

Chapter 1 : Religion and Morality (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

*Religion and Dramatics [Herbert Sennett] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Engaged in a love-hate relationship, Christianity and theater arts are brought together as never before in this by trained clergyman and theater educator Herbert Sennett.*

The Origins of Theatre and Drama I. Introduction to the Question of the Origins of Theatre and Drama
Although the origin of Western theatre itself does not strictly fall within the scope of the study of classical drama, Greek drama is the earliest form of theatre attested in the West and so it behooves students of classical drama to review what constitutes the background of the subject they are exploring. Furthermore, the question of the origin of Western theatre makes an excellent test case for the theories explored in the previous chapter, a chance to apply the definition of "theatre" constructed there to the issue of where and when theatre as such arose. In other words, using the definition of "theatre" constituted above lends focus to the search for its origin, especially when we look for art forms antecedent to the earliest Greek drama which center on language, impersonation, and audience and which led to, or may have led to, theatre. This also predicates a certain approach to the question. While we are looking for audience, impersonation, and spoken language in performance, we will not be looking for other things which from a modern perspective one might presume are prerequisite to drama. Theatre buildings, for instance, are not absolutely obligatory, nor are dramatic scripts. Even more important, we must not seek "progress" across time, especially the sort of advancement measured by modern technological standards. And we must avoid seeing merely theatrical elements in society as evidence of theatre as an "autonomous activity. Any autonomous activities that involve impersonation, audience, and language, such as festivals, celebrations, rituals, and the like where people watch other people speaking and playing roles, may give evidence of where theatre came from. The Documentary Evidence for Pre-Classical Drama Before embarking on our search, we must address a problem that immediately confronts anyone exploring the origin of Western drama. There is a pitiful dearth of written texts available for reconstructing the path that led to classical drama. Those dated to the early periods of Greek history are particularly scarce, and artistic sources vase paintings, in particular are little better. Indeed, remarkably few instructive depictions of early drama exist at all—about twenty representations of choruses and dancing painted on vases surviving from the late sixth and early fifth centuries BCE—and even so it is not clear how these may connect, if they do at all, to institutional theatre. Furthermore, there is no written source on early theatre and drama contemporaneous with the period in which the art form arose. All our documentation comes from later authors. That is, it is secondary evidence, and so its bearing on our search for origins is at best suspect. Even Herodotus, who lived in the age of classical drama, presents few reliable data about the preceding century in which theatre developed as an art form. In all the nine books of *The Histories* he notes only twice what seem to be theatre-like activities. First, in Book 2 he describes an Egyptian festival that involves a ritual mock battle which may include an early form of drama. Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 2. My evidence for this is as follows: They sail, men together with women and a large number of each in every boat, and some of the women carry rattles and shake them, and the men play flutes the whole way, and the remaining women and men sing and clap their hands. Whenever they come to a new city, they bring their boat close to shore and do the following: These things in every city along the river they do. When they come to Bubastis, they have a festival and make great sacrifices and drink grape wine more in this festival than in the whole year remaining. They gather, whatever there is of men and women but no children, as many as, as the locals say. They beat themselves after the sacrifices, all men and all women making very many thousands of people. Greeks from Asia Minor are living in Egypt, they go so far as also to cut their foreheads with daggers and in this make it clear that they are foreigners and not Egyptians. The lamps are really saucers filled with salt and oil, and on top there is the wick itself and this burns all night, and this festival has the name "The Lamplighting. The reason that the light or "the day" and the honor is. In Papremis, sacrifices and rites, as elsewhere, are performed. The statue, being as it is in a small shrine made of wood and plated with gold, they escort this statue on the day before to another sacred building. And those few left behind with the statue pull a

four-wheeled wagon carrying the shrine and the statue which is in the shrine, and the others standing at the front gates i. Thereupon a battle with clubs, a rather large one, ensues, and they split skulls and, as I understand, many even die from their wounds; not, however, according to the Egyptians does anyone die. This all-night ceremony became a tradition for the following reason, say the locals: For this reason this fight in behalf of Ares at the festival has become a tradition, they say. While this passage seems to some scholars to present data which fit into a scheme of evolution advancing toward drama, careful examination of the passage clouds the picture considerably. The truth is there are no clear, unambiguous records preserved of early theatrical forms in any ancient Western society prior to the rise of classical drama in Greece. The desperate state of this situation has led scholars to search in other arenas for evidence of early Western drama. If Greek historical data prove lacking, perhaps other cultures have somehow preserved analogues comparable to what must have existed in early Western civilization. These rituals have, as some scholars presume, been frozen in time and may represent what prehistoric drama in the West looked like. But where does one begin such a search? What limitations are there to a cultural treasure hunt of this ilk? How does one recognize data which pertain from those which do not? Admittedly, some form of theatrical art must have preceded and led in one way or another to Greek drama, but lacking even a hint of what it looked like, how do we proceed? It is like trying to reconstruct dinosaurs without a single fossil of a dinosaur to go on, relying on only what their descendants or evolutionary kin look like. If there were no fossils of dinosaurs, it seems unlikely anyone would be able to deduce reliably even that dinosaurs ever existed, much less their appearance or behavior. This is comparable to what historians face in trying to reconstruct the origin of drama. But, when there is virtually no historical evidence to go on, reconstruction based on the study of "living fossils" is the only option, sad to say. As we proceed down this path then, we must bear in mind at all times that our search may be an exercise in futility, especially because it risks a great danger that lurks behind all historical investigation. It might end up saying more about the historians than the history itself. That is, in our reconstruction we may be seeing what we want to see in history—or more likely what we are programmed by our culture to see—and not what was once really there. This is how the fallacy can run: Reasoning of this sort is obviously circular. Indeed, we may have learned something but it is not about the origins of Western theatre, rather about ourselves and our culturally prescribed biases, a fine subject for the therapy couch but not for the history seminar room. Before we head off on this perilous trek, let us begin by reviewing past scholarship on the origins of Western drama. Research on the Origins of Theatre and Drama The search for the origins of theatre is a very old one, dating back at least to the Greek philosopher Aristotle who lived in the century after the Classical Age. His researches, now seen as "data" about classical theatre, are—and one must always remember this—the results of his own investigations into theatre history and, just like ours, no more or less reliable than the data on which they rest. Because he lived in antiquity and speaks so often from authority about the ancient life, we must never forget that Aristotle is, in essence, secondary evidence when it comes to the birth of Greek theatre, an event which occurred two centuries before his day. Exactly how "secondary" are the data he presents—that is, how much better his conclusions are than our own investigations—lies at the crux of an important issue in evaluating his contribution to our understanding of primordial Greek drama. We will return to Aristotle and this conundrum when we address the classical sources pertaining to this issue later see Section 1, Chapter 4. For now, let us proceed to more recent scholarship. The modern "scientific" search for the origins of Western theatre is grounded in a revolutionary book by an important nineteenth-century anthropologist, *The Golden Bough* by James Frazer. His work constitutes one of the seminal documents of anthropology, and in many ways its publication in , with later expansion and republication in , sparked the scientific investigation of human culture. Though he addressed drama and theatre as such relatively little, others used his methodology to approach that subject. To early anthropologists, comparing theatre with religion and ritual proved particularly productive. A mere two decades after the first publication of *The Golden Bough*, no fewer than six new theories concerning the origin of theatre had appeared in print. But there are grave fallacies demonstrable in this early research. First and foremost, the equation of early and "primitive" on which many of these early studies are founded is fundamentally misguided. All societies do not march to the beat of the same drummer. They develop and progress by their own standards which are not

necessarily congruent with the ideals eventually adopted by modern Western civilizations. All in all, our values are not the only ones possible, nor is our culture the paradigm of all others. In particular, technological superiority does not always go hand and hand with cultural advancement, an equation popular in the West. Even more so did his tenet that human culture is ultimately knowable in a scientific sense. Such positivism indeed assumes that science and scientific knowledge represent the culmination of civilization. So, following positivistic principles and the dictum of evolutionary biology that species tend generally to evolve slowly from one type to another by proceeding through a series of transitional forms, those studying the religion and rituals of "primitive" peoples, which they presumed served as the forerunners of theatre, expected to see in them evidence of the state of early Western civilization and thus not only what early Greek culture and theatre looked like but the pattern of gradual evolution followed by all human societies. Of course, in the end they did not find those transitional forms nor, in fact, any compelling evidence for such an evolution. In fact, many more questions than answers rose out of these early modern studies, which is not in itself a bad thing but can lead to confusion. What is more significant and disconcerting, a dramatic change of academic venue occurred at this juncture in scholarship. The study of early theatre passed largely into the hands of anthropologists, not theatre historians. In other words, the study of world cultures was seen to do at least as much good for a researcher investigating this issue as it was to read ancient Greek. Aboriginal Western drama was now a question of sociology, not ancient Greece or theatre or even Aristotle. Likewise, information from later periods such as the Classical Age seemed of less interest than that which dealt with the rituals, myth, and magic of "primitive" societies. For instance, sacred dances in early Greece began to receive more attention than the later choruses of Euripides, and theatre fell by the wayside as "theatrical" practices took the center stage of scholarship. The underlying question of the relationship between religious rituals and later theatre was not often addressed directly, because it was assumed that these early celebrations must in some way have led to theatre. Few seemed to question how a sacred dance is "theatre" or how such a thing might evolve into drama. While much was learned in this sort of study, the central question, "About what? Their work also contributed to the question of the origin of theatre, inasmuch as early drama is almost exclusively centered around myth. One such researcher, Bronislaw Malinowski, worked on the nature of myth. He theorized that mythological thinking functioned in society as a means of rationalizing the institutions prevalent in the day. It justifies by precedent the existing order. It is true that all but a few early Greek dramas narrated stories drawn from myth and that many include aetiological "explanatory" elements. This play clearly contains aetiological elements i. But are all dramas aetiological? Can some not be merely good narrative or exciting theatre without necessarily explaining to the audience why something exists in their world? Here again, theory falls short of encompassing the great breadth of drama, even from its earliest day. Others later have continued the debate, in particular, Claude Levi-Strauss whose complex and sometimes unfathomable theory of structuralism explores the nature of prevailing dualities in culture which art and myth seek to "mediate. It is hard to argue against such a wide-ranging thesis, which means it is equally hard to argue for it.

An introduction to religious drama --A short history of religious drama --Dynamics of religious drama --A theology of religious drama --Dramatic production by the church --Drama in the worship setting --Drama and the art of preaching --Dramatics in church ministries --The church and the theater world --The state of the theater today.

It is therefore necessary to speak of a mosaic of medieval theatricality. Some are short text passages, others are quite long and developed. In the 15th and 16th Centuries, Passion Plays and Corpus Christi plays grew into highly developed performances, which in some localities existed until the 17th Century. The premodern combination of liturgy, ritual and performance makes it especially difficult to apply the term " Drama ". It is not always possible to understand the relationship between written text, staging and performance. The texts themselves are often part of a liturgical rite, making it difficult to locate a beginning or an end of the play within the liturgical or paraliturgical context. Yet the concept of drama cannot adequately be used to describe the *Quem Queritis*, since drama as a concept is not found in the medieval sources themselves; using the term drama opens up a vast field of anachronistic misunderstandings. The largest part of plot material is taken from the Bible or Christian legend. Contrary to earlier theories tracing the development of European theatre from the Catholic liturgy, there is no logical or chronological development in the various play texts from the Middle Ages; the scope of the text, its complexity, and its dramatic structure of the many sources known today [3] do not develop in a systematic manner. Another widespread misunderstanding of medieval performance forgets that music always played an important part in liturgical rites and plays. Forms of Performance[edit] The rites in Latin were always performed in a church, in the context of a liturgical ceremony. Since they are so strongly integrated into the liturgy Mass or Liturgy of the Hours , it is questionable whether or not they count as performance. Latin-language plays were also performed in churches without a liturgical context. Vernacular plays were most often performed in public spaces outside of the church, usually on mansion stages on the public square. To speak of actors is only pertinent to the plays; in the church, the rites were performed by clerics and monks who did not consider themselves to be acting in any amateur or professional sense. A director of sorts arbitrated between the stage and the audience; he commented upon the scene, narrated passages and kept order. While most performances were limited to a few hours, some plays could reach monumental proportions: The Passion-Play of Bolzano took seven days in , and the one staged at Valenciennes in , a total of Social Context[edit] While liturgical rites are a constant in Christian life, plays are not. There are passages of European history in which plays are all but unknown. The medieval city was a performance-friendly culture. Clerics and trade fraternities encouraged stage performance in the church and outside of it. Amateur actors were recruited among the ranks of schoolboys and trade apprentices. Topics performed were predominantly taken from Christian sources, yet comic and contemporary topics were omnipresent in almost all performance, in a more or less discreet manner. Improvisation was a crowd-pleaser. Antisemitic violence could occur after the crowds had witnessed a Passion-Play; sometimes members of the audience would interrupt the performance by jumping into the scene in order to "save" the suffering Christ.

This chapter explores the history of the theatre and drama and its varying relationships with religious belief. It begins in the ancient world where the term 'liturgy' had its origins and where one such liturgical act was the staging of drama.

Early Medieval theatre[edit] Hrosvitha of Gandersheim, the first dramatist of the post-classical era. Faced with the problem of explaining a new religion to a largely illiterate population, churches in the Early Middle Ages began staging dramatized versions of particular biblical events on specific days of the year. These dramatizations were included in order to vivify annual celebrations. These were extensive sets of visual signs that could be used to communicate with a largely illiterate audience. These performances developed into liturgical dramas , the earliest of which is the Whom do you Seek Quem-Quaeritis Easter trope, dating from ca. While surviving evidence about Byzantine theatre is slight, existing records show that mime , pantomime , scenes or recitations from tragedies and comedies , dances , and other entertainments were very popular. Constantinople had two theatres that were in use as late as the 5th century A. However, the true importance of the Byzantines in theatrical history is their preservation of many classical Greek texts and the compilation of a massive encyclopedia called the Suda , from which is derived a large amount of contemporary information on Greek theatre. Efforts were made in many countries through this period to not only convert Jews and pagans but to destroy pre-Christian institutions and influences. Works of Greek and Roman literature were burnt, the thousand-year-old Platonic Academy was closed, the Olympic Games were banned and all theatres were shut down. The theatre itself was viewed as a diabolical threat to Christianity because of its continued popularity in Rome even among new converts. They were forbidden to have contact with Christian women, own slaves , or wear gold. They were officially excommunicated , denied the sacraments , including marriage and burial , and were defamed and debased throughout Europe. For many centuries thereafter, clerics were cautioned to not allow these suddenly homeless, travelling actors to perform in their jurisdictions. As such, most organized theatrical activities disappeared in Western Europe. While it seems that small nomadic bands traveled around Europe throughout the period, performing wherever they could find an audience, there is no evidence that they produced anything but crude scenes. Hrosvitha was followed by Hildegard of Bingen d. The anonymous pagan play Querolus , written c. Other secular Latin plays were also written in the 12th century, mainly in France but also in England Babio. There certainly existed some other performances that were not fully fledged theatre; they may have been carryovers from the original pagan cultures as is known from records written by the clergy disapproving of such festivals. It is also known that mimes, minstrels, bards, storytellers, and jugglers traveled in search of new audiences and financial support. One of the most famous of the secular plays is the musical Le Jeu de Robin et Marion , written by Adam de la Halle in the 13th century, which is fully laid out in the original manuscript with lines, musical notation, and illuminations in the margins depicting the actors in motion. Adam also wrote another secular play, Jeu de la Fueillee in Arras , a French town in which theatre was thriving in the late 12th and 13th centuries. High and Late Medieval theatre[edit] Stage drawing from 15th-century vernacular morality play The Castle of Perseverance as found in the Macro Manuscript. As the Viking invasions ceased in the middle of the 11th century A. Only in Muslim-occupied Spain were liturgical dramas not presented at all. Despite the large number of liturgical dramas that have survived from the period, many churches would have only performed one or two per year and a larger number never performed any at all. The festival inverted the status of the lesser clergy and allowed them to ridicule their superiors and the routine of church life. Sometimes plays were staged as part of the occasion and a certain amount of burlesque and comedy may have entered the liturgical drama as a result of its influence. The use of vernacular enabled drama to be understood and enjoyed by a larger audience. The Mystery of Adam gives credence to this theory as its detailed stage direction suggest that it was staged outdoors. Economic and political changes in the High Middle Ages led to the formation of guilds and the growth of towns, and this would lead to significant changes for theatre starting in this time and continuing into in the Late Middle Ages. Trade guilds began to perform plays, usually religiously based, and often dealing with a biblical story that referenced their profession. These vernacular " mystery plays " were written in cycles of a large number of plays: York 48 plays , Chester 24 ,

Wakefield 32 and Unknown A larger number of plays survive from France and Germany in this period and some type of religious dramas were performed in nearly every European country in the Late Middle Ages. Many of these plays contained comedy, devils, villains and clowns. For example, at Valenciennes in 1500, more than 70 roles were assigned to 72 actors. Often providing their own costumes, amateur performers in England were exclusively male, but other countries had female performers. The platform stage, which was an unidentified space and not a specific locale, allowed for abrupt changes in location. Morality plays emerged as a distinct dramatic form around 1400 and flourished until 1600. Though Everyman may possibly be the best known of this genre, it is atypical in many ways. Along the way, he is deserted by Kindred, Goods, and Fellowship - only Good Deeds goes with him to the grave. Secular drama was also staged throughout the Middle Ages, the earliest of which is The Play of the Greenwood by Adam de la Halle in 1374. It contains satirical scenes and folk material such as faeries and other supernatural occurrences. Farces also rose dramatically in popularity after the 13th century. The majority of these plays come from France and Germany and are similar in tone and form, emphasizing sex and bodily excretions. However, farce did not appear independently in England until the 16th century with the work of John Heywood. A significant forerunner of the development of Elizabethan drama was the Chambers of Rhetoric in the Low Countries. These masques were especially popular during the reign of Henry VIII who had a house of revels built and an office of revels established in 1545. All medieval stage production was temporary and expected to be removed upon the completion of the performances. Actors, predominantly male, typically wore long, dark robes. Medieval plays such as the Wakefield cycle, or the Digby Magdalene featured lively interplay between two distinct areas, the wider spaces in front of the raised staging areas, and the elevated areas themselves called, respectively, the locus and the platea. Scenery, stage machinery and costumes enabled a more realistic depiction of the message the play was trying to promote. First, the Protestant Reformation targeted the theatre, especially in England, in an effort to stamp out allegiance to Rome. In Wakefield, for example, the local mystery cycle text shows signs of Protestant editing, with references to the pope crossed out and two plays completely eliminated because they were too Catholic. However, it was not just the Protestants who attacked the theatre of the time. The Council of Trent banned religious plays in an attempt to rein in the extrabiblical material that the Protestants frequently lampooned. A revival of interest in ancient Roman and Greek culture changed the tastes of the learned classes in the performing arts. Greek and Roman plays were performed and new plays were written that were heavily influenced by the classical style. A change of patronage also caused drastic changes to the theatre. Finally, the construction of permanent theaters, such as The Theatre signaled a major turning point. Permanent theaters allowed for more sophisticated staging and storytelling. Contributions to modern theatre[edit] Many components of theatre that developed during the Middle Ages continue to be incorporated in productions around the world to this day, such as use of the vernacular, spectacle, stage direction and the use of farce. Performances that were spoken in the vernacular provided opportunities for larger audiences, who included members of lower socio-economic status, who would have otherwise been excluded from understanding the performances. In addition, it presented various actions on stage in time and space and presented a combination of the sublime with detailed realism. The spectacle of the later Medieval theatre made it necessary to have detailed stage directions. A sample of documented staging drawings and directions remain from the 15th-century morality play The Castle of Perseverance. The evolution to the dependence on detailed stage direction made possible the great Shakespearean stage. The surviving texts of this oral tradition were recorded in the 18th century, at a time when the industrial revolution began to break up the rural communities in which the plays were performed. Mystery plays[edit] Mystery Plays are still produced regularly throughout the United Kingdom. The local cycles were revived in both York and Chester in 1903 as part of the Festival of Britain, and are still performed by the local guilds. These productions differed from past performances in that women were cast in the title role, rather than men. Film adaptations of the version of the play appeared in 1908 and 1912, with the film being presented with an early color two-process pioneered by Kinemacolor. Frederick Franck published a modernised version of the tale entitled "Everyone", drawing on Buddhist influence. The reenactment of the Passion of Christ is performed throughout the world in the late Lenten season.

Chapter 4 : Medieval theatre - Wikipedia

drama: drama and religion Although it can be said that the presentation of drama and religious ceremony are analogous, the two practices are not always directly related in world history. The notion popularized in the early twentieth century by the Cambridge School that drama springs directly from ritual has been largely discredited.

Where drama has kept alive its quality of magic disclosure, it has remained indispensable. These legacies have proved difficult to maintain in Western society, but they contain the heart of the expectations people bring to theater and to religious ceremony alike. The ancient and persistent link between religion and drama may be viewed as the result of factors that include the emergence of theater from religious ritual, the acting out of sacred myth and story, the quasi-priestly or shamanic characteristics of theatrical performers and, conversely, the theatrical qualities of religious liturgies. It is often supposed that the theater in modern Europe and North America, like Western civilization in general, has steadily become more secular, which is to say, less and less concerned with religion. The truth of this assumption, with respect to theater and modern society alike, is debatable. To the extent that it may be true, it is balanced by the fact that Western religion itself has undergone a kind of secularization: More significant than the phenomenon of secularization is the fact that, in most European and American societies in modern times, the professional theater and institutional religion have both become culturally marginal—perhaps for similar reasons. Before, the principal places for public storytelling were theaters and churches. The advent of novelistic fiction in the eighteenth century meant that stories could be told to a wide audience without people having to gather in a public place. Even so, theater remained a popular institution throughout the nineteenth century while revivalistic religion, if not regular church attendance, was also vigorous, especially in the United States. The immense success of motion pictures and television in the twentieth century reduced the audience for live theater to a very small portion of the population. Although, compared to this, the number of churchgoers remains very large, perhaps twenty to twenty-five times as great in the United States, it too has shrunk as the audience for film and television has grown. New methods of communication, the proliferation of channels on television, the advent of virtual-reality meeting places on the World Wide Web, and multiplex movie palaces have all brought about a change in the way people gather in public—or do not so gather—to participate at the performance of stories, rituals, and myths. The change in patterns of assemblage has not been quite the same for all social classes. The popularity of religious gatherings continues more vigorously among the marginalized than among the affluent. One might even argue that religion serves as a theater of the poor, although it would be more accurate to say that among them the bifurcation between religion and drama is not as deep as among those with higher incomes. The rise of the charismatic movement within traditional and established churches, as well as the growth of Pentecostal denominations, may indicate a renewed quest for theatrical and ecstatic worship, paralleling the revivalism of an earlier age. It would be a mistake, of course, to link forms of worship too closely to social strata. In the United States, for instance, congregations of evangelical churches now occupy middle- to upper-level income brackets and are flourishing. In some cases their messages, saturated with apocalyptic themes, are inherently dramatic and conjure up spectacular imagery. However, it must be said that insofar as religion and theater are middle-class institutions, both are, ironically, of less and less importance to the middle class. The social bracketing of the two institutions leads to a kind of aesthetic bracketing as well: In this situation, theater and religion often look to each other for some lost component to help restore their immediacy. The fundamental link between them is their use of performance to make what is unseen seen and what is absent present, and this in the immediacy of a specific time and place. Hence, Christianity brought into European culture many sensibilities concerning human character, experience, and historical existence that were significantly different than those upon which the drama of Greece and Rome had been based. It is likely that these sensibilities became mixed with those of the religions that were already practiced in Europe when Christianity arrived. Several nonclassical ideas emerged that proved important to drama: As they worked their way into dramatic expression on stage, these ideas led to a mode of drama concerned with processes of history, the dynamics of class interaction, and the confrontation of the human soul with temptation, with

conscience, and with God. An unprecedented outburst of dramatic genius occurred in the sixteenth century. Their writing for the stage was based upon very different ideas of dramatic form from the Greek and Roman classics. These ideas led to a form more loose, more episodic, more open to variety in human characterization, more concerned with reflective consciousness, and more open to depictions of the grotesque and the ugly. In England, the new dramatic sensibilities were expressed by Shakespeare and most of his contemporary dramatists, using themes much indebted to the humanists and to Protestant mostly Puritan reformers of that age and showing the strong influence of a rising middle class. The Renaissance, with its ambivalent attitude toward Christianity, the church, and dogma, empowered dramatists not only to express their own religious ambivalence but also, in the process, to fashion a new dramatic form. Puritan influence on drama, noticeable during the reign of Elizabeth I in England, soon changed to hostility toward theatergoing. By the early seventeenth century, most Puritans would have been startled to know that John Calvin had spent many Sunday afternoons watching the performance of plays, even if those were indeed plays on scriptural subjects by Theodore Beza. In , English Puritans, who had achieved municipal power in London, closed all theaters, partly because the stage was thought conducive to loose morals, but also because it was associated with the royal court, the nobility, and Roman Catholicism. Although the theaters were allowed to reopen in with the accession of Charles II to the throne, this forced closing left its mark on all subsequent relations between church and theater throughout the Western world, relations that are sometimes intense but most often strained.

Drama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries With some exceptions, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not periods of important interaction between religion and drama. In the Counter-Reformation, Jesuits throughout Europe made widespread use of dramas to propagate the faith, producing a legacy of postmedieval didactic theater that has had widespread influence, for example on the twentieth-century Marxist playwright Bertolt Brecht. The anticlericalism that spread during the Enlightenment, especially in France and Germany, exacerbated ancient tensions between religion and theater, with the result that the rift between them was at its widest in the Age of Reason. Whether that has anything to do with the fact that this was not an especially creative period of playwriting, as compared to epochs before and after, is a matter for speculation. The theater of the eighteenth century went in for extraordinary scenic effects and allied itself with experiments being made by painters and architects. It tended more toward the pictorial than the performance aspect of theater and hence was distant from any deep religious sensibility. The Romantic movement that began in the late eighteenth century was a different matter. It stimulated the use of religious themes in drama, often in unorthodox forms.

Social Realism During the nineteenth century, European drama began to display two major interests: At the same time, there was also a tendency for the more realistic or "secular" plays to develop a symbolic mode that verges on myth and confronts an audience with quasi-religious mystery. To this tendency among major nineteenth-century playwrights to evince an interest in religious themes, the most notable exception is Anton Chekhov. In him the heavens are closed. The symbolism of plays like *The Seagull* and *The Cherry Orchard* , strong and beautiful as it is, does not hint at transcendent mystery. The closing speech of Sonya in *Uncle Vanya* , with its vision of an eventual heavenly peace, is moving precisely because the audience recognizes that her words are only wistful. George Bernard Shaw , a fourth luminary among playwrights at the turn of the century, was a severe critic of contemporary Christianity, mostly because of what he saw as its moral hypocrisy and its alliance with capitalism; yet he introduced religious motifs in almost all his plays, and it may be said of him, as of William Butler Yeats , that he invented a religion of his own.

Twentieth-Century Theater World War I put an end, not to romanticism in the arts, as used to be said, but to its nineteenth-century phase. Following the war, the theatrical motifs and styles of the preceding century continued, but in a deeper, more tortured form. The quest for meaning became more desperate. One result in the theater was a form known as expressionism, which used theatrical resources—decor, costuming, lighting, music, scene construction, performance technique—to achieve effects more like painting, cartooning, clowning, and poetry than like the narrative art that most Western theater has been. Indeed, from Yeats onward the experimental Western theater has reached out to Eastern mostly Japanese stylistic conventions, which are themselves firmly rooted in religious tradition. In the work of German expressionist playwrights such as Ernst Toller , Ernst Barlach , and Oskar Kokoschka better known as a painter is found an outrage

against existence that is at once moral and religious, the latter with varying degrees of explicitness. Art of this kind, in the theater as well as in other forms, was employed by the theologian Paul Tillich to depict the religious situation in Germany in the late s. He wrote of such art as engaged in a religious protest against "bourgeois self-sufficient finitude," as he termed the attitude that had infiltrated both the churches and other social institutions and against which much serious theater of the time protested. Here he wrote of his desire to dig at "the roots of the sickness today," which he described as "the death of an old God and the failure of science and materialism to give any satisfying new one for the surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life in, and to comfort its fears of death with" quoted in Clark and Freedley, , p. Such a sense of the loss of God, of meaning, of satisfaction and comfort, may be called post-Nietzschean, after the German philosopher who was the first among modern intellectuals to write of the "death of God. This concentration upon the theatrical gesture per se would return theater to the domain of ritual. Theologically speaking, an acte gratuit is the action of a divinity that is answerable only to itself. Avant-garde theater in the twentieth century has been an attempt to return theater to its religious roots without necessarily adoptingâ€”indeed, often opposingâ€”religious faith. There was, however, a movement in midcentury to restore religious faith to the theater by way of a return to poetic drama. Eliot, who in was asked by E. Martin Browne, a theater director working for the Anglican diocese of London, to compose some verses later known as "Choruses from the Rock" for a diocesan stage production. This was followed by a commission from Browne and Canterbury Cathedral that resulted in the play *Murder in the Cathedral* , an explicitly religious play, which made Eliot famous as a playwright and which is arguably the best poetic drama written in modern times. Eliot later aspired to the writing of religious plays composed in verse about people in modern circumstances, partly because of the aesthetic challenge such a task presented, partly for the sake of propagating Christian faith in the modern world, and partly as an answer to existentialist playwrights. He wrote five of these, of which the most popular has been *The Cocktail Party* . However, the Belgian Michel de Ghelderode, who wrote perhaps the most forceful religious dramas of the century, chose not to use verse. Instead, he adopted a theatrical style somewhere between that of expressionism and absurdism, yielding works of strong religious and theatrical interest, including *Barabbas* , *Chronicles of Hell* , and *The Women at the Tomb* . During this period, Brecht was seeking a theater that synthesized both the aesthetic value of expressionism and the instructional value of naturalism. He sought a theater that was poetic, parable-like, didactic, and epic, portraying the large configurations of power while locating the dilemmas of the little person within these configurations. In his play, *Galileo* , for example, he demonstrates how the authority of an institution supersedes the rationality of scientific truth. Garbed in papal vestments, the otherwise supportive prelate must force Galileo to renounce his discovery. The dramaturgy is antinaturalistic and yet captivating. Although there is controversy over the precise meaning of Brechtian concepts like "the alienation effect" *Verfremdungs-effekt* and "epic," the result was a certain spaciousness that allowed audiences to contemplate ideas that might form a basis for decisions in real life. Although Brecht, with his Marxist orientation, derided religious piety, his work seems to lie within a biblical tradition of prophecy in its analysis of an era and its denunciation of the destructive forces within society.

Performance Theater

An important result of the competition given to theater by film and television has been the recognition by innovative theorists and practitioners that theater is not necessarily an art of representation. There have been attempts to work from an aesthetic of actuality rather than one of imitation. This awareness, and the techniques of performance associated with it, tend to move theater in the direction of ritualization and thus bring to the surface one of its more important yet hidden connections with religion. For this reason, it may be argued that there has been no more significant development in the relation between theater and religion in the twentieth century than the experimental theater movement of the s and s. The most influential exponent of this movement was Jerzy Grotowski , founder of the Polish Laboratory Theater. Peter Brook has acknowledged the inspiration of G. Gurdjieff, also a major influence for Grotowski. Indeed, the intensity of such work necessitates the formation of quasi- or actual religious communities of performers who often abandon the role of entertainer in favor of both improving technical skills and finding an absolute immediacy of the performing gesture in a quest for a transcendent awareness. The performers wear vestments not of priests but of medieval bedlam idiots who are called upon by circumstance to celebrate a Mass even

though they do not know how. Moving easily between the sublime and the ridiculous, drawing its audience through laughter toward participation and contemplation, the work resists being categorized as either theater or religion, becoming both at once in an event experienced by many as transformative. As they stand beside these grotesque characters in prayer, worshippers begin to participate in the liturgy with new understanding. African American Theater African American religion in the United States, unlike the religion of most white Americans, has made a direct artistic contribution to the theater, largely because worship in African American churches has retained a vigorous performance tradition. Narrative recitation in African American preaching, for example, is theatrical in the deepest sense of the word. Music and rhythm provide the structure of the service, and dancing often occurs. The religious service aims at a visible experiential encounter between the suppliants and a God who provides security, dignity, and freedom. There has also been a close connection between African American church music and music performed for entertainment in clubs and theaters. This text was sung, orated, and preached as if it were part of an African American church service. Here gospel music, African American preaching, an avant-garde approach to theater, and the ritual basis of Greek theater as echoed in the Sophoclean text all joined to provide a glimpse of the ecstasy that a living tradition of religious theater can provide. Contemporary Theater It would be a mistake to assume that religious themes are not part of the work of the major playwrights of late twentieth and early twenty-first century. The play portrays how the kindly vicar of an inner city parish is sabotaged and ultimately ousted by the establishment and its ecclesiastical allies. For the inchoate characters of American writer David Rabe, religion seems a vague notion that has been mislaid in the recent past.

Chapter 5 : Religious Dramas

Religion and Drama. In their poorest winter ever, when the crops have been devastated by locusts and the family must deal with the death of baby Freddie, Charles Ingalls backtracks his family to Iowa, to take over the running of a hotel.

Ancient Greek Philosophy We can start with the Greeks, and this means starting with Homer, a body of texts transmitted first orally and then written down in the seventh century BCE. So what does the relation between morality and religion look like in Homer? The first thing to say is that the gods and goddesses of the Homeric poems behave remarkably like the noble humans described in the same poems, even though the humans are mortal and the gods and goddesses immortal. Both groups are motivated by the desire for honor and glory, and are accordingly jealous when they receive less than they think they should while others receive more, and work ceaselessly to rectify this. The two groups are not however symmetrical, because the noble humans have the same kind of client relation to the divinities as subordinate humans do to them. This includes, for example, sanctuaries devoted to them, dedications, hymns, dances, libations, rituals, prayers, festivals and sacrifices. There is a clear analogy with purely human client-relations, which are validated in the Homeric narrative, since the poems were probably originally sung at the courts of the princes who claimed descent from the heroes whose exploits make up the story. The gods and goddesses are not, however, completely at liberty. It is sometimes said that the Presocratic philosophers come out of Homer by rejecting religion in favor of science. When Anaximenes around talks of air as the primary element differing in respect of thinness and thickness, or Heraclitus explains all change as a pattern in the turnings of fire igniting in measures and going out in measures, they are not giving stories with plot-lines involving quasi-human intentions and frustrations DK 13, A 5, DK 22, B But it is wrong to say that they have left religion behind. Heraclitus puts this enigmatically by saying that the one and only wisdom does and does not consent to be called Zeus DK 22, B He is affirming the divinity of this wisdom, but denying the anthropomorphic character of much Greek religion. The sophists, to whom Socrates responded, rejected this tie between human law and divine law and this was in part because of their expertise in rhetoric, by which they taught their students how to manipulate the deliberations of popular assemblies, and so change the laws to their own advantage. The most famous case is Protagoras c. Protagoras is not correctly seen here as skeptical about morality or religion. But as Plato c. His view of what this justice is, namely the interest of the stronger, is disputed by Plato. But the claim that justice operates at both the divine and human levels is common ground. Euthyphro is taking his own father to court for murder, and though ordinary Greek morality would condemn such an action as impiety, Euthyphro defends it on the basis that the gods behave in the same sort of way, according to the traditional stories. Socrates makes it clear that he does not believe these stories, because they attribute immorality to the gods. This does not mean, however, that he does not believe in the gods. He points to the spirit who gives him commands about what not to do Apology, 31d , and we learn later that he found it significant that this voice never told him to stop conducting his trial in the way that in fact led to his death Ibid. Socrates interpreted this as an invitation from the gods to die, thus refuting the charge that, by conducting his trial in the way he did, he was guilty of theft " i. Socrates makes it clear that his view is the second though he does not argue for this conclusion in addressing this question, and he is probably relying on the earlier premise, at Euthyphro, 7c10f, that we love things because of the properties they have. But his view is not an objection to tying morality and religion together. He hints at the end of the dialogue Euthyphro, 13de that the right way to link them is to see that when we do good we are serving the gods well. Plato probably does not intend for us to construe the dialogues together as a single philosophical system, and we must not erase the differences between them. But it is significant that in the Theaetetus b , Socrates says again that our goal is to be as like the god as possible, and since the god is in no way and in no manner unjust, but as just as it is possible to be, nothing is more like the god than the one among us who becomes correspondingly as just as possible. In several dialogues this thought is connected with a belief in the immortality of the soul; we become like the god by paying attention to the immortal and best part of ourselves e. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is also tied to the doctrine of the Forms, whereby things with characteristics that we experience in this life e. This train of thought sees the

god or gods as like a magnet, drawing us to be like them by the power of their goodness or excellence. Mention of the divine is not merely conventional for Aristotle, but does important philosophical work. In the Eudemian Ethics 1022 he tells us that the goal of our lives is service and contemplation of the god. He thinks that we become like what we contemplate, and so we become most like the god by contemplating the god. Incidentally, this is why the god does not contemplate us; for this would mean becoming less than the god, which is impossible. As in Plato, the well-being of the city takes precedence over the individual, and this, too, is justified theologically. It is nobler and more divine to achieve an end for a city than for an individual NE 1099 Aristotle draws a distinction between what we honor and what we merely commend NE, 1102a There are six states for a human life, on a normative scale from best to worst: The highest form of happiness, which he calls blessedness, is something we honor as we honor gods, whereas virtue we merely commend. It would be as wrong to commend blessedness as it would be to commend gods NE, 1102a The activity of the god, he says in the Metaphysics, is nous thinking itself b The best human activity is the most god-like, namely thinking about the god and about things that do not change. This gives him a defense against the charge sometimes made against virtue theories that they simply embed the prevailing social consensus into an account of human nature. Aristotle defines ethical virtue as lying in a mean between excess and defect, and the mean is determined by the person of practical wisdom actually the male, since Aristotle is sexist on this point. He then gives a conventional account of the virtues such a person displays such as courage, literally manliness, which requires the right amount of fear and confidence, between cowardice and rashness. It is not clear whether the Nicomachean Ethics has a consistent view of the relation between the activity of contemplation and the other activities of a virtuous life see Hare, *God and Morality*, chapter 1, and Sarah Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle*, chapter 7. But the connection of the highest human state with the divine is pervasive in the text. One result of this connection is the eudaimonism mentioned earlier. If the god does not care about what is not divine for this would be to become like what is not divine, the highest and most god-like human also does not care about other human beings except to the degree they contribute to his own best state. This degree is not negligible, since humans are social animals, and their well-being depends on the well-being of the families and cities of which they are members. Aristotle is not preaching self-sufficiency in any sense that implies we could be happy on our own, isolated from other human beings. But our concern for the well-being of other people is always, for him, contingent on our special relation to them. We therefore do not want our friends to become gods, even though that would be the best thing for them. Finally, Aristotle ties our happiness to our end in Greek, *telos*; for humans, as for all living things, the best state is its own activity in accordance with the natural function that is unique to each species. For humans the best state is happiness, and the best activity within this state is contemplation NE, 1177a The Epicureans and Stoics who followed Aristotle differed with each other and with him in many ways, but they agreed in tying morality and religion together. For the Epicureans, the gods do not care about us, though they are entertained by looking at our tragicomic lives rather as we look at soap operas on television. We can be released from a good deal of anxiety, the Epicureans thought, by realizing that the gods are not going to punish us. Our goal should be to be as like the gods as we can, enjoying ourselves without interruption, but for us this means limiting our desires to what we can obtain without frustration. They did not mean that our happiness is self-interested in any narrow sense, because they held that we can include others in our happiness by means of our sympathetic pleasures. The Stoics likewise tied the best kind of human life, for them the life of the sage, to being like the divine. The sage follows nature in all his desires and actions, and is thus the closest to the divine. Such commands come already in the first chapter of Genesis. In the second chapter God tells Adam that he is free to eat from any tree in the garden, but he must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When Eve and Adam disobey and eat of that fruit, they are expelled from the garden. There is a family of concepts here that is different from what we met in Greek philosophy. God is setting up a kind of covenant by which humans will be blessed if they obey the commands God gives them. Human disobedience is not explained in the text, except that the serpent says to Eve that they will not die if they eat the fruit, but will be like God, knowing good and evil, and Eve sees the fruit as good for food and pleasing to the eye and desirable for gaining wisdom. After they eat, Adam and Eve know that they are naked, and are ashamed, and hide from God. As the story goes on, and Cain kills Abel, evil

spreads to all the people of the earth, and Genesis describes the basic state as a corruption of the heart 6: Then there is the command to Abraham to kill his son, a deed prevented at the last minute by the provision of a ram instead Gen. Under Moses the people are finally liberated, and during their wanderings in the desert, Moses receives from God the Ten Commandments, in two tables or tablets Exod. The second table concerns our obligations to other human beings, and all of the commands are negative do not kill, commit adultery, steal, lie, or covet except for the first, which tells us to honor our fathers and mothers. The Greeks had the notion of a kingdom, under a human king though the Athenians were in the classical period suspicious of such an arrangement. But they did not have the idea of a kingdom of God, though there is something approaching this in some of the Stoics. This idea is explicable in terms of law, and is introduced as such in Exodus in connection with the covenant on Mt. The kingdom is the realm in which the laws obtain. This raises a question about the extent of this realm. The surrounding laws in the Pentateuch include prescriptions and proscriptions about ritual purity and sacrifice and the use of the land that seem to apply to this particular people in this particular place. But the covenant that God makes with Noah after the flood is applicable to the whole human race, and universal scope is explicit in the Wisdom books, which make a continual connection between how we should live and how we were created as human beings. For example, in Proverbs 8 Wisdom raises her voice to all humankind, and says that she detests wickedness, which she goes on to describe in considerable detail. The New Testament is unlike the Hebrew Bible, however, in presenting a narrative about a man who is the perfect exemplification of obedience and who has a life without sin. New Testament scholars disagree about the extent to which Jesus actually claimed to be God, but the traditional interpretation is that he did make this claim; in any case the Christian doctrine is that we can see in his life the clearest possible revelation in human terms both of what God is like and at the same time of what our lives ought to be like. He takes the commandments inside the heart; for example, we are required not merely not to murder, but not to be angry, and not merely not to commit adultery, but not to lust see Ezekiel Jesus tells us to love our enemies and those who hate and persecute us, and in this way he makes it clear that the love commandment is not based on reciprocity Matt 5: This event is understood in many different ways in the New Testament, but one central theme is that Jesus died on our behalf, an innocent man on behalf of the guilty. Jesus describes the paradigm of loving our neighbors as the willingness to die for them. And we are given the hope of future progress in holiness by the work of the Holy Spirit Rom. All of this theology requires more detailed analysis, but this is not the place for it. There is a contrast between the two traditions I have so far described, namely the Greek and the Judeo-Christian. The idea of God that is central in Greek philosophy is the idea of God attracting us, like a kind of magnet, so that we desire to become more like God, though there is a minority account by Socrates of receiving divine commands. In the Jewish and Christian scriptures, the notion of God commanding us is central. It is tempting to simplify this contrast by saying that the Greeks favor the good, in their account of the relation of morality and religion, and the Judeo-Christian account favors the right or obligation. It is true that the notion of obligation makes most sense against the background of command. The Middle Ages The rest of the history to be described in this entry is a cross-fertilization of these two traditions or lines of thought. In the patristic period, or the period of the early Fathers, it was predominantly Plato and the Stoics amongst the Greek philosophers whose influence was felt. The Eastern and Western parts of the Christian church split during the period, and the Eastern church remained more comfortable than the Western with language about humans being deified in Greek theosis.

Chapter 6 : Religious Dance and Drama

"The Journal of Religion and Theatre is a peer-reviewed online journal. The journal aims to provide descriptive and analytical articles examining the spirituality of world cultures in all disciplines of the theatre, performance studies in sacred rituals of all cultures, themes of transcendence in text, on stage, in theatre history, the analysis of dramatic literature, and other topics relating.

The renaissance theatres were those that were opened during the time between Reformation and the closing down of theatres. Queen Elizabeth ruled England from 1558 to 1603, hence the drama of this era came to be known as Elizabethan drama. Earlier, dramas were based on the bible stories, mystery, or had a moral attached to it and even tried to recreate Greek or Italian drama. However, during the Elizabethan period, drama branched out to political plays, comedy and historical content. It veered away from bible stories and tackled the reality. The unique feature of Elizabethan drama is that one play was not played twice and certainly not within the same week. A new play was belted out almost every day. Range of Drama The theme of Elizabethan drama ranged from history of monarchs or the country including various European countries, tragedy, comedy and something called revenge drama emerged which the audience quite liked. These were particularly informative and also informative for those who had not or were unable to read about the history of England. A Larum for London was something like a current event play which was written by an unknown author. It was the very first of its kind to be presented in London and its roots were in the Elizabethan theatre. Genre of Drama Comedy was a genre appreciated by the audience. A number of sub genres of comedy drama emerged in the Elizabethan drama. City comedy was one of the sub branches of comedies that emerged in the Elizabethan theatre. It contained slick and sarcastic depiction of life in a city, namely, London. Ben Johnson wrote the alchemist which presented society without the rose coloured glasses. Elizabethan Drama Tragicomedy breathed its first in early 1600s in the Elizabethan drama. The audience loved a good tragedy. And who better than the most eminent of all playwrights, William Shakespeare, to deliver a heart wrenching drama. Elizabethan drama differs from Jacobean Drama as the latter was named during the rule of King James I. Although, Jacobean drama was more like a continuation of Elizabethan drama, it was more intense and more intelligent. The plays became more complicated, tackling burning issues and portrayed more emotions, intensity, and aggression.

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The religious drama of ancient Greece, the temple drama of early India and Japan, the mystery cycles of medieval Europe, all have in common more than their religious content: when the theatre is a place of worship, its drama goes to the roots of belief in.

You have the opportunity to select wild modules in this stage Year abroad Going abroad as part of your degree is an amazing experience and a chance to develop personally, academically and professionally. You experience a different culture, gain a new academic perspective, establish international contacts and enhance your employability. All students within the Faculty of Humanities can apply to spend a term or year abroad as part of their degree at one of our partner universities in North America, Asia or Europe. You are expected to adhere to any progression requirements in Stage 1 and Stage 2 to proceed to the term or year abroad. Places and destination are subject to availability, language and degree programme. To find out more, please see Go Abroad.

Stage 3 Credits DR - Introduction to Stand Up This module will introduce students to practical and theoretical aspects of stand-up comedy. Initially, they will analyse the work of individual comedians, exploring such issues as comic theory, traditions of stand-up, and historical context. Later, they will work on creating their own short stand-up acts, generating original material and developing key performance skills such as developing persona, working an audience, improvisation, and characterisation. Performance, workshop, design, stagecraft, producing or other creative skills encountered in earlier modules will be developed, extended and explored in autonomous work, which will be supported by regular group supervision sessions. Projects will also involve research which will contextualise the practical elements. Supervision will take place in timetabled teaching slots, in which students involved in several projects will be supervised together. Practical outcomes might take the form of performances, workshops or public interventions. After writing an essay focussing on one of these questions, the class will then turn its attention to a specific performance text and the various conceptual and philosophical questions that arise from it. Once they have engaged with a range of theoretical perspectives on the text the course will culminate in an assessed presentation where the students propose a production which engages with these issues. It will focus on how Physical Theatre practitioners have deployed compositional techniques, and the principals that underlie such work. It differs from Physical Theatre 1 in focussing less on training for performance and much more on composition and different possibilities of structuring Physical Performance, using space, sound, movement, rhythm and the body. Students will conduct in-depth investigations into the relationship between training and performance and devising techniques and compositional approaches through weekly practical workshops.

Making it Happen This module will look at arts funding policy and public funding structures for the arts, including the formation of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport DCMS , and the Arts Council and its various models of operation since through to the present. This will serve to place productions from across the arts within the context of who makes policy and how it is formed, while acting as an introduction to arts funding and the application and measurement process. Students will gain an understanding of the structure of central, regional and local government in as much as they affect the arts. Trust and Foundations that support and nurture the arts are also explored in the context of how these can supplement and develop productions. Sponsorship and commercial involvement is looked at in the ways that this can be integrated into the package.

For Beginners Through weekly lectures, seminars and practical workshop sessions, the course will allow students to write scenes and experience the results and effects of their playwriting as performed by others. In the context of on-going discussions about the practice and characteristics of playwriting students will develop an understanding of the importance of revision and development of evolving work as mediated by the constructive criticism of group and convenor response. It offers students the opportunity to both understand and apply workshop techniques, planning, facilitation and management of projects within an Applied Theatre context. Practical work is based on a theoretical understanding and grounding in the historical and social contexts of Applied Theatre. The module will be structured in 2 distinctive parts: The first introduces and considers the historical development of applied theatre, current debates, methodologies and case studies within

the field. The second stage will focus on developing associated practical skills to include project planning, management, workshop and facilitation skills. Instruction in the analysis of language structure and verse forms, verse structure, style, metre, imagery and language texture forms a key component to this course. This work on unambiguous structural matters will enable the student actor to articulate experience in time, avoiding the risk of leaving performance at the level of the pursuit of feeling and expression. Focus will also be placed on how this analysis can direct the performer, facilitating discovery in both action and character. The module will run in two parts, the first part focusing on the demands of the verse monologue and its performing challenges, culminating in a solo performance assessment. The second part will explore performance text analysis when working with group scenes and how this analysis can direct the performer. The course will close with assessed practical scene performances taken from classical texts accompanied by a written scene analysis for later submission. In this module you will work with a range of dramatic material and forms, studying, for example, play texts, performance art, verbatim and documentary theatre. You will also engage with a range of theoretical approaches and perspectives. Students who wish to take the module must approach a permanent academic member of staff with a proposal, typically in advance of module registration, during the Spring term of the previous year. Students pick a research topic of their choice; however, students are only allowed to register for the module with the permission of a staff member who has agreed to supervise the project, and who has the expertise to do so. Potential supervisors must also ensure before they agree to supervise a project that the resources required to complete the project will be available to the student, and that adequate supervisory support will be available to the student throughout their study on the module. Students will be supported in the preparation and submission of their work by their supervisor, although a central expectation of the module is that students will take increasing responsibility for their learning, consistent with expectations of Level 6 study. The student will be responsible for finding the work-based situation, though support from the School and CES will be available. The internship should bear relevance to their subject of study or a career they expect to pursue upon graduation. There is, however, also a long tradition of transgressive female protagonists in "male" genres, and this module investigates such characters. The female protagonist is thus often perceived as standing between the masculine and the feminine. Among the many questions triggered by transgressive female protagonists, this module might explore whether this character can and should be perceived as feminist or merely as exploitative, and how and why such protagonists may appeal to a female audience in particular. Artforms that will be considered include visual arts painting, sculpture, architecture, popular art, performing arts dance and theater, music, and film. Readings will interface with subdisciplines of psychology such as perception, psychoaesthetics, neurophysiology, social psychology, and studies of emotion. Principal areas of focus will include aesthetics, arts-experimental design, perception of art, meaning in art, the psychology of the creative process, social and cultural issues, and the ramifications of arts-sciences research. The primary focus will be on Western art forms, though other world art traditions and aesthetics will be discussed. Assessment methods will test understanding through a summary and critical reflection on a selected text and the proposal, research, and design and oral presentation of a potential interdisciplinary research project. It will examine key concepts and literature in English translation from classical Chinese thought and will consider the historical context in which those ideas emerged. Traditions to be explored include Confucianism, Philosophical and Religious Daoism, and Chinese folk traditions. But we will also be looking at blasphemy in historical and global contexts. How have old British colonial laws been developed in Pakistan and India, for example? When was the last execution and imprisonment for blasphemy in the UK? These include the conflict between freedom of religion and freedom of speech, and the conflict between religion and sexual freedom. Roman Empire to European Union This course considers important moments in the Western history of political theology in order to understand modern and contemporary discussions of secular politics. These moments will be considered in relation to comparable instances of politically imagined theology or theologically imagined politics from other religious traditions as well. This will be followed by a discussion of the interplay in western theological and philosophical traditions between competing notions of the resurrection of the flesh and the immortality of the body as well as an evaluation of what various Christian thinkers, including Augustine and Origen, believed that an eternity in heaven or hell

might be like. The module will then investigate the range of eschatological teachings that different traditions have offered, including in Christian thought the diversity of realized and future forms of eschatology, as well as the tenability of purported testimony surrounding the possibility of out-of-body experiences, near-death experiences and mind-dependent worlds, and the way in which such endeavours have been sustained or critiqued in the light of scientific and historical advances. The module explores classic Indian approaches to key philosophical themes such as the nature of truth, the relationship of language and reality, cosmology and theories of causality, the nature of perception, karma and rebirth, debates about the self, the relationship of consciousness and the body, the nature of liberation and valid sources of knowledge.

Religion and Drugs in Continental Philosophy This is an introduction to the Continental philosophy of religion which orients itself around philosophical discussions of religion as a form of intoxication. This module will be divided into two parts. First, it will familiarise students with how Continental philosophy has developed in response to methodological and historical questions. Second, it will then show how Continental philosophy applies to the philosophy of religion by discussing traditional religious problems. The first part of the module will discuss critical, historical-based methodologies in: The second part of the module will utilise contemporary scholarship consisting in contemporary philosophers applying the aforementioned methodological approaches to religious problems. The course will begin with an examination of the methodological, conceptual and disciplinary issues that arise before exploring in critical depth the historical relationship between religion and film, with specific reference to the reception ranging from prohibition to utilisation of film by different religious groups. There will be a focus on particular categories of film and categories and models of religious and theological understanding, allowing students taking this module to develop the critical skills helpful for film interpretation and for exploring possible religious and theological approaches to film criticism. In the summer before joining the module, students will be given advice on how to identify their research focus, and by the start of the autumn term in which the module begins they will be expected to have produced a single side of A4 summarising key literature or other sources relevant to their specific project. Individual supervision will begin from the autumn term onwards. Initially this is likely to focus on clarifying the research focus or question, and situating it more deeply in existing literature and debates. Following this a clearer outline plan for conducting the research will be developed, with students then undertaking work necessary to meet each phase of this plan. If the project involves original fieldwork, the student will be expected to submit a research ethics application form for Faculty approval. As the project develops, chapter drafts will be submitted for review and discussion with the supervisor. Supervision contact time is likely to vary according to the project and student need, but will not exceed a total of 6 hours per student including face to face supervision or time spent writing written feedback to electronically-submitted drafts. Supervisors will provide feedback on chapter drafts, which will need to be submitted to supervisors in good time before supervision meetings, but will not provide feedback on whole draft manuscripts once chapters are completed. Supervisors will only provide supervisory support during term-time. Once the project has been agreed and a supervisor allocated in the autumn term, students will not normally be allowed to change their fundamental focus of their project although their specific questions are likely to change as the project develops or change their supervisor unless in highly exceptional circumstances. Whilst addressing key debates within the sociology of religion e. Examples of issues covered in the module include: The significance of intersectionality between different social structures will also be discussed, and useful sources of secondary data e. BRIN will be explored. Examples of good writing in this style of sociological research are presented and explored through the module.

Chapter 8 : Origins of Theatre and Drama, Classical Drama and Theatre

In the ancient Greek world, religion was personal, direct, and present in all areas of life. With formal rituals which included animal sacrifices and libations, myths to explain the origins of mankind and give the gods a human face, temples which dominated the urban landscape, city festivals and.

Origins and Earliest Specimens. The religious drama, as setting forth events recorded in the Bible or moral lessons to be drawn from religious teaching, is distinctively medieval in character, and in origin is closely connected with the services of the Church. At a very early period a quasi-dramatic effect was given by the division of the choir into antiphonal semi-choruses and in the responses of the congregation to the clergy, though it was not until the tenth century that there was any approximation to dramatic action. Then, however, tropes, or texts interpolated during the service, as in the introit, were added, the oldest specimens being contained in a St. Gall manuscript of about 800. In many monasteries the crucifixion and resurrection were dramatically represented from Good Friday to Easter; and the custom thus inaugurated received accretion after accretion, such as a scene between Mary Magdalene and Christ, added in the twelfth century. In like manner the antiphon and the trope sung at Christmas gave rise to a little drama, probably modeled on the Easter playlet, the earliest Easter tropes extant dating from the eleventh century; and similar provision was made for the feasts of Holy Innocents and Epiphany. As a specimen the little drama acted on the latter feast may be described. Three of the clergy, robed as kings, came from three sides of the church and met at the altar, whence they solemnly proceeded, with a star swinging before them from a cord, to the crib, where they were received by two priests vested in dalmatica. Having offered their gifts, they were warned by an angel a white-robed boy to escape the wrath of Herod, whereupon they made their exit from the church through the transept. A combination of Christmas, Holy Innocents, and Epiphany was also effected by having the three kings brought before Herod while on their way to Bethlehem, the introduction of that king giving the moment of opposition and thus inaugurating true dramatic life in Christian drama. Yet another drama was evolved from a homily attributed to Augustine and read as a lesson on Christmas. Assailing the Jews for their stubborn refusal to hear their own prophets concerning the Christ, the opportunity was afforded, in the eleventh century, of presenting not only the prophets, but also Vergil on account of the fourth Eclogue, Nebuchadrezzar, and the Sibyl. The feasts of the Annunciation, Easter Monday, and the Ascension gave rise to minor dramas; while the dramatic representation of eschatological events, e. g. Gradual Extension of Action. In all this the Church endeavored not only to provide a substitute for pagan and secular plays, but also to teach the masses, who were ignorant of Latin, the lessons of Scripture and doctrine which they would not otherwise comprehend. The gradual extension of the text gave increasing independence of diction, and new passages in prose and poetry were gradually added to the mosaic of passages from the Bible and the chants of the Church which make up the oldest religious plays. Beginning with the twelfth century the Easter plays manifest a tendency to extend the time of action, one of the early thirteenth century beginning with the calling of Peter and Andrew, and, though now ending abruptly with the negotiations between Pilate and Joseph of Arimathea concerning the sepulcher of Christ, once evidently carried on to the resurrection. This is, accordingly, the oldest specimen thus far known of the Passion play, which was to become the chief theme of medieval drama; but this type was not developed from the liturgy for Good Friday in the same sense as the Easter play from the liturgy for Easter, the deep solemnity of Good Friday forbidding free play to dramatic imagination. The twelfth century also witnessed the rise of dramas dealing with the saints, although these seem to have been intended primarily for schools, since they all deal with St. Nicholas, the patron of younger pupils, with the exception of one, which is devoted to St. Catherine, the patron of the older scholars. The departure of the religious drama from its original limits was unpleasant to some of the more rigorous, and complaints were made as early as the twelfth century, when Gerhoh of Reichersberg and Abbot Harrod of Landsberg both attacked the drama as the work of the devil, the latter especially objecting that, while the plays were laudable and useful in their primary form, they had degenerated into irreligion and license. The production of plays in churches was finally forbidden, though the prohibition seems to have been aimed at unworthy productions rather than at

religious dramas proper, the latter being expressly excepted from condemnation in the decretals of Gregory "Decretals," book III. Rise of Objections; Vernacular Plays. The first traces of the use of the vernacular in religious dramas date from the twelfth century. In Germany this was effected by a spoken German paraphrase following the chanted Latin sentence, and with the triumph of the vernacular over Latin also went the gradual supremacy of spoken over chanted lines. The earliest extant specimen of the vernacular religious drama is the twelfth-century French Adam. A number of French dramas of the saints have also been preserved, the most important of which is the St. Nicholas of Jean Bodel of Arras c. A later cycle of dramas shows how the Virgin miraculously intervenes in time of need or danger to succor those who adore her. The grotesque element comes to the fore in certain fourteenth-century German Easter plays, especially in those scenes where Satan, having lost so many souls through the descent of Christ to hell, sends the devil to recoup, this affording an opportunity for the satirization of the most varied estates of man. To the same period belongs the play of The Wise and Foolish Virgins, an eschatological drama. No texts of religious dramas. Increasing Elaborateness of Production. Though numerous specimens have been preserved of the Latin drama, which may be said to have come to an end about , few examples survive of the national plays of the oldest period , so that their process of development must remain uncertain; yet the dramatic merit of even the earliest vernacular plays is far superior to the Latin mysteries of the closing medieval period. In the cities the presentations became more imposing and the casts larger; in the great squares were erected stages, the location permitting the action to proceed without needing change of scenery; above was the throne of God and heaven, whence angels could descend to aid the good; and at the end of the stage was the abyss of hell, from which figures of grotesque devils constantly ascended. Since such productions required fair weather, the time of presentation tended to abandon the seasons of Christmas and Easter; and with increasing frequency the time of action extended throughout the earthly life of Christ, or even from the creation to the last day, the actual time of presentation now covering several days. This growth also involved the increasing introduction of the laity, although the clergy jealously arrogated to themselves the preparation of texts and the training of actors. The presentation of a religious drama, moreover, was held to be essentially pleasing to God, and was often motivated either by thanksgiving for divine protection or to deprecate threatening calamity, while occasionally indulgences were attached to such presentations. While the educational purpose, already noted, was frequently stressed, there are only rare allusions to the moral influence of the plays, although it is once remarked that sinners would be terrified by the tortures of the damned or of those in purgatory represented on the stage. The cycles dealing with the saints often advocated openly the veneration of their heroes, and the Passion plays were designed to awaken a living sympathy with the agony of Christ and to call forth the grace of tears; while the plea was also advanced that man needs amusement, and that the religious drama was better adapted for this than many other forms of enjoyment. There is scant trace in the Middle Ages of the modern scruples against the dramatic representation of sacred themes, and the attitude in general toward them finds its modern counterpart in the Oberammergau Passion Play. Literary Style; Corpus Christi. In the psychology of the leading parts and in the evolving of motives, he was mainly dependent on the theologians, especially those of the contemplative school who had pondered long upon the Passion. From these sources are borrowed such pathetic scenes as that in which the Virgin intrusts Christ to the care of the traitor Judas, and also scenes of horror. The greatest originality is displayed in comic scenes, although the wit here was of a breadth that sometimes caused the clergy to interfere. Thus, in the scene of the crucifixion, the Jews executed a grotesque song and dance with exaggerated caricatures of contemporary Jewish characteristics; and the beggars and cripples on whom the saints worked miracles like wise came in for their share of satire. In criticizing medieval religious dramas, however, it must be borne in mind that their authors did not aim at literary style, but only at the conversion from narrative to drama of their Biblical and legendary themes. Yet even the weakest plays mirror forth the thought of their time; and the uniformity of development in various countries likewise finds its explanation in the common source, the Latin literature of the Church, as well as in the uniform religious conditions prevailing throughout Western Christendom, not in international communication. International communication did, however, have some part, and the people here most concerned were the French, among whom the religious drama, here called "mystery," attained its richest and highest development, aided by dramas of the legends of the saints,

especially those in which their intercession aids those who venerate them, these dramas of the saints being specifically termed "miracle plays. Here it became possible to represent the entire history of the world, the division of the presentation between the various guilds and parishes heightening the magnificence of the whole, especially as the different scenes were given at designated places along the route. This form of drama reached its zenith in England, as in the "York plays," Spain not coming to the fore until much later. The older Latin liturgical dramas still lingered on, though steadily declining until they disappeared altogether, except for a few modern attempts at revival. In addition to plots taken from the Bible and legend, the later Middle Ages developed the allegorical drama, or "morality. To this category belongs, for example, the English Everyman, showing how each one, in his progress to the judgment of God, is deserted by kindred, wealth, and friends, only Good Deeds clinging to him. A variant of the moralities was afforded by the dance of death, apparently first devised by a preacher, probably a Franciscan, to illustrate the power of death over all classes, each of which, represented by a character appropriately costumed, holds dialogue with death before passing to the grave. The spread of the Reformation naturally affected the religious drama. The adherents of the ancient faith redoubled their zeal in France in the production of mysteries, but the civil authorities no longer were as favorable as in the past; many points, such as the coarse jests of the comic scenes, were now regarded as exposed to Protestant attack; the Roman Catholics themselves, under the literary influence of the school of Ronsard, came to regard the medieval drama as barbarous and devoid of style; and there was apprehension of the faulty presentation of the doctrines of the Church. The attitude of the Calvinists was at first not unfavorable to the religious drama, but about the position changed, and the synods of Nimes and Figeac condemned them. In German Switzerland the Protestants took delight in religious dramas until late in the sixteenth century, and Luther, at least once supported by Melanchthon, expressly approved them if presented reverently and without unseemly levity. The numerous German dramas now written were modeled largely on Terence and on the Latin school-plays based on the Bible; and the best specimen of this type, the Acolastus of Gnapheus, based on the parable of the prodigal son, was produced in , while an English translation was published by John Palsgrave in . The Protestant religious drama likewise mingled polemic elements in its plots, the priests of Baal in Old-Testament plays being favorite covers for attacks on the Roman Catholic clergy. This spirit, however, was especially manifest in the moralities from the earliest decades of the Reformation Period. An entire cycle of French moralities represent sick faith seeking assistance in vain from a scholastic theologian, and find healing only from Text of Holy Writ; or permit Simony and Avarice to imprison Truth until she is freed by a layman versed in the Bible. The Roman Catholics long lacked, both in the drama and elsewhere, such determined protagonists as their opponents possessed, nor was the situation changed until toward the end of the sixteenth century, when the Jesuits began their dramatic propaganda with the aid of all the refinements of the Barocco style. In Spain, beginning with the middle of the sixteenth century, the Corpus Christi processions assumed the form of moralities rigidly Roman Catholic in spirit, filled with hatred of heresy, and usually exalting the mystery of transubstantiation. In the following century, through the genius of Calderon, they attained their zenith, and by their rich mysticism, allegory, and diction they impressed even the Protestant mind. The Oberammergau Passion Play. While dramas based on the Bible and on legends of the saints maintained their existence in Roman Catholic lands, and even spread to such countries as Poland and Croatia, they gradually retreated from the cities to the rural districts, where they may still be witnessed. By far the most famous of this type is the passion play of Ober-Ammergau q. In the play was entirely revised, at the request of the villagers of Ober-Ammergau, by a Benedictine friar, Ferdinand Rosner, who introduced scenic effects borrowed from the Jesuit stage as well as arias and choruses modeled on Italian opera. The most striking innovation, however, was the representation of prefiguration of New-Testament events in the Old Testament. This motive, apparently found in the Middle Ages only in the Heidelberg passion play manuscript of , which, for instance, prefigures Jesus and the woman of Samaria by Eliezer and Rebecca at the well, was a favorite device in the Jesuit drama, whence Rosner incorporated it in the Ober-Ammergau play. In the second half of the eighteenth century the mocking spirit of the Enlightenment caused the governments of Bavaria and Austria to assume an unfavorable position toward the religious drama, and the production of passion plays was forbidden. In , however, after "amendment" by the clergy of Ettal, the Ober-Ammergau play was excepted

from the prohibition, and though again forbidden in , it was officially sanctioned after . By the text had again been revised and the verse of the dialogue had been turned into prose, while it now contained clear traces of the influence of the sentimentalism of the eighteenth century and of the religious poetry of Klopstock. The play as now presented is exceedingly impressive and reverent; each actor is chosen in conformity with his character and is schooled both by tradition and practise; but the stage is no longer that of medieval times. The Christmas plays, still produced even among Protestants, are less ambitious. As already noted, the late Middle Ages witnessed a tendency to transfer the drama of the birth and childhood of Christ from Christmas to the Christmas summer, but the Christmas play proper still survived, though in simpler form: Among the German Christmas plays special interest attaches to one of the fifteenth century in the Hessian dialect, presenting many traits which became traditional in the cycle, such as the humorous character of the aged Joseph and the comic shepherd scenes with their allusions to contemporary peasant life. The scenes of the three kings and Herod are often reminiscent of the *Entpfengnis und Geburdt Johannis und Christi* of Hans Sachs, and they were often amalgamated with the Christmas play, which was also sometimes combined with the Advent play, in which the Christ-child goes about to see whether the children have been good and industrious.

Chapter 9 : Christian Publishers - Christmas and Easter plays and musicals for all ages

Medieval theatre refers to theatrical performance in the period between the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century A.D. and the beginning of the Renaissance in approximately the 15th century A.D. Medieval Theatre covers all drama produced in Europe over that thousand-year period and refers to a variety of genres, including.

The notion popularized in the early twentieth century by the Cambridge School that drama springs directly from ritual has been largely discredited. However, religious practices and dramatic presentation often share many common elements: With that in mind, drama has had a long, sometimes intimate, sometimes adversarial relationship with religion. Scholars generally assign drama and religious ritual to a continuum with the following divisions: While this continuum cannot be used as a trajectory of theatrical development, it provides a useful tool with which to understand the many kinds of relationships theatrical performance has had with religious practice. Some societies developed rituals with advanced elements of performance but never developed anything approaching a secular drama. Conversely, some societies adopted a secular performance form independent of religious ritual. At the same time, many in Western society have assigned the secular theater a religious importance and power, particularly during the mid-twentieth century, when interest in so-called primitive cultures surged.

Ritual Comprising Performative Elements To understand the relationships between these various forms and concepts it is useful to examine the ritual practice of Egungun. Egungun ritual influenced later performance forms in Yorubaland and what came to be known as Nigeria. Yoruba religion centers on deities related to nature the orisha and ancestor worship. The followers of Yoruba believe human spirits travel back and forth to a spiritual plane between lives, and followers look to the spirits of their ancestors for guidance. The ancestor may appear to someone in material form embodied by a dancer from the Egungun secret society. The ancestor can be summoned at particular times of need or may appear regularly during cyclical rituals, such as the Egungun Festival. The dancer wears elaborate costumes, which consist of a mask and long strips or panels of fabric. The dancer whirls around so that the long strips of fabric fan out and create a breeze. This breeze is said to be a blessing passed from the ancestors to the living. No one may touch the dancers, however, and men with whips or sticks keep the dancers and the spectators separated. The Egungun ritual contains other performative elements, including songs of praise for the orisha and satirical sketches. The ritual does not possess the elements of a ritual drama in that it does not contain a set narrative, characters, or specific dialogue, but according to Joel Adedeji , Egungun had a direct influence in the development of dramatic forms such as the Yoruba Alarinjo theater and on the postcolonial drama of such writers as Wole Soyinka.

Ritual Drama The earliest known record of ritual drama comes from an Egyptian stele erected around bce. It is the account by Ikhnofret of his participation in the Mysteries of Osiris at Abydos. The stele reads like a list of heroic accomplishments: I celebrated the Great-Going-Forth, following the god at his going. I sailed the divine boat of Thoth. It is difficult to get an accurate idea of how elaborate or developed the performance may have been or where one might place it on the continuum between ritual and drama. Scholars have long studied the accounts of ritual warfare among the Mayans, but in the s Nikolai Grube deciphered the glyph for the word dance. Several precolonial dances have survived, including the Dance of Giants, a solstice ritual of the lunar gods in conflict with the solar gods, and a pole dance in which dancers attached to ropes wound tightly around a pole slowly descend fly to the ground from the top as the ropes unwind. The French priest-explorer Charles Brasseur de Bourbourg, after seeing a performance, convinced Zis to recite it to him. Cawek leaves the room and returns sometime later angry at the idea that anyone might have assumed that he had fled. He then bravely faces his sacrificial death. The drama was accompanied by music, and Brasseur included musical notation in his description. His version includes two trumpets probably European-style and a drum, although scholars assume that other native instruments were used in the precolonial performances. The anthropologist Georges Reynaud made special note of the "parallelism" of the dialogue. The ritualistic dialogue consists of "parallel" responses in which the second speaker repeats what the first speaker says before adding more dialogue to the conversation. The dialogue also contains ritualistic salutations and closings. Dancers continued to perform the ritual drama into the twenty-first

century, although as Carlos Escobar points out, some question how much the text must have changed through the ages, especially after the Spanish priests outlawed such rituals in Zis inherited the oral text in secret, and subsequent translations present an even greater filter of the text. Richard Leinaweaver noted that in a twentieth-century production the masks, costumes, and musical instruments were placed on a sacred altar the night before the drama was staged, a syncretic practice that performers of the sacred autos, the Catholic liturgical dramas, also occasionally observe Leinaweaver, , p. The Difference between Ritual and Secular Drama Ritual drama developed in many societies in large part because drama and religious ritual share so many elements and structural qualities. As Richard Schechner notes in *Between Theater and Anthropology* , both employ the use of "restored behavior," or behavior that is repeated. The repetition sets dramatic performance and ritual behavior apart from the behavior of everyday life. The distance of the performers from the behavior makes the behavior "symbolic and reflexive" in a way that regular behavior is not. Religious ritual and dramatic performance both employ the use of a "frame" to set these behaviors apart from everyday life. These may be as complex as the concentric circles of ritual sacrifice that separate the world of the sacred from the world of the profane or as simple as the rectangle of the proscenium arch in the Western theater. But herein lies the key difference between ritual and the performance of secular drama. Arnold van Gennep explained that in the ritual, such as the rite of passage, the ritual subject moves through three phases: The subjects pass through the ritual frame into a marginal, or liminal, state where their status is ambiguous. Then the subjects are restored to everyday life in a new state, with a new status. Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss also defined ritual as "a religious act which, through the consecration of a victim, modifies the condition of the moral person who accomplishes it or that of certain objects with which he is concerned" Gennep, , p. As Victor Turner noted, while ritual behavior can be defined as obligatory, collective, integrated, and transformingâ€”or liminal â€”secular drama is optional, individual, removed, and although it may question the status quo or experiment with form, it is ultimately void of the transforming quality of ritual. It is, therefore, merely liminoid. Drama of Religious Festivals Of the secular dramatic traditions, many coincide with religious festivals, and many of those can be traced back directly to a ritual drama or a ritual practice. Nigerian scholars have traced the Egungun ritual origin of Alarinjo theater, the court theater of the Oyo Yoruba kingdom that predated colonialism. While the drama may be tied to religious practice, dramatic traditions such as Alarinjo demonstrate an elaborate theatrical practice in which artisans train for specific tasks within the theatrical art, such as acting, dance, costuming, mask making, set design, or music. Often a system of guilds and schools control the selection and training of the artists and oversee the production of the theatrical event. Sanskrit Drama Scholars know very little about the origin of Sanskrit drama, a performance form that remained popular from approximately the second century ce to the ninth century. While some say that Sanskrit drama has its origins in the popular traditions, others argue that it shares many elements with certain religious rituals. Regardless of its origins, the Sanskrit theater of India has a close relationship with Hindu temple festivals. The gods gave the priests the charge of creating and maintaining the dramatic tradition Richmond et al. While Sanskrit drama, in its ancient form, did not last past the ninth century, other forms grew up in its place. Wealthy families offer kathakali performances at temple festivals and other important events. Although it may have sprung from devotional worship, kathakali is an institution unto itself. The kathakali actor undergoes extensive training from a young age. Kathakali students learn elaborate makeup art specific to their character types. In addition to the dance steps, the actor must learn a series of hand gestures and complex facial expressions. It is through the face that the actor evokes the appropriate rasa and reflects the psychic state of the character. The Origins of Greek Drama Also associated with a religious festival, Greek tragedy supposedly evolved from dithyrambs, or choral dance drama, to honor the demigod Dionysos. To some extent, high school and college textbooks have oversimplified the relationship of tragedy to Dionysian worship, influenced perhaps by the century-old theory of Gilbert Murray that rituals of vegetation deities, specifically the Dionysian sparagmos ritual rending , were evident in the tragedies of Euripides. However, as William Ridgeway suggests and Herodotus before him , dithyrambic performance was not limited to religious worship as the people of Sicyon used the dithyramb as a tribute to ancestors and dead heroes. Also while the dithyramb may have influenced the development of tragedy, the dithyramb continued to develop as an independent form.

Scholars have begun to look at Greek dramatic forms as having a multitude of influences instead of looking for one ritualistic ur-drama that must have predated Aeschylus. In the sixth century bce Peisistratus established the Greater Dionysia. The festival included many activities celebrating wine and fertility, such as the procession of the phallus. Like two of the other Dionysian festivals, the Greater Dionysia included dramatic contests. According to the Marmor Parium, the first tragic contest occurred in bce. Although the priest of Dionysos occupied the central seat at the dramatic performance, the dramas themselves do not reflect a particular religious belief. Rather, they reinforce Athenian class and political ideology. Athenian playwrights of the fifth century bce seem particularly interested in analyzing the benefits of Athenian institutions, such as democracy or the courts. The plays were performed at a religious festival but other than that have very little connection with religious thought.

Religion and Drama at Odds While many religions included drama as an important part of religious observance, some religions especially the Christian and Islamic forbade theater. Even before Rome became a Christian empire in the late fourth century ce, the early Christian Church looked with disfavor on dramatic performance. Tertullian wrote *De Spectaculis* at the end of the second century ce, sometime after his own conversion to Christianity. He devoted his entire treatise to explaining why Christians should not attend any of the entertainments such as races, gladiatorial combat, Atellan farce, and tragedies. Christians should not take pleasure in watching others being harmed, nor should they witness licentious behavior. His thinking also reflects some of the complexities of early Christian thought. He noted that watching such entertainment aroused passions that could lead to sinful feelings and actions. Tertullian condemns the practice of acting itself, stating: Tertullian found the very idea of performing a role sinful. In the first half of the treatise, Tertullian lays out what seem to be the most vehement of his reasons for avoiding the entertainments: The fact that the theater of Rome was a temple of Venus and that the Greek theater came from the Dionysian festivals, Tertullian states, are reason enough to avoid theatrical entertainment. The theater became the site of conflict between Roman pantheism and emerging Christianity. The Catholic Church, in its quest for a monopoly on spectacle during the medieval period, continued to campaign against the theater, decreeing excommunication for anyone who attended theater instead of church and declaring that no plays should be performed on Sundays.

Medieval Ritual Drama In the late medieval period the Catholic Church began to develop a theatrical practice of its own. Many scholars believe that the liturgical drama grew out of the Mass in the form of a trope, or a lengthened musical passage used to elaborate some moment in the liturgy. The most widely cited trope is the *Quem Queritis*, the trope that accompanies the Easter Mass in the form of a dialogue between the three Marys and the angel at the tomb. This simple passage was accompanied by stage directions written in the tenth century by Bishop Ethelwold in the *Regularis Concordia*, instructing the monks to position themselves around the tomb "in imitation of the angel seated in the tomb, and of the women coming with spices to anoint the body of Jesus" Gassner, , p. The tropes were performed on the platea a flat space in the front of the church in front of a mansion a small structure that signified a location such as the sepulcher, manger, or Hellmouth. The theory of the development of liturgical drama holds that these miniature dramatic presentations in the form of tropes became more elaborate and developed into the later outdoor vernacular religious drama, following the ritual-to-drama trajectory.