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THOMAS MIDDLETON IN CONTEXT

The redefinition of the Thomas Middleton canon has led to an explosion of interest in this quintessential Jacobean. Middleton's best-known plays, such as *Women Beware Women* and *The Changeling*, are now staged, filmed, and rewritten for modern audiences. But Middleton also wrote religious poetry, satires, historical allegory, prose, and less familiar plays; he collaborated frequently, even with Shakespeare. His works are rooted in his historical and cultural environment, from the growth of religious Arminianism and the Overbury scandal to the fall of the boys' companies. Here, experts in literature, theatre, history, law, and religion analyze the complex contexts of Middleton's works, clarifying debates over his religious and political affiliations. Divided into sections presenting new interpretations of the world in which Middleton wrote – as Londoner, citizen, dramatist, and early modern man – and concluding with a section on performance history, the essays cover the full range of his works, from the frequently performed to the newest attributions.

SUZANNE GOSSETT is Professor of English at Loyola University Chicago. She has edited Middleton's *A Fair Quarrel* for the Oxford Middleton, Shakespeare and Wilkins's *Pericles* for the Arden Shakespeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster* for Arden Early Modern Drama. She is a general editor of Arden Early Modern Drama and, with Gordon McMullan, General Textual Editor for the Norton Shakespeare 3.

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Chronology

Dates of texts are from *Middleton* and refer to date of composition.

Middleton/Middleton texts	Literary contexts	Cultural and political contexts
1580 Middleton is born to William and Anne Middleton		1580 Jesuit mission established in England
1586 Death of William Middleton	1586 Death of Sidney	1580 Return of Francis Drake
1586 Anne Middleton remarries	1587 Kyd, <i>The Spanish Tragedy</i>	1580 Marlowe begins residence at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
	1588–92 Marlowe, <i>Doctor Faustus, The Jew of Malta, The Massacre at Paris, Edward II</i>	1586–7 Mary, Queen of Scots, implicated in the Babington Plot and executed
	1588 Lyly, <i>Endymion</i>	1587 Drake defeats Spanish fleet at Cadiz
	1592 Death of Robert Greene	1590 Death of Francis Walsingham
	1592–3 Shakespeare, <i>Richard III</i>	1592–3 Plague: London theatres close
	1592–3 Shakespeare, <i>Venus and Adonis</i>	
	1593 Death of Marlowe	
	1593–4 Shakespeare, <i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	
1597 <i>The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased</i>	1596–7 Shakespeare, <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	1596 James Burbage builds the second Blackfriars Theatre
	1596–7 Shakespeare, <i>1 Henry IV</i>	
	1597–8 Shakespeare, <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	
	1597–8 Shakespeare, <i>2 Henry IV</i>	

Middleton/Middleton texts	Literary contexts	Cultural and political contexts
1598 Middleton matriculates at The Queen's College, Oxford	1598 Shakespeare, <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	
1599 <i>Microcynicon</i>	1598–9 Shakespeare, <i>Henry V</i> 1599 Death of Spenser 1599 Marlowe's <i>Hero and Leander</i> published	1599 "Bishops Ban" on satire Middleton's <i>Microcynicon</i> burned
	1599 Shakespeare, <i>Julius Caesar</i>	1599 Henry Airay elected Provost of The Queen's College, Oxford
1600 <i>The Ghost of Lucrece</i>	1599–1600 Shakespeare, <i>As You Like It</i>	
1601 <i>The Penniless Parliament of Threadbare Poets</i>	1600–1 Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i>	
1601 Middleton receives the £25 set aside for him at the time of his father's death From January he is noted "in London daylie accompaninge the players"	1601 Shakespeare, <i>Twelfth Night</i>	
1602 "Caesar's Fall" (lost)	1602 Shakespeare, <i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	
1602 Prologue and Epilogue for revival of <i>Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay</i>		
1603 <i>News from Gravesend</i>	1603 Jonson, <i>Sejanus</i>	1603 Death of Elizabeth I
1603 Middleton marries Magdalen (Mary) Marbecke	1603 Heywood, <i>A Woman Killed with Kindness</i>	1603 Accession of James I
1603–4 <i>The Phoenix</i>	1602–5 Shakespeare, <i>A Lover's Complaint</i>	1603 The Chamberlain's Men become the King's Men
1603–4 The Middletons' son Edward born	1603 Shakespeare, <i>Measure for Measure</i>	1603 Orlando Gibbons becomes a musician of the Royal Chapel
	1603–4 Shakespeare, <i>Othello</i>	1603–4 Plague: London theatres close
1604 <i>The Whole Royal and Magnificent Entertainment</i>	1604 'A' text of Marlowe's <i>Doctor Faustus</i> published	1604 Tobacco Tax introduced
1604 <i>Father Hubbard's Tales</i>	1604 Daniel, <i>Philotas</i>	1604 Peace concluded with Spain
1604 <i>The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinary</i>	1604 Marston, <i>The Fawn</i>	1604 Convening of the Hampton Court Conference
1604 <i>Plato's Cap</i>		1604 Dowland, <i>Lachrimae</i>
1604 <i>The Black Book</i>		
1604 <i>The Patient Man and the Honest Whore</i>		
1604–6 <i>Michaelmas Term</i>		
1605 <i>A Trick to Catch the Old One</i>	1605 Shakespeare, <i>The History of King Lear</i>	1605 The Gunpowder Plot
1605 <i>A Mad World, My Masters</i>	1605 Munday, <i>The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia</i>	1605 Jonson and Chapman arrested for <i>Eastward Ho!</i>
		1605 The Red Bull opens

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Middleton/Middleton texts	Literary contexts	Cultural and political contexts
1605 <i>A Yorkshire Tragedy</i> 1605–6 <i>Timon of Athens</i>	1605 Jonson and Jones, <i>Masque of Blackness</i> 1605 Bacon, <i>The Advancement of Learning</i> 1605 Cervantes, <i>Don Quixote</i>	1605 The Rose closes 1605 Caravaggio, <i>Ecce Homo</i>
1606 “The Viper and Her Brood” (lost) 1606 <i>The Puritan Widow</i> 1606 <i>The Revenger’s Tragedy</i>	1606 Fletcher, <i>The Noble Gentleman</i> 1606 Jonson, <i>Volpone</i> 1606 Shakespeare, <i>Macbeth</i> 1606 Shakespeare, <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> 1606 Wilkins, <i>The Miseries of Enforced Marriage</i> 1606 Death of John Lyly	1606 Charters issued to colonize Virginia 1606 Union Flag 1606 Plague: London theatres close 1606 <i>Act to Restrain Abuses of Players</i> 1606 Actors of the Children of the Queen’s Revels arrested for <i>The Isle of Gulls</i> 1606 Birth of Rembrandt 1607 “Midlands Rising” 1607 Jamestown founded in North America 1607 Halley’s Comet 1607 Plague: London theatres close for most of the year 1607 Robert Jones, <i>First Set of Madrigals</i> 1607 Monteverdi, <i>L’Orfeo</i> 1608 Theatres reopen and then close due to plague 1608 Whitefriars theatre opens 1609 The King’s Men begin to perform at the Blackfriars 1609 Shipwreck of <i>The Sea Venture</i> in the Bermudas 1609 Galileo’s telescope 1609 Moors expelled from Spain 1609 Theatres reopen 1609 Death of Dr. Dee
1607 <i>Your Five Gallants</i>	1607 Beaumont, <i>The Knight of the Burning Pestle</i> 1607–8 Shakespeare and Wilkins, <i>Pericles</i>	
1608–9 <i>The Bloody Banquet</i>	1608 Birth of John Milton 1608 Shakespeare, <i>Coriolanus</i> 1608 Fletcher, <i>The Faithful Shepherdess</i>	
1609 <i>Sir Robert Sherley</i> 1609 <i>The Two Gates of Salvation</i>	1609 Shakespeare, <i>Sonnets</i> 1609–10 Shakespeare, <i>The Winter’s Tale</i> 1609 Beaumont and Fletcher, <i>Philaster</i> 1609 Jonson, <i>Epicene</i> 1609 Jonson, <i>The Masque of Queens</i>	
1611 <i>The Roaring Girl</i> 1611 <i>No Wit/Help Like a Woman’s</i> 1611 <i>The Lady’s Tragedy</i>	1610 Shakespeare, <i>The Tragedy of King Lear</i> 1610 Shakespeare, <i>Cymbeline</i> 1611 Shakespeare, <i>The Tempest</i>	1610 Prince Henry made Prince of Wales 1610 Assassination of Henri IV of France 1610 Louis XIII becomes King of France

Middleton/Middleton texts	Literary contexts	Cultural and political contexts
	1611 Lanyer, <i>Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum</i>	1610 John Guy leads expedition to colonize Newfoundland
	1611 Fletcher, <i>The Tamer Tamed</i>	1610 George Buc replaces Edmund Tilney as Master of the Revels
	1611 Jonson, <i>The Alchemist</i>	1610 Death of Caravaggio
	1611 Tourneur, <i>The Atheist's Tragedy</i>	1611 King James Bible published
	1611 Heywood, <i>The Brazen Age</i>	
	1611 Heywood, <i>The Silver Age</i>	
	1612 Webster, <i>The White Devil</i>	1612 Death of Prince Henry
	1612 Heywood, <i>An Apology for Actors</i>	1612 Execution of the Lancashire witches
	1612 <i>Don Quixote</i> published in English	1612 John Dowland becomes lutenist to James I
	1612–13 Shakespeare and Fletcher, <i>Cardenio</i>	1612 Gibbons, <i>The First Set of Madrigals and Mottets</i>
1613 <i>A Chaste Maid in Cheapside</i>	1613 Elizabeth Cary, <i>Tragedy of Mariam</i>	1613 Princess Elizabeth marries the Elector Palatine
1613 <i>The Manner of His Lordship's Entertainment</i>	1613 Shakespeare and Fletcher, <i>Henry VIII</i>	1613 First Globe burns down
1613 <i>The Triumphs of Truth</i>	1613 Beaumont, <i>Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn</i>	1613 Opening of the New River in London
1613 <i>Wit at Several Weapons</i>	1613–14 Shakespeare and Fletcher, <i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>	
1614 <i>Masque of Cupids</i>	1614 Webster, <i>The Duchess of Malvi</i>	1614 "Addled Parliament" dissolved
1614 <i>More Dissemblers Besides Women</i>	1614 Jonson, <i>Bartholomew Fair</i>	1614 Pocahontas marries John Rolfe
		1614 Hope Theatre opens
		1614 Second Globe opens
		1614 Death of El Greco
1615–16 <i>The Widow</i>	1615 Donne ordained	1615 The King's Men and other theatre companies summoned by the Privy Council for performing during Lent
		1615 Rubens, <i>The Death of Seneca</i>
		1615 Inigo Jones becomes Surveyor of the King's Works

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Middleton/Middleton texts	Literary contexts	Cultural and political contexts
1616 <i>The Witch</i>	1616 Death of Shakespeare	1616 Catholic Church bans Copernicus's <i>De Revolutionibus</i>
1616 <i>Macbeth</i> (adaptation)	1616 Death of Henslowe	1616 Rubens, <i>Hippopotamus and Crocodile Hunt</i>
1616 <i>Civitas Amor</i>	1616 Death of Beaumont	
1616 <i>A Fair Quarrel</i>	1616 Death of Cervantes	
	1616 Jonson, <i>The Devil is an Ass</i>	
	1616 Chapman, <i>Whole Works of Homer</i>	
	1616 'B' text of Marlowe's <i>Doctor Faustus</i> published	
	1616 <i>The Works of Ben Jonson</i> published	
1617 <i>The Triumphs of Honour and Industry</i>	1617 Jonson becomes Poet Laureate	1617 Cockpit Theatre destroyed in apprentice riots and rebuilt as the Phoenix
1618 <i>The Owl's Almanac</i>		1618 Beginning of the Thirty Years War
1618 <i>The Peacemaker</i>		1618 Walter Raleigh executed
1618–19 <i>An/The Old Law</i>		1618 Francis Bacon appointed Lord Chancellor
		1618 William Harvey lectures on the circulation of blood
1619 <i>Masque of Heroes</i>	1619 Death of Richard Burbage	1619 Death of Queen Anne
1619 "Burbage"		1619 Inigo Jones designs the Whitehall Banqueting House
1619 <i>The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity</i>		1619 Edward Alleyn founds Dulwich College
1620 <i>The World Tossed at Tennis</i>	1620 Bacon, <i>Novum Organum</i>	1620 The <i>Mayflower</i> embarks from Plymouth to Cape Cod
1620 <i>Hengist, King of Kent</i>		1620 Gentileschi, <i>Judith Decapitating Holofernes</i>
1620 Middleton appointed City Chronologer of London		
1620–1 <i>Honourable Entertainments</i>		
1620–3(?) <i>Annales</i>		
1621 <i>Women Beware Women</i>	1621 Jonson, <i>The Gypsies Metamorphosed</i>	1621 The Fortune burns down
1621 "Bolles"		
1621 <i>Measure for Measure</i> (adaptation)	1621 Dekker, Ford, Rowley, <i>The Witch of Edmonton</i>	1621 Donne becomes Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral
1621 <i>The Sun in Aries</i>	1621 Fletcher, <i>The Island Princess</i>	
1621 <i>Anything for a Quiet Life</i>	1621 Burton, <i>Anatomy of Melancholy</i>	

Middleton/Middleton texts	Literary contexts	Cultural and political contexts
	1621 Wroth, <i>The Countess of Montgomery's Urania</i>	
1622 <i>An Invention</i>		1622 Birth of Molière
1622 <i>The Changeling</i>		
1622 <i>The Nice Valour</i>		
1622 <i>The Triumphs of Honour and Virtue</i>		
1623 "St James"	1623 Shakespeare's First Folio published	1623 Prince Charles and Buckingham visit Spain
1623 <i>The Spanish Gypsy</i>		1623 Henry Herbert appointed Master of the Revels
1623 <i>The Triumphs of Integrity</i>	1623 Fletcher, <i>The Sea Voyage</i>	1623–4 Velázquez, <i>The Investiture of St. Ildefonso with the Chasuble</i>
1623 "Malfi"		1624 Pope Urban VIII orders burning of Luther's German translation of the Bible
1624 <i>A Game at Chess</i> , banned after a nine-day run	1624 Massinger, <i>The Parliament of Love</i>	1624 Cardinal Richelieu appointed adviser to Louis XIII of France
1624 "To the King"		1625 Death of James I
1624 "Hammond"		1625 Accession of Charles I
	1625 Death of Fletcher	1625 Dutch settlement in Manhattan
1625 "Picture"	1625 Massinger becomes principal playwright for the King's Men	1625 Death of Gibbons
1625–6 "Pageant for Charles I" (Lost)		
1626 <i>The Triumphs of Health and Prosperity</i>		
1626–7 <i>Farrago</i>		
1627 Middleton dies and is buried in St. Mary's churchyard in Newington		

Abbreviations

Note: The abbreviations of Middleton titles (listed below) in almost all cases are taken from the Oxford *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*. All Middleton quotations are from this edition. Lost plays are indicated by quotation marks, extant plays by italics. Middleton plays are cited by act, scene, and line number; other works are cited by line or page number as appropriate. Introductions and other essays are cited by page and the author is credited. All quotations from Shakespeare are taken from the relevant volume of the New Cambridge Shakespeare.

- Companion* *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (gen. eds.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).
- Middleton* *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (gen. eds.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).
- ODNB* *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds.) (Oxford, 2004–10); online edn., L. Goldman (ed.) (www.oxforddnb.com, 2007).
- OED* *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn., 1989; online edn. (<http://dictionary.oed.com>).

WORKS OF MIDDLETON

- Antiquity* *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity*
- Aries* *The Sun in Aries*
- Banquet* *The Bloody Banquet*
- Black Book* *The Black Book*
- “Bolles” “On Sir George Bolles”
- “Burbage” “Richard Burbage”
- Changeling* *The Changeling*
- Chaste Maid* *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*

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List of abbreviations

<i>Civitatiss</i>	<i>Civitatis Amor</i>
<i>Cupids</i>	<i>Masque of Cupids</i>
<i>Dissemblers</i>	<i>More Dissemblers Besides Women</i>
<i>Entertainments</i>	<i>Honourable Entertainments</i>
<i>Five Gallants</i>	<i>Your Five Gallants</i>
<i>Game</i>	<i>A Game at Chess</i>
<i>Ghost</i>	<i>The Ghost of Lucrece</i>
<i>Gravesend</i>	<i>News from Gravesend: Sent to Nobody</i>
<i>Gypsy</i>	<i>The Spanish Gypsy</i>
“Hammond”	“To the worthily accomplished Master William Hammond”
<i>Hengist</i>	<i>Hengist, King of Kent; or, The Mayor of Queenborough</i>
<i>Heroes</i>	<i>Masque of Heroes</i>
<i>His Lordship’s Entertainment</i>	<i>The Manner of his Lordship’s Entertainment</i>
<i>Hubburd</i>	<i>Father Hubburd’s Tales</i>
<i>Industry</i>	<i>The Triumphs of Honour and Industry</i>
<i>Integrity</i>	<i>The Triumphs of Integrity</i>
<i>Invention</i>	<i>An Invention</i>
<i>Lady</i>	<i>The Lady’s Tragedy</i>
<i>Mad World</i>	<i>A Mad World, My Masters</i>
<i>Magnificent</i>	<i>The Whole Royal and Magnificent Entertainment, with the Arches of Triumph</i>
“Malfi”	“Upon this Masterpiece of Tragedy”
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinary</i>
<i>Michaelmas</i>	<i>Michaelmas Term</i>
<i>Microcynicon</i>	<i>Microcynicon: Six Snarling Satires</i>
<i>No Wit</i>	<i>No Wit/Help Like a Woman’s</i>
<i>Old Law</i>	<i>An/The Old Law</i>
<i>Owl</i>	<i>The Owl’s Almanac</i>
<i>Patient Man</i>	<i>The Patient Man and the Honest Whore</i>
<i>Peacemaker</i>	<i>The Peacemaker</i>
<i>Penniless</i>	<i>The Penniless Parliament of Threadbare Poets</i>
<i>Parliament</i>	
<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>The Phoenix</i>
“Picture”	“The Picture”
<i>Plato</i>	<i>Plato’s Cap</i>
<i>Prosperity</i>	<i>The Triumphs of Health and Prosperity</i>

List of abbreviations

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<i>Puritan</i>	<i>The Puritan or The Puritan Widow or The Widow of Watling Street</i>
<i>Quarrel</i>	<i>A Fair Quarrel</i>
<i>Quiet Life</i>	<i>Anything for a Quiet Life</i>
<i>Revenger</i>	<i>The Revenger's Tragedy</i>
<i>Roaring Girl</i>	<i>The Roaring Girl</i>
"St James"	"The Temple of St James"
<i>Sherley</i>	<i>Sir Robert Sherley his Entertainment in Cracovia</i>
<i>Solomon</i>	<i>The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased</i>
<i>Tennis</i>	<i>The World Tossed at Tennis</i>
<i>Timon</i>	<i>Timon of Athens</i>
<i>Trick</i>	<i>A Trick to Catch the Old One</i>
<i>Truth</i>	<i>The Triumphs of Truth</i>
<i>Two Gates</i>	<i>The Two Gates of Salvation</i>
<i>Valour</i>	<i>The Nice Valour; or, The Passionate Madman</i>
<i>Virtue</i>	<i>The Triumphs of Honour and Virtue</i>
<i>Weapons</i>	<i>Wit at Several Weapons</i>
<i>Widow</i>	<i>The Widow</i>
<i>Witch</i>	<i>The Witch</i>
<i>Women Beware</i>	<i>Women Beware Women</i>
<i>Yorkshire</i>	<i>A Yorkshire Tragedy</i>