



Wesker's Historical Plays (Oberon Modern Playwrights)

Arnold Wesker

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Presented here are four epic history plays from Sir Arnold Wesker, which touch on the age-old conflicts caused by religion, science and the Establishment.

Set in the Jewish ghetto of Venice, 1563, *Shylock* (1972) is based on the same three stories from which Shakespeare wove his play, *The Merchant of Venice*. The core plot remains, but the relationships and characterisations are very different. *Caritas* (1980) is at once the story of a monastic young woman in the fourteenth century but also a metaphor for the wrong decisions which can imprison us for life. In 1144 a young boy was found brutally murdered in Thorpe Wood. The Jews were accused of slaughtering a Christian child to use his blood for Passover and mock the crucifixion. *Blood Libel* (1991) investigates a calumny which persists to this day. Meanwhile *Longitude* (2002) tells of the eighteenth-century race to accurately measure longitude – and claim a £20,000 reward from Parliament.

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