writer says things. The analysis and assessment of style involves examination of a writer's choice of words, his figures of speech, the devices (rhetorical and otherwise), the shape of his sentences (whether they be loose or periodic), the shape of his paragraphs – indeed, of every conceivable aspect of his language and the way in which he uses it. Style defies complete analysis or definition (Remy de Gourmont put the matter tersely when he said that defining style was like trying to put a sack of flour in a thimble) because it is the tone and 'voice' of the writer himself; as peculiar to him as his laugh, his walk, his handwriting and the expressions on his face. The style, as Buffon put it, *is* the man.

However, styles have been roughly classified and these crude categories are sometimes helpful: (a) according to period: Metaphysical, Augustan, Georgian; (b) according to individual authors: Chaucerian, Miltonic, Gibbonian, Jamesian; (c) according to level: grand, middle, low and plain; (d) and according to language: scientific, expository, poetic, emotive, referential, journalistic. See also DECORUM; PROPRIETY.

## stylistics

**stylistics** Akin to linguistics and semantics (*qq.v.*), it is an analytical science which covers all the expressive aspects of language: phonology, prosody, morphology, syntax and lexicology.

**subdued metaphor** *See* TELESCOPED METAPHOR.

**subjectivity and objectivity** The terms subjective and objective were imported into England from the post-Kantian German critics of the late 18th c. and are, in many ways, as Ruskin put it, 'two of the most objectionable words . . . ever coined by the troublesomeness of metaphysicians'. Subjectivity, when applied to writing, suggests that the writer is primarily concerned with conveying personal experience and feeling – as in autobiography (*q.v.*) or in fiction which is thinly concealed autobiography (e.g. Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Samuel Butler's *The Way of all Flesh* and Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*). Objectivity suggests that the writer is 'outside' of and detached from what he is writing about, has expelled himself from it, is writing about other people rather than about himself, and by so doing is exercising what Keats called 'negative capability' (*q.v.*), and preserving what is described as 'aesthetic distance' (*q.v.*). The novels of Henry James and the poems of T. S. Eliot show marked objectivity.

In fact, any writer of any merit is simultaneously subjective and objective. He is subjectively engrossed in his work and the quality and intensity of his personal vision will be dictated in a subjective way. At the same time he must be removed from and in control of his material. Thus he is involved in a paradoxical activity: an intellectually creative balancing act in which invention (*q.v.*) and judgement coalesce or co-ordinate to achieve and preserve equilibrium. *See also* THE PERSONAL HERESY; VIEW-POINT.

**sublime** (L 'elevated, lofty') As a critical and aesthetic term it owes its existence to an anonymous treatise in Greek titled *Peri Hypsous* (*hypsos*, 'height', 'elevation'), once ascribed to Longinus of the 3rd c. A.D. but now believed to have been of earlier date.

The idea of sublimity stems from the rhetoricians' distinctions of various styles of speech: namely, high, middle and low. From the 17th c. onwards it held a particular fascination for people. As an intellectual concept and as an attainable quality in art and literature it was especially attractive to writers during the 18th c.



and during the Romantic period (*q.v.*). Sublimity came to connote a surpassing excellence, an Everest of achievement, where great thoughts, noble feeling, lofty figures (i.e. figurative language), diction and arrangement (the five sources of sublimity established by the author of *Peri Hypsous*) all coincided. Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757) was an important contribution to thinking on the subject. Kant developed his ideas and equated beauty with the finite, and the sublime with the infinite. As Byron was to put it later in *Childe Harold*:

Dark-heaving – boundless, endless, and sublime,  
The image of eternity.

Wordsworth and Shelley were particularly susceptible to intimations of the sublime.

**sub-plot** A subsidiary action in a play or story which coincides with the main action. Very common in Tudor and Jacobean drama, it is usually a variation of or counter-point to the main plot. For example, the comic sub-plot involving Stefano and Trinculo in *The Tempest*; and the serious one involving Gloucester, Edmund and Edgar in *King Lear*. The sub-plot became increasingly rare after the 17th c. See PLOT.

**substitution** In verse, the replacement of one kind of metrical foot (*q.v.*) by another. Usually done as a deliberate variation in order to produce a particular counter-point (*q.v.*) effect of sound and sense. A common form of substitution in English verse is putting a trochee (*q.v.*) for an iamb (*q.v.*) at the beginning of a line. In this first stanza from Geoffrey Hill's *God's Little Mountain* the basic foot is an iamb (though there are one or two variations), but the first word of the third line is a trochee carefully placed for emphasis:

Bělow, | thě rí | věr scrám | blěd líke | ă goát  
Díslód | gǐng stónes. | Thě móun | taín stámped | ít's fóot,  
Shákǐng, | ăs fróm | ă tránce. | Ānd Í | wás shút  
Wíth wáds | ǒf sóund | ĩntǒ ă súd | děn quǐět.

*See also* CHOLIAMBUS.

**sub-text** Theatrical jargon for the unspoken in a play; what is

## sub-text

implied by the pause and by silence. Perhaps also what Harold Pinter means by 'the pressure behind the words'. See THEATRE OF SILENCE.

**succès** (F 'success') A *succès d'estime* means that the critics have given their blessing; *succès fou* is a popular hit; *succès de scandale*, a popular hit because of some notoriety or scandalous element. A *roman à clef* or *livre à clef* (*q.v.*) might produce a *succès de scandale*.

**suggestion** The term covers those ideas, feelings and impulses that a word or an arrangement of words may evoke over and above their actual sense and sound. Suggestion may be achieved by literary association (and, perhaps, allusion) as well as through subjective links in the receptor (*q.v.*) – to use a jargon (*q.v.*) term. Much writing is 'suggestive' in various ways for different people, especially in the use of allegory (*q.v.*), symbol (*q.v.*), and particular images. Both the poet and the writer of prose may 'suggest'. It is largely a matter of subjectivity (*q.v.*). These lines from John Berryman's *The Dispossessed* might trigger all sorts of associations through suggestion for various readers:

'and something that . . . that is theirs – no longer ours'  
stammered to me the Italian page. A wood  
seeded & towered suddenly. I understood. –

The leading Man's especially, and the Juvenile Lead's,  
and the Leading Lady's thigh that switches & warms,  
and their grimaces, and their flying arms:

*our* arms, *our* story. Every seat was sold.  
A crone met in a clearing sprouts a beard  
and has a tirade. Not a word we heard.

Movement of stone within a woman's heart,  
abrupt & dominant. They gesture how  
fings really are. Rarely a child sings now.

My harpsichord weird as a koto drums  
*adagio* for twilight, for the storm-worn dove  
no more de-iced, and the spidery business of love.

The Juvenile Lead's the Leader's arms, one arm  
running the whole bole, branches, roots (O watch)  
and the feaceless fellow waving from her crotch,

Stalin-unanimous! who procured a vote  
and care not use it, who have kept an eye  
and care not use it, percussive vote, clear eye.

See also CONNOTATION.

**summary** A *précis* (q.v.) or *resumé* of the main points of a book or part of it. Also known as a synopsis. To be found in abridged works and also by way of introduction. It used to be a common practice but is now fairly rare. See ARGUMENT.

**supernatural story** A very comprehensive term which may be applied to any sort of story which in some way makes use of ghosts, ghouls, spectres, apparitions, poltergeists, good and evil spirits and things that go bump in the night; not to mention magic, witchcraft, marvels, talismans, the eerie atmosphere and the presence of the uncanny; anything supranormal, and beyond sensory perception; what makes the flesh creep and the hair stand on end; the 'spooky', the numinous; that which conveys the sense of the preternatural (to use Coleridge's word) powers. In short anything which belongs to that world so powerfully suggested by Milton in *Comus* when he wrote of:

Calling shapes and beckoning shadows dire,  
And airy tongues that syllable men's names  
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.

In verse, of the thousands of examples available, one may mention the supernatural and supranormal elements in *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Sir Orfeo*, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Comus*, Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*, Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, E. A. Poe's *The Raven*, Browning's *Child Harold to the Dark Tower Came*, Walter de la Mare's *The Listeners*, W. W. Gibson's *Flannan Isle*, Alfred Noyes's *Sherwood*, Vernon Watkins's *Ballad of the Mari Lwyd*, as well as a large number of ballads (e.g. *The Wee Wee Man*, *The Wife of Usher's Well*, *The Daemon Lover*).

Two classic collections of supernatural stories are *The Arabian Nights* and the brothers Grimm *Fairy Tales*. Mention should also be made of Perrault's collection of fairy stories which includes *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella* and *Red Riding Hood*; Defoe's *True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs Veal*; Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*; Anne Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*; M. G.

## supernatural story

(‘Monk’) Lewis’s *The Monk* and *The Castle Spectre*; C. R. Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer*; Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*; Hoffmann’s *Tales*; Poe’s *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*; Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*; James Hogg’s *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*; Dostoevski’s *The Possessed*; Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol*; Stevenson’s *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Bottle Imp*; Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; Ambrose Bierce’s *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*; W. W. Jacobs’s *The Monkey’s Paw*; Sheridan Le Fanu’s *In a Glass Darkly* (a collection which contains the famous *Green Tea*); Henry James’s *The Turn of the Screw*; Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*; H. G. Wells’s *The Invisible Man*. Plus a large number of stories by French and Russian 19th c. writers – principally Gautier, Mérimée, Villiers de l’Isle-Adam, Huysmans, Balzac, Gogol, Pushkin and Turgenev.

More recent writers of note who have made memorable use of supernatural elements are: G. K. Chesterton, Walter de la Mare, Algernon Blackwood, H. P. Lovecraft, W. F. Harvey, A. M. Burrage, A. N. L. Munby, Georges Bernanos, L. P. Hartley, M. R. James (his *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* is a classic), Denis Wheatley, Ray Bradbury and Roald Dahl. See also GOTHIC NOVEL.

**sura** A section or ‘chapter’ in the *Koran*. Each *sura* contains a variable number of verses.

**surprise ending** The twist in the tail of a story; a sudden and unexpected turn of fortune or action. Some writers of the short story (*q.v.*) have proved expert at this device; notably, O. Henry and de Maupassant.

**surrealism** This movement originated in France in the 1920s and was a development of Dadaism (*q.v.*). The surrealists attempted to express in art and literature the workings of the unconscious mind and to synthesize these workings with the conscious mind. The surrealist allows his work to develop non-logically (rather than illogically) so that the results represent the operations of the unconscious.

The term ‘super-realism’ was coined by Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918), but it was not until 1924 that the poet André Breton issued the first manifesto (there were three altogether) of surrealism which recommended that the mind should be liber-



ated from logic and reason. Breton had been influenced by Freudian analysis and had experimented with automatic writing under hypnosis. The surrealists were particularly interested in the study and effects of dreams and hallucinations and also in the interpenetration of the sleeping and waking conditions on the threshold of the conscious mind, that kind of limbo where strange shapes materialize in the gulfs of the mind, 'fearful, no-man-fathomed'. In his second manifesto (1929) Breton explained how the surrealist idea was to revitalize the psychic forces by a 'vertiginous descent' into the self in quest of that secret and hidden territory where all that is apparently contradictory in our everyday lives and consciousness will be made plain. There was a 'point' in the mind, he thought, where, beyond realism one attained a new knowledge.

Distinguished writers who experimented with surrealist methods were mostly Frenchmen: principally (apart from Breton) Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, Benjamin Péret and Philippe Soupault. The main surrealist painters have become much more famous: chiefly, Chirico, Max Ernst, Picasso and Salvador Dali.

The long-term influence of surrealism all over the world has been enormous. Apart from poetry, it has affected the novel, the cinema, the theatre, painting and sculpture. A great many writers have continued to explore the territories of the conscious and semi-conscious mind; delving into and exposing the private chaos, the individual hell. In doing so they have often experimented with stream of consciousness (*q.v.*) techniques. Surrealist poetry is now rare, but plays and novels often show the influence of surrealism. From the scores of examples available, one may mention the work of Anton Artaud, Eugene Ionesco, Jean Genet, Samuel Beckett, William Burroughs, Julien Gracq, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Nathalie Sarraute, Alan Burns and B. S. Johnson. *See also* EXPRESSIONISM; NONSENSE; PATAPHYSICS; REALISM; THEATRE OF THE ABSURD; VORTICISM.

**suspended rhyme** *See* ANALYSED RHYME.

**suspense** A state of uncertainty, anticipation and curiosity as to the outcome of a story or play, or any kind of narrative in verse or prose. The suspense in *Hamlet*, for instance, is sustained throughout by the question of whether or not the Prince will achieve what he has been instructed to do and what he intends to do. *See* PLOT.

## sutra

**sutra** A Sanskrit term for (a) a mnemonic rule; (b) a poetic treatise in verse.

**sweetness and light** A phrase originally used, in all probability, by Swift in his Preface to *The Battle of the Books* (1697): 'Instead of dirt and poison we have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax; thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light'. Matthew Arnold, in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), regarded these as the basic contributions of the artist: '... He who works for sweetness and light united, works to make reason and the will of God prevail.'

**sword dance** A dramatic ritual of ancient origin; in the first place probably a fertility rite symbolizing the death and resurrection of the year. It is widespread in central Europe. In England also, especially in Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland. Often enough the practice of the dance survives in mining areas. There are many variations. An element common to a large number of them is the symbolic death of one of the characters and his revival. There are some stock characters (*q.v.*): notably a Fool and a man dressed in woman's clothes. The sword dance is one of the origins of the Mumming Play (*q.v.*). See FOLK DRAMA; PLOUGH MONDAY PLAY; REVESBY PLAY.

**syllaba anceps** (L 'twofold, fluctuating syllable') A syllable that may be read as either long or short according to the requirements of the meter. This especially refers to a syllable at the end of a line of verse.

**syllabic verse** Verse measured not by stress (*q.v.*) or quantity (*q.v.*) but by the number of syllables in each line. The more conservative English poets, like Dryden, Pope and Johnson, were fairly strict about the number of syllables they would allow in the pentameter (*q.v.*) line. See also FOOT; SCANSION.

**sylllepsis** See ZEUGMA.

**syllogism** (Gk 'reckoning together') Deduction, from two propositions containing three terms of which one appears in both, of a conclusion that is true *if* they are true. For example: All men are sinners; politicians are men; therefore all politicians are sinners.

**symbol and symbolism** The word symbol derives from the Greek verb *symbollein* 'to throw together', and its noun *symbolon* 'mark', 'token' or 'sign'. It is an object, animate or inanimate, which represents or 'stands for' something else. As Coleridge put it, a symbol 'is characterized by a translucence of the special [i.e. the species] in the individual'. A symbol differs from an allegorical (*See Allegory*) sign in that it has a *real* existence, whereas an allegorical sign is arbitrary.

Scales, for example, symbolize justice; the orb and sceptre, monarchy and rule; a dove, peace; a goat, lust; the lion, strength and courage; the bulldog, tenacity; the rose, beauty; the lily, purity; the Stars and Stripes, America and its States; the Cross, Christianity; the swastika (or crooked Cross) Nazi Germany and Fascism; the gold, red and black hat of the Montenegrin symbolizes glory, blood and mourning.

Actions and gestures are also symbolic. The clenched fist symbolizes aggression. Beating of the breast signifies remorse. Arms raised denote surrender. Hands clasped and raised suggest supplication. A slow upward movement of the head accompanied by a closing of the eyes means, in Turkish, 'no'. Moreover, most religious and fertility rites are rich with symbolic movements and gestures, especially the Roman Mass.

A literary symbol combines an image with a concept (words themselves are a kind of symbol). It may be public or private, universal or local. They *exist*, so to speak. As Baudelaire expressed it in his sonnet *Correspondances*:

La Nature est un temple ou de vivants piliers  
Laisent parfois sortir de confuses paroles.  
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles . . .

In literature an example of a public or universal symbol is a journey into the underworld (as in the work of Homer, Dante and James Joyce) and a return from it. Such a journey may be an interpretation of a spiritual experience, a dark night of the soul and a kind of redemptive odyssey. Examples of private symbols are those that recur, for instance, in the works of W. B. Yeats: the sun and moon, a tower, a mask, a tree, a winding stair and a hawk.

Dante's *Divine Comedy* is structurally symbolic. In *Macbeth* there is a recurrence of the blood image symbolizing guilt and violence. In *Hamlet* weeds and disease symbolize corruption and decay. In *King Lear* clothes symbolize appearances and authority;

## symbol and symbolism

and the storm scene in this play may be taken as symbolic of cosmic and domestic chaos to which 'unaccommodated man' is exposed. The poetry of Blake and Shelley is heavily marked with symbols. The shooting of the albatross in Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is symbolic of all sin and stands for a lack of respect for life and a proper humility towards the natural order. In his *Four Quartets* T. S. Eliot makes frequent use of the symbols of Fire and the Rose. To a lesser extent symbolism is an essential part of Eliot's *Ash Wednesday* (especially Part III) and *The Waste Land*.

In prose works the great white whale of Melville's *Moby Dick* (the 'grand god') is a kind of symbolic creature – a carcass which symbol-hunters have been dissecting for years. Much of the fiction of William Golding (especially *Lord of the Flies*, *Pincher Martin* and *The Spire*) depends upon powerful symbolism capable of more interpretations than one. To these examples should be added the novels and short stories of Kafka, and the plays of Maeterlinck, Andrejev, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Synge and O'Neill.

In all these works we find instances of the use of a concrete image to express an emotion or an abstract idea; or, as Eliot put it when explaining his term 'objective correlative' (*q.v.*), finding 'a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events, which shall be the formula of that particular emotion'.

Symbolism characterized much 19th c. French poetry. In *Oeuvres Complètes* (1891) Mallarmé explained symbolism as the art of evoking an object 'little by little so as to reveal a mood' or, conversely, 'the art of choosing an object and extracting from it an *état d'âme*. This 'mood', he contended, was to be extracted by 'a series of decipherings'.

Mallarmé's follower Henri Regnier made the additional point that a symbol is a kind of comparison between the abstract and the concrete in which one of the terms of the comparison is only suggested. Thus it is implicit, oblique; *not* spelt out.

As far as particular objects are concerned, this kind of symbolism is often private and personal. Another kind of symbolism is known as the 'transcendental'. In this kind, concrete images are used as symbols to represent a general or universal ideal world of which the real world is a shadow. Sir Thomas Browne, long before theories of symbolism were abundant, suggested the nature of this in his magnificent phrase: 'The sun itself is the dark simulacrum, and light is the shadow of God'.



The 'transcendental' concept is Platonic in origin, but was given considerable vogue in the 18th c. by Swedenborg. In the 19th c. there developed the idea that this 'other world' was attainable, not through religious faith or mysticism, but, as Baudelaire expressed it in *Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe*, 'à travers la poésie'. Through poetry the soul perceives 'les splendeurs situées derrière le tombeau'.

Baudelaire and his followers created the image of the poet as a kind of seer (*q.v.*) or *voyant*, who could see through and beyond the real world to the world of ideal forms and essences. Thus the task of the poet was to create this 'other world' by suggestion and symbolism; by transforming reality into a greater and more permanent reality.

The attainment, in transcendental symbolism, of the vision of the essential Idea was to be achieved by a kind of deliberate obfuscation or blurring of reality so that the ideal becomes clearer. This, according to symbolist theory, could be best conveyed by the fusion of images and by the musical quality of the verse; by, in short, a form of so-called 'pure poetry' (*q.v.*). The music of the words provided the requisite element of suggestiveness. Verlaine, in his *Art Poétique* (1874), for instance, says that verse must possess this musical quality 'avant toute chose'. Such a point of view was also expressed, in other words, by Mallarmé, Valéry and Rimbaud.

Theory and practice led the French symbolist poets to believe that the evocativeness and suggestiveness could best be obtained by verse forms that were not too rigid. Hence *vers libérés* and *vers libres* (*qq.v.*). Rimbaud and Mallarmé were the main experimenters in these forms; Rimbaud the chief innovator of the 'prose poem' (*q.v.*). Such verse enabled the poet to achieve what Valéry described as 'cette hésitation prolongée entre le son et le sens'.

The definitive manifesto of symbolism was published in September 1886 in an article in *Le Figaro* by Jean Moréas, contending that Romanticism, Naturalism and the movement of *Les Parnassiens* were over and that henceforth symbolic poetry 'cherche à vêtir l'idée d'une forme sensible'. Moréas founded the Symbolist School whose progenitors were Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Verlaine and Rimbaud; and whose disciples were, among others, René Ghil, Stuart Merrill, Francis Viéllé-Griffin and Gustave Khan.

Some of the major symbolist poems by Baudelaire are *Les Correspondances*, *Harmonie du Soir*, *Spleen*, *La Chevelure*, *L'Invitation*

## symbol and symbolism

*au Voyage, Bénédiction, Au Lecteur, Moesta et Errabunda, Elévation, Les Sept Vieillards, Le Voyage, Le Cygne*. His main work is the collection known as *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857, 1860).

From Verlaine's work one should mention *Poèmes Saturniens* (1866), *Fêtes Galantes* (1869), *La Bonne Chanson* (1872), *Romances sans Paroles* (1874) and *Sagesse* (1881). From Rimbaud *Le Bateau Ivre* (1871), *Une Saison en Enfer* (1873) and *Illuminations* (1886). From Mallarmé, these poems particularly: *Apparition, Les Fenêtres, Sonnet Allégorique de Lui-même, Ses Purs Ongles, Un Coup de Dés, Grand Oeuvre*. His main collection is *Poésies* (1887).

These poets were later to influence the work of Valéry very considerably, as can be seen from a study of *Le Cimetière Marin, L'Abeille, Le Rameur, Palme, Les Grenades, La Jeune Parque* and in various poems in the collection *Charmes* (1922).

Other influences of Symbolist theory and practice are discernible in Lautréamont's prose poem *Chants de Maldoror* (1868, 1869), in several works by Laforgue, in a number of plays by Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Maurice Maeterlinck and Claudel, in J. K. Huysman's novel *A Rebours* (1884), and, most of all, in Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-1927).

The main 'heirs' of the Symbolist movement outside France are W. B. Yeats, the Imagist group of English and American poets (especially T. E. Hulme and Ezra Pound), and T. S. Eliot; and, in Germany, Rainer Maria Rilke and Stefan George. The ideas of the French Symbolists were also adopted by Russian writers in the 1870s and the early years of the 20th c.; notably by Bryusov, Volynsky and Bely. In the academic world the search for and study of symbols and symbolism has become a form of light industry which shows every sign of being over-stuffed.

*See also* ALLEGORY; CORRESPONDENCE OF THE ARTS; IMAGERY; IMAGISTS; IMPRESSIONISM; METONYMY; PARNASSIANS; PRIMITIVISM; SUGGESTION; SYMBOLIC ACTION; SYNECDOCHE; TROPE.

**symbolic action** This jargon term denotes the conscious or unconscious 'ritual' which the writer experiences while creating a work. The work is a 'strategy' (*q.v.*) for controlling his own problems. The writer disguises his identity and, by so doing, performs a symbolic action. For example, a writer may 'write out of himself' aggressive impulses, guilt complexes, sex complexes, through the symbolic action. These theories were introduced and elaborated by Kenneth Burke in *Attitudes Towards History* (1937)

and *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action* (1941).

**sympathy** See EMPATHY.

**symposium** (Gk 'drinking together') The term derives from the most famous of Plato's Dialogues, *The Symposium*, and, by transference, it now applies to a collection of essays or articles by various scholars on some special topic. Sometimes such a collection of monographs is presented to a person as a homage volume. See also FESTSCHRIFT.

**synaeresis** (Gk 'seizing together') It occurs when two normally separate vowels are combined into one syllable. For example: 'see-est' becomes 'seest'. See CONTRACTION; ELISION.

**synaesthesia** (Gk 'perceiving together') The mixing of sensations; the concurrent appeal to more than one sense; the response through several senses to the stimulation of one. For instance: 'hearing' a 'colour', or 'seeing' a 'smell'. Dr Johnson once remarked on the discovery of a blind man that scarlet represented 'the clangour of a trumpet'.

It is probable that the word was first used by Jules Millet in 1892 in a thesis on *Audition colorée*. Before that, Huysmans and Rimbaud had consciously attempted synaesthetic effects. Earlier, Baudelaire had deliberately attempted the same sort of impression in many of his poems. As he put it in his sonnet *Correspondances*:

Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.  
Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfant,  
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies.

Synaesthetic effects are frequent in Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*, especially in those poems addressed to Jeanne Duval. But there was nothing new about synaesthesia, except that it had not been theorized over so intensely before or so consciously used. Homer, Aeschylus, Horace, Donne, Crashaw, Shelley and dozens of other poets had used synaesthetic effects. We use them in everyday speech when we talk of 'a cold eye', 'a soft wind', 'a heavy silence', 'a hard voice', 'a black look', and so forth. See also CORRESPONDENCE OF THE ARTS; LOGOPOEIA; ONOMATOPOEIA; TONE COLOUR.

## synaloepha

**synaloepha** (Gk 'coalescence') In Classical prosody the contraction of a long vowel or diphthong at the end of one word with a vowel or diphthong at the beginning of the next. Thus, the making of one long syllable. In effect, elision (*q.v.*). In Spanish verse *sinalefa* is more complex and has been known to combine six vowels. Spanish has rather more words *beginning* with vowels and ending with them than other languages.

**synaxarion** In the Eastern church, a brief account of a saint or feast appointed to be read at the early morning service of *Orthros*. It also denotes the book which contains such passages, arranged according to the Calendar (the Greater Synaxarion). Synaxaries therefore belong to hagiography (*q.v.*). *See also* CALENDAR.

**syncopation** (MedL 'striking together') In verse and in music it occurs when the metrical pattern goes contrary to the natural stress of normal speech. Common in ballad meter, as in these two opening stanzas from *Sir Patrick Spens*:

The King sits in Dumfermline toune,  
Drinking the blude-red wine:  
'O whar will I get a skeely skipper  
To sail this ship o' mine?'

Up and spak an eldern knicht,  
Sat at the king's richt kne:  
'Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor  
That sails upon the se.'

'Sailor' in line 7 is a trochaic word, but the meter clearly requires the stress to fall upon the second syllable, making it iambic. *See* FOOT; RHYTHM; SCANSION; WRENCHED ACCENT.

**syncope** (Gk 'cutting') The cutting short of a word by omitting a letter or syllable, as in 'e'er' for 'ever', 'e'en' for 'even'. *See* CONTRACTION; ELISION.

**synecdoche** (Gk 'taking up together'). A figure of speech in which the part stands for the whole, and thus something else is understood within the thing mentioned. For example: in 'Give us this day our daily bread', 'bread' stands for the meals taken each day. In these lines from Thomas Campbell's *Ye Mariners of England*, 'oak' represents the warships as well as the material from which they are made:



## synthetic rhyme

With thunders from her native oak,  
She quells the flood below.

Synecdoche is common in everyday speech. In 'Chelsea beat Aston Villa', Chelsea stands for the Chelsea Football Team. *See also* ANTONOMASIA; METALEPSIS; METONYMY.

**syneciosis** (Gk 'linking of opposites') An antithetical device quite frequent in satire (*q.v.*) which was often used by practitioners of the heroic couplet (*q.v.*). This example comes from part of Dryden's description of Shimei in *Absalom and Achitophel*:

His Cooks, with long disuse, their Trade forgot;  
Cool was his Kitchen, tho' his Brains were hot.

*See* ANTITHESIS; OXYMORON; ZEUGMA.

**synonym** (Gk 'together name') A word similar in meaning to another. It is rare to find an exact synonymous meaning. It is usually a matter of 'shades' of meaning, as in: insane, mad, demented, daft, loopy, psychotic, barpoo, crazy, nutty, maghnoon, off one's coconut, etc. *See* ANTONYM.

**synonymous parallelism** Jargon for a couplet in which each line expresses the same idea in different terms.

**synopsis** *See* SUMMARY.

**syntax** (Gk 'together arrangement') Sentence construction.

**synthesis** *See* ANALYSIS.

**synthetic rhyme** This occurs when words are distorted in any way in order to give an approximate phonetic identity. It is common in humorous verse. For example, Ogden Nash's *Requiem*:

There was a young belle of old Natchez  
Whose garments were always in patchez.  
When comment arose  
On the state of her clothes,  
She drawled, 'When Ah itchez Ah scratchez.'

And:

## **synthetic rhyme**

For the over fifties  
And the not-so-nifties  
A discotheque  
Is a risk to tek. (Author)

**synthetic rhythm** The repetition of a word or phrase to fill up a line. It is common in folksong, nonsense verse and ballad (*qq.v.*). The second and third stanzas from *The Wife of Usher's Well* illustrate the effect:

They hadna been a week from her,  
A week but barely ane,  
When word-came to the carline wife  
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,  
A week but barely three,  
When word came to the carline wife  
That her sons she'd never see.

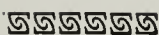
*See also* INCREMENTAL REPETITION; REFRAIN.

**system** In Greek prosody, a sequence of *cola* (*q.v.*) in the same meter (*q.v.*).

**systrophe** A rhetorical device which contains an accumulation of definitions, or repetition by definition. A classic example is Macbeth's apostrophe (*q.v.*) to Sleep (*Macbeth* II, ii.).

**syzygy** (Gk 'yoke') A term in Classical prosody to describe the combination of two feet into a single metrical unit. Phonetic *syzygy* describes consonant sound patterns and repetitions not covered by alliteration (*q.v.*). *See also* CONSONANCE; IAMBIC TRIMETER.

# T



**tableau** (F 'little table, picture') Primarily a theatrical term, though deriving from graphic art. Current from the 19th c. and used to denote a grouping of performers in a production; certainly stationary and possibly silent. The musical *My Fair Lady* (adapted from Shaw's *Pygmalion*), has a fine tableau for the Ascot scene which is not in the original play.

**table-talk** A form of literary biography (*q.v.*) which consists of a person's sayings, opinions, *obiter dicta* (*q.v.*) aperçus, etc. These are recorded by the person to whom they are addressed. Table-talk may constitute extremely valuable material for biographers (e.g. the biography of Ben Jonson would be meagre without his conversations recorded by William Drummond of Hawthornden).

This type of literature (often known as '-ana' *q.v.*, as in *Walpoliana*) is of great antiquity. A notable paradigm in Greek literature is *Deipnosophistai* ('Sophists at Dinner' or 'Connoisseurs in Dining'), by Athenaeus (c. A.D. 200), a work of fifteen books in which twenty-three learned men meet at dinner in Rome on various occasions and discuss food and other subjects. The author was a diligent gleaner of excerpts, conversations and anecdotes which he reproduced in the form of dialogue; rather as Landor did in his *Imaginary Conversations*. In Latin literature the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellius (c. 200) is a collection of writings in 'essay' (*q.v.*) form based on quotations, conversations, discourses. Comparable are the 'Lectures' (*Diatribai*) of Epictetus (c. 60-140), which are verbatim notes on Stoic writings; and the lives of eminent philosophers compiled by Diogenes Laërtius (c. 200-250). The works of Athenaeus and Gellius are more akin to dialogue (*q.v.*) – as in Oliver Wendell Holmes's 'breakfast table' series of conversations – but they are a form of table-talk and we find not dissimilar collections in several European literatures, and also in Persian, Hebrew, Arabic and Turkish literature.

Two early instances of table-talk in modern European literature were *De Dictis et factis Alphonsi regis Aragonum* (i.e. Alphonso of Aragon) compiled by Antonio Beccadelli c. 1455, and the *Facezie et molti arguti* (c. 1475) which was ascribed to Poliziano; but by far the most important of the early records of table-talk, brutally frank and intimate, were Martin Luther's *Tischreden* or *Colloquia Mensalia* (1566).

In 1618 Ben Jonson visited (on foot) William Drummond of Hawthornden in Scotland. The laird recorded many of his observations and left them in manuscript. Though not published in full until 1833, they comprise one of the earliest and most valuable instances of table-talk in English literature.

A vogue for recording table-talk established itself during the 17th c. For instance, in 1627 was published a collection (made by J.L.S.) of observations made by James I, entitled *Flores Regii. Or Proverbs and Aphorisms, Divine and Moral, of James I.* Another collection of the king's *sententiae* was made by his servant Benjamin Agar and published in 1643 as *King James His Apophthegms; Or Table-Talk* (1643). In 1650 came out Worcester's *Apophthegms or Witty Sayings of the Right Honourable Henry (late) Marquess and Earl of Worcester*; and in 1667, the 'Essays and Discourses Gather'd from the Mouth of my Noble Lord and Husband', which are contained in the fourth book of *The Life of William Duke of Newcastle*.

Clearly, by now, table-talk and '-ana' were 'in', and it is worth noting that as far back as c. 1569 the term 'table-talk' meaning conversation at the dinner table had been used, and in Camden's *Remains* (1605) the term 'table-talker' occurs. It is also worth noting that during the 17th c. the practice of keeping diaries, journals and notebooks became widespread. To this time belong the famous diaries of Pepys and John Evelyn, also various collections of apophthegms, *pensées* and aphorisms (*qq.v.*). Even John Aubrey's *Brief Lives* are almost a form of table-talk because Aubrey, as a biographer, depended so much on his ears and therefore on what people said, rather than on books and what they wrote.

The greatest table-talker of the 17th c. was John Selden (1584-1654), a friend of Jonson's. Fortunately, his secretary Richard Milward had spent twenty years in the assiduous collection of his master's *obiter dicta*. These, for diplomatic and political reasons, were not finally published until 1689 under the title of *Table-Talk: Being the Discourses of John Selden Esq; or His Sence of Various Matters*



of *High Consequence Relating Especially to Religion and State*. These discourses, in Dr Johnson's opinion, were better than all the French -ana put together.

There was already a fashion for '-ana' because of the publication in 1666 of *Scaligerana*, a collection of the sayings of Joseph Scaliger made by François Vertunien the physician, and Scaliger's friend. These were followed by *Perroniana*, *Thuana* and *Colomesiana*. The gathering of '-ana' was by this stage becoming popular in France where friends of distinguished scholars were in the habit of collecting their conversations and publishing them as tributes. One notable example is *Ménagiana* (1693), the cherished verbal crumbs of Ménage, who was renowned as a scholar and conversationalist. Actually, '-ana' remained predominantly a French fashion and few English scholars have been so well reported as were Ménage, Charpentier and Boileau. However, the fashion began to die out fairly early in the 18th c. in France and by c.1750 '-ana' were so *démodés* that collectors disguised them as 'Recueils' or 'Mélanges'. *Mélanges* were much more like *Festschriften* (q.v.) or 'homage volumes': collections of essays by colleagues and quondam students (e.g. *Mélanges de philologie offerts à Ferdinand Brunot*).

Meanwhile, in England, Joseph Spence (1699-1768) was gathering material for his *Anecdotes*, many of which were reports of things that Pope had said. They were eventually published in 1822 under the title *Anecdotes, Observations, and Characters of Men. Collected from the Conversation of Mr Pope, and other eminent Persons of his time*.

In 1763 Boswell began laying down the vintage Johnsoniana and, not to be outdone, also bottled his own *Boswelliana* – as well as the abrasive remarks of his caustic wife which he titled *Uxoriana*. At Strawberry Hill Horace Walpole had his Boswell in the shape of J. Pinkerton who published *Walpoliana* in 1799. Two other famous 18th c. English writers went into the books of the 'Anaists'. Samuel Foote was recorded by William Cooke who published *Memoirs of the Life of Samuel Foote* (1778) and *Memoirs of Samuel Foote Esq.* (1805). The dramatist Sheridan was reported by Kelly, who published *Sheridaniana; Or, Anecdotes of the Life of Richard Brinsley Sheridan; his Table-Talk, and Bon Mots* in 1826. Richard Porson, the Classical scholar, also had a kind of Boswell in William Maltby whose *Porsoniana* were published in *Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers* in 1856. In the same year Dyce produced *Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers*.

## table-talk

Sydney Smith, one of the wittiest of all English talkers, had much reported by his daughter Lady Holland in *A Memoir of the Reverend Sydney Smith* (1855), and by Thomas Moore whose *Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence* was published in 1856. At about the time that Smith was most famous Eckermann arrived in Weimar (c. 1823) and when Goethe was already an old man. However, Eckermann was able to jot down many of the sage's most interesting observations before the poet died in 1832. The first two volumes of the *Conversations* were published in 1836, the third in 1848. Again at about the same period H. N. Coleridge was recording the table-talk of S. T. Coleridge. Specimens of this came out in 1835. Apart from Selden, Johnson and Goethe, Coleridge was about the best table-talker of all time.

Three other notable collections of table-talk dating from the first half of the 19th c. are: Hazlitt's conversations with James Northcote the painter (which Hazlitt had published in 1830 under the title *Conversations of James Northcote Esq. R.A.*), Thomas Medwin's record of things said by Byron when the poet was at Pisa in 1821-22 (which was published in 1824) and Leigh Hunt's *Table-Talk* (1851). Leigh Hunt, table-talking on table-talk, provides us with a pleasing and serviceable description of what it is at its best:

Table-talk, to be perfect, should be sincere without bigotry, differing without discord, sometimes grave, always agreeable, touching on deep points, dwelling most on seasonable ones, and letting everybody speak and be heard . . . The perfection of conversational intercourse is when the breeding of high life is animated by the fervour of genius . . . Luckily for table-talkers in general, they need be neither such fine gentlemen as Chesterfield, nor such oracles as Johnson, nor such wits as Addison and Swift, provided they have nature and sociability, and are not destitute of reading and observation.

*See also* ANECDOTE.

**Tachtigers** A group of Dutch poets who, in the last twenty years of the 19th c., brought about a literary revolution in their country. Their achievement, though important for Holland, does not seem to have had much effect outside that country.

**Tafelspel** A dramatic form popular in the Netherlands from the 15th to the 18th c. It was a kind of interlude (*q.v.*) during a banquet or

a wedding and appears to have been connected with festivals like the Epiphany.

**tag** Something added to a piece of writing by way of ornament; commonly a quotation. It may also apply to a saying, proverb or adage. The addition of a quotation is quite a common device among modern poets. T. S. Eliot made good use of it. Ezra Pound was addicted to the practice, as can be seen in his *Cantos*.

**Tagelied** (G 'dawn song') A form of German Minnesang derived from the *alba* of the troubadours. The earliest example dates from the 12th c. Wolfram von Eschenbach (c. 1200) is generally regarded as one of its finest practitioners. See AUBADE.

**tail-rhyme** A tailed caudate rhyme is our term for F *rime couée* (L *rhythmus caudatus*). It denotes a unit of verse in which a short line, followed by a group of longer lines e.g. couplet, triolet or stanza (*qq.v.*) rhymes with a preceding short line. The tail-rhyme stanza has a number of variants. Well known instances can be found in Chaucer's *Sir Thopas*, Drayton's *Ballad of Agincourt*, and Shelley's *To Night*, from which the following example is taken:

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,  
 Spirit of Night!  
 Out of the misty eastern cave,  
 Where, all the long and lone daylight,  
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,  
 Which make thee terrible and dear, –  
 Swift be thy flight!

See CAUDA; CAUDATE SONNET.

**tale** A narrative, written (in prose or verse) or spoken. When in prose, barely distinguishable from a short story (*q.v.*). If there *is* a difference, then a tale perhaps suggests something written in the tone of voice of someone speaking. Usually the theme of a tale is fairly simple but the method of relating it may be complex and skilled. Much depends on the writer's view point (*q.v.*). One might perhaps say the kind of narratives that R. L. Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, W. W. Jacobs, Joseph Conrad, Somerset Maugham and William Faulkner liked to write and excelled at are tales, whereas the kind preferred by Henry James, E. M. Forster,

Aldous Huxley, Katherine Mansfield and Elizabeth Bowen are short stories. However, any such classifications may be wholly misleading, and such a division would not be serviceable in classifying the shorter works of Poe, 'Saki', Chekhov, Maupassant and D. H. Lawrence or a dozen other writers.

The tale in verse has a long and venerable history in English literature (the term includes ballad, epic and lay *qq.v.*) from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* to C. Day Lewis's *The Nabara*. Among shorter tales the following are notable: Thomas Parnell's *The Hermit*, William Cowper's *John Gilpin*, George Crabbe's *Peter Grimes*, Robert Burns's *Tam o'Shanter*, Wordsworth's *Michael*, Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon*, Keats's *Eve of St Agnes*, Macaulay's *The Keeping of the Bridge*, Tennyson's *Maud* and *Morte d'Arthur*, Browning's *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came*, Matthew Arnold's *Sobrah and Rustum*, Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *The White Ship*, Swinburne's *St Dorothy*, Dobson's *The Ballad of 'Beau Brocade'*, Hardy's *The Sacrilege*, R. L. Stevenson's *Ticonderoga*, Kipling's *Tomlinson*, Robert Service's *The Shooting of Dan Macgregor*, Laurence Binyon's *The Battle of Stamford Bridge*, Masfield's *The Rider at the Gate* and *Reynard*, Alfred Noyes's *The Highwayman* (not to mention many by Sir Walter Scott and William Morris) – plus: Edmund Blunden's *Incident in Hyde Park*, 1803, W. S. Graham's *The Nightfishing*, Patrick Kavanagh's *The Great Hunger*, Anthony Cronin's *R.M.S. Titanic*, Vernon Watkins's *Ballad of the Mari Lwyd*, and a considerable number of poems by Robert Frost. *See also* CONTE; FAIRY TALE; FOLK TALE; NARRATIVE VERSE; SHORT STORY; TALL STORY; YARN.

**tall story** A story which is extravagant, outlandish or highly improbable. Usually regarded as false, however good it may be. They are of the same family as fantasy and fairy tale (*q.v.*). The epic (*q.v.*) tradition, and especially the primary epic, contains a good many episodes which are classifiable as tall stories: e.g. the deeds of Odysseus, Beowulf's swimming match with Breca, the feats of Marko Kraljević in the South Slav *narodne pesme* (*q.v.*) and the exploits of Skandarbeg in the Albanian epic cycles. Often enough the 'traveller's tale' is virtually the same as a tall story. Early and very entertaining examples of these are to be found in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* (1st c. A.D.), and in Lucian's *Dialogues* (2nd c. A.D.) particularly Icaromenippus. Medieval 'Vision' literature is full of splendid tall stories (e.g. the 12th c. *Vision of Tundale*) and medieval collections of exempla, like the



*Gesta Romanorum*, also contain many. Sir John Mandeville's *Book of Travels* (14th c.) is a classic of its kind. In Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532-34) we find some of the more prodigious instances of the tall story. Another Renaissance writer to make much of its possibilities was Cellini, in his *Autobiography* (c. 1560). Utopian literature also provides memorable instances, for example Gabriel de Foigny's *La Terre Australe Connue* (1676). But for sustained invention, wit and panache it is difficult to find anything to equal Voltaire's *Zadig* (1747), and, even better, *Candide* (1759). That age which, for all its devotion to reason, took much delight in fantasia also produced Raspe's *Baron Munchausen: Narrative of his Marvellous Travels* (1785). There have been few taller stories than Munchausen's tale of the horse that was cut in two, drank from a fountain, and was sewn up again.

The tall story has also flourished in the environments and atmospheres of frontier life, 'bad lands', pioneering endeavours, among many sporting fraternities, among fishermen and sailors, and especially in rural areas. A very large number of folk tales which are usually the product of rural environments have all the traditional elements of a good tall story (e.g. Jack the Giant-killer). Not a few of the best tall stories belong to the oral tradition (*q.v.*), like the famous R.A.F. one (of the Second World War) about the squadron that bombed dummy aeroplanes on a German airfield with wooden bombs.

Among recent writers Mark Twain, O. Henry, J. C. Powys, William Faulkner, James Thurber and William Saroyan have all made notable contributions to the genre. *See also* FOLK LITERATURE; SHAGGY DOG STORY; YARN.

**tanka** A Japanese lyric form of 31 syllables, in lines of 5/7/5/7/7 syllables. Also known as a *Waka* or an *uta*, it originated in the 7th c. and is regarded as the classic Japanese poetic form. It has not had so much influence on western poetry as the *haiku* (*q.v.*). A few poets (e.g. Amy Lowell and Adelaide Crapsey) have imitated it.

**tapinosis** (Gk 'lowering') A figurative device, expression or epithet which belittles by exaggeration; for instance, Pope's lines about Timon's villa in *Moral Essays, Epistle IV*:

Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught  
As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.  
To compass this, his building is a Town,

## tapinosis

His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down:  
Who but must laugh, the Master when he sees,  
A puny insect, shiv'ring at a breeze!  
Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!

See HYPERBOLE.

**taste** We first find the word used as a critical term towards the end of the 17th c. La Bruyère, for example, in *Les Caractères* (1688) argued that in artistic matters 'il y a donc un bon et un mauvais goût'. Joseph Addison, in his *Spectator* papers on taste (1712), defined it as 'that faculty of the soul which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike'. The term became well established in the 18th c. and, as a critical tool word, was thereafter used in a bewildering variety of senses especially in the philosophy and science of aesthetics. How bewildering may be gauged from Coleridge's definition of it as 'the intermediate faculty which connects the active with the passive powers of our nature, the intellect with the senses; and its appointed function is to elevate the *images* of the latter, while it realizes the *ideas* of the former'. In fact, the history of the word exemplifies the truism: *quot homines, tot sententiae*.

Every man may be expected to possess at any rate an inchoate idea of taste, about which, in all probability, there can be no dispute, – or a great deal. To establish a polarity: some hold that matters of taste are subjective; others that they are objective. In either case the judgements may be universally valid, but it is more than likely that, owing to what Dr Johnson referred to as 'the wild vicissitudes of taste', few works survive to pass a hypothetical absolute test of excellence or inferiority; that is, the test of universality (*q.v.*). Even Shakespeare's works have been regarded as lacking in taste, and have suffered a period of being 'out of fashion'. The issue is further complicated by the fact that any arbiter is immediately vulnerable when he arrogates to himself the power of discriminating between what is in good or bad taste. See VULGARITY.

**tautology** (Gk 'the same saying') Redundant words or ideas. Repetition of words or ideas, as in the common phrase 'I myself personally'. See also PERIPHRAISIS.

**telescope word** See PORTMANTEAU WORD.

**telescoped metaphor** Also known as a complex metaphor. In such a figure of speech the vehicle of one metaphor becomes the tenor of another (see tenor and vehicle). Consider the following lines from *King Lear* (IV, vi, 141–48):

And the creature run from the cur? There  
thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's  
obeyed in office. –  
The usurer hangs the cozener.  
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;  
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,  
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;  
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.

The vehicle here may be taken as the image or concept of authority whose shortcomings can be concealed by rich apparel (a thematic image in *King Lear* and an idea central to the tragedy; thus it is doubly an organic metaphor *q.v.*). This vehicle becomes the personification of sin armoured in gold like a knight at tourney; or, again, like a beggar. Thus we have one vehicle elaborated in three tenors.

The passage also contains what are sometimes called 'subdued metaphors'; in this case they are the implied images of justice in a court of law, and the conflict in a jousting tournament. The interlocking images support each other; the 'sword' of justice becomes a lance and then a straw. See IMAGERY; METAPHOR.

**telestich** See ACROSTIC.

**tema con variazioni** (It 'theme with variations') A musical term occasionally used in literary criticism to denote a humorous verse or parody (*q.v.*).

**tenor and vehicle** Terms coined by I. A. Richards. By 'tenor' he meant the purport or general drift of thought regarding the subject of a metaphor; by 'vehicle', the image which embodies the tenor. In these lines from R. S. Thomas's *A Blackbird Singing* the tenor is the bird's song, its tune; the vehicle is the fine smelting image in the fifth and sixth lines:

It seems wrong that out of this bird,  
Black, bold, a suggestion of dark  
Places about it, there yet should come

## tenor and vehicle

Such rich music, as though the notes'  
Ore were changed to a rare metal  
At one touch of that bright bill.

**tension** A term used in a particular sense by Allen Tate to designate the totality of meaning in a poem. He derives it from the logical terms 'extension' and 'intension' by removing the prefixes. Extension = literal meaning; intension = metaphorical meaning. The simultaneous co-existence of these sets of meaning constitutes tension. It may also refer to 'conflict structures'. For example, the counterpoint (*q.v.*) between the rhythm and meter of a poem and speech rhythms; or between the concrete and the abstract. Some critics, following the theories of Anaximander and Heraclitus, take it to mean the balance of mental and emotional tensions which help to give shape and unity to a work.

**tenson** A type of poetic composition (also known as *tenzone* and *tencon*) which originated in Provence in the 12th c. It usually consisted of a debate between two poets, or with a poet versus an imaginary opponent. The subjects were various: love, politics, literary criticism. It developed into the *partimen* (*q.v.*) and the *jeu parti* (*q.v.*) and as a poetic device spread to Italy and Sicily. See DÉBAT.

**ten-year test** A term devised by Cyril Connolly to denote a book (usually a novel) which, ten years after its first publication, is still regarded as being of unusual literary merit, is still being widely read, and is still well thought of in literary and critical circles. Recent instances in English have been William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* (1954), V. S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961). See also BEST SELLER.

**tercet** (F 'triplet') A stanza of three lines linked by rhyme, as in *terza rima* (*q.v.*). Also as one of a pair of triplets which makes up the sestet (*q.v.*) of a sonnet (*q.v.*) or as three consecutive rhyming lines (known as a triplet in a poem which is largely written in couplets). These tercets are from Tennyson's *Two Voices*:

A still small voice spake unto me:  
'Thou art so full of misery,  
Were it not better not to be?'



Then to the still small voice I said:  
 'Let me not cast in endless shade  
 What is so wonderfully made.'

**tern** A group of three stanzas, especially in a ballade (*q.v.*) consisting of a tern and an envoi (*q.v.*). See **TERCET**.

**ternaire** (F 'three at one time') A three-line stanza on one rhyme. The French poet Auguste Brizeux (1803-55) claimed to be the first to use it.

**terza rima** (It 'third rhyme') The measure adopted by Dante for his *Divina Commedia*, consisting of a series of interlocking tercets (*q.v.*) in which the second line of each one rhymes with the first and third lines of the one succeeding, thus: aba, bcb, cdc. At the end of the canto (*q.v.*) a single line rhymes with the second from last: wxy x, as in the conclusion of Canto Primo of the *Inferno*:

Ed io a lui: Poeta, io ti richieggo  
 per quello Dio che tu non conoscesti,  
 acciocch'io fugga questo male e peggio  
 Che tu mi meni là dov'or dicesti,  
 sì ch'io vegga la porta di san Pietro,  
 e color cui tu fai cotanto mesti.  
 Allor si mosse, ed io li tenni retro.

Terza rima was also used by Petrarch and Boccaccio. Chaucer used it for part of *A Complaint to his Lady*, but it was Sir Thomas Wyatt who pioneered its use in England. This example comes from the beginning of his *Second Satire*:

My mother's maids, when they did sew and spin,  
 They sang sometimes a song of the field mouse,  
 That for because her livelihood was but thin

Would needs go seek her townish sister's house.  
 She thought herself endured to much pain:  
 The stormy blasts her cave so sore did souse . . .

Because it is a difficult form to manage (few Italian poets have used it successfully) it has never been very adaptable or popular outside Italy. A few 19th and 20th c. Dutch and German poets employed it; some French (notably Gautier); and some English – principally Byron in *The Prophecy of Dante*, Shelley in *Prince*

## terza rima

*Athanese, The Triumph of Life* and *Ode to the West Wind*, Browning in *The Statue* and *The Bust*. More recently, Auden attempted it (with variations) in *The Sea and the Mirror*. See also CAPITULO; TERZA RIMA SONNET.

**terza rima sonnet** A term occasionally used to describe a quatorzain (*q.v.*) whose rhyme uses the interlocking method of *terza rima* (*q.v.*). The rhyme pattern of aba, bcb, cdc, ded, ee (the same form as the sections in Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*) is similar to the Spenserian sonnet (*q.v.*).

**terzina** An Italian term for a stanza of three lines, especially in *terza rima* (*q.v.*) Also applied to a continuous (non-stanzaic) poem rhymed aba, bcb, cdc, and so on. Fairly common in early Romance languages (*q.v.*), but rare in English.

**testament** (L 'witnessing') A document which bears witness; an affirmation. For instance, the Old and New Testaments. A number of well-known secular works come into the category. Among the better known are: Thomas Usk's allegorical prose work *The Testament of Love* (1387); Henryson's beautiful *Testament of Cresseid* (15th c. but printed in 1593); Villon's highly personal and moving *Petit Testament* (1456) and *Grand Testament* (c. 1461); Bridges's philosophical poem *The Testament of Beauty* (1929). In view of the general meaning of the term, numerous other writings might be put into this genre. For example, St Augustine's *Confessions*, or Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, or Camus' remarkable *Lettres à un ami allemand*. See also CONFESSIOAL LITERATURE.

**tetralogy** (Gk 'set of four') Four plays (three tragedies and a satyr play) were submitted for the prize in tragedy (*q.v.*) at the drama competitions in Athens in the 5th c. The term may now be applied to any four connected works. Shakespeare's History Plays are sometimes divided into two tetralogies: (a) *Henry VI* (Parts I, II and III) and *Richard III*; (b) *Richard II*, *Henry IV* (Parts I and II) and *Henry V*. See also TRILOGY.

**tetrameter** (Gk 'of four measures') A line of four metrical feet. In English verse usually iambic or trochaic. Used extensively by many English poets, including Milton, Scott and Byron. These lines are from Milton's *L'Allegro*:

Haste thee, Nymph and bring with thee  
Jest and youthful Jollity,  
Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,  
Nods and Becks and wreathed Smiles.

**tétramètre** The twelve-syllable French Classical alexandrine (*q.v.*). It was already in use in the 12th c. and is seen at its best in the tragedies of Corneille and Racine. *See also* TRIMÈTRE.

**tetrapody** (Gk 'four feet') A group or line of four feet.

**tetrastich** (Gk 'four lines') A group, stanza or poem of four lines. A synonym for quatrain (*q.v.*).

**textual criticism** A branch of scholarship which is devoted to the study and analysis of extant texts in order to determine authorship and authenticity and, where there is a multiplicity of texts of one work, to determine which one is the 'best' or the 'original'.

**texture** A jargon term derived from the plastic arts which denotes the surface qualities of a work, as opposed to its shape and structure. In modern literary criticism it tends to designate the concrete qualities of a poem as opposed to its ideas; thus, the verbal surface of a work, its sensuous qualities, the density of its imagery. In these lines from John Crowe Ransom's *Dog* (Ransom, incidentally, uses 'texture' to refer also to the variations on the basic metrical pattern or structure) the texture varies a good deal:

Cock-a-doddle-doo the brass-lined rooster says,  
Brekekekex intones the fat Greek frog –  
These fantasies do not terrify me as  
The bow-wow-wow of dog.

I had a little doggie who used to sit and beg,  
A pretty little creature with tears in his eyes  
And anomalous hand extended on his leg;  
Housebroken was my Huendchen, and so wise.

Tentative analysis suggests that the general springiness and resilience of the rhythms is varied by a certain abrasiveness in 'brekekekex', a plumpness in 'fat Greek frog', and a pronounced brittleness in 'a pretty little creature'. The alliteration in the fourth

line of the second stanza helps to knot the line together; while the nap on the mellifluous third line of that stanza is relieved by slight asperity of 'intertexture' in the word 'extended'.

**theatre of the absurd** A term applied to many of the works of a group of dramatists who were active in the 1950s: Adamov, Beckett, Genet, Ionesco and Pinter. Among the less known were Albee, Arrabal, Gunter Grass, Pinget and N. F. Simpson. The phrase 'theatre of the absurd' was probably coined by Martin Esslin, who wrote *The Theatre of the Absurd* (1961).

The origins of this form of drama are obscure, but it would be reasonable to suppose that its lineage is traceable from Roman mime plays, through to aspects of comic business and technique in medieval and Renaissance drama, and *commedia dell'arte* (q.v.) and thence to the dramatic works of Jarry, Strindberg and Brecht. The work of Jarry is vital and the possibilities of a theatre of the absurd are already apparent in *Ubu Roi* (1896), *Ubu Coccu* (1897-98) and *Ubu Enchaîné* (c. 1898); as they are also in Apollinaire's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (completed in 1917). Moreover, it is conceivable that the increasing popularity of nonsense verse (q.v.) from about the mid-19th c. onwards is connected with this concept of the absurd. Almost certainly Dadaism and Surrealism (qq.v.) influenced the development of the Theatre of the Absurd, and so have Artaud's theories on the Theatre of Cruelty (q.v.).

In the evolution of a new vision of mankind in relation to his environment and the universe one may expect to see a large number of cross-fertilizing influences. Clearly, the idea that man is absurd is by no means new. An awareness of the essential absurdity of much human behaviour has been inherent in the work of many writers. Aristophanes, Plautus, Terence, Chaucer, Erasmus, Cervantes, Molière, Swift, Pope, both Samuel Butlers, Anatole France, Balzac, Dickens, Goncharov, Thurber, Chesterton, Belloc, Damon Runyon, William Saroyan – to cite only a handful – have all shown an acute feeling for man's comicality.

However, the concept of *homo absurdus* has acquired a rather more specific meaning in the last hundred years or so. This is partly, no doubt, owing to an increasingly widespread belief that God is dead (a theory generally ascribed to Nietzsche) and partly owing to the need to provide an explanation of man's apparently purposeless role and position in a universe which is popularly imagined to have no discernible reason for existence.

Mathematically, a surd is that which cannot be expressed in



finite terms of ordinary numbers or quantities. Hence irrational rather than ridiculous. It is in the mathematical sense that the 'philosophy' of the absurd has been mostly expressed. But it is a *pervasive attitude rather than a system of thought*.

In his *La Tentation de l'occident* (1926) André Malraux, who has expatiated at such length, *farfelu*, about 'the human condition', remarked that 'at the centre of European man, dominating the great moments of his life, there lies an essential absurdity'. The theme recurs in a number of works by Malraux, and is apparent, particularly, in the works of Sartre and Camus. The latter's collection of essays *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942) contains some of the most interesting statements on the theme. Camus expounded in some detail a vision of life which was essentially absurd, without apparent purpose, out of harmony with its surroundings, sad to the point of anguish, and at the same time, in a laconic fashion, funny. He stresses the destructive nature of time, the feeling of solitude in a hostile world, the sense of isolation from other human beings. The dominant symbolism of the title is perfectly appropriate.

In the early 1950s many diffused conceptions of the absurd began to be resolved and articulated in a series of remarkable plays which dramatized the kind of vision which Camus had projected – fundamentally, human beings struggling with the irrationality of experience, in a state of what has been described as 'metaphysical anguish'. The plays themselves lack a formal logic and conventional structure, so that both form and content support (while emphasizing the difficulty of communicating) the representation of what may be called the absurd predicament. The major works are: (the dramatists in alphabetical order) *La Parodie* and *L'Invasion* (1950), *Le Professeur Taranne* (1953), *Le Ping-Pong* (1955), *Paolo Paoli* (1957) by Adamov; *Waiting for Godot* (1953), *Endgame* (1957), *Happy Days* (1961) by Beckett; *Le Balcon* (1957), *Les Nègres* (1959), *Les Paravents* (1961) by Genet; *La Cantatrice Chauve* (1950), *La Leçon* (1951), *Les Chaises* (1952), *Amédée* (1954), *Le Nouveau Locataire* (1955), *Rhinoceros* (1960), *Le Roi se meurt* (1961) by Ionesco; *Lettre Morte* (1960), *La Manivelle* (1960) by Pinget; *The Room* (1957), *The Birthday Party* (1958), *The Dumb Waiter* (1958); *The Caretaker* (1960), *The Homecoming* (1965), *Landscape and Silence* (1970) and *No Man's Land* (1975) by Pinter; *Next Time I'll Sing to You* (1962) by James Saunders; *A Resounding Tinkle* and *The Hole* (1958), *One Way Pendulum* (1959) by N. F. Simpson; to these should be added minor works, namely:

## theatre of the absurd

*Pique-nique en campagne* (1952) by Arrabal; *The Lunatic View* (1957) by David Campton; *The Sport of My Mad Mother* (1958) by Anne Jellicoe. See also FARCE; HAPPENING; PATAPHYSICS.

**theatre of cruelty** This derives from the theories of the French dramatist Antonin Artaud (1896–1948) who, in 1938, published *Le Théâtre et son double*, in which he formulated his principles. In his view the theatre must disturb the spectator profoundly, pierce his heart and soul in such a way as to free unconscious repressions and oblige men to view themselves as they really are. In it mime (*q.v.*), gesture and scenery are more important than words, and the director is a kind of maker of magic, ‘a master of sacred ceremonies’. Much depends on spectacle, lighting effects and the exploitation of the full range of the ‘theatrical’. Prior to 1938 Artaud had published two manifestos (in 1923 and 1933) and also had produced *Les Cenci* (1935), based on versions by Shelley and Stendhal, which was an attempt to put his theories into practice. Artaud’s influence has been very considerable, especially on the work of Adamov, Genet, Camus and Audiberti. English dramatists have not been affected anything like as much. A recent and well-known example of *Théâtre de la Cruauté* is Weiss’s drama *The Persecution and Assassination of Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade* (1964). See also GRAND GUIGNOL; MELODRAMA.

**theatre of silence** A theory of drama, more accurately called the theatre of the unspoken (*Théâtre de l’Inexprimé*) devised by Jean-Jacques Bernard (1888– ) in the 1920s. In his view dialogue was not sufficient; equally important was what characters *could* not and *did* not say. Though this may always have been obvious, and certainly has been since Bernard’s experiments, very few dramatists had deliberately exploited the possibilities of silence before. Chekhov is a clear exception. Bernard’s influence has been considerable. Some of his main works are: *Le Feu qui reprend mal* (1921), *Martine* (1922), *Le Printemps des autres* (1924), *L’Ame en peine* (1926). Among recent English dramatists the master of the prolonged pause (*q.v.*) and sustained silence is unquestionably Harold Pinter (especially in *Landscape and Silence*, 1970). See SUB-TEXT.

**théâtre total** A term used to denote a form of theatrical presentation in which the director’s vision and control is dominant. The text

is a subsidiary, even a minor, part of the total conception of the piece. Just as important – perhaps more important – is the total effect of using lights and lighting effects, music, movement, costumes, sets, etc. The most famous and talented exponent of this kind of drama is Jean-Louis Barrault who has made many spectacular experiments with *théâtre total*. One of the best known was his production of Claudel's *Christophe Colomb* (1953). In England the leading exponent has been Joan Littlewood at the Theatre Workshop. One of her most successful productions was *Oh, What a Lovely War!* (1963). There have been many others in the *théâtre total* style.

**theatricalism** A concept and theory of dramatic presentation which developed in Russia and Germany in the early years of the 20th c. It was strongly opposed to naturalism (*q.v.*) and was in favour of the principle that theatre *is* theatre and is a representation of life – and is *not* life itself. Nevertheless, naturalistic drama (*q.v.*), like the well-made play (*q.v.*), has continued to be popular.

**theatre-in-the-round** A form of theatrical presentation in which the acting area is surrounded by the audience. It is far from being a new idea, though it has had some vogue since the 1930s. It seems very probable that some of the Cornish Mystery Plays were performed in the open air with an audience ranged round the actors on banks. One may suppose, too, that Mumming Plays (*q.v.*) and related dramatic entertainments were thus presented. In modern times theatre-in-the-round achieved prominence in Russia in the 1930s where Okhlopov, using his realistic theatre, even involved the audience in the drama. At that time, too, Robert Atkins was producing Shakespeare in *The Ring* at Blackfriars. In America it has been a particularly popular form of presentation, especially in the universities. Margo Jones was the main American exponent. In France, also, it has had some success, particularly in the hands of André Villiers who, in 1954, founded the *théâtre en rond* in Paris. In England the leading light and dedicated crusader was Stephen Joseph who established something of a tradition in theatre-in-the-round at Stoke-on-Trent. Joseph also worked on it in London, Southampton and Scarborough.

**theme** Properly speaking, the theme of a work is not its subject but rather its central idea which may be stated directly or indirectly.

## theme

For example, the theme of *Othello* is\* jealousy. See LEITMOTIF; MOTIF.

**theogony** A Greek term for an account of the origin and genealogy of the gods. Probably the most famous is the *Theogonia*, a poem in hexameters attributed to Hesiod (8th c. B.C.). In it he recounts the genealogy and mythological history of the gods.

**thesaurus** (Gk 'treasure') A repository of information, like a dictionary or encyclopaedia (*qq.v.*). Well-known examples are: the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, the German dictionary of the Latin language begun in 1900. Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*, first published in 1852, has been revised and enlarged many times since.

**thesis** Three meanings may be distinguished: (a) a long essay (*q.v.*) or treatise (*q.v.*) presented for a degree; (b) a proposition to be proved; (c) the unstressed syllable of a metrical foot (e.g. *thesis* itself is a trochaic word on which the second syllable is unstressed). See ARSIS.

**thesis novel** One which treats of a social, political or religious problem with a didactic and, perhaps, radical purpose. It certainly sets out to call people's attention to the shortcomings of a society. Some outstanding examples of the genre are: Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke* (1850); Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852); Dickens's *Hard Times* (1854); Charles Reade's *Hard Cash* (1863); Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* (1903); Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906); Walter Greenwood's *Love on the Dole* (1933); Winifred Holtby's *South Riding* (1936); John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939); and Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948). Some would include William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954) in this category. Utopian and dystopian visions in fictional form might also be included. See also PROLETARIAN NOVEL; THESIS PLAY; UTOPIA.

**thesis play** A drama which deals with a specific social problem and, very probably, offers a solution. This form appears to have originated in France in the 19th c. Both Dumas ( *fils*) and Brieux wrote a considerable number between 1860 and 1900. Elsewhere Ibsen was a major influence on the genre, for example *A Doll's House*. In England Shaw (*Widowers' Houses* 1892, *Mrs Warren's Profession*



1902, *Major Barbara* 1905) and Galsworthy (*The Silver Box* 1907, *Strife* 1909, *Justice* 1910) made notable contributions. This type of drama is also known as a problem or propaganda play. Arnold Wesker has also written something approximating to thesis plays (e.g. *Chicken Soup with Barley*, *Roots*, and *I'm Talking about Jerusalem*, 1960). A sub-species of the problem play is what has been called the 'discussion play'. This is more like a debate in which characters put forward different points of view. Shaw employed this method of dramatizing issues in *Getting Married*, *The Apple Cart* and in Act III of *Man and Superman* – perhaps the best known example.

**threnody** (Gk 'wailing song') Originally a choral ode (*q.v.*), it changed to a monody (*q.v.*) which was strophic in form. It can now be applied to any lamentation; for instance, Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (1850) has been described as 'the great threnody of our language'. See COMPLAINT; DIRGE; ELEGY; EPICEDIMUM; LAMENT; UBI SUNT.

**thriller** A tense, exciting, and sometimes sensational type of novel (*q.v.*) or play (or film); usually an ingeniously plotted story in which the action is swift and the suspense continuous. In novel (*q.v.*) form it often contains elements of the detective story (*q.v.*), the whodunit (*q.v.*) and the spy story (*q.v.*). In the last fifty years or so it has become a specialized kind of entertainment of which there have been (and still are) many able professional practitioners.

Its origins are obscure, but it evidently developed in the 19th c. with works like Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1840), and Wilkie Collins's *Woman in White* (1860) and *The Moonstone* (1868). Near the turn of the century Anthony Hope achieved great popularity with two famous Ruritanian adventure stories: *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1894) and its sequel *Rupert of Hentzau* (1898). A. E. W. Mason was a prolific writer of thrillers, like *The Four Feathers* (1902), *At the Villa Rose* (1910) and *The House of the Arrow* (1924). Roughly contemporary with Mason, John Buchan became a specialist in comparable tales. For instance: *The Watcher by the Threshold* (1902), *Prester John* (1910), *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915), *Greenmantle* (1916), *The Three Hostages* (1924) and a number of others. During this period the supreme exponent of the 'pure' thriller was Edgar Wallace, an immensely prolific writer who made his name with *The Four Just Men* (1906), and then followed it up with a long succession of exciting stories, including

## thriller

*Sanders of the River*, *The Angel of Terror*, *The Green Archer*, *The Mind of Mr J. G. Reeder*, *The Fellowship of the Frog*, *The Dark Eyes of London* and *The Hand of Power*. Meanwhile, Conan Doyle had established the detective story (*q.v.*) with the various adventures of Sherlock Holmes, and G. K. Chesterton had published many of his Father Brown stories. Raymond le Queux's thrillers also had a great vogue early in the 20th c., as did Nathaniel Gould's 'racing' thrillers. More recently, the following have written famous thrillers: Dornford Yates, Sax Rohmer, 'Sapper', Raymond Chandler, Graham Greene, and Eric Ambler; and yet more recently, James Barlow, Geoffrey Household, John le Carré, Len Deighton, Francis Clifford, Lionel Davidson, John Welcome, Adam Hall and Frederick Forsyth.

There have also been a large number of successful plays of the thriller kind. Here again, Edgar Wallace excelled with *The Ringer* (1926), *On the Spot* (1930) and *The Case of the Frightened Lady* (1931). Other notable instances were John Willard's *The Cat and the Canary* (1922); Frederick Lonsdale's *The Last of Mrs Cheyney* (1925); Patrick Hamilton's *Rope* (1929), *Gaslight* (1938) and *The Governess* (1945); Emyln Williams's *Night Must Fall* (1935) and *Some One Waiting* (1953); Barré Lyndon's *The Amazing Dr Clitterhouse* (1936); Frederick Knott's *Dial 'M' For Murder* (1952); Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Niggers* (1943) and *Witness for the Prosecution* (1953). See also MELODRAMA.

**time novels** A term used occasionally to denote those novels which employ the stream of consciousness (*q.v.*) technique and in which the use of time and time as a theme is of pre-eminent importance. Famous instances are: Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1913–27), Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* (1915–38); Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924).

**tirade** (F 'volley of words') A long speech, usually vehement, and perhaps abusive and censorious. Timon delivers several remarkable tirades in Act IV of *Timon of Athens* (c. 1607).

**tnesis** (Gk 'a cutting') The separation of the parts of a word by the insertion of another word or words. Not unusual in abusive speech. For example: 'Neverthebloodyless, I won't accept that.'

**tone** The reflection of a writer's attitude (especially towards his readers), manner, mood and moral outlook in his work; even,

perhaps, the way his personality pervades the work. The counterpart of tone of voice in speech, which may be friendly, detached, pompous, officious, intimate, bantering and so forth. For example, in the following poem by David Holbrook *Living? Our Supervisors Will Do That For Us!* the skilfully contrived rhythm almost slouches and preserves the tune of slightly jerky, elliptical speech. The shrugging, 'throw-away' language, very colloquial, suggests laconic detachment. As a sketch of two contrasting characters it is most adroit in its economy and largely sympathetic to both:

Dankwerts, scholarship boy from the slums,  
 One of many, studied three years for the Tripos,  
 Honours, English; grew a beard, imitated the gesture  
 And the insistent deliberate (but not dogmatic)  
 'There!' of his supervisor. For a time  
 The mimesis was startling. Dankwerts knew  
 Uncannily what was good, what bad.  
 Life and earning a living, extra muros, for a time  
     afterwards,  
 Left him hard up: people in their ambiguity  
 Nuisances. A bracing need for self-justification  
 (And spot cash) drove some of the nonsense out of him:  
 He found a foothold in films, the evening papers,  
 With his photograph, up to the ears in steaks, or ivy,  
 In 'art' magazines. Passing over the metropolis  
 He ejaculates like a satellite, evaporates, and falls,  
 Albeit on to a fat bank balance of amoral earnings.

Whereas his supervisor can be seen any Friday  
 Walking up Trumpington Street with an odd movement  
     of the feet,  
 Still looking like an old corm, lissom, and knowing  
 Uncannily what's good, what's bad,  
 And probably rather hard up out of the bargain.

**tone colour** Jargon for the auditory quality of speech sounds, what Ezra Pound meant by *melopoeia* (*q.v.*). It covers kinaesthetic and synaesthetic experience. For instance, despair may be a 'black' word; hope, a 'white'. We speak of a 'hard' tone and a 'soft' tone. Words may seem 'smooth' or 'rough'. *Mellifluous* is 'soft' and euphonious, whereas *crag* is 'hard' and harsh. See EUPHONY; LOGOPOEIA; ONOMATOPOEIA; SYNAESTHESIA.

## tongue-twister

**tongue-twister** Associated with nonsense verse, nursery rhyme and patter songs (*qq.v.*) the tongue-twister is an alliterative jingle (*q.v.*) of some antiquity. Also known as a tongue-tripper. The following is a fairly well-known example:

Theophilus Thistledown, the successful thistle sifter,  
In sifting a sieve of unsifted thistles,  
Thrust three thousand thistles  
Through the thick of his thumb.  
If, then, Theophilus Thistledown, the successful  
thistle sifter,  
In sifting a sieve full of unsifted thistles,  
Thrust three thousand thistles  
Through the thick of his thumb,  
See that thou, in sifting a sieve of unsifted thistles,  
Do not get the unsifted thistles stuck in thy tongue.

**topographical poetry** Writing of Denham in *Lives of the Poets* (1779–81) Johnson aptly described this genre as ‘local poetry, of which the fundamental subject is some particular landscape, to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospect, or incidental meditation’. One of the earliest examples was, in fact, Sir John Denham’s *Cooper’s Hill* (1642). In the next 150 years the genre flourished in England (it seems to be a very English phenomenon) like a counterpart to landscape painting. Apart from one or two slight pieces by Lady Winchilsea (e.g. *Fanscomb Barn*), some of the principal works were: Pope’s *Windsor Forest* (1713); Dyer’s *Grongar Hill* (1726), one of the most agreeable poems of the kind; Gray’s *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College* (1742); Collins’s *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland* (1749); Goldsmith’s *The Deserted Village* (1770); plus several works by George Crabbe, who might almost be described as a regional poet; most notably – *The Village* (1783), *The Parish Register* (1807), *The Borough* (1810), *Tales* (1812) and *Tales of the Hall* (1819). Wordsworth also wrote topographical poetry; an obvious example is *Tintern Abbey* (1798). Since Wordsworth, few have seriously attempted the form, but in recent years John Betjeman has achieved a revival of it almost single-handed. *See also* PASTORAL.

**tornada** A short concluding stanza, similar to the *envoi* (*q.v.*) added to Old Provençal poems by way of complimentary dedication to a patron or friend. *See also* CHANSON.



**touchstone** A term used by Matthew Arnold in *The Study of Poetry* (1880) to denote a test or standard by which a work may be evaluated.

**tour de force** (F 'turn of force') As a literary term, it may be applied to a work which provides an outstanding illustration of an author's skill and mastery. Among modern examples one might suggest Hemingway's short story *The Short and Happy Life of Francis Macomber* (1938); Koestler's novel *Darkness at Noon* (1940); and Orwell's fable *Animal Farm* (1945). It may also describe a work which has little merit except technical virtuosity.

**tract** Usually a short pamphlet (*q.v.*) on a religious or political subject. Two famous examples are the *Marprelate Tracts* issued in 1588-9 which were an attack on the bishops and a defence of Presbyterian discipline, and *Tracts for the Times* (1833-41), a series on religious subjects written by, among others, Cardinal Newman, Keble, R. H. Froude and Pusey. Their object was to revive certain doctrines of the Church. See OXFORD MOVEMENT.

**tractarian movement** See OXFORD MOVEMENT.

**tradition** This denotes the inherited past which is available for the writer to study and learn from. Thus, the writer's native language, literary forms, codes, devices, conventions (*q.v.*) and various cultures from the past. We may, for example, refer to the Neo-Classical tradition or the French Classical tradition or to the tradition of the English essay, or the Irish tradition of dramatic comedy, or the Scottish ballad tradition, or the Welsh tradition of religious lyric poetry and many others, and in each case mean something fairly specific in spirit, matter and style. Anything traditional is established, has often been tried and is constantly returned to.

And every writer begins with some sort of tradition behind him (even if only that provided by his language) and every writer in some way modifies or influences that tradition, even when being imitative. Though some poems by Keats might have been written by Milton, and some by Dylan Thomas are almost indistinguishable from work by Gerard Manley Hopkins, there are differences.

Arbitrary classification of writers according to differing traditions is obviously a most perilous undertaking, but, bearing in mind the primary meaning of tradition (that which is passed

## tradition

down from generation to generation through custom and practice) we may distinguish certain traditions in English poetry (or poetry written by English speaking peoples). Basically, there are (a) the native tradition, as exemplified in the work of Chaucer and the Scottish Chaucerians, Wyatt, Shakespeare (and the majority of his contemporary poets and dramatists), Donne and most of the 17th c. lyric poets, and, thereafter, Burns, Blake, Clare, Barnes, Browning, Hopkins, Yeats, Pound, Eliot, W. H. Auden, Dylan Thomas and Ted Hughes – to mention only some of the major writers, and; (b) the Italianate tradition of Surrey, Sidney, Spenser, Milton, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold and Francis Thompson. Linking these two, and owing a good deal to both, is the Neo-classical tradition from the Renaissance through to the 18th c., whose finest representatives are Dryden, Pope, Johnson and Crabbe, though all four are peculiarly *English* poets. Pope, for example is much nearer in spirit and style to Donne than to Tennyson. As always there are poets who appear not to belong to (or who are not easily identified with) any specific tradition. Wordsworth, Coleridge and Byron are obvious examples.

Among prose writers definite traditions are much less distinguishable. For example, in the novel the main tradition seems to lie through the work of Jane Austen, George Eliot, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, Conrad, Arnold Bennett and D. H. Lawrence, but clearly this is not a tradition in which one could include major writers like James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner and Samuel Beckett, and dozens of others who have flourished recently.

**tragedy** (Gk 'goat song') In the first place it almost certainly denoted a form of ritual sacrifice accompanied by a choral song in honour of Dionysus, the god of the fields and the vineyards. Out of this ritual developed Greek dramatic tragedy.

In Chapter VI of his *Poetics*, Aristotle defined tragedy as:

The imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions.

In Chapter X he spoke of the plot:

Plots are either simple or complex, since the actions they represent are naturally of this twofold description. The action, proceeding in the way defined, as one continuous whole, I call simple, when the change in the hero's fortunes takes place without Peripety or Discovery- and complex, when it involves one or the other, or both. These should each of them arise out of the structure of the Plot itself, so as to be the consequence, necessary or probable, of the antecedents.

In Chapter XIII Aristotle spoke of the tragic hero:

There remains, then, the intermediate kind of personage, a man not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgement, of the number of those in the enjoyment of great reputation and prosperity; e.g. Oedipus, Thyestes, and the men of note of similar families. The perfect Plot, accordingly, must have a single, and not (as some tell us) a double issue; the change in the hero's fortunes must be not from misery to happiness, but on the contrary from happiness to misery; and the cause of it must lie not in any depravity, but in some great error on his part; the man himself being either such as we have described, or better, not worse, than that.

(Bywater's translation)

There is little of note between him and the writers of the Renaissance period. Diomedes (4th c. A.D.) for example, remarks that tragedy is a narrative about the fortunes of heroic or semi-divine characters. Isidore of Seville (c. 6th-7th c.) observes that tragedy comprises sad stories about commonwealths and kings. John of Garland (12th c.) describes tragedy as a poem written in the grand style about shameful and wicked deeds; a poem which begins in joy and ends in grief. And Chaucer, in the prologue to *The Monk's Tale*, gives a representative medieval view:

Tragedie is to seyn a certeyn storie,  
As olde bokes maken us memorie,  
Of him that stood in greet prosperitie  
And is y-fallen out of heigh degree  
Into miserie, and endeth wrecchedly.

Later, Sir Philip Sidney, eloquently refers to 'high and excellent

## tragedy

Tragedy' that opens the greatest wounds and displays the ulcers covered with tissue; tragedy which makes kings fear to be tyrants and tyrants to 'manifest their tyrannical humours'. Sidney goes on to say that it stirs 'the affects of admiration and commiseration, teacheth the uncertainty of this world, and upon how weak foundations gilden roofs are built.'

In the end it becomes fairly clear, from both theory and practice, that, hitherto, tragedy has tended to be a form of drama concerned with the fortunes and misfortunes, and, ultimately, the disasters, that befall human beings of title, power and position. For example: Oedipus, Agamemnon, Antigone, Hecuba, Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, Hamlet, the Duchess of Malfi, Samson, Phèdre, Jaffier and Belvidera, Cato, Don Carlos, Brand, Deirdre . . . What makes them tragic figures is that they have qualities of excellence, of nobleness, of passion; they have virtues and gifts that lift them above the ordinary run of mortal men and women. In tragedy these attributes are seen to be insufficient to save them either from self-destruction or from destruction brought upon them. And there is no hope for them. There is hope, perhaps, *after* the tragedy, but not *during* it. The overwhelming part about tragedy is the element of hopelessness, of inevitability. This aspect of tragedy is nowhere better expressed than by the Chorus at the beginning of Anouilh's play *Antigone*:

. . . The machine is in perfect order; it has been oiled ever since time began, and it runs without friction. Death, treason and sorrow are on the march; and they move in the wake of storm, of tears, of stillness . . . Tragedy is clean, it is restful, it is flawless . . . In tragedy nothing is in doubt and everyone's destiny is known. That makes for tranquillity. There is a sort of fellow-feeling among characters in a tragedy: he who kills is as innocent as he who gets killed: it's all a matter of what part you are playing. Tragedy is restful; and the reason is that hope, that foul, deceitful thing, has no part in it.

Sooner or later we have to ask ourselves why the spectacle of a man or of a woman destroying themselves or being destroyed should give the spectator any kind of emotional, intellectual or aesthetic pleasure.

In attempting to answer this question there is space here only for a few gross simplifications and suggestions. Othello's terrifying jealousy is something to which perhaps almost any person



can 'relate', for sexual jealousy must be very nearly a universal experience. Phèdre's overpowering passion for Hippolyte is also something to which almost any person can 'relate'. Such ungovernable feelings, which bring about the destruction of those two characters, may not be within the compass of an ordinary mortal, but he or she can imagine them, understand them, sympathize with them, identify with them and be moved by them.

Tragedy is the disaster which comes to those who represent and who symbolize, in a peculiarly intense form, those flaws and shortcomings which are universal in a lesser form. Tragedy is a disaster that happens to other people; and the greater the person, so it seems, the more acute is their tragedy. Put at its crudest – the bigger they are the harder they fall.

In a way, also, tragedy is a kind of protest; it is a cry of terror or complaint or rage or anguish to and against whoever or whatever is responsible for 'this harsh rack', for suffering, for death. Be it God, Nature, Fate, circumstance, chance or just something nameless. It is a 'cry' about the tragic situation in which the tragic hero or heroine find themselves.

On the plane of reality, the life and death of Christ have all the basic traditional elements of tragedy – especially inevitability. His death was foreseen, and forecast and was a 'foregone conclusion'. And even Christ was very nearly without hope. His cry of agony and despair from the Cross was the final proof, so to speak, of the authenticity of His human nature. He always knew how He had to die and when He had to die. As the Son of God He *must* have known. But at the very end He *almost* forgot that He was the Son of God – and that He was going to be saved.

By participating vicariously in the grief, pain and fear of the tragic hero or heroine, the spectator, in Aristotle's words, experiences pity and fear and is purged. Or, again crudely, he has a good cry and feels better. But then, comedy (*q.v.*) purges, too – through laughter. And laughter and tears are so closely associated physically and physiologically that often we do not know whether to laugh or to cry. Tragi-comedy (*q.v.*) is that form of drama which attempts to reconcile and represent these conflicting and ambivalent states. And comic relief (*q.v.*) in tragedy serves many purposes, not least preventing the spectator from being overcharged with tragic emotion.

Classical Greek tragedy is almost wholly devoid of comedy (though the occasional grim observation or rejoinder might raise a laconic smile), but the Greek tragedians made up for this by

## tragedy

having a satyr-play (*q.v.*) to make the fourth part of the tetralogy (*q.v.*) and this was a kind of palliative burlesque after the full cathartic experience of pity and fear.

The Greeks were the first of the tragedians and it was upon their work only that Aristotle formed his conclusions. Unhappily, owing to Aristotle's immense prestige and authority, his theories were later misapplied and misused: either by trying to make them fit all forms of tragedy; or by doing the opposite and excluding all those works which did not fit his descriptions. Both misapplications were equally harmful.

The principal writers of tragedy before Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, were Phrynicus, Pratinas and Choerilus, and the semi-legendary Thespis (fl. c. 534 B.C.). Thespis is believed to have made a major innovation by introducing an actor into tragic performances which formerly were given by a Chorus (*q.v.*) alone. To this Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.) added a second, and Sophocles (496-406 B.C.) a third; namely, protagonist, deuteragonist and tritagonist (*qq.v.*). Both these playwrights and Euripides (480-406 B.C.) made other modifications and improvements to the structure of tragedy.

Aeschylus wrote about ninety plays of which seven are extant, namely: *Suppliants*, *Persians*, *Seven Against Thebes*, *Prometheus Vincitus*, and the Oresteian trilogy which comprises *Agamemnon*, *Choephoroe* and *Eumenides*. Sophocles was even more prolific. He is credited with 120 plays and at the dramatic festivals won eighteen times with eighteen different tetralogies. Only seven of his works are also extant, namely: *Antigone*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Electra*, *Ajax*, *Trachiniae*, *Philoctetes* and *Oedipus at Colonus*. The output of Euripides was almost as great. Eighty or ninety plays are ascribed to him, and eighteen of these (if we include *Rhesus*) survive. Of these the main works are: *Alcestis*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Trojan Women*, *Orestes*, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, *Bacchae*, *Andromache*, *Hecuba*, *Electra* and *Iphigenia in Tauris*.

By 400 B.C. Greek tragedy seems to have run itself out, but a hundred-odd years had produced a tragic corpus that has certainly not been surpassed.

There is relatively little of note in Roman tragedy except for the work of Seneca which, fifteen hundred years after his death, was to have a very considerable influence on Elizabethan tragedy. In 240 B.C. Livius Andronicus first presented rough adaptations of Greek tragedy, and he continued to do that. Naevius, a younger contemporary, composed tragedies on Greek subjects and themes,

and also *fabulae praetextae* (See Fabula). His main successors were Ennius, Pacuvius and Accius who also wrote occasional *praetextae*. After them tragedy declined and it was not until the age of Nero that Seneca (c. 4 B.C.—A.D. 65) made any notable contribution to the genre. He was a prolific writer of tragedies who took the bulk of his subjects from Greek sources; but very probably his tragedies were not intended for the stage.

Thereafter, for 1,500 years, there appears to be no tragedy of any kind anywhere. It seems almost incredible that a thousand years of Byzantine civilization produced no drama. We can only surmise that the liturgy of the Church satisfied the dramatic and histrionic needs of the Byzantine Greeks.

In the Middle Ages Classical drama was not known; nor were Aristotle's theories. In that period tragedy was a story of the kind that Chaucer described in his Prologue to *The Monk's Tale*. The greatest tragedy of all had been played in real life. From it grew the richly complex, symbolic drama of church ritual. In the absence of drama this must have been theatre and spectacle enough. However, out of the Mystery Plays (*q.v.*), some of which dealt with the Passion and Death of Christ, the secular drama evolved; and in the Elizabethan period tragedy as a form was revived. Seneca provided the model for a formal five-act play in a rhetorical style.

An early and important example of this was *Gorboduc* (1561) by Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton. Often regarded as the first Elizabethan tragedy, it was also a kind of political Morality Play (*q.v.*) on the proper government of a kingdom.

The Senecan model produced approximately two kinds of tragedy: academic drama (*q.v.*), based on Classical rules and often using a Chorus (*q.v.*) of the type used by the Greeks and Romans; and the much more important genre of revenge tragedy (*q.v.*). A notable early instance of the latter is Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1584–9). To this tradition and convention also belong Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1592), and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (1594) and *Hamlet* (c. 1603–04). There are many other well-known instances.

During the latter part of the 16th c. and until approximately 1640, dramatists paid less and less attention to the Classical rules and conventions, and more and more worked out what was most suitable for their individual needs. In fact we find a very large number of tragedies in this period whose form and structure show considerable variations. In rough chronological order some



## tragedy

of the more famous and notable works are: Thomas Preston's *Cambyzes* (1569); Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* (c. 1588), a play which used some of the conventions of the Morality; the anonymous *Arden of Faversham* (c. 1592), a very early instance of what has been described as domestic tragedy (*q.v.*); several major works by Shakespeare, namely: *Romeo and Juliet* (c. 1595), *Othello* (1604), *King Lear* (1606), *Macbeth* (c. 1606), *Antony and Cleopatra* (c. 1606-7) and *Coriolanus* (c. 1608); George Peele's *David and Bethsabe* (1599); John Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* (1602) and his *Antonio's Revenge* (1602); Chettle's *The Tragedy of Hoffman* (1602); Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603); Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* (1603) and his *Catiline* (1611), both of which were influenced by Classical models; Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* (1607), *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* (1613), *Caesar and Pompey* (1631), and *The Tragedy of Chabot* (1639); Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1607) and his *The Atheist's Tragedy* (1611); Webster's *The White Devil* (c. 1608), *Appius and Virginia* (c. 1609) and *The Duchess of Malfi* (c. 1614); the anonymous *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608), a curiosity in its way and once ascribed to Shakespeare; Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy* (c. 1610), plus several other works by this very prolific pair of partners; Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (c. 1621); Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* (1622); Massinger's *The Roman Actor* (1626); John Ford's *The Broken Heart* (1633) and his *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1633).

During approximately the same period tragedy burgeoned in Spain where the main writers were Lope de Vega (1562-1635), Molina (1571-1648) and Calderón (1600-81), and just as a declension began in England and Spain so the form began to flourish in France where the two finest exponents were Corneille and Racine. This was tragedy in a traditional grand manner, in an heroic manner. As Racine expressed it in his Preface to *Bérénice* (1668): 'Ce n'est point une nécessité qu'il y ait du sang et des morts dans une tragédie; il suffit que l'action en soit grande, que les acteurs en soient héroïques, que les passions y soient excitées, et que tout s'y ressente de cette tristesse majestueuse qui fait tout le plaisir de la tragédie'. And both these dramatists conceived the tragic form in Classical terms. The major works of Corneille are: *Médée* (1635), *Le Cid* (1636), *Horace*, *Cinna* and *Polyeucte* (all 1640), *La Mort de Pompée* (1643?), and *Rodogune* (1644). Those of Racine are: *Andromaque* (1667), *Iphigénie* (1674), *Phédre* (1677), *Britannicus* (1669), *Bérénice* (1670), *Mithridate* (1673), *Esther* (1689) and *Athalie* (1691).



In the latter part of the 17th c. there was a slight revival of tragedy in England, but it was very slight. The most notable work of the period (belonging to the category heroic drama *q.v.*), was Dryden's *All for Love* (1678), a highly successful re-working of the story of Antony and Cleopatra. Minor works were Milton's *Samson Agonistes* (1671); Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserved* (1682); and Thomas Southerne's *The Fatal Marriage* (1694) and *Oroonoko* (1695).

It is a commonplace of dramatic history that from *c.* 1700 onwards relatively little tragedy of note was written; or, to put it another way, little that has survived has proved of durable interest. There seems to be a definite connection between the decline of verse drama and the inferiority of tragedy. In the 18th c. playwrights tended to write under the influence of Classical rules and models, or they attempted something like domestic or bourgeois tragedy. Prose and verse were used. But verse drama was seldom successful. This is true also of the 19th c. Dramatic prose was usually serviceable; verse was too often like an unconscious parody or deliberate imitation of Elizabethan and Jacobean blank verse (*q.v.*). These faults are very noticeable in the works of, for example, quite a talented dramatist like James Sheridan Knowles (1784-1862), whose best tragedy was *Caius Gracchus* (1815), and in plays by Keats, Tennyson, Browning and Swinburne.

Nevertheless, during the 18th and 19th c. a large number of European playwrights did experiment with tragic formulae, and in some cases with considerable or varying success. Among the more notable achievements one should mention Nicholas Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (1703) and his *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (1714); Addison's *Cato* (1713); Lillo's *The London Merchant* (1731); Johnson's *Irene* (1749); Edward Moore's *The Gamester* (1753); Lessing's *Miss Sara Simpson* (1755); John Home's *Douglas* (1756); Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* (1772) and his *Nathan the Wise* (1783); Alfieri's *Saul* (1784) and his *Mirra* (1786); Schiller's *Don Carlos* (1787); George Colman the Younger's *The Iron Chest* (1796); Schiller's *Maria Stuart* (1800); Kleist's *Penthesilea* (1808) and *Prince of Homburg* (1811); Shelley's *Cenci* (written in 1818, but first performed in 1886); Victor Hugo's *Hernani* (1830) and *Ruy Blas* (1838); Büchner's *Danton's Death* (1835).

Near the end of the 19th c. two Scandinavian dramatists brought about a wholly unexpected revolution of tragic form and subject. Their works displayed the tragedy of disease, of

## tragedy

eccentricity, of bad heredity, of madness and more or less psychotic and emotionally morbid states. Their tragic vision revealed a society that was diseased; spiritually and morally corrupt and decadent. In Ibsen's case the vision gave great and bitter offence. What he exposed was too near the truth for almost anybody's comfort. One can say that their tragedies were unlike anything written hitherto, and, like many that followed, far removed from Classical and Aristotelian concepts. Some of their major works in the tragic mode were: Strindberg's *The Father* (1887) and *Miss Julie* (1889); Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879), *Brand* (1885), *Hedda Gabler* (1891) and *John Gabriel Borkman* (1897).

Since then a large number of dramatists have attempted different kinds of tragedy; or serious plays which are tragic in tone, import and intention. Notable instances are: Synge's *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and his *Deirdre of the Sorrows* (1910); Granville Barker's *Waste* (1907); Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones* (1920) and *All God's Chillun* (1924); O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock* (1924); Lorca's *Blood Wedding* (1933), *Yerma* (1934) and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (1945); T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935); Maxwell Anderson's *Winterset* (1935); Clifford Odets's *Golden Boy* (1937); Anouilh's *Antigone* (1944); Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947); Arthur Miller's *Death of A Salesman* (1948) and his *A View from the Bridge* (1955); Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953); John Arden's *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* (1959); and John McGrath's *Events while guarding the Bofors Gun* (1966).

If tragedy, like other major art forms, is to be taken as an expression and reflection of man's nature, and his vision of the universe and his role and position in it, in any society or period, then the concept of tragedy has changed greatly since the 16th c. The scale and tone of tragedy or anything resembling it has been modified. We now have the grief, the misery, the disaster, of the ordinary man. Not a king or a queen or a prince, but an everyday mother, tramp, peasant or salesman.

Two powerful influences in the 20th c. theatre have been the Theatre of the Absurd and the Theatre of Silence (*qq.v.*). Nowadays the potentially tragic dramatist is more likely to express the sadness and wretchedness of man's position by understatement; even to the point of saying nothing. What a world of difference there is between the magnificent, articulate, self-conscious and deeply moving valedictory speech of Othello, and the broken, barely articulate concluding words of Davies in *The Caretaker* – a farewell which just rambles away into a long silence (the stage

direction is *Long Silence*). See ANAGNORISIS; DRAME; HAMARTIA; HUBRIS; METATHEATRE; PERIPETEIA; TRAGIC FLAW.

**tragedy of blood** See REVENGE TRAGEDY.

**tragic flaw** Traditionally that defect in a tragic hero or heroine which leads to their downfall. To all intents and purposes a synonym for the Greek *hamartia* (*q.v.*). In Othello a capacity for extreme jealousy; in Macbeth vaulting ambition; in Lear paternal arrogance and wilfulness; and in Hamlet an acute inability to make decisions, or, as Hamlet puts it, 'thinking too precisely on the event'. Indeed, the *locus classicus* is *Hamlet*, I, iv, 23-36. See also HUBRIS; TRAGEDY.

**tragic irony** See IRONY.

**tragi-comedy** The term derives from a reference by Plautus (254-184 B.C.) to the unconventional mixture of kings, gods and servants in his own play *Amphitruo* as *tragico-comoedia*. However, the idea of tragi-comedy was not new even then since Euripides's *Alcestis* and *Iphigenia* (both tragedies) had happy endings; and Aristotle had made it clear in *Poetics* that audiences preferred the kind of endings where poetic justice (*q.v.*) was seen to be done.

From the late Middle Ages (or early Renaissance) there are two roughly identifiable genres of tragi-comedy in drama: the Neoclassical and the popular. Some Italian playwrights, of whom the best known is Giraldi Cinthio, wrote several tragedies with happy endings which he called *tragedie miste* ('mixed tragedies'). Others wrote what Polonius might have called tragical comedies (or comical tragedies) which had serious main plots and comic sub-plots (*q.v.*). By the end of the 16th c. these two kinds had drawn together and were more or less indistinguishable. By this time, anyway, we find an increasing mingling of tragic and comic elements, the use of comic relief (*q.v.*) in tragedy, and what might be called tragic aggravation or heightening in comedy.

One of the main influences in this mingling was Guarini's pastoral tragi-comedy. His most famous work was *Il Pastor Fido* (c. 1583). It is noticeable that by the turn of the 16th c. something like a *theory* of tragi-comedy is evolving. We find Florio referring to 'tragi-comedia' and Sidney, in his *Apologie for Poetrie* (1595) speaking of 'mungrell Tragi-comedie'. In 1603 Samuel Harsnet



## tragi-comedy

alludes to Plautus's classification thus: 'Our Daemonopoia or Devill-fiction is Tragico-Comoedia, a mixture of both as Amphitryo in Plautus is . . .' And William Drummond of Hawthornden refers to this tragi-comedy called life.

Many of the major dramatists in France and England between 1590 and late in the 17th c. followed Guarini's example of mingling comic and tragic elements. The best known in France were Corneille, Hardy and Jean de Rotrou; in England, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Marston, Thomas Heywood, Massinger, Webster, Tourneur, Ben Jonson, Shirley, Dryden and Davenant.

It was Fletcher who, in his preface to *The Faithful Shepherdess* (c. 1610), provided an agreeable description of the genre: 'A tragi-comedy', he wrote, 'is not so called in respect to mirth and killing, but in respect it wants deaths, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy . . .'

This suggests how flexible was the form, and Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and his *The Jew of Malta* might both be called tragi-comedies even though they want not deaths.

Other notable instances are as follows: Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (1602), *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1596), *Measure for Measure* (1604), *The Winter's Tale* (1609-10), and *Cymbeline* (c. 1610), and possibly *All's Well that Ends Well*; Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster, or Love Lies Bleeding* (c. 1610); Chapman's *The Widow's Tears* (1612); Ben Jonson's *The Sad Shepherd* (1641); Jean de Rotrou's *Don Bernard de Cabrère* (1648); Corneille's *Don Sanche d'Aragon* (1649); and Molière's *Le Misanthrope* (1666).

It can be argued that the tragedies of Webster and Tourneur, which are pervaded by such a black and sardonic humour, are also tragi-comical; and that the satirical comedies of Ben Jonson, among others, succeed the tragi-comic type.

With the demise of verse drama, dramatic tragi-comedy virtually disappeared, but occasionally a playwright has combined tragic and comic elements in such a way as to warrant his work being called tragi-comedy. Notable examples are Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897); Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* (1900) and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904); J. M. Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903); Ashley Duke's *Jew Süß* (1929); Giraudoux's *Le Folle de Chaillot* (1945); Marcel Aymé's *The Count of Clerembard* (1950); and Brendan Behan's *The Quare Fellow* (1954).

But distinctions between tragi-comedy, black comedy (*q.v.*)



and what Jean Anouilh calls *pièces noires* and *pièces grinçantes* are difficult to make. From the 18th c. onwards the French have tended to use the term *drame* (*q.v.*) to denote a serious play which contains some comedy; and there are literally hundreds of plays extant from, say, 1800, which are now loosely called 'dramas' because they do not fit into any easily identifiable category.

One may conclude that the Elizabethan and Jacobean conception of life as a tragi-comedy was an attempt to balance and reconcile a conflict of vision. This would help to explain the mordant wit and the more macabre elements; also the sudden and sombre events which unexpectedly overshadow the radiance of plays like *Much Ado about Nothing*. It is a commonplace that surprisingly little tragedy of note has been produced since the 17th c. whereas there have been many excellent plays with tragic qualities and tragic potentialities.

It should also be noted that since early in the 20th c. the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*) has been a major influence in drama; perhaps partly as a result of this the 'darker' comedies of the Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights have become particularly popular.

Apart from drama, the term can be applied to many works of fiction and to one exceptional poem, namely Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (c. 1385). Chaucer called it a tragedy but it is much more in the tragi-comical tradition largely because of the character of Pandarus and because of Chaucer's genially ironical treatment of the conventions of courtly love (*q.v.*) and because of the occasionally comic predicaments of the lovers.

**tranche de vie** See SLICE OF LIFE.

**transcendentalism** A New England movement which flourished from c. 1835 to 1860. It had a considerable influence on American art and literature. Basically religious, it emphasized the role and importance of the individual conscience, and the value of intuition in matters of moral guidance and inspiration. The actual term was coined by opponents of the movement, but accepted by its members (e.g. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–82), one of the leaders, published *The Transcendentalist* in 1841). The group were also social reformers. Some of the members, besides Emerson, were famous and included Bronson Alcott, Henry David Thoreau and Nathaniel Hawthorne.

transferred epithet

transferred epithet *See* HYPALLAGE.

**translation** Despite the truth of the Italian aphorism 'traduttore traditore', there have been many praiseworthy and successful (and, in some cases, superlative) translations across a large number of languages – not least from foreign tongues into English. Three basic kinds of translation may be distinguished: (a) a more or less literally exact rendering of the original meaning at the expense of the syntax, grammar, colloquialism and idiom of the language into which it is put (e.g. Lang, Leaf and Myers' famous translation of the *Iliad*, 1883); (b) an attempt to convey the spirit, sense and style of the original by finding equivalents in syntax, grammar and idiom (e.g. Dryden's *Virgil*, 1697); (c) a fairly free adaptation which retains the original spirit but may considerably alter style, structure, grammar and idiom (e.g. Edward Fitzgerald's free versions of six of Calderón's plays, 1853; the same author's version of *Omar Khayyám*, 1859).

Notable landmarks in the history of translation are: King Alfred's translation of Boethius's *De Consolatione* and of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (9th c.); Luther's version of the Bible (1522–34); William Adlington's translation of *The Golden Ass* by Apuleius (1566); North's version of *Plutarch's Lives* (1579); Marlowe's of Ovid's *Elegies* (1590); George Chapman's of the *Iliad* (1598–1611); Florio's of Montaigne's *Essays* (1603); The English Authorized Version of the Bible (1611); Dryden's *Virgil* (1687); Pope's *Iliad* (1715–20); Schlegel's *Shakespeare* (1797–1810); Jowett's version of Plato (1871). Other outstanding translators are: C. M. R. Leconte de Lisle, Ezra Pound, Arthur Whaley, Scott Moncrieff, E. V. Rieu and Robert Graves.

**travel book** A neglected and much varied genre of great antiquity to which many famous, more or less professional or 'full-time' writers have contributed, but which has also been enriched by a number of occasional writers. For the most part these have been diplomats, scholars, missionaries, soldiers of fortune, doctors, explorers and sailors. The genre subsumes works of exploration and adventure as well as guides and accounts of sojourns in foreign lands and includes such various works as: Pausanias's *Hellados Periegesis* or 'guide' to Greece (2nd c. A.D.); Giraldus Cambrensis' *Itinerarium Cambriae* (c. 1188); the extravaganzas of 'Sir John Mandeville' or Jean d'Outremeuse (namely, his *Travels*, printed

1496), and Baron Munchausen (namely, *Narrative of his Marvellous Travels by Rudolph Raspe*, 1785); Friedrich Humboldt's immense output of travel narratives combined with scientific reports (30 volumes in all, produced in the 19th c.), Curzon's classic work on Persia (*Persia and the Persian Question*, 1892); Scott's record of Polar exploration (*The Voyage of the Discovery*, 1905); D. H. Lawrence's personal and highly subjective account of a brief trip to Sardinia (*Sea and Sardinia*, 1923); and the well documented and scholarly descriptions of his journeys in Russia and the Balkans by Sir Fitzroy Maclean (*Eastern Approaches*, 1949).

Some of the earliest records of travels come from Egypt; for instance, an anonymous 14th c. B.C. record known as *The Journeying of the Master of the Captains of Egypt*; and an account by Cosmas of Alexandria (c. A.D. 548) of travels in Ethiopia and the Indian Ocean. From China we have early accounts of travels in India by Fa-Hian (c. A.D. 399-414), and by Shaman Hwui-Li (c. A.D. 630) of journeys in the Far East. The Histories of Herodotus (c. 485-425 B.C.) are a fascinating record of extensive travels in Egypt, Africa and elsewhere. And in Greek literature there is the almost epic narrative of Xenophon (c. 430 B.C.) about the return of the Ten Thousand from Sardis. Among Roman authors Horace (65-8 B.C.) has left a record of a journey to Brundisium, and there are interesting accounts by Gaius Solinus (3rd c. A.D.) of journeys to Britain and Asia. A notable Arabian traveller was Ibn Battutah (1304-78) who for twenty-eight years travelled round the Far East, India, Africa, South Russia, Egypt, Spain and elsewhere and who in 1354 compiled a copious description of his journeyings. In the 16th c. Al Hassan Ibn Mohammed Al Wezas Al Fasi (a Moor), later known as Leo Africanus, left an account of his travels in the Mediterranean. Two Persian travellers of importance were Abd-Er-Razzak Samarqandi (A.D. 1413-82) and Don Juan of Persia (1560-1605). The former described a journey to Samarkand; the latter, an expedition to Muscovy. One of the earlier German travellers was Albert de Mandelslo (c. 1614) whose record of a trip to Muscovy and Persia is particularly interesting. An enterprising Russian traveller of the Middle Ages was the man known as Abbot Daniel of Kiev (c. A.D. 1107) who recorded a journey to the Holy Land. Among Dutchmen one should mention Jan Huygen van Linschoten (c. 1563-1611) who made a long trip to the East Indies in 1576. One of the earlier travellers of French origin was St Silvia of Aquitaine who, c. A.D. 400, made an extensive journey to the Near East. And in the

14th c. a French friar, Jordanus of Séverac also went to the Near East, Armenia and India. Apart from Columbus and Vasco da Gama, an early Portuguese traveller of some note was Francisco de Alvarez (c. 1465-1541) who set off c. 1487 for the land of the legendary Prester John. In the 16th c. another Portuguese, Fernao Mendes Pinto (1509-83), travelled to the Far East. A much more famous contemporary of his, Fr Mathew Ricci, the Jesuit, (1552-1610), went to China and spent many years there. He left an absorbing account of this, which a modern writer, Vincent Cronin, used in his equally interesting narrative called *The Wise Man from the West*. A well-known 17th c. Portuguese explorer and traveller was Jeronimo Lobo (1593-1678) who ventured to Ethiopia. Early Spanish travellers have also left us memorable accounts of their voyages. Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, for example, who also took that legendary 'golden road' to Samarkand c. 1403; and Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas (1559-1625) who travelled to Darien, and the great Cortés (1485-1547) the conqueror of Mexico. A contemporary, Garcilasso Inca de la Vega, also left an account of travels in Central America - c. 1539-42. Another contemporary was a man who signed himself 'A Gentleman of Elvas' and gave a version of Don Ferdinando's travels in Florida (c. 1540-42). Among Italians one should mention the record of John of Pian de Carpine's journey to Russia (in 1245). This was written by a man known as Friar Benedict the Pole. A little later the legendary Marco Polo (c. 1254- c. 1324) made his famous journeys to the East. In the middle of the 14th c. John de Marignolli travelled to see the Emperor of the Tatars. In the following century and a half the Cabots (John and Sebastian) made their journeys to the South American seas and the Far East. And in the 16th c. Cellini wrote extensive accounts in his *Memoirs* of his various peregrinations.

These are only a handful of the many who, in Classical times, in the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance period, explored the then known world and opened up the unknown.

From the 16th c. onwards the Near East, the Middle East and the Far East, Asia and parts of Africa were increasingly explored and travelled, and the world of the Americas was gradually charted. As the world became more navigable and better known, so travel books of every kind proliferated. Here there is only space to mention a few of the hundreds that exist.

One of the earliest extant accounts of an Englishman's travels abroad are those concerning one Willibald who set out for Rome



with his father, brother and sister in c. A.D. 718. This record is anonymously written by a nun of Heidenheim.

But it is not until the 16th c. that we find plentiful narratives by Englishmen travelling abroad. For example, Anthony Jenkinson's account of a trip to Russia in 1557; and Thomas Dallam's account of a journey to Constantinople in 1599. Dallam was organist to Queen Elizabeth.

In the last half of the 16th c. a number of accounts of exploratory journeys began to appear. A random selection of these is: Martin Frobisher's *Third Voyage to the North-West* (1578); Barlowe's account of the *Discovery of Virginia* (1584); John Davis's *Voyage to the Straits of Magellan* (1591-3); Henry May's *Voyage to the East and West Indies* (1591-4); Richard Hawkins' *Voyage in the Pacific* (1594); Raleigh's account of the discovery of Guinea (1595); Fynes Moryson's trip to the Levant (1596-7); James Lancaster's *Voyage to the East Indies* (1601-3); Sylvester Jourdan's account of the discovery of the Bermudas (1609); and Habbakuk Prickett's narrative of Hudson's last voyage about the return of the *Discovery* from the northwest (1611).

From this period two great collections of travel records survive. The first is Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations, Voiaages, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1598); and the successor to this work, known as *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes, contayning a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Land Travell by Englishmen and others* (1625). Purchas made use of MSS left by Hakluyt.

Other works from the 15th to the 17th c. worthy of particular mention are: Pero Tafur's *Las andancas e viajes* (1435-9); Flavio Biondo's *Italia Instaurata* (c. 1500); Nicolas de Nicolay's *Quatres Premiers Livres* (1567); *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant* (1584-1602); *A Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610* (1615) by George Sandys; Coryat's *Crudities and Coryat's Cramb* (1611) by Thomas Coryat; *The Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures and Painefull Peregrinations, Etc.* of William Lithgow (1632); *A Voyage into the Levant* by Sir Henry Blount (1636); *A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem at Easter A.D. 1697* by Henry Maundrell (publ. 1703); *A Faithful Account of the Religion and Manners of the Mahometans* (1704) by Joseph Pitts; and, perhaps the best of all 17th c. travel books, the ten volumes written by Evliya Celebi in the course of his travels through the Ottoman Empire in Europe, Asia and Africa. Evliya was born in Istanbul in 1611 and died in 1682. He is one of the great travel writers and his works give an

extraordinary amount of information on the history, geography, customs, folklore etc. of the many countries he visited.

Travel became easier in the 18th c. (hence the popularity of the Grand Tour *q.v.*) and thus there is a steadily increasing number of works. The following are a few of the more notable instances: Aaron Hill's *Account of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (1709); Jean Chardin's *Voyage en Perse et aux Indes Orientales* (1711); Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* (1721); Defoe's *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724-6); Thomas Shaw's *Travels or Observations relating to Several Parts of Barbary and the Levant* (1738); Richard Pococke's *A Description of the East* (1743-5); The Earl of Sandwich's *A Voyage performed . . . round the Mediterranean in the Years 1738 and 1739* (publ. 1799); Charles Perry's *A View of the Levant* (1743); Robert Wood's *The Ruins of Palmyra* (1753); and the same author's *The Ruins of Balbec* (1757); Henry Fielding's *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (1755); Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Letters . . . During Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa* (1763-7); Smollett's *Travels in France and Italy* (1766); Sterne's *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768); James Boswell's *An Account of Corsica* (1768); Bougainville's *Voyage autour du monde* (1771); James Cook's accounts of his voyages, published in 1773, 1777, 1784; Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775); Henry Swinburne's *Travels through Spain* (1775-6); and the same author's *Travels in the Two Sicilies* (1779-80); Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (1785); Arthur Young's *Travels in France* (1792); Mungo Park's *Travels in the Interior of Africa* (1799); plus many other works by European writers.

In the 19th and 20th c. there is a positive flood of travel literature of one sort and another which shows no sign of easing. In fact, since the Second World War 'arm-chair' travelling has become an occupation for many people; and, as travelling has become easier and easier, so people read more books about the places they have heard of, have been to or are going to.

There follow a few of the better known works of the last 150-odd years: Abraham Parsons' *Travels in Asia and Africa* (1808); William Cobbett's *Rural Rides* (1830); George Sand's *Lettres d'un voyageur* (1834-6); E. W. Lane's *Account of the Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians* (1836); Lamartine's *Souvenirs, Impressions, Pensées et Paysages pendant un voyage en Orient* (1835); James Wellstead's *Travels in Arabia* (1838); Charles Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle* (1839); George Borrow's *The Bible in Spain*

(1843); Kinglake's *Eothen* (1844); Eliot Warburton's *The Crescent and the Cross* (1845); Thackeray's *Cornhill to Grand Cairo* (1846); Robert Curzon's *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant* (1849); Sir Richard Burton's *Scinde, or the Unhappy Valley* (1851); Edward Lear's *Journal of a Landscape Painter in Southern Calabria* (1852); Sir Richard Burton's *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Meccah* (1855); C. T. Newton's *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1856); David Livingstone's *Missionary Travels in S. Africa* (1857); George Borrow's *Wild Wales* (1862); J. H. Speke's *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863); David Livingstone's *The Zambesi and its Tributaries* (1865); Lady Duff Gordon's *Letters from Egypt* (1863-5); W. G. Palgrave's *Narrative of a Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia* (1865); C. T. Newton's *Travels and Discoveries in the Levant* (1869); Sir Henry Stanley's *How I found Livingstone* (1872); Sir Richard Burton's *Unexplored Syria* (1872); Sir Arthur Evans's *Through Bosnia and Herzegovina on Foot during the Insurrection 1875* (1876); R. L. Stevenson's *Inland Voyage* (1878); Sir Henry Stanley's *Through the Dark Continent* (1878); Sir Richard Burton's *Goldmines of Midian and Ruined Midianite Cities* (1878); and that author's *The Land of Midian Revisited* (1879); R. L. Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey* (1879); Sir Adolphus Slade's *Travels in Turkey, Greece etc.* (1883); C. M. Doughty's *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (1888); Nansen's *The First Crossing of Greenland* (1888); W. B. Harris's *A Journey through the Yemen* (1893); Pierre Loti's *Le Désert* (1895); D. G. Hogarth's *A Wandering Scholar in the Levant* (1896); Hilaire Belloc's *Path to Rome* (1902); Pierre Loti's *Vers Ispahan* (1904); Gertrude Bell's *The Desert and the Sown* (1907); W. H. Davies's *Autobiography of a Super-Tramp* (1908); H. M. Tomlinson's *The Sea and the Jungle* (1912); Pierre Loti's *Un Pèlerin d'Angkor* (1912); R. F. Scott's *Scott's Last Expedition* (1913); W. H. Hudson's *Far Away and Long Ago* (1918); Norman Douglas's *Old Calabria* (1915); H. St John B. Philby's *The Heart of Arabia* (1922); Aldous Huxley's *Jesting Pilate* (1926); H. St John B. Philby's *Arabia of the Wahabis* (1928); Bertram Thomas's *Arabia Felix* (1932); H. St John B. Philby's *The Empty Quarter* (1933); Peter Fleming's *Brazilian Adventure* (1933); Aldous Huxley's *Across the Mexique Bay* (1934); Anne Lindbergh's *North to the Orient* (1935); T. E. Lawrence's *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1935); Freya Stark's *The Southern Gates of Arabia* (1936); Peter Fleming's *News from Tartary* (1936); Ella Maillart's *Forbidden Journey* (1937); Graham Greene's *Lawless Roads* (1939); Freya Stark's *Winter in Arabia* (1940); Rebecca



## travel book

West's *Black Lamb, Grey Falcon* (1942); Denton Welch's *Maiden Voyage* (1943); H. St John B. Philby's *A Pilgrim in Arabia* (1946); Evelyn Waugh's *When the Going was Good* (1946) – a selection of all he wished to preserve from four previous travel books; Gerald de Gaury's *Arabia Phoenix* (1946); R. A. B. Hamilton's *The Kingdom of Melchior* (1949); André Dupeyrat's *Mitziñari* (1949); Thor Heyerdahl's *The Kon-Tiki Expedition* (1950); Laurens van der Post's *Venture into the Interior* (1952); Sir Arthur Grimble's *A Pattern of Islands* (1952); Heinrich Harrer's *Seven Years in Tibet* (1953); Peter Mayne's *The Alleys of Marrakesh* (1953); V. S. Pritchett's *The Spanish Temper* (1954); Lord Kinross's *Within the Taurus* (1954); Vincent Cronin's *The Golden Honeycomb* (1954); Alberto Denti di Pirajno's *A Cure for Serpents* (1955); Eric Newby's *The Last Grain Race* (1956); Laurence Durrell's *Bitter Lemons* (1957); Gavin Maxwell's *A Reed Shaken by the Wind* (1957); Gerald Brennan's *South From Granada* (1957); Laurens van der Post's *The Lost World of the Kalahari* (1958); Patrick Leigh Fermor's *Mani* (1959); Thor Heyerdahl's *Aku-Aku* (1958); Wilfred Thesiger's *Arabian Sands* (1959); James Morris's *Venice* (1960); V. S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* (1964); Sir Harry Luke's *Cyprus, A Portrait and Appreciation* (1965); Patrick Leigh Fermor's *Rumeli* (1966); Wally Herbert's *Across the Top of the World* (1969). See also **GUIDEBOOK**.

**travesty** See **BURLESQUE**.

**treatise** A formal work containing a systematic examination of a subject and its principles. The commonest subjects are philosophical, religious, literary, political, scientific and mathematical. Notable examples of the genre are: Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Metaphysics*, (4th c. B.C.); Quintillian's *Institutio* (1st c. A.D.); Peter Lombard's *Sententiae (Liber Sententiarum)* (1145–50); Calvin's *Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1535); Sir Philip Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie* (1595); Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* (1620); William Harvey's *Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus* (1628); Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica* (1687); Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690); Bossuet's *Traité de la connaissance de Dieu et de soi-même* (1722); David Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739–40); Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois*; Rousseau's *Du Contrat Social* (1762); Betham's *Introduction to Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789); Malthus's *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798); J. S. Mill's *System of Logic* (1843) and his *Princi-*



*ples of Political Economy* (1848); Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859); A. N. Whitehead's *A Treatise of Universal Algebra* (1898) and his *The Concept of Nature* (1920); Louis Aragon's *Traité du Style* (1928). See also TRACT; PAMPHLET.

**triad** (Gk 'three') In Classical Greek poetry a group of three lyric stanzas: strophe, antistrophe and epode (*qq.v.*). This arrangement was probably introduced by Stesichorus (c. 640–c. 555 B.C.) and was followed by Simonides and Pindar. See ODE.

**tribe of Ben** Or the sons of Ben. A title adopted by a group of English poets early in the 17th c. who were considerably influenced by Ben Jonson – and thus by Classicism (*q.v.*). Their lyrics were often epigrammatical, witty and satirical and were modelled on the lyrics of *The Greek Anthology*. The main members of the 'tribe' were Herrick, Carew, Sir John Suckling, Lovelace, Randolph and Godolphin. See also METAPHYSICAL; SCHOOL OF SPENSER.

**tribrach** (Gk 'three short') A metrical foot containing three unstressed syllables: ∪ ∪ ∪. Usually a resolved iamb or trochee (*qq.v.*) and seldom found as an independent foot.

**trilogy** (Gk 'set of three') A group of three tragedies presented by individual authors at the drama festivals in Athens in the 5th c. B.C. The practice was introduced by Aeschylus whose *Oresteia* is the only complete trilogy extant from that time. More recent examples are Shakespeare's *Henry VI* (c. 1592); Schiller's *Wallenstein* (1799); Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931), which was a reworking of the Oresteian theme; and Arnold Wesker's *Chicken Soup with Barley*, *Roots* and *I'm Talking about Jerusalem* (1960). The term may also be applied to a group of three novels linked by a common theme and characters. A good modern example is Joyce Cary's *Herself Surprised*, *To Be a Pilgrim* and *The Horse's Mouth* (1941–44). See TETRALOGY.

**trimeter** (Gk 'three measure') A line of verse containing three metrical feet, as in the second and fourth lines of these verses from W. S. Gilbert's *The Yarn of the 'Nancy Bell'*:

'Twas on the shores that round our coast  
Fröim Déal | tő Ráms|gäte spán,  
That I found alone on a piece of stone  
Än él|dėrlý ná|vål mán.

## trimeter

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,  
    And wée|dý and lóng | wás hé,  
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,  
    In ä sín|gúlär mí|nör káy:

Line 2 contains three iambs; line 4 an iamb, an anapaest and an iamb; line 6 is the same as line 4; line 8 is anapaest, anapaest, iamb. *See* ANAPAEST; IAMB.

**trimètre** A French metrical term for the twelve-syllable alexandrine (*q.v.*) which has *three* divisions to the line. Common in the 16th c., it was later used by Molière and La Fontaine, and extensively revived by the 19th c. romantic poets.

**triolet** (F 'little three') A French fixed form, it has eight lines and two rhymes. The first line is repeated as the fourth, and the second and eighth are alike. It has been used occasionally by various poets, mostly French: Deschamps and Froissart in the late Middle Ages, La Fontaine in the 17th c., Daudet and Théodore du Banville in the 19th c. Few English poets have attempted it, but Austin Dobson, W. E. Henley and Robert Bridges all experimented quite successfully. The following example is by Bridges:

When first we met, we did not guess  
    That Love would prove so hard a master;  
Of more than common friendliness  
When first we met we did not guess  
Who could foretell the sore distress,  
    The inevitable disaster,  
When first we met? We did not guess  
    That Love would prove so hard a master.

**triple meter** This occurs when a metrical scheme requires a three-syllable foot. It is common in anapaestic meter, and also with dactyls; though dactylic metrical schemes are fairly rare. *See* ANAPAEST; DACTYL; DUPLERHYTHM.

**triple rhyme** Multiple or polysyllabic rhyme. A three-syllable rhyme, like prettily | wittily, rosily | cosily. Rare except in comic and bawdy verse. Four-syllable rhymes, like risibility | visibility, are rarer still but can be found or invented.

**triple rhythm** A synonym for triple meter (*q.v.*).

**triplet** A run of three lines in the same pattern, as a stanza, an individual poem, or, in particular, in a poem whose basic scheme is different: especially three successive rhyming lines in a poem of rhyming couplets. Dryden was fond of the occasional triplet, as in *Absalom and Achitophel*, Part I, 150:

Of these the false Achitophel was first,  
 A name to all succeeding ages curst:  
 For close designs and crooked counsels fit,  
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,  
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place,  
 In power unpleas'd, impatient of disgrace;  
 A fiery soul, which working out its way,  
 Fretted the pigmy body to decay  
 And o'er-informed the tenement of clay. }

The interlinking *sestine* of Dante's *Divina Commedia* is the major example of triplet composition. Other notable users of it are Donne, in his verse epistles; Shelley, in *Ode to the West Wind* and *The Triumph of Life*; and William Carlos Williams in *The Desert Music*. See TERCET; TERZA RIMA; TERZINA.

**tripody** A line of three feet or three feet treated as one unit. See TRIMETER.

**trisemic** (Gk 'of three time units') The term denotes the principle whereby three syllables are equivalent to three morae. See MORA.

**tristich** (Gk 'three rows') A group of three lines of verse or a stanza of three lines, as in a triplet (*q.v.*).

**tritagonist** (Gk 'third contestant') The third actor in Greek tragedy, probably introduced by Sophocles. See ANTAGONIST; PROTAGONIST; TRAGEDY.

**trivium** See QUADRIVIVIUM.

**trobar** The profession, act or art of composing poetry. The word appears to derive from the Latin *tropare* 'to make tropes'. See TROBAR CLUS; TROPE.

**trobar clus** An esoteric form of 12th c. Provençal poetry marked by complex language, enigmatic treatment and ingenious rhyming.

## trobar clus

In many cases technical virtuosity seems to have been more important than having anything to say. This style was opposed to *trobar clar*, or 'open' writing. See TROBAR.

**trochee** (Gk 'running') A metrical foot containing a stressed, followed by an unstressed, syllable: / ∪ . The reverse of an iamb (*q.v.*) and thus producing a falling rhythm (*q.v.*) as opposed to a rising rhythm (*q.v.*). In Classical verse trochaics were used from the time of Archilochus onwards, especially in lyric and drama. The commonest form was the trochaic tetrameter (*q.v.*) catalectic – known as the *septenarius* by the Romans. Not much used in English verse before the 16th c., the trochee (also known sometimes as a *choree*) was used increasingly thereafter in blank verse to provide variations in the iambic line. Many subtle examples of this substitution (*q.v.*) can be found, for instance, in Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. It is rare to find English verse composed exclusively of trochaics. When employed as the basic foot, as in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, the effect can become monotonous. In these two lines from Robert Lowell's *The Holy Innocents* the first words are trochaic:

Lístěn, | thě háybélis | tínklě | ăs thě cárt  
Wávěrs | ǒn rúb | běř týres | ălóng | thě tár.

**Troilus stanza** See RHYME ROYAL.

**trope** (Gk 'turn') In general it still denotes any rhetorical or figurative device, but a special development in its use occurred during the Middle Ages when it came to be applied to a verbal amplification of the liturgical text. An early example was the elaboration of the *Kyrie eleison*:

Kyrie,  
magnae Deus potentiae,  
liberator hominis,  
transgressoris mandati,  
eleison.

However, the most famous instance of such an interpolation was the *Quem quaeritis* (*q.v.*) trope preceding the *Introit* on Easter Sunday. This developed into a dramatized form and became detached from the sacred Liturgy. See LITURGICAL DRAMA; MYSTERY PLAY.



**troubadour** (Pr 'finder, inventor') The troubadours were poets who flourished in the south of France between c. 1100 and 1350. They were attached to various courts and were responsible for the phenomenon known as courtly love (*q.v.*). Most of their lyrics were amorous; some satirical and political. They cultivated five main genres: the *canso d'amor* (see *chanson*); the *pastorela* (see *pastourelle*); the *alba* (see *aubade*); the *tenso*, *partimen* or *jeu parti* (*q.v.*); and the *sirventes* (*q.v.*). Some troubadours were known by name: Guillaume d'Aquitaine, Arnaut Daniel and Bertrand de Born. The troubadours (who composed in *langue d'oc*) had a very considerable influence on Dante and Petrarch, and indeed on the whole development of the lyric (*q.v.*), especially the love lyric, in Europe. See MINNESINGER; PAYADA; TROUVÈRE.

**trouvère** (OF 'finder, inventor') A medieval poet of northern France, especially Picardy. The *trouvères*, who were contemporary with the southern troubadour poets, wrote lyrics on similar topics in *langue d'oïl*. They also composed *chansons de geste* (*q.v.*) and *romans bretons* (*q.v.*). As with the troubadours, some were known by name: for instance, Jean Bodel, Blondel de Nesle, Conon de Béthune. See MINNESINGER; PAYADA; TROUBADOUR.

**truncation** See CATALEXIS.

**Tudor period** The period of 1485–1603 during which the Tudor family ruled England. Among the hundreds of writers who flourished during this time of almost unparalleled creative activity in literature, the following are some of the most famous: Caxton, Lydgate, Barclay, William Dunbar, Hawes, Sir Thomas More, Skelton, Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Earl of Surrey, William Tyndale, John Lyly, Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, Nashe, Peele, Greene, Lodge, Daniel, Kyd, Drayton, Chettle, Bacon, Barnabe Barnes, Hooker, Marston, Southwell, Middleton, Dekker, Ben Jonson, Thomas Heywood, Campion and Carew.

**tumbling verse** A term apparently first used by James VI of Scotland in *Reulis and Cautelis* (1585) to describe a four-foot line of tri-syllabic feet (dactyls and anapaests); a line form which developed from the alliterative verse (*q.v.*) of the Middle Ages. Skelton, among others, experimented with this. The following stanza comes from *Speak, Parrot* (1521):

## tumbling verse

My name is Parrot, a bird of Paradise,  
By nature deviséd of a wonderous kind,  
Daintily dieted with divers delicate spice  
Till Euphrates, that flood, driveth me into Ind;  
Where men of that countrý by fortune me find  
And send me to greatè ladyès estate:  
Then Parrot must have an almond or date.

Most of the feet are dactylic or anapaestic.

However, the term is also applied to another kind of verse at which Skelton again was particularly adept. It consists of short lines of two or three stresses which move at a brisk, almost helter-skelter (one might say helter-Skelton) pace, as in his *Colin Clout* (1519–20). See DOGGEREL; SKELTONICS.

**turning point** The observable moment when, in a story or a play (or indeed in many kinds of narrative), there is a definite change in direction and one becomes aware that it is now about to move towards its end. This is a change of fortune; what Aristotle described as *peripeteia* (*q.v.*), or reversal. It is the equivalent of reaching a peak and beginning the descent beyond. In tragedy (*q.v.*), especially, one is conscious of this crucial or fulcral point. Thomas Hardy, for example, underlines the moment in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*:

Small as the police-court incident had been in itself, it formed the edge or turn in the incline of Henchard's fortunes. On that day – almost at that minute – he passed the ridge of prosperity and honour, and began to descend rapidly on the other side.

In the same way, Chaucer, when he begins Book IV of *Troilus and Criseyde*, makes it clear that the wheel of fortune is about to turn:

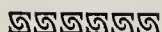
From Troilus she [Fortune] gan hire brighte face  
Away to writhe, and tok of hym non heede,  
But caste hym clene out of his lady grace,  
And on her whiel she sette up Diomedé;  
For which right now myn herte gynneth blede,  
And now my penne, alas! with which I write,  
Quaketh for drede of that I moste endite.

*See* CLIMAX; FREYTAG'S PYRAMID.

typological *See* ALLEGORY; CONCEIT.

**tz'u** A Chinese poetic form created during the T'ang period. It was a kind of song libretto with a tonal pattern similar to that found in the lu-shih (*q.v.*), and its meters were irregular.

# U



**ubi sunt** (L 'where are (they) ?') The opening words of a number of MedL poems, they are now used to classify a particular kind of poem that dwells on and laments the transitory nature of life and beauty. Sometimes the words open a poem, or begin each stanza, or serve as a refrain (*q.v.*). The elegiac mood to which they are a keynote is present in some early OE poems like *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer*, and in ME lyrics like the 13th c. *Ubi Sount Qui Ante Nos Fuerount* which begins:

Uere be þey beforen us weren,  
Houndes ladden and hauekes beren  
And hadden feld and wode?  
Þe riche leuedies in hoere bour,  
Þat wereden gold in hoere tressour  
Wiþ hoere brigtte rode . . .

A number of French poets made considerable use of the motif. In the 14th c. Deschamps composed several *ballades* on the theme. In the 15th c. Chastellain used it in a long poem called *Le Pas de la Mort*, and in the same period Olivier de la Marche worked it through the allegorical *Parement et Triumphe des Dames*. Probably the best known of all is Villon's *Ballade des Dames du Temps Jadis* (also of the 15th c.) with its famous refrain 'Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?'. The motif recurs regularly in Tudor and Elizabethan lyric poetry, and nowhere more eloquently than in Thomas Nashe's magnificent *In Time of Pestilence* whose third stanza runs:

Beauty is but a flower  
Which wrinkles will devour:  
Brightness falls from the air,  
Queens have died young and fair,  
Dust hath closed Helen's eye.

Followed by the knell-like refrain:



I am sick, I must die.  
 Lord have mercy on us!

The motif is present in many elegies, but today one is unlikely to find it except in a fixed form; as in, for example, Edmund Gosse's *Ballade of Dead Cities*. See also CARPE DIEM; CORONACH; DANSE MACABRE; DIRGE; ELEGY; EPICEDIIUM; LAMENT; THRENODY.

**ultraism** A radical attitude whose quest and objective in literature (and art) is for a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*, or for an expression of experience which seeks to go beyond the limitations of the medium. Hence phenomena like 'happenings', the use of different coloured pages in a novel to suggest tone and mood, gimmick books in which the pages can be re-arranged as the reader wishes. In this century there have been many experiments in ultraistic modes. If we accept that language is 'public' but that 'private' languages are also possible, then Joyce, in *Finnegans Wake*, was pushing language near the limits of comprehensibility in the 'public' sense. Orwell was clearly experimenting 'ultraistically' in 1984. Likewise Anthony Burgess with *natsad* in *The Clockwork Orange*; and B. S. Johnson in several of his novels. Ultraism is particularly noticeable in the Theatre of the Absurd (*q.v.*). See also DADAISM; EXPRESSIONISM; NADSAT; SUR-REALISM.

**unanimism** The term 'unanimist' was applied to a school of French poets in the early 1920s. Unanimism (considerably influenced by Walt Whitman's theories of universal brotherhood) represents a vision of humanity in which man is seen as a member of a group (in a school or factory or city) as well as an individual. Also a vision in which groups are seen in relation to other groups. The principal writer of this school was Jules Romains (1885-1972) who explained his ideas in *Les Hommes de bonne volonté* (1932-47). Another prolific writer connected with the movement was Georges Duhamel (1884-1966).

**unconscious, the** A region or state of mind assumed to exist without any evidence other than that adduced by conscious action. Alternatively, by assumption, the sum of the dynamic elements which constitute a personality (the individual may be aware of some of these and unaware of others). Or, again by assumption,

## unconscious, the

a mental process wholly different from a conscious process but at the same time one which influences and modifies the conscious processes; also known as endopsychic processes.

The term 'unconscious', like subconscious (*q.v.*) and, to a much lesser extent, pre-conscious, co-conscious and extra-conscious, has become a part of literary critical jargon; for example, in the phrase 'creative unconscious', which Koestler says works by a 'bisociation of matrices'; one of many instances of inspissating pseudo-scientific verbiage.

## understatement *See* LITOTES.

**unities** Aristotle was the first to consider the problem of the dramatic unities of action, time and space, but he did not invent them. In *Poetics* (writing of action) he says: 'The fable should be the imitation of one action, and of the whole of this and the parts of the transactions should be so arranged, that any one of them being transposed, or taken away, the whole would become different and changed'. Of time he writes: 'Tragedy endeavours to confine itself to one revolution of the sun, or but slightly to exceed this limit'. On space he is less explicit, merely saying (when contrasting epic and tragedy *qq.v.*) that tragedy should be confined to a narrow compass.

It has sometimes arisen that comparatively casual remarks by an ancient pundit have come to be regarded as *ex cathedra* fiat of almost infallible authority. Aristotle's observations have been particularly susceptible to this sort of reverence. For instance, in 1570 Castelvetro, the Italian scholar, laid down the above statements as *rules* and it was only a matter of time before a large number of other scholars made out that Aristotle himself had pronounced these points of view as dogma. In all probability it was Jean Mairet (1604-86) who established the doctrine of unities (though Ronsard and Jean de la Taille had made earlier statements) which French dramatists were to follow (almost unquestioningly) for two hundred years. Mairet's play *Sophonisbe* (1634) was the first French play to conform strictly to the unity rules.

The supporters of the Classical precepts required that a play should be a unified whole, that the time of action should be limited to twenty-four hours (though some allowed thirty-six) and that the scene should be unchanged (or at any rate confined to one town or city).

These rules were largely ignored by English and Spanish dramatists – probably to the lasting gain of drama – though, oddly, the French called them *les unités scaligeriennes* after Julius Caesar Scaliger, the eminent classical scholar, who had referred to them in *Poetices Libri Septem* (1561) when speaking of verisimilitude (*q.v.*). See CONVENTION; UNITY.

**unity** The concept of artistic unity was first worked out by Plato in *Phaedrus*. A work which possesses the quality of unity has an internal logic of structure wherein each part is interdependent. The work coheres, is self-contained and is free of any element (digression, ornament or episode) which might distract attention from its main purpose. The concept of perfect unity presupposes a work from which nothing can be taken away without marring it, and to which nothing can be added without introducing a blemish. See also PLATONISM; UNITIES.

**universality** That quality in a work of art which enables it to transcend the limits of the particular situation, place, time, person and incident in such a way that it may be of interest, pleasure and profit (in the non-commercial sense) to all men at any time in any place. As it was expressed in the treatise *On The Sublime* – ‘lofty and true greatness in art pleases all men in all ages’. The writer who aspires to universality therefore concerns himself with, primarily, aspects of human nature and behaviour which seldom or never change. Thus the good satirist concentrates on the major diseases of the mind and spirit – like pride and avarice, envy, hypocrisy and lust for power. This explains why the satires of Aristophanes, Juvenal, Erasmus, Ben Jonson, Molière, Dryden, Swift, Voltaire, Pope and Samuel (Erewhon) Butler are so successful. See also QUOD SEMPER QUOD UBIQUE; TASTE.

**university wits** A name given to a group of writers who flourished in London in the last twenty years or so of the 16th c. The most notable members were: Marlowe, Nashe, Greene, Lyly, Kyd, Lodge and Peele. They are reputed to have used the Mermaid Tavern in Bread Street off Cheapside.

**untranslatableness** A word used by Coleridge in a fairly famous passage in *Biographia Literaria* (Chap. XXII): ‘In poetry, in which every line, every phrase, may pass the ordeal of deliberation and deliberate choice, it is possible, and barely possible, to attain that

## untranslatableness

*ultimatum* which I have ventured to propose as the infallible test of a blameless style; namely; its *untranslatableness* in words of the same language without injury to the meaning.'

**usage** The generally accepted mode of expression in words, as established by custom, tradition and practice. Words, idioms, colloquialisms, syntax, grammar in common everyday use. Two classic works on the subject are H. W. & F. G. Fowler's *The King's English* (1906) and H. W. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (1926). See KING'S ENGLISH.

**ut pictura poesis** (L 'as is painting so is poetry') A phrase invented by Horace (*Ars Poetica* 361), though the idea was not new, suggesting that painting and poetry are comparable or similar arts. The idea provoked some discussion during the 16th, 17th and 18th c. For the most part these aesthetic speculations seem otiose if not sterile, and Shaftesbury may well have been right when, in *Plastics* (1712), he remarked that comparisons '... between painting and poetry are almost ever absurd and at best constrained, lame and defective'. As an aesthetic theory (it was probably little more than a casually tentative *obiter dictum* by Horace – like Aristotle's remarks on the dramatic unities *q.v.*) it has long been defunct. See CORRESPONDENCE OF THE ARTS.

**utopia** Sir Thomas More was the first to apply this word (from Greek *ou* 'not' + *topos* 'place') to a literary genre when he named his imaginary republic *Utopia* (1516), a pun on *eutopia* 'place (where all is) well'.

The idea of a place where all is well is of great antiquity. In the Sumerian epic of *Gilgamesh*, for example, of the second millennium B.C. we find a description of a kind of earthly paradise: 'The croak of the raven was not heard, the bird of death did not utter the cry of death, the lion did not devour, the wolf did not tear the lamb, the dove did not mourn, there was no widow, no sickness, no old age, no lamentation'. Homer described the Elysian Fields in the *Odyssey*. So, later, did Lucian in a slightly more comic fashion. There were various versions of the Greek myth of the Isles of the Blessed, which Hesiod described (also Pindar and Horace). Christianity reinforced the notion of an attainable paradise which, in St Augustine's terms, was the heavenly city (as opposed to the earthly city) and for the next thousand years at



least, in both 'official' and popular literature, the kingdom of heaven was a more than possible objective. The Church exhorted the faithful to lead holy lives in order to go there. The popular conception was fed on visions of paradise and accounts of journeys there, just as it was nourished on extremely dissuasive accounts of hell and purgatory. Many of the paradises are reminiscent of garden cities and the descriptions are materialistic in tone; good weather and medieval mod cons are more or less guaranteed. But then, even the paradise depicted in the *Koran* sounds like a polygamous establishment organized by Mediterranean tour operators.

It is probably no coincidence that as traditional religious beliefs were modified, so the number of earthly utopian schemes proliferated. Since More's *Utopia*, which can be taken as the first of modern times, there have been at least a hundred similar ideas. Some are mere pipe-dreams, little more than Butlin castles in Spain; others are carefully thought out working models.

Long before More, however, the very first ideal commonwealth was devised by Plato. In his *Republic* (4th c. B.C.), Plato depicted a state in which rulers are philosophers, goods and women are communally owned, slavery is taken for granted, and the breeding of children is controlled on eugenic lines. There was to be no art or drama and next to no poetry. It was a Spartan utopia; indeed, the prototype of the totalitarian state.

More's welfare state was also communistic. No private property, free universal education, six hours' manual work a day, utility clothes, free medical treatment, meals in civic restaurants (meals accompanied by reading or music). All religions were to be tolerated, but the penal code, especially in sexual matters, was harsh; adultery led to slavery; repeated offences to death.

The next utopian plan of note was the *Christianopolis* (1619) of Andreae and this was not dissimilar to More's conception. A remarkable feature was the town-planning scheme which provided houses with bathrooms. Campanella's *La Città del Sole* (1623) has many features of Plato's and More's régimes, but the ruler is an executive – O or Metaphysic, assisted by three subordinates named Love, Power and Knowledge. In 1626 Francis Bacon published his *New Atlantis*, which is akin to a treatise on political philosophy in the form of a fable and is particularly noteworthy because it contains the 'blueprint' for the Royal Society and mentions inventions which suggest the future development of aeroplanes, submarines and telephones. In

## utopia

Samuel Gott's *New Jerusalem* (1648) there is great emphasis on ideal education, and in Gerrard Winstanley's *The Law of Freedom in a Platform* (1649) there are detailed plans for communal property and free education. From this period also dates Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651) and Harrington's *Oceana* (1656). Hobbes's work is a treatise on political philosophy; *Oceana* a counter and a contrast to it; a kind of political romance (*q.v.*).

From this time on many contributions to utopian literature were made (not a few of them frivolous and extravagant) but there is nothing of great importance or merit until the 19th c. when there was not only a spate of literary utopias, but an increasing number of experiments in putting utopian schemes into actual practice.

The influence of the French and Industrial Revolutions suggested again that some form of earthly paradise was attainable. For example, Southey and Coleridge were stimulated by the concept of Pantisocracy (a utopia in which all rule and all are equal).

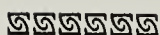
The most original utopias were created towards the end of the century: Bulwer Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871); Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888); William Morris's *A Dream of John Bull* (1888) and his utopian romance *News from Nowhere* (1890); Theodor Hertzka's *Freeland, a Social Anticipation* (1891). But the major contribution was H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1905). Wells was the first to conceive utopia as a world state: international government; central bureaucracy; state-controlled land, capital and industry; and population control. This global utopia was ruled by a voluntary 'nobility' called Samurai – the equivalent of Plato's guardian Philosophers. Wells, a compulsive utopist, followed this up with *Men Like Gods* (1925), a further plan for harmonious living. In 1962 Aldous Huxley published *Island*, a genuinely constructive utopia which has been misunderstood.

The seeming impossibility of utopia (and the many failures to create it) has produced its converse: dystopia or anti-utopia; in some cases almost chiliastic forecasts of the doom awaiting mankind. They range from the whimsical fantasy of Joseph Hall's *Mundus Alter et Idem* (1600), very probably the first of its kind, to the unrelievedly depressing vision of Orwell's *1984* (1949). In between come Zamyatin's *My* (1920), a Wellsian fantasy set in the 26th c., Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), the wittiest and most urbane of all anti-utopian worlds, and the same author's

*Ape and Essence* (1949). Political dystopia is also well represented by Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) and David Karp's *One* (1953).

In some instances utopian worlds are almost indistinguishable from those in SF, desert island fiction (*qq.v.*) and tall traveller's tales of the kind that Pliny, Lucian and Sir Mandeville delighted in (and sometimes combine elements of all three). Some works which owe a good deal to the classic examples of utopia are: Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moon* (1638); Gabriel de Foigny's *La Terre Australe Connue* (1676); H. G. Wells's *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1899), *The Time Machine* (1895) and *The First Men in the Moon* (1901); E. M. Forster's *The Machine Stops* (1947); Mary McCarthy's *A Source of Embarrassment* (1950); Evelyn Waugh's *Love Among the Ruins* (1953); William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954); and John Wyndham's *From Pillar to Post* (1956).

# V



**vade mecum** (L 'go with me'). A manual (*q.v.*) or handbook carried for frequent and regular reference. For example, *The Fisherman's Vade Mecum* (1942) by G. W. Maunsell. Field guides for birds, trees, mammals, insects etc. are also vade mecums. *See also* GUIDEBOOK.

**variable syllable** One which may be stressed or unstressed according to the needs of the metrical pattern. Also known as 'distributed stress' and 'hovering accent'. Take these lines from the beginning of Pope's *Second Epistle: Of the Characters of Women*:

Nothing so true as what you once let fall,  
Most Women have no Characters at all.  
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,  
And best distinguish'd by black, brown or fair.

The first line is regularly iambic, except for the substituted trochaic foot at the beginning ('nothing' is trochaic) and scans thus:

Nóthĩng | sỏ trué | ấs whát | yỏ ónce | lẻt fáll,

The second line, however, might be scanned in three different ways, according to where the emphases are placed in order to get a particular sense:

Móst Wó|mẻn hẻvẻ nỏ | Chẻrẻctẻrs | ất ảll.

That is: spondee/tribrach (which is rare)/dactyl/iamb. Or:

Mỏst Wỏ|mẻn hẻvẻ nỏ | Chẻrẻctẻrs | ất ảll.

That is: iamb/anapaest/dactyl/iamb. Or:

Móst Wỏ|mẻn hẻvẻ nỏ | Chẻrẻctẻrs | ất ảll.

That is: spondee/bacchius (which is rare)/dactyl/iamb.



The third line is exactly the same as the first, with a substituted trochaic 'matter'. The fourth has a variable syllable in 'distinguish'd'. The line may be scanned either:

Ānd bést | dīstīnguīsh'd | bŷ bláck, | brówn ōr fáir.

That is: iamb/bacchius/iamb/cretic (or amphimacer). Or:

Ānd bést | dīstīnguīsh'd | bŷ bláck, | brówn ōr fáir.

In this version 'distinguish'd' is an amphibrach.

It should be noted that each of the above lines has ten syllables and that in each the basic stress pattern tends to comprise five stresses per line – as one would expect in iambic pentameters. But Pope had such a sensitive ear for the delicate nuances of words that he often eludes scansion, and technical exegesis of the kind displayed here verges on impertinence. *See* DURATION; FOOT; HOVERING STRESS; SUBSTITUTION.

**variorum** (Short for, 'an edition with the notes of various persons' from *L editio cum notis variorum*); a *variorum* contains the complete works of an author accompanied by the notes of previous commentators and editors; and, in all probability, indications of the textual changes made during successive printings. An outstanding recent example is the *Twickenham Edition* of Pope's works.

**vates** (L 'poet, bard') Especially one of the theopneustic or prophetic kind. Hence *vatic* means characteristic of a prophet or seer. A class of Gaulish druids were known as *vates*. Perhaps the most famous of classical times was the Sibyl. Virgil has been credited with vatic powers because, in the *Fourth Eclogue*, he prophesied the birth of a boy under whose rule the world would be peaceful. This was later interpreted as a prophecy of the birth of Christ.

**vaudeville** (Shortened alteration of OF *chanson du vau de Vire* 'song of the vale of Vire') In all probability the term derives from the fact that, in the 15th c., Olivier Basselin, who lived in the valley of the river Vire in Calvados, Normandy, wrote satirical songs. Such songs were later incorporated in comedies; thus, comedy with vaudevilles. Later, it was adopted in America to describe comic, musical and acrobatic turns in the theatre; the equivalent of the British music hall. The period of its greatest popularity coincided with that of the music hall (c. 1890–1930). Thereafter vaudeville could not compete with the cinema. The term is still

## vaudeville

used in France and England to describe light, theatrical entertainment of a knockabout kind, with musical interludes. *See also* ZARZUELA.

**vehicle** *See* TENOR AND VEHICLE.

**venedotian code** An extremely complex code dating from the 15th c. which lays down the rules of Welsh versification and classifies twenty-four different measures.

**Venus and Adonis stanza** So named because Shakespeare used it for *Venus and Adonis* (1593). A six-lined stanza rhyming ababcc. But a number of poets had used it earlier, e.g. Sidney in *Arcadia* (1590). However, it has a 'curiosity' interest because Shakespeare used it in *Love's Labour's Lost* (c. 1595) and *Romeo and Juliet* (c. 1595) where its effect is to produce dramatic stylization of an almost operatic kind.

**verbocrap** A type of jargon (*q.v.*) language commonly used by verbocrats, and thus dear to bureaucrats and semi-literate officials of all kinds. It is marked by polysyllabic circumlocutions, crude syntax, faulty grammar and a self-important, orotund tone; what A. P. Herbert called 'Jungle English' or 'Dolichologia'. An example (from an educational publication) is:

Due to increased verbalization the educationist desires to earnestly see school populations achieve cognitive clarity, auracy, literacy and numeracy both within and without the learning situation. However, the classroom situation (and the locus of evaluation *is* the classroom) is fraught with so many innovative concepts (e.g. the problem of locked confrontation between pupil and teacher) that the teaching situation is, in the main, inhibitive to any meaningful articulacy. It must now be fully realized that the secondary educational scene has embraced the concept that literacy has to be imparted and acquired via humanoid-to-humanoid dialogue. This is a break-through.

One may well ask – from what and to what. *See also* OFFICIALESE; PERIPHRAISIS.

**Verfremdung** *See* ALIENATION EFFECT.

**verisimilitude** Likeness to the truth, and therefore the appearance of being true or real even when fantastic. But then fantasy is, or should be, rooted in reality. What might be called the inherent authenticity of a work (as well as its intrinsic probability), having made allowances for premisses, conventions and codes, will be the criterion by which its 'truth' can be assessed. If the writer has done his work well, then the reader will find the result an acceptable presentation of reality. Thus, works which may strain ordinary credulity (e.g. Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Voltaire's *Candide*, Wells's *The First Men in the Moon*) will be as credible as those which purport to be mundanely realistic (e.g. most of the novels of writers like Jane Austen, Zola, Thomas Hardy, Henry James and Arnold Bennett). In the end, verisimilitude will depend as much on the reader's knowledge, intelligence and experience (and his capacity for make-believe) as upon the writer's use of those same resources. See BIENSÉANCES, LES; MIMESIS; VRAISEMBLANCE.

**verism** The doctrine that literature or art should represent the truth (reality), however disagreeable that truth might be. A verist believes this. See REALISM.

**vernacular** (L *vernaculus* 'domestic, native, indigenous') Domestic or native language. Now applied to the language used in one's native country. It may also be used to distinguish between a 'literary' language and a dialect; for instance, William Barnes's 'vernacular poems', an outstanding example of dialect (*q.v.*) poetry.

**vers** A kind of song in Old Provençal. Almost indistinguishable from the *chanson* (*q.v.*), but *vers* is the older term.

**vers de société** Literally 'society verse', a sub-species of light verse (*q.v.*). It is usually epigrammatic or lyrical verse dealing with the superficial problems and events of a sophisticated and polite society. It is often satirical and characterized by technical virtuosity, wit, elegance and a conversational tone. Often intricate forms like *triolet*, *villanelle* and *rondeau* (*qq.v.*) are used. The *ballads*, the limerick and the clerihew (*qq.v.*) are also favourite forms. A great many English poets have produced such verse; outstanding among them are Alexander Pope, Matthew Prior, Mackworth Praed, Theodore Hook, C. S. Calverley, W. E.

## vers de société

Henley, Andrew Lang, Austin Dobson, W. S. Gilbert, Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, A. P. Herbert, John Betjeman and W. H. Auden. Less notable contributions have been made by George Wither, John Wilmot Rochester, the Cavalier Poets (*q.v.*), and Thomas Gray. Among Americans the better known are Ogden Nash, Morris Bishop, Phyllis McGinley and Richard Armour. Many French poets have essayed *vers de société*, including Léon-Paul Fargue, Jules Laforgue, Tristan Corbière and Théophile Gautier.

Betjeman's *In Westminster Abbey* is a good modern example of the genre. The first verses run:

Let me take this other glove off  
As the *vox humana* swells,  
And the beauteous fields of Eden  
Bask beneath the Abbey bells.  
Here, where England's statesmen led,  
Listen to a lady's cry.  
  
Gracious Lord, oh bomb the Germans.  
Spare their women for Thy Sake,  
And if that is not too easy  
We will pardon Thy Mistake.  
But gracious Lord, whate'er shall be,  
Don't let anyone bomb me.  
  
Keep our Empire undismembered  
Guide our Forces by Thy Hand,  
Gallant blacks from far Jamaica,  
Honduras and Togoland;  
Protect them Lord in all their fights,  
And, even more, protect the whites.  
  
Think of what our Nation stands for,  
Books from Boots' and country lanes,  
Free speech, free passes, class distinction,  
Democracy and proper drains.  
Lord, put beneath Thy special care  
One-eighty-nine Cadogan Square.

**vers libérés** (F 'freed verse') The French *Symbolistes*, most notably Verlaine, c. 1880, introduced new metrical forms and modifications of traditional ones. The intention was to free French versification from Classical conventions. But this 'liberated'



verse was still syllabic and still rhymed. *See also* FREE VERSE; VERS LIBRES; SYMBOL AND SYMBOLISM.

**vers libres** (F 'free verse') A term used to denote verse forms commonly employed in the 17th c. in which there were subtle variations of line and stanza length and alternations of masculine and feminine rhymes in order to achieve special effects. La Fontaine's *Fables* (1668-94) contain many examples. *See also* FREE VERSE; VERS LIBRES (below); VERS LIBÉRÉS.

**vers libres** An important innovation in French prosody dating, like *vers libérés* (q.v.), from c. 1880. It abandoned certain traditional principles; especially the rules which prescribed recurrent metrical patterns and a certain number of syllables per line. Rhythm, and the division of verse into rhythmical units, was held to be the essential foundation of poetic form. This rhythm was to be personal, the particular expression of the individual poet. Thus, his own voice or tune. The rhythm had also to be appropriate to the subject. Any poet worthy of the name had always been keenly aware of the nature and importance of rhythm, and any poet anyway has his own voice and tune. The theories of the French poets and prosodists helped to enforce a heightened awareness of the essential; and the innovations were, in many cases, beneficial.

Among the earliest poems to be written in *vers libres* were two by Rimbaud: namely, *Marine* and *Movement* (c. 1872-73). Other important *vers-libristes* were Paul Verlaine, Jules Laforgue, Edouard Dujardin, Francis Jammes, Henri de Regnier and Emile Verhaeren. The innovations had considerable influence upon American and English poets. How much is a matter of dispute; but it is a fact that Walt Whitman, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot and D. H. Lawrence (among many others) were all, at some stage or another, affected by them. Poets continue to experiment with *vers libres*. For example: Gregory Corso, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Allen Ginsberg, Roger McGough, John Berryman, Ted Hughes, Michael Hamburger, Peter Redgrove, Philip Larkin, Donald Davie, Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton - to name a handful of American and English poets. Their counterparts on the European continent are as numerous.

**verse** Three main meanings may be distinguished: (a) a line of metrical writing; (b) a stanza (q.v.); (c) poetry in general.

## verse paragraph

**verse paragraph** A group of lines (often in blank verse) which forms a unit. Common in long narrative poems, like Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Wordsworth's *Prelude*. In fact, Milton developed the verse paragraph so skilfully that it is unlikely that anyone will ever surpass him. See LAISSE; VERSET.

**verset** A form derived from the kind of verse formations to be found in the Old Testament (e.g. *The Song of Songs*). Usually several long lines forming a group or 'paragraph', the whole characterized by a strong rhythm and many figurative and rhetorical devices. A number of European poets have explored the possibilities of this flexible form. Notable instances are Hölderlin, Peguy, Rimbaud and Claudel. Among English poets: Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot and D. H. Lawrence. The following lines from Lawrence's *Kangaroo* give some idea of the verset:

Still she watches with eternal, cocked wistfulness!  
How full her eyes are, like the full, fathomless, shining eyes of an  
Australian black-boy  
Who has been lost so many centuries on the margins of existence!

She watches with insatiable wistfulness.  
Untold centuries of watching for something to come,  
For a new signal from life, in that silent lost land of the South.

Where nothing bites but insects and snakes and the sun, small life.  
Where no bull roared, no cow ever lowed, no stag cried, no  
leopard screeched, no lion coughed, no dog barked,  
But all was silent save for parrots occasionally, in the haunted blue  
bush.

Wistfully watching, with wonderful liquid eyes.  
And all her weight, all her blood, dripping sack-wise down to-  
wards the earth's centre,  
And the live little-one taking in its paw at the door of her belly.  
Leap then, and come down on the line that draws to the earth's  
deep, heavy centre.

See VERSE PARAGRAPH.

**versicle** Usually a liturgical term. Four meanings can be distinguished: (a) a short sentence said or sung antiphonally; (b) a little verse; (c) a verse of the Psalms or Bible; (d) a short or single metrical line.

**versification** Three meanings may be distinguished: (a) the action of composing a verse (*q.v.*) or the art or practice of versifying; (b) the form of a poetical composition – its structure and metre; (c) a metrical version of some prose work.

**verso piano** (It ‘plain verse’) In Italian prosody, any line that has a feminine ending (*q.v.*) with the stress on the penultimate syllable. *Verso piano* is the basic narrative line in Italian verse, corresponding to our iambic pentameter. *See* IAMB; PENTAMETER; VERSO SCIOLTO; VERSO TRONCO.

**verso sciolto** (It ‘free, easy, loose verse’) An unrhymed hendecasyllabic line with the main accent on the tenth syllable. Italian poets were using it in the 13th c. and by the Renaissance period it was established as the equivalent of the Classical hexameter (*q.v.*) used for epic poetry. It served as the basis for blank verse (*q.v.*) in English poetry. *See also* VERSO PIANO; VERSO TRONCO.

**verso sdrucciolo** (It ‘sliding, slippery verse’) In Italian prosody, a line with the principal accent on the tenth syllable and ending with a word accented on the antepenultimate syllable – thus giving the line twelve syllables.

**verso tronco** (It ‘truncated verse’) In Italian prosody, any line ending with an accented syllable, especially one with the principal accent on the tenth syllable and a masculine ending. *See also* VERSO PIANO; VERSO SCIOLTO.

**Vice, the** A kind of fool or buffoon who appeared as a character in the Interludes and Morality Plays (*qq.v.*) in the 16th c. The Vice was often borne on the devil’s back and he carried a dagger of lath or a stick. *See also* SLAPSTICK.

**Victorian period** The era of Queen Victoria’s reign (1837–1901). The period is sometimes dated from 1832 (the passage of the first Reform Bill). A period of intense and prolific activity in literature, especially by novelists and poets, philosophers and essayists. Dramatists of any note are few. Much of the writing was concerned with contemporary social problems; for instance, the effects of the industrial revolution, the influence of the theory of evolution, movements of political and social reform. The following are among the most notable English writers of the period:

## Victorian period

Thomas Love Peacock, Keble, Carlyle; William Barnes, Cardinal Newman, Disraeli, R. S. Surtees, Bulwer Lytton, J. S. Mill, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Kinglake, Tennyson, Charles Darwin, Thackeray, Robert Browning, Edward Lear, Dickens, Aytoun, Charles Reade, Trollope, Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, Anne Brontë, Charles Kingsley, George Eliot, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Wilkie Collins, T. H. Huxley, George Meredith, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, Lewis Carroll, William Morris, Lord Acton, Samuel Butler, Swinburne, Pater, Dobson, Thomas Hardy, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Andrew Lang, Alice Meynell, W. E. Henley, Robert Louis Stevenson, Henry Arthur Jones, Oscar Wilde, Pinero, Francis Thompson, Rudyard Kipling, Synge.

Famous American writers of the period were Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Melville, Mark Twain and Henry James.

**viewpoint** The position of the narrator in relation to his story; thus the outlook from which the events are related. There are many variations and combinations but three basic ones may be distinguished. Firstly, the omniscient – the author moves from character to character, place to place, and episode to episode with complete freedom, giving himself access to his characters' thoughts and feelings whenever he chooses and providing information whenever he wishes. This is probably the commonest point of view and one which has been established for a very long time. Chaucer used the method very successfully in *Troilus and Criseyde* (c. 1385); Fielding employed it in *Tom Jones* (1749); Huxley in *Brave New World* (1932); Gabriel Fielding in *The Birthday King* (1962). Such a point of view does not require the author to stay outside his narrative. He may interpolate his own commentaries. Secondly, the third person – the author chooses a character and the story is related in terms of that character in such a way that the field of vision is confined to him or her alone. A good example of this is Strether in Henry James's *The Ambassadors* (1903). Thirdly, first person narrative – here the story is told in the first person by one of the characters. Classic examples are Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1849–50) and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916). This method had become increasingly popular and has been used by many authors during this century. A recent instance is Graham Greene's *Travels with My Aunt* (1969). Various combinations of these methods have been



attempted by many authors; in some cases deliberately; in some, apparently, haphazardly. For example: Dickens shifts his viewpoint continually in *Bleak House* (1852-3). So does Tolstoy in *War and Peace* (1865-72). Likewise Gide in *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* (1926). In many cases the narrator is a minor character within the story. Examples of this method are to be found in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Conrad's *Victory* (1915) and Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge* (1944). See also AESTHETIC DISTANCE; NARRATOR; NOVEL; STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS; SUBJECTIVITY AND OBJECTIVITY.

**vignette** (F 'little vine') A small ornamental design on a blank page in a book, especially at the beginning or end of a chapter. Today it may also be applied to a sketch or short composition which shows considerable skill (e.g. Virginia Woolf's short story *Kew Gardens*). Moreover, it may describe part of a longer work (e.g. Faulkner's extraordinary description of the wild spotted horses in *The Hamlet*). A further example is Turgenev's *Sketches of a Sportsman* (1847-51), vignettes of country life in Russia.

**villain** The bad man in a story, and, in an important and special sense, the evil machinator or plotter in a play. Not to be found in Classical literature, the villain, as a particular character type, was developed in the 16th c. in drama. During this period the devils who played a prominent part in the medieval Mystery Plays (*q.v.*) and the Tudor Moralities (*q.v.*) suffered a kind of metamorphosis into the full-scale villains of Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedy (the majority of the villains are to be found in Revenge Tragedy *q.v.*). In effect the devils were humanized and the villains diabolized. This process of evolution, in which two of the major formative influences were the concept of 'Senecal man' and the philosophy of expediency culled from Machiavelli (hence Machiavel, Machiavellian), can be seen in the *Digby Plays* (c. 1512), *The Castell of Perseverance* (1425), *Mind, Will and Understanding* (1460), in Bale's *The Temptation of Our Lord* (1547), in Wever's *Lusty Juventus* (c. 1559), in *The Conflict of Conscience* (1563), in Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (1568), in Lupton's *All For Money* (1578), and in Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* (c. 1588) – plus a number of other works. In most of these (and in similar plays) the devils are comic or semi-comic figures – devils continued to appear as devils in comedy until late in the 16th c. and early in the 17th c. e.g. Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594), Haughton's *Grim the*

## villain

*Collier of Croydon* (1600), the anonymous *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (1608), Dekker's *If this be not good the Devil is in it* (1610), Ben Jonson's *The Devil is an Ass* (1616) and the anonymous *The Witch of Edmonton* (1623); but *Faustus* is one of the few tragedies of the period in which the devil appears as a devil. Other examples are Barnabe Barnes's *Devil's Charter* (1607) and Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* (1607).

The villains (and some of the villainous characters) of Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedy (*q.v.*) exhibit the characteristics of devils incarnate. Of the many instances that might be cited the following are among the most notable: Barabas in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1592), Aaron in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (1594), and Gloucester in his *Richard III* (c. 1594), Piero in John Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* (1599), Hoffman in Chettle's *Tragedy of Hoffman* (c. 1600), Eleazar in *Lust's Dominion* (1600), Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello* (1604), Vendici in Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1607), Flamineo in Webster's *The White Devil* (1608), the husband in the anonymous *Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608), D'Amville in Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy* (1607-11), Bosola in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614), De Flores in Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* (1621) and Eleazar in William Heminge's *The Jewe's Tragedy* (c. 1637).

In these plays, and in many others of the period, the dramatists explored and exploited the possibilities of the evil antagonist as something like an incarnate devil, thus achieving an increased realism.

The summit and apotheosis, so to speak, of the villain in literature (and a devilish villain at that) is attained in Milton's portrayal of Satan in *Paradise Lost* (1667). Satan, as a figure and character, combines many of the characteristics of the devils and villains of the preceding three hundred years.

Thereafter, the villain as a character is not prominent until 19th c. melodrama when, for the most part, he has deteriorated into a grotesque if not buffoonish 'baddy' to be hissed and booed. The outstanding exception to this generalization is the Mephistopheles of Goethe's *Faust* (Pt I: 1808; Pt II: 1832), but this character does not really belong to the same tradition of the Elizabethan and Jacobean villain. See *SENECAN TRAGEDY*; *SOLILOQUY*.

**villancico** A Spanish song and verse form. The term derives from *villano* 'villein, peasant' and so we may suppose that it has a rustic

origin. It is a popular poetic form often with a religious content which is sung in churches at Christmas and on other feast days. In some cases it can be taken as a kind of carol, though, properly, a Christmas carol is *verso de Nochebuena* or *verso de Navidad*.

**villanelle** (It 'rural, rustic' from *villano* 'peasant') Originally used for pastoral (*q.v.*) poetry in various forms. Jean Passerat (1534-1602) very probably fixed the standard form: five three-lined stanzas or tercets (*q.v.*) and a final quatrain (*q.v.*). The first and third lines of the first tercet recur alternately in the following stanzas as a refrain (*q.v.*) and form a final couplet. A number of English poets have experimented with it, notably Oscar Wilde, W. E. Henley and W. H. Auden. Auden's *Time will say nothing* is a good example:

Time will say nothing but I told you so,  
Time only knows the price we have to pay;  
If I could tell you I would let you know.

If we should weep when clowns put on their show,  
If we should stumble when musicians play,  
Time will say nothing but I told you so.

There are no fortunes to be told, although,  
Because I love you more than I can say,  
If I could tell you I would let you know.

The winds must come from somewhere when they blow,  
There must be reasons why the leaves decay;  
Time will say nothing but I told you so.

Perhaps the roses really want to grow,  
The vision seriously intends to stay;  
If I could tell you I would let you know.

Suppose the lions all get up and go,  
And all the brooks and soldiers run away;  
Will Time say nothing but I told you so?  
If I could tell you I would let you know.

See CHAIN VERSE.

**vireli** A Provençal verse form (it also appears as *virelai*, *virelais*) which varies in length and the number of stanzas. There are two kinds: *vireli ancien* and *vireli nouveau*. A rare form. Austin Dobson experimented with it.

**virgule**

**virgule** A slanting stroke / often used to mark foot divisions in a line of verse. *See* SCANSION.

**vīsa** Half-line unit in ON poetry.

**vocalic assonance** *See* VOWEL RHYME.

**volapük** An artificial international language invented by J. M. Schleyer in 1879. It was superseded by Esperanto (*q.v.*). *See also* BASIC ENGLISH; IDO.

**Volksmärchen** (G 'folk-tale') A tale which belongs to the oral tradition (*q.v.*), and thus differs from the *Kunstmärchen* (*q.v.*) which is written down.

**volta** (It 'turn') The change in thought or feeling which separates the octave (*q.v.*) from the sestet (*q.v.*) in a sonnet (*q.v.*). *See also* MILTONIC SONNET.

**vorticism** A movement in art and literature begun *c.* 1912 by the painter and writer Wyndham Lewis. It produced a magazine, *Blast*, *Review of the Great English Vortex*, which came out twice, in 1914 and 1915. These publications carried the manifestos of the poet Ezra Pound and the sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska. Some of the early poems of Pound and T. S. Eliot were also published in *Blast* and Pound used it to elaborate his theory of the image. The movement lost momentum after 1920. *See also* IMAGISTS; SURREALISM.

**vowel rhyme** When two words rhyme because their vowel or vowels are the same. For instance: boot/roof; ease/peace. Some accept it as a form of rhyme in which any vowel sound is allowed to agree with any other. Emily Dickinson used it quite often, as in these two stanzas from *A bird came down the walk*:

... cautious,  
I offer'd him a crumb,  
And he unrolled his feathers  
And rowed him softer home  
  
Than oars divide the ocean,  
Too silver for a seam,



Or butterflies, off banks of noon,  
Leap, plashless, as they swim.

*See also* ASSONANCE.

**vraisemblance** The French equivalent of verisimilitude (*q.v.*). 17th c. French criticism distinguished between *vraisemblance ordinaire* and *extraordinaire*. The former covered appropriateness of behaviour and motive; the latter, supernatural or extraneous action—the element of surprise in plot or word. *See* BIENSÉANCES, LES.

**vuelta** (Sp ‘turn, return’) In the Spanish *zéjel* (*q.v.*) the *vuelta* is a fourth line which follows a rhymed triplet called the *mudanza* (*q.v.*).

**vulgarity** Of the large number of synonyms available in English for vulgar, ‘loud’, partly because of its sartorial associations, is one of the most suitable. Vulgarity in literature usually occurs when a writer strains himself and protests too much. He then becomes boorish, ill-bred, bullying, crude, conceivably tawdry, or just plain silly or absurd. Thus vulgarity occurs where there is a serious discrepancy between tone, matter and form; where there is incongruity; where the feelings are contrived or forced; where the language is not apt for the emotional content; where there is pretension or self-indulgence in the shape of meretricious ornament, effect for the sake of effect, and ‘display’ of emotions which are not really felt.

A good deal of dramatic verse written during the Elizabethan Jacobean periods is in poor taste because it is bombast (*q.v.*). This kind of vulgarity was skilfully parodied by Shakespeare on a number of occasions (especially, for example, in the Players’ speeches in *Hamlet*, and in Pistol’s rant in *Henry IV* and *Henry V*). Crashaw, in his more syrupy moods (there are a good many instances in *Steps to the Temple* (1646) and *The Delights of the Muses* (1646) is also guilty of vulgarity. For example, these lines from *The Weeper*:

Upwards thou dost weep,  
Heaven’s bosom drinks the gentle stream;  
Where the milky rivers meet,  
Thine crawls above and is the cream.  
Heaven, of such fair floods as this,  
Heaven the crystal ocean is.

## vulgarity

Ev'ry morn from hence,  
A brisk cherub something sips,  
Whose soft influence  
Adds sweetness to his sweetest lips;  
Then to his music and his song  
Tastes of this breakfast all day long.

Crashaw was a poet susceptible to the more bathetic forms of vulgarity, and so were a number of poets and novelists during the 18th c., a period when writers were particularly sensitive to what was fitting, and to aberrations from decorum (*q.v.*). An attitude and sensibility (*q.v.*) conveyed in Lord Chesterfield's remark that audible laughter was illiberal and ill-bred, and in Johnson's *obiter dictum* that cow-keeper and hogherd were not to be used in our language (though, he added, there were no finer words in the Greek language). Thomas Parnell, a minor 18th c. poet, conveys the then prevailing view tersely at the beginning of his *Essay On The Different Styles Of Poetry* (1713):

I hate the vulgar with untuneful mind;  
Hearts uninspir'd, and senses unrefin'd.

To this century belongs a particularly good example of a certain kind of vulgarity – Dyer's *The Fleece* (1757). He begins his four-book poem on sheep farming in the high and serious manner of Virgil and Milton:

The care of sheep, the labours of the loom,  
And arts of trade, I sing. Ye rural nymphs,  
Ye swains, and princely merchants, aid the verse.

And so on. Some lines at the beginning of the second book are a good example of a discrepancy between style, tone and matter:

Through all the brute creation, none, as sheep,  
To lordly man such ample tribute pay.  
For him their udders yield nectareous streams;  
For him the downy vestures they resign;  
For him they spread the feast; ah! ne'er may he  
Glory in wants which doom to pain and death  
His blameless fellow creatures.

The vulgarity of over-much sentimentality is a notable feature of some 18th c. novels, especially Richardson's *Pamela* (1740–1) and Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771).

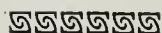
Some of the more flamboyant 'musiquesque' poems of Edgar Allan Poe display another kind of vulgarity. Consider the beginning of *Ulalume* (1847):

The skies they were ashen and sober;  
 The leaves they were crisped and sere –  
 The leaves they were withering and sere;  
 It was night in the lonesome October  
 Of my most immemorial year;  
 It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
 In the misty mid region of Weir –  
 It was down by the dank tarn of Auber  
 In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

This anapaestic word-thumping is crude.

Many other examples can be found. Swinburne often tries strenuously to be 'poetical'. Balzac, frequently a bad writer, is quite often guilty of vulgarity (for example, in *Séraphita*, 1834–5). So is Dickens, especially in the death scene of Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841). Hardy comes perilously near to 'overdoing it' in the horrors of *Jude the Obscure* (1895). Among more recent writers examples can be found in the work of Henry Miller, Laurence Durrell, William Burroughs and Ian Fleming; not to mention many instances in the purveyors of cheap, popular 'pulp' literature: the third-rate erotica and the fourth-rate thrillers. See TASTE.

# W



**weak ending** One that is unaccented. *See* FEMININE ENDING.

**well-made play** Eugène Scribe (1791–1861), the French dramatist, is usually credited with the concept of the well-made play. The term is now normally pejorative and refers to a neatly and economically constructed play which works with mechanical efficiency. Scribe was a very successful dramatist and exerted considerable influence in the theatre for many years. Well-made plays were still common in the 1930s and not infrequent until the late fifties. There may always be a commercial market for them. Witness the phenomenal run of *The Mousetrap* (1952).

**Weltanschauung** (G ‘world outlook’) As a literary term it may be used judiciously in reference to a particular author’s attitude to the world, or to the prevailing spirit and vision of a period. For instance, Thomas Hardy’s view of the human being as the victim of fate, destiny, impersonal forces and circumstances; or the disillusioned and laconic cynicism so often expressed by poets in the 1930s: W. H. Auden, Louis MacNeice, Stephen Spender, Cecil Day Lewis, William Empson, Francis Scarfe, Michael Roberts, Bernard Spenser, Norman Cameron, David Gascoyne and others.

**Weltliteratur** A term coined by Goethe which means, approximately (Goethe did not define it), that literature which is of all nations and peoples, and which, by a reciprocal exchange of ideas, mediates between nations and helps to enrich the spirit of man. Carlyle spoke of ‘World literature’. *See also* COMPARATIVE LITERATURE.

**Weltschmerz** (G ‘world smart’) Vague yearning and discontent, a weariness of life, and a melancholy pessimism. Many of the poems of Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837) suggest such a feeling of un-



ease and despair. The term may also apply to the spirit of a period like the 15th c. when there was widespread despondency and pessimism throughout Europe: feelings frequently manifest in the literature and art of that time. *See also* WELTANSCHAUUNG; ZEITGEIST.

**wên and wu** The two main classes of traditional Chinese drama.

*Wên* denotes civil, and *wu* military drama. The 'book' for these plays is more like a roughly outlined scenario than a dramatic text as we understand it in the West. In China the actors fill out the scenario framework as required, and this gives flexibility. The plays are a mixture of dialogue in prose and verse, acrobatics, dancing, mime and operatic singing. They are divided into many different scenes of variable length and are usually performed on a square stage. The dramatic conventions are prescribed and elaborate. Stage props are simple and symbolic: a table, for instance, may represent variously an altar, a wall, a bridge, a hill or a judge's bench; four black flags waved vigorously represent a strong wind; a hat done up in red cloth signifies a decapitated head; a cube wrapped in yellow silk is an official seal – and so on.

There are four main types of character: *shêng* – males in general; *tan* – females in general; *ching* or *hua-lien* – strong, vigorous men whose faces are painted like masks; *ch'ou* – comedians. Within these categories there are a number of sub-divisions.

Both speech and song are delivered in a high-pitched voice, though the comedians render a kind of bass. The twang and wong and ping noises are reinforced by not dissimilar musical accompaniment from a fiddle; but the Chinese orchestra (which is on stage) also has brass and percussion instruments.

Costume and make-up are of the greatest importance. Costumes tend to be lavish and are adapted from the styles of the T'ang, Sung, Yüan and Ming dynastic periods. Convention prescribes the significance of particular colours (emperors wear red, important officials yellow, and so forth) and also prescribes particular uses of the clothes (for example, a sleeve held up to the eyes denotes weeping). Comparable rules apply in the use of complicated make-up. Character and temperament are expressed by lines on the face and varied combinations of colour. For instance, white denotes a treacherous disposition; red, loyalty and courage; black, candour and integrity; yellow, guile; green for demons, brigands and outlaws . . . and so on. The beard, an important prestige and status symbol in ancient China, is also an integral

## wên and wu

part of make-up. A very long beard signifies heroism and wealth; a blue or red beard signifies a supernatural being.

The movements of the actors are according to convention and their tempo is set by the orchestra.

Most of the *wên* and *wu* plays are based on traditional material like legends and historical events. They tend to point a moral, or give that impression. They possess a timeless quality in that they depict Chinese life over many centuries, and they are as stylized as *No* (*q.v.*) and puppet-theatre like *karagöz* (*q.v.*).

**Wessex novels** Thomas Hardy (1840–1928) resuscitated the name of the old kingdom of Wessex to denote the south-west counties of England (principally Dorset) which are the scene of many of his novels, the most famous of which are: *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872); *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874); *The Return of the Native* (1878); *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886); *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895).

**wheel** See BOB AND WHEEL.

**whodunit** An illiterate form of 'who did it?' (i.e. the crime). A crime story closely akin to the thriller, the detective story and the *roman policier* (*qq.v.*), and often synonymous with these terms.

**willing suspension of disbelief** One of the most famous phrases ever coined. Like 'negative capability' and 'dissociated sensibility' (*qq.v.*) it has almost the utility of an indispensable talisman. Coleridge invented it and used it in Chapter XIV of *Biographia Literaria* to describe that state of receptivity and credulity desirable in a reader or member of an audience (in current jargon, 'the receptor'). The reader must 'grant' that he is about to read a story; a man in the audience is 'asked' to accept the dramatic conventions of the theatre and stage. In explaining one of the more remarkable *aperçus* in literary criticism Coleridge writes:

In this idea [he has been speaking of two possible subjects for poetry] originated the plan of the LYRICAL BALLADS; in which it was agreed, that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows

of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith.

*See also* ALS OB.

**wit** (OE *witan* 'to know') The word has acquired a number of accretions in meaning since the Middle Ages, and in critical and general usage has changed a good deal. Wit formerly meant 'sense' or 'the five senses'; thus common sense. (Cf. the phrase 'out of one's wits'.) During the Renaissance period it meant 'intelligence' or 'wisdom'; thus intellectual capacity; even, perhaps, 'genius' (*q.v.*). Roger Ascham and Lyly, for example, associated quick wit with intellectual liveliness. To Sir Philip Sidney it suggested an aptitude for writing poetry. Later, during the 17th c., the word came to mean 'fancy', dexterity of thought and imagination. Boyle and Locke understood it in those terms. Hobbes, however, in *Leviathan* (1651) thought that judgment rather than fancy was the main element. 'Judgment without fancy is wit, but fancy without judgment not.' Dryden, Cowley and Pope (among others) held that wit was primarily a matter of propriety. As Pope put it in his *Essay on Criticism* (he uses the term forty-six times in at least five different senses):

True wit is Nature to advantage dressed,  
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.

Johnson, however, growled disapprovingly at Cowley's conception and referred to his 'heterogeneous ideas . . . yoked by violence together . . .' Hazlitt distinguished between wit, which is artificial, and imagination, which is valid. During the 19th c., imagination was the term generally used to designate the ability to invent and find resemblances. Wit was associated with levity. Matthew Arnold would not allow Chaucer or Pope on his list of the greatest poets because of their wittiness, and lack of 'high seriousness'. T. S. Eliot adjusted the balance by preferring witty poets like Donne and Marvell because they were able to combine wit with seriousness. The majority of modern critics agree with Eliot. For the most part wit now suggests intellectual brilliance and ingenuity; verbal deftness, as in the epigram (*q.v.*). Wit is commonly verbal, while humour need not be. *See* FANCY AND IMAGINATION; JEU D'ESPRIT.

**wrenched accent** This occurs in verse when the requirements of

### wrenched accent

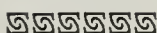
metrical stress prevail over the natural stress of a word or words. Common in ballads, as in this verse from the 18th c. Scots ballad *Mary Hamilton*:

He's courted her in the kitchen,  
He's courted her in the ha',  
He's courted her in the laigh cellar,  
And that was warst of a'.

*Cellar* is a trochaic word, but for the sake of the stress pattern is here made iambic – thus *cellár*.



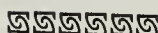
# X



**Xanaduism** A form of academic research which entails the quest for sources behind works of imagination. John Livingston Lowes set a fashion for it in 1927 with the publication of *The Road to Xanadu*, which was inspired by Coleridge's 'visionary' poem about Xanadu.

**Xenophanic** Xenophanes (6th c. B.C.) was a native of Ionia and an itinerant poet who visited many parts of the Greek world. He was also a sillographer (*q.v.*). Thus 'Xenophanic' may be used to describe a wandering poet with a witty and satirical talent. The Goliards were Xenophanic. *See also* GOLIARDIC VERSE.

# Y



**yarn** A story or tale (*q.v.*). The term derives from the nautical slang phrase 'to spin a yarn'. It often has the connotation of a tallish or slightly improbable story. One who 'yarns' is inclined to be a romancer, with the attitude of 'believe it if you will'. Among the many distinguished yarners in English and American literature one should mention R. L. Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, W. W. Jacobs, Joseph Conrad, Somerset Maugham, A. E. Coppard, John Masefield, T. F. Powys, Mark Twain and William Faulkner. Some poets, too, have been fine yarners. For example: John Masefield, Robert Frost, Robert Service; plus the Australian poets Charles Harpur, Adam Lindsay Gordon, A. B. 'Banjo' Paterson, Henry Lawson and Christopher Brennan. *See* SHORT STORY; TALE; TALL STORY.

**year book** In particular the reports of English Common Law cases for the period 1292-1534. These were succeeded by the Law Reports. In general a year book is an annual publication; usually a reference work - like *The Writers and Artists Year Book*.

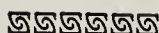
**yellow journalism** A name given to a particularly sensational kind of journalism which flourished in America in the 1880s. The term derives from an 1895 number of the *New York World* in which a child in a yellow dress ('The Yellow Kid') was the central figure of a cartoon. This was an experiment in colour printing. In England the term 'yellow press' is applied to sensational periodicals.

**Yellow Book, The** An illustrated quarterly which appeared in 1894-97. Many distinguished writers and artists contributed. Among the better known were Aubrey Beardsley, Max Beerbohm, Henry James and Walter Sickert.

**yellow-backs** Cheap editions of novels bound in yellow boards, including the 'railway novels' of the latter years of the 19th c.

**yüeh-fu** (Ch 'music bureau') A form of Chinese poetry so named because the music bureau collected popular songs and ballad-type lyrics. The *yüeh-fu* poems were in mixed meters and short lines (a five-word line was common), and the number of stanzas was variable. The poems usually consisted of monologue or dialogue which presented, in dramatic form, some misfortune.

# Z



**zany** (It *zani*, *zanni*; a Venetian form of Gianni or Giovanni) A servant-clown in *commedia dell'arte* (*q.v.*). More generally, any kind of jester or clown; also a comedian's stooge. Currently used on occasions to describe an idea (or person) which is off-beat, odd, crazily funny.

**zarzuela** (Sp, after La Zarzuela, the palace near Madrid where, in 1629, the first performance was staged) A form of Spanish drama in which recitation alternated with song. Thus, a sort of hybrid of drama and opera which became particularly popular in the 17th c. After a period of desuetude in the 18th c. it was revived in the 19th and remains immensely popular in the 20th c. *See also* VAUDEVILLE.

**Zeitgeist** (G 'tide ghost, spirit of the times') The trend, fashion or taste of a particular period. For instance, a preoccupation with the more morbid aspects of dying and death was characteristic of some English literature in the Jacobean period (*q.v.*), especially in the works of dramatists like Webster and Tourneur. *See also* DECADENCE; WELTANSCHAUUNG.

**zéjel** A Spanish poetic form (believed to be of Arabic origin) which was popular in Spain in the late Middle Ages. It consists of an introductory strophe (*q.v.*) followed by a series of strophes. At its simplest the strophic form is four verses rhyming aaab, cccb. The b rhyme runs throughout. *See also* ESTRIBILLO; MUDANZA; VUELTA.

**ženske pesme** (S 'women's songs') Songs or poems of oral tradition and of the ballad (*qq.v.*) type frequently sung and chanted by South Slav women, especially peasant women. Their themes are



often love, death, marriage, home life and romance. See JUNAČKE PESME; NARODNE PESME.

**zeugma** (Gk 'yoking') A figure of speech in which a word stands in the same relation to two other terms, but with a different meaning. Usually a verb governs two objects. For example: 'She caught the aeroplane and a husband'. It is a fairly common device in satire (*q.v.*). There are several well-known instances in Pope. The third line in the following quotation from *The Rape of the Lock* is one of the better known:

Whether the Nymph shall break *Diana's* Law,  
Or some frail *China* jar receive a Flaw,  
Or stain her Honour, or her new Brocade,  
Forget her Pray'rs, or miss a Masquerade,  
Or lose her Heart, or Necklace, at a Ball;

The fifth line is also zeugma. See also CHIASMUS.



















*continued from front flap*

J. A. CUDDON, a graduate of Oxford University, has published five novels, two travel books and a biography, as well as many essays and short stories. He is currently at work on another novel and a dictionary of sports and games.

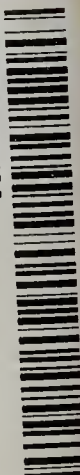
# A DICTIONARY OF LITERARY TERMS

Over 2,000 terms—English, foreign language, technical—  
explained with quotations and illustrations from  
world literature past and present.

A valuable reference book and pure entertainment.

J.A. Cuddon

9780385127134  
2016-02-15 12:30



22