

# Ballad

- ▣ Ballad is a short story in verse, which is intended to be sung with the accompaniment of music
- ▣ Ballads have a long history and are found in many cultures
- ▣ The ballad actually began as a folk song and continues today in popular music

# Definition

- ▣ F.B Gum has explained the definition of ballad as, *“a poem meant for singing, quite impersonal in material, probably connected in its origins with the communal dance but submitted to a process of oral traditions among people who are free from literary influences and fairly homogeneous in character.”*

# Origin

- ▣ Etymologically, the word *ballad* has been taken from Latin word *ballare*, which means *dancing song*
- ▣ Ballad is a shorter narrative poem, which comprises of short stanzas
- ▣ A typical ballad consists of stanzas that contain a quatrain, or four poetic lines

# Form

- ▣ The meter or rhythm of each line is usually iambic- one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.
- ▣ There are usually eight or six syllables in a line.
- ▣ Some ballads follow this form and some don't, but almost all ballads are narrative, which means they tell a story.

# Characteristics of a Ballad

- ❑ Every ballad is a short story in verse, which dwells upon only on one particular episode of the story.
- ❑ There is certainly only one episode of the story in a ballad and the poet needs to complete the story within the limits of small number of stanzas.
- ❑ A ballad has a universal appeal.
- ❑

# Characteristics of a Ballad

- ▣ Every single ballad touches upon a specific subject, which bears universal significance.
- ▣ It's not simply restricted to his personality or his country, rather; it deals with the whole humanity.
- ▣ Use of colloquial language is an indispensable feature of a ballad. The poet has a tendency to make use of day-to-day and commons words instead of bombastic and flowery language in the ballad.

# Characteristics of a Ballad

- ▣ It has an abrupt and unexpected opening.
- ▣ The poem starts all of a sudden, without providing any details about the subject matter.
- ▣ The ending of may also be abrupt and unexpected.
- ▣ There are no extra details about the surroundings, atmosphere or environment.
- ▣ The reader has to visualize the setting himself through the words of the poet.

# Characteristics of a Ballad

- ▣ The story is mostly told through dialogues.
- ▣ Generally, in every ballad, there is a refrain.
- ▣ Refrain is a phrase or a line, which is repeated again and again after a stanza.
- ▣ The poet tends to use stock phrases so that it may be easier to be memorized by the readers.
- ▣ Easier than any poem to be memorized

# Characteristics of a Ballad

- ▣ Every ballad is written in a ballad stanza.
- ▣ Ballad stanza is a stanza, which consists of four lines with abcb rhyme scheme.
- ▣ There are four accented syllables in the first and third line, while in the second and the fourth lines there are three accented syllables.

# Characteristics of a Ballad

- ▣ Use of supernatural elements is an imperative feature of a ballad. Johan Keats and Coleridge's ballads are best examples in this regard.
- ▣ Usually, the themes of most ballads are tragic, but it must be kept in mind that there are some ballads, which are comic in nature.
- ▣ Ballads are simple in structure, style and diction, which make them the most popular form of poetry.

# Characteristics of a Ballad

- ▣ Ballads are normally composed in two kinds of stanzas; the first consists of a couplet of lines each with four stressed syllables, and with an interwoven refrain, the second a stanza of alternating lines of four stresses and three stresses, the second and fourth lines rhyming

# Types of Ballad

- ▣ There are two kinds of ballads
- ▣ Folk or Traditional Ballad and Literary Ballad
- ▣ Folk or traditional ballad was developed by anonymous poets in the ancient times and handed down to our generation by word of mouth.
- ▣ It has no written form. It is a verbal sort of poetry, which underwent reasonable changes during the course of time due to new circumstances and conditions.

# Types of Ballad

- ▣ In every new age, it altered a lot and absorbed many traits of the contemporary age.
- ▣ The traditional ballad had no single author, rather; it was the product of many poets.
- ▣ The author of the traditional ballads remains unknown.
- ▣ The Nut-Brown Maid and Chevy Chase are excellent examples in this regard.

# Types of Ballad

- ▣ Literary ballad is actually an imitation of the traditional ballad.
- ▣ The only difference between the two ballads is the authorship. The author of the literary ballad is a known personality, while the author of the traditional ballad is anonymous. The author of the traditional ballad may be a common man or a shepherd, villager or a farmer. Nobody knows about the real author of the traditional ballad.

# Types of Ballad

- ▣ Time cannot bring about any change in the text of the literary ballad as it is preserved in hard and soft copies.
- ▣ The poet is the legal owner of his ballads.
- ▣ Literary ballads are more polished and lengthy when compared with the traditional ballads.
- ▣ Literary ballads possess all the remaining features of the traditional ballad.
- ▣ John Keats, Samuel Coleridge, Wordsworth and many other poets excelled in balladry

# Example

## ▣ Rime of an Ancient Mariner (By Samuel Taylor Coleridge)

“Day after day, day after day

We stuck nor breathe, nor motion;

As idle as a painted ship

Upon a painted ocean.”

# Example

## ▣ The Ballad of Billy the Kid (By Billy Joel)

“From a town known Wheeling, Wes Virginia  
Rode a boy with six gun in his hands  
And his daring life crime  
Made him a legend in his time  
East and west of Rio Grande”

# Comedy

- ▣ Comedy is a literary genre and a type of dramatic work that is amusing and satirical in its tone, mostly having a cheerful ending.
- ▣ The motif of this dramatic work is triumph over unpleasant circumstance by creating comic effects, resulting in a happy or successful conclusion.

# Comedy

- ▣ Comedy has multiple sub-genres depending upon the source of the humor, context in which an author delivers dialogues, and delivery methods, which include farce, satire, and burlesque.
- ▣ Tragedy is opposite to comedy, as tragedy deals with sorrowful and tragic events in a story.

# History

- ▣ The definition of comedy has changed over the
- ▣ In Ancient Greek theater, dramas were classified as comedies if they showed a struggle between the societal norms that older people held to, and the younger people who tried to thwart these norms, often with examples of dramatic irony.
- ▣ The Greek philosopher Aristotle described comedy as an imitation of men who are worse than average, whereas a tragedy depicts men who are better than average.

# History

- ▣ In Shakespeare's time, a comedy often included humor but more generally referred to a play in which characters get married rather than murdered in the end.
- ▣ Shakespeare's comedies are more light-hearted than his tragedies, though sometimes there are moments of levity in his tragedies.

# History

- ▣ In Shakespearean comedies, as well as many other comedy examples, the characters end up in a better situation at the end than they were at the beginning, whereas in tragedies the characters end up worse than in the beginning (including ending up dead).
- ▣ However, the comedy definition continues to change its meaning and function, especially absurdist plays and narratives in which things do not change much for the characters at all or even get worse (such as in the television series "Seinfeld" or in Tom Stoppard's absurdist play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*).

# History

- ▣ The word comedy seems to be connected by derivation with the Greek verb meaning “to revel,” and comedy arose out of the revels associated with the rites of Dionysus, a god of vegetation.
- ▣ The origins of comedy are thus bound up with vegetation ritual. Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, states that comedy originated in phallic songs and that, like tragedy, it began in improvisation.

# Types of Comedy

- ▣ There are five types of comedy in literature:
- ▣ Romantic Comedy
- ▣ Comedy of Humors
- ▣ Comedy of Manners
- ▣ Sentimental Comedy
- ▣ Tragicomedy

# Types of Comedy

- ▣ Romantic comedy involves a theme of love leading to a happy conclusion.
- ▣ Shakespearean plays and some Elizabethan contemporaries
- ▣ These plays are concerned with idealized love affairs.
- ▣ True love never runs smoothly; however, love overcomes difficulties and ends in a happy union.

# Types of Comedy

- ▣ Comedy of Humors
- ▣ Ben Johnson is the first dramatist who conceived and popularized this dramatic genre during the late sixteenth century.
- ▣ The term humor derives from the Latin word humor, which means “liquid.”
- ▣ It comes from a theory that the human body has four liquids, or humors, which include phelgm, blood, yellow bile, and black bile. It explains that, when human beings have a balance of these humors in their bodies, they remain healthy.

# Types of Comedy

- ▣ Comedy of Manners
- ▣ This form of dramatic genre deals with intrigues and relations of ladies and gentlemen living in a sophisticated society.
- ▣ This form relies upon high comedy, derived from sparkle and wit of dialogues, violations of social traditions, and good manners, by nonsense characters like jealous husbands, wives, and foppish dandies.
- ▣ We find its use in Restoration dramatists, particularly in the works of Wycherley and Congreve.

# Types of Comedy

- ▣ Sentimental Comedy
- ▣ Sentimental drama contains both comedy and sentimental tragedy.
- ▣ It appears in literary circles due to reaction of the middle class against obscenity and indecency of Restoration Comedy of Manners.
- ▣ This form, which incorporates scenes with extreme emotions evoking excessive pity, gained popularity among the middle class audiences in the eighteenth century.

# Types of Comedy

- ▣ Tragicomedy
- ▣ This dramatic genre contains both tragic and comedic elements.
- ▣ It blends both elements to lighten the overall mood of the play.
- ▣ It is a serious play that ends happily.

# Example

- ▣ A Midsummer Night's Dream (By William Shakespeare)
- ▣ William Shakespeare's play, A Midsummer Night's Dream, is a good example of a romantic comedy, presenting young lovers falling comically in and out of love for a brief period. Their real world problems get resolved magically, enemies reconcile, and true lovers unite in the end.

# Example

- ▣ Every Man in His Humor (By Ben Johnson)
- ▣ In his play Every Man in His Humor, Ben Johnson brings a comedy of humors. An overpowering suspicion of, and obsession with, his wife – that she might be unfaithful to him – controls Kiteley. Then a country gull determines every decision of George Downright in order to understand the manners of the city gallant. Kno'well worried for moral development of his son, tries to spy on him.

# Epic

- ▣ The word epic is derived from the Ancient Greek adjective, “epikos”, which means a poetic story.
- ▣ In literature, an epic is a long narrative poem, which is usually related to heroic deeds of a person of an unusual courage and unparalleled bravery.
- ▣ In order to depict this bravery and courage, the epic uses grandiose style.

# Epic

- ▣ The hero is usually the representative of the values of a certain culture, race, nation or a religious group on whose victory or failure the destiny of the whole nation or group depends.
- ▣ Supernatural forces (deus ex machine) help the hero, who comes out victorious at the end.
- ▣ An epic usually starts with an invocation to muse, but then picks up the threads of the story from the middle and moves on to the end.

# Epic

- ▣ An epic may deal with such various subjects as myths, heroic legends, histories, edifying religious tales, animal stories, or philosophical or moral theories.
- ▣ Epic poetry has been and continues to be used by peoples all over the world to transmit their traditions from one generation to another, without the aid of writing.
- ▣ These traditions frequently consist of legendary narratives about the glorious deeds of their national heroes.

# Function

- ▣ The main function of poetry in heroic-age society was to stir the spirit of the warriors to heroic actions by praising their exploits, by assuring a long and glorious recollection of their fame, and by supplying them with models of ideal heroic behavior.
- ▣ One of the favorite pastimes of the nobility in heroic ages in different times and places has been to gather in banquet halls to hear heroic songs, in praise of famous deeds sung by professional singers as well as by the warriors themselves.
- ▣ Heroic songs also were often sung before a battle, and such recitations had tremendous effect on the morale of the combatants.

# History

- ▣ The passing of a heroic age does not necessarily mean the end of its heroic oral poetry.
- ▣ An oral epic tradition usually continues for as long as the nation remains largely illiterate.
- ▣ Usually it is after the heroic age has passed that the narratives about its legendary heroes are fully elaborated.
- ▣ Even when the nobility that originally created the heroic epic perishes or loses interest, the old songs can persist as entertainments among the people.

# History

- ▣ Court singers, then, are replaced by popular singers, who recite at public gatherings.
- ▣ The ancient Greek epic exemplifies the cycle of an oral tradition.
- ▣ Originating in the late Mycenaean period, the Greek epic outlasted the downfall of the typically heroic-age culture (c. 1100 BCE) and maintained itself through the “Dark Age” to reach a climax in the Homeric poems by the close of the Geometric period (900–750 BCE).

# History

- ▣ During the first half of the 7th century, the aoidoi produced such new poems as those of Hesiod and some of the earlier poems of what was to become known as the Epic Cycle. Between 625 and 575 BC the aoidoi gave way to oral reciters of a new type, called rhapsodes or “stitchers of songs,” who declaimed for large audiences the already famous works of Homer while holding in their hand a staff

# Verbal Formulas

- ▣ To compose and to memorize long narrative poems like the Iliad and the Odyssey, oral poets used a highly elaborate technical language with a large store of traditional verbal formulas, which could describe recurring ideas and situations in ways that suited the requirements of metre.
- ▣ So long as an oral epic tradition remains in its creative period, its language will be continually refined by each generation of poets in opposite directions, refinements that are called scope and economy.

# Verbal Formulas

- ▣ Scope is the addition of new phrases to express a larger number of recurrent concepts in varying metrical values fitting the possible positions in a verse.
- ▣ Economy is the elimination of redundancies that arise as gifted poets invent new set phrases that duplicate, both in a general sense and in metrical value, the formulas that already exist in the traditional stock.

# Verbal Formulas

- ▣ This highly formalized language was elaborated by generations of oral poets to minimize the conscious effort needed to compose new poems and memorize existing ones.
- ▣ Because of it, an exceptionally gifted aoidos, working just prior to the corruption of the genre, could orally create long and finely structured poems like the Iliad and the Odyssey, and those poems could then be transmitted accurately by the following generations of rhapsodes until complete written texts were produced.

# Example

- ▣ The Iliad (800 BCE)
- ▣ It was written by the popular Greek poet, Homer.
- ▣ It relates the story of the Trojan wars, involving themes of courage, boldness, love for one's country and nostalgia of family.
- ▣ However, it describes many legends related to the siege of Troy, the events took place before the siege, the gathering of the warriors prior to the siege and the causes of the war.
- ▣ Later, the epic foretold the looming death of Achilles and the destruction of Troy. The style of narration is grand, and suits an epic poem — the reason that it is still one the most celebrated work of antiquity

# Example

- ▣ Paradise Lost (1667)
- ▣ Paradise Lost, is an English epic by yet another blind poet of English origin, John Milton.
- ▣ It also is known colloquially as the Protestant Epic.
- ▣ Milton argues Satan's fall from the heaven as well as Adam and Eve's fall from the Garden of Eden.
- ▣ Despite his blindness, Milton did not stop from explaining "the ways of God to men."
- ▣ He has depicted Satan as a highly complex character, who is at war with God.
- ▣ Used several epic devices introduced by Homer such as invocation to the muse, extended similes and grand style
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