

18th century saw a big change in the societal and literary arenas with the rise of the middle classes. So as to appeal to the tastes of the middle class, the century witnessed the introduction of novel as a new genre, essay writing, periodical culture, and coffee house gatherings. This century further marked the change of dramatic traditions from the Restoration comedies of manners to sentimental drama – George Lillo’s *The London Merchant* (1731) as an example of sentimental tragedy and Sir Richard Steele’s *The Conscious Lovers* (1722) as an example of sentimental comedy.

Delving into this dramatic shift, we analyzed differences between Restoration comedies of manners and sentimental comedies with ELIT 362 British Drama from the Restoration to the Modern students. Tracing the philosophical shift from Hobbesian to Lockean perception by also taking both the class mobility and some literary influences such as Jeremy Collier’s *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698) into consideration, we looked at the historical, social, philosophical and economic changes in drama.

A very short comparison between Restoration comedy of manners and sentimental comedy is as follows:

| Comedy of manners (use of wit) | Sentimental comedy |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Hobbes – you can use everything for your own goodness | Locke – people are born good |
| Love triangle | - |
| Bedroom scenes / exhibiting adultery | - |
| Libertine is refined | established saint / converted sinner |
| Young wife: cuckolding her husband | heroine: young maiden |
| Wit & ingenuity of the characters | providence / intuition |
| Laughter | tear / cry |
| It berates marriage | It exalts marriage |
| Obscene language | It avoids profanity |

Keeping the elements of sentimental drama, we made a comparative project with my students. I wanted the students to trace some of the sentimental elements in one of Yeşilçam movies of their choice. Here is a selection of this project.

Teaching and enjoying,

Assist. Prof. Dr. Z. Gizem YILMAZ KARAHAN