

①

Crites for the Ancients

His logic: Dramatic art had been indigenous to ancient Greece. Greece and attained maturity there.

(i) Now the dramatists don't deserve to excel because they are not held in high esteem as in ancient Greece.

(ii) Emulation/Imitation is necessary for artistic development but modern English dramatists are evil copyists. Hence drama is declining.

(iii) English have enacted all the rules from the ancients i.e. Aristotle's Poetics and Horace's Art of Poetry. and have not added anything of their own.

(iv) Modern plays fail because they don't follow the three unities of time, place and action.

Still Crites admires Ben Jonson.

②

Eugenius: for the Moderns

He agrees Moderns have profited from ancients but argues that they have actually improved on the work of the ancients.

How? → (1) Superior construction of the play (modern by its division into five acts) (Unlike Greeks who believed in writing by Entrants).

(2) The plots of Ancients were faulty because they were based on the hackneyed tales of Thibel and Troy - that before it came upon the stage, it was already known to the audience.

(3) In comedies, characters were limited to certain stock types.

(4) Ancients themselves didn't observe the three unities and those unities were not Aristotelian but French.

(5) Ancients failed in technique as well as moral teaching.

(6) They were either tragedist or comedian. None was both.

- ③ Lesidius : for the French Drama.
- ① He prefers blank verse for tragedies.
 - ② Praised the french plays for "beauty of rhyme".
 - ③ He admits, English plays surpassed French plays 40 years ago.
 - ④ But now, Contemporary French dramatists have scrupulously observed threeunities.
 - ⑤ There are no underplots and subplots in their (French plays). They do not write tragic-comedies. (the most absurd thing invented by English dramatists).
 - ⑥ French have best economy of plot.
 - ⑦ Base their plots on familiar history & modify and transform it unlike English who crammed too much in a play of 2 1/2 hours.
 - ⑧ French plays have only one hero, important & central.
 - ⑨ narration of french is superior.
 - ⑩ Their plays never end with a conversion or simple change of will. English plays are also faulty because they often end with sudden conversions without any logical reason.

Neander (Dryden) : Vindication of English Drama

- In the beginning he admits that the French plays are very regular, they observe decorum and like. But a play has been described as "lively imitation of nature" so French plays are defective. ② French plays lack touch with real life.
- ② He defends English practice of writing tragic-comedies. He says "A continued gravity keeps the spirit too much bent, we must refresh it sometimes."

- (3) He does not admire the barreness and severity of the French plays in excluding underplots and minor episodes. He thinks that such details add a pleasing variety to the play if they do not contribute to the main design.
- (4) He does not justify the rigid adherence of the French dramatists to the three unities and thinks that it has been fatal to many artistic effects. It leads to death of plot, narrowness of imagination which may be observed in all their plays.

(5) Appreciation of Shakespeare:

He was the man who "all modern, and perhaps ancient poets had the largest and most comprehensive soul."

(6) Appreciation of Beaumont and Fletcher.

(7) On Ben Jonson:

He regards him as "the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre had."

"If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet but Shakespeare the greater wit. Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets, Jonson was the Virgil. I admire him (Jonson) but I love Shakespeare."

(8) He praises Ben Jonson's "The Silent Woman":

(9) His views on rhyme: Critics had earlier attacked rhyme. Neander rebuked and defends the use of rhyme in serious plays. He says rhyme is more natural and more effectual than blank verse. Blank verse is too stiff and unnatural.