

- Comedies of Shakespeare: Johnson believed that Shakespeare's tragedies are inferior to his comedies. His comedy pleases by the thoughts and the language and his tragedy for the greater part by incident and action. His tragedy seems to be his skill, his comedy to be instinct.
- Shakespeare's Style → praised by Johnson as he is one of the original masters of our language.
- Defects in Shakespeare's Plays:
 - ① No poetic justice, he has written without moral purpose.
 - ② Faulty plots and faulty endings: loosely formed plots and catastrophe in the end is imperfectly represented.
 - ③ He objects to Shakespeare's anachronisms or violations of chronology.
 - ④ His tragedies fall into bombast, obscurity, tumour, meanness, tediousness and obscurity. In narration, he affects of disproportionate pomp of diction and a weariness of circumlocution.
 - ⑤ A quibble is to Shakespeare, what luminous vapours are to the traveller... "A quibble was to him the fatal Cleopatra for which he lost the world and was content to loose it."
- Johnson's Support of Tragi-Comedy → Johnson deviates from the neo-classical creed in defending Shakespeare's practice of mingling tragic and comic elements in the same play. He regards tragi-comedy as more representative of actual life and a better source of instruction.

→ The Unities: Johnson defends non-observance of the unities of time and place. Johnson justifies by saying that spectator is in a state of elevation above the reach of reason or truth. Unity of place: He says that the spectators are always in their senses and know from the first act to the last, the stage is only a stage and that the players are only players and place is not a place Sicily or Athens, but a modern theatre.

→ Historical Estimate: A writer should be judged with reference to the condition of the age in which he lived. He emphasized the historical estimate of a writer.

Important: Johnson's defense "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 the players only players: the delight proceeds from our consciousness of fiction, if we thought murder and treason real, they would please no more".

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