

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

Av Helge Ridderstrøm (førsteamanuensis ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet)

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## Tragikomedie

En blandings-/hybridsjanger mellom tragedie og komedie. Det tragiske og det komiske samvirker, står i et gjensidig forhold (Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 316). Sjangeren bygger på en innsikt om at i livet ligger ofte det komiske og det tragiske, alvor og lek, redning og undergang tett opp til hverandre.

“Tragikomedie, genre som kombinerer tragik og komik, kendt fra bl.a. spansk renæssancedrama. T[ragikomedien] kan fx være tragisk i sit anlæg, men ende lykkeligt, som Pierre Corneilles *Le Cid* 1637; eller lade komedien dominere, men ende tragisk, som Molières *Don Juan* 1665. [Ludvig] Holberg kaldte sin egen *Melampe* 1724 en *Tragi-Comoedie*.” (Bent Holm i <https://teaterleksikon.lex.dk/tragikomedie>; lesedato 09.02.23)

“[T]ragicomedie can either be a serious play with a happy ending – which is not the case with a straightforward tragedy – or a tragic play interspersed with moments of humor in order to lighten the mood.” (<https://literarydevices.com/tragicomedie/>; lesedato 28.09.22)

“Tragicomedie has established itself in the twentieth century as the dominant dramatic form. [...] black comedy, comedy of menace and savage farce [...] The further back we travel in dramatic history the easier it is to draw clear distinctions between tragedy and comedy; yet the two have always been complementary aspects of the impulse which creates theatre.” (Hirst 1984 s. xi)

Den romerske dramatiker Plautus’ “witty designation of his *Amphitryon* as a “tragicomoedia,” ostensibly because both gods and a comic slave appear in it [...] the ruler of the gods, of course, is the principal in a comic action of disguise and cuckoldry.” (Madeleine Doran i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/435436?seq=1>; lesedato 07.03.23)

I prologen til *Amphitryon* “Plautus announced, via the character Mercury, that this play would inhabit a new form of genre: “I will make it a mixture: let it be a tragicomedie. I don’t think it would be appropriate to make it consistently a comedy, when there are kings and gods in it. What do you think? Since a slave also has a part in the play, I’ll make it a tragicomedie.” [...] Plautus was not necessarily

trying to make a philosophical argument in creating a play that could not be defined solely as comedy or tragedy, and yet it was important to begin recognizing that most lives contain elements of both.” (<https://literarydevices.com/tragicomedy/>; lesedato 28.09.22)

“To Plautus it [dvs. det som utgjorde det tragikomiske] was an action drawn from contrasting spheres of life, including the divine. In the Prologue to *Amphitryon*, he made the god Mercury, disguised as the slave Sosia, say: “Are you frowning because I said that this would be a tragedy? ... I will bring about a mixture: let it be tragicomedy. For I do not think it proper to make it wholly comedy, since there are kings and gods. What then? Since there is also a slave, it will be ... a tragicomedy.”” (Howarth 1978 s. 170)

“When coined by the Roman dramatist Plautus in the 2nd century BC, the word denoted a play in which gods and men, masters and slaves reverse the roles traditionally assigned to them, gods and heroes acting in comic burlesque and slaves adopting tragic dignity. This startling innovation may be seen in Plautus’ *Amphitryon*. In the Renaissance, tragicomedy became a genre of play that mixed tragic elements into drama that was mainly comic. The Italian writer Battista Guarini defined tragicomedy as having most of tragedy’s elements – e.g., a certain gravity of diction, the depiction of important public events, and the arousal of compassion – but never carrying the action to tragedy’s conclusion, and judiciously including such comic elements as low-born characters, laughter, and jests. Central to this kind of tragicomedy were danger, reversal, and a happy ending.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/tragicomedy>; lesedato 23.09.22)

Den italienske 1500-tallsdikteren Giovanni Battista Giraldi Cinthio har en “rightfully important place in the history of tragicomedy, both for the kinds of plays he wrote and for his critical defense of them. Those of his plays which he called “tragedie miste,” or mixed – because they end unhappily for the bad, happily for the good – anticipate, in their complicated plots of romantic danger and fortunate solution, the type of tragicomedy so popular on the Jacobean and Caroline stage [dvs. i første halvdel av 1600-tallet].” (Madeleine Doran i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/435436?seq=1>; lesedato 11.03.23)

“[T]ogether with a considerable bulk of tragedy, tinged anyway with tragicomic elements, an immense and variously qualified corpus of plays all bearing in one form or another the label *tragicomedy* arises through the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, France and Spain. [...] Italy led the way during the mid-sixteenth century in the progress towards secular tragicomedy as it possessed the cultural and social conditions for the existence of a courtly and more sophisticated audience allowing the emancipation of tragicomedy from the academic milieu of school and university [...] the tragedy with a happy ending with no comic episodes, originating in the dramatic output of Giraldi Cinthio during the middle of the century (*Altile, Selene, Arrenopia, Antivalomeni*, etc.) [...] the Italian practice and theory of both Cinthio

and Guarini reveal that, in its origin, the new tragicomedy is equally rooted in tragedy and comedy, for, broadly speaking, the Cinthian tragicomedy is conceived of as “tragedy utilizing some comic methods”, whereas the Guarinian pastoral tragicomedy is conceived of as “comedy utilizing some tragic methods” (Herrick 1955: 136), and, what is more, romantic comedy, as can be seen early in the practice of Cinthio with his *Eudemoni* or a bit later in Giovanni Battista della Porta, shows romantic and pathetic arguments that made them close to tragicomedy” (Luciano García García i [http://www.sederi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/10\\_13\\_GarciaLuciano.pdf](http://www.sederi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/10_13_GarciaLuciano.pdf); lesedato 11.03.23).

Den italienske 1500-tallsdikteren Torquato Tasso bidro til å grunnlegge tragikomedien som sjanger (Wittschier 1985 s. 101).

Shakespeares *The Winter's Tale* er en tragikomedie (Fowler 1982 s. 55). Dette skuespillet og *Pericles*, *Cymbeline* og *The Tempest* “is in embryo substantially the same: a break-up of the family unit leads to separation, banishment (and sometimes death); a period of wandering in exile has the force of a pilgrimage and is rewarded with forgiveness, reconciliation and rebirth. This formula for a drama which moves from tragedy through suffering to a happy outcome is very different from the Italian prototype; indeed it is essentially the material of [Shakespeares tragedie] *King Lear* given a different ending.” (Hirst 1984 s. 26)

“[T]he term tragicomedy developed in the Renaissance [...] it became “a genre of play that mixed tragic elements into drama that was mainly comic.” Reversal, love, disguises, surprises, jealousy and a happy ending were central to this kind of tragicomedy. Also the term in English dramatic history is usually applied to a particular kind of plays that were developed by [Francis] Beaumont and [John] Fletcher. Fletcher provides a good example of such genre in *The Faithful Shepherdess*. In this sense Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Winter's Tale* are notable examples of tragicomedy. In *Merchant of Venice* the trick about the shedding of blood was omitted allowing Shylock to have his bond and the play will be considered easily a tragedy. Many Romantic writers in the nineteenth century, follow Shakespeare’s use of tragicomedy believing that his plays mirror nature so that they used him as a model for their works.” (Elaf G. Salih i <https://www.iasj.net/iasj/download/caf5535ca00d8f4f>; lesedato 07.03.23)

“A key work in its [sjangerens] development is [John] Marston’s *Malcontent* [1604], which was entered in the Stationers’ Register as “The Malecontent Tragicomedia” – a reflection, in George Hunter’s view, “of Marston’s programmatic attempt to reconstruct this genre in English.” ” (Fowler 1982 s. 187)

“Despite its affront to the strict Neoclassicism of the day, which forbade the mixing of genres, tragicomedy flourished, especially in England, whose writers largely ignored the edicts of Neoclassicism. John Fletcher provides a good example of the genre in *The Faithful Shepherdess* (c. 1608), itself a reworking of Guarini’s *Il*

*pastor fido*, first published in 1590.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/tragicomedy>; lesedato 23.09.22)

“Giambattista Guarini’s essay *Compendio della Poesia Tragicomica*, published in 1601, was the first and remains the most substantial analysis of the tragicomic form. Written in late Renaissance Italy, it represents a justification of that mixed genre which was brought to its height at the turn of the sixteenth century. [...] *Compendio della Poesia Tragicomica* is closely related to Guarini’s drama *Il Pastor Fido* which triumphantly reveals the author’s theories in practice. [...] He defends the mixed form, making analogies with the hermaphrodite and with the alloy, bronze, before employing the example of the doctor who employs a substance extracted from the venom of the snake itself as an antidote for snake bite. The point is that this substance has been tempered: only what is beneficial has been utilized. This, he goes on to argue, is what the writer of tragicomedy should do: take what he needs from the contrasted genres of tragedy and comedy. From the former he takes ‘noble characters not noble actions, a story which is credible but not historically true, heightened yet tempered effects, delight not sorrow, the danger not the death’, and from the latter ‘laughter which is not dissolute, modest pleasures, a feigned crisis, an unexpected happy ending and above all – the comic plotting’ (*Compendio*, p. 231).” (Hirst 1984 s. 3-4)

Guarini skriver at hensikten med en tragikomedie er “to imitate through the *mise en scène* a contrived action which combines all the tragic and comic elements which can believably and decorously coexist, regulated within the framework of a unified dramatic form whose aim is to purge with delight the sadness of the audience. In such a way that Imitation – the ‘technical’ objective – is a mixed one, because it represents a combination of tragic and comic elements. Whereas Purgation – the ‘overall’ objective – is a single one because it reduces this combination of elements to one basic concept: the liberation of the audience from melancholy.” (siteret fra Hirst 1984 s. 5-6)

“It is important to define precisely what tragicomedy implies and this can be done not so much through a fixed definition as through an assessment of how a tradition has developed and to what extent the blueprint evolved by Guarini has been utilized and adapted by succeeding dramatists. While Guarini was working on *Il Pastor Fido*, Sir Philip Sidney had something very different to say about tragicomedy. In *The Defence of Poesie* (1583) he is heavily dismissive of drama as a whole, arguing: “But beside these gross absurdities, how all their plays be neither right tragedies nor right comedies, mingling kings and clowns, not because the matter so carrieth it but thrust in the clown by head and shoulders to play a part in majestical matters, with neither decency nor discretion; so as neither the admiration and commiseration, nor the right sportfulness is by their mongrel tragicomedy obtained.” ” (Hirst 1984 s. 8-9)

“The vogue of tragicomedy may be said to have been launched in England with the publication of John Fletcher’s *Faithfull Shepheardesse* (c. 1608), an imitation of the *Pastor fido*, by the Italian poet Battista Guarini. In his *Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry* (1601), Guarini had argued the distinct nature of the genre, maintaining it to be a third poetic kind, different from either the comic or the tragic. Tragicomedy, he wrote, takes from tragedy its great persons but not its great action, its movement of the feelings but not its disturbance of them, its pleasure but not its sadness, its danger but not its death, and from comedy it takes laughter that is not excessive, modest amusement, feigned difficulty, and happy reversal. Fletcher adapted this statement in the address “To the Reader” that prefaces *The Faithfull Shepheardesse*. The form quickly established itself on the English stage, and, through the force of such examples as Beaumont and Fletcher’s *Phylaster* (1610) and *A King and No King* (1611) and a long sequence of Fletcher’s unaided tragicomedies, it prevailed during the 20 years before the closing of the theatres in 1642. The taste for tragicomedy continued unabated at the Restoration, and its influence was so pervasive that during the closing decades of the century the form began to be seen in plays that were not, at least by authorial designation, tragicomedies.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/comedy/Kinds-of-comedy-in-diverse-historical-periods>; lesedato 05.06.19)

Den engelske dramatiker John Websters *The Devil’s Law Case* (antakelig 1610) “adopted a tragicomic form, here closely allied with the satiric city comedy practised by Chapman, Marston, and Middleton [...] Webster’s interlocked plots tragicomically avert disaster and at the same time explore one of his most persistent moral concerns: violation of basic human relationships is both cause and symptom of the more general social corruption. Wilful destruction of the family unit corrodes those bonds of love and duty which constitute society’s moral foundation.” (Lee Bliss i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3725393.pdf>; lesedato 08.06.22)

I Frankrike ble det i perioden mellom 1628 og 1634 publisert seksten komedier og ti tragedier, men hele 50 tragikomedier. Som det kunstneriske høydepunktet for tragikomedien i Frankrike på 1600-tallet regnes et noe senere verk, Pierre Corneilles *Le Cid* (1637) (Hélène Baby i <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=105>; lesedato 19.10.22). Etter at dette skuespillet ble en stor publikumssuksess, ble det i bokutgaver fra 1648 av bare kalt en “tragedie” (Barbier 2007 s. 175). Corneille sluttet å bruke betegnelsen tragikomedie om sine skuespill, og kalte dem fra 1650 for heroiske komedier (Hélène Baby i <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=105>; lesedato 19.10.22).

Hovedpersonene i de franske tragikomediene i første halvdel av 1600-tallet er ofte fortvilte og på grensen til å begå selvmord. Deres største motstandere kan være fedre, rivaler eller nesten allmektige konger (Hélène Baby i <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=105>; lesedato 19.10.22).

Tendensen i de franske tragikomediene på 1600-tallet er at hendelsene skyldes tilfeldigheter, mens i tragediene fra samme periode er det en svikt hos helten som leder til en tragisk slutt (Hélène Baby i <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=105>; lesedato 19.10.22).

På 1600-tallet “Philippe Quinault made significant contributions to the history of French theatre [...] *La Comédie sans comédie* [*Komedien uten komedie*] is a fascinating series of four one-act plays-within-a-play. Quinault wrote *La Comédie sans comédie* for the Parisian Theater of the Marais, and members of this troupe are themselves the major characters in this play, whose unifying theme is theatrical illusion. In the opening act, the characters explain that the main obstacle to their happiness is a middle-class merchant named La Fleur, himself a member of their troupe. La Fleur disdains actors and actresses and does not want his son and daughter, also members of this troupe, to marry people engaged in such a disreputable profession. The other members of the troupe conclude that it is in their own self-interest to convince La Fleur of the excellence of their profession. For the edification of La Fleur and other spectators in the Theater of the Marais, they perform four one-act plays. Each play-within-a-play illustrates a different contemporary dramatic genre. Act 2 is a pastoral play, act 3 is a farce, act 4 is a tragedy, and act 5 is a tragicomedy that utilizes elaborate stage machinery. [...] Act 5 further develops the intimate connection among love, violence, and fate. The main characters in this tragicomedy with machines, set on the enchanted island of Armide, are the pagan magician Armide and the Christian knight Renaud. During the Crusades, Renaud killed many enemies, including several of Armide’s cousins, yet after having seen a portrait of Armide, Renaud fell madly in love with her. When he reaches her enchanted island, Armide plans to kill him. The god of Love, however, intervenes and shoots an arrow into her heart. All ends well for the two lovers in this tragicomedy, which illustrates the adage *omnia vincit amor* (“love conquers all”).” (<https://www.enotes.com/topics/philippe-quinault/critical-essays>; lesedato 09.02.23)

I første halvdel av 1600-tallet i Frankrike var tendensen at tragikomediene fulgte tilnærmet en formel: Et ungt, forelsket par må igjennom en lang rekke hindringer før den lykkelige slutten i siste akt, når også deres foreldre har forsonet seg med at kjærligheten skal seire. Men før slutten har den unge kvinnen og mannen risikert livet mange ganger, og noen av deres fiender har dødd, blant annet fordi kjærligheten mellom han og henne har ledet til politiske konspirasjoner eller krig (Hélène Baby i <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=105>; lesedato 19.10.22). Konger og hele kongerikers skjebne kan stå på spill. Til tross for det sentimentale i dramaene og den lykkelige slutten for de to unge, får publikum se mange farer og mye vold, som dermed gjør at dramaene ligner tragedier. Dessuten er den typen mennesker som publikum får oppleve i disse tragikomediene, de samme som i periodens tragedier, nemlig adelige, fyrster og konger, riktignok i deres dramatiske kontakt med pirater og andre skurker (Hélène Baby i <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=105>; lesedato 19.10.22). Det at handlingen har

personer fra et så høyt sosialt miljø, fjerner skuespillene fra komedier som ofte har vanlige borgere som sine protagonister. Tragikomediene har dessuten i denne perioden lite humor, men er ikke tragedier fordi de slutter med kjærlighet og lykke.

En av kong Ludvig 13.s rådgivere, Jean Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin, skrev fire tragikomedier, *Scipion* og *Roxane* i 1639 og *Mirame* og *Erigone* i 1641 (Hélène Baby i <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=105>; lesedato 19.10.22). “Critics have paid little attention to *Mirame*. This tragicomedy is best known for two reasons. First, it was chosen for the inauguration of the Great Hall of the Palais-Cardinal in 1641. It thus represents a key work in the history of theater policy in France. The premiere took place a few weeks before the publication of the famous “king’s declaration concerning the comedians”. Secondly, this play and its stage machinery introduced Italian scenography in France and thus marked the beginning of a new genre, the French machine theater.” (Kirsten Dickhaut i <https://www.cairn.info/revue-litteratures-classiques-2021-2-page-93.htm>; lesedato 07.03.23)

Den franske skuespillerforfatteren Molières skuespill *Psyché: Tragi-komedie og ballett, danset foran Hans Majestet* (1671) ble skrevet for å framføres for kong Ludvig 14. og hans hoff i Tuileries-salen i Paris (Duchêne 1998 s. 595). Molières *Misanthropen* (1666) har temaer som ensomhet, kommunikasjonsvansker og mangel på lykke (Barbéris 1983 s. 6), i et univers som har blitt karakterisert som nevrotisk og absurd (s. 9). Likevel regnes skuespillet oftest som en komedie.

“Tragicomedy is something of a Cinderella among dramatic genres. Despite the claims of its defenders for its aesthetic and moral integrity, the form has often been maligned or sidelined by critics. Philip Sidney’s critique of “mongrel tragicomedy” in *An Apology for Poetry* is merely the best-known of a number of condemnations of the genre; its vicissitudes are perhaps best encapsulated by the fact that the term seems originally to have been coined by Plautus in *Amphitryon* as a joke. Yet tragicomedy has also seen periods during which its influence on the English stage has been immense. In the early seventeenth century, the experiments of dramatists such as Beaumont, Chapman, Fletcher, Marston, Middleton and Shakespeare established it as a major force, and it went on to dominate the Caroline stage before modulating in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries into a number of interconnected mixed forms, including sentimental comedy, melodrama and the drame. Then, as tragedy gradually fell from favour in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, tragicomedy took centre stage once more in plays by dramatists ranging from Ibsen and Chekhov to Beckett and Pinter.” (Lucy Munro i <https://go.gale.com/ps/>; lesedato 15.03.23)

Andre eksempler:

Philip Massinger: *The Bondman* (1624)

Jean Mairet: *Chryseide og Arimant* (1625)

François Tristan: *Den klokes galskap* (1644)

Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz: *Huslæreren, eller fordelene ved privat oppdragelse* (1774)

Gerhart Hauptmann: *Rottene* (1911)

Hugo Ball: *Michelangelos nese: Tragikomedie i fire opptrinn* (1911)

Den irske dramatiker George Bernard Shaw “dealt with what, in the preface to *Major Barbara* (1905), he called “the tragi-comic irony of the conflict between real life and the romantic imagination,” and his use of the word *tragicomic* is a sign of the times. The striking feature of modern art, according to the German novelist Thomas Mann, was that it had ceased to recognize the categories of tragic and comic or the dramatic classifications of tragedy and comedy but saw life as tragicomedy. The sense that tragicomedy is the only adequate dramatic form for projecting the unreconciled ironies of modern life mounted through the closing decades of the 19th century. Ibsen had termed *The Wild Duck* (published 1884) a tragicomedy; it was an appropriate designation for this bitter play about a young man blissfully ignorant of the lies on which he and his family have built their happy life until an outsider who is committed to an ideal of absolute truth exposes all their guilty secrets with disastrous results. The plays of the Russian writer Anton Chekhov, with their touching and often quite humorous figures leading lives of quiet desperation, reflect precisely that mixture of inarticulate joy and dull pain that is the essence of the tragicomic view of life.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/comedy/20th-century-tragicomedy>; lesedato 11.03.23)

Tragikomiske skuespill er ofte preget av personenes utveisløshet og fortvilelse, men med innslag av (kyniske) morsomheter. Russeren Anton Tsjechov er kjent for tragikomedier som *Tre søstre* (1901) og *Kirsebærhagen* (1904). “The tragicomic vision is one of the interests of Anton Chekhov, the Russian dramatist who longs to portray and present it authentically and honestly in his play the *Three Sisters*. It is the realistic vision of life which includes in it the tragic and comic sides of man’s life, especially modern man’s life. Being a realist, Chekhov is one of those dramatists who perceive life as a mixture of tragedy and comedy. This realization represents the realistic vision of life. For such an end, he wrote plays of mixed moods in which he combines two genres of tragedy and comedy. [...] Chekhov reflects those tragic and comic aspects of the human conditions by bringing together, the tragic and the comic in a mixed form. According to Chekhov, man finds himself in a meaningless, trivial and empty world, so he has no other choice, only to face and survive by laughter and comic response to his tragic life. [...] he shares the contemporary absurdist dramatists like Samuel Beckett, in their concern with the meaninglessness that lies at the heart of existence. In *Three Sisters*, Chekhov shows people laughing at their miseries and life’s contradictions. So, The



laughter became an effective way to express the serious and the painful simultaneously.” (Elaf G. Salih i <https://www.iasj.net/iasj/download/caf5535ca00d8f4f>; lesedato 07.03.23)

Den russiske dramaturgen Vladimir Nemirovitsj-Dantsjenko skrev om Tsjekhovs *Kirsebærhagen*: “The absurd and the pathetic, the noble and the worthless, the intelligent and the stupid, all are interwoven and assume a form of peculiar theatrical resonance” (sitert fra Hirst 1984 s. 88-89).

Den tyske naturalistiske dikteren Gerhart Hauptmann kalte sitt skuespill *Rottene* (1911) en tragikomedie, men teaterkritikerne var mest opptatt av det tragiske i dramaet, og oppfattet det komiske i stykket som kun en lys overflate som gjør skyggene med de tragiske hendelsene desto dystre (Brinkmann og Poppe 1988 s. 58).

Østerrikeren Arthur Schnitzler kalte sitt skuespill *Det vide landet* (1910) for en tragikomedie. Det er mye komikk i det, men det begynner med et selvmord og ender med en dødelig duell.

“Tragicomedy – something both ‘deeper and grimmer’, in [George Bernard] Shaw’s estimate, than tragedy – is in fact the Modernist mode *par excellence*. A seeming tentativeness compounds with a confidence and an assurance – a knowingness, indeed, which for the first time implicates the spectator in the very structure of the drama – to lend identification to the Modernist aesthetic, from [Ibsens] *The Wild Duck* to [Becketts] *Waiting for Godot*.” (John Fletcher og James McFarlane i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 506) Tragikomedie er “inseparable from Modernism” (John Fletcher og James McFarlane i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 510).

“One great artist of the grotesque and of tragicomedy in the 20th century was the Italian Luigi Pirandello. His drama is explicitly addressed to the contradictoriness of experience: appearances collide and cancel out each other; the quest of the absolute issues in a mind-reeling relativism; infinite spiritual yearnings are brought up hard against finite physical limits; rational purpose is undermined by irrational impulse; and with the longing for permanence in the midst of change comes the ironic awareness that changelessness means death. Stated thus, Pirandello’s themes sound almost forbiddingly intellectual, but one of his aims was to convert intellect into passion. Pirandello’s characters suffer from intellectual dilemmas that give rise to mental and emotional distress of the most anguished kind, but their sufferings are placed in a satiric frame. The incongruities that the characters are furiously seeking to reconcile attest to the comic aspect of this drama, but there is nothing in it of the traditional movement of comedy, from a state of illusion into the full light of reality. Pirandello’s characters dwell amid ambiguities and equivocations that those who are wise in the tragicomic nature of life will accept without close inquiry. The logic of comedy implies that illusions exist to be dispelled; once they

are dispelled, everyone will be better off. The logic of Pirandello's tragicomedy demonstrates that illusions make life bearable; to destroy them is to destroy the basis for any possible happiness." (<https://www.britannica.com/art/comedy/20th-century-tragicomedy>; lesedato 15.03.23)

“Six Characters in Search of an Author as a Tragicomedy: This particular play seems to encapsulate Pirandello's pessimistic approach towards life [...] life is, after all, a maze that can hardly be understood at a deeper level. Just like the theatricality of this play is a complex structure with the ever anxious Producer's panic situations that provide some comic relief, life is also humour and comedy at the surface level, but deep within, there lie pain and anguish. The inability of the Six Characters to break free from their assigned roles and that they have to enact and re-enact the same situations over and over, and with that, they are destined to suffer eternally give the play its tragic edge.” ([https://kkhsou.ac.in/eslm/E-SLM\\_Main/](https://kkhsou.ac.in/eslm/E-SLM_Main/); lesedato 16.01.23)

“Chekhov and Pirandello, like many dramatists, prefer tragicomedy since they both consider that tragicomedy is the convenient and comprehensive form portraying the ups and downs of life and both the tragic and comic responses of the people to human existence. After the Second World War, the dramatists of the period such as [Friedrich] Dürrenmatt and [Eugène] Ionesco [...] regarding the comic and the tragic as the same, indiscernible; thereby the presentation of the tragicomedy on the stage is unavoidable. As a result, the influence of these notions on [Tom] Stoppard's dramatic representations, particularly in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, can be traced. [...] Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* can be regarded as a source of influence on Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* taking into account of the handling of the theme of reality versus illusion. Besides, the use of play within a play is also employed in the three mentioned plays so as to debate over the nature of art and artist, the theatrical world and the actor and in Pirandello as a means of tragicomic effect.” (Sevda Karataş i [https://acik.bilim.yok.gov.tr/bitstream/handle/20.500.12812/613376/yokAcikBilim\\_342076.pdf](https://acik.bilim.yok.gov.tr/bitstream/handle/20.500.12812/613376/yokAcikBilim_342076.pdf); lesedato 16.01.23)

“An affinity can be drawn between Chekhov's and Pirandello's characters in that they are not drawn as tragic; in fact, they see themselves as tragic whereas Stoppard's characters are presented as comic enrolling circus clown routines and repetitions such as spinning coins. Pirandello presents two groups of dramatic figures including the Characters and the Actors. The Characters are tragic not in the sense that they perceive themselves; yet, they are seeking an author to complete their story while the Actors turns into comic characters who are mimicking the Characters. In contrast to Renaissance tragicomedy presenting tragic characters in a comic world, Stoppard's characters are portrayed as comic characters who lack free will, notion of identity and a sense of past in a tragic universe. The presence of an author with a previous one controlling their lives and determining their end remarks the “bewildered innocents” as tragicomic characters with Stoppard's use of

humor.” (Sevda Karataş i [https://acikbilim.yok.gov.tr/bitstream/handle/20.500.12812/613376/yokAcikBilim\\_342076.pdf](https://acikbilim.yok.gov.tr/bitstream/handle/20.500.12812/613376/yokAcikBilim_342076.pdf); lesedato 16.01.23)

“After the disappearance of tragicomedy in the eighteenth century and replacement of the kind by various cognate forms such as the romantic drama, the drame and melodrama in the nineteenth century, tragicomedy re-emerges in the late nineteenth century with the pens of playwrights such as Ibsen, Chekhov, Synge and O’Casey. Foster points out the affinities between melodrama and Renaissance tragicomedy on the grounds that both make use of the “danger not the death”, hidden identities, reunion and revelation, blending of comic and serious characters and episodes. Furthermore, both Foster and Hirst draw attention to the influence of melodrama on the development of modern tragicomedy, especially Chekhov and Ibsen’s use of melodramatic conventions for tragicomic purposes.” (Sevda Karataş i [https://acikbilim.yok.gov.tr/bitstream/handle/20.500.12812/613376/yokAcikBilim\\_342076.pdf](https://acikbilim.yok.gov.tr/bitstream/handle/20.500.12812/613376/yokAcikBilim_342076.pdf); lesedato 16.01.23)

“Modern tragicomedy is sometimes used synonymously with Absurdist drama, which suggest that laughter is the only response left to man when he is faced with the tragic emptiness and meaninglessness of existence. Examples of this modern type of tragicomedy are Samuel Beckett’s *Endgame* (1958) and Harold Pinter’s *The Dumb-Waiter* (1960).” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/tragicomedy>; lesedato 23.09.22) Dramatikere innen den absurde teatertradisjonen er blant andre Eugène Ionesco, Fernando Arrabal, Arthur Adamov, Kateb Yacine og Armand Gatti.

“[M]ange av mine tidligere teaterstykker har tragikomedien i seg. De balanserer mellom det triste og det latterlige.” (Jon Fosse i intervju i *Aftenposten* 24. juni 2006 s. 6)

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