

B. A. Part II (H)  
Paper III  
Edward II As a Historical play or Tragedy

Edward II is Christopher Marlowe's historical and aesthetic historical play or a historical tragedy. It retells the King's dull and voluptuous twenty year rule as the dreadful struggle of a few personalities. It is also a chronicle play which has a crucial role in the development of English drama. Elizabethan drama, this very play displays the victory of art and order. Some critic has said, 'Edward II is the most finished and satisfactory of Marlowe's plays, evidently carefully written, with the refractory chronicle material skillfully handled. When we read Edward II against a conception of the chronicle, Marlowe's historiographical practice emerges.'

Marlowe focused on a private jurisdiction, which he established in a protest against the subjects as a volatile source of decisions affecting the state. He set up this play as a challenge and defended his very different understanding of both political process and history writing. Edward II is a history remake. This is a fact that Marlowe didn't write the history of the reign of Edward II but wrote a tragedy out of the material that history provided him. In the Elizabethan age, history plays were written for information. They were more true than the other plays. In doing so, Marlowe depicts some facts to get an emotional authenticity. Marlowe's Edward II is an English historical play in which history has been

with

well presented and well dramatized.  
 readers and the audience have a reborn  
 at the King's weakness - homosexuality and  
 the minor pier Gaveston's weakness - sodomy.  
 The long 22 yrs (1307 - 1330) rule of Edward  
 II is deftly compressed by Marlowe  
 linking up the episodes of Gaveston and  
 Spencer in scene I, Act II. A famous critic  
 Charles Lamb says of King Edward II,  
 the death scene of Marlowe's King moves  
 pity and terror beyond any level, ancient or  
 modern with which I am acquainted! The  
 quotation or statement of Lamb denotes how  
 Marlowe was successful transforming history into  
 a deep moving tragedy.

The chief characters of Edward II  
 demonstrate no marked history deviation from  
 history. He was the son of Edward I. He succeeded  
 his father in July 1307. He was forced to reign  
 his crown. He was murdered at Berkeley castle  
 in Gloucestershire. Marlowe has drawn the character  
 of Edward II in accordance with the view of  
 historians of the time and reveals the fact that  
 the king was unwise, vindictive and thoughtless.

The second most significant character  
 in the play is Piers Gaveston, son of Arnold  
 Gaveston. He was brought up as a play fellow  
 of Edward II. He was married to his niece  
 Margaret de Clare. He was banished and returned  
 after one year of exile.  
 King of France was sent by her husband  
 to France because he had an illicit  
 relationship with his minion, Gaveston.  
 She had illicit relationships with  
 Hotspur Tumor, who was a powerful

Baron of Welsh march. He was imprisoned by King Edward II, but he escaped from the Tower. He became the real ruler of England. Prince Edward, afterwards Edward III was the son of King Edward II and Queen Isabella of France. Young King Edward III is executed by order of the murdered King Edward II before the body of the Edmund Spenser, the Earl of Kent is given a burial: dramatists own creation. He was six years older than King Edward II. Just like the King, Kent is impulsive and feeble, and

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