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**DISCUSS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
RENAISSANCE DRAMA AND MEDIEVAL DRAMA**

In the history of Europe the medieval period lasted from the 5th to the 15th century. It began with the fall of the Western Roman Empire and merge into the renaissance and age of discovery.

Medieval drama was preceded by Greek and Roman drama. There was a pause in drama for some time after the classical era to the beginning of the medieval era. This pause in drama was as a result of the fall of the Roman Empire. Medieval drama became the beginning of Modern drama. Medieval drama was “*was buoyant, full of ideas and essentially theatrical*” [Emeka Nwabueze; Studies in dramatic literature; 2011, pg. 36]. The church in this period wanted to transform drama to conform to the religious line of the time.

The renaissance period was the period of discovery opening and knowledge. It was the *rebirth*. It began in Italy during the 14th century and

reached its height in the 15th. In the 16th and 17th centuries it spread to the rest of Europe. It was also known as the neoclassical age.

Renaissance drama grew out of the established medieval tradition of the mystery and morality plays. The drama then was centred on religious purpose but as time passed the dramas began shifting into political and other secular focuses. The production of the *Philologia* by Petrarch in 1349 began dramatic renaissance. Another example of this was John Skeleton's *Magnyfycence* which was a political satire even though it had the characters of virtue n vice etc. When the church withdrew its support, the secular nature of drama continued to survive. It was at this time that the renaissance drama was born. This means that it was medieval drama that paved way for the renaissance drama.

Still medieval drama did not follow the usual conventions so the renaissance drama which means the *rebirth* drama was a new proper beginning for drama. For the first time in many years writers wrote tragedies influenced by Greek plays. The most influence of these plays came from the roman Seneca plays which were translated into English by Jasper Heywood in 1589. At this time the new ruler on the throne Queen Elizabeth the first encouraged theatrical art, this created the dramatic literature called the Elizabethan Drama.

Renaissance drama had the English and Italian drama which was subdivided into Humanist drama and The Commedia.

Medieval drama in general was the link between classical and renaissance. It helped to keep some elements of drama alive and not totally washed away to enable the renaissance scholars rebuild dramatic art. The specific difference between the two was that medieval focused on the religious while renaissance focused on the regular.