Jacobean Playwrights

While Shakespeare and Jonson are the two most popular Elizabethan and early Jacobean playwrights, there were other important figures. These writers invented new genres and took the tragedy in new, bold and occasionally even perversely horrible directions. They were:
- George Chapman (1559-1634), generally known as a translator of Homer, he was a writer of several comedies and five tragedies which show the Elizabethan interest in Stoic philosophy.
- John Marston (d. 1634) began as a writer of coarse and violent verse satires and liked exuberant language. He wrote melodramatic tragedies of love and revenge and cynical comedies.
- Thomas Heywood(1570-1641)s known for his domestic tragedies, plays which deal with tragic results of passion or lust in ordinary family situations
- Thomes Dekker (1570-1641) is particularly known for his city comedies, plays which focus exclusively on urban life.
- Cyril Tourneur (1575-1626) explored the corrupting power of revenge.
- Thomas Middleton (1570-1627) dealt in his comedies with London life.
- Frances Beaumont (1584-1616) & John Fletcher (1579-1625). In their plays the Jacobean drama indulges in the skilful professional exploitation of pathetic or emotionally extravagant situations.
- Philip Massinger (15B3-1640) is best known for his comedies.
- John Ford (1586 1639) developed an interest in the psychology of frustrated and of illicit love.
- James Shirley (1596-1666) was in full career as a dramatist when the closing of the theatres by the Puritans in 1642 put an end to the publicly acted drama. He wrote tragedies of Italianate intrigue and villainy or of dark passion
- John Webster(1580-1625) was one of the first wave of playwrights to begin working before the closing of the theatres. Although he was a contemporary of Jonson, his work is almost diametrically opposed in content, focus and tone. He was fascinated by how ambition, and lust could motivate the typical villain The White Devil (1610) and The Duchess of Malfi (1614) are his best plays.