

**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF BRITAIN:
HISTORY OF TUDORS AND STUARTS**

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MODULE-I

TRANSITION FROM MEDIEVAL PERIOD TO MODERN AGE

With the end of the Wars of the Roses and the accession of Henry VII (1485-1509), England entered a period of renaissance under the new dynasty of the Tudors.

Kings and Queens of the Tudor Dynasty:

Henry VII (1485-1509 AD)
Henry VIII (1509-1547 AD)
Edward VI (1547-1553 AD)
Queen Mary (1553-1558 AD)
Elizabeth I (1558-1603 AD)

In his book *England under Tudors and Stuarts*, Robert Raynes remarks that, "the advent of the Tudors marked the sunset of the Middle Ages and the sunrise of Modern times." Actually the reconstruction of the English society and civilization took place under the Tudors. The modern age started in England from the mid-fifteenth century. Some such changes took place from 1483, which had a lasting effect on the history of England as well as on the whole of Europe.

The Intellectual revolution hit London during the reign of Henry VII. The scholars that he sent to Italy learned Greek and Latin languages, which they taught in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Henry's family was also devoted to the cause of learning and spreading modern thought. Books were made available throughout the country, which brought about the Renaissance in England, encouraging the study of sciences, arts, philosophy and literature. Thus, the rise of the Tudors in England and the Renaissance all over opened a new chapter of "Modern Age" in the History of England.

Development in England

During the Renaissance period many positive developments took place in Europe, especially in England. The spirit of Nationalism started to gain hold over the English psyche. The Roman Church started to loosen its grip over the people. The English people now became more united and trusted their own Church. A spirit of nationalism spread all over England. The English language, literature and people were now becoming more distinctive.

As far the Religious field was concerned, it was during the reign of the Tudors that the country was divided between the Catholics and the Protestants. The foundation of national religion was laid. As the 'Holy Bible' was translated into many languages, people read it and became aware of the facts in religion. People could gather courage and strength to talk about the deeds of Pope and Church.

Petty feudal lords ruled England before the Tudors took over the English throne. Henry VII took some major steps by which the power of the traditional feudal lords came to an end. Henry supported upcoming lawyers, small merchants, clerks, educated class, writers, small businessmen, etc. Common people thus started gaining prominence. Henry made his schemes so well and arranged finances from the parliament for their proper execution.

Marriage alliances were another form by which Henry kept up the balance of power and also managed to make England a very powerful country. He married

his son to the princess of Spain, Catherine and daughter to the King of Scotland, James IV. This policy helped in maintaining peace and security for England.

Henry VII - The Founder of the Tudor Dynasty

After Henry VII ascended the English throne he had to face lot of problems like that of law and order, financial difficulties, feudal lords, etc. He married the Yorkist heiress, Elizabeth and came to the English throne. The Yorkist faction was easily defeated by Henry and after that the dynastic issue was settled. He now became powerful and acquired the moral support of the 'people of England' with whose help he ruled efficiently.

The everyday administration was given to those countrymen who were unpaid but ready to help the King in his administration. Henry VII successfully carried out the administration. He gave secondary position to the parliament. But he never desired to reduce its legal powers. Somehow the roots of despotism were laid.

The English parliament was very reluctant to grant money to the King. To raise huge funds, Henry used many methods. He began 'benevolence' which were the gifts to the monarch which were in reality forced gifts or loans. The financial councilors of Henry VII were empowered with 'Morton Fork,' this tax was forced on rich and poor for the uplift of the State. Although these two tax devices earned a huge amount for the first Tudor King they also gave him bad name. Henry also forced the Kings who were defeated in the wars he fought to pay for the war losses from their treasury. In this way the cost of war was recovered. Besides this, he increased the tax on the crown lands by which the income was raised from 52,000 Sterling Pounds to 1, 42,000 Sterling Pounds. He raised money from some other sources like confiscation of estates of barons who were destroyed in war times. He imposed heavy fines on the one who broke any of his laws.

This apart, he was economical and avoided wars and ran the administration with proper balance of income and expenses. Economic development was very essential for him, and so he paid special attention to it. He founded a Merchant Navy and encouraged shipbuilding for the commercial development of the country. Development of industry was his special interest. Due to his policy relating to commerce the country could become more prosperous and economically developed.

Main domestic policy of Henry VII

The major objectives of Henry were:

- to quell all the revolts so that his position could be secured and so he could concentrate on the proper administration of the country.
- As 'money' and economic stability was essential for the proper and efficient implementation of his policies, his major concentration was on accumulation of finances.
- For ending the power of the barons the King established a new monarchy. He established a special court of the Stuart Chamber. He reduced the power of the feudal lords. He imposed heavy fines on nobles who were found disobeying the regulations of the King.
- He increased the foreign trade of the country so that the wealth and prosperity of the country could be increased.

Foreign Policy of Henry Tudor

It was after Henry VII Tudor took over as the King of England that it became a powerful nation. With his foolproof policy towards his neighbors England created an important place for itself in the family of European nations.

With France, its ancient enemy England adopted an intellectual policy. When the King of France attacked Spain, Henry VII also declared war on France. To settle this situation the French decided to make peace with Henry by offering large sums of money. He also joined the League of Venice to maintain the balance of power in Europe. With Spain he entered into a matrimonial alliance with Ireland. He passed all such laws put forth in the English parliament that would be compulsorily imposed on Ireland. He also saw to it that laws could not be passed by Irish parliament without the sanction of the English parliament.

Henry VII was a farsighted ruler. His policy both domestic and foreign brought prestige to England and credit to Tudors.

Henry VIII (1509 - 1547)

Henry VIII became the King of England after the death of his father Henry VII. He was just 18 years of the age at that time. He was a man of great qualities. He had learned administration from his father. Apart from being a good administrator he was also a man of letters and interested in music and art. His father handed over a strong kingdom to him. Henry VIII was one of the greatest statesmen that England had. He offered great services to the nation. He established law and order when it was much required. He also boldly separated the Pope from his administration.

Thus, he also brought about the reformation in England. As peace prevailed, Trade, Commerce and Industry flourished and the economic status of English people improved greatly. Henry also worked for the development of the naval authority of England. He encouraged the building of modern ships for navigation.

The relations of Henry VIII with his parliament were unique. He took great interest in the progress of the parliament. Even though he kept the parliament under his full control, he called repeated sessions of the parliament to take major decisions. He himself never acted against the will of the Parliament.

Major Domestic Policy of Henry VIII

Although Henry VIII was a despotic king his people supported him greatly. His decisions were mostly according to the desire of the people. His strong army protected the people from frequent civil wars in England. Like his father he also made many forced loans. Due to this he could acquire a lot of money for his treasury, which he used for the implementation of his policies.

The Navy was the real strength of England. Foreigners were always cautious of this English strength. The credit for it goes to Henry VIII who made special efforts towards the building of ships.

Foreign Policy of Henry VIII

The aims of Henry VIII's foreign policy were:

- To maintain the balance of power in Europe.
- To resist the power of the enemies of England.
- To dominate European politics.

Henry joined the Holy League with the intention of driving France out of Italy. He made peace with France through the marriage alliance of his sister Mary with Louis XII of France. But after the terms of his alliance with Spain

expired, Henry declared war with France. By doing this he also checked the increase in the power of Charles V of Spain.

When the Scots refused to accept the marriage proposal of Henry's son for their daughter, he invaded and burned Edinburgh. He also crushed an Irish revolt against the supremacy of England and acquired the title 'King of Ireland.' He also divided the country into many provinces and included Wales with England.

England began to be looked upon as the most important political nation of Europe in the then politics when Henry VIII broke his relations with the Pope and paved a way for the reformation movement. As a result, the English church was separated from the Roman Church. He reduced the importance of Spain and France and due to his shrewdness, England gained in political importance.

Reformation during the Reign of Henry VIII

The reformation in England was the religious revolution that had lasting effects on the life of the people. The condition of the Church had deteriorated and its representatives had become worldly, corrupt and immoral. The most religious and Orthodox Church people also desired a reformation. The power of the Papacy was used for personal advantage and benefit. Besides, the higher clergy had a wealthy and pleasurable life whereas the lower clergy led a life of misery and poverty. This amounted to a feeling of resentment against the church.

Henry VIII took bold and major steps during his reign to put an end to growing power of the church. He took measures to curtail the power of the clergy in the English church by destroying monasteries and passing laws that were to be followed by the church authorities. The gist of these laws stated that a priest could be associated with a single church only. Another act stated that Pope was to be elected by the clergy who were nominated by the King. Due to the reformation, the English church was separated from the Roman church. The community of Christians was split into two camps: the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. Many wars occurred due to religion. The Counter Reformation was the most important effect of reformation though it had started much earlier.

The Reign of Edward VI (1547 - 1553)

Edward came to the throne of England by the act of succession passed by Henry VIII. As he was a minor he was to be guided by the 'Council of Regency' in carrying out the day-to-day administration. Henry VIII appointed a well-balanced council. As the opinion of the members of Council changed the plans of Henry VIII suffered. The Duke of Somerset, the king's uncle was a member of the Council of Regency. He held strong opinions. He became the protector of the new King. He practically ruled England from 1547 - 1549. It was he who declared war against Scotland as they refused the marriage proposal of Edward with Mary of Scotland. Mary was married to the French Prince, resulting in bad relations between England and Scotland.

The Duke of Somerset was a Protestant who supported the Reformation movement. During this time, Catholicism was greatly criticized. However, in 1552, the Duke of Somerset was executed under charges of conspiracy. After the execution of the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Northumberland started gaining power. He started to rule the country on behalf of Edward VI from

1549 - 1533. Northumberland (Warwick) was a cunning man. He was a staunch Protestant. He encouraged reformation in England. He forced Edward VI to declare Jane Grey, granddaughter of Henry VIII's youngest sister to be the heiress to the throne of England after Edward VI whose health was failing.

However, the plans of the Edward VI under the influence of Northumberland failed. Edward VI died in 1553 and the crown went to Mary Tudor.

Mary Tudor (1553 - 1558)

Although Edward had wished that Jane Grey be made the Queen of England, the people were not ready to accept her as queen. So, Northumberland had to declare Mary as the Queen of England. The people looked towards her as the daughter of Henry VIII, who had brought peace in England.

Mary was a staunch Catholic. She renewed the faith and once again introduced mass. In her parliament, she refuted the acts of Edward VI as immature. She tried to swerve England towards Catholicism.

The Tudors generally had a flair for understanding people, but unfortunately Mary lacked this quality. In spite of the fact that her people did not want Mary to have a marriage alliance with the Spanish Prince, Philip II, she insisted on it. Her Catholic leanings made her unpopular.

Roman Catholicism during the reign of Mary

Being a staunch Catholic Mary did away with all the measures which Henry VIII and Edward VI took to restrict the activities of Catholics. She also annulled the divorce of Catherine and her strength was increased. The Latin Bible was reinstated in the English churches. Mary apologized to the Pope and requested him to accept England in the folds of the Roman church.

Mary was clearly against Protestantism. Many Protestants were burnt alive and several were severely punished during her reign. This distanced her from the common people in England. They began hating her. They called her "Bloody Mary." These were serious political mistakes on the part of Mary, which caused her unpopularity. England lost many scholars and learned people due to Mary's persecution. An ironical outcome of Mary's cruel policies was that Protestantism became stronger as the people boldly faced the cruelties of Mary.

When Spain and France were at war, England was dragged into the skirmish due to the relationship of Philip II. The French took over Calais. This was a great blow to England. Mary, however, did not recover from the shock of the event and she died in 1558.

Although she became popular for a small time, the English public hated her for her religious intolerance. Perhaps Mary desired to revenge for her mother's fate due to her father's tilt towards Protestantism. Thus it is evident that religion, politics and even personal lives could not be separated in the politics of England during that time.

Rise and growth of new middle classes

During the Tudor and early Stuart period there was a great increase in social mobility, with wealth and political influence shifting from the nobility and clergy towards a "middling class" of gentry, yeomen and burghers. These were the people represented in the House of Commons, and who eventually challenged royal sovereignty.

Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

Elizabeth's reign is considered the Golden Age in the History of England. For she ushered in political stability and with it trade, commerce and the fine arts flourished. The English language was also polished and tempered at this time.

Elizabeth was not in a hurry to solve the question of religion. She wanted to solve this very delicate problem with the help of the Parliament who represented the people. She took the advantage of the popular public feeling and acted accordingly. With suave diplomacy, she adopted the policy of ecclesiastical compromise. She founded a National Church i.e. the "Anglican Church," which borrowed principles from both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant faiths. Thus, she won the hearts of the followers of both faiths.

The religious policy of Elizabeth was not liked by Philip of Spain. He attempted to murder the Queen, but could not succeed in it. With the financial help of Pope Sixtus V, he decided to invade England, but was badly defeated. This event established the supremacy of England and its trade and commerce also flourished. It checked the progress of Catholicism. England also became a major naval power in Europe.

On the fine arts front, Elizabeth invited talented artists from various parts of Europe to settle in England and spread their skill and knowledge. In the field of agriculture too, there was improvement. People were encouraged to grow more food grains in the country. This ensured self-sufficiency as regards food. Besides, she was very popular among the poorer classes because of the generous provisions of her poor laws.

Elizabeth inculcated in the people love for the country. Popular poets and playwrights were also largely responsible for the development of this patriotic fervor. Thus, Nationalism brought the English people closer together.

The English Parliament acquired a special place during the reign of Elizabeth. The Parliament acquired the right to vote and the right against unwarranted arrest of its members. The Parliament also acquired the power to punish those who gave bribes during elections.

Elizabeth had special love for music and literature. According to Trevelyan, "Europe recognized Elizabethan England as the country of music par excellence." Besides instrumental and vocal music, people were interested in architecture, theater, dance, acting etc. All forms of art and literature attained great heights during the time of Elizabeth.

Foreign Relations of Elizabeth

Elizabeth was a true politician. She framed her foreign policy with the intense ambition that England emerges as an important nation, socially, politically, religiously and even economically. She encouraged internal differences and revolts in Spain, France etc. By this the neighboring countries would remain occupied with their own national problems. This would give England room to grow powerful in the community of European nations.

Philip of Spain desired to help England to win back some of the territory she had lost in France, but on the conditions that he marry Elizabeth and dominate her foreign policy. Elizabeth refused to compromise on these terms so the issue remained unresolved.

The Anglo-Spanish relations had already deteriorated but Elizabeth did not desire to have the same quality of relations with France at this moment of time. So Elizabeth decided to remain neutral when the Protestants of Scotland requested her to help them. Later on she did help them against France, but

very secretly. This way she could maintain relations with both, France and Scotland.

A revolt broke out in Ireland during the time of Elizabeth after the Pope excommunicated her. At this time she sent the Earl of Essex to suppress the revolt. After this, Ireland completely came under the control of England.

OVERSEAS TRADE

Elizabeth looks beyond Europe for opportunities to expand trade and increase the nation's wealth. Her reign sees many voyages of discovery. In 1580 Francis Drake becomes the first Englishman to circumnavigate the globe. In 1585 Sir Walter Raleigh sets up a colony of about 100 men on the east coast of North America, which he names Virginia after Elizabeth I, 'the Virgin Queen'.

SPANISH ARMADA

In May 1588 a massive invasion fleet or 'Armada' sailed from the port of Lisbon. It was made up of 130 ships fitted with 2,500 guns. They carried 30,000 soldiers and sailors. This Great War fleet was bound for England.

The Armada is famous because at that time England was a small nation with a little navy and they were facing the greatest power in the world (Spain). They defeated Spain, with help from Mother Nature. It marked the beginning of England's mastery of the seas.

The great history of the English navy began, as did serious English exploration and colonization.

The Spanish monarch, Philip II, was angry that Queen Elizabeth had not punished Sir Francis Drake and other English seadogs for plundering Spanish ships. Philip was a devout Catholic. He felt it was his duty to invade and conquer England in order to convert the country back to the Church of Rome.

The two fleets met in the English Channel. There were many more Spanish ships than the English ships but the English ships were smaller and easy to manoeuvre. This would turn out to be a great advantage for the English.

On 6 August 1588, the Spanish Armada anchored at Calais. The English filled eighty ships with flammable material and set fire to them. They sent in fire ships to panic the Spaniards and scatter the Armada's formation. (The Armada's formation, the famous crescent, had proved extremely successful in previous campaign as it allowed all ships to fire their heavy guns simultaneously.) The Spanish panicked and fled to the open sea, straight into the gunfire of the waiting English. In the open sea, the Armada wasn't in formation, so the Spanish ships were easy targets for the English artillery.

An important reason why the English were able to defeat the Armada was that the wind blew the Spanish ships northwards. Strong winds and terrible rain forced many ships onto rocks near Ireland. The English celebrated their victory with a medal saying 'God Blew and they were Scattered'

Mercantilism

The Tudors inaugurated the great period of English commercial expansion. Henry VII made the development of the national wealth an explicit object of policy, the State operating by means of commercial treaties, although he did not hesitate to employ commercial wars as a means to securing quite other political ends. The root principle of the politico-economic theory known as

Mercantilism was already being formulated, namely, that wealth is to be sought as a means to national power.

It was not assumed that wealth is convertible into power as a matter of course; on the contrary, it was frequently assumed that wealth might be accumulated at the expense of power; it did not follow that the course which was economically the best was politically the best.

On this theory, then, trades and employments should be encouraged which tended to develop national strength; trade which enriched another nation was to be discouraged; the prosperity of a neighbour probably, of a rival certainly, was looked upon as injurious. The importance to the State of possessing a large amount of gold and silver gave rise to the doctrine that a trade which exchanged treasure for goods was bad for the country, but that one which exchanged goods for treasure was beneficial.

Balance of Trade

It became, therefore, the duty of the State to control commerce, to encourage or discourage it actively, with a view to maintaining the "balance of trade" that is, of securing an inflow of treasure greater than the outflow — the artificial development of industries regarded as beneficial, as, for instance, the manufacture of gunpowder and ordnance, and in particular the increase of shipping, which the England of the sixteenth century was learning to look upon as of quite vital importance.

The Navigation Acts

The principal means to the encouragement of shipping was found in the Navigation Acts, favouring goods exported or imported in English bottoms', and to these must be added the post-Reformation ordinances insisting on the Lenten fast — issued by Protestant governments even while they repudiated fasting on religious grounds as a papistical superstition — because employment was given thereby to the deep-sea fishermen and sailors, and so shipbuilding and the mariner's art were fostered. But the State left it to private enterprise to turn maritime energy to commercial account. After the first start, sailors and explorers owed nothing to the State, although Elizabeth personally speculated in some of their ventures on terms exceedingly profitable to herself.

Perhaps, however, we should qualify the statement that private enterprise was unaided. The government continued on an extended scale to employ the old method of granting monopolies in order to extend trade. Of these monopolies there were two types, those which were granted to mercantile companies, and those which were granted to individuals. In the past the great examples of monopolist Companies had been the Merchants of the Staple and the Merchant Adventurers, who had exclusive rights of trading in certain classes of goods in Western Europe.

Such monopolies were in fact a condition of the progress of trade, or at least appeared to be so. Other states practically excluded the foreign private trader, as did the English themselves. The trader was admitted only if he was an enrolled member of a Company which was responsible for his good behaviour and could be penalized if its members set rules and regulations at naught. To a Company which was under control privileges might be conceded.

A Company to which authority had been granted could control its members but unless the grant conveyed also a monopoly, it would have no control over

traders who were not members. It could not protect itself against the misconduct of such persons, while they, on the other hand, would have the utmost difficulty, acting as private individuals, in enforcing for themselves such rights as the law might concede to them. Provided that the monopolist Company was open to all would-be traders on reasonable terms, it was ordinarily to the advantage of the private individual to trade under its aegis; while the Company itself was liable to suffer damage from illegitimate practices, if non-members were permitted to trade within its area. Commercial treaties were effective under the Company system, but would have been a dead letter without it.

Chartered companies

That was a state of things which passed away in Western Europe as the ordinary machinery of the law became sufficient to protect the community against the unprincipled "free trader," the trader who was not a member of a Company, and to secure the individual in his rights even when there was no organized Company at his back to help him. But the maritime expansion of the sixteenth century opened up new markets or new fields of enterprise, where the economic arguments which had warranted the old monopolies were more effective than ever.

The great bar to enterprise was insecurity, and a chartered Company could give a comparative security to its members. But the chances of profit were too precarious, unless the Company itself could protect itself from the reckless competition of the free-trading adventurer; in other words, unless it had a legal monopoly.

So in Elizabeth's reign there began a multiplication of chartered Companies for trading in the more remote and less civilized portions of the globe. Thus the **Eastern or Prussian Company** was established for trading with the Baltic, the **Muscovy Company** for the Russian trade, the **Levant Company to trade with the Ottoman Empire**, and, finally, on the last day of the year 1600, the **East India Company to trade with India**.

Analogous to these were the patents granted for colonization to Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh in America. These were the men who first conceived the mighty vision of a new England beyond the ocean, where Englishmen should find a new home. The Spaniard had secured the treasure-regions of the south, and Englishmen were eager enough to break through the Spanish monopoly, to join on their own account in the hunt for Eldorado; but Gilbert and Raleigh dreamed of something far different, something which was realized in those colonies which have developed into the United States of America.

To neither of them was it given to realize the dream. Gilbert tried vainly to plant a colony in the vague northern region known as Norumbega, but his ship foundered at sea when he was returning to England. After him his half-brother Raleigh spent wealth and brains and energy in the attempt to plant his colony of Virginia, whither he sent expeditions year after year, only to find each time that the last group of settlers had been wiped out. Only in the next reign, when Raleigh was eating his heart out in the Tower, was the colony of Virginia really created; the child of a commercial chartered Company.

Somewhat different was the basis on which trading monopolies were granted to private individuals. In theory, at least, the monopoly was granted in

such cases with the direct object of creating industries which could only be nursed into life, industries in which the financial risks were too serious unless they were protected from competition, or which required the granting of special powers such as those which, in the nineteenth century, it was necessary to confer upon railway companies.

In practice, the system became liable to serious abuse, and occasionally, at least, the Crown conferred monopolies for the enrichment of private individuals where there was no adequate excuse for prohibiting competition. At the end of Elizabeth's reign the grievance had become sufficiently serious to threaten a rupture between the Crown and parliament; a rupture which was averted by the tactful skill with which Elizabeth promised to withdraw and prohibit obnoxious monopolies, although the promise 'was not in fact observed. The State sought to encourage new industries, as it sought to encourage commercial enterprise, by granting monopolies to the pioneers, but also by the introduction of foreign craftsmen.

In particular, privileges were granted to refugees from Alva's persecution in the Low Countries, where textile arts in especial were practiced which had not yet been taken up in England, in spite of the great development of the cloth manufacture. It is probable that refugees from Antwerp introduced the cotton industry, although its great development was deferred for a couple of centuries.

MODULE-II

AGE OF REFORMATION AND RENAISSANCE

"Renaissance" literally means "rebirth." It refers especially to the rebirth of learning that began in Italy in the fourteenth century, spread to the north, including England, by the sixteenth century, and ended in the north in the mid-seventeenth century (earlier in Italy). During this period, there was an enormous renewal of interest in and study of classical antiquity.

Yet the Renaissance was more than a "rebirth." It was also an age of new discoveries, both geographical (exploration of the New World) and intellectual. Both kinds of discovery resulted in changes of tremendous import for Western civilization. In science, for example, Copernicus (1473-1543) attempted to prove that the sun rather than the earth was at the center of the planetary system, thus radically altering the cosmic world view that had dominated antiquity and the Middle Ages. In religion, Martin Luther (1483-1546) challenged and ultimately caused the division of one of the major institutions that had united Europe throughout the Middle Ages--the Church. In fact, Renaissance thinkers often thought of themselves as ushering in the modern age, as distinct from the ancient and medieval eras.

Study of the Renaissance might well center on five interrelated issues. First, although Renaissance thinkers often tried to associate themselves with classical antiquity and to dissociate themselves from the Middle Ages, important continuities with their recent past, such as belief in the Great Chain of Being, were still much in evidence. Second, during this period, certain significant political changes were taking place. Third, some of the noblest ideals of the period were best expressed by the movement known as Humanism. Fourth, and connected to Humanist ideals, was the literary doctrine of "imitation," important for its ideas about how literary works should be created. Finally, what later probably became an even more far-reaching influence, both on literary creation and on modern life in general, was the religious movement known as the Reformation.

Renaissance thinkers strongly associated themselves with the values of classical antiquity, particularly as expressed in the newly rediscovered classics of literature, history, and moral philosophy. Conversely, they tended to dissociate themselves from works written in the Middle Ages, a historical period they looked upon rather negatively. According to them, the Middle Ages were set in the "middle" of two much more valuable historical periods, antiquity and their own. Nevertheless, as modern scholars have noted, extremely important continuities with the previous age still existed.

Reformation

The English Reformation started in the reign of Henry VIII. The English Reformation was to have far reaching consequences in England. Henry decided to rid himself of his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, after she had failed to produce a male heir to the throne. He had already decided who his next wife would be - Anne Boleyn. By 1527, Catherine was considered too old to have any more children.

However, a divorce was not a simple issue. In fact, it was a very complicated one. Henry VIII was a Roman Catholic and the head of this church was the pope based in Rome.

The Roman Catholic faith believed in marriage for life. It did not recognize, let alone support, divorce. Those who were widowed were free to re-marry; this was an entirely different issue. But husbands could not simply decide that their marriage was not working, divorce their wife and re-marry. The Roman Catholic Church simply did not allow it.

This put Henry VIII in a difficult position. If he went ahead and announced that as king of England he was allowing himself a divorce, the pope could excommunicate him. This meant that under Catholic Church law, your soul could never get to Heaven. To someone living at the time of Henry, this was a very real fear, and a threat which the Catholic Church used to keep people under its control.

Another approach Henry used was to make a special appeal to the pope so that he might get a special "Papal Dispensation". This meant that the pope would agree to Henry's request for a divorce purely because Henry was king of England but that it would not affect the way the Catholic Church banned divorce for others. The pope refused to grant Henry this and by 1533 his anger was such that he ordered the Archbishop of Canterbury to grant him a divorce so that he could marry Anne Boleyn.

The Archbishop granted Henry his divorce - against the wishes of the pope. But what else could the archbishop do if he wanted to remain on good terms with Henry?

This event effectively leads to England breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church based in Rome. Henry placed himself as head of the church and in that sense, in his eyes, his divorce was perfectly legal. In 1533, few were brave enough to tell him otherwise!

How did the people of England react to this? In fact, the vast bulk of the population was very angry at the way the Roman Catholic Church had used them as a source of money. To get married you had to pay; to get a child baptized (which you needed to be if you were to go to Heaven - so the Catholic Church preached) you had to pay; you even had to pay the Church to bury someone on their land (which you had to do as your soul could only go to Heaven if you were buried on Holy Ground). Therefore, the Catholic Church was very wealthy while many poor remained just that....poor. Their money was going to the Catholic Church. Therefore, there were no great protests throughout the land as many felt that Henry would ease up on taking money from them. Henry knew of the Catholic Church's unpopularity and, therefore, used this to his advantage.

Henry was made Supreme Head of the Church by an Act of Parliament in 1534. The country was still Catholic but the pope's power had been ended. The wealthiest Catholics in England were the monasteries where monks lived. They were also the most loyal supporters of the pope. This made them a threat to Henry.

By the time of Henry, many monks had grown fat and were lazy. They did not help the community as they were meant to do. All they seemed to do was take money from the poor. Also some monasteries were huge and owned vast areas of land. So here were monks not loyal to Henry who was also very wealthy. Henry decided to shut down the monasteries of England. The monasteries were to disappear like sugar dissolves in hot liquid. This is why

Henry's attack on the monasteries is called the 'Dissolution' - they were to be dissolved!

Henry wanted to make the Dissolution appear to be backed by law. He sent round government officials to check up on what the monks were doing. This was organized by his chief minister, Thomas Cromwell. The officials knew what the king wanted in their reports - information that the monks were not working, were not saying their prayers etc. Anything to discredit the monks was considered useful. Sometimes, the monks were asked trick questions. "Do you keep all of your vows?" If the monks answered "yes", but had taken a vow of silence, they had not kept all of their vows. If they refused to answer because of their vow of silence, they would be accused of failing to help the king. Or worse, were they trying to hide something?

One report sent to Cromwell commented that the head of the monastery visited, the prior, was a "virtuous man". However, his monks were "corrupt" and "full of vice". The report claimed that the monks had eight to ten girl friends each. This was all that Cromwell needed to shut down the monastery.

The allegations against some monks and nuns 'spoke' for themselves. At Bradley monastic house, the prior was accused of fathering six children; at Lampley Convent, Mariana Wryte had given birth to three children and Johanna Standen to six; at Litchfield Convent, two nuns were found to be pregnant and at Per shore Monastic House, monks were found to be drunk at Mass.

The smaller monasteries were shut down by 1536 while the larger and more valuable ones were shut by 1540. Few people in England were sorry to see them go. Few monks protested as they were given pensions or jobs where their monastery was. The abbot of Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, Marmaduke Bradley, was given a £100 pension a year for life - a considerable sum of money then. Some chief monks - abbots - were hanged but this was a rarity.

Some monastery buildings were reduced to ruin as the local population was allowed to take what they wanted as long as the silver and gold in the monastery went to the Crown. This meant that expensive building bricks etc. could be acquired for free. This alone made the Dissolution popular with the majority of the people who tended to dislike lazy monks anyhow.

However, the vast bulk of the wealth of the monasteries went to Henry. Some was spent building defenses against France on the south coast around Portsmouth; a small amount went on paying pensions to monks and abbots.

The only real protest in England to what Henry was doing came in 1536 with the Pilgrimage of Grace. This was led by Robert Aske, a lawyer. He wanted the monasteries left alone. Aske, along with several thousands of others, marched to London. Henry promised to look into their complaints and many of the protesters went home satisfied with this. Their complaints were never looked into. Aske was arrested and hung from a church tower in chains until he died of starvation.

When Henry became king in 1509, the church in England was as follows:

Head of the Church: the pope based in Rome
Church services: all were held in Latin
Prayers: all said in Latin
Bible: written in Latin
Priests: not allowed to marry

By the death of Henry in 1547, the church in England was as follows:

Head of the Church: the king Church services: held in Latin Prayers: most said in Latin. The "Lord's Prayer" was said in English Bible: written in English Priests: not allowed to marry.

To reform means to change. This is why this event is called the English Reformation as it did change the way the church was run throughout England. However, the death of Henry in 1547 did not see an end of the religious problems of England.

After Henry's death, England tilted toward Calvinist-infused Protestantism during Edward VI's six-year reign and then endured five years of reactionary Catholicism under Mary I. In 1559 Elizabeth I took the throne and, during her 44-year reign, cast the Church of England as a "middle way" between Calvinism and Catholicism, with vernacular worship and a revised Book of Common Prayer.

HUMANISM

A common oversimplification of Humanism suggests that it gave renewed emphasis to life in this world instead of to the other worldly, spiritual life associated with the Middle Ages. Oversimplified as it is, there is nevertheless truth to the idea that Renaissance Humanists placed great emphasis upon the dignity of man and upon the expanded possibilities of human life in this world. For the most part, it regarded human beings as social creatures who could create meaningful lives only in association with other social beings.

In the terms used in the Renaissance itself, Humanism represented a shift from the "contemplative life" to the "active life." In the Middle Ages, great value had often been attached to the life of contemplation and religious devotion, away from the world (though this ideal applied to only a small number of people). In the Renaissance, the highest cultural values were usually associated with active involvement in public life, in moral, political, and military action, and in service to the state. Of course, the traditional religious values coexisted with the new secular values; in fact, some of the most important Humanists, like Erasmus, were Churchmen. Also, individual achievement, breadth of knowledge, and personal aspiration (as personified by Doctor Faustus) were valued. The concept of the "Renaissance Man" refers to an individual who, in addition to participating actively in the affairs of public life, possesses knowledge of and skill in many subject areas. (Such figures included Leonardo Da Vinci and John Milton, as well as Francis Bacon, who had declared, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province.") Nevertheless, individual aspiration was not the major concern of Renaissance Humanists, who focused rather on teaching people how to participate in and rule a society (though only the nobility and some members of the middle class were included in this ideal). Overall, in consciously attempting to revive the thought and culture of classical antiquity, perhaps the most important value the Humanists extracted from their studies of classical literature, history, and moral philosophy was the social nature of humanity.

Thomas More (1478 - 1535)

Sir Thomas More was an English lawyer, scholar, writer, Member of Parliament and chancellor in the reign of Henry VIII. He was executed for

refusing to recognize Henry VIII's divorce and the English church's break with Rome.

Thomas More was born on 7 February 1478 in London, the son of a successful lawyer. As a boy, Thomas More spent some time in the household of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury. He later studied at Oxford, and qualified as a lawyer, although he did contemplate becoming a monk. From 1510 to 1518 he was one of the two under-sheriffs of London and in 1517 entered the king's service, becoming one of Henry VIII's most effective and trusted civil servants and acting as his secretary, interpreter, speech-writer, chief diplomat, advisor and confidant. In 1521 he was knighted, in 1523, he became the speaker of the House of Commons and in 1525 chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

At the same time Thomas More was building a reputation as a scholar. He was close to the radical catholic theologian Erasmus, but wrote polemics against Martin Luther and the protestant reformation. Around 1515, he wrote 'The History of Richard III' which established that king's reputation as a tyrant and has been described as the first masterpiece of English historiography. In 1516, he published his most important work 'Utopia' - a description of an imaginary republic ruled by reason and intended to contrast with the strife-ridden reality of contemporary European politics. More remained a passionate defender of Catholic orthodoxy - writing pamphlets against heresy, banning unorthodox books, and even taking responsibility when chancellor for the interrogation of heretics.

More took the post of Lord Chancellor in 1529, just as Henry had become determined to obtain a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. The previous chancellor, Lord Wolsey, had failed to achieve this objective. Henry was close to breaking with the Church of Rome, and the so-called 'Reformation parliament' was about to convene.

When Henry declared himself 'supreme head of the Church in England' - thus establishing the Anglican Church and allowing him to end his marriage - More resigned the chancellorship. He continued to argue against the king's divorce and the split with Rome, and in 1534 was arrested after refusing to swear an oath of succession repudiating the pope and accepting the annulment of Henry's marriage. He was tried for treason at Westminster and on 6 July 1535 was executed on Tower Hill.

Francis Bacon (1561 - 1626)

Sir Francis Bacon was an English philosopher and statesman, and a pioneer of modern scientific thought. He was born on 22 January 1561 in London. He was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon; keeper of the great seal for Elizabeth I. Bacon studied at Cambridge University and at Gray's Inn and became a member of parliament in 1584. However, he was unpopular with Elizabeth, and it was only on the accession of James I in 1603 that Bacon's career began to prosper. Knighted that year, he was appointed to a succession of posts culminating, like his father, with keeper of the great seal.

However, Bacon's real interests lay in science. Much of the science of the period was based on the work of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. While many Aristotelian ideas, such as the position of the earth at the centre of the

universe, had been overturned, his methodology was still being used. This held that scientific truth could be reached by way of authoritative argument: if sufficiently clever men discussed a subject long enough, the truth would eventually be discovered. Bacon challenged this, arguing that truth required evidence from the real world. He published his ideas, initially in '**Novum Organum**' (1620), an account of the correct method of acquiring natural knowledge.

Bacon's political ascent also continued. In 1618 he was appointed Lord Chancellor, the most powerful position in England, and in 1621 he was created viscount St Albans. Shortly afterwards, he was charged by parliament with accepting bribes, which he admitted. He was fined and imprisoned and then banished from court. Although the king later pardoned him, this was the end of Bacon's public life. He retired to his home at Gorham bury in Hertfordshire, where he continued to write. He died in London on 9 April 1626.

University Wits

The University Wits is a phrase used to name a group of late-16th-century English playwrights and pamphleteers who were educated at the universities (Oxford or Cambridge) and who became popular secular writers. Prominent members of this group were Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, and Thomas from Cambridge, and Lyly, Thomas, George Peele from Oxford. Thomas Kyd is also sometimes included in the group, though he is not believed to have studied at university. Others who have been identified as University Wits include Matthew Roydon and Thomas Watson, likely both Oxford men.

This diverse and talented loose association of London writers and dramatists set the stage for the theatrical Renaissance of Elizabethan England. They are identified as among the earliest professional writers in English, and prepared the way for William Shakespeare.

The term "University Wits" was not used in their lifetime, but was coined by George Saintsbury, a 19th-century journalist and author. Saintsbury argues that the "rising sap" of dramatic creativity in the 1580s showed itself in two separate "branches of the national tree":

In the first place, we have the group of university wits, the strenuous if not always wise band of professed men of letters, at the head of whom are Lyly, Marlowe, Greene, Peele, Lodge, Nash, and probably (for his connection with the universities is not certainly known) Kyd. In the second, we have the irregular band of outsiders, players and others, who felt themselves forced into literary and principally dramatic composition, who boast Shakespeare as their chief, and who can claim as seconds to him not merely the imperfect talents of Chettle, Munday, and others whom we may mention in this chapter, but many of the perfected ornaments of a later time.

Saintsbury argues that the Wits drew on the ploddingly academic verse-drama of Thomas Sackville, and the crude but lively popular entertainments of "miscellaneous farce-and-interlude-writers", to create the first truly powerful dramas in English. The University Wits, "with Marlowe at their head, made the blank verse line for dramatic purposes, dismissed, cultivated as they were, the cultivation of classical models, and gave English tragedy its Magna Charta of freedom and submission to the restrictions of actual life only". However, they failed "to achieve perfect life-likeness".^[3] It was left to "the actor-playwrights

who, rising from very humble beginnings, but possessing in their fellow Shakespeare a champion unparalleled in ancient and modern times, borrowed the improvements of the university wits, added their own stage knowledge, and with Shakespeare's aid achieved the master drama of the world."

The term "University Wits" was taken up by many writers in the 20th century to refer to the group of authors listed by Saintsbury, often using his basic model of dramatic development. Adolphus William Ward in the *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (1932) has a chapter on the "The Plays of the University Wits", in which he argues that a "pride in university training which amounted to arrogance" was combined with "really valuable ideas and literary methods". In 1931, Allardyce Nicoll wrote that "it was left to the so-called University Wits to make the classical tragedy popular and the popular tragedy unified in construction and conscious of its aim."

Characteristics.

Edward Albert in his *History of English Literature* (1979) argues that the plays of the University Wits had several features in common:

- (a) There was a fondness for heroic themes, such as the lives of great figures like Muhammad and Tamburlaine.
- (b) Heroic themes needed heroic treatment: great fullness and variety; splendid descriptions, long swelling speeches, the handling of violent incidents and emotions. These qualities, excellent when held in restraint, only too often led to loudness and disorder.
- (c) The style was also 'heroic'. The chief aim was to achieve strong and sounding lines, magnificent epithets, and powerful declamation. This again led to abuse and to mere bombast, mouthing, and in the worst cases to nonsense. In the best examples, such as in Marlowe, the result is quite impressive. In this connection it is to be noted that the best medium for such expression was blank verse, which was sufficiently elastic to bear the strong pressure of these expansive methods.
- (d) The themes were usually tragic in nature, for the dramatists were as a rule too much in earnest to give heed to what was considered to be the lower species of comedy. The general lack of real humour in the early drama is one of its most prominent features. Humour, when it is brought in at all, is coarse and immature. Almost the only representative of the writers of real comedies is Lyly.

Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593)

Christopher Marlowe was a poet and playwright at the forefront of the 16th-century dramatic renaissance. His works influenced William Shakespeare and generations of writers to follow. During Christopher Marlowe's short career, he produced one of the most controversial and well-known plays of all time, "Doctor Faustus." The truth behind his sudden death still remains suspicious and unresolved.

Early Years

Christopher Marlowe was born in Canterbury around February 26, 1564 (this was the day on which he was baptized). He went to King's School and was awarded a scholarship that enabled him to study at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, from late 1580 until 1587.

Marlowe earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1584, but in 1587 the university hesitated in granting him his master's degree. Its doubts (perhaps

arising from his frequent absences, or speculation that he had converted to Roman Catholicism and would soon attend college elsewhere) were set to rest, or at least dismissed, when the Privy Council sent a letter declaring that he was now working "on matters touching the benefit of his country," and he was awarded his master's degree on schedule.

Marlowe as a Secret Agent?

The nature of Marlowe's service to England was not specified by the council, but the letter sent to Cambridge has provoked abundant speculation, notably the theory that Marlowe had become a secret agent working for Sir Francis Walsingham's intelligence service. No direct evidence supports this theory, but the council's letter clearly suggests that Marlowe was serving the government in some secret capacity.

Surviving Cambridge records from the period show that Marlowe had several lengthy absences from the university, much longer than allowed by the school's regulations. And extant dining room accounts indicate that he spent lavishly on food and drink while there, greater amounts than he could have afforded on his known scholarship income. Both of these could point to a secondary source of income, such as secret government work.

But with scant hard evidence and rampant speculation, the mystery surrounding Marlowe's service to the queen is likely to remain active. Spy or not, after attaining his master's degree, Marlowe moved to London and took up writing full-time.

Early Writing Career

After 1587, Christopher Marlowe was in London, writing for the theater and probably also engaging himself occasionally in government service. What is thought to be his first play, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, was not published until 1594, but it is generally thought to have been written while he was still a student at Cambridge. According to records, the play was performed by the Children of the Chapel, a company of boy actors, between 1587 and 1593.

Marlowe's second play was the two-part *Tamburlaine the Great* (c. 1587; published 1590). This was Marlowe's first play to be performed on the regular stage in London and is among the first English plays in blank verse. It is considered the beginning of the mature phase of the Elizabethan theater and was the last of Marlowe's plays to be published before his untimely death.

There is disagreement among Marlowe scholars regarding the order in which the plays subsequent to *Tamburlaine* were written.

Some contend that *Doctor Faustus* quickly followed *Tamburlaine*, and that Marlowe then turned to writing *Edward the Second*, *The Massacre at Paris*, and finally *The Jew of Malta*. According to the Marlowe Society's chronology, the order was thus: *The Jew of Malta*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Edward the Second* and *The Massacre at Paris*, with *Doctor Faustus* being performed first (1604) and *The Jew of Malta* last (1633).

What is not disputed is that he wrote only these four plays after *Tamburlaine*, from c. 1589 to 1592, and that they cemented his legacy and proved vastly influential.

The Plays

The Jew of Malta

The Jew of Malta (fully *The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta*), with a prologue delivered by a character representing Machiavelli, depicts the Jew

Barabas, the richest man on all the island of Malta. His wealth is seized, however, and he fights the government to regain it until his death at the hands of Maltese soldiers.

The play swirls with religious conflict, intrigue and revenge, and is considered to have been a major influence on Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. The title character, Barabas, is seen as the main inspiration for Shakespeare's Shylock character in *Merchant*. The play is also considered the first (successful) black comedy, or tragicomedy.

Barabas is a complex character who has provoked mixed reactions in audiences, and there has been extensive debate about the play's portrayal of Jews (as with Shakespeare's *Merchant*). Filled with unseemly characters, the play also ridicules oversexed Christian monks and nuns, and portrays a pair of greedy friars vying for Barabas' wealth. *The Jew of Malta* in this way is a fine example of what Marlowe's final four works are in part known for: controversial themes.

Edward the Second

The historical *Edward the Second* (fully *The Troublesome Reign and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second, King of England, with the Tragical Fall of Proud Mortimer*) is a play about the deposition of England's King Edward II by his barons and the queen, all of whom resent the undue influence the king's men have over his policies. *Edward the Second* is a tragedy featuring a weak and flawed monarch, and it paved the way for Shakespeare's more mature histories, such as *Richard II*, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*.

It is the only Marlowe plays whose text can be reliably said to represent the author's manuscript, as all of Marlowe's other plays were heavily edited or simply transcribed from performances, and the original texts were lost to the ages.

The Massacre at Paris

The Massacre at Paris is a short and lurid work, the only extant text of which was likely a reconstruction from memory, or "reported text," of the original performance. Because of its origin, the play is approximately half the length of *Edward the Second*, *The Jew of Malta* and each part of *Tamburlaine*, and comprises mostly bloody action with little depth of characterization or quality verse. For these reasons, the play has been the most neglected of Marlowe's oeuvre.

Massacre portrays the events of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572, in which French royalty and Catholic nobles instigated the murder and execution of thousands of protestant Huguenots. In London, agitators seized on its theme to advocate the murders of refugees, an event that the play eerily warns the queen of in its last scene. Interestingly, the warning comes from a character referred to as "English Agent," a character who has been thought to be Marlowe himself, representing his work with the queen's secret service.

Doctor Faustus

Marlowe's most famous play is *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, but, as is the case with most of his plays, it has survived only in a corrupt form, and when Marlowe actually wrote it has been a topic of debate.

Based on the German *Faustbuch*, *Doctor Faustus* is acknowledged as the first dramatized version of the Faust legend, in which a man sells his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge and power. While versions of story began

appearing as early as the 4th century, Marlowe deviates significantly by having his hero unable to repent and have his contract annulled at the end of the play. He is warned to do so throughout by yet another Marlowe variation of the retelling--a Good Angel--but Faustus ignores the angel's advice continually.

In the end, Faustus finally seems to repent for his deeds, but it is either too late or just simply irrelevant, as Mephistopheles collects his soul, and it is clear that Faustus exits to hell with him.

Arrest and Death

The constant rumors of Christopher Marlowe's atheism finally caught up with him on Sunday May 20, 1593, and he was arrested for just that "crime." Atheism, or heresy, was a serious offense, for which the penalty was burning at the stake. Despite the gravity of the charge, however, he was not jailed or tortured but was released on the condition that he report daily to an officer of the court.

On May 30, however, Marlowe was killed by Ingram Frizer. Frizer was with Nicholas Skeres and Robert Poley, and all three men were tied to one or other of the Walsinghams--either Sir Francis Walsingham (the man who evidently recruited Marlowe himself into secret service on behalf of the queen) or a relative also in the spy business. Allegedly, after spending the day together with Marlowe in a lodging house, a fight broke out between Marlowe and Frizer over the bill, and Marlowe was stabbed in the forehead and killed.

Conspiracy theories have abounded since, with Marlowe's atheism and alleged spy activities at the heart of the murder plots, but the real reason for Marlowe's death is still debated. What is not debated is Marlowe's literary importance, as he is Shakespeare's most important predecessor and is second only to Shakespeare himself in the realm of Elizabethan tragic drama.

Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

Ben Jonson was an English playwright, poet, and literary critic of the seventeenth century, whose artistry exerted a lasting impact upon English poetry and stage comedy. He popularised the comedy of humours. He is best known for the satirical plays *Every Man in His Humour* (1598), *Volpone*, or *The Foxe* (1605), *The Alchemist* (1610), and *Bartholomew Fayre: A Comedy* (1614), and for his lyric poetry; he is generally regarded as the second most important English dramatist, after William Shakespeare, during the reign of James I.

Jonson was a classically educated, well-read, and cultured man of the English Renaissance with an appetite for controversy (personal and political, artistic and intellectual) whose cultural influence was of unparalleled breadth upon the playwrights and the poets of the Jacobean era (1603–1625) and of the Caroline era (1625–1642).

John Lyly (1554-1606)

John Lyly, author considered to be the first English prose stylist to leave an enduring impression upon the language. As a playwright he also contributed to the development of prose dialogue in English **comedy**.

Lyly was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and went to London about 1576. There he gained fame with the publication of two prose romances, **Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit (1578)** and **Euphues and His England (1580)**, which together made him the most fashionable English writer of the 1580s. *Euphues* is a romantic intrigue told in letters interspersed with

general discussions on such topics as religion, love, and epistolary style. Lyly's preoccupation with the exact arrangement and selection of words, his frequent use of similes drawn from classical mythology, and his artificial and excessively elegant prose inspired a short-lived Elizabethan literary style called "euphuism." The *Euphuies* novels introduced a new concern with form into English prose.

After 1580 Lyly devoted himself almost entirely to writing comedies. In 1583 he gained control of the first **Blackfriars Theatre**, in which his earliest plays, *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, were produced. All of Lyly's comedies except *The Woman in the Moon* were presented by the **Children of Paul's**, a children's company that was periodically favoured by Queen Elizabeth. The performance dates of his plays are as follows: *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, 1583–84; *Gallathea*, 1585–88; *Endimion*, 1588; *Midas*, 1589; *Love's Metamorphosis*, 1590; *Mother Bombie*, 1590; and *The Woman in the Moon*, 1595. All but one of these is in prose. The finest is considered to be *Endimion*, which some critics hold a masterpiece.

Lyly's comedies mark an enormous advance upon those of his predecessors in English drama. Their plots are drawn from classical mythology and legend, and their characters engage in euphuistic speeches redolent of Renaissance pedantry; but the charm and wit of the dialogues and the light and skillful construction of the plots set standards that younger and more gifted dramatists could not ignore.

Lyly's popularity waned with the rise of **Thomas Kyd**, **Christopher Marlowe**, and **William Shakespeare**, and his appeals to Queen Elizabeth for financial relief went unheeded. He had hoped to succeed Edmund Tilney in the court post of **Master of the Revels**, but Tilney outlived him, and Lyly died a poor and bitter man.

William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire and was baptized a few days later on 26 April 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was a glove maker and wool merchant and his mother, Mary Arden, was the daughter of a well-to-do landowner from Wilmcote, South Warwickshire. It is likely Shakespeare was educated at the local King Edward VI Grammar School in Stratford.

Marriage

The next documented event in Shakespeare's life is his marriage at the age of 18 to Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a local farmer, on November 28, 1582. She was eight years older than him and their first child, Susanna, was born six months after their wedding. Two years later, the couple had twins, Hamnet and Judith, but their son died when he was 11 years old.

Again, a gap in the records leads some scholars to refer to Shakespeare's life between 1585 and 1592 as 'the lost years'. By the time he reappears again, mentioned in a London pamphlet, Shakespeare has made his way to London without his family and is already working in the theatre.

Acting career

Having gained recognition as an actor and playwright Shakespeare had clearly ruffled a few feathers along the way – contemporary critic, Robert Green, described him in the 1592 pamphlet as an, "upstart Crow".

As well as belonging to its pool of actors and playwrights, Shakespeare was one of the managing partners of the Lord Chamberlain's Company (renamed the King's Company when James succeeded to the throne), whose actors included the famous Richard Burbage. The company acquired interests in two theatres in the Southwark area of London near the banks of the Thames - the Globe and the Black friars.

In 1593 and 1594, Shakespeare's first poems, 'Venus and Adonis' and 'The Rape of Lucrece', were published and he dedicated them to his patron, Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton. It is thought Shakespeare also wrote most of his sonnets at this time.

Playwright

Shakespeare was prolific, with records of his first plays beginning to appear in 1594, from which time he produced roughly two a year until around 1611. His hard work quickly paid off, with signs that he was beginning to prosper emerging soon after the publication of his first plays. By 1596 Shakespeare's father, John had been granted a coat of arms and it's probable that Shakespeare had commissioned them, paying the fees himself. A year later he bought New Place, a large house in Stratford.

His earlier plays were mainly histories and comedies such as 'Henry VI', 'Titus Andronicus', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'The Merchant of Venice' and 'Richard II'. The tragedy, 'Romeo and Juliet', was also published in this period. By the last years of Elizabeth I's reign Shakespeare was well established as a famous poet and playwright and was called upon to perform several of his plays before the Queen at court. In 1598 the author Francis Meres described Shakespeare as England's greatest writer in comedy and tragedy.

In 1602 Shakespeare's continuing success enabled him to move to up market Silver Street, near where the Barbican is now situated, and he was living here when he wrote some of his greatest tragedies such as 'Hamlet', 'Othello', 'King Lear' and 'Macbeth'.

Final years

Shakespeare spent the last five years of his life in New Place in Stratford. He died on 23 April 1616 at the age of 52 and was buried in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford. He left his property to the male heirs of his eldest daughter, Susanna. He also bequeathed his 'second-best bed' to his wife. It is not known what significance this gesture had, although the couple had lived primarily apart for 20 years of their marriage.

The first collected edition of his works was published in 1623 and is known as 'the First Folio'.

Roger Ascham (1515-1568)

Roger Ascham, British humanist, scholar, and writer, famous for his prose style, his promotion of the vernacular, and his theories of education.

As a boy of 14, Ascham entered the University of Cambridge, where he earned his M.A. (1537) and one year later was elected a fellow of St. John's and appointed reader in Greek. The new Renaissance enthusiasm for the classics, especially Greek, was at its height.

Ascham's *Toxophilus* ("Lover of the Bow"), written in the form of a dialogue, was published in 1545 and was the first book on archery in English. In the preface Ascham showed the growing patriotic zeal of the humanists by stating

that he was writing “Englishe matter in the Englishe tongue for Englishe men.” He became Princess Elizabeth’s tutor in Greek and Latin (1548–50), then served as secretary to Sir Richard Morison (1550–52), English ambassador to the Habsburg emperor Charles V, traveling widely on the European continent. Thereafter, he was appointed Latin secretary to Queen Mary, a post he held until her death in 1558. He continued in this position for Queen Elizabeth I until his death. He served her by composing her official letters to foreign rulers and by helping her pursue the study of Greek.

The *Scholemaster*, written in simple, lucid English prose and published posthumously in 1570, is Ascham’s best-known book. It presents an effective method of teaching Latin prose composition, but its larger concerns are with the psychology of learning, the education of the whole person, and the ideal moral and intellectual personality that education should mold. His success in tutoring three females—Lady Jane Grey, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth—has led some to consider Ascham an early proponent of education for girls.

Philip Sidney (1554–1586)

Elizabethan courtier Philip Sidney served as a Protestant political liaison for Queen Elizabeth I, but became famous for his poetry and death as a soldier during the English Renaissance.

Early Life

Philip Sidney was born on November 30, 1554, at the family estate at Penshurst in Kent, England. His father, Sir Henry Sidney, had been a close personal adviser to Edward VI (Henry VIII’s son), but when the young king died, he managed to stay in favor with the Catholic Queen Mary, naming his first son after her husband, Philip II of Spain, who also agreed to be the child’s godfather. Philip’s mother was Lady Mary Dudley, sister to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who was for his lifetime a close confidant and personal favorite of Queen Elizabeth I.

Three more children were born to the couple, including Mary Sidney (later known as Countess of Pembroke), who adored her elder brother. Young Philip began his education at the Shrewsbury School, where he proved an apt and eager student and forged a lifelong friendship with Fulke Greville (later Baron Brooke), who would write a laudatory epitaph and biography of his bosom buddy. At the age of 13, Sidney transferred to the University of Oxford’s Christ Church College.

Diplomat Courtier and Poet

Three years later, Sidney was sent to the Continent to further his education, and in 1572, he was first enlisted in diplomatic service, functioning as an envoy to King Charles IX of France. While in Paris, Sidney witnessed the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre of Protestant Huguenots by Catholics. He also met Hubert Languet, a politically influential humanist who became a lifelong friend and adviser, in Europe.

Sidney, like his father before him, provided frequent diplomatic service in Europe for Queen Elizabeth. Among his actions, he formed an exploratory alliance with Protestant German princes, and visited his father in Ireland when Henry Sidney was lord deputy there.

Courtier and Poet

Sidney joined the fad of Elizabethan courtier poets, penning a play, *The Lady of May*, that was performed at his uncle, Earl of Leicester's royal entertainment for the queen in 1578. The production included political undertones about Elizabeth's consideration of a Catholic marriage alliance with France.

In 1579, a heated fracas known as the "tennis-court quarrel" between Sidney and Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was ostensibly about rank and the rights of play, but beneath the facade were tensions between factions for and against the queen's marriage. (The two had also been rivals for the hand of Anne Cecil—William Cecil, Baron Burghley's daughter—and Oxford had married her.)

The queen sternly admonished Sidney for his behavior, and he subsequently left court for his sister Mary's estate at Wilton, where he took up writing a long narrative poem, *The Arcadia*, for her entertainment. During this time, he also wrote a sonnet cycle, *Astrophil and Stella*, and his critical treatise, *An Apologie for Poetry* (also known as *A Defence of Poesy*). Sidney's compatriots in poetry included Edmund Spenser, Edward Dyer, Samuel Daniel and Gabriel Harvey.

Sidney is lampooned in several Shakespeare plays, including the character Master Slender in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, referencing his marriage negotiations with Anne Cecil, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* (Sidney's face was scarred from a bout with smallpox and his birthday is St. Andrew's Day).

Death & Legacy

Philip Sidney died at Arnhem in the Netherlands on October 17, 1586, after a gunshot that he'd sustained in a battle at Zutphen against the Spanish Catholic forces turned gangrenous. According to legend, in his pained state, Sidney eschewed a cup of water in favor of another wounded soldier, saying, "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine," underscoring a carefully cultivated persona of nobility. His lavish state funeral, which almost bankrupted his father-in-law, Sir Francis Walsingham, the queen's spymaster, was delayed until February of the following year—just eight days after the beheading of Mary Queen of Scots, drawing attention away from that political powder keg. He is buried at St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

Forty-two years after Sidney's death, schoolfellow Fulke Greville had engraved on his tombstone: *Servant to Queene Elizabeth/ Conceller to King James/ and Frend to Sir Philip Sidney*. His biography of Sidney was published in 1652.

Edmund Spenser 1552 –1599)

Edmund Spenser was one of the greatest poets of Elizabethan England, as evidenced by his masterwork; *The Faerie Queene*. Edmund Spenser published his first important work, *The Shepheardes Calender* circa 1580. He also worked for courtiers Robert Dudley and Arthur Lord Grey, deputy of Ireland. It is in Ireland that Spenser wrote most of his masterwork, *The Faerie Queene*, a multi-part epic poem which glorifies England and its language. The poem pleased Queen Elizabeth I, who gave Spenser a small pension for life.

Walter Raleigh (1552 - 1618)

Walter Raleigh *was an adventurer, courtier to Elizabeth I, navigator, author and poet. He was born into a well-connected gentry's family at Hayes Barton in*

Devon in around 1552. He attended Oxford University for a time, fought with the Huguenots in France and later studied law in London.

In 1578, Raleigh sailed to America with explorer Sir Humphrey Gilbert, his half brother. This expedition may have stimulated his plan to found a colony there. In 1585, he sponsored the first English colony in America on Roanoke Island (now North Carolina). The colony failed and another attempt at colonization also failed in 1587. Raleigh has been credited with bringing potatoes and tobacco back to Britain, although both of these were already known via the Spanish. Raleigh did help to make smoking popular at court.

Raleigh first came to the attention of Elizabeth I in 1580, when he went to Ireland to help suppress an uprising in Munster. He soon became a favourite of the queen, and was knighted and appointed captain of the Queen's Guard (1587). He became a member of parliament in 1584 and received extensive estates in Ireland.

In 1592, the queen discovered Raleigh's secret marriage to one of her maids of honour, Elizabeth Throckmorton. This discovery threw Elizabeth into a jealous rage and Raleigh and his wife were imprisoned in the Tower. On his release, in an attempt to find favour with the queen, he set off on an unsuccessful expedition to find El Dorado, the fabled 'Golden Land', rumoured to be situated somewhere beyond the mouth of the Orinoco river in Guiana (now Venezuela).

Elizabeth's successor, James I of England and VI of Scotland, disliked Raleigh, and in 1603 he was accused of plotting against the king and sentenced to death. This was reduced to life imprisonment and Raleigh spent the next 12 years in the Tower of London, where he wrote the first volume of his 'History of the World' (1614).

In 1616, Raleigh was released to lead a second expedition to search for El Dorado. The expedition was a failure, and Raleigh also defied the king's instructions by attacking the Spanish. On his return to England, the death sentence was reinstated and Raleigh's execution took place on 29 October 1618.

DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENCE

Isaac Newton (1643 - 1727)

Sir Isaac Newton was an English physicist and mathematician, and the greatest scientist of his era. He was born on 4 January 1643 in Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire. His father was a prosperous farmer, who died three months before Newton was born. His mother remarried and Newton was left in the care of his grandparents. In 1661, he went to Cambridge University where he became interested in mathematics, optics, physics and astronomy. In October 1665, a plague epidemic forced the university to close and Newton returned to Woolsthorpe. The two years he spent there were an extremely fruitful time during which he began to think about gravity. He also devoted time to optics and mathematics, working out his ideas about 'fluxions' (calculus).

In 1667, Newton returned to Cambridge, where he became a fellow of Trinity College. Two years later he was appointed second Lucasian professor of mathematics. It was Newton's reflecting telescope, made in 1668, that finally brought him to the attention of the scientific community and in 1672 he was

made a fellow of the Royal Society. From the mid-1660s, Newton conducted a series of experiments on the composition of light, discovering that white light is composed of the same system of colours that can be seen in a rainbow and establishing the modern study of optics (or the behaviour of light). In 1704, Newton published 'The Opticks' which dealt with light and colour. He also studied and published works on history, theology and alchemy.

In 1687, with the support of his friend the astronomer Edmond Halley, Newton published his single greatest work, the 'Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica' ('Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy'). This showed how a universal force, gravity, applied to all objects in all parts of the universe.

In 1689, Newton was elected Member of Parliament for Cambridge University (1689 - 1690 and 1701 - 1702). In 1696, Newton was appointed warden of the Royal Mint, settling in London. He took his duties at the Mint very seriously and campaigned against corruption and inefficiency within the organization. In 1703, he was elected president of the Royal Society, an office he held until his death. He was knighted in 1705.

Newton was a difficult man, prone to depression and often involved in bitter arguments with other scientists, but by the early 1700s he was the dominant figure in British and European science. He died on 31 March 1727 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

MODULE-III

ENGLAND UNDER STUARTS

After the death of Queen Elizabeth I her nephew James I (1603-1625), the son of Mary Queen of Scots (beheaded for treason on the order of Elizabeth), succeeded to the English throne. He then became the ruler of the two kingdoms. James believed in the mediaeval idea of the 'divine right' and absolute authority of the king.

His son Charles I (1625-1649) was a weak monarch. He had Catholic sympathies and was unpopular among the Puritans who wanted radical reform of the Church of England. Charles attempted to reduce the power of Parliament and as a result of this a bloody civil war followed in 1642 between the king's supporters (**Cavaliers**) and the Parliamentary forces (**Roundheads**) recruited mostly from London and other towns, led by the military genius Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658). The king was arrested and executed in 1649 and England became a republic (Commonwealth). The Puritans could finally implement their aims, i.e. the 'purification' of the Church of England by the removal of what they believed to be 'superstitious' Catholic practices.

However, Cromwell, who called himself the Lord Protector (1653-1658), behaved like a dictator. He dissolved Parliament and ruled with the help of his army. Soon after his death the monarchy was restored. Charles II (1660-1685) resumed the throne taken from his father. However, the king's authority was reduced significantly in favour of Parliament.

James II (1685-1688) was an ardent Catholic and wanted to reimpose Catholicism in England. He had to flee the country when Parliament invited William of Orange and his wife Mary to take the English throne. The deposition of King James I in 1688 was called by its supporters the 'Glorious Revolution', achieved without bloodshed.

The joint rule of William and Mary put England back in the European scene. William was a Protestant and his greatest enemy was the militant Catholic Louis XIV, king of France and the most powerful monarch in Europe. Thanks to the military genius of the Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722) England defeated the French army, on European soil.

GROWTH OF ROYAL ABSOLUTISM.

"The Tudor period reconstructed English civilization" wrote one historian. The same Dynasty not only accomplished a social revolution but also achieved an ecclesiastical revolution. The Church and Baronage were great powers on which the medieval civilization in England had revolved. Both these were overthrown by the Tudor dynasty.

After the death of Elizabeth I, James I became the King of England. It was the beginning of Stuart Dynasty in England. The Line of the Stuarts stretched from 1603 to 1714 AD. The following are the English rulers of this period.

- 1) James I (1603-1625 A.D)
- 2) Charles I (1625-1649 AD)
- 3) Commonwealth Interlude (1649-1660 AD)
- 4) Charles II (1660-1685 AD)
- 5) James II (1685-1688 AD)
- 6) William and Mary (1689-1702 AD)
- 7) Queen Anne (1702-1714 AD)

Conflicts of Stuarts with their Parliaments

According to the historian Southgate, "The history of England in Stuart times is the story of a struggle between the Kings and the Parliaments of the period. In the middle of the century this struggle developed into open warfare, and a King was beheaded, but the contest had begun many years before the actual outbreak of war, and it did not end even when Charles I was executed. There were many issues upon which the King and the Parliament quarreled, but the real cause of the struggle is not to be found merely by considering these points. It was a struggle for supremacy." Before the advent of the Stuarts, the Tudors who were despotic rulers had ruled for England more than a century. They tactfully manipulated popular support. This is why during the Tudor period not a single instance of any serious conflict was reported between the Parliament and the Monarchy. On the contrary, the Stuart Kings, who were themselves Scots, could not understand the temper of the English people. They were frank and straightforward in their opinions and possessed no political skill or tact like the Tudors to humor the Parliament or the people. Therefore, several crises occurred during the whole period of Stuart rule from 1603 to 1688. Ultimately, the Parliament achieved its final victory in 1688 with the Glorious Revolution.

The Theory of the Divine Rights of Kings

James I was the first ruler of the Stuart period. He was a Scot and was considered as the 'wisest fool' in Europe. He had the notion that the King derived his authority from god and was answerable only to him.

Certain historians have formulated the theory of the Divine Rights of the King on the basis of the beliefs of various despotic rulers. According to them the Theory maintained:

That the Supreme Being regarded hereditary monarchy as opposed to other forms of Government with peculiar favor;

That no human power could deprive a legitimate prince of his rights;

That the authority of such a prince was necessarily always despotic;

That the laws, in England and other countries, were to be regarded merely as concessions which the sovereign had freely made and might, at his pleasure, resume;

That any treaty which a King might concede to his people was merely a declaration of his present intentions and not a contract of which the performance could be demanded.

The English Civil War (1642-1649)

The Civil War of England (1642-1649) is one of the most remarkable and important events in the history of England. The monarchy and the popular will were in open conflict for the first time. During this war the King was defeated and then executed. The parties that contended were the Royalists and the Puritans. The former was on the side of the King. They were also called the Cavaliers. They consisted of the nobility and the gentry. The Catholics also sided with the Royalists in large numbers.

Nature of Civil War.

The nature of this war was dual. This was a religious and a political war. The Puritans and the Parliament united against the King and condemned his interference in the religious affairs. Both the Parliament and the Puritans were dissatisfied, as the King did not care for the existence of either. The Parliament

along with the Puritans combined to dispute the King's authority to lay down the law in Church and State. The main issue at stake was whether sovereignty resided in the King alone, or whether both the King and Parliament should share power. This discontentment broke out into an open struggle between the King, on the one hand, and the Parliament, on the other. This came to be known as the English Civil War or the Puritan Revolution.

The Main Reasons for this war were as stated under

i. Economic Problems

The King desired to extract money by unreasonable means and the Parliament wanted to have full control over the State Exchequer. The Parliament passed the Triennial Act, which made it obligatory for the King to call the Parliament for a session thrice a year. Another clause in the Act stated that the parliament could be dissolved only with its own consent, not as per the whims of the King.

The Tonnage and Poundage Act was passed in June 1614. Tonnage meant the tax levied upon each ton of wine coming in or going out of the Kingdom. Poundage was the tax levied upon every pound of dry goods. Although the tax was granted to the King (Charles I) for a year only, he continued to levy these custom duties well after the permitted duration.

ii. Religious Issues

The English King followed the Anglican Church. Catholicism and Puritanism were the other faiths that existed in England at that time. Charles desired to convert his subjects to his own faith. At the same time the Puritans, who were in majority in the Parliament, desired to convert the nation to their faith. The King tried to give some concessions and amenities to the Catholics by appointing them in high positions. He appointed William Laud as the Archbishop of Canterbury and wanted the people to be guided by him. Due to this there was war with the Parliament. The Puritans were badly suppressed. This added to the growing unpopularity of Charles.

iii. Political Issues

When the King visited Scotland to settle the Scottish issue, he had to accept the full Restoration of the Presbyterian system. The King also met some Scottish nobles, who did not want the struggle to continue longer. A plot was also framed by some of the King's friends to seize some of the Presbyterian leaders. These issues aroused anti-Regal feelings, and the confidence in the King was also lost.

An incident occurred in Ireland that once again created a rift between the King and the Parliament. A revolt broke out in which many Protestants were killed. The Irish rebels claimed that they were acting for the King. Crushing this rebellion became very difficult, The Parliament, meanwhile, debated the issue of no confidence in the King.

The impeachment and execution of Strafford and the impeachment of Archbishop Laud caused by the Act of Attainder was responsible for the widening of the gap between the King and the Parliament. For this Act allowed the declaration of guilt and the imposition of punishment on an individual without a proper trial. The Royal Counselors, the Secretary of State and Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal fled to save their lives.

Charles I charged five parliament members with high treason, and sent armed forces to arrest them. The Parliament refused to hand them over.

Charles planned to go personally to arrest the five Knights. But they received information of this in advance and fled.

In 1642 AD the Parliament placed before the King a proposal known as "Nineteen Propositions." This ultimatum was delivered to the King on June 1, 1642. He refused to accept the terms of the proposal.

iv. The Immediate Cause of the War

The parliament wanted the sole command of the military forces. This was contrary to English law and Charles I refused to agree to this enactment. As Charles would not surrender his control over the army, the rupture was complete. Charles raised his troops and set up his standard at Nottingham as a signal that the Civil War had begun.

The English Civil War had two phases: Phase I from 1642 - 1646; Phase II from 1646 - 1649

Main Events of Civil War - Phase I (1642-46)

At the foot of Edge Hill a heated battle was fought. In this battle, the Royalists gained a victory but they could not gain London. Again at Chalgrove Field, the parliamentary army was beaten and John Hampden, one of main rebels against the king was killed. The Royalist forces won on behalf of the Parliament at other places too. Oliver Cromwell, the leader of the parliamentary forces set up an association of eastern counties. They formed a new army "Ironsides."

At the battle of Marston Moor the royal army suffered heavily. A self-denying ordinance was passed. By this members of Parliament resigned their commands in the army and were replaced by experienced soldiers. Cromwell retained command over this army. This army was the "New Model."

Main Events of Civil War - Phase II (1646-49)

King Charles I took the advantage of the confusion between the Parliament and the army. He refused the demands of both. Attempting to take advantage of the political turmoil, the Scots invaded England. They were routed at the battle of Preston (August 1648). The second Civil War made Cromwell an undisputed leader of the masses. Nobody dared to oppose Cromwell. Now the nation was at the mercy of Cromwell and his army. Charles I was punished for his incurable duplicity.

After a formal trial in 1649 Charles I was accused of treason and was executed, on January 30, 1649. He was beheaded before the White Hall. Cromwell called the execution of Charles I as a 'Cruel necessity.' However, the last words of Charles were:

"For the people truly I desire their liberty and freedom as much as anybody whatsoever, but I must tell you their liberty and freedom consists in having that government, those laws by which their lives and their goods may be most their own. It is nothing appertaining to them. A subject and a sovereign are clearly different things."

Impact of the Civil War

The people were stirred deeply due to the King's execution. Sympathy was aroused for this monarch and the entire monarchy. Besides this some even viewed Charles I as 'martyr.' There was a total breakdown of the constitution. The Commonwealth was established. Oliver Cromwell now established army rule. This Commonwealth was to be administered by a Council consisting of 41 members, who were Puritan supporters of Oliver Cromwell.

Historical Importance

This Civil War has great historical importance. In this war the people of England i.e. the Parliament won. This proved that the ultimate power rests with the people. This marked the end of the concept of the Divine Rights of the King. Absolute monarchy ended in England.

England under Oliver Cromwell

Oliver Cromwell remains one of our most famous characters in history. From 1649 to 1653, Parliament ran England but from Cromwell's point of view, it was not a system that worked effectively and England, as a nation was suffering. As a result, Cromwell, backed by the army, sent home MP's and he became the effective leader of England from 1653 to 1658.

He was the man who really pushed for the execution of Charles as he believed that Charles would never change his ways and that he would continue to be a source of trouble until he died. Cromwell's signature is one of the easiest to make out on the death warrant of Charles - it is third on the list of signatures. It is said that a shadowy man was seen by guards who were guarding the dead body of Charles. He was heard to mutter "It was a cruel necessity, it was a cruel necessity." Was this Cromwell? However, there is no proof that this ever happened and it could be that it is just one of those historical stories that has gone down into legend.

Cromwell was a Puritan. He was a highly religious man who believed that everybody should lead their lives according to what was written in the Bible. The word "Puritan" means that followers had a pure soul and lived a good life. Cromwell believed that everybody else in England should follow his example.

One of the main beliefs of the Puritans was that if you worked hard, you would get to Heaven. Pointless enjoyment was frowned upon. Cromwell shut many inns and the theatres were all closed down. Most sports were banned. Boys caught playing football on a Sunday could be whipped as a punishment. Swearing was punished by a fine, though those who kept swearing could be sent to prison.

Sunday became a very special day under the Puritans. Most forms of work were banned. Women caught doing unnecessary work on the Holy Day could be put in the stocks. Simply going for a Sunday walk (unless it was to church) could lead to a hefty fine.

To keep the population's mind on religion, instead of having feast days to celebrate the saints (as had been common in Medieval England), one day in every month was a fast day - you did not eat all day.

He divided up England into 11 areas; each one was governed by a major-general who was trusted by Cromwell. Most of these generals had been in Cromwell's New Model Army. The law - essentially Cromwell's law - was enforced by the use of soldiers.

Cromwell believed that women and girls should dress in a proper manner. Make-up was banned. Puritan leaders and soldiers would roam the streets of towns and scrub off any make-up found on unsuspecting women. Too colourful dresses were banned. A Puritan lady wore a long black dress that covered her almost from neck to toes. She wore a white apron and her hair was bunched up behind a white head-dress. Puritan men wore black clothes and short hair.

Cromwell banned Christmas as people would have known it then. By the C17th, Christmas had become a holiday of celebration and enjoyment - especially after the problems caused by the civil war. Cromwell wanted it returned to a religious celebration where people thought about the birth of Jesus rather than ate and drank too much. In London, soldiers were ordered to go round the streets and take, by force if necessary, food being cooked for a Christmas celebration. The smell of a goose being cooked could bring trouble. Traditional Christmas decorations like holly were banned.

Despite all these rules, Cromwell himself was not strict. He enjoyed music, hunting and playing bowls. He even allowed full-scale entertainment at his daughter's wedding. Despite being a highly religious man, Cromwell had a hatred for the Irish Catholics. He believed that they were all potential traitors willing to help any Catholic nation that wanted to attack England (he clearly did not know too much about the 1588 Spanish Armada).

During his time as head of government, he made it his task to 'tame' the Irish. He sent an army there and despite promising to treat well those who surrendered to him, he slaughtered the people of Wexford and Drogheda who did surrender to his forces. He used terror to 'tame' the Irish. He ordered that all Irish children should be sent to the West Indies to work as slave labourers in the sugar plantations. He knew many would die out there - but dead children could not grow into adults and have more children. Cromwell left a dark stain on the history of Ireland.

By the end of his life, both Cromwell and the 11 major-generals who helped to run the country had become hated people. The population was tired of having strict rules forced onto them. Cromwell died in September 1658. His coffin was escorted by over 30,000 soldiers as it was taken to Westminster Abbey where he was buried. Why so many soldiers? Were they there as a mark of respect for the man who had formed the elite New Model Army? Or was there concern that the people of London, who had grown to hate Cromwell, would try to get to the body and damage it in some way ?

Cromwell was buried in Westminster Abbey. This is where kings and queens were buried. His son, Richard, took over leadership of the country. However, Richard was clearly not up to the task and in 1660 he left the job. In that year, 1660, Charles II was asked to return to become king of England. One of Charles' first orders was that Cromwell's body should be dug up and put on 'trial' as a traitor and regicide (someone who is responsible for the execution/murder of a king or queen). His body was put on trial, found guilty and symbolically hanged from a gallows at Tyburn (near Hyde Park, London). What was left of his body remains a mystery. Some say the body was thrown on to a rubbish tip while others say it was buried beneath the gallows at Tyburn. His head was put on display in London for many years to come.

PURITAN LITERATURE

James I., who succeeded Elizabeth and his son Charles I, believed that the power of the king was God-given, and should not be controlled by the people. Charles refused to call Parliament together, raised money without the consent of the people, and did many illegal acts. Civil war, however, soon broke out between him and the people, who were led in military matters by Oliver Cromwell, a Puritan. The fortune of war went against Charles. He was taken prisoner, and was beheaded in 1649. The form of government was then

changed to a commonwealth, or republic and Cromwell became Protector in 1653. He continued in power until his death in 1659, and then, in 1660, the people called back to England the son of Charles I Who had been in exile on the Continent. His coming restored the old kingly line of rulers, and is spoken of in history as the Restoration.

The Puritans believed in simplicity of life. They disapproved of the sonnets and the love poetry written in the previous period. In 1642 the theatres were closed. The Bible became now the one book of the people. The Puritan influence in general tended to suppress literary art, yet this hard, stern sect produced a great poet, John Milton, and a great prose writer, John Bunyan.

John Milton

John Milton as a poet ranks next to Shakespeare. Some critics call him the last of the Elizabethans, because his writings show many of the qualities which they possessed.

Milton's life extends from 1608 to 1674. He was born in London, attended several private schools, and at the age of sixteen entered Christ's College, Cambridge. While at college he showed marked ability as a poet, by composing *On the death of the Fair Infant*, and *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*.

Milton's father, who was a Puritan, owned a country seat at Horton, not far from London. To this country seat young Milton went after leaving college, and there he spent nearly six years reading Greek and Latin authors, leading a quiet, peaceful life, experimenting with poetry. Even thus early he had resolved to write at some time a grand poem, but he had not decided what his subject should be.

The poems of Milton's Youth.—During the time which he spent at Horton, Milton wrote the poems *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas*.

The first two, the titles of which mean “the cheerful man” and “the thoughtful man,” show Milton's observation and appreciation of nature, as well as his attitude toward life. In *L'Allegro* he tells the pleasures which would delight him if his mood were mirthful, and in *Il Penseroso* those that would please him if his mood were sad. The verse of these poems is musical and the thought is sublime.

Comus, which is a masque touches upon the beauty of the temperance and chastity and the ugliness of riotous indulgence. It shows Milton to be a true poet, grave and grand, able to write good blank verse and good lyrics. In fact, the poetry in this masque is finer than that in any other masque in the English language.

In '*Lycidas*' Milton mourns for a learned friend who was drowned at sea. He imitates in some measure the old Greek poems, but he also improves on the lines of the old Greek and produces exquisite poetry.

Trip on the Continent —In 1638 Milton set out for a trip on the Continent. He visited Paris, and then went on to Italy, spending many delightful hours with men of learning. The news of political troubles in England, however, reached his ear, and in 1639 he returned to aid his countrymen in the struggle against the King.

Milton's Prose Period.—After Charles I was beheaded. Milton served the state as Latin Secretary, and continued in that capacity until Charles II's return in 1660. With the exception of a few sonnets, during this period Milton

which they had taken in resisting the tyranny of Charles I.; he wrote on education, and in favor of doing away with the license required for printing books.

Last Years—From 1660 until his death, Milton lived quietly in London, and turned his attention again to poetry. From overuse of his eyes, in 1652 he became totally blind, and was obliged to ask the assistance of his daughters in writing his thoughts. The writing of the grand poem which he had in mind in his youth was the task which he now attempted. Taking his first theme “man’s first disobedience,” he wrote the epic, *Paradise Lost*. This was published in 1667, and was followed in 1671 by *Paradise Regained*.

Paradise Lost is Milton's greatest work. It tells of the revolt of the angels under Satan, of their expulsion from Heave, and of their plans for revenge by coming to earth and tempting man to disobey God.

In telling this story, strong imagination is needed to picture the scenes in heaven and hell and elsewhere. A lofty conception of the characters is also necessary, for God and the angels, as well as Satan and his followers, have parts to play. Exalted sentiments, too, must be expressed by characters raised so high above mortals, and dignified, stately expression must voice their sentiments. That *Paradise Lost* is grand in imagination and poetic expression, no one will deny. John Bunyan (1628-1688)

John Bunyan was the author of the most imaginative prose which this period produced. His talent lay in writing allegories—stories with a double meaning, where characters are named according to certain properties which they possess. In *Pilgrim’s Progress*, which is Bunyan’s greatest book, abstract qualities, as wisdom and flattery, are made to act as persons. Pilgrim, the hero, stands for the true Christian, and the story is the record of his journey from the “City of Destruction” to the Celestial City.”

Besides vivid imagination, Bunyan shows strong dramatic power. His language is earnest and simple, and was formed from reading the Bible, which he knew almost by heart. He wrote several other books besides *Pilgrim’s Progress*; namely, *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* and *The Holy War*, but his fame rests on *Pilgrim’s Progress*, which is the greatest prose allegory in the English language.

Bunyan’s writings are the result of genius, for Bunyan had no literary training, and hardly any education whatever. He was the son of the traveling tinker, and grew up amid most uncouth surroundings. When he was about twenty, he became deeply concerned for the welfare of his soul, and when he thought his own salvation had been attained, he became a preacher to others. Many of his talks were given out of doors, and as he preached without the sanction of the English Church, he was arrested and thrown into jail, where he was kept for nearly twelve years. While in jail he wrote the first part of *Pilgrim’s Progress*.

Metaphysical poets

The word 'meta' means 'after,' so the literal translation of 'metaphysical' is 'after the physical.' Basically, metaphysics deals with questions that can't be explained by science. It questions the nature of reality in a philosophical way.

The metaphysical poets were a group of 17th-century poets who concerned themselves with the experience of man and the nature of being on the world.

What is our place within the world and how to best define that place? Taking up the philosophy of metaphysics, first set forth by Aristotle, the metaphysical poets wrote of experience, including love, romance, beauty, imagination and man's relationship with God. Less concerned with expressing feeling than with analyzing it, metaphysical poetry is marked by bold and ingenious conceits, metaphor, drawing something forced parallels between apparently dissimilar ideas or things complex and subtle thought, frequent use of paradox and a dramatic directness of language.

Although in no sense a school or movement proper, they share common characteristics of wit, inventiveness, and a love of elaborate stylistic maneuvers. Metaphysical concerns are the common subject of their poetry, which investigates the world by rational discussion of its phenomena rather than by intuition or mysticism.

What is Metaphysical Poetry?

Metaphysical poetry is concerned with the whole experience of man, but the intelligence, learning and seriousness of the poets means that the poetry is about the profound areas of experience especially - about love, romantic and sensual; about man's relationship with God - the eternal perspective, and, to a less extent, about pleasure, learning and art. Metaphysical means dealing with the relationship between spirit to matter or the ultimate nature of reality

Metaphysical poems are lyric poems. They are brief but intense meditations, characterized by striking use of wit, irony and wordplay. Beneath the formal structure (of rhyme, meter and stanza) is the underlying (and often hardly less formal) structure of the poem's argument. Note that there may be two (or more) kinds of argument in a poem. In "To His Coy Mistress" the explicit argument (Marvell's request that the coy lady yield to his passion) is a stalking horse for the more serious argument about the transitoriness of pleasure. The outward levity conceals (barely) a deep seriousness of intent. You would be able to show how this theme of *carpe diem* ("seize the day") is made clear in the third section of the poem. Origin of the Name.

'Metaphysical poets' the name given to a diverse group of 17th-century English poets whose work is notable for its ingenious use of intellectual and theological concepts in surprising conceits, strange paradoxes and far-fetched imagery.

The word metaphysics is formed from the Greek *Meta ta phusika*, a title which, about the year A.D. 70, was related by Andronicus of Rhodes to that collection of Aristotelian treatises which since then goes by the name of the "Metaphysics"

Age:

The term "metaphysical" when applied to poetry has a long and interesting history. The term "Metaphysical Poet" was first coined by the critic Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) in his book 'Life of Cowley' and he used it as a disparaging term. Earlier, John Dryden had also been critical of the group of poets he grouped together as too proud of their wit. Johnson and Dryden valued the clarity, restraint and shapeliness of the poets of Augustan Rome (which is why some 18th century poets are called "Augustan," and therefore were antagonistic towards poets of the mid-17th century.

The Metaphysical poets were out of critical favor for the 18th and 19th centuries (obviously, the Romantic poets found little in this heavily intellectualized poetry). At the end of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century, interest in this group picked up, and especially important was T.S. Eliot's famous essay "The Metaphysical Poets" Interest peaked this century with the New Critics school around mid-century, and now is tempering off a bit, though Donne, the original "Big Name" is being superseded now by interest in George Herbert, who's religious seeking and questioning seems to be hitting a critical nerve.

Characteristics of Metaphysical Poetry:

The metaphysical poems have been written following some chief characteristics. Such as:

- o Use of ordinary speech mixed with puns, paradoxes and conceits (a paradoxical metaphor causing a shock to the reader by the strangeness of the objects compared; some examples: lovers and a compass, the soul and timber, the body and mind)
- o The exaltation of wit, which in the 17th century meant a nimbleness of thought; a sense of fancy (imagination of a fantastic or whimsical nature); and originality in figures of speech
- o Abstruse terminology often drawn from science or law
- o Often poems are presented in the form of an argument
- o In love poetry, the metaphysical poets often draw on ideas from Renaissance Neo-Platonism to show the relationship between the soul and body and the union of lovers' souls
- o They also try to show a psychological realism when describing the tensions of love.
- o These poems are full of Obscurity-which means confusion and haziness for common readers.

Examples of Some Metaphysical Poems:

John Donne- The Good-Morrow, The Sunne Rising, The Anniversarie, The Canonization, A Valediction Forbidding Mourning and A Nocturnall upon S. Lucies Day

George Herbert- Jordan (I), The Pearl, The Collar, Discipline and Love (III) Andrew Marvell- The Coronet, Bermudas, To His Coy Mistress, The Definition of Love

and The Garden Henry Vaughan- He retreat, The World, Man and "They Are All Gone into the World of Light"

Sources of Metaphysical Poem:

The poems are from the activities of every spheres of life especially from craft, all the school of science, alchemy, Aristotle's theory, philosophy, history, mythology, law, religion and different beliefs.

Poets of Metaphysical World

This is a very broad term, but it joins together a number of 17th century poets, most notable among them John Donne, Abraham Cowley, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Andrew Marvell, and Henry Vaughn.

John Donne (1572-1631):

The last decade of 16th century and early 17th century a very strange style of verse is written by John Donne. He creates a new trend for writing poetry in the history of English literature. That's why he possessed one of the keenest

and most powerful intellects of the time. His poetry is noted for its ingenious fusion of wit and seriousness and represents a shift from classical models towards a more personal style. In that time he took the major position for writing metaphysical poetry.

John Donne born on 1572, Donne came from a Roman Catholic family, despite his great education and poetic talents he lived in poverty for several years. He started writing religious poems after his wife's death, before that he wrote many love poems. He died on March 31, 1631.

Specialty of John Donne's poetry:

Donne is considered the master of the metaphysical poetry. In his poem we get some unique versatility. Such as, He yoke together two entirely opposite ideas and told very serious matter with the help of playfulness.

Intellectuality, cleverness, unique diction sparkingly express through his poem. He draws the material of his figure of speech from highly unpoetical sources. The material is abstract but Donne gives it full poetic concrete Pictures. Especially his imagistic writing, use of conceit, abrupt opening with a dramatic style and colloquial diction made his poems highlighted.

Abraham Cowley (1618–1667)

Poet and essayist Abraham Cowley was born in London, England, in 1618. He displayed early talent as a poet, publishing his first collection of poetry, *Poetical Blossoms* (1633), at the age of 15. Cowley studied at Cambridge University but was stripped of his Cambridge fellowship during the English Civil War and expelled for refusing to sign the Solemn League and Covenant of 1644. In turn, he accompanied Queen Henrietta Maria to France, where he spent 12 years in exile serving as her secretary. During this time, Cowley completed *The Mistress* (1647). Arguably his most famous work, the collection exemplifies Cowley's metaphysical style of love poetry. After the Restoration, Cowley returned to England, where he was reinstated as a Cambridge fellow and earned his MD before finally retiring to the English countryside. He is buried at Westminster Abbey alongside Geoffrey Chaucer and Edmund Spenser.

George Herbert:

George Herbert was born in Montgomery, Wales, on April 3, 1593, the fifth son of Richard and Magdalen Newport Herbert. His poetry shows that to a large extent he followed the lead offered by Donne, but he also made contributions which were quite distinct. Herbert's poems are characterized by a precision of language, a metrical versatility, and an ingenious use of imagery or conceits that was favored by the metaphysical school of poets.

Herbert's distinguishing characteristic is his simplicity of diction and metaphor. He retains the colloquial manner, and, to an extent, the logical persuasive presentation of ideas, but he draws his metaphors from everyday domestic experience, employing a range of simple commonplace imagery in contrast to the sophisticated imagery of Donne. A technique Herbert introduced was the ending of a poem with two quiet lines which resolve the argument in the poem without answering the specific points raised by it. . Herbert occasionally explores his doubts in intellectual terms, but answers

them with emotion. Herbert's poetry is certainly about struggles of a religious kind. In these respects Herbert can be considered to have broken new ground, into which Henry Vaughan followed later.
Henry Vaughan:

Henry Vaughan was born in 1621 to Thomas Vaughan and Denise Morgan. He is considered one of the major Metaphysical Poets, whose works ponder one's personal relationship to God. He shares Herbert's preoccupation with the relationship between humanity and God. He saw mankind as restless and constantly seeking a sense of harmony and fulfillment through contact with God. Vaughan, in contrast, has the arrogance of a visionary. He feels humility before God and Jesus, but seems to despise humanity. In contrast, Vaughan's images are more universal, or cosmic, even to the point of judging man in relation to infinity. The term 'visionary' is appropriate to Vaughan, not only because of the grand scale of his images, but also because his metaphors frequently draw on the sense of vision. Andrew Marvell:

Andrew Marvell was born at Wine stead-in-Holderness, Yorkshire, on March 31, 1621. The life and work of Andrew Marvell are both marked by extraordinary variety and range. Gifted with a most subtle and introspective imagination. His technique of drawing upon philosophy to illustrate his argument gives the poem an intellectual appeal, not just a visual one. There is also complete devotion displayed in this first stage of the argument, namely:

"I would Love you ten years before the flood. And you should, if you please, refuse till the conversion of the Jews."

In Marvell we find the pretence of passion (in *To His Coy Mistress*) used as a peg on which to hang serious reflections on the brevity of happiness. The Definition of Love is an ironic game - more a love of definition let loose; the poem is cool, lucid and dispassionate, if gently self-mocking. Marvell considers whether the poetic skill which has formerly (and culpably) served to praise his "shepherdess" can "redress that Wrong", by weaving a "Chaplet" for Christ.

Richard Crashaw:

Richard Crashaw was born on 1613. He was the only son of William Crashaw, a puritan preacher in London who had officiated at the burning of Mary, Queen of Scots. He wrote many metaphysical poems following Donne. Though his verse is somewhat uneven in quality, at its best it is characterized by brilliant use of extravagant baroque imagery.

Crashaw owed all the basis of his style, as has been already hinted, to Donne. His originality was one of treatment and technique; he forged a more rapid and brilliant short line than any of his predecessors had done, and for brief intervals and along sudden paths of his own he carried English prosody to a higher refinement, a more glittering felicity, than it had ever achieved. Thus, in spite of his conceits and his romantic coloring, he points the way for Pope, who did not disdain to borrow from him freely.

Conclusion:

Metaphysical poets created a new trend in history of English literature. These poems have been created in such a way that one must have enough knowledge to get the actual meaning. Metaphysical Poets made use of everyday speech, intellectual analysis, and

unique imagery. The creator of metaphysical poetry John Donne along with his followers is successful not only in that Period but also in the modern age. Metaphysical poetry takes an important place in the history of English literature for its unique versatility and it is popular among thousands of people till now.

Robert Burton (1577–1640)

Robert Burton, English clergyman and scholar, born in Leicestershire, educated at Oxford. He served as librarian at Christ Church, Oxford, all his life; in addition he was vicar of St. Thomas, Oxford, and later was rector of Seagrave, Leicestershire. A bachelor, he led an uneventful, scholarly life. His famous work, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, appeared in 1621 under the pen name Democritus Junior. Enlarged and revised several times before his death, this treatise originally set out to explore the causes and effects of melancholy, but it eventually covered many areas in the life of man, including science, history, and political and social reform. The work is divided into three main portions: The first defines and describes various kinds of melancholy; the second puts forward various cures; and the third analyzes love melancholy and religious melancholy. Burton's prose style is informal, anecdotal, and thoroughly idiosyncratic, and he includes quotations from a wide range of literature—the Bible, the classics, the Elizabethan authors.

'The Anatomy of Melancholy', which is a book of its own type in the English language. In it Robert Burton has analysed human melancholy, described its effect and prescribed its cure. But more than that the book deals with all the ills that flesh is heir to, and the author draws his material from writers, ancient as well as modern. It is written in a straightforward, simple and vigorous style, which at times is marked with rhythm and beauty.

Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682)

Sir Thomas Browne belonged entirely to a different category. With him the manner of writing is more important than the substance. He is, therefore, the first deliberate stylist in the English language, the forerunner of Charles Lamb and Stevenson. Being a physician with a flair for writing, he wrote *Religio Medici* in which he set down his beliefs and thoughts, the religion of the medical man. In this book, which is written in an amusing, personal style, the conflict between the author's intellect and his religious beliefs, gives it a peculiar charm. Every sentence has the stamp of Browne's individuality. His other important prose work is *Hydriotaphia or The Urn Burial*, in which meditating on time and antiquity Browne reaches the heights of rhetorical splendour. He is greater as an artist than a thinker, and his prose is highly complex in its structure and almost poetic in richness of language.

RESTORATION

Under invitation by leaders of the English Commonwealth, Charles II, the exiled king of England, lands at Dover, England, to assume the throne and end 11 years of military rule.

Prince of Wales at the time of the English Civil War, Charles fled to France after Oliver Cromwell's Parliamentarians defeated King Charles I's Royalists in 1646. In 1649, Charles vainly attempted to save his father's life by presenting Parliament a signed blank sheet of paper, thereby granting whatever terms were required. However, Oliver Cromwell was determined to execute Charles I, and on January 30, 1649, the king was beheaded in London.

After his father's death, Charles was proclaimed king of England by the Scots and by supporters in parts of Ireland and England, and he traveled to Scotland to raise an army. In 1651, Charles invaded England but was defeated by Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester. Charles escaped to France and later lived in exile in Germany and then in the Spanish Netherlands. After Cromwell's death in 1658, the English republican experiment faltered. Cromwell's son Richard proved an ineffectual leader, and the public resented the strict Puritanism of England's military rulers.

In 1660, in what is known as the English Restoration, General George Monck met with Charles and arranged to restore him in exchange for a promise of amnesty and religious toleration for his former enemies. On May 25, 1660, Charles landed at Dover and four days later entered London in triumph.

RESTORATION THEATRE

The Restoration period refers to the decades between the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 and the end of the century, during which the theatre regained its popularity and productivity, although the scope of drama was far from the abundance of genres in the Elizabethan theatre. However, the period is extremely significant in the history of English theatre, since most of the foundations of what we know today as modern theatre were laid during these decades.

When King Charles II came back from his exile on the Continent, he brought an enthusiasm for entertainment to England, but no one in the royal court wished to allow the subversive element of the theatre to go uncontrolled. Besides, the King got used to regarding the theatre as a social event as well, where there was an opportunity to meet and observe other members of the aristocracy. As the previous public playhouses were clearly not suitable for accommodating the monarch, now new theatre buildings had to be designed and constructed. The King issued royal patents to two theatres, Thomas Killigrew's, which became the foundation of the later Drury Lane theatre, and Sir William Davenant's theatre, which was the forerunner of the Covent Garden theatre. These new theatre buildings contained boxes for the King and the Royal Family, while the galleries and the pit were used by the lower classes.

The stage itself also underwent significant changes; first the bare stage gave way to the scenic stage, then later the proscenium arch over the stage, which had appeared in Jacobean masques, also became a significant part of theatre design, framing the production and at the same time, separating the stage from the auditorium.

The dominant dramatic genre in the Restoration period was the comedy of manners, depicting elegant society together with its vices and follies, with an emphasis on verbal wit and stylishness, rather than moral instruction; outstanding authors were William Wycherley (*The Country Wife*) and William Congreve (*Love for Love; The Way of the World*). This genre was later refined and perfected in the second half of the 18th century by Richard Brinsley Sheridan (*The School for Scandal*), who set the vein for the tradition of satirical comedies, which has been a widely practiced tradition in English drama ever since. This genre fulfils the desire to criticize society but at the same time retains the audience's wish to recognize itself in a favourable light, as witty

and intelligent, fashionable and brilliant. The art of criticism was also born in this period, when it was considered fashionable to be seen at the theatre as early as possible (this is the period when the tradition of first night rituals was born), and then to discuss and criticize the performances in the appropriate social circles.

In tragedy the new genre of heroic tragedy gained prominence, the most important authors being Sir William Davenant, former collaborator of Inigo Jones (the designer of Jacobean court masques) and the holder of a royal patent for the Covent Garden theatre; and also John Dryden, the most important literary figure of the period.

This was the period in English theatre history when women also made their appearance on the stage, although first they were only seen in foreign, mainly French troupes. Then the Royal Warrant of King Charles II permitted only women to perform female roles, and this novelty of theatrical practice brought about not only a more realistic portrayal of the female character, but also the beginnings of the modern star-image of actresses, whose private lives were just as much followed by their fans as their stage careers.

A reaction against the immoral society of the comedy of manners came in the form of the sentimental comedy in the late 17th, early 18th century. This period did not produce any outstanding pieces, but it was popular both in England and France at the time. Afterwards no significant new comic form appeared in drama until the Theatre of the Absurd in the 20th century, but playwrights were elaborating on and widening the scope of the already established genres.

By the end of the 19th century, national characteristics of theatres have largely disappeared; from this time on, national theatres were aware of and influenced by other nations' theatrical achievements, and new trends or approaches travelled across national boundaries.

Nevertheless, another dramatic form produced outstanding achievements in the age, the so-called closet drama (often called a dramatic poem), which was designed to be read rather than performed. As literacy was increasing among the middle classes and the reading public was widening, this form also gained prominence, and many famous poets contributed to the genre. One of the earliest examples is Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, and later ones are Byron's *Manfred*, Shelley's *Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*, or Keats's *Otho the Great*.

POLITICAL PAMPHLETEERING

John Dryden (1631-1700)

John Dryden was the son of a clergyman, had a university education, and made up his mind to earn his livelihood by writing. He forms the connecting link between the age of Puritan influence and the age of the Restoration. He knew Milton, and sometimes visited him; but he lacked Milton's firmness of Character. Having made up his mind to support himself by his pen, he was careful to keep in favor with the ruling powers. When Charles II was king, Dryden was an Episcopalian; when James II took the throne, he became a Catholic, and he did his best in writing for each religious sect in turn. He devoted his whole life to literature, and became the acknowledged literary leader of the time.

His Poetry—Dryden's greatest poem is a satire called *Absalom and Achitophel*. Under these names from the Bible two prominent political leaders of the day, the Earl of Shaftesbury and the Duke of Monmouth are satirized. Their friends and associates also come in for a share of ridicule. For skilful drawing of character and situation, and for keenness of attack on individuals, this poem ranks first among English political satires.

Religio Laici and *the Hind and the Panther* are two other poems by Dryden. The former is a defense of the Church of England' in the latter Dryden gives his reasons for becoming a Catholic.

An ode called *Alexander's Feast* is the most popular of Dryden's poems, and comes nearer to true poetry than anything else that he wrote.

Dryden has been called "the greatest poet that ever was or could be made wholly out of prose." He delighted to argue in verse. Dryden was Poet Laureate from 1670 to 1688.

His Dramatic Work.—Dryden wrote many plays, including both tragedy and comedy. Among his best plays are the *Indian Emperor* and the *Conquest of Granada*.

His Prose.—Dryden is another "Father of English Prose;" this time, however, it is as the father of modern English prose that we wish to distinguish him. He set the example of clear, direct expression which modern prose follows, and broke away from the scholarly language of the age which preceded him. In *An Essay on Dramatic Poesy* he uses simple, forceful, and natural language.

Joseph Addison (1672-1719)

The English essayist and politician Joseph Addison founded the "Spectator" periodical with Sir Richard Steele. Joseph Addison was born on May 1, 1672, the son of the rector of Milston, Wiltshire. He was educated at the Charterhouse, an important boarding school, and then at Oxford, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1691.

Addison used poetry to further his political ambitions; his earliest poems include flattering references to influential men. In 1699 Addison was rewarded with a grant of money which allowed him to make the grand tour, a series of visits to the main European capitals, which was a standard part of the education of the 18th-century gentleman. One record of his travels is his long poem *Letter from Italy*.

In 1703 Addison returned to England to find that the Whigs, the party with which he had allied himself, were out of power. But his poem on the Battle of Blenheim won him an appointment as commissioner of appeal in excise. Addison continued to combine literary with political success. He was elected to parliament in 1707, and in 1709 he went to Dublin as secretary to the lord lieutenant of Ireland. In 1710 he founded the *Whig Examiner* to counter the Tory views of the *Examiner*, a periodical managed by Jonathan Swift.

In 1709 Addison had begun to write for the *Tatler*, a magazine edited by his friend Sir Richard Steele; Addison contributed in all 42 essays. The last issue of this periodical was published in January 1711. Two months later, under the joint editorship of Addison and Steele, the first number of the *Spectator* appeared. Published every day, it ran for 555 numbers (the last issue appeared on Dec. 6, 1712). Although its circulation was small by modern standards, it was read by many important people and exercised a wide

influence. Addison and Steele wrote 90 percent of the essays. Their purpose was, in their words, to bring "Philosophy out of Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and in Coffee-Houses." Some of the essays are concerned with literary and philosophical questions; others comment on good manners and bad, life in the country and in the town. Addison and Steele invented characters who represent different types, notably the old-fashioned country gentleman, Sir Roger de Coverley.

In 1713 Addison wrote *Cato: A Tragedy*, a play in which he undertook to imitate and to improve upon classical Greek tragedy. The play was a success, probably because some of the audience took it to be a political allegory. Alexander Pope wrote the prologue, and Samuel Johnson later praised the play as Addison's noblest work.

In 1714 Queen Anne died, and Addison shared in the Whigs' rise to power. He was known as a temperate, conciliatory politician. In 1717 he was appointed secretary of state; he retired the next year with a generous pension. Addison died on June 17, 1719.

Sir Richard Steele (12 March 1672 – 1 September 1729)

The British essayist, dramatist, and politician Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729) is best known for his collaboration with Addison on a series of essays for the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*.

Richard Steele was born in Dublin, Ireland, in March 1672. The exact date of his birth is not known, but he was baptized on March 12. Steele's father, an attorney, died in 1676, and his mother died the next year. He was placed under the guardianship of his maternal uncle, Henry Gascoigne, who was secretary and confidential agent to the Duke of Ormonde. In 1684 he began attending Charterhouse School, London, where he met Joseph Addison. Both Steele and Addison went to Oxford, Steele entering Christ Church in 1689 and transferring to Merton College in 1691. His Oxford career was undistinguished, and he left in 1692 without taking a degree in order to volunteer for cadet service under the command of the Duke of Ormonde. Steele then served in the Life Guards and later transferred to the Coldstream Guards. In 1695 Lord Cutts, to whom Steele had dedicated a poem on the funeral of Queen Mary, became Steele's patron. Steele first served him as private secretary and then became an officer in Cutts's regiment in 1697. Two years later Steele received a captaincy in a foot regiment.

During these years of military service in London, Steele became acquainted with a circle of literary and artistic figures, and he began to write. His first comedy, *The Funeral, or Grief A-la-mode*, was performed successfully at Drury Lane Theatre in 1701. This play was a satire on the new profession of undertaking. It was followed by *The Lying Lover, or The Ladies' Friendship* in 1703. His third comedy, *The Tender Husband, or The Accomplished Fools*, produced in 1705, achieved some success, perhaps because Addison helped him write it.

A constant need for money dominated much of Steele's life because his spending habits were impulsive and extravagant. In 1705 he married an elderly and propertied widow, Margaret Stretch. She died in 1706, leaving him an annual income of £850, and in 1707 Steele married Mary Scurlock (died 1718), the "Dear Prue" of a series of delightful letters he addressed to her. They had four children, but only Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, survived to

maturity. Steele lived in considerable style after his second marriage, and his habits continued to be free-spending and improvident. He left the army in 1707, or perhaps earlier, and in the years following secured several minor appointments.

On April 12, 1709, Steele launched his own paper, the *Tatler*, to be published three times weekly. Partly a newspaper and partly a journal of politics and of society events, the *Tatler* soon featured essays on general questions of manners, morality, and entertainment. The great majority of the *Tatler* issues were authored by Steele, Addison writing about 46 by himself and about 36 in conjunction with Steele. The *Tatler*, though prosperous, discontinued publication for obscure reasons on Jan. 2, 1711.

The first issue of the *Tatler*'s brilliant successor, the *Spectator*, appeared on March 1, 1711. It was a joint venture of Steele and Addison, who was the chief contributor to the new paper. However, in this paper, as in the *Tatler*, Addison followed Steele's choice of subjects. The Steele-Addison literary partnership ranks as one of the most successful in the history of English literature. Both men were Whigs and sympathized with the moral attitudes of England's rapidly growing middle class. They differed greatly in temperament, Steele being impulsive and warmhearted and Addison restrained and sedate. The *Spectator* had a run of 555 daily numbers, discontinuing publication on Dec. 6, 1712. Of this number, Steele authored about 240 issues.

Steele made many additional forays into periodical journalism. The most notable of these, some of which were purely political, were the *Guardian* (March 12-Oct. 1, 1713); the *Englishman* (Oct. 6, 1713-Feb. 11, 1714; July 11-Nov. 21, 1715); and the *Lover* (Feb. 25-May 27, 1714), which saw the publication of 40 essays by Steele. The *Plebeian* (1718), Steele's most famous political journal, involved him in a dispute with Addison, whose death in 1719 frustrated Steele's attempt at reconciliation.

During these years Steele served as the chief Whig propagandist; as the principal journalist of the Whigs in opposition, he was the antagonist of Jonathan Swift, who held the corresponding job for the Tories. Steele's writings frequently made his political career perilous. Appointed commissioner of stamps in 1710, he was forced to resign from this office in 1713. That same year he was elected to Parliament from Stockbridge, but he was expelled in 1714 on a charge of sedition.

After the accession of George I to the English throne in 1714, Steele obtained a number of political favors. In 1715 he was knighted and was reelected to Parliament. Steele's intemperance gradually undermined his health, and he suffered from gout for many years. In 1722 he wrote his last and most successful comedy, *The Conscious Lovers*. In 1724—still notoriously improvident, impulsive, ostentatious, and generous—Steele was forced to retire from London because of his mounting debts and his worsening health. He went to live on his wife's estate of Llangunnor in Wales, and in 1726 he suffered a paralytic stroke. His health broken, Steele died at Carmarthen, Wales, on Sept. 1, 1729.

Jonathan Swift

Jonathan Swift (30 November 1667 – 19 October 1745) was an Anglo-Irish satirist, essayist, political pamphleteer (first for the Whigs, then for the Tories), poet and cleric who became Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

He is remembered for works such as *Gulliver's Travels*, *A Modest Proposal*, *A Journal to Stella*, *Drapier's Letters*, *The Battle of the Books*, *An Argument Against Abolishing Christianity*, and *A Tale of a Tub*. Swift is regarded by the *Encyclopædia Britannica* as the foremost prose satirist in the English language,[1] and is less well known for his poetry. Swift originally published all of his works under pseudonyms – such as Lemuel Gulliver, Isaac Bickerstaff, MB Drapier – or anonymously. He is also known for being a master of two styles of satire: the Horatian and Juvenalian styles.

Alexander Pope (May 21, 1688- May 30, 1744)

The English poet Alexander Pope is regarded as one of the finest poets and satirists (people who use wit or sarcasm to point out and devalue sin or silliness) of the Augustan (mid-seventeenth to mid-eighteenth century English literature) period and one of the major influences on English literature in this time and after.

Early years

Alexander Pope was born on May 21, 1688, in London, England, to Alexander and Edith Pope. His Roman Catholic father was a linen merchant. His family moved out of London and settled in Binfield in Windsor Forest around 1700. Pope had little formal schooling. He educated himself through extensive studying and reading, especially poetry.

Although Pope was healthy and plump in his infancy, he became severely ill later in his childhood, which resulted in a slightly disfigured body—he never grew taller than 4 feet 6 inches. He suffered from curvature of the spine, which required him to wear a stiff canvas brace. He had constant headaches. His physical appearance, frequently ridiculed by his enemies, undoubtedly gave an edge to Pope's satire (humor aimed at human weaknesses), but he was always warmhearted and generous in his affection for his many friends.

Early poems

Pope was precocious (showed the characteristics of an older person at a young age) as a child and attracted the notice of a noted bookseller who published his *Pastorals* (1709). By this time Pope was already at work on his more ambitious *Essay on Criticism* (1711) designed to create a rebirth of the contemporary literary scene.

The Rape of the Lock (1712) immediately made Pope famous as a poet. It was a long humorous poem in the classical style (likeness to ancient Greek and Roman writing). Instead of treating the subject of heroic deeds, though, the poem was about the attempt of a young man to get a lock of hair from his beloved's head. It was based on a true event that happened to people he knew. Several other poems were published by 1717, the date of the first collected edition of Pope's works.

Translations of Homer

Pope also engaged in poetic imitations and translations. His *Messiah* (1712) was an imitation of Virgil (70–19 B.C.E.). He also did a version of Geoffrey Chaucer's (1342–1400) poetry in the English of Pope's day. But it was Pope's versions of Homer (c. 700 B.C.E.) that were his greatest achievement as a translator.

Pope undertook the translation of Homer's *Iliad* because he needed money. The interest earned from his father's annuities (money from investments) had dropped sharply. The translation occupied him until 1720. It was a great

financial success, making Pope independent of the customary forms of literary patronage (support from wealthy people), and it was highly praised by critics.

From the time parts of *Iliad* began to appear, Pope became the victim of numerous pamphlet attacks on his person, politics, and religion. In 1716 an increased land tax on Roman Catholics forced the Popes to sell their place at Binfield and to settle at Chiswick. The next year Pope's father died, and in 1719 the poet's increased wealth enabled him to move with his mother to Twickenham.

From 1725 to 1726 Pope was engaged in a version of *Odyssey*. He worked with two other translators, William Broome and Elijah Fenton. They completed half of the translation between them. It was Pope's name, however, that sold the work, and he naturally received the lion's share (biggest part) of the profits.

Editorial work

Pope also undertook several editorial projects. Parnell's *Poems* (1721) was followed by an edition of the late Duke of Buckingham's *Works* (1723). Then, in 1725, Pope's six volumes on the works of William Shakespeare (1564–1616) were published. Pope's edits and explanatory notes were notoriously capricious (impulsive and not scholarly). His edition was attacked by Lewis Theobald in *Shakespeare Restored* (1726), a work that revealed a superior knowledge of editorial technique. This upset Pope, who then made Theobald the original hero of *Dunciad*.

The Dunciad

In 1726 and 1727 the writer Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) was in England and a guest of Pope. Together they published three volumes of poetry. Renewed contact with Swift must have given a driving force to Pope's poem on "Dulness," which appeared as the three-book *Dunciad* (1728). Theobald was the prime dunce, and the next year the poem was enlarged by a burlesque (broad comedy) on commentators and textual critics.

Clearly Pope used *Dunciad* as personal satire to pay off many old scores. But it was also prompted by his distaste for that whole process by which worthless writers gained undeserved literary prominence (fame). The parody (comic imitation) of the classical epic (heroic poem) was accompanied by further mock-heroic elements, including the intervention of a goddess, the epic games of the second book, and the visit to the underworld and the vision of future "glories." Indeed, despite its devastating satire, *Dunciad* was essentially a phantasmagoric (created by the imagination) treatment by a great comic genius. In 1742 Pope published a fourth book to *Dunciad* separately, and his last published work was the four-volume *Dunciad* in 1743.

An Essay on Man

Pope's friendship with the former statesman Henry St. John Bolingbroke, who had settled a few miles from Twickenham, stimulated his interest in philosophy and led to the composition of *An Essay on Man*. Some ideas expressed in it were probably suggested by Bolingbroke. For example, the notion that earthly happiness is enough to justify the ways of God to man was consistent with Bolingbroke's thinking.

In essence, the *Essay* is not philosophy (the study of knowledge) but a poet's belief of unity despite differences, of an order embracing the whole multifaceted (many-sided) creation. Pope's sources were ideas that had a long

history in Western thought. The most central of these was the doctrine of plenitude, which Pope expressed through the metaphors (a figure of speech in which words or phrases are used to find similarities in things that are not comparable) of a "chain" or "scale" of being. He also asserted that the discordant (not harmonious) parts of life are bound harmoniously together.

Later years

Pope wrote *Imitations of Horace* from 1733 to 1738. (Horace was a Roman poet who lived from 65 to 8 B.C.E.) He also wrote many "epistles" (letters to friends) and defenses of his use of personal and political satire. As Pope grew older he became more ill. He described his life as a "long disease," and asthma increased his sufferings in his later years. At times during the last month of his life he became delirious. Pope died on May 30, 1744, and was buried in Twickenham Church.

Alexander Pope used language with genuine inventiveness. His qualities of imagination are seen in the originality with which he handled traditional forms, in his satiric vision of the contemporary world, and in his inspired use of classical models.

John Gay

John Gay was born in Barnstable, Devon, England on June 30, 1685. At the age of 10, Gay was orphaned and his uncle, the Reverend John Hammer, agreed to take care of him. After finishing his education at the Barnstable Grammar School, Gay went to London to be an apprentice to a silk merchant. Disliking the work, Gay left the merchant to work briefly for Arthur Hill, who became manager of a theater company. In 1712, in his late twenties, Gay was a secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth. He also worked as a secretary to Lord Clarendon. During his time in London, Gay established relationships with Londoners and became a part of the city society.

In 1713, Gay published the poem "Rural Sports," a comic description of hunting and fishing, and inscribed it to Alexander Pope, a prominent writer of the time. Pope appreciated the honor and soon became acquainted with Gay. Pope and Gay became lifelong friends and colleagues. Gay also became close with the writer Jonathon Swift; Pope and Swift both encouraged Gay to continue writing and publishing his work. Gay studied with Georg Frederic Handel, the greatest opera composer at the time in London. Gay's love for music transferred into much of his writings for the stage; he included some type of music in many of his plays.

Gay published poems, fables, plays, and ballad operas. His most notable works include:

1. *The Shepherd's Weeks*, a series of mock-classical pastoral poems (1714)
2. *What D'Ye Call It*, a satirical play (1715)
3. "Trivia: Or, The Art of Walking the Streets of London," a poem (1716)
4. *Three Hours after Marriage*, a comedy written with Alexander Pope and John Arbuthnot (1717)
5. *Acis and Galatea*, the libretto to Handel's opera and Gay's final attempt at ballad opera (1719)
6. *Poems on Several Occasions*, a set of poems (1720)
7. *Fables*, a set of beast fables (1727-38)
8. *Fifty-One Fables in Verse* (1727)
9. *The Beggar's Opera*, his famous ballad opera (1728)

10. *Polly*, the sequel to *The Beggar's Opera* which was published but not performed (1729)

11. *Achilles* (1733)

Although Gay wrote numerous poems and plays, his ballad opera *The Beggar's Opera* was certainly his greatest success and his most important contribution. John Gay is credited with the first success of the ballad opera genre. Although many scholars believe his ballad opera was the only notable one of its kind, many scholars also believe that his opera led to the popular and successful operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan. The success of the ballad opera was immediate and Gay made a significant amount of money from the opera.

Even though Gay was successful as a writer, he was not a rich man. Luckily, he made friends with some of the high society who helped support him. Most notable were the Duke and Duchess of Queensbury. Gay met them when he was working for the Duchess of Monmouth. The Duchess of Queensbury became Gay's most important patron until his death.

John Gay died at the age of 47 on December 4, 1732 in London. He was buried in the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. The inscription on his tomb is taken from *The Beggar's Opera* and spoken by the Beggar, showing Gay's humor until the end of his life: "Life is a Jest, and all Things show it: I thought so once and now I know it".

Daniel Defoe (1660–1731)

English novelist, pamphleteer and journalist Daniel Defoe is best known for his novels, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*.

Daniel Defoe, the son of a butcher, was born in London in 1660. He attended Morton's Academy, a school for Dissenters at Newington Green with the intention of becoming a minister, but he changed his mind and became a hosiery merchant instead.

In 1685 Defoe took part in the Monmouth Rebellion and joined William III and his advancing army. Defoe became popular with the king after the publication of his poem, *The True Born Englishman* (1701). The poem attacked those who were prejudiced against having a king of foreign birth.

The publication of Defoe's *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* (1702) upset a large number of powerful people. In the pamphlet, Defoe, a Dissenter, ironically demanded the savage suppression of dissent. The pamphlet was judged to be critical of the Anglican Church and Defoe was fined, put in the Charing Cross Pillory and then sent to Newgate Prison.

In 1703 Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, a Tory government official, employed Defoe as a spy. With the support of the government, Defoe started the newspaper, *The Review*. Published between 1704 and 1713, the newspaper appeared three times a week. As well as carrying commercial advertising *The Review* reported on political and social issues. Defoe also wrote several pamphlets for Harley attacking the political opposition. The Whigs took Defoe court and this resulted in him serving another prison sentence.

In 1719 Defoe turned to writing fiction. His novels include: *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Captain Singleton* (1720), *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722), *Captain Jack* (1722), *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxanda* (1724).

Defoe also wrote a three volume travel book, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724-27) that provided a vivid first-hand account of the state of the country. Other non-fiction books include *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726) and *London the Most Flourishing City in the Universe* (1728). Defoe published over 560 books and pamphlets and is considered to be the founder of British journalism. Daniel Defoe died in 1731.

SYLLABUS

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF BRITAIN: HIS2C03 HISTORY OF TUDORS AND STUARTS

Module I Transition from Medieval period to Modern Age

Establishment of Tudor monarchy – features – Rise and growth of new middle classes – Elizabethan Era – Overseas trade – Spanish Armada – Mercantilism – Trading Companies –

Module II Age of Reformation and Renaissance

Reformation – Humanism – Thomas More – Francis Bacon – University Wits – Marlowe – Ben Jonson – John Lyly – William Shakespeare – Roger Ascham – Philip Sidney – Edmund Spenser – Walter Raleigh – Development of Science – Isaac Newton

Module III England under Stuarts

Growth of Royal absolutism – Civil War – Puritan Revolt – Oliver Cromwell – Puritan Literature – Milton – Bunyan – Metaphysical Poets – John Donne – Cowley – Robert Burton – Thomas Browne

Restoration – Theatre – Satire – Political pamphleteering – John Dryden – Joseph Addison – Steele – Jonathan Swift – Alexander Pope – John Gay – Daniel Defoe

Books for Reading:

Module I

1. G. M. Travelyan, A Social History of England, Vol. I
2. G. M. Travelyan, Illustrated English Social History
3. Carter and Mears, A History of England
4. H. A. L. Fischer, History of Europe

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