



VELS



INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED STUDIES (VISTAS)
(Deemed to be University Estd. u/s 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)
PALLAVARAM - CHENNAI
INSTITUTION WITH UGC 12B STATUS

DCBEN - 12

History of English Literature - I



B.A (Hons) English
ODL MODE
[Semester Pattern]

School of Languages
Centre for Distance and Online Education
Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies (VISTAS)
Pallavaram, Chennai - 600 117

**Vels Institute of Science, Technology
and Advanced Studies**

Centre for Distance and Online Education

BA (Hons)-English- ODL Mode

(Semester Pattern)

DCBEN-12: History of English Literature-I

(4 Credits)

Course Design and Preparation Committee

Dr. P. Mahalingam

Dean, School of Languages,
VISTAS, Pallavaram,
Chennai

Dr. T. Senthamarai

Professor and Head,
Department of English,
CDOE, VISTAS,
Pallavaram,
Chennai

Course Writer

Dr. P. Santhosh

Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
CDOE, VISTAS, Pallavaram,
Chennai

Programme Coordinator

Dr. T. Senthamarai

Professor, Department of
English, CDOE, VISTAS,
Pallavaram, Chennai.

Content Editing

Dr. P. Preethi

Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
VISTAS, Pallavaram,
Chennai.

Ms. R. Abeetha

Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
VISTAS, Pallavaram,
Chennai

Language Editing

Dr.V.Jaisre

Professor, Department of
English , VISTAS, Pallavaram,
Chennai

Printing and Distribution

Ms.S.G.Chitra

Deputy Registrar, CDOE,
VISTAS, Pallavaram, Chennai

Mr.V.Kumar

Section Officer, CDOE,
VISTAS, Pallavaram, Chennai

February 2024 (First Edition)

©Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies-2024

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission in writing from the Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies (VISTAS).

Further information on the VISTAS ODL Academic Programmes may be obtained from VISTAS at Velan Nagar, P.V.Vaithiyalingam Road, Pallavaram, Chennai-600117 [or] www.vistas.ac.in.

Printed at:

FOREWORD



Dr. Ishari K Ganesh
Chancellor

Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies (VISTAS), Deemed-to-be University, was established in 2008 under section 3 of the Act of 1956 of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Government of India, New Delhi.

VISTAS has blossomed into a multi-disciplinary Institute offering more than 100 UG & PG Programmes, besides Doctoral Programmes, through 18 Schools and 46 Departments. All the Programmes have the approval of the relevant Statutory Regulating Authorities such as UGC, UGC-DEB, AICTE, PCI, BCI, NCTE and DGS.

Our University aims to provide innovative syllabi and industry-oriented courses, and hence, the revision of curricula is a continuous process. The revision is initiated based on the requirement and approved by the Board of Studies of the concerned Department/School. The courses are under Choice Based Credit Systems, which enables students to have adequate freedom to choose the subjects based on their interests.

I am pleased to inform you that VISTAS has been rendering its services to society to democratize the opportunities of higher education for those who are in need through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode. VISTAS ODL Programmes offered have been approved by the University Grants Commission (UGC) – Distance Education Bureau (DEB), New Delhi.

The Curriculum and Syllabi have been approved by the Board of Studies, Academic Council, and the Executive Committee of the VISTAS, and they are designed to help provide employment opportunities to the students.

The ODL Programme [B.Com., BBA , B.A(Hons)-Economics and B.A(Hons)-English] Study Materials have been prepared in the Self Instructional Mode (SIM) format as per the UGC-DEB (ODL & OL) Regulations 2020. It is highly helpful to the students, faculties and other professionals. It gives me immense pleasure to bring out the ODL programme with the noble aim of enriching learners' knowledge. I extend my congratulations and appreciation to the Programme Coordinator and the entire team for bringing up the ODL Programme in an elegant manner.

At this juncture, I am glad to announce that the syllabus of this ODL Programme has been made available on our website, www.vistascdoe.in, for the benefit of the student community and other knowledge seekers. I hope that this Self Learning Materials (SLM) will be a supplement to the academic community and everyone.

CHANCELLOR

FOREWORD



Dr.S.Sriman Narayanan
Vice-Chancellor

My Dear Students!

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) of VISTAS gives you the flexibility to acquire a University degree without the need to visit the campus often. VISTAS-CDOE involves the creation of an educational experience of qualitative value for the learner that is best suited to the needs outside the classroom. My wholehearted congratulations and delightful greetings to all those who have availed themselves of the wonderful leveraged opportunity of pursuing higher education through this Open and Distance Learning Programme.

Across the World, pursuing higher education through Open and Distance Learning Systems is on the rise. In India, distance education constitutes a considerable portion of the total enrollment in higher education, and innovative approaches and programmes are needed to improve it further, comparable to Western countries where close to 50% of students are enrolled in higher education through ODL systems. Recent advancements in information and communications technologies, as well as digital teaching and e-learning, provide an opportunity for non-traditional learners who are at a disadvantage in the Conventional System due to age, occupation, and social background to upgrade their skills. VISTAS has a noble intent to take higher education closer to the oppressed, underprivileged women and the rural folk to whom higher education has remained a dream for a long time.

I assure you all that the Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies would extend all possible support to every registered student of this Deemed-to-be University to pursue her/his education without any constraints. We will facilitate an excellent ambience for your pleasant learning and satisfy your learning needs through our professionally designed curriculum, providing Open Educational Resources, continuous mentoring and assessments by faculty members through interactive counselling sessions.

VISTAS, Deemed- to- be University, brings to reality the dreams of the great poet of modern times, Mahakavi Bharathi, who envisioned that all our citizens be offered education so that the globe grows and advances forever.

I hope that you achieve all your dreams, aspirations, and goals by associating yourself with our ODL System for never-ending continuous learning.

With warm regards,

VICE-CHANCELLOR

Course Introduction

The Course , **DCBEN-12: The History of English Literature**, has been divided into five Blocks consisting of 20 Units. The framework of the study is given below:

Block-1: Block one enlightens the basic understanding of the social history of England. Unit-1 describes the early history of England, and Unit-2 discusses Feudalism. Unit-3 deals with Religion in Medieval England, England's Hundred Years' War with France, and Unit-4 details the impact of Wars of the Roses.

Block-2 : Block two deals with Tudor Age. Unit-5 discusses Renaissance land; Unit-6 details the Reformation, and Unit-7 deals with the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Unit-8 explains about Golden Age of Queen Elizabeth.

Block-3: Block three details historical occurrences of the Age of Stuarts. Unit-9 discusses the Long Parliament and Unit-10 details the Civil War and its Social Significance. Unit -11 explains Puritanism, and the Unit-12 details the Colonial Expansion.

Block-4: Block four discusses Stuart England. Unit-13 discusses Restoration England, Unit -14 details the Literature in the Restoration Age, Unit -15 explains social conditions during Restoration England, and the Unit-16 explores the Glorious Revolution.

Block-5: Block five explores Stuart England. The Unit-17 discusses the Golden Age of Queen Anne. The Unit-18 details the role of Coffee Houses and Life in London. The Unit -19 deals with the Political and Social conditions in Queen Anne's England and the Unit-20 explores the Coffee Houses in Queen Anne's England.

DCBEN-12: History of English Literature-I

S.No	Particulars	Page No
Block- 1: From Chaucer to Renaissance		
Unit-1	The Origins of English Literature	8
Unit-2	Old English and Anglo-Saxon Poetry	23
Unit-3	Middle English: Chaucer and the Canterbury Tales	33
Unit-4	Drama: Mystery and Miracle Plays; Morality Plays	42
Block-2: Renaissance Literature		
Unit-5	The Development of Drama	50
Unit-6	Dramatists of the the16 th Century	57
Unit-7	Elizabethan Poetry	66
Unit-8	Elizabethan prose	73
Block-3: The Age of Milton		
Unit-9	The Poetry of Milton	83
Unit-10	Puritanism and John Milton	91
Unit-11	Contemporaries of Milton	97
Unit-12	Works of Milton	105
Block-4: The Age of Dryden		
Unit-13	Restoration of Drama	118
Unit-14	Development of Prose	125
Unit-15	Poetry of Dryden	135
Unit-16	The Metaphysical poets	142
Block-5: The Age of Pope		
Unit-17	Political Satire and Mock-Epics	152
Unit-18	Transitional Poets	162
Unit-19	Pre-Romantic Authors	171
Unit-20	18 th Century novel	179
Plagiarism Certificate		190

Block-1: Introduction

Block-1: From Chaucer to Renaissance has been divided in to four Units.

Unit -1: The Origins of English Literature deals with Introduction, Themes in the Period, Indo-European Language Family, The Germanic Languages, Historical Relationship of English to German, Techniques of Historical Language Study, What is a History of English Literature?, English Literature and English History and The Periods of English Literature.

Unit-2: Old English and Anglo-Saxon Poetry explains about Introduction, Place of an Old English Literature, English Literature before the Conquest, From the Conquest to Chaucer, the Making of the English Language, the Dialectics of Old English and Periods in the Development of English.

Unit-3: Middle English: Chaucer and the Canterbury Tales describes about Introduction, The Norman Invasion, The Middle English, The Dialects of Middle English, Age of Chaucer, Chaucer's work in General and The Canterbury Tales.

Unit-4: Drama: Mystery and Miracle Plays; Morality Plays deals with Introduction, Medieval Drama, Mystery Plays, Morality Plays and The Interlude.

In all the units of Block -1 **From Chaucer to Renaissance**, the Check your progress, Glossary, Answers to Check your progress and Suggested Reading has been provided and the Learners are expected to attempt all the Check your progress as part of study.

Unit -1

The Origins of English Literature

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

1.1. Introduction

1.2. Themes in the Period

1.3. Indo-European Language Family

1.4. The Germanic Languages

1.5. Historical Relationship of English to German

1.6. Techniques of Historical Language Study

1.7. What is a History of English Literature?

1.8. English Literature and English History

1.9. The Periods of English Literature

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit traces the origin of the Indo-European family, the historical relationship of English to German, and the origin and development of English literature through different periods.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To understand the origin and development of the Indo-European family.
- To study the historical relationship between English to German.
- To trace the origin and development of English literature.

1.1. Introduction

Literature is the reflection of life. It mirrors the society in which it is generated. The word literature comes from the Latin word 'litaritura' meaning "writing organized with letters". We classify literature according to language, origin, historical period, genre, and subject matter. Initially,

literature was a form of entertainment for the people. Over time, it attained the purpose of reform as well. The writers started to highlight the social issues in their writing. Thus, it became a medium to draw the audience's attention to certain matters and urge them to consider the reform. From ancient civilizations to the modern era, all the works of literature have given us insight into the issues and trends prevailing at that time. Literature also provides an escape from the 'grim realities' of life. In contrast, many people read to escape the boredom of their life. Moreover, the higher type of literature helps the reader to escape from trivial reality into significant reality.

English literature, however, emerged at the beginning of the history of the English people. It refers to all the literary works (novels, short stories, poems, fiction, nonfiction, and plays) composed in English. The earliest works of English literature mirror the life lived by the people of that region at that specific period. For instance, all the changes undergone by English society from the earliest to modern times have left their imprints on English literature. As a nation's literature characterized by the spirit of determination, adventure, and diligence, English literature is rich in vitality, diversity, and essence.

1.2. Themes in this Period

- The Indo-European language family
- In the Germanic languages, major sound changes
- The historical relationship of English to German
- The techniques of historical language study
- Internal reconstruction
- Comparative linguistics

1.3. The Indo-European Language Family

The Indo-European languages are native to most of Europe, the Iranian plateau, and the northern Indian subcontinent. Some European languages of this family, such as English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Dutch, and Spanish, have expanded.

The Indo-European family is divided into several branches or sub-families. Through colonialism in the modern period, and are now spoken across several continents. There are eight groups with languages still alive today: Albanian, Armenian, Balto-Slavic, Celtic, Germanic, Hellenic, Indo-Iranian, and Italic, and another six subdivisions that are now extinct.

Today, the individual Indo-European languages with the most speakers are English, Hindi - Urdu, Spanish, Bengali, French, Russian, Portuguese, German, Persian, and Punjabi, each with over 100 million speakers; many others are small and in danger of extinction. All Indo-European languages are descended from a single prehistoric language, linguistically reconstructed as Proto-Indo-European, spoken sometime in the Neolithic to Early Bronze Age.

The geographical location where it was spoken, the Proto-Indo-European homeland, has been the object of many competing hypotheses; the academic consensus supports the Kurgan hypothesis, which posits the homeland to be the Pontic–Caspian steppe in what is now Ukraine and southern Russia, associated with the Yamnaya culture and other related archaeological cultures during the 4th millennium to early 3rd millennium BC.

When the first written records appeared, Indo-European had already evolved into numerous languages spoken across much of Europe, South Asia, and part of Western Asia. Written evidence of Indo-European appeared during the Bronze Age in Mycenaean Greek and the Anatolian languages of Hittite and Luwian. The oldest records are isolated Hittite words and names - interspersed in texts that are otherwise in the unrelated Akkadian language, a Semitic language - found in the texts of the Assyrian colony of Kültepe in eastern Anatolia in the 20th century BC. Although no older written records of the original Proto-Indo-European population remain, some aspects of their culture and religion can be reconstructed from later evidence in the daughter cultures.

The Indo-European family is significant to the field of historical linguistics, as it possesses the second-longest recorded history of any known family, after the Afro-Asiatic family in the form of the pre-Arab Egyptian language and the Semitic languages. During the 19th century, the linguistic concept of Indo-European languages was frequently used interchangeably with the obsolete racial concepts of Aryan and Aryans. The analysis of the family relationships between the Indo-European languages, and the reconstruction of their common source, was central to the development of the methodology of historical linguistics as any other language family through any more distant genetic relationship. However, several disputed proposals to that effect have been made.

1.4. The Germanic Languages

Germanic sound shifts are the phonological developments (sound changes) from the Proto-Indo-European language (PIE) to Proto-

Germanic, in Proto-Germanic itself, and various Germanic subfamilies and languages.

Germanic subfamilies and languages

- Germanic umlaut (all of the early languages except for Gothic)
- Great Vowel Shift (English)
- High German consonant shift
- Ingvaemonic nasal spirant law (attested in Old English, Old Frisian and Old Saxon)
- West Germanic germination

1.5. Historical Relationship of English to German

- **Old High German** : Runes are an early type of writing used primarily for inscriptions on stone by Germanic speakers. Celtic runes, collectively known as Ogam, also existed at the same time (first few centuries CE) Earliest forms of continental Germanic languages. Note that Slavic peoples occupied the area east of the Elbe and Saale rivers. The Lombards were a Germanic group which lived south of the Alps for several centuries. The written documents of Old High German were produced in monasteries like St Gallen (in present-day Switzerland), Reichenau or Fulda (probably where the Hilde brands lied was written down); this situation is similar to that of Old English. One of the main pieces of Old High German epic poetry is the Muspilli (now in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), probably written about 870. It deals with the theme of the afterlife, what happens to the soul after death.

The Hilde brands lied is a poem of alliterative verse, some 68 lines of which have survived. It was written down in the early 9th century in a mixture of Old Bavarian and Old Saxon. The poem is an item of oral literature and was composed sometime before the date given here.

- **Middle High German** : Middle High German refers to dialects spoken in the central and southern parts of German from the latter half of the eleventh century onwards. These were distinguished from Low German and early Dutch forms found in the north of Germany, especially in the coastal areas. A general form of Middle High German was the Dichtersprache, based on southwestern dialects, such as Swabian and Alemannic. The geographical extent of German increased to the spread of the

language east of the Elbe-Saale River border. In addition, early forms of Yiddish (varieties of German used by Jews with elements of liturgical Hebrew and some Slavic loans) began to appear in writing in the late Middle Ages (13th and 14th centuries). Various linguistic features characterize Middle High German, notably umlaut (for noun plurals, comparative, and certain verb forms), as well as final devoicing and the phonetic reduction of vowels in unstressed syllables).

The Techniques of Historical Languages Study

In the 19th century, when Indo-European studies evolved as a science in its own right, various techniques and methods were developed to help the linguist arrive at solid facts about the previous stages of a language. Of all the methods, the two listed at the beginning below are the main ones, the next two representing additional techniques that can be useful occasionally; the last phenomenon quoted below is important when considering the plausibility of change.

Comparative Method

This refers to the practice of comparing forms in two or more languages to discover regularities of correspondence. A simple instance from English and German concerns /t/ and /s/. With a series of native words, i.e., not loans, one can see that where English has /t/, German has /s/: water: Wasser, better: Besser, foot: Fuss. It is obvious here that English /t/ corresponds to German /s/ in the non-initial position. The question remains whether the /t/ or the /s/ is original. Here one can quote other Germanic languages, e.g., Swedish has vatten, betra, fot for water, better, foot, and this would imply that it is German which has changed the original /t/ to its present /s/. One could also use the arguments under (5) below to show that a fricative is more likely to develop from a stop through a general weakening process rather than vice versa (unless through assimilation to another stop).

A further instance of the comparative method in operation is the reconstruction of morphological endings. Take the nominative singular masculine ending of Germanic. This is postulated to have been /-z/. The evidence is as follows. Whatever sound at the end of masculine nominatives became /-r/ in North Germanic through rhotacism. It is still seen in Icelandic, which is particularly archaic; comparing the English wolf with ulfr; ulf in Modern Swedish shows the loss of the final consonant. Now in Finnish there are a number of well-preserved old Germanic loans such as kuning as 'king' which shows a final /-s/. But Finnish does not have /z/ and we know from rhotacism in other

languages (such as Latin, compare *flōs* :*flōris* 'flower') that /r/ arises from a voiced sibilant so that we are justified in assuming /-az/ as the ending of the nominative masculine singular in Germanic.

Another major concern of the comparative method is justifying a postulated original form which is not attested. An example of this would be the vowel which was initially present in words *home* and *Heim* (the present-day German pronunciation is /haim/, but as the orthography and southern German dialects show, this developed from an earlier /heim/). This is termed West Germanic /a:/. The reason for assuming /a:/ as the original vowel is that this requires the shortest movement to both a mid-front and a mid-back vowel. Furthermore, long vowels tend to rise more than to fall, so postulating /i:/ as a mid-vowel half way between the front /e, ei/ and the back /ou/ would be quite improbable.

Internal Reconstruction

This is the second major technique in reconstructing previous stages of languages. The basic principle is that one uses evidence from within a single language to gain knowledge of an earlier stage. Such evidence is usually available in forms that embody unproductive processes and remnants of formerly active ones. A simple example can be given from Old English, where an allophony led to morphophonemic alternations in Modern English as seen in word pairs like *roof*: *rooves*, *wife*: *wives*, *life*: *lives*. The change between singular and plural here is between a voiceless and a voiced fricative. The reason for this is that in Old English [f] and [v] were allophones of each other. The [f] occurred at the beginning and end of words as well as in the environment of other voiceless consonants. The [v] was found in an intervocalic ally and a voiced environment. Unchanging words like *five* and *live* show [v] in the singular from the previously intervocalic position of the fricative.

The voiced environment was provided in the plural where the ending /-as/ caused the word- final fricative of the singular to be in an intervocalic position and hence voiced: [ro:f] : [ro:vas]. This alternation has remained, although the automatic voicing rule has been lost and both /f/ and /v/ are now phonemes.

Consistency of Orthography

Latin orthography is known in its entirety and much is known of other systems as well, for instance, that þ, ð in Old English were realized as [θ, ð], because the first letter is a known Runic symbol and the second a 'crossed d', a fricative voiced alveolar stop used elsewhere as well. Æ is a ligature symbolising a sound between [a] and [e]. Equally, this principle

tends to apply to orthographical diphthongs such as eo and ea in Old English.

The orthography is not always reliable, however. Take the practice in Early Modern English of writing ye as a shorthand for the. The y never had any phonetic basis, although it has led to a curious spelling pronunciation /ji:/, which is found in names of supposedly traditional pubs and restaurants such as Ye Olde Shippe /ji: əʊldʃɪp/.

1) Rhyme Material and Reverse Spelling

The conclusion to be drawn here is that the sound indicated by - gh- [x] was already lost by this stage, so the spelling -igh- was interpreted as an adequate representation of /i:/ as in the word write (pre-Great Vowel Shift value). If a word is made to rhyme with another whose pronunciation is known then the same sound, value can be assumed for the first word. A reverse spelling is where a writer does not use the usual spelling for a sound A but that for another sound B, as when Middle English writers used wright for write.

2) General Knowledge of Linguistic Processes

If two languages have [k] and [tʃ] one can safely assume that [tʃ] is from [k] as [tʃ] to [k] is a non-attested sound change (palatalization as a process always involves a forward movement from the velum to the palate). Another example of a general process would be rhotacism, the development of /r/ from /z/. This is attested in a wide variety of languages and language groups such as Latin and Germanic (see above). The direction is generally from the fricative to the sonorant, though examples in the opposite direction are not unknown.

Yet another example of general reasoning would concern front vowels. If a language has /y/ and /ø/, then one can assume that i-umlaut (the anticipation of a high front vowel in a preceding syllable) has occurred, as this is generally the source of front rounded vowels. Though not all linguists accept this source type, there is a second possible origin in language contact. Again, an instance of general knowledge helping in an individual case would be morphology. Suppose a language has fewer inflexions than another. In that case, it is probably right to assume that the latter is older or at least more conservative, as inherited inflections tend to be lost by phonetic attrition and to be gained by the grammaticalization of semantically bleached lexical elements.

Applying general knowledge in particular cases assumes that linguists have an accurate conception of what constitutes a typical and what an unusual change. Scholars do not always agree on this point, and it is difficult to quantify 'typical' and 'unusual'. Despite these difficulties, the

notions are nonetheless useful. For instance, palatalization is a widespread phenomenon. It involves the shifting of articulation from a velar position to a palatal one, normally with a change in manner from stop to affricate, this later being simplified to a fricative in many instances. This is to be seen clearly in Slavic and Romance languages, e.g., Latin *camera* became *chamber* in French, first with then with by affricate simplification. Old English also shows this change in southern forms and in northern forms, in Scandinavian and German, e.g., *chin* versus *Kinn*.

A common principle may be seen to apply to a specific process in language change. For instance, there is a general principle that words normally maintain their quantity, despite segmental changes within them. Thus, on consonant loss, there is frequently compensatory lengthening by a short vowel becoming long. In Middle English the sound was lost in southern English and the vowels before this segment were lengthened, thus maintaining the entire quantity of the word, e.g., *light* was originally and later became (and with the Great Vowel Shift). Suppose one considers single consonants and short vowels as consisting of one unit of quantity. In that case, one can interpret the long vowel (a segment with two units of quantity) as arising due to the adoption of the quantity released by the loss of /x/. Unusual changes are understandably not very widespread. To demonstrate unusualness, consider palatalization again. This is the fronting of the point of articulation. The reverse practically never occurs but Rhenish German (Cologne-Bonn area) is an exception in that it has a general velarization of alveolars as in *Hund* [hʊŋk], *Seite* [zɪk], *Pein* [pɪŋ].

1.6. What is the History of English Literature?

Perhaps it seems hardly worthwhile to put this question because the answer to it is so apparent. A history of English literature, we reply without a moment's hesitation, is simply a chronological account of the books, which have been written in the English language, and since we cannot think of a book without thinking of its author or the men who wrote them. In a rough way, this answer is all right as far as it goes. However, it is too vague and does not go far enough. Therefore, it will be well for us to pause at the outset of our work to consider a little closely what it is that a history of English literature, however brief, really involves. Stress may first be laid upon the personal element our answer already recognizes. We cannot, we say, think of a book without also thinking of its author. Every book, in other words, takes us back immediately to the man behind it, whose genius it is a product of and whose thoughts and feelings it embodies.

Therefore, in the history of English literature, we must focus on the personalities of the men by whom this literature has been made. In a short sketch, we cannot, of course, examine their lives, experiences, and characters in detail. This must be left for a more comprehensive study. However, we must try to understand the distinctive quality in the genius of each man who comes before us. The reason for this is apparent. Genius means many things, but at the bottom, it means strength of personality and originality. Every great writer, it has been well said, brings one new thing into the world himself; and it is just because he puts this one new thing into what he writes that his work bears its special hallmark and has something about it which makes it unlike the work done by anyone else. In the detailed study of any great writer, this essential element of individuality is the chief feature to be considered. In a historical survey, no matter how slight, it must be carefully noted, too, for otherwise, we cannot learn why such a writer counts as he does in his nation's literature.

A history of English literature, then, is concerned with indicating the nature and value of the particular contribution which each writer personally has made to that literature. This, however, is only a small part of its task. A mere list of authors, taken separately, and of their books, does not constitute a history of literature, for literature as a whole grows and changes from generation to generation and in tracing this growth, history must show the place which each writer occupies in it, and his relations with those who went before, and with those who came after him. A writer of compelling personality is certain to stamp his impress upon his age, and amongst those who follow him, many will always be found who, conscious of it or not, reveal his influence in their thought and style. Moreover, the popularity obtained by any writer with a particular kind of work will naturally breed imitations, and what has once been done successfully will, for a time, be done repeatedly. In this way, schools are formed and "movements" initiated, which last for a while, and then, when tastes presently change, and other schools "and" movements arise disappear. Thus, we speak of the school of Pope, meaning the whole succession of poets who wrote in the particular style which he had brought to perfection and made current; of the classic "movement in verse which, following his lead, these writers carried on; of the romantic" movement in prose fiction which owed its principal impulse to Scott's historical novels; and so on. Such schools and movements always play a large part in the development of literature and are often as important to the student as the individual writers themselves. It must be remembered, too, that even the most original men the men who are most completely themselves -have their intellectual ancestry and are

often deeply indebted to others for inspiration and example. I have spoken of Pope's particular style, but this was not his independent creation. While it assumed perfection in his hands, it was the final result of a long "movement" in verse that had already found one great representative in his immediate predecessor, Dryden. Scott was Educated in a romantic school before becoming a supreme master in that school.

We frequently think of Shakespeare as if he stood altogether apart in the literature of his day, but in fact, he took the drama up at the point that it had reached when he began to write for the stage and followed the lines which his forerunners had laid down. The history of literature, then, must consider all these things. It must bring out the relationships between writer and writer and group and group; it must trace the rise, growth, and decline of "schools" and "movements"; and whenever any given writer had been especially prominent in their evolution, it must consider the influence he exerted in making literature either by keeping it in the old channels or in directing it into new.

We have, however, to go much farther even than this. I have said that literature grows and changes from generation to generation. This means that, as each age has its particular lines of interest and its particular way of thinking and feeling about things, so certain prevailing tastes govern the literature which it produces; that these tastes last for a time only; and that the tastes of one age are sure to differ, and are often found to differ enormously, from those of every other. Near as we are to the great Victorian era which was simply the era of our fathers there is much in its literature which now seems as foreign to us as it fashions in dress.

We all know that authors did not write and that there was no public to enjoy the same kind of poetry in Pope's Day as in Spenser's or Scott's day as in Pope's. In Spenser's day there was boundless enthusiasm for *The Faery Queen*; in Pope's, for the *Essay on Man*; in Scott's, for *The Lady of the Lake*. Now the great central purpose of a history of literature the purpose to which everything else in it is secondary and subordinate is to give a clear account of the whole transformation of literature from period to period, and so far, as possible to mark out the causes which have combined to produce it. Among these causes, as I have already suggested, we have to reckon the influence of individual men; for a great writer will often create a new taste, and make a fresh departure in the literature of his time. Yet, while full weight must be given to personal initiative and example, we must be careful not to emphasize their importance to the exclusion of all other considerations.

Even the greatest genius is necessarily moulded by the culture, ideals, and mental and moral tendencies of the world into which he is born, and the character of what he produces is therefore to a large extent determined by these. If a man of powerful personality stamps his impress upon his age, as I have said, he also takes the impress of his age, and the success of his work, entirely original as it may seem to be, is often due to the way in which it meets or anticipates the general taste of the public to which he appeals. In this sense we have to regard every writer as a "product " of his time, and so regarding him, we have to inquire into the nature of the influences which shaped his thought, directed his taste, and helped to give a distinctive character to his work. Such inquiry, it is evident, will often lead us rather far afield. Sometimes the influences in question are purely literary; they belong to the sphere of books and scholarship. Thus, for example; one of the principal forces behind the English literature of the Elizabethan era was the immense enthusiasm for the Greek and Latin classics which had come with what we call the Renaissance.

Our writers and readers alike were under the powerful spell of Italian literature during the same period, under that of French literature at the end of the seventeenth century. Under that of German literature a hundred years later. While to give one more illustration, the re-awakening, from about 1750 onward, of popular interest in the long-neglected art and literature of the Middle Ages inspired that "mediaeval revival" which culminated in Coleridge and Scott. In such cases, we see how literary influences introduce new currents of taste, which carry even the most independent writers along with them. But often, the influences which most profoundly affect literature are not literary; they are influences which belong not to books and scholarship but to general life, politics, society. Whatever brings new interests and ideas into the life of an age, whatever tends to modify its ways of thought and feeling and to change its attitude towards men and things, must of necessity, enter as a vital factor into the making of its literature. We must never think of a book as though it were written outside the conditions of time and space. We must think of it as the work of a man who, living in a certain age, was affected, according to the nature of his personality, by the atmosphere and the movements of that age.

The Reformation, Puritanism, the French Revolution, and the enormous progress of science during the nineteenth century are enough to mention to show the intimate connection between the history of literature and general history. I hope we are now in a position to realize what a history of English literature should undertake to do. Its principal object is to trace the progress of English literature through all its transformations from age

to age and, in following the varying course of its development, to explain the successive changes which have taken place in its matter, form, and spirit. It has, therefore, to consider the influences by which these changes have been wrought. Thus it becomes a record of individual men and their special contributions to literature and of the forces, personal and impersonal, which shaped their work.

1.7. English Literature and English History

This suggests one point, which is so important that I trust that the reader of these pages will think about it carefully for himself. Every man belongs to his race and age, and no matter how marked his personality, the spirit of his race and age finds expression through him. The history of English literature has a national as well as a personal character and interest. It is not only an account of the work done by several separate English writers; it is also an account of a great body of literature, which in its totality is to be regarded as the production of the genius of the English people. Everything that for good or evil has entered into the making of our nation's life has also entered into the texture of its literature.

In studying English literature according to the chronological method of history, let us always try to think of it as the progressive revelation of the mind and spirit of the English people. Ordinary English history is our nation's biography; its literature is its autobiography; in the one we read the story of its actions and practical achievements; in the other the story of its intellectual and moral development. As we follow the history of our literature through all its transformations, therefore, we are brought into direct and living contact with the motive forces of the inner life of each successive generation, and learn at first-hand how it looked at life and what it thought about it, what were the things in which it was most interested and by which it was most willing to be amused, by what passions it was most deeply stirred, by what standards of conduct and of taste it was governed, and what types of character it deemed most worthy of its admiration.

1.8. The Periods of English Literature

We ought now to have no difficulty understanding why English literature's history is always divided into periods. This division is made, it is true, primarily as a matter of convenience, since it is necessary to break a large subject up into parts for study purposes, but there is also a real justification for it. A period in the sense which we properly attach to the term, is a certain length of time during which a particular kind of taste prevails, and the literature of which is therefore marked by various common characteristics of subject matter, thought, tone, and style. While

the individual writers of such a period will differ immensely in all the specific qualities of personality, these common characteristics will nonetheless be pronounced features in the work of all of them. Then with a decisive change of taste, the period in question may be said to come to a close while another period opens. We must be on our guard against treating these periods as if they were rigorously fixed and self-contained, with actual boundary-walls between each one and the next.

History recognizes only a continuous flow, and knows nothing of absolute endings and beginnings. Hence, age overlaps age, and in strict chronology, a man's work may begin in one and end in another. We can see at once that all proposed divisions have something arbitrary about them when we remember that Dryden was a man of forty-three when Milton died, and outlived him only twenty-six years, and that we yet always consider them not as contemporaries, but as representatives of different epochs.

Still, on the whole, the periods of literature are fairly well denned, and in practice they are of the utmost value because they help us to concentrate attention upon the things which are most important in each successive stage of that great gradual transformation which, as we have learned, it is the main business of a history of literature to record. In tabulating these periods various methods may be adopted. It is very usual to label them with epithets derived from history, and to speak, for example, of the Elizabethan Age, the Age of the Restoration, the Victorian Age, and so on. But perhaps it is better to take our descriptive terms from literature itself, and to designate each period by the name of its most characteristic and representative writer.

Leaving out of consideration for the moment literature before Chaucer and for a hundred and fifty years or so after his death, we shall thus have the Age of Chaucer, the Age of Shakespeare, the Age of Milton, the Age of Dryden, the Age of Pope, the Age of Johnson, the Age of Wordsworth, and the Age of Tennyson, as the large divisions of our study.

The appended table will show the rough limits of these periods, and their relations with the periods of general history. It must be borne in mind that as this is a little book on a big subject, the various questions with which, as I have shown, the history of English literature must be very briefly treated. The literature of special subjects of science, theology, philosophy, and so forth save in exceptional cases in which there is some particular reason for mentioning it will therefore be omitted from our survey.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

English literature emerged with the beginning of the history of the English people. It refers to all the literary works (novels, short stories, poems, fiction, nonfiction, and plays) composed in English. The earliest works of English literature mirror the life lived by the people of that region at that specific period. For instance, all the changes undergone by English society from the earliest to modern times have left their imprints on English literature.

Check Your Progress

1. What does the word renaissance mean?
 - a. To regard
 - b. To honour
 - c. Revival or birth
 - d. An achievement in writing
2. Which age in Britain lasted from AD 410 to 1066?
 - a. Anglo- Saxon age
 - b. Anglo–Norman age
 - c. Anglo–German age
 - d. Anglo- Celtic age
3. Which was the first greatest English poem?
 - a. The Canterbury Tales
 - b. Lives of Saints
 - c. Beowulf
 - d. Piers the Plowman

Glossary

Dialect: A particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group

Epoch: A particular period in history or a person's life

Answers to Check Your Progress

1. c

2. a

3. c

Suggested Reading

1. Craig, Hardin. A History of English Literature. Collier Books. 1962.
2. Cambridge University Press et al. The New Cambridge History of English Literature. Cambridge University Press. 1999.
3. Mullan, John. Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature. Princeton University Press 2007.

Unit-2

Old English and Anglo-Saxon Poetry

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Place of an Old English Literature

2.3. English Literature before the Conquest

2.4. From the Conquest to Chaucer

2.5. The Making of the English Language

2.6. The Dialectics of Old English

2.7. Periods in the Development of English

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answer to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit briefs the old English literature, the conquest of Chaucer and the periods in the development of English.

Objectives

- To offer students critical and historical insight into salient literary trends and movements.
- To explain the development of Anglo-Saxon to the Eighteen Century.

2.1. Introduction

Anglo-Saxon Poetry (or Old English Poetry) encompasses verse written during the 600-year Anglo-Saxon period of British history, from the mid-fifth century to the Norman Conquest of 1066. Almost all of the literature of this period was orally transmitted, and almost all poems were intended for oral performance.

2.2. Place of an Old English Literature

- External history
- The coming of the Germanic tribes to England (c 450)

- The Christianization of England (c 600)
- The Scandinavian invasions (c 800)
- Literature
- Epic literature: Beowulf (c 800, manuscript from c 1000)
- Minor poetry (600 onwards)
- The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (8th century onwards)
- Structure of language
- Sound system
- Grammatical system
- Vocabulary (Latin borrowings; Scandinavian borrowings)

Old English

English has been spoken in England since around 450. To be more precise, a set of varieties of West Germanic have been spoken. After the Anglo-Saxon invasion, no one knew England, not English. The establishment of the West Saxon kingdom in later centuries and with the court formed the pivot point of this kingdom, the first inkling of the idea of English developed. With the invasion of England by the Danes (after 800), it became more apparent that the Germanic tribes in England were separate from their fellows on the Continent and Scandinavia.

Among the different groupings in England in the Old English period, different dialects (that is purely geographical variants) are recognizable: Northumbrian in the north, Anglian in the middle and West-Saxon in the south. Due to the political significance of West Saxon in the late Old English period (after the 9th century) the written form of this dialect developed into something like a standard. Note that at this time it was Winchester and not London, which was the country's political centre. The term used for the West Saxon 'standard' is koiné which derives from Greek and means a common dialect that is a variety which was used in monasteries in parts of England outside of West Saxony for writing.

Among historians of our language, it was formerly the practice to draw a sharp dividing line between what they called "Anglo-Saxon" and that new speech, which they distinguished as "English," which after the Conquest gradually arose from the union of this Anglo-Saxon with the Norman French brought over by the Conqueror. This dividing line is not recognized by modern writers, who insist that in its foundations English is essentially a Teutonic language that the English of the fourteenth century grew out of the Anglo-Saxon of the fifth by a regular course of

evolution, and that nothing occurred at any stage to break its continuity. For this reason, the term Anglo-Saxon is now commonly dropped and "Old English" is used instead.

A corresponding change has naturally occurred in interpreting the history of literature. Here, again, the idea of unbroken continuity is emphasized. As what was once called Anglo-Saxon is regarded as a nearly form of English speech, what was once called Anglo-Saxon literature is regarded as an early form of English literature.

According to this conception, English literature did not begin, as used to be said, with Chaucer. It began far back with the beginnings of the history of the English people on the continent of Europe before bands of them had settled on the little island, which was presently to become the home of their race. I am not now going to question the modern scientific view. Yet, we may still recognize the practical convenience, if not the scientific accuracy, of the older view, which it has displaced. We can trace the gradual growth of Chaucer's language to a slow, unbroken development out of that which Caedmon had used some seven centuries earlier. However, one fundamental difference exists between Chaucer's English and Caedmon's.

We have to learn Caedmon's Old English as we learn a foreign language, while though Chaucer's Middle English is full of words and idioms which puzzle us, we rightly feel that it is only an archaic form of the same tongue that we use today. So, with literary style: that of Caedmon is based on principles radically different from ours; that of Chaucer, on principles which are substantially those of our poetry. Continuous, then, though the history of English literature is from the fifth century to the twentieth, we may still hold that literature before Chaucer constitutes a special field of study, and that it is only with Chaucer that modern English literature definitely begins.

Adopting this view here, we will merely sketch with the utmost brevity the growth of our literature prior to the middle of the fourteenth century, and take this period as the real starting- point of our narrative.

2.3. English Literature before the Conquest

A considerable body of Anglo-Saxon poetry has been preserved, including one piece of immense interest, the epic Beowulf. Nothing is known about the authorship of this, and its history is still controversial.

However, it probably grew up in the form of ballads among the ancestors of the English in Denmark and South Sweden, that in this form invader to this country brought it, and that it was here fashioned into an epic, perhaps by some Northumbrian poet, about the eighth century.

Manifestly, heathen in origin, it is as it stands the work of a Christian writer. It tells with rude vigor of the mighty feats of the hero whose name it bears; how, first, he fought and killed the monster Grendel, who for twelve years had wasted the land of the King of the Danes; how, next, he slew Grendel's mother; and how at last, a very old man, he went out to destroy a fiery dragon, receiving as well as giving a mortal wound. Vivid pictures of life in war and peace among our remote ancestors add greatly to the value of a fine old poem.

Apart from Beowulf, the most important surviving examples of our oldest English poetry are to be found in the works of Caedmon and Cynewulf, both of whom belong to the north and to the period immediately following the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, which began at the end of the sixth century. CAEDMON, who died about 680, was a servant attached to the monastery of Whit in Yorkshire.

According to the adorable tale told by the Venerable Bede, the power of verse came to him suddenly as a divine gift. He had never been able to sing to the harp as others did in festive gatherings in the monastery hall, and when his turn came around, he had always been used to retiring in humiliation. However, one night, having gone to the stables to look after the horses he had charged, he fell asleep, and an angel appeared to him in a vision and told him to sing. Then, when he asked, "what shall I sing?" the heavenly visitor replied, "Sing the beginning of created things"; and waking, he found himself, to his astonishment, endowed with the faculty of poetry.

A miraculous element also enters into the story of CYNEWULF'S career. Born, it is conjectured, between 720 and 730, he was in earlier life, as he tells us in his Dream of the Rood, a wandering gleeman and a lover of pleasure, but converted by a vision of the cross, he dedicated himself henceforth to religious themes. His works include a poem called Christ, treating of the Incarnation, the Descent into Hell, the Ascension, and the Last Judgment; Elene, an account of the finding of the true cross, according to the legend, by Helena, the mother of Constantine; and Juliana, a tale of Christian martyrdom.

While generally sacred in the subject and profoundly earnest in feeling, Anglo-Saxon poetry is full of a love of adventure and fighting. Sometimes, its martial spirit bursts into regular war poetry, as in The Battle of Brunanburh (937), Tennyson made a spirited translation. A fondness for the sea, ingrained in our English character, is also another striking feature of it. In form, it rests upon principles of composition radically different, as I have said, from those, which govern modern English versification. In place of our rime (or "end rime" as it is more

strictly called, it employs "beginning rime," or alliteration, that is, the regular and emphatic repetition of the same letter; while the lines are quite irregular in regard to the number of unaccented syllables introduced. To state the broad rule: each line of an Anglo-Saxon poem consisted of two divisions; the first of these contained two accented syllables, the second at least one; and the accented syllables in each case began with the same letter.

This gives us the normal type of Anglo-Saxon verse, as in this line from *Beowulf*: Grendel gongan, Godesyrrebaer (Grendel going God's anger bore). Another illustration will be given later from a fourteenth century poem, in which the old alliterative system was preserved. Anglo-Saxon poetry flourished most in the north; prose developed later in the south. In general, while interesting from the linguistic and antiquarian points of view, the prose writings, which have come down to us, possess but little value as literature.

Though hardly more than a translator, King ALFRED (849-901) holds an honorable place as the first to put the vernacular to systematic use. Among the works rendered by him into "the language which we all understand"(to adopt his own significant phrase) was the Latin Ecclesiastical History of the Venerable BEDE, or Baeda (673-735), who wrote at Jarrow in the kingdom of North Umbria. But the greatest monument of Old English prose is the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which, though it already existed before Alfred, was under his guidance transformed into a national history, and which was so continued till 1154, when it closed with the record of the death of King Stephen.

2.4. From the Conquest to Chaucer

From the Norman Conquest to the beginning of the thirteenth century English had a severe struggle to maintain itself as a written language, and consequently, English literature, which for nearly two hundred years before William's landing had shown little sign of life, now for another period of a hundred and fifty years almost ceased to exist. Its revival began in the reign of John, by which time the long-standing hostility between the native population and the invaders had been largely outgrown and, as the famous incident of Magna Charta shows, the two elements had been welded into a single people.

The loss of the French possessions of the English crown tended still further to confirm the growing unity of the nation. In these circumstances, English began to assert itself beside the rival tongue, which was already losing ground, and with this English literature assumes a certain historical interest. It now becomes clear how much

has been gained in the meantime by the accumulation of fresh materials from various sources. We see this in the case of the first noteworthy production of the revival, *Brut*, completed about 1205 by Layamon, a parish priest of Worcestershire.

This enormous poem of some 30,000 lines contains the legendary history of ancient Britain, beginning with Eneas, whose descendant Brutus was the supposed ancestor of the British people, ending with Cadwallader, the last of the native kings, and including by the way, among innumerable episodes, the stories of Lear and King Arthur; but the point of special importance in connection with it is, that it is a paraphrase with additions of a versified chronicle, *Brut d'Engleterre*, of the Anglo-Norman poet Wace, which in its turn had been based upon the so-called *History of Britain* (1132) by the romancing Welsh annalist, Geoffrey of Monmouth.

In Layamon's poem, then, three streams of influence Celtic, French, and English run together;. At the same time, though in versification it follows the Anglo-Saxon principle of alliteration, French taste is reflected in the occasional appearance of rime. A little later came *Ormulum* (about 1215), a series of metrical homilies, in short lines without either rime or alliteration, by a Lincolnshire priest named ORM; and a prose treatise, the *Ancren Riwe* (about 1225), or *Rule of Anchoresses*, prepared by some unknown writer for the guidance of three ladies entering the religious life.

A charming dialogue poem, *The Owl and the Nightingale* (about 1220), in which the two birds discuss their respective merits, is historically interesting because it discards alliteration and adopts French end-rimes. This is the only other piece of native thirteenth-century literature which calls for mention. The principal productions of the early fourteenth century ROBERT MANNYNG'S *Handlyng Synne* (*Manual of Sins*, 133) ,the prose *Agenbite* (*Remorse of Conscience*, 1340) both translated from the French, and the *Cursor Mundi* (about 1320), a versified account of scripture history together with many legends of the saints belong to religious rather than to general literature.

2.5. The Making of the English Language

The period between the Conquest and Chaucer is, however, much more important from the point of view of our language than from that of our literature. During these three hundred years, while little was being produced in prose or verse of any intrinsic value, modern English was gradually evolving out of the conflict of opposing tongues, and assuming national rank as the speech of the whole people. To trace the stages of

this evolution does not, of course, fall within the scope of a primer of literary history. It is enough for us to note that the final product of it was a mixed or compound language, the grammatical structure and vocabulary of which alike were the result of Norman French influences acting upon the old Anglo-Saxon material. It was this new tongue, which ultimately displaced that of the Conquerors.

Norman French long continued, indeed, to be the only recognized official language and, to some extent, the language of fashion. But by the beginning of the fourteenth century, it had entirely lost its hold upon English life at large, and the complete triumph of English was signaled by a statute of 1362, which proclaimed that henceforth all proceeding in the law courts should be in that language instead of French.

For more than a hundred years before these numerous English translations of French romances had shown the growth of a literary public among those who, as the phrase then ran, "had no French." We must, however, remember that while French was thus disappearing, there was as yet no standard form of the new tongue to take its place. English was broken up into dialects. There was a Northern English, a Midland English, and a Southern English, which differed fundamentally from one another, and which were yet subdivided within themselves into numerous minor varieties. In this confusion, little by little, East Midland English tended to gain ascendancy, because it was the speech of the capital and of the two centers of learning, Oxford and Cambridge. Then when Chaucer began to write, he chose this as his vehicle, and it was largely on account of his influence that what had hitherto been only one of several provincial dialects attained the dignity of the national language. We thus come round to Chaucer, the first of our really national English poets.

2.6. The Dialectics of Old English

It is common to divide England into four dialect areas for the Old English period. First of all, note that by England that part of mainland Britain is meant which does not include Scotland, Wales and Cornwall. These three areas were Celtic from the time of the arrival of the Celts some number of centuries BC and remained so well into the Middle English period. The dialect areas of England can be traced back quite clearly to the Germanic tribes which came and settled in Britain from the middle of the 5th century onwards. There were basically three tribal groups among the earlier settlers in England: The Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes.

The Angles came from the area of Angeln (roughly the Schleswig-olstein of today), the Saxons from the area of east and central Lower

Saxony and the Jutes from the Jutland peninsula which forms west Denmark today. Of these three groups the most important are the Saxons as they established themselves as the politically dominant force in the Old English period. A number of factors contributed to this not least the strong position of the West Saxon kings, chief among these being Alfred (late 9th century).

The West Saxon dialect was also strongest in the scriptoria's (i.e., those places where manuscripts were copied and/or written originally) so that for written communication West Saxon was the natural choice. The dialects of Old English (continued) A variety of documents have nonetheless been handed down in the language of the remaining areas. Notably from Northumbria a number of documents are extant which offer us a fairly clear picture of this dialect area.

At this point one should also note that the central and northern part of England is linguistically fairly homogeneous in the Old English period and is termed Anglia. To differentiate sections within this area one speaks of Mercia which is the central region and Northumbria which is the northern part (i.e., north of the river Humber).

A few documents are available to us in the dialect of Kent (notably a set of sermons). This offers us a brief glimpse at the characteristics of this dialect which in the Middle English period was considerable significance. Notable in Kentish is the fact that Old English /y:/ was pronounced /e:/ thus giving us words like evil in Modern English where one would expect something like evil.

2.7. Periods in the Development of English

It is common to divide the history of English into three periods: old, middle and an early modern one. The justification for this is partly external and partly internal. The Old English period begins in the middle of the 5th century with the coming of Germanic tribes to settle in England.

The Middle English period begins with the conquest of England by Normans after their success in the Battle of Hastings in 1066, the end of this period is marked by the introduction of printing by William Caxton in 1476.

The early modern period begins with the 16th century and is characterized by an expansion in vocabulary by borrowing from classical languages, by the gradual conclusion of the Great Vowel Shift (see below) and by the regularization of English grammar after the demise of the language's former inflectional morphology.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

Anglo-Saxon Poetry (or Old English Poetry) encompasses verse written during the 600- year Anglo-Saxon period of British history, from the mid-fifth century to the Norman Conquest of 1066. Almost all of the literature of this period was orally transmitted, and almost all poems were intended for oral performance.

Glossary

Manifest: Clear or obvious to the eye or mind

Manuscript: Book or document written by hand rather than typed or printed

Check Your Progress

1. The wisdom poetry found in the Exeter Book was
 - a. The Seafarer, and the Wanderer
 - b. Beowulf
 - c. Death Song
 - d. King Alfred The Great
2. The first manuscript -Junius manuscript was otherwise known as
 - a. Illiad of Homer
 - b. The Phoenix
 - c. Bede
 - d. Caedmon manuscript
3. Elene, a poem of 1,321 lines, is an account of the finding of
 - a. True Cross
 - b. Apostles
 - c. Mercia
 - d. Christ

Answer to Check Your Progress

1.a

2.d

3.a

Suggested Reading

1. Craig, Hardin. A History of English Literature. Collier Books. 1962.
2. Cambridge University Press et al. The New Cambridge History of English Literature. Cambridge University Press. 1999.
3. Mullan, John. Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature. Princeton University Press 2007.

Unit-3

Middle English: Chaucer and the Canterbury Tales

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

3.1. Introduction

3.2. The Norman Invasion

3.3. The Middle English

3.4. The Dialects of Middle English

3.5. Age of Chaucer

3.6. Chaucer's work in General

3.7. The Canterbury Tales

Let us sum up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to check your progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit elaborates on the Norman invasion, the dialects of middle English and details the biography of Chaucer and his works.

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- describe Chaucer's age-both medieval and modern,
- define the age of chivalry, explain the church and
- describe literary and intellectual tendencies.

3.1. Introduction

For a profound and comprehensive study of an author's literary work is required, among other things, a thorough understanding of the age which produced and nurtured him. Without an acquaintance with the historical context our evaluation and apprehension of literature is bound to be lop-sided, if not altogether warped and garbled. Every man is a child of his age. He is influenced by it though, if he is a great man, he may influence it also. A great writer like Shakespeare or Chaucer is

generally said to be “not of an age, but of all ages.” But, in spite of his universal appeal, the fact remains that even he could not have escaped “the spirit of the age” in which he lived and moved and had his being. So, to understand him and his works in their fullness it, is imperative to familiarize ourselves with the influential currents of thought and feeling and sensibility (not to speak of the socio political economic conditions) obtained in the times in which he flourished.

Probably the Reverse of it is also true: we may acquire some understanding of these tendencies and currents, the ethos of the age, through the writer himself.

Emphasizing this point, W. H. Hudson says: “Every man belongs to his race and age; no matter how marked his personality, the spirit of his race and age finds expression through him” The same critic cogently expresses the relationship between history and literature. “Ordinary English history’ he says, “is our nation’s biography, its literature is its autobiography; in the ‘one we read the story of its actions and practical achievements; in the other the story of its intellectual and moral development.” Though Chaucer transcends the limits of his generation and creates something which is of interest to the future generation too, yet he represents much of what his age stands for. And therein lies his greatness.

3.2. The Norman Invasion

In 1066 the Normans conquered England and it affected strongly the language. Without William the Conquerors invasion, English would have retained most of its inflections and preserving a predominantly Germanic vocabulary, the characteristic methods of word formation and incorporating words from other languages much less freely. It would have lacked the greatest part of French words that today make English seem on the side of vocabulary more a Romance than a Germanic language.

The Norman Conquest changed the whole course of English. William’s coronation involved more than a mere substitution of a monarch for another. His possession of the throne had been a matter of conquest and was attended by all the consequences of the conquest of one people by another. New nobility was introduced. Many of the English higher class had been killed at Hastings, and others were considered as traitors. In 1072 only one of the 12 earls in England was an Englishman. For several generations after the conquest the important

positions and the great estates were almost held by Normans or men of foreign blood. Norman prelates occupied important positions in the church.

3.3. The Middle English

After the invasion of England by the Normans in 1066, the West Saxon 'standard', which was waning anyway due to natural language change, was dealt a deathblow. Norman French became the language of the English court and clergy. English sank to the level of a patois (an unwritten dialect). With the loss of England for the French in 1204

English gradually emerged as a literary language again. For the development of the later standard, it is important to note (1) that it was London, which was now the center of the country, and (2) that printing was introduced into England in the late 15th century (1476 by Caxton). This latter fact contributed more than any single factor to the standardization of English. It is obvious that for the production of printing fonts a standard form of the language must be agreed upon. This applied above all to spelling, an area of English, which was quite chaotic in the pre-printing days of the Middle English period.

3.4. The Dialects of Middle English

The dialectal position of Middle English is basically a continuation of that of Old English. The most important extra linguistic fact for the development of the Middle English dialects is that the capital of the country was moved from Winchester (in the Old English period) to London by William the Conqueror in his attempt to diminish the political influence of the native English.

Northern

This dialect is the continuation of the Northumbrian variant of Old English. Note that by Middle English times English had spread to (Lowland) Scotland and indeed led to a certain literary tradition developing there at the end of the Middle English period which has been continued up to the present time (with certain breaks, admittedly). Characteristics. Velar stops are retained (i.e., not palatalized) as can be seen in word pairs like rigg/ridge; kirk/church.

Kentish

This is the most direct continuation of an Old English dialect and has more or less the same geographical distribution Characteristics. The two most notable features of Kentish are (1) the existence of /e:/ for Middle English /i:/ and so-called "initial softening" which caused fricatives in

word-initial position to be pronounced voiced as in *vat*, *vane* and *vixen* (female fox).

Southern

West Saxon is the forerunner of this dialect of Middle English. Note that the area covered in the Middle English period is greater than in the Old English period as inroads were made into Celtic-speaking Cornwall. This area becomes linguistically uninteresting in the Middle English period. It shares some features of both Kentish and West Midland dialects.

West Midland

This is the most conservative of the dialect areas in the Middle English period and is fairly well-documented in literary works. It is the western half of the Old English dialect area Mercian Characteristics. The retention of the Old English rounded vowels /y:/ and /ø:/ which in the East had been unrounded to /i:/ and /e:/ respectively.

East Midland

This is the dialect out of which the later standard developed. To be precise the standard arose out of the London dialect of the late Middle English period. Note that the London dialect naturally developed into what is called Cockney today while the standard became less and less characteristic of a certain area and finally (after the 19th century) became the *socialist* which is termed Received Pronunciation Characteristics. In general, those of the late embryonic Middle English standard.

3.5. Age of Chaucer

Geoffrey Chaucer was born in the reign of Edward III., lived through that of Richard II., and died the year after Henry IV. Ascended the throne. His life thus covers a period of glaring social contrasts and rapid political change. Edward's reign marks the highest development of mediaeval civilization in England.

It was also the midsummer of English chivalry. The spirit of his court was that of the romantic idealism which fills Chaucer's own *Knights Tale*, and the story of his successive wars with France, and of the famous victories of Crecy and Poitiers, as written in the *Chronicles of Froissart*, reads more like a brilliant novel than a piece of sober history. Strong in its newly established unity, England went forth on its career of foreign conquest in a mood of buoyant courage, and every fresh triumph served to give further stimulus to national ambition and pride. But there was another side to this picture.

The king and his nobility led a very gay and debonair life. Trade expanded, and among the commercial classes' wealth increased. But the masses of the people were meanwhile sunk in a condition of deplorable misery. Pestilence after pestilence ravaged the land, and then in 1348-9 came the awful epidemic called the Black Death, which in a single year swept away more than a third of the entire population and reappeared in 1362, 1367 and 1370. Famine followed plague; vagrants and thieves multiplied; tyrannous laws passed to regulate labour only made bad matters worse.

The French wars, which had given temporary glory to the arms of Edward, were fraught with disastrous consequences for his successor. Their enormous cost had to be met by heavy burdens of taxation, which were the immediate cause of a general rising of the common folk under Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, and the unfrocked priest, John Ball. Though soon quelled, this was a sign of widespread social unrest. Political troubles also grew apace under Richard's unwise and despotic rule, and the constitutional conflicts between the king and his subjects resulted in endless discord and confusion. The temper of the England of Chaucer's closing years was therefore very different from that of the England into which he had been born. Much of the glamour had gone from life, and men were more conscious of its stern realities.

Among the causes which greatly contributed to the increasing evils of Chaucer's age we must also reckon the corruption of the Church. Of spiritual zeal and energy very little was now left in the country. The greater prelates heaped up wealth, and lived in a godless and worldly way; the rank and file of the clergy were ignorant and careless; the mendicant friars were notorious for their greed and profligacy.

Chaucer himself, as we shall presently have to note, took little serious interest in social reform; yet the portraits which he draws for us of the fat, pleasure-loving monk, the merry and want-on friar, and that clever rogue, the pardoner, who wanders about hawking indulgences and relics, show that he was alive to the shocking state of things which existed in the religious world of his time.

It is at this point that we recognize the importance of the work of John Wyclif (about 1320- 84), "the morning star of the Reformation." That earnest and intrepid man gave the best of his life to the great task of reviving spiritual Christianity in England, and in the carrying out of his mission, he wrote religious pamphlets, sent his "poor priests" or itinerant preachers far and wide with the message of the Gospel, and with the help of his disciples produced a complete English version of the

Bible the first translation of the scriptures into any modern vernacular tongue.

3.6. Chaucer's Work In General

It is usual and convenient to divide Chaucer's literary career into three periods, which are called his French, his Italian, and his English period, respectively. His genius was nourished, to begin with, on the French poetry and romance which formed the favourite reading of the court and cultivated society during the time of his youth. Naturally he followed the fashion, and his early work was done on French models.

Thus, besides translating portions at least of the then popular Roman de la Rose, he wrote, among other quite imitative things, an allegory on the death of Blanche, John of Gaunt's wife, which he called *The Boke of the Duchesse* (1369), and which is wholly in the manner of the reigning French school. Then, almost certainly as a direct result of his visits to Italy, French influences disappear, and Italian influences take their place. In this second period (1370-84), Chaucer is the disciple of the great Italian masters, for *The House of Fame* clearly owes much to Dante, while *Troilus and Cryseyde*, by far his longest single poem, is based upon, and in part translated from, Boccaccio's *Filostrato*. To the close of this period the unfinished *Legende of Good Women* may also be referred.

Finally, he ceases to be Italian as he had ceased to be French, and becomes English. This does not mean that he no longer draws freely upon French and Italian material. He continues to do this to the end. It simply means that, instead of being merely imitative, he becomes independent, relying upon himself entirely even for the use to which he puts his borrowed themes. To this last period belong, together with sundry minor poems, the *Canterbury Tales*, in which we have Chaucer's most famous and most characteristic work.

3.7. The Canterbury Tales

These are a collection of stories fitted into a general framework which serves to hold them together. Some of them were certainly written earlier, and before the framework had been thought of; but we put the *Tales* as a whole into Chaucer's third period, because it was then that most of them were composed, and that the complete design shaped itself in the poet's mind. That design explains the title. A number of pilgrims on the eve of their departure meet at the Tabard Inn in Southwark, where, as it chanced, Chaucer himself is also staying; and, as he too is bent on the same errand, he is easily persuaded to join the party. Pilgrimages were very popular in the fourteenth century; they were

often undertaken, as here, in companies, partly for the sake of society by the way, and partly because of the dangers of the roads; and, it must be admitted, their prevailing spirit was anything but severely devotional.

Sometimes the pilgrims went, as Chaucer's Wife of Bath had already done, as far afield as Rome and Jerusalem; but one of the favourite expeditions nearer home was to the shrine of the murdered St. Thomas a Becket at Canterbury; and thither these particular pilgrims are bound. The jolly host of the Tabard, Harry Bailly, gives them hearty welcome and a supper of his best good victual and strong drink to match and, after they are satisfied, he makes this proposal, that to beguile the tedium of the journey each member of the party shall tell two tales on the way to Canterbury, and two on the way back, that he himself shall be the judge ; and that the one who tells the best tale shall be treated by all the rest to a supper on their return to the Tabard Inn.

The suggestion is applauded, and these Canterbury Tales are the result. All this is explained in the Prologue, after which Chaucer proceeds to introduce his fellow- pilgrims. Though limited to what we may broadly call the middle classes, the company is still very comprehensive.

The military profession is represented by a knight, a squire, and a yeoman; the ecclesiastical, by a prioress, a nun (her secretary), a monk, a friar, a summoned (summoned of those charged under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts), a pardoner (or seller of pardons), a poor parson, and a Clerk of Oxford, who is a student of divinity.

Then we have a lawyer and a physician, and, running down the social scale, a number of miscellaneous characters whom one cannot well classify a franklin (freeholder of land), a merchant, a shipman (sailor), a miller, a cook, a manciple (caterer for colleges), a reeve (land steward), a haberdasher, a carpenter, a weaver, a dyer, a tapycer (tapestry maker) , a ploughman (the poor parson's brother), and a well-to-do west-country cloth-maker named Alison, who, however, is better known as the Wife of Bath.

In his descriptions of the most prominent of these people Chaucer's powers are shown at their very highest, and this Prologue is a masterpiece of insight, sureness of touch, fine discrimination, and subtle humour. All the characters are individualized, yet their thoroughly typical quality gives unique value to Chaucer's picture of men and manners in the England of his time. As according to programme each of the pilgrims was to have told four stories, the poet's plan was a very large one. He lived to complete a small portion only, for the work, as we have it, is merely a fragment of twenty-four tales. Yet even as it stands its interest

is wonderfully varied, for Chaucer is guided by a sense of dramatic propriety, and so the tales differ in character as widely as do those by whom they are told.

Thus, to take extreme examples, we have the chivalrous epic of the Knight and the Clerk's beautiful account of the patient Griselda's wifely devotion balanced in strange contrast by the coarse farcical stories of the Miller and the Reeve. It should be noted that in no case are the tales original in theme.

Chaucer takes his raw material from many different sources, and the range of his reading and his quick eye for anything and everything which would serve his purpose wherever he found it, are shown by the fact that he lays all sorts of literature, learned and popular, Latin, French, and Italian, under contribution. But whatever he borrows he makes entirely his own, and he remains one of the most delightful of our story-tellers in verse.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

The Canterbury Tales is a collection of twenty-four stories that runs to over 17,000 lines written in Middle English by Geoffrey Chaucer between 1387 and 1400. The tales (mostly written in verse, although some are in prose) are presented as part of a story-telling contest by a group of pilgrims as they travel together from London to Canterbury to visit the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. The prize for this contest is a free meal at the Tabard Inn at Southwark on their return.

Check Your Progress

1. The Canterbury Tales is a collection of
 - a. 27 stories
 - b. 24 stories
 - c. 28 stories
 - d. 20 stories
2. Why do the characters tell stories in The Canterbury Tales?
 - a. to enrich spirituality
 - b. to pass the time on their pilgrimage
 - c. to induce sleep
 - d. to be happy

3. The pilgrims in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* are traveling to
 - a. The shrine of Saint Thomas Becket
 - b. The Shirne of Chaucer
 - c. The shrine of Saints
 - d. The shrine of Franklin

Glossary

Pilgrim: A person who journeys to a sacred place for religious reasons.

Chivalry: The medieval knightly system with its religious, moral, and social code.

Answers to Check Your Progress

- 1.b
- 2.b
- 3.a

Suggested Reading

1. Craig, Hardin. *A History of English Literature*. Collier Books. 1962.
2. Cambridge University Press et al. *The New Cambridge History of English Literature*. Cambridge University Press. 1999.
3. Mullan, John. *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature*. Princeton University Press 2007.

Drama: Mystery and Miracle Plays; Morality Plays

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

4.1. Introduction

4.2. Medieval Drama

4.3. Mystery Plays

4.4. Morality Plays

4.5. The Interlude

Let us sum up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answer to check your progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

The entire unit describes the three kinds of plays whose origination led to the further development of modern plays.

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- define medieval drama
 - describe mystery plays and morality plays
 - explain the early renaissance beginning of the Era and the age of Queen Elizabeth I.
-

4.1. Introduction

Drama traces its origins to religious observances both in Greek and European traditions. Indeed, most Greek plays celebrated some aspect of Greek religion and they were intended not as an amusement for the people but as an act of homage and reverence to whatever god was being worshipped. Thus, Sophocles' Oedipus trilogy is primarily concerned with the gods and their relationship with men, not with a single human character who becomes the focus of all the plays.

Sophocles did not write for poetic or self-expression motives so much as an act of religious devotion.

4.2. Medieval Drama

The late Roman Empire, drama became debased and so obscene that it was an abomination. This occurred because drama was forced to compete with the gladiatorial events of the Amphitheatre and the excesses of the circuses. Once the influence of Christianity was felt in Rome, the theatre was essentially censored and closed.

The appearance of the scop in O. E. literature may have obscure connections with the mimes, clowns, buffoons, and actors of Roman theatre although while the respectable citizens of Rome scandalized the latter, the former was held in high esteem by the nobility of A-S society. The wandering minstrel of the middle Ages is probably a direct descendant of the A-S scop. However, unlike the scop, the minstrels were not thought to be respectable, at least after the reign of Charlemagne.

The medieval Roman Catholic Church in particular was anti-minstrel. Among the populace, on the other hand, they were very popular. Their good music, fine singing voices, wit, good humor, and quick minds served them well at fairs, market days, feast days, and in the service of the rich for an evening's entertainment. Although most minstrels were wanderers, eventually stable groups formed around rich and powerful patrons who supported them financially. Soon even municipalities sponsored their own Digvijay Pandya, Lovely Professional University group of minstrels and dressed them in the town livery and crests. As these groups stabilized in towns, they formed around guild or crafts societies and were regulated by law.

Church policy often continued to hold these groups at arm's length, yet many clergy embraced them and thought how to use the many gifts of the minstrels in service to the church. The most obvious benefit to the church in the use of the minstrels was a teaching medium. The Bible, inaccessible to common folk who could not read, is filled with dramatic episodes.

The clergy thus found it easy to adapt drama into the life of the church as a way of teaching basic Biblical truth and church doctrine. Early plays in the church may have been no more than dumb shows with actors moving mutely in harmony with the sermon. For instance, on Easter a play focusing on the adoration of the cross may have been acted out before the altar; at Christmas, a play celebrating the Nativity; on other feast or holy days, some other event may have been celebrated. In class

I will show an early example of this. Eventually this kind of crude form was replaced by grander versions and laymen rather than priests became the actors. However, what is clear is that the cradle of English drama rests on the church altar.

4.3. Mystery Plays

Medieval religious drama existed primarily, then, to give religious instruction, establish faith, and encourage piety. There were two dramatic forms used by the church: mystery (miracle) plays and morality plays. Mystery plays derive their name from the French *mystere* or *ministere* because the ministerium, the clergy were the first actors. Mystery plays are primarily concerned with Scripture narrative with prominence given to the story of man's fall and redemption; miracle plays deal with the lives of the saints and martyrs. Actually, however, the terms are used interchangeably.

Plays in the church were very popular on holy days (holidays) and fairs. Inevitably they became filled with humor and even buffoonery as a way of capturing the audience's attention. The church reacted by throwing out all those kinds of actors and troops and instead produced full and complete performances themselves. The effect was electric the church building proper was too small to contain the crowds so plays moved from the altar to the porch to the church yard and eventually to public streets and open spaces.

Every foot the plays moved from the church weakened the ability of the clergy to control the performances; as a result, more and more comedy and buffoonery were introduced and the church eventually withdrew its support and backing for the plays. Comedy gradually became more and more a part of these plays as the various guilds sought larger audiences. Nevertheless, it must be underscored that within the mystery plays comedy was almost always incidental; it never overshadowed the dramatic story itself. The comic elements of these plays are worth noting, especially since many of them passed down into Elizabethan and

Shakespearean drama

- The simplest and most primitive form of comedy is that of action sudden, incongruous, and laughter moving (e.g., Chevy Chase's falls, the old pie -in- the- face play, etc.). The action is for the most part naively realistic, emphasizing a kind of rough and tumble, almost slapstick mode.
- Action combined with the spoken word, in particular, dirty language. Indeed, many of the plays are filled with profanity, much of it having to do with oaths and inappropriate swearing.

Language, like the action described above, tends to be simple and realistic. There is no attempt to play with the subtleties of the spoken word.

- Social and political satire on commonplace topics: the miseries of married life with special reference to shrewish wives; oppression of the poor by the gentry; ill-treatment of servants by stingy masters.
- A higher form of comedy appears when the playwright's art enables him to present amusing and laughable characters. Here we have the beginning of the clownish comic character, perhaps best typified by Mak from *The Second Shepherd's play*. Once rejected by the church, the plays came under the care of the guild societies and were produced as a cycle on feast or holy days. For instance, the cycle of plays would begin early in the morning with a play about the fall of Lucifer or the creation of the world put on by a specific guild society and move through the day with plays concerning the chief events of the Biblical narrative (Abraham and Isaac, Noah's flood, the nativity, the harrowing of hell, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and so on) toward a final, climaxing play concerning the day of last judgment or doomsday.
- Such a cycle would illustrate salvation history, the idea that history is a linear process with various specific stages, all indicating that God has a plan for humankind and that he makes various covenants with humankind along the way. In addition, the plays demonstrate a theological adherence to the ideas of Natural law, written law, and grace and mercy or the new law of the New Testament and especially the Pauline epistles.

4.4. Morality Plays

A morality play is a type of theatre, which was common in medieval Europe. It uses allegorical characters to teach the audience moral lessons, typically of a Christian nature. The morality play can be considered an intermediate step between the biblical mystery plays of the medieval period and the secular theater of the later Renaissance, such as the plays of William Shakespeare. The morality play has remained a cultural influence to some degree, though it has greatly waned in popularity. The basic premise of the morality play, however, in which an "everyman" character that is easy to relate to makes a journey and is influenced by characters along the way, eventually gaining some kind of personal integrity, is still common in many works of theater and film.

One of the most salient characteristics of the morality play is the way that characters are named. Instead of normal names, they are called by the quality they represent. In *Everyman*, the most famous morality play, some of the characters include Fellowship, Knowledge, Goods, and Kindred. Eventually, all of these characters abandon the play's hero, *Everyman*, during his journey with Death, and only Good-Deeds stays with him. The moral of this play is therefore that only good deeds can help one get into Heaven, and that no other earthly things are truly lasting. The morality plays allowed writers more creativity than was possible with the former mystery play, which was very closely based on biblical and traditional stories.

This trend continued into later centuries with morality plays that sought to teach secular lessons, such as which form of government is best. Throughout the Renaissance, plays continued to be less didactic and allegorical and more representative of real life. John Bunyan's 1678 novel, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, while not an example of drama, relies heavily on the tropes of the morality play.

4.5. The Interlude

The interlude, which grew out of the morality, was intended, as its name implies, to be used more as filler than as the main part of an entertainment. At its best it was short, witty, simple in plot, suited for the diversion of guests at a banquet, or for the relaxation of the audience between the divisions of a serious play. Unlike the pageants, it was essentially an indoors performance, and generally of an aristocratic nature. In its development it tended always towards greater refinement and concentration. At first the flavor of the morality clung to it, as is seen by such titles as *The Four Elements*, or *The World and the Child*.

In the early part of the sixteenth century political subjects began to be used, and public officials were satirized under allegorical names. It will be remembered that this was the century of Luther and much dissension in the Church; and religion was often criticized under cover of the interlude. Cardinal Wolsey imprisoned an author, John Roo, and an actor, for alleged satire against himself in a play called *Lord Governance and the Lady Public Weal*, presented at Gray's Inn at Christmas time, 1525 or 1527. The author pleaded that the play had been "compiled for the most part" twenty years before, at a time when the Cardinal had not yet come to any position of authority; consequently, the culprits were released.

In a Latin play given before the king and the French ambassador in 1527 unflattering portraits of "Lewter" and his wife were presented, other

characters in the piece being Religion, Veritas, Heresy, and False Interpretation. In the Protestant camp John Bale, author of God's Merciful Promises and other interludes, was one of the strongest of the anti-popish writers. The best of the interludes, however, were not those used for the purpose of propaganda. As the species developed, abstract characters gave place to recognizable human beings, didacticism disappeared, and a spirit of genuine comedy emerged. Life was no longer like the morality, a battlefield between Virtue and Vice, with the betting chances strongly in favor of Vice, but an opportunity for amusing and diversified experiences. The engaging quality which characterizes Chaucer and Piers Plowman was little by little transferred to the stage, partly at least through the interlude.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

The wandering minstrel of the Middle Ages is probably a direct descendant of the A-S scop.

There were two dramatic forms used by the church: mystery (miracle) plays and morality plays.

The interlude, which grew out of the morality, was intended, as its name implies, to be used more as filler than as the main part of an entertainment.

England was also well-off compared to the other nations of Europe. The Italian Renaissance had come to an end under the weight of foreign domination of the peninsula.

Check Your Progress

1. A miracle play presents a real or fictitious account of the life
 - a. Brave death
 - b. Surprises and life
 - c. Martyrdom of a saint
 - d. Tragedy
2. The mystery plays, usually represents developed from plays presented in Latin by churchmen on church premises.
 - a. Biblical subjects
 - b. Pilgrimage
 - c. Celebration of mystery elements
 - d. Supernatural elements

3. Tragedy in Ancient Greece emerged out of
 - a. Fear
 - b. Religious observance
 - c. Greek chorus
 - d. Entertainment

Glossary

Morality Play: It is a type of theater, which was common in medieval Europe.

Elizabethan Era: It was a time associated with Queen Elizabeth I's reign (1558–1603) and is often depicted as the golden age in English history.

Answer to Check Your Progress

- 1.c
- 2.a
- 3.b

Suggested Reading

1. Beer, Anna R. *Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature*. Oneworld Publications. 2022.
2. Peck, John and Martin, Coyle. *A Brief History of English Literature*. Second ed. Palgrave Macmillan. 2013.
3. Gramley, Stephan. *The History of English: An Introduction*. Routledge. 2012.

Block-2: Introduction

Block-2: Renaissance Literature has been divided in to four Units.

Unit- 5: The Development of Drama explains about Introduction, The Beginning of English Drama, The Early Renaissance, The Age of Queen Elizabeth I and Classical Mythology .

Unit-6: Dramatists of the 16th Century deals with Introduction, Emphasis on Self-Culture, Some Other Renaissance Features, Major Dramatists of the Century, Renaissance and University Wits.

Unit-7: Elizabethan Poetry describes about Introduction, The Elizabethan Poetry before Spencer, The Faerie Queen, Other Poets from 1579 to 1625 and Elizabethan Age.

Unit-8: Elizabethan Prose discuss with Introduction, Elizabethan Prose, Shakespeare's Predecessors, Shakespeare's Life and Elizabethan Prose Writers.

In all the units of Block -2 **Renaissance Literature**, the Check your progress, Glossary, Answers to Check your progress and Suggested Reading has been provided and the Learners are expected to attempt all the Check your progress as part of study.

The Development of Drama

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

5.1. Introduction

5.2. The Beginning of English Drama

5.3. The Early Renaissance

5.4. The Age of Queen Elizabeth I

5.5. Classical Mythology

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit defines prose fiction, describes Plato and Aristotle, explains the Renaissance and Elizabethan eras, and elaborate on the classical mythology after finishing this unit.

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able

- to describe Plato and Aristotle
- to define classical mythology, explain the renaissance and Elizabethan age and define prose fiction.

5.1. Introduction

The Renaissance (etymologically, re-birth) which started in Italy (and somewhat later, in France) as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries came to have its full impact on England only sometime in the middle of the sixteenth. Basically, the arrival of the Renaissance signaled a revival of interest in ancient Greek and Roman literature and learning, but as the Renaissance arrived in England via Italy (and to some extent, France), it came after acquiring a particular complexion associated with the Italy of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Not only were the ancient Greek and Roman men of letters and philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Homer, and Virgil hailed as guides and

models by the English but also the Italian poets and philosophers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, like Ariosto, Petrarch, Tasso, and Machiavelli who themselves had written under the impact of the ancient masters. By the time the dawn of the Renaissance arrived in England, it had already become a decadent, if not an altogether defunct, force in Italy.

Nevertheless, the Renaissance meant in England not only the revival of interest in the Greek and Roman antiquity but also a great deal of respect for the values of Renaissance. Italy which was characterized, along with an avid love of learning, by such features as a reckless spirit of adventure, a taste for pomp and splendour, a keen appreciation of beauty (generally of the physical kind), a kind of "Machiavellian" egocentricism, and a general love of luxury. Spenser's work very well captures the spirit of the Italian Renaissance which stirred the life of his age in all its aspects except the sordid Machiavellianism which held such sinister interest for some of, his contemporaries, like the University Wits and Baron as well as a vast brood of gilded courtiers. The Renaissance elements in Spenser are tempered by the Reformation ideals.

5.2. The Beginning of English Drama

The history of the English drama takes us back to the century succeeding the coming of the Normans, the earliest mention of any dramatic representation in this country referring to a performance of a Latin play in honour of St. Katherine, at Dunstable about 1100. By the time of the Norman Conquest a form of religious drama, which in the first instance had evolved out of the rich symbolic liturgy of the Church, had already established itself in France, and as a matter of course it soon found its way into England.

Its purpose was directly didactic; that is, it was the work of ecclesiastical authors, who used it as a means for instructing the unlettered masses in the truths of their religion. To begin with, the Church had this drama under complete control; performances were given in the sacred buildings themselves; the priests were the actors; and the language employed was the Latin of the service. But as the mystery or miracle play, as it was called, increased in popularity, and on great occasions larger and larger crowds thronged about the church, it became necessary to remove the stage from the interior of the building to the porch.

Later, it was taken from the porch into the churchyard, and finally from the precincts of the church altogether to the village green or the city street. Laymen at the same time began to take part in the performances, and presently they superseded the clerical actors entirely, while the

vernacular tongue first French, then English was substituted for the original Latin. But the religious drama in England did not reach its height till the fourteenth century, from which time onward at the festival of Corpus Christi, in early summer, miracle plays were represented in nearly all our large towns in great connected sequences or cycles. Arranged to exhibit the whole history of the fall of man and his redemption, these Corpus Christi plays, or "collective mysteries," as they are sometimes called, were apportioned among the Trading Guilds of the different towns, each one of which took charge of its own particular play, and their performance occupied several days.

Four of these cycles have come down to us complete: the Chester cycle of 25 plays; the Coventry, of 42; the Wakefield, of 31; and the York, of 48. Each of these begins with the creation of the world and the fall of man, and, after dealing with such prophetic themes as the Flood, the Sacrifice of Isaac, and the Exodus from Egypt, goes on to elaborate the last scenes in the life of Christ, the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension, and closes with the Last Judgment.

In literary quality they are of course crude, but here and there they touch the note of pathos, as in the story of Abraham and Isaac, and the note of tragedy, as in the scene of the Crucifixion. While the occasional introduction of a comic element, as notably in the Shepherd plays of the Wakefield series, which are, in fact, rough country farces, only slightly connected with their context, shows even more clearly the growth of the dramatic sense. These religious performances lasted well on into the sixteenth century, and there is good reason to think that Shakespeare must have witnessed once at least those which, during his boyhood, were still being given annually at Coventry. Hamlet's advice to the players not to "out-Herod Herod" recalls the ranting braggart Herod of the old miracle plays.

5.3. The Early Renaissance

The Renaissance was a cultural movement that spanned roughly the 14th to the 17th century, beginning in Italy in the Late Middle Ages and later spreading to the rest of Europe. The term is also used more loosely to refer to the historical era, but since the changes of the Renaissance were not uniform across Europe, this is a general use of the term. As a cultural movement, it encompassed a flowering of literature, science, art, religion, and politics, and a resurgence of learning based on classical sources, the development of linear perspective in painting, and gradual but widespread educational reform.

Traditionally, this intellectual transformation has resulted in the Renaissance being viewed as a bridge between the Middle Ages and the Modern era. Although the Renaissance saw revolutions in many intellectual pursuits, as well as social and political upheaval, it is perhaps best known for its artistic developments and the contributions of such polymaths as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, who inspired the term “Renaissance man”. There is a consensus the Renaissance began in Florence, Tuscany in the 14th century.

Various theories have been proposed to account for its origins and characteristics, focusing on a variety of factors including the social and civic peculiarities of Florence at the time; its political structure; the patronage of its dominant family, the Medici.

The Renaissance has a long and complex historiography, and there has been much debate among historians as to the usefulness of Renaissance as a term and as a historical delineation. Some have called into question whether the Renaissance was a cultural “advance” from the middle Ages, instead seeing it as a period of pessimism and nostalgia for the classical age, while others have instead focused on the continuity between the two eras. Indeed, some have called for an end to the use of the term, which they see as a product of presents the use of history to validate and glorify modern ideals.

5.4. The Age of Queen Elizabeth I

The earlier half of Elizabeth’s reign, also, though not lacking in literary effort, produced no work of permanent importance. After the religious convulsions of half a century time was required for the development of the internal quiet and confidence from which a great literature could spring. At length, however, the hour grew ripe and there came the greatest outburst of creative energy in the whole history of English literature. Under Elizabeth’s wise guidance the prosperity and enthusiasm of the nation had risen to the highest pitch, and London in particular was overflowing with vigorous life.

A special stimulus of the most intense kind came from the struggle with Spain. After a generation of half-piratical depredations by the English seadogs against the Spanish treasure fleets and the Spanish settlements in America, King Philip, exasperated beyond all patience and urged on by a bigot’s zeal for the Catholic Church, began deliberately to prepare the Great Armada, which was to crush at one blow the insolence, the independence, and the religion of England.

There followed several long years of breathless suspense; then in 1588 the Armada sailed and was utterly overwhelmed in one of the most

complete disasters of the world's history. There upon the released energy of England broke out exultantly into still more impetuous achievement in almost every line of activity. The great literary period is taken by common consent to begin with the publication of Spenser's 'Shepherd's Calendar' in 1579, and to end in some sense at the death of Elizabeth in 1603, though in the drama, at least, it really continues many years longer. Several general characteristics of Elizabethan literature and writers should be indicated at the outset.

1. The period has the great variety of almost unlimited creative force; it includes works of many kinds in both verse and prose, and ranges in spirit from the loftiest Platonic idealism or the most delightful romance to the level of very repulsive realism.
2. It was mainly dominated, however, by the spirit of romance.
3. It was full also of the spirit of dramatic action, as befitted an age whose restless enterprise was eagerly extending itself to every quarter of the globe.
4. In style it often exhibits romantic luxuriance, which sometimes takes the form of elaborate affectations of which the favorite 'conceit' is only the most apparent.
5. It was in part a period of experimentation, when the proper material and limits of literary forms were being determined, oftentimes by means of false starts and grandiose failures. In particular, many efforts were made to give prolonged poetical treatment to many subjects essentially prosaic, for example to systems of theological or scientific thought, or to the geography of all England.
6. It continued to be largely influenced by the literature of Italy, and to a less degree by those of France and Spain.
7. The literary spirit was all-pervasive, and the authors were men (not yet women) of almost every class, from distinguished courtiers, like Raleigh and Sidney, to the company of hack writers, who starred in garrets and hung about the outskirts of the bustling taverns.

5.5. Classical Mythology

Another Renaissance feature of Spenser's work is his employment of classical mythology for ornament and illustration. Being a devout Christian, he did not believe at all in the multiplicity of pagan-deities, but, like Shakespeare, Marlowe, Lyly, and almost all the rest of his

contemporaries, he was attracted by classical mythology which he freely drew upon in his works.

Like Milton he uses his profound and vast knowledge of this mythology even when his sincere aim is to drive home a Christian moral. At any rate, the frequent references to classical mythology give the language a veneer of richness and exoticism which was so much sought after by the English writers of the Renaissance.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

Spenser, an M. A. of Cambridge University, was well read in much of the ancient classical literature which had then begun to be commonly known. The earlier half of Elizabeth's reign, also, though not lacking in literary effort, produced no work of permanent importance. In 1578 Lyly, at the age of twenty-five, came from Oxford to London, full of the enthusiasm of Renaissance learning, and evidently determined to fix himself as a new and dazzling star in the literary sky. In literature the imitations of 'Euphues' which flourished for a while gave way to a series of romances inaugurated by the 'Arcadia' of Sir Philip Sidney.

Glossary

Renaissance: It was a cultural movement that spanned roughly the 14th to the 17th century, beginning in Italy in the Late Middle Ages and later spreading to the rest of Europe.

Prose Fiction: The period saw the beginning, among other things; of English prose fiction of something like the later modern type. First appeared a series of collections of short tales chiefly translated from Italian authors, to which tales the Italian name 'novella' (novel) was applied.

Check Your Progress

1. How many dramatic unities were recommended by the Greek?
 - a. One central unity
 - b. Two dramatic unities
 - c. Three dramatic unities
 - d. No numbers fixed
2. The First tragedy Gorboduc was later given a title
 - a. Gamer Gurton's Needle
 - b. Endymion

- c. Corpus Christi
 - d. Forrex and porrex
3. Which is the first regular comedy?
- a. Jocasta
 - b. Needle
 - c. The English Traveler
 - d. Roister Doister

Answers to Check Your Progress

- 1.c,
2.c
3.d

Suggested Reading

1. Gramley, Stephan. The History of English: An Introduction. Routledge. 2012.
2. Beer, Anna R. Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature. Oneworld Publications. 2022.
3. Gramley, Stephan. The History of English: An Introduction. Routledge. 2012.

Unit-6

Dramatists of the 16th Century

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

6.1. Introduction

6.2. Emphasis on Self-Culture

6.3. Some Other Renaissance Features

6.4. Major Dramatists of the Century

6.5. Renaissance

6.6. University Wits

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit briefs the biography of Thomas Nash, Thomas Lodge, George Peele and John Lyly. Also, it outlines their major works for better understanding.

Objectives

After studying this unit, students will be able,

- To understand the biography of Christopher Marlowe and Robert Greene
- To understand the biography of Thomas Nash, Thomas Lodge, George Peele and John Lyly and their primary works.

6.1. Introduction

The University Wits were a group of late 16th century English playwrights who were educated at the universities (Oxford or Cambridge) and who became playwrights and popular secular writers. Prominent members of this group were Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, and Thomas Nashe from Cambridge, and John Lyly, Thomas Lodge, George Peele from Oxford.

This diverse and talented loose association of London writers and dramatists set the stage for the theatrical Renaissance of Elizabethan

England. They were looked upon as the literary elite of the day and often ridiculed other playwrights such as Thomas Kyd and Shakespeare who did not have a university education. Greene calls Shakespeare an “upstart crow” in his pamphlet *Greene’s Groats - Worth of Wit*.

6.2. Emphasis On Self-Culture

A new creed of humanism arrived with the Renaissance in England. It taught that the universe was not, as the Middle Ages had believed, theocentric (that is, centered in God), but homocentric (that is, centered in man). Much emphasis came to be laid upon man, human life, the material world, and man’s activity in this world. Such things had hitherto been despised, for man was taught to concern himself with his welfare in the next world.

The new humanistic thinking, which put human interest’s paramount, gave special importance to self-culture which did not mean simply the cultivation of the well-known Christian virtues but implied a harmonious development of the human personality on all planes- thought, feelings, and action. More concretely, it meant the cultivation of “the twelve private moral virtues, as Aristotle hath devised.” In *The Faerie Queene* Spenser celebrates not only Holiness but also other virtues, like justice and Temperance, which are more of secular and humanistic than of Christian nature.

6.3. Some Other Renaissance Features

The age of the Renaissance in England was, as has been often said, “a young age.” It was marked by unprecedented ebullience and adolescent impatience of all fetters intellectual, religious, and even moral. It also developed a craving for sensuous thrills. Renaissance Italy had burst forth into hectic activity in the field of arts like painting, music, and sculpture which in the Middle Ages were looked down upon as too mundane. England in the late sixteenth century produced a number of great musicians such as Byrd, but she remained devoid of the plastic arts. However, in the poetry of the age” we often find the sensuous touches of a painter. Spenser’s poetry is well known for its sensuous and more specifically, pictorial quality.

He was in the words of Legouis, “a painter whomever held a brush.” But what is more, Spenser with all his Platonism and Puritanism notwithstanding seems too frequently to indulge in the pleasures of the senses for their own sake. His paradise seems to be as earthly as that of Omar Khayyam himself. He spends all his art while describing the beauty of the nude female figure, which he does quite voluptuously and with untiring zeal, dwelling on each and every part with great patience

and a greater joy. He is, no doubt, uncontaminated by the virus of the Italian pornographic eroticism which is evident in works like Marston's *Pigmalion* and even in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, but his taste for the delights of the senses is quite apparent.

6.4. Major Dramatists of the Century

JOHN WEBSTER (1580-1625) was a dramatist of sombre cast of genius and great power, though his morbid love of the violent and the horrible led him too often to sheer sensationalism. His *White Devil* and *Duchess of Malfi* contain scenes of tragic passion unrivalled outside Shakespeare. In JOHN FORD (1586 -1639) a similar tendency towards repulsive subjects and unnatural emotions is apparent, but his pathos gives a distinction to his best work, like *The Broken Heart*.

The names of FRANCIS BEAUMONT (1584- 1616) and JOHN FLETCHER (1579-1625) are always associated, and they did much work in collaboration, though Fletcher continued to write with great fluency for the nine years between his partner's death and his own. Their moral tone is often relaxing, their sentiment strained, and their characterization poor; but they have many redeeming features and such plays as *Philaster* and *The Maid's Tragedy* successfully challenge comparison with anything in the romantic drama outside Shakespeare.

PHILIP MASSINGER (1583-1640), a ready writer in various styles, reached a high level in his comedy *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*. JAMES SHIRLEY (1596-1666) belongs to the reign of Charles I., but we may mention him here as, in Charles Lamb's phrase, "the last of a great race." In all these writers, and still more, in smaller men whom we need not pause to name, the decline of the drama is apparent. By the time we reach the end of the period we find that all the old creative power has gone, and that the stage has yielded completely to the fast-spreading immorality of the age; while even the formlessness of the blank verse employed gives one more sign of the general decay.

6.5. Renaissance

The age of the Renaissance in England was, as has been often said, "a young age." It was marked by unprecedented ebullience and adolescent impatience of all fetters intellectual, religious, and even moral. It also developed a craving for sensuous thrills. Renaissance Italy had burst forth into hectic activity in the field of arts like painting, music, and sculpture which in the Middle Ages were looked down upon as too mundane. England in the late sixteenth century produced a number of great musicians such as Byrd, but she remained devoid of the plastic

arts. However, in the poetry of the age” we often find the sensuous touches of a painter. Spenser’s poetry is well known for its sensuous and more specifically, pictorial quality.

He was in the words of Legouis, “a painter who never held a brush.” But what is more, Spenser-with all his Platonism and Puritanism notwithstanding- seems too frequently to indulge in the pleasures of the senses for their own sake. His paradise seems to be as earthly as that of Omar Khayyam himself. He spends all his art while describing the beauty of the nude female figure, which he does quite voluptuously and with untiring zeal, dwelling on each and every part with great patience and a greater joy. He is, no doubt, uncontaminated by the virus of the Italian pornographic eroticism which is evident in works like Marston’s Pigmalion and even in Marlowe’s Hero and Leander and Shakespeare’s Venus and Adonis, but his taste for the delights of the senses is quite apparent.

6.6. University Wits

The chief University Wits include:

- Christopher Marlowe
- Robert Greene
- Thomas Nashe
- Thomas Lodge
- George Peele
- John Lyly

1) Christopher Marlowe

Christopher Marlowe (baptized 26 February 1564; died 30 May 1593) was an English dramatist, poet and translator of the Elizabethan era. As the foremost Elizabethan tragedian, next to William Shakespeare, he is known for his blank verse, his overreaching protagonists, and his mysterious death.

A warrant was issued for Marlowe’s arrest on 18 May 1593. No reason for it was given, though it was thought to be connected to allegations of blasphemy-a manuscript believed to have been written by Marlowe was said to contain “vile heretical concepts”. On 20 May he was brought to the court to attend upon the Privy Council for questioning. There is no record of their having met that day, however, and he was commanded to attend upon them each day thereafter until “licensed to the contrary.” Ten days later, he was stabbed to death by Ingram Frizer. Whether the stabbing was connected to his arrest has never been resolved.

2) Robert Greene

Robert Greene (11 July 1558 – 3 September 1592) was an English author best known for a posthumous pamphlet attributed to him, Greene's *Groats-Worth of Wit*, widely believed to contain a polemic attack on William Shakespeare. He was born in Norwich and attended Cambridge University, receiving a B.A. in 1580, and an M.A. In 1583 before moving to London, where he arguably became the first professional author in England. Greene published in many genres including autobiography, plays, and romances, while capitalizing on a scandalous reputation.

3) Thomas Nashe

Thomas Nashe was an English Elizabethan pamphleteer, playwright, poet and satirist. He was the son of the minister William Nashe and his wife Margaret. Little is known with certainty of Nashe's life. He was baptized in Lowestoft, Suffolk, where his father was curate. The family moved to West Harling, near Thetford in 1573 after Nashe's father was awarded the living there at the church of All Saints. Around 1581 Thomas went up to St John's College, Cambridge as a sizar, gaining his bachelor's degree in 1586. From references in his own polemics and those of others, he does not seem to have proceeded Master of Arts there. Most of his biographers agree that he left his college about summer 1588, as his name appears on a list of students due to attend philosophy lectures in that year. His reasons for leaving are unclear; his father may have died the previous year, but Richard Lichfield maliciously reported that Nashe had fled possible expulsion for his role in *Terminus et non terminus*, one of the raucous student theatricals popular at the time.

4) Thomas Lodge

Thomas Lodge was an English dramatist and writer of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. In 1578 he entered Lincoln's Inn, where, as in the other Inns of Court, a love of letters and a crop of debts were common. Lodge, disregarding the wishes of his family, took up literature. When the penitent Stephen Gosson had (in 1579) published his *School of Abuse*, Lodge responded with *Defence of Poetry, Music and Stage Plays* (1579 or 1580), which shows a certain restraint, though both forceful and learned. The pamphlet was banned, but appears to have been circulated privately. It was answered by Gosson in his *Playes Confuted in Five Actions*; and Lodge retorted with his *Alarum against Usurers* (1585)-a tract for the times which may have resulted from personal experience. In the same year he produced the first tale written

by him on his own account in prose and verse, *The Delectable History of Forbonius and Prisceria*, both published and reprinted with the *Alarum*. From 1587 onwards he seems to have made a series of attempts at play writing, though most of those attributed to him are mainly conjectural. He probably never became an actor, and John Payne Collier's conclusion to that effect rested on the two assumptions that the "Lodge" of Philip Henslowe's manuscript was a player and that his name was Thomas, neither of which is supported by the text.

5) George Peele

George Peele (born in London and baptized 25 July 1556 – buried 9 November 1596), was an English dramatist. His pastoral comedy *The Arraignment of Paris* was presented by the Children of the Chapel Royal before Queen Elizabeth perhaps as early as 1581, and was printed anonymously in 1584. In the play, Paris is arraigned before Jupiter for having assigned the apple to Venus. Diana, with whom the final decision rests, gives the apple to none of the competitors but to a nymph called Eliza, a reference to Queen Elizabeth I. His play *Edward I* was printed in 1593.

This chronicle history is an advance on the old chronicle plays, and marks a step towards the Shakespearean historical drama. Peele is said by some scholars to have written or contributed to the bloody tragedy *Titus Andronicus*, which was published as the work of Shakespeare. This theory is in part due to Peele's predilection for gore, as evidenced in *The Battle of Alcazar* (acted 1588-1589, printed 1594), published anonymously, which is attributed with much probability to him.

The Old Wives' Tale (printed 1595) was followed by *The Love of King David and fair Bethsabe* (written ca. 1588, printed 1599), which is notable as an example of Elizabethan drama drawn entirely from Scriptural sources. F. G. Fleay sees in it a political satire, and identifies Elizabeth and Leicester as David and Bathsheba, Mary, Queen of Scots as Absalom.

Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes (printed 1599) has been attributed to Peele, but on insufficient grounds. Other plays attributed to Peele include *Jack Straw* (ca. 1587), *The Wisdom of Dr. Doddy poll* (printed 1600), *The Maid's Metamorphosis* (printed 1600), and *Wily Beguiled* (printed 1606) - though the scholarly consensus has judged these attributions to be insufficiently supported by evidence. Indeed, individual scholars have repeatedly resorted to Peele in their attempts to grapple with Elizabethan plays of uncertain authorship. Plays that have been assigned to (or blamed on) Peele include *Lochrine*, *The Troublesome*

Reign of King John, and Parts 1 and 2 of Shakespeare's Henry VI trilogy, in addition to Titus Andronicus. Edward III was attributed to Peele by Tucker Brooke in 1908. While the attribution of the entire play to Peele is no longer accepted, Sir Brian Vickers demonstrated using metrical and other analysis that Peele wrote the first act and the first two scenes in Act II of Titus Andronicus, with Shakespeare responsible for the rest.

6) John Lyly

John Lyly was an English writer, best known for his books *Euphues*, *The Anatomy of Wit* and *Euphues and His England*. Lyly's linguistic style, originating in his first books, is known as Euphuism. In 1632 Blount published *Six Court Comedies*, the first printed collection of Lyly's plays. They appear in the text in the following order; the parenthetical date indicates the year they appeared separately in quarto form:

- *Endymion* (1591)
- *Campaspe* (1584)
- *Sapho and Phao* (1584)
- *Gallathea* (1592)
- *Midas* (1592)
- *Mother Bombie* (1594).

Lyly's other plays include *Love's Metamorphosis* (though printed in 1601, possibly Lyly's earliest play - the surviving version is likely a revision of the original), and *The Woman in the Moon*, first printed in 1597. Of these, all but the last are in prose. The first editions of all these plays were issued between 1584 and 1601, and the majority of the between 1584 and 1592, in what were Lyly's most successful and popular years. His importance as a dramatist has been very differently estimated.

Lyly's dialogue is still a long way removed from the dialogue of Shakespeare. But at the same time, it is a great advance in rapidity and resource upon anything which had gone before it; it represents an important step in English dramatic art. His nimbleness, and the wit which struggles with his pedantry, found their full development in the dialogue of *Twelfth Night* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, just as "Marlowe's mighty line" led up to and was eclipsed by the majesty and music of Shakespearean passion.

One or two of the songs introduced into his plays are justly famous and show a real lyrical gift. Nor in estimating his dramatic position and his

effect upon his time must it be forgotten that his classical and mythological plots, flavourless and dull as they would be to a modern audience, were charged with interest to those courtly hearers who saw in Midas Philip II, Elizabeth in Cynthia and perhaps Leicester's unwelcome marriage with Lady Sheffield in the love affair between Endymion and Tellus which brings the former under Cynthia's displeasure. As a matter of fact, his reputation and popularity as a playwright were considerable. Harvey dreaded lest Lyly should make a play upon their quarrel; Francis Meres, as is well known, places him among "the best for comedy;" and Ben Jonson names him among those foremost rivals who were "outshone" and sung by Shakespeare.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

Christopher Marlowe (baptized 26 February 1564; died 30 May 1593) was an English dramatist, poet and translator of the Elizabethan era. Lodge's known dramatic work is small in quantity. In conjunction with Robert Greene he, probably in 1590, produced in a popular vein the odd but far from feeble play, *A Looking Glass for London and England* (published 1594). *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes* (printed 1599) has been attributed to Peele, but on insufficient grounds. Lyly must also be considered and remembered as a primary influence on the plays of William Shakespeare, and in particular the romantic comedies.

Check Your Progress

1. *Gorboduc* was a play written by the Elizabethan dramatist
 - a. Thomas Sackville
 - b. Shakespeare
 - c. Marlowe
 - d. Dryden
2. The second period of Elizabethan age was dominated by
 - a. Ben Jonson
 - b. Chaucer
 - c. University Wits
 - d. Edmund Spencer
3. Who was the central Sun among the University Wits?
 - a. John Lyly
 - b. Christopher Marlowe

c. Robert Greene

d. George Peele

Glossary

University wits: a group of late 16th-century English playwrights and pamphleteers who were educated at the universities (Oxford or Cambridge)

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.a

2.c

3. b

Suggested Readings

1. Gramley, Stephan. *The History of English: An Introduction*. Routledge. 2012.
2. Laird, Mark. *A Natural History of English Gardening 1650- 1800*. Yale University Press. 2015.
3. Chandler, James. *The Cambridge History of English Romantic Literature*. 1st pbk. ed. Cambridge University Press. 2012.

Unit-7

Elizabethan Poetry

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

7.1. Introduction

7.2. The Elizabethan Poetry before Spenser

7.3. The Faerie Queen

7.4. Other Poets from 1579 to 1625

7.5. Elizabethan Age

Let Us Sum Up

Check your progress

Glossary

Answer to check your progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

Understanding Elizabethan poetry and the poets who made significant contributions to the period's development is made easier by this unit. This lesson focuses on the peculiar development of Elizabethan poetry.

Objectives

This unit helps you:

- to understand the Elizabethan poetry and the poets who contributed much to the growth of the era.
- to focus on the distinctive growth of Elizabethan poetry.

7.1. Introduction

With the dawn of the new era i.e., the late of 1570s of the Elizabethan Age, "a gleam of hope" was seen through some poetry- based works. The poets are Sir Thomas Wyatt and Earl of Surrey who revives interest in poetry by writing sonnets and lyrics. It is they who for the first time introduced "Sonnet" in England. It is they who paved the way for the full flowering of poetry in the hands of Sydney, Spenser and Shakespeare.

7.2. The Elizabethan Poetry before Spenser

We may take the publication of Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar in 1579 as marking the opening of the "golden age" of Elizabethan literature. In

the first half of the queen's reign, while there was a good deal of poetic activity, little verse of any distinct value was produced. By far the best poetry of the period is to be found in the contributions of Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst to an extensive undertaking entitled *A Myrroure for Magistrates*.

This originated in a publisher's scheme for a continuation of Lydgate's *Falles of Princes*, and was designed to include a long series of "tragical histories" of famous Englishmen. A number of writers took part in it, but Sackville's two poems (which first appeared in the edition of 1563) the *Induction* (or general introduction to the whole) and the *Complaint of Buckingham* are immeasurably superior to the rest of the work. The noble, but somber *Induction* in particular is worthy of attention as the finest single poem written in England between Chaucer and Spenser. The *Steele Glas* (1576) of George Gascoigne possesses some interest as the first regular verse satire in the English language.

7.3. The Faerie Queen

Like the *Canterbury Tales*, *The Faery Queen* is a fragment, for of the twelve books which Spenser projected, six only were published during his lifetime, and portions of the seventh after his death. Even as it stands, however, it is one of the longest as well as one of the greatest of English poems.

According to his own statement, his plan was that, while each of the twelve books should be independent and self-contained, they should none the less be connected as parts of a general comprehensive whole. His underlying scheme is explained at length in his prefatory letter to his friend, Sir Walter Raleigh. *The Fairy Queen* keeping her annual feast for twelve successive days, on each of these days a certain knight at her command undertook a particular adventure, each such adventure furnishing the subject of one book.

Meanwhile, Prince Arthur, whom he chose as his central figure, because he was the hero of the greatest British legend-cycle of chivalry, having dreamed of the Fairy Queen, went forth in quest of her, falling in with the various knights who were engaged on their adventures, by the way. This appearance of Arthur at a critical juncture in each of the stories was specially devised as a link between one part and another of the gigantic design. Externally considered, *The Faery Queen*, like its principal models the Italian romantic epics, is compounded of the traditional materials of chivalry; giants, dragons, dwarfs, wizards, knights of super human prowess and courage, and distressed damsels of marvelous beauty, provide its chief characters; enchantments, tournaments, love

passages and endless fighting's, are the staple of its plot. But Spenser's genius was fed by the Reformation as well as by the love of mediaeval romance and the culture of the Renaissance, and unlike his brilliant Italian master, Ariosto, who wrote only to amuse, his own great work is inspired by a high moral and religious aim. In other words, *The Faery Queen* is not simply a romance; it is a didactic romance, the poet throughout using his stories as vehicles of the lesson she wished to convey.

He carries out his purpose by turning romance into allegory. His twelve knights-errant are types of the twelve cardinal virtues of Aristotle's philosophy, and the adventures of each knight are arranged to body forth symbolically the experiences, conflicts, and temptations of each such virtue in the turmoil of the world, and its ultimate triumph, with the aid of Arthur, the incarnation of Divine Power, over all its foes.

Thus, the first book contains "the Legend of the Knight of the Red Cross, or of Holiness"; the second, that "of Sir Guyon, or of Temperance"; the third, that "of Britomart, or of Chastity"; the fourth, that "of Cambell and Triamond, or of Friendship"; the fifth, that "of Artegall, or of Justice"; the sixth, that "of Sir Calidore, or of Courtesy." Involved with this ethical allegory, another kind of allegory enters into Spenser's plan which, as it is directly concerned with the political and religious problems of the age, we may call the historical; for the figures of his narrative are not merely personifications of moral and mental qualities, but often stand at the same time for individuals or institutions representing or embodying the qualities in question.

Thus, in the first book we have the story of the Red Cross Knight, who goes out to rescue the parents of the Lady Una from the power of a great dragon who for years has kept them confined in a brazen castle. As general allegory this represents the work of True Religion in rescuing Humanity from the power of the great dragon.

7.4. Other Poets from 1579 To 1625

The minor poets of the Age of Shakespeare were very numerous, but it would serve no useful purpose to attempt a catalogue of them here. It is, however, necessary that we should learn something about the different kinds of poetry which were then written, and about a few of the men who helped to swell the chorus of Elizabethan song. Following in the wake of Tottel's *Miscellany* came many collections of a similar character under curiously fanciful titles, such as *The Paradyse of Daynty Devises* (1576), *A Handful of Pleasant Delites* (1584), *An Arbor of Amorous Devises* (1597), and the most famous of all of them *England's Helicon* (1600).

These, like the regular song books, which were also popular, have preserved for us many graceful pieces of verse by authors whose very names would otherwise have been forgotten.

A special type of lyric which enjoyed great vogue was the sonnet, which on its introduction from Italy by Wyatt and Surrey, at once established itself among the recognized forms of English poetry. The Italian plan of writing sonnets in sequences was, as we have seen, also adopted by many poets. One such sequence the *Amoretti* of Spenser has already been mentioned, and to this we may now add, by way of further illustration, Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Daniel's *Delia*, Drayton's *Idea*, and the *Sonnets* of Shakespeare.

All these are love poems, which in the Italian manner trace the movements and fluctuations of passion, but while in some cases the experiences and sentiments are real, in others they are merely feigned. Another class of poetry which historically is very significant, because it expresses the powerful patriotic feeling of the time, is that inspired by national themes. William Warner's *Albion's England* (1586-1616), a poem of some 10,000 lines, sets forth the history of England from Noah's days to those of Elizabeth. Samuel Daniel produced a versified chronicle in eight books on *The Civil Wars between the Two Houses of Lancaster and York* (1595-1609).

Michael Drayton, who is now best known by his spirited ballad *The Battle of Agincourt*, has a more substantial, if not a better, claim to recognition as the author of *England's Heroical Epistles* (1595), *The Barons' Wars* (1603), and *Polyolbion* (1612-22), an enormous poetical description of England in thirty books, which Drayton himself not unjustly refers to as his "Herculean toil." We must remember that such poems were the product of the same keen interest in, and love for, England which led scholars like Stowe, Harrison, and Holinshed into laborious historical researches, and found dramatic expression in the chronicle plays of Shakespeare.

We have spoken of the Jacobean division of the Age of Shakespeare as the period of decline. By this we mean that the Elizabethan inspiration was now waning, that its subject matter was getting exhausted, and that a tendency to imitation was setting in among the rising generation. Meanwhile, a new kind of poetry was beginning with John Donne (1573-1631), whose work belongs essentially to the time of James, though he was thirty years old when Elizabeth died. Donne, who was celebrated divine and preacher, wrote songs, sonnets, marriage poems, elegies, and satires, all of which are characterized by much genuine poetic feeling, harsh metres, and those strained and whimsical images and

turns of speech, which are called "conceits." His historical importance lies in the fact that he initiated the "Metaphysical" school of poetry, of which we shall have something more to say presently.

7.5. Elizabethan Age

The earlier half of Elizabeth's reign, also, though not lacking in literary effort, produced no work of permanent importance. After the religious convulsions of half a century time was required for the development of the internal quiet and confidence from which a great literature could spring. At length, however, the hour grew ripe and there came the greatest outburst of creative energy in the whole history of English literature. Under Elizabeth's wise guidance the prosperity and enthusiasm of the nation had raised to the highest pitch, and London in particular was overflowing with vigorous life.

A special stimulus of the most intense kind came from the struggle with Spain. After a generation of half-piratical depredations by the English seadogs against the Spanish treasure fleets and the Spanish settlements in America, King Philip, exasperated beyond all patience and urged on by a bigot's zeal for the Catholic Church, began deliberately to prepare the Great Armada, which was to crush at one blow the insolence, the independence, and the religion of England.

There followed several long years of breathless suspense; then in 1588 the Armada sailed and was utterly overwhelmed in one of the most complete disasters of the world's history. There upon the released energy of England broke out exultantly into still more impetuous achievement in almost every line of activity. The great literary period is taken by common consent to begin with the publication of Spenser's 'Shepherd's Calendar' in 1579, and to end in some sense at the death of Elizabeth in 1603, though in the drama, at least, it really continues many years longer. Several general characteristics of Elizabethan literature and writers should be indicated at the outset.

1. The period has the great variety of almost unlimited creative force; it includes works of many kinds in both verse and prose, and ranges in spirit from the loftiest Platonic idealism or the most delightful romance to the level of very repulsive realism.
2. It was mainly dominated, however, by the spirit of romance.
3. It was full also of the spirit of dramatic action, as befitted an age whose restless enterprise was eagerly extending itself to every quarter of the globe.

4. In style it often exhibits romantic luxuriance, which sometimes takes the form of elaborate affectations of which the favorite 'conceit' is only the most apparent.
5. It was in part a period of experimentation, when the proper material and limits of literary forms were being determined, oftentimes by means of false starts and grandiose failures. In particular, many efforts were made to give prolonged poetical treatment to man subjects essentially prosaic, for example to systems of theological or scientific thought, or to the geography of all England.
6. It continued to be largely influenced by the literature of Italy, and to a less degree by those of France and Spain.
7. The literary spirit was all-pervasive, and the authors were men (not yet women) of almost every class, from distinguished courtiers, like Raleigh and Sidney, to the company of hack writers, who starred in garrets and hung about the outskirts of the bustling taverns.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

Poetry during this period were written on the 'theme of romanticism and melodramatic' features. 'Comedy' and 'tragedy' can be seen in Edmund Spenser's work. The poets of Elizabethan age used to write 'short but numerous types of Poetry' which can be seen in Wyatt's works. In fact, he imparted 'emotion and passion', 'favour and enthusiasm' to English Poetry. Combination of 'love and nature' were also seen. 'Sonnets' and 'Blank Verse' were introduced in this very period. The first printed anthology of English Poetry called Tottel's Miscellany was published.

Check Your Progress

1. The Defense of Poesy one of the major works of 16th century England was written by
 - a. William Shakespeare
 - b. George Puttenham
 - c. Sir Phillip Sidney
 - d. None of these
2. The chief function of literature is to instruct – who has told the line?
 - a. John Dryden

- b. Philip Sydney
 - c. Wordsworth
 - d. Ben Jonson
3. Who completed Hero and Leander started by Christopher Marlowe?
- a. Thomas Kyd
 - b. Thomas Middleton
 - c. George Chapman
 - d. Robert Burton

Glossary

Blank Verse: Verse without rhyme, especially that which uses iambic pentameters

Sonnet: A poem of fourteen lines using any of a number of formal rhyme schemes

Answers to Check Your Progress

- 1.c
- 2.d
- 3.c

Suggested Readings

- 1. Gramley, Stephan. The History of English: An Introduction. Routledge. 2012.
- 2. Laird, Mark. A Natural History of English Gardening 1650-1800. Yale University Press. 2015.

Unit - 8

Elizabethan Prose

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

8.1. Introduction

8.2. Elizabethan Prose

8.3. Shakespeare's Predecessors

8.4. Shakespeare's Life

8.5. Elizabethan Prose Writers

Let Us Sum Up

Check your progress

Glossary

Answer to check your progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

Heroic themes dominated Elizabethan tragedy, which typically centred on a great character driven by his own passion and desire. The fops and gallants of society were frequently satirised in comedies.

Objectives

This unit helps the students,

- To understand the Elizabethan tragedy dealt with heroic themes.
- To understand the style of Elizabethan drama and characterization. (usually centering on a great personality by his own passion and ambition)
- To study the comedies which are often satirized the fops and gallants of society.

8.1. Introduction

Elizabethan literature refers to bodies of work produced during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603), and is one of the most splendid ages of English literature. In addition to drama and the theatre, it saw a flowering of poetry, with new forms like the sonnet, the Spenserian stanza, and dramatic blank verse, as well as prose, including historical chronicles, pamphlets, and the first English novels. Major writers

include William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, Richard Hooker, Ben Jonson, Philip Sidney and Thomas Kyd.

8.2. Elizabethan Prose

Many writers of the Elizabethan age translated various books into English. Sir Thomas North translated Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans. He was one of the best translators with a good command of English. He also had the ability to weave words into powerful sentences. He did not translate directly from Greek, but from a French translation. Shakespeare has also used some expressions of North's work in some of his famous dramas. Richard Hakluyt collected and published The Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation. At this time there was a great deal of travel and adventure on the sea. This book includes the accounts of the voyages of different people. Hakluyt left a lot of unpublished papers and some of these came into the possession of Samuel Purchas. He published them under the title Purchase his Pilgrims. Two other books by Purchase have titles, which are almost the same Purchase his Pilgrimage.

Some Early Novels

Some of the forms of novel also appeared during the Elizabethan age. John Lyly wrote a kind of novel named Euphues. He started a fashion, which spread in books and conversation. It has a thin love story. This style is filled with tricks and alliteration. The sentences are rather long and complicated. This kind of language style was common among ladies of the time. Even Shakespeare was influenced by this artificial style.

Another novelist of the other time was Thomas Nash, who wrote a picaresque novel named The Life of Jacke Witton. This sort of novel is about the adventure of bad (wicked) but lovable character. The novels of this period could not create a basis for later development. The fashion of these novels, died out very soon.

Francis Bacon

Bacon is one of the most famous prose writers of the time was Francis Bacon who is also known as the father of the English prose. He wrote books both in English and Latin. His aphoristic prose style is very popular. His essays are full of remarkable thoughts. He could express great ideas in short and effective sentences. His famous books are The Essays, The Advancement of Learning, The History of Henry VII and The New Atlantis.

Translation of Bible

During this period several translations of the Bible were made. William Tyndale was a successful translator who translated the New Testament from the Greek and the Old Testament from the Hebrew. He was later burnt to death for his beliefs. The Authorized Version (A.V) of the Bible appeared in 1611. Forty-seven translators worked in groups in different parts of the Bible in order to translate it. This work was dependent chiefly on Wycliffe and Tyndale. The language is beautiful, strong and pure. Many English writers are influenced by the words of the Authorized Version of the Bible.

John Lyly

Lyly wrote a thin love story, Euphues which is used for the purpose of giving Lyly's ideas in various talks and letters. The style is filled with tricks and alliteration whereas the sentences are long and complicated and large number of similes is brought into this story. Even Shakespeare was influenced by his artificial style.

Ben Jonson

The famous dramatist Ben Jonson, who is also known as the father of the English literary criticism wrote a book names Timber, or Discoveries. This book is a collection of notes and ideas on many subjects. Jonson is of the opinion that a critic should judge a work as a whole and he must have some poetic abilities. He did not like Donne and Spenser, but always preferred Shakespeare.

8.3. Shakespeare's Predecessors

It will be seen that special importance attaches historically to the work of those playwrights who, coming just before Shakespeare, prepared the way for him by ensuring the triumph of that free and flexible form of drama which he was afterwards to make his own. In a loose sense, they constitute a group, and they are commonly known by the name of "the university wits."

As this implies, they were all men of academic training, and had thus been brought into personal touch with the new learning, and had absorbed its spirit, at one or other of the two great institutions of scholarship. But, with one exception, they gave their talents to the public stage, and it is certain that the strongly pronounced taste of their audience had a good deal to do with the class of drama which they produced. Arranged roughly in order of time, they are: John Lyly (1554 - 1606); Thomas Kyd (1557-1595); George Peele (1558 - 1597); Thomas Lodge (1558 -1626); Robert Greene (1560 -1502); Christopher Marlowe

(1564-1593); And Thomas Nash (1576-1601). It would be of little use to give a mere catalogue of the dramatic works of these men, and a more detailed examination of their writings would be out of keeping with the design of this short sketch. We must think of them, therefore, mainly as a group, and must be satisfied with the general assertion that each contributed something to the evolution of the drama into the forms in which Shakespeare was to take it up. Concerning two of them only, a few further details must be added, because of their special significance in literary history and of the direct influence which they exerted upon Shakespeare himself.

These are Lyly and Marlowe. LYLY is most widely known as the author of a prose romance entitled *Euphues*, of which we shall speak in our next chapter. His dramatic work, with which alone we have now to do, consists of eight comedies, of which the best is *Campas-pe*, *Endymion*, and *Gallathea*. These were all written for performance at the court, and the interest in them depends not on plot, situation, or even characterization, but on language that is, on the wit, point, ingenuity, and grace of the dialogue.

At a time when the humours of the public stage ran often into coarseness and horse-play, Lyly helped to give comedy an intellectual tone. In this, as well as in his skill in clever repartee, and in his continual use of puns, conceits, and all sorts of verbal fireworks, he anticipated Shakespeare, whose early comedies, such as *Love Labour's Lost* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, obviously owe much to his example. From Lyly Shakespeare also learned how to combine (as in the two plays just named) a courtly main plot with episodes of rustic blunders and clownish fooling. In these things Lyly set a fashion which others, including Shakespeare, followed, and in comedy he was undeniably Shakespeare's first master.

8.4. Shakespeare's Life

William Shakespeare was born on or about the 23rd April, 1564, at Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire. He was the son of a prosperous tradesman of the town, who a little later became its High Bailiff or Mayor. Though there is no actual record of the fact, it is practically certain that, like other Stratford boys of his class, he went to the local Grammar School, an excellent institution of its kind, where he was taught Latin and arithmetic. While he never became a learned man, his few years at school thus gave him a sound education as far as it went. Financial misfortunes presently overtook his father, and when he was about fourteen, he was taken from school that he might help the family by earning money on his own account. Of the nature of his employment,

however, we know nothing. In his eighteenth year he married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years his senior, the daughter of a well-to-do yeoman of the neighboring village of Shottery. This marriage was hasty and ill-advised, and appears to have been unhappy. Three children were born to him: Susannah, and the twins, Judith and Hamnet.

Tradition says that meanwhile he fell into bad company, and that a deer stealing escapade in the woods of Charlecote Hall obliged him to fly from home. There may or may not be truth in this story we cannot tell. It is certain that a few years after his marriage roughly, about 1587 he left his native town to seek his fortunes in London. At this time the drama was gaining rapidly in popularity through the work of the University Wits. Shakespeare soon turned to the stage, and became first an actor, and then (though without ceasing to be an actor) a playwright. An ill-natured reference to him in a pamphlet written by Greene on his death-bed, shows that in 1592 he was well known as a successful author.

He remained in London upwards of twenty years after this, working hard, producing on an average a couple of plays a year, and growing steadily in fame and wealth. He became a shareholder in two of the leading theatres of the time, the Globe and the Blackfriars, and purchased property in Stratford and London. But the years which brought prosperity also brought domestic sorrows. His only son died in 1596; his father in 1601; his younger brother Edmund, also an actor, in 1607; his mother in 1608. Then between 1610 and 1612 he retired to Stratford, where he had bought a house the largest in the town known as New Place.

His elder daughter had already (1607) married Dr. John Hall, who was later celebrated as a physician; on February 10, 1616, Judith became the wife of Thomas Quiney, whose father had been one of the poet's closest friends. By this time Shakespeare's health had broken down completely, and he died on the 23rd April of that year. Shakespeare's biography proves conclusively that, like Chaucer, he was no dreamer, but a practical man of affairs.

He reached London poor and friendless; he left it rich and respected; and his fortunes were the work of his own hand. Much light is thus thrown not only upon his personal character, but also upon his writings, in which great powers of creative imagination are combined with, and supported by, a wonderful feeling for reality, sound common sense, and a large and varied familiarity with the world. Of the learning which is shown in his plays, and about which so much has been written, it is enough here to say that it is not the learning of the trained and accurate scholar of a Bacon or a Ben Jonson, but rather the wide miscellaneous knowledge of many things, which was naturally accumulated by an

extraordinarily assimilative mind during years of contact with men and books at a time when all social intercourse and all literature were alike saturated with the classicism of the Renaissance. Translations gave him easy access to the treasures of ancient literature; the intellectual atmosphere of the environment in which he lived and worked was charged with new ideas, and was immensely stimulating; and Shakespeare was pre-eminently endowed with the happy faculty of turning everything that came to him to the best possible account.

8.5. Elizabethan Prose Writers

The period saw the beginning, among other things; of English prose fiction of something like the later modern type. First appeared a series of collections of short tales chiefly translated from Italian authors, to which tales the Italian name 'novella' (novel) was applied. Most of the separate tales are crude or amateurish and have only historical interest; though as a class they furnished the plots for many Elizabethan dramas, including several of Shakespeare's. The most important collection was Painter's 'Palace of Pleasure,' in 1566.

The earliest original or partly original, English prose fictions to appear were handbooks of morals and manners in story form, and here the beginning was made by John Lyly, who is also of some importance in the history of the Elizabethan drama. In 1578 Lyly, at the age of twenty-five, came from Oxford to London, full of the enthusiasm of Renaissance learning, and evidently determined to fix himself as a new and dazzling star in the literary sky. In this ambition he achieved a remarkable and immediate success, by the publication of a little book entitled 'Euphues and His Anatomie of Wit.' 'Euphues' means 'the well-bredman,' and though there is a slight action, the work is mainly a series of moralizing disquisitions (mostly rearranged from Sir Thomas North's translation of 'The Dial of Princes' of the Spaniard Guevara) on love, religion, and conduct.

Most influential, however, for the time- being, was Lyly's style, which is the most conspicuous English example of the later Renaissance craze, then rampant throughout Western Europe, for refining and beautifying the art of prose expression in a mincingly affected fashion. Witty, clever, and sparkling at all costs, Lyly takes especial pains to balance his sentences and clauses antithetically, phrase against phrase and often word against word, sometimes emphasizing the balance also by an exaggerated use of alliteration and assonance.

A representative sentence is this: 'Although there be none so ignorant that both not know, neither any so impudent that will not confess,

friendship to be the jewel of humane joy; yet who so ever shall see this amity grounded upon a little affection, soon will conjecture that it shall be dissolved upon a light occasion.' Others of Lyly's affectations are rhetorical questions, hosts of allusions to classical history, and literature, and an unending succession of similes from all the recondite knowledge that he can command, especially from the fantastic collection of fables which, coming down through the Middle Ages from the Roman writer Pliny, went at that time by the name of natural history and which we have already encountered in the medieval Bestiaries. Preposterous by any reasonable standard, Lyly's style, 'Euphuism,' precisely hit the Court taste of his age and became for a decade its most approved conversational dialect.

In literature the imitations of 'Euphuism' which flourished for a while gave way to a series of romances inaugurated by the 'Arcadia' of Sir Philip Sidney. Sidney's brilliant position for a few years as the noblest representative of chivalrous ideals in the intriguing Court of Elizabeth is a matter of common fame, as is his death in 1586 at the age of thirty-two during the siege of Zutphen in Holland. He wrote 'Arcadia' for the amusement of his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, during a period of enforced retirement beginning in 1580, but the book was not published until ten years later.

It is a pastoral romance, in the general style of Italian and Spanish romances of the earlier part of the century. The pastoral is the most artificial literary form in modern fiction. It may be said to have begun in the third century B. C. with the perfectly sincere poems of the Greek Theocritus, who gives genuine expression to the life of actual Sicilian shepherds. But with successive Latin, Medieval, and Renaissance writers in verse and prose the country characters and setting had become mere disguises, sometimes allegorical, for the expression of the very far from simple sentiments of the upper classes, and sometimes for their partly genuine longing, the outgrowth of sophisticated weariness and ennui, for rural naturalness. Sidney's very complicated tale of adventures in love and war, much longer than any of its successors, is by no means free from artificiality, but it finely mirrors his own knightly spirit and remains a permanent English classic.

Among his followers were some of the better hack-writers of the time, who were also among the minor dramatists and poets, especially Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge. Lodge's 'Rosalynde,' also much influenced by Lyly, is in itself a pretty story and is noteworthy as the original of Shakespeare's 'As You Like It'. Lastly, in the concluding decade of the sixteenth century, came a series of realistic stories depicting chiefly, in

more or less farcical spirit, the life of the poorer classes. They belonged mostly to that class of realistic fiction which is called picaresque, from the Spanish word 'pícaro,' a rogue, because it began in Spain with the 'Lazarillo de Tormes' of Diego de Mendoza, in 1553, and because its heroes are knavish serving-boys or similar characters whose unprincipled tricks and exploits formed the substance of the stories. In Elizabethan England it produced nothing of individual note.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

In 1578 Lyly, at the age of twenty-five, came from Oxford to London, full of the enthusiasm of Renaissance learning, and evidently determined to fix himself as a new and dazzling star in the literary sky. In literature the imitations of 'Euphues' which flourished for a while gave way to a series of romances inaugurated by the 'Arcadia' of Sir Philip Sidney.

Check Your Progress

1. The period of the origin of modern English prose was
 - a. Renaissance period
 - b. Anglo - Saxon period
 - c. Anglo – Norman period
 - d. None of the above
 2. The prose writers of Elizabethan age are
 - a. Chaucer and Shakespeare
 - b. Sir Thomas Watt and Surrey
 - c. John Lyly and Sidney
 - d. None of the above
 3. Aracadia is a prose written by
 - a. Sidney
 - b. Shakespeare
 - c. Ben Jonson
 - d. John Lyly
-

Glossary

Prose Fiction: The period saw the beginning, among other things; of English prose fiction of something like the later modern type. First appeared a series of collections of short tales chiefly translated from

Italian authors, to which tales the Italian name 'novella' (novel) was applied.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.a

2.c

3.a

Suggested Readings

1. Gramley, Stephan. *The History of English: An Introduction*. Routledge. 2012.
2. Laird, Mark. *A Natural History of English Gardening 1650-1800*. Yale University Press. 2015.

Block-3: Introduction

Block-3: The Age of Milton has been divided in to four Units.

Unit-9: The Poetry of Milton deals with Introduction, Milton's Life, Milton's Earlier Poetry, Milton's Prose Writing and Milton's Later Poetry.

Unit-10: Puritanism and John Milton describes about Introduction, The Puritans: Baxter, Milton and Others, Philosophy: Hobbes, Harrington, The Eccentrics and The Anglican Clergy.

Unit-11: Contemporaries of Milton explains about Introduction, The Caroline Poets, Cowley and the Metaphysical poets, The Caroline Prose Writers and The Baroque Style.

Unit-12: Works of Milton discuss with Introduction, The Paradise Lost, On Shakespeare, Milton's Contribution to the English Language, Religious Views of John Milton and Characteristics of Milton's Poetry.

In all the units of Block -3 **The Age of Milton**, the Check your progress, Glossary, Answers to Check your progress and Suggested Reading has been provided and the Learners are expected to attempt all the Check your progress as part of study.

The Poetry of Milton

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

9.1. Introduction

9.2. Milton's Life

9.3. Milton's Earlier Poetry

9.4. Milton's Prose Writing

9.5. Milton's Later Poetry

Let Us Sum Up

Check your progress

Glossary

Answer to check your progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit outlines the concepts of eccentrics, explain the puritans, including Baxter, Milton, and others, and characterise the baroque style and Sir Thomas Browne.

Objectives

After studying this unit, students will be able,

- to describe the baroque style and Sir Thomas Browne,
- to understand the ideology of the puritans:
- to study the biography and works of Baxter, Milton and others

9.1. Introduction

The age of Milton (that is, 1625-1660, comprising the Caroline age and the Commonwealth) was an age of singular activity in the field of English prose. The central events of the age-political struggles culminating in the execution of Charles me and the establishment of the Commonwealth-exerted both a hampering and an encouraging influence on the prose writers of the age. Much was written by them in sheer party spirit to promote either of the two conflicting parties-the Puritans and the Cavaliers. Thus, the air was thick with party pamphlets most of which proved only of ephemeral interest. Further, this age was remarkable for

its production of some very eloquent and compelling sermons of the first rank in the language.

The age of Milton has been very aptly called "the Golden Age of English Pulpit." The names of such powerful writers as Taylor, Robert South, Fuller, Isaac Barrow, and Richard Baxter are associated with this department of writing. In the field of moral, social, and political philosophy the age was enriched by the works of Sir Thomas Browne, John Hales, and Hobbes. Clarendon and Fuller wrote distinguished histories. Isaac Walton composed the quaint work *The Complete Angler*—a work of its own kind. And then there was the almighty Milton who distinguished himself almost as eminently in the field of prose as that of poetry.

9.2. Milton's Life

John Milton was born in Bread Street, Cheapside, London, on December, 1608, or some four years before Shakespeare's retirement to Stratford. His father, though strongly Puritan in his sympathies, was none the less a lover of literature and art, and the child enjoyed all the advantages of a cultivated home. He was educated at St. Paul's School, and at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he remained seven years, taking his B.A. in 1629 and his M.A. in 1632. His systematic studies did not, however, close with the close of his college course. Realizing that he could not conscientiously enter the church, for which he had been intended, and feeling no call to any other profession, he decided to give himself up entirely to self-culture and poetry.

Fortunately, his father was in a financial position to further his wishes, and on leaving Cambridge he accordingly took up his abode in the country house of the family at Horton, Buckinghamshire, some seventeen miles from London. While a boy at school, as he himself tells us, his books had kept him out of bed till midnight; at the university he had shown the same untiring devotion to learning; and now during six years of almost uninterrupted seclusion he was able to pursue his studious way undisturbed.

Building steadily upon the firm foundation she had already laid; Milton thus became a very great scholar. This point must be carefully marked, not only because in the breadth and accuracy of his erudition he stands head and shoulders above all our other poets, but also because his learning everywhere nourishes and interpenetrates his poetic work. Having now reached his thirtieth year, he resolved to complete his studies by travel.

He therefore left London in May, 1638, and went by way of -Paris to Italy, whence, however, he was prematurely recalled by news of the critical state of things at home. "While I was preparing to pass over into Sicily and Greece," he writes, "the melancholy intelligence which I received of the civil commotions in England made me alter my purpose; for I thought it base to be travelling for my amusement abroad while my fellow citizens were fighting for liberty at home." He was back in London in August, 1639, after an absence of fifteen months; and from 1640 onward was increasingly active as a supporter of the Puritan cause against the Royalists. As a pamphleteer he became indeed one of the great pillars of that cause, and on the establishment of the Commonwealth was appointed Latin Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs.

In 1643 he married Mary Powell, the young daughter of a Royalist, but the union proved a most unhappy one. Early in 1653 a terrible calamity overtook him; his sight, which had long been failing, was now ruined entirely by over-stress of work, and he became totally blind. Three years later he married again, but his wife, Catherine Woodcock, died within fifteen months. On the restoration of the monarchy, Milton was arrested and two of his books were publicly burnt by the hangman; but he was soon released and permitted to drop into political obscurity.

He was now poor and lonely as well as blind; he felt bitterly the failure of the cause for which he had toiled so hard and sacrificed so much; and though his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, brought comfort to his declining years, he was greatly distressed by the unfilial conduct of his daughters by his first marriage. It was in darkness and sorrow, therefore, that he now turned back upon the ambitious poetical designs which he had cherished many years before and had long set aside at the call of practical duty. His *Paradise Lost* was published in 1667; *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* together in 1671. Three years later on 8th November, 1674 Milton died.

9.3. Milton's Earlier Poetry

Milton's work falls naturally into four periods: (1) the college period, closing with the end of his Cambridge career in 1632, (2) the Horton period, closing with his departure for the Continent in 1639, (3) the period of his prose writings, from 1640 to 1660 and (4) the late poetic period, or period of his greatest achievement. His college poems, Latin and English, are for the most part simply a young man's experimental work, and while interesting to the special student as the expression of his genius during its immaturity, they have little other importance. To this statement, however, one exception must be made in favor of the ode On

the Morning of Christ's Nativity, which, though far from perfect and in places sadly marred by conceits and inequalities of style, is still a very remarkable production for a poet of twenty-one.

To the Horton period, on the other hand, belong four minor poems of such beauty and power that, even if *Paradise Lost* had never been written, they would have sufficed to put their author high among the greater gods of English song: *L'Allegro and Penseroso* (1633), *Comus* (1634), and *Lycidas* (1637). Each of these may, of course, be enjoyed to the full for its own sake; but for the student the most significant thing about them is that, read in the order of their writing, they show that during these years of thoughtful leisure a profound change was taking place in the poet's mind.

I have said that in Milton's work the moral and religious influences of Puritanism were blended with the generous culture of the Renaissance. It was this combination of elements which gave its distinctive quality to his greatest poetry; he could never have written as he did, had either of them been wanting. But from his earlier poetry we now learn that he began to write chiefly under the inspiration of the learning and art of the Renaissance; that the Puritan element was at first quite subordinate; and that it gradually gained in strength and depth till it became at last the dominant element.

Thus in *L'Allegro and Penseroso*, with their charming contrasted pictures of man, nature, and art as seen through the medium of the mood, in the one case of gladness, and in the other of melancholy, there is little that is characteristically Puritan, and a good deal that is really un-puritan; for the poet dwells frankly upon the pleasures of romance and rustic sports, upon the delights of the playhouse and the Greek drama, and upon the beauty of church architecture and music all of which things were to the religious fanatic objects of uncompromising hatred. Then with *Comus* we mark a distinct stage in the development of Milton's mind.

Thus far latent only, the Puritan spirit now makes its influence felt, not alone in the poet's increased earnestness, but also in the specific quality of his moral teaching. On the literary side, this work too belongs to the Renaissance; for it is an example (and the finest example in our literature) of that type of drama which is called the *Mask*, which had been brought into this country from Italy, and which had ever since been extremely popular at court and among the nobility. That Milton should be willing to adopt it is proof that he was still far from sharing the intense hostility of the Puritan party to everything connected with the drama. But though he wrote in the forms of Renaissance art, he filled them with a strenuous moral spirit and meaning for his simple story of the lady lost in

the woods, lured away by Comus and his band of revelers, and rescued by her brothers with the help of an attendant spirit and the river nymph, is a patent allegory of virtue attacked by sensuality and conquering by divine aid. Here, then, we see the two streams of influence, by which Milton's genius was fed, running together, and note that while the drama is loaded with classical learning, the nobility of its tone and the superb faith in God which is expressed through it, testify to the growing power of religious inspiration over the poet's thought.

Finally, in *Lycidas* we have a Puritanism which is political and ecclesiastical as well as spiritual and ethical. A monody on the death of Milton's college friend, Edward King, this, like Spenser's *Astrophel* is in the conventional style of the classic pastoral elegy. In form, therefore, it belongs with *Comus* to the Renaissance. But the religious accent in it throughout is unmistakably Puritan, while its famous attack upon the corrupt church and the hireling clergy of the time openly proclaims Milton's adherence to the Puritan cause.

Thus, through these earlier poems we can trace the steady growth of the religious element in Milton's mind. The learning and the art of the Renaissance were not abandoned by him; but they were more and more used for the service of a Puritan philosophy of life.

9.4. Milton's Prose Writing

On his return to England from the Continent, Milton, then in his 31st year, threw himself into the fierce controversies of the hour, and thus in his own words embarked "on a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes."

The ambition to write a great epic poem had already taken shape in his mind, but this he laid aside in order that he might give all his strength and industry to the performance of what he conceived to be a great public duty. Involved in political and religious controversies, he thus turned from poetry entirely, and for the next twenty years continued active as a writer of prose.

When we remember that Milton was incomparably the greatest poet of his age, and that in the very prime of his manhood, and during a space of time almost equal to the whole period of Shakespeare's dramatic activity, he produced all that we have talked about a dozen sonnets, we can form some idea of what literature must have lost through his pre-occupation with temporary matters.

His prose works are not to-day very interesting in themselves, nor indeed do they make very agreeable reading; for though they are often filled with noble earnestness and are redeemed by occasional bursts of

splendid eloquence, they are too often marred by the coarseness of phrase and the intense bitterness of temper which were the prevailing characteristics of the polemical literature of their time. Moreover, their style is heavy and cumbrous.

Milton himself said that they were the work of his "left hand," and we can learn from almost every page that his left hand did not possess the cunning of his right. The long trailing sentences, the involved constructions, the parentheses, the Latin inversions, all in fact show that, when Milton wrote, modern English prose had not yet come into existence.

One of these treatises, however, stands altogether apart the great and noble *Areopagitica*. Directed against an order of Parliament which established a censorship of books, this is essentially a plea for freedom of thought and speech and it should be read by every lover of literature and of intellectual liberty.

9.5. Milton's Later Poetry

It was not till the restoration of the monarchy drove him into private life and obscurity that Milton found leisure to accomplish the immense task which year by year he had kept in the background of his mind. Now in *Paradise Lost* he produced our greatest English poem.

It is in the study of this stupendous masterpiece of intellectual energy and creative power that the full significance of that combination of qualities in his work of which we have spoken, becomes apparent.

The inspiration and the subject matter of the poem alike come from Milton's Puritanism; *Paradise Lost* is written as an exposition of his theology; upon the foundation of that theology, it undertakes to "assert Eternal Providence and justify the ways of God to men." But if as a thinker and moralist he now belonged completely to Puritanism, as an artist he had not ceased to belong to the Renaissance; and in its form and style, its machinery and method, the poem everywhere takes us back to Milton's avowed models, the great epics of classical antiquity, while the vast and varied learning which is built into its fabric, shows how fondly in the blindness and loneliness of his old age, he even now, then, the Puritan in Milton had not killed the humanist.

With the zeal for righteousness and the strenuous moral purpose which pertained to the one, there were still blended the love of learning and the passion for beauty which were the characteristics of the other. That Milton should have written the greatest regular epic poem in any modern literature, and should yet have written it, not on a classical but on a

theological subject, and as the vehicle of Christian teaching, is thus one fact of capital importance in the consideration of his work.

In *Paradise Lost* he set forth the revolt of Satan against God, the war in heaven, the fall of the rebel angels, the creation of the world and man, the temptation of Eve and Adam, and their expulsion from Eden. Yet, while his central purpose was to show how "man's first disobedience"-brought sin and death in its train, it is characteristic of him that he does not close on the note of evil triumphant, but prophetically introduces the divine work of redemption.

Though in this way he had apparently completed his original scheme, however, he was afterwards led to add a sequel in four books the substance of which was provided by the temptation of Christ in the wilderness; but, while not without its occasional passages of sublimity and of tenderness, *Paradise Regained* seems to most modern readers a very slight thing beside its gigantic predecessor. The "dramatic poem" *Samson Agonistes* (*Samson the Wrestler*) crowns the labours of these closing years.

In this as in *Paradise Lost*, Milton applies the forms of classic art to the treatment of a biblical subject, for the work is fashioned strictly upon the principles of Greek tragedy, while the matter is, of course, derived from the fate of Samson among the Philistines.

This subject had been in Milton's thought many years before when he had been casting about for a theme for his epic, but it had then been discarded in favour of the fall of man. He returned to it now in all probability because he saw in the hero an image both of himself, blind, disappointed, and surrounded by enemies, and of the Puritan cause, overwhelmed by the might of its foes.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

The age of Milton was an age of singular activity in the field of English prose. The age of Milton has been very aptly called "the Golden Age of English Pulpit."

The names of such powerful writers as Taylor, Robert South, Fuller, Isaac Barrow, and Richard Baxter are associated with this department of writing. In the field of moral, social, and political philosophy the age was enriched by the works of Sir Thomas Browne, John Hales, and Hobbes. And then there was the almighty Milton who distinguished himself almost as eminently in the field of prose as that of poetry.

Check Your Progress

1. What is Milton's On the Nativity of Christ?
 - a. A sonnet
 - b. A lyric
 - c. An Idyll
 - d. An Ode
2. Lycidas is a pastoral elegy written by Milton on the death of his friend
 - a. Edward King
 - b. Cromwell
 - c. Arthur Hallam
 - d. Lord Fairfax
3. Milton borrowed the idea/theme for Comus from
 - a. Homer's Iliad
 - b. Virgil's Aeneid
 - c. Homer's Odyssey
 - d. Spenser's Fairie Queene

Glossary

Epic: A long poem narrating the deeds and adventures of heroic or legendary figures

Golden Age: The period when a specified art or activity is at its peak

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.d

2.a

3.c

Suggested Readings

1. Chandler, James. The Cambridge History of English Romantic Literature. 1st paperback. ed. Cambridge University Press. 2012.
2. Westland, Peter and Arthur, Compton-Rickett. The Teach Yourself History of English Literature. English Universities Press. 1950.

Unit - 10

Puritanism and John Milton

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

10.1. Introduction

10.2. The Puritans: Baxter, Milton and Others

10.3. Philosophy: Hobbes, Harrington

10.4. The Eccentrics

10.5. The Anglican Clergy

Let Us Sum Up

Check your progress

Glossary

Answer to check your progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit outlines the concept of eccentrics and the puritans, also introduces the baroque style and Sir Thomas Browne.

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able,

- to describe the baroque style and sir Thomas Browne,
- to understand the puritans: Baxter, Milton and others.

10.1. Introduction

The age of Milton (that is, 1625-1660, comprising the Caroline age and the Commonwealth) was an age of singular activity in the field of English prose. The central events of the age-political struggles culminating in the execution of Charles I and the establishment of the Commonwealth-exerted both a hampering and an encouraging influence on the prose writers of the age. Much was written by them in sheer party spirit to promote either of the two conflicting parties-the Puritans and the Cavaliers.

Thus, the air was thick with party pamphlets most of which proved only of ephemeral interest. Further, this age was remarkable for its production of some very eloquent and compelling sermons of the first rank in the language.

The age of Milton has been very aptly called “the Golden Age of English Pulpit.” The names of such powerful writers as Taylor, Robert South, Fuller, Isaac Barrow, and Richard Baxter are associated with this department of writing. In the field of moral, social, and political philosophy the age was enriched by the works of Sir Thomas Browne, John Hales, and Hobbes.

Clarendon and Fuller wrote distinguished histories. Isaac Walton composed the quaint work *The Complete Angler*-a work of its own kind. And then there was the almighty Milton who distinguished himself almost as eminently in the field of prose as that of poetry.

10.2. The Puritans: Baxter, Milton and Others

The Puritan camp was dominated by Milton. But there were also some other important figures such as Baxter and Prynne. As compared to the prose works of the Anglicans, those of the Puritans are marked by violence and coarseness and, not un often, downright lack of good taste. In his *Histriomastix* (1632) Prynne made a violent attack in the alleged immorality of the state. Elsewhere, he lashed at the Anglican bishops. Richard Baxter (1615-91), however, is not so intolerant.

He wrote two manuals of practical religion-*The Saints' Everlasting Rest* (1650) and *Call to the Unconverted* (1657) which remained for long very important books in the Puritan tradition in both England and America. His style is quite simple but has few qualities to recommend itself. The prose of John Owen, another Puritan divine, is again, as Legouis remarks, “rather dull and uninviting.” Milton from the age of thirty-one. Jo fifty wrote a number of pamphlets on political and ecclesiastical themes. In this period his poetic activity remained suspended except for the production of a dozen sonnets.

On his return from the Continent to England he found the country “on a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes.” But he plunged into the “sea” and made his appearance felt. Milton’s prose is the work of an excellent poet who looked upon prose as something contemptible and the work of but his “left hand.” His prose is generally rhetorical and too highly Latinized, but is not without its rocky strength and overwhelming grandeur, to one thing, it has the quality of high seriousness plus sincerity.

Milton always has a point to make and does make it, and quite often, effectively. But some bitterness does become manifest here and there. *Areopagitica*, a *Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing* (1644) is Milton’s most outstanding prose work. It was an eloquent plea for the liberty of the press. Regarding Milton’s style, Legouis observes: “There

morsels length, of his sentences renders them formidable at first to the reader, but' from their troubled vehemence breaks forth at times a scathing irony or a sudden splendor. They reveal the impetuous idealist, unpractical and thorough-going."

10.3. Philosophy: Hobbes, Harrington

The prose of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) raises above all political and religious controversies. Hobbes was Bacon's secretary and Decartes' correspondent. He combines in his philosophic work the empiricism of the former and the mechanistic rationalism of the latter. His important work *Leviathan* (1651) sets forth his totalitarian, materialistic, and rationalistic philosophy.

Leviathan, says Legouis, "is written in strong, logical, massive prose, exempt from the oratorical vehemence and ornaments of his great contemporaries, and heralding the prose of the classical period." James Harrington in his Utopian work *Oceana* (1656) offered to controvert the views of Hobbes favouring absolute monarchy. The Cambridge Platonists, Henry More (1614- 87) and Ralph Cudworth (1617-88) wrote in opposition to Hobbes's rationalism. The prose of all these writers is fanciful and devoid of lucidity and exactness-the hallmarks of Hobbes's style.

10.4. The Eccentrics

Lastly, we come across some "eccentrics" who wrote about the middle of the seventeenth century. Of them Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty (1611-60) translated the first two books of Rabelais *Gargantua* (1653). In giving free play to fancy he outdid even Browne Thomas Fuller (1608-61), an Anglican clergyman, wrote the *Church History of Britain* (1655-56), *Holy and Prophane State* (1642), and *The History of the Worthies of England* (1662). Fuller's prose is somewhat quaint, but has an element of wit, even the wit of the metaphysical kind.

At any rate, he is delightful, even though in patches. He wittily describes a negro as "an image of God cut in ebony." "The soldier", Fuller writes at a place, "at the same time shoots out his prayers to God and his pistol at his enemy." Izaak Walton (1593-1683) falls in a class by himself.

He is known for his biographies of Donne, Henry Wotton, Hooker, George Herbert, and Bishop Sanderson written between 1640 and 1678. They are, says Hardin Craig in *A History of English Literature*, ed. Hardin Craig, "masterpieces, not of biography, but of style and temper, hearty sincerity, cheerfulness and good nature, and personal interest in the men treated. His mistakes as a biographer, for example in the case

of 'Hooker, have to be guarded against, but his pictures are essentially true." Walton's more important work, however, is *The Angler* (1653) which is essentially a treatise on fishing, but has alongside many incidental attractions for the student of literature.

Walton was an ironmonger by profession and he spent all of his leisure on fishing, of which sport he acquired an almost uncanny knowledge. He sets forth this knowledge in this book. "Its charm," says Hardin Craig, "rests also on its background which is made up of natural scenery, life at inns, fishermen's tales and casual conversations with fishermen, and of casually interspersed songs and lyrics".

"He", says Legouis in his *A Short History of English Literature* "serves as a link between Marlowe and Dryden." We can easily perceive in his prose, even though it is the prose of an ironmonger, a marked Elizabethan quality. "He describes", says Legouis, "these healthful pleasures in a prose, limpid, if a little slow; still redolent of the artificial pastoral here and there but wherein lies the witchery of the English countryside."

10.5. The Anglican Clergy

The prose of the age of Milton is remarkable for its pronounced religious slant. The secular interest of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods seems to have yielded considerable place to religious interests. Legouis remarks in this connexion: "The rich humanity, the widespread curiosity, the intermingling of comedy with tragedy in the portrayal of life, were replaced by a passionate controversy on the forms of Christian religion and a search which became almost an obsession for the way of salvation."

In the Caroline period there was a complete polarization of religious affiliations and the Puritans and the Protestants (Anglicans) emerged as two groups irreconcilably opposed to each other. Both of them had eminent men of letters among their ranks. Whereas Milton was the most important of the Puritans, Jeremy Taylor was the best among the Protestants.

Let us consider briefly the prose of the Anglicans first. Among the Anglicans the important prose writers were George Herbert, Thomas Traherne, John Hales, William Chillingworth, John Gauden, and Jeremy Taylor (1613-67). Most of them mainly wrote sermons. The last named was the most distinguished and the most tolerant of all of them. Along with his sermons he gave *Liberty of Propheying* (1646) and his most famous works *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* (1650-51). Like Browne, Taylor is preoccupied with the thought of human mortality. Like him,

again, he is not afraid of death; he considers it as “nothing but a middle-point between the two lives.” The recent death of his wife prompted him further to enter into the contemplation of mortality and the holy practice of prayer as also the importance of faith and patience.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

The age of Milton (that is, 1625-1660, comprising the Caroline age and the Commonwealth was an age of singular activity in the field of English prose. Browne’s *Pseudo Doxia Epidemica* (Vulgar Errors), which comprised seven books, attempted to correct the common errors in the fields of mineral and vegetable bodies, animals, men, misrepresentations in pictures etc. Among the Anglicans the important prose writers were George Herbert, Thomas Traherne, John Hales, William Chillingworth, John Gauden, and Jeremy Taylor (1613-67)

Check Your Progress

1. Which of the following is the age of Puritans in English literature?
 - a. From 1570 to 1600
 - b. From 1700 to 1744
 - c. From 1600 to 1660
 - d. From 1660 to 1700
2. Who is known as the noblest representative of the Puritan age in English literature?
 - a. John Donne
 - b. John Milton
 - c. Philip Massinger
 - d. John Dryden
3. Which of the following poets did write *Paradise Lost*?
 - a. John Milton
 - b. Marlowe
 - c. Philip Massinger
 - d. Shakespeare

Glossary

Puritanism: Puritanism a religious reform movement in the late 16th and 17th centuries that sought to “purify” the Church of England of remnants of the Roman Catholic “popery” that the Puritans claimed had been retained after the religious settlement reached early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.c

2.b

3. a

Suggested Readings

1. Westland, Peter and Arthur, Compton-Rickett. The Teach Yourself History of English Literature. English Universities Press. 1950.
2. Ellis, Roger et al. The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English. Oxford University Press. 2010.
3. Laird, Mark. A Natural History of English Gardening 1650-1800. Yale University Press. 2015.

Unit-11

Contemporaries of Milton

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

11.1. Introduction

11.2. The Caroline Poets

11.3. Cowley and the Metaphysical poets

11.4. The Caroline Prose Writers

11.5. The Baroque Style

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit deals with the contemporaries of the period of Milton and other poets like Caroline Poets, Cowley and metaphysical poets and the prose writer -evolved to convey genuine characters and experiences, and their thoughts concentrated on their subjects' feelings, emotions, and society as they were experiencing them.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To study the parameter of the contemporary age of Milton.
- To explore the views and strength of Caroline Poets Cowley and metaphysical poets
- To understand the intention of writers during this Milton Contemporaries

11.1. Introduction

The parameters of 'Contemporary' and 'Postcolonial', the adjectives that preface the writers included in this section, are astonishingly fluid, shifting and impossible to define in any rigid or fixed way. Indeed, simply calling an author a 'Contemporary Postcolonial Writer' is becoming increasingly complex, contingent on various factors and presuppositions, some of which I shall explore here. Arguably, any author writing from a

country in its post-independence era can be termed postcolonial if we take the title in its literal sense. If we combine this with understanding the term contemporary, which tends to be attributed to any 'author that wrote post-1945' (as indicated by modules on current university courses entitled 'Contemporary Literature'), some problems arise. Because of the shockingly recent history of colonialism - many African countries especially only attained independence in the 1960s, with South Africa's 'internal colonialism', apartheid, ending in 1994 - these two definitions overlap so that any author writing from the post-colonial world should fit under this subcategory.

This clearly renders the label both reductively homogenous and, if attributable to such a wide variety of writers in different and contrasting geographical and historical locations, largely redundant. Additionally, some would argue that attempting to label all these writers in this way would work to retain the hegemony of 'West and Rest' that was instilled by the colonial world - that such a move prevents these authors from being anything other than 'postcolonial'.

11.2. The Caroline Poets

As I have already pointed out, the Age of Milton and the Age of Dryden, though broadly we are bound to distinguish between them, really overlap, and as a result it is extremely difficult in grouping the writers of the period between 1625 and 1700 under one or the other head, to establish any quite satisfactory order among them. We will here, however, for the present confine our attention to those who, irrespective of dates, seem to belong to the older generation by the quality of their thought and style.

Those who, while really contemporary with them, belong rather to the new generation, or for any reason may most conveniently be connected with it, will be dealt with in our next two chapters. Under the term Caroline Poets 1 we include a number of verse writers whose work may be roughly assigned to the reign of Charles I. Though many of them continued to produce through the years of the Commonwealth or even later. Some of them were secular, some religious poets.

The most important of them, ROBERT HERRICK (1591- 1634), wrote both secular and religious poetry with equal facility, if not quite with equal success. In early life an associate of Ben Jonson, Herrick went into the church, found himself in the banishment of his Devonshire parson ages unhappy as Spenser had been in Ireland, was deprived of his living after the civil war, and reinstated at the Restoration. His religious poetry was published under the general title of Noble Numbers;

his secular, in the same volume (1648), under that of Hesperides. It is in the latter that Herrick's powers are shown at their best. In the "Cavalier" group of Caroline poets, whose inspiration was entirely or almost entirely secular, the principal names are those of Thomas Carew (1598-1639), his friend Sir John Suckling (1609-42), and Richard Lovelace (1618-58).

They are miscellaneous in character, comprising addresses to friends, fairy poems, occasional poems on all sorts of subjects, and many love poems, but they are all delightful in their naturalness and spontaneity, their exquisite fancy, and their lyrical charm and grace. Historically, perhaps their most singular feature is their complete detachment from the political interests of the hour. In that season of tumult and confusion, when the fiercest passions stirred the minds of men, Herrick held himself altogether aloof, preferring to sing of the joys of life, with a tender sense, all the same, of their brevity.

These are all poets in the lighter vein and made no pretence to treat their art seriously, but what they did they do extremely well. Carew's *He that loves a rosy cheek*, and Suckling's *Why so thin and pale, fond lover?* In addition, Lovelace's *to Althea from Prison* may be cited as examples of the fine lyrical quality by which their amatory verse is marked at its best. With these, we may here join ANDREW MARVELL (1620-78), because his earlier work exhibits many of the characteristics of the Cavalier school.

However, in politics and religion he was on the other side, and after the Restoration he changed his poetic note, and wrote fierce satire in rugged style on Charles II. And his supporters. Of the Caroline poets who found their main interest in religion, the most widely known, though not poetically the greatest, was GEORGE HERBERT (1593-1633), whose collection of lyrics entitled *The Temple* breathes the spirit of the purest piety.

The sacred verse of RICHARD CRASHAW (1613-49), though very unequal and at times quite ruined by conceits, has far greater fire and passion, that of HENRY VAUGHAN (1621-93), while directly and powerfully influenced by Herbert, is deeper in thought and much more mystical. The *Religious Emblems* of FRANCIS QUARLES (1592-1644), the text of which was illustrated by quaint engravings, must be placed on record because of their immense and long-enduring popularity.

11.3. Cowley and the Metaphysical Poets

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618-67) demands a little more attention, both because he was in his own day considered the greatest of English

poets, and because he is usually regarded as the chief representative of that "metaphysical" School which, as we have seen, took its rise in the work of Donne. The name "metaphysical" was first applied to this school by Johnson, and though it is not a very good one, it has kept its place in our critical vocabulary. Johnson's explanation of his term is, however, excellent. The metaphysical poets, he writes, "were men of learning, and to show their learning was their whole Endeavour. They neither copied nature nor life. Their thoughts are often new, but seldom natural ; they are not obvious, but neither are they just ; and the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders more frequently by what perverseness of industry they were ever found.

The salient features of this curious group of writers are here clearly indicated. Their work is packed with affectations and conceits; in their effort to surprise by the boldness and novelty of their images they indulge in strained metaphors, far-fetched similes, and the most extravagant hyperbole; they cultivate ingenuity at any cost; substitute philosophical subtleties and logical hair splitting for the natural expression of feeling; and employ their vast out- of-the-way learning without the slight estregard to propriety.

As a result, they are in general violent, harsh, cold, and obscure. That from time to time they none the less give us passages or even whole poems of real power and beauty only proves that vicious theories did not altogether stifle the promptings of genius. But when we find a poet of the quality of Crashaw ransacking earth and heaven for emblems of the eyes of the sorrowing Mary Magdalene and describing them, for example, as " Two walking baths, two weeping motions, Portable and compendious oceans,"

As Johnson puts it, we can realise what frantic absurdities English poetry was for a time misled "by a voluntary deviation from nature in pursuit of something new and strange." In Cowley's work we have the last important productions of this metaphysical school, but we must remember that its influences were widely spread among the poets of the age. Thus the three chief religious poets who have been named above Crashaw, Herbert, and Vaughan were all more or less metaphysical. It should also be noted that in his later poetry Cowley discards much of his former extravagance and approximates to the restrained and sober style which came in with the next generation.

11.4. The Caroline Prose Writers

In the prose literature of Milton's age, there are many names of importance, but it is only of the men whose interest is broad enough to

justify their inclusion in a record of general literature that we have here to take account. Thus the Holy Living and Holy Dying of the eloquent divine, JEREMY TAYLOR (1613-67) and The Saints' Everlasting Rest of the Puritan RICHARD BAXTER (1615-91), though purely religious in matter and aim deserve reference as acknowledged classics of their kind. Another divine, the quaint, witty, and vivacious THOMAS FULLER (1608- 61), though he also wrote much on religious subjects, is best-remembered to-day for his delightful miscellaneous Worthies of England. SIR THOMAS BROWNE, a physician, was the author of a number of books full of varied and curious erudition, but his main title to fame is his personal confession of religious faith, Religion Medici.

That a highly special subject may by sheer charm of treatment be endowed with the widest possible interest is strikingly shown in the case of The Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation, by IZAAK WALTON (1593-1688), which, though ostensibly designed for the instruction of fishermen, has long been popular with countless readers who care nothing for the sport, on account of its pleasant gossipy style and genuine rustic flavor.

Walton also wrote some admirable biographies. In history, in which much good work was now done, the first place is occupied by the History of the Great Rebellion, by EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON (1608-74), which, while untrustworthy by reason of its royalist bias, is justly admired for its stately diction and its skilful studies of character. The Leviathan of THOMAS HOBBS (1588-1679), advocating strong central government, apart from its theories, which do not now concern us, must be mentioned as the most important political treatises were inspired by the unrest and speculations of the time.

Speaking of the work of all these men in general, and disregarding for the moment their individual qualities, we may say that we nowhere recognize in their style the characteristic tone and manner of our modern prose. What has been said about the prose of Milton is equally applicable to that of his contemporaries. Even in the greater colloquialism of Baxter there is still much to remind us that this is not the sort of prose we use to-day. We must therefore be careful to note the particular historical interest of the charming Essays of COWLEY, the manner of which has a great deal in common with that simpler and clearer way of writing which the Age of Dryden, as we shall presently see, was to introduce.

11.5. The Baroque Style

As regards prose style, the writers of the age of Milton exhibit a curious retrogressive tendency. Every past age in England had in some measure advanced literature from antiquity to modernity. But the age of Milton does not seem to have advanced English prose from the extravagance and antiquity of the prose of the Elizabethan period towards the ideal of simplicity, comprehensibility, and lucidity associated with the prose of the writers of the age of Queen Anne (1702-14).

Right in the Jacobean age (1603-25) we come across some important writers like Bacon and the character writers who look to the future and dissociate themselves from the ornateness, prolixity, involvedness, and diffuseness of the prose of their contemporaries. The Gothic style of most Elizabethans influenced a sizable proportion of the prose writer of the age of Milton.

The lesson of simplicity and sententiousness set forth by Bacon and the character writers was forgotten, resulting in a kind of "baroque" style cultivated during the age of Milton. At the end of the age, the Restoration writers like Dryden stemmed the retrogressive tide and furthered the advance towards simplicity and lucidity which came fully and effectively to be realized by such writers as Addison and Swift after the close of the seventeenth century. However, it may be admitted by

H.C.J. Grierson that the progress towards simplicity and modernity cost the English prose some "freshness, harmony, dignity, and poetic richness of phraseology." When prose becomes strictly functional, these qualities must be done without. With these preliminary remarks let us proceed to examine the work of the major prose writers of the age.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

This clearly renders the label both reductively homogenous and, if attributable to such a wide variety of writers in different and contrasting geographical and historical locations, largely redundant. Additionally, some would argue that attempting to label all these writers in this way would work to retain the hegemony of 'West and Rest' that was instilled by the colonial world - that such a move prevents these authors from being anything other than 'postcolonial'.

Check Your Progress

1. Who said of Milton: "Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart."
 - a. Wordsworth
 - b. Matthew Arnold
 - c. Dr. Johnson
 - d. Keats
2. Milton's poetry is a mirror in which the writer's character is very clearly reflected" Who made this statement?
 - a. Shakespeare
 - b. Dr. Johnson
 - c. Macmillan
 - d. None of the above
3. Who made the rhymed version of Paradise lost
 - a. Dryden
 - b. Pope
 - c. Swift
 - d. None

Glossary

Contemporary Writers: Perhaps it might be more productive to define 'contemporary' as 'an author that is still alive' or even 'a twenty-first- century author'.

Metaphysical Poets: Metaphysical poets any of the poets in 17th-century England who inclined to the personal and intellectual complexity and concentration that is displayed in the poetry of John Donne, the chief of the Metaphysical.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.a

2.c

3.a

Suggested Reading

1. Beer, Anna R. *Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature*. One world Publications. 2022.
2. Laird, Mark. *A Natural History of English Gardening 1650-1800*. Yale University Press. 2015.
3. Westland, Peter and Arthur, Compton-Rickett. *The Teach Yourself History of English Literature*. English Universities Press. 1950.

Unit-12

Works of Milton

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

12.1. Introduction

12.2. The Paradise Lost

12.3. On Shakespeare

12.4. Milton's Contribution to the English Language

12.5. Religious Views of John Milton

12.6. Characteristics of Milton's Poetry

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit deals with the study of John Milton as a poet with a classical background who proved himself as a puritan, and he dominated the renaissance and reformation

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To understand the life and works of Milton
- To trace the significance of his writing The Paradise Lost and his contribution towards his writing.
- To study Milton's Religious perceptive and the Characteristics of Milton's Poetry

12.1. Introduction

John Milton (born December 9, 1608, in London, England—died November 8, 1674, London?), English poet, pamphleteer, and historian, considered the most significant English author after William Shakespeare. Milton is best known for Paradise Lost, widely regarded as the greatest epic poem in English. Together with Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes, it confirms Milton's reputation as one of the

greatest English poets. In his prose works, Milton advocated the abolition of the Church of England and the execution of Charles I.

From the beginning of the English Civil Wars in 1642 to long after the restoration of Charles II as king in 1660, he espoused a political philosophy that opposed tyranny and state-sanctioned religion in all his works. His influence extended not only through the civil wars and interregnum but also to the American and French revolutions.

In his works on theology, he valued liberty of conscience, the paramount importance of Scripture as a guide in matters of faith, and religious toleration toward dissidents. As a civil servant, Milton became the voice of the English Commonwealth after 1649 through his handling of its international correspondence and his defense of the government against polemical attacks from abroad.

12.2. The Paradise Lost

Paradise Lost by John Milton is a long-form epic poem consisting of 12 books and more than 10,000 lines of blank verse. Published in 1667, Milton's poem is an argument on self-determination and God's justice explored through a creative retelling of the fall of Adam and Eve. The themes explored throughout the poem parallel Milton's own life. He calls upon muses to help him see, an allusion to the seers in classic Greek epics and a literal plea because he was slowly becoming blind as he wrote this epic.

Milton was also staunchly against the English monarchy, and his belief that only God has ultimate rule and power over man is a major lesson articulated in Paradise Lost. Even Milton's use of blank verse is metaphorical and literal: The poem is constructed of 10-syllable lines with no rhyme because Milton compared rhyming to "bondage," much like the bondage of a citizen to their king.

Milton's goal in writing Paradise Lost was to write an epic that would capture the spirit and environment of his own society and religion, much as Homer's epics spoke for Greek civilization. Indeed, Milton succeeded in this goal, as Paradise Lost is now considered one of the greatest works of poetry ever written in English.

It has been alluded to in other great works of literature, such as Frankenstein, and added a new layer to Lucifer that remains culturally relevant today. Although Milton and his work are controversial, Paradise Lost introduced new words and concepts to English. Scholars have argued that Milton invented around 630 words in writing Paradise Lost and new linguistic concepts like the phrase "outer space."

Paradise Lost has been quoted in politics, law, and literature. The poem's ripple effect on Western culture continues 350 years after its publication, making Paradise Lost a true English literature classic. Paradise Lost recreates the biblical story of the fall of man, starting with the first fall, that of a group of rebel angels in Heaven. Satan, one of God's most cherished and powerful angels, grows angry when God creates the Son and proclaims that Son as leader.

Satan asserts his own authority and power when he organizes a group of rebel angels against God, leading to the Angelic War, which ends in no deaths but much pain. The Son defeats the rebels, who are cast into Hell. After this civil war, God creates the first man, Adam. Lonely, Adam requests a companion, and so God makes Eve from Adam's flesh. Eve is beautiful, intelligent, and in love with Adam; she is curious and hungry for knowledge. Adam and Eve begin in a close relationship with God. They live in Paradise, in the Garden of Eden. God gives them the power to rule over all creation with only one command: They cannot eat fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. God warns that if they eat from the tree, they will die.

Meanwhile, in Hell, Satan concocts a plan to destroy man in an act of revenge. He journeys to Earth, tricking the angel Uriel into showing him where man lives. After finding Adam and Eve in Paradise, he grows jealous of them, for they have God's favor. He overhears Adam and Eve talking about the forbidden fruit. He disguises himself as a serpent, cunning and deceptive. He tricks Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. Adam learns of Eve's sin and knows that she must die.

He also chooses to eat the forbidden fruit, feeling bound to Eve because they are from the same flesh. Adam and Eve both know they have sinned. They fall asleep and have terrible nightmares. When they awake, they both feel guilt and shame for disobeying God. On bended knees, they beg God for forgiveness. With mankind fallen, Satan returns to Hell to celebrate his triumph.

As soon as he finishes his victory speech, he and all his followers turn into snakes without limbs or the ability to speak. God sends the Archangel Michael to escort Adam and Eve from Paradise. Before expelling them, Michael shows Adam the future-the events resulting from the original sin. The vision shows everything that will happen to mankind, tracing events from Cain and Abel to the redemption of sin through Jesus Christ. With a mixture of sadness and hope, Adam and Eve leave Paradise.

12.3. On Shakespeare

The rise and spread of the reputation of William Shakespeare is that, he is regarded today as the epitome of the great writer, his reputation was at first very different. Shakespeare was a popular playwright who wrote for the commercial theatre in London. He was not college-educated, and although his company had the sponsorship of King James, his work was not entirely “respectable.”

Academic critics at first scorned his indiscipline, his rejection of their drama concepts, which were partly derived from ancient Roman and Greek patterns. A good play should not mix comedy with tragedy, not proliferate plots and subplots, not ramble through a wide variety of settings or drag out its story over months or years of dramatic time; but Shakespeare’s plays did all these things.

A proper serious drama should always be divided neatly into five acts, but Shakespeare’s plays simply flowed from one scene to the next, with no attention paid to the academic rules of dramatic architecture (the act divisions we are familiar with today were imposed on his plays by editors after his death). If the English romantics exalted Shakespeare’s works as the greatest of their classics, his effect on the Germans was positively explosive. French classical theater had been the preeminent model for drama in much of Europe; but when the German Romantics began to explore and translate his works, they were overwhelmed.

His disregard for the classical rules which they found so confining inspired them. Writers like Friedrich von Schiller and Goethe created their own dramas inspired by Shakespeare.

Faust contains many Shakespearian allusions as well as imitating all of the neoclassical qualities enumerated above. Because Shakespeare was a popular rather than a courtly writer, the Romantics exaggerated his simple origins. In fact, he had received an excellent education which, although it fell short of what a university could offer, went far beyond what the typical college student learns today about the classics.

In an age drunk on the printing and reading of books he had access to the Greek myths, Roman and English history, tales by Italian humanists and a wide variety of other materials. True, he used translations, digests, and popularizations; but he was no ignoramus. To the Romantics, however, he was the essence of folk poetry, the ultimate vindication of their faith in spontaneous creativity. Much of the European 19th century drama is influenced by him, painters illustrated scenes from his plays, and composers based orchestral tone poems and operas on his narratives.

12.4. Milton's Contribution of English Language

John Milton's literary career can be divided into three clear and well-marked periods. Of these the first was the period of training, education and literary apprenticeship; the second was the period of political strife and turmoil; while the third was the period of the great poems. First period (1608-1639) Born in London of a family in easy circumstances and Christian without undue strictness, he dedicated himself to poetry from adolescence.

He was only twenty one when he wrote his first masterpiece 'Ode on the Morning' of Christ's Nativity in which his mastery is apparent in the poems of maturity. He was at Cambridge when he wrote this ode. He left there to live for time with his father at Horton in Buckinghamshire. Between 1632 and 1638 in the studious quiet of Horton, he wrote the lovely poems of his youth. He shows his feeling for nature in the early L' Allegro and Il Penseroso. Each poem evokes a distinct figure: the first, that of mirth, fresh, rosy and vigorous, dancing on tiptoe and the second, that of divine Melancholy like a pensive nun "devout and pure after the fragment of a masque- Arcades, John Milton wrote an entire masque- Comus (1634). It is hymn to chastity. The young heroine assailed in a wood by the magician Comus, God of wine and sensuality disdains his attacks and emerges from the trial. The poem is simple as an old morality. The morality of the poem is that of Milton, high, disdainful and solitary.

Lycidas (1657), probably the finest example of the pastoral elegy in English is a lament for a Cambridge fellow student who was drowned. The pastoral poetry of Bion, Mosehus and Theocritus inspires Lycidas. In all these poems, the mental conflict of the poet is evident. In outward form he adheres to the Renaissance, writing either masques or pastorals. He introduced classical machinery and copiously drew on Greek mythologies to decorate his poems. From the beginning of his poetic career, Milton had felt the conflict of the opposing forces- Paganism and Christianity and intermingled the two elements harmoniously by the impulse of a powerful will. He fused the spirit of the Renaissance and the Spirit of Reformation.

In 1637, John Milton went on an extensive tour through the continent, and after travelling largely in France, Italy and Switzerland returned home in June, 1639.

His second period begins from 1639 and extends to 1660. It was the period of civil war in England and Milton plunged headlong into the vortex of the conflict between Charles and his people. He wrote a

number of prose pamphlets on Church, Government, divorce and the justice and otherwise on the king's execution. His greatest prose tract is *Areopagitica*- a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing. The sole exceptions to the prose were a dozen 'occasional' sonnets, among which are some of the noblest in English. Of these is the sonnet on his blindness: that which describes his vision of his second wife after death, and specially that in which his indignation bursts forth against the Piedmontese for having massacred the Vandois.

The third period: Restoration of 1660, in forcing Milton back into private life allowed him to return to the high aims of his youth. He was blind, old, lonely and cut off from all communion with the world. And yet these last years of worldly loss and privation were the greatest in the poet's life. *Paradise Lost* appeared in 1665; *Paradise Regained* in 1671 and *Samson Agonistes* in 1671. He died shortly after in 1674.

Tennyson appropriately calls Milton the "God gifted organ voice of England". Halam says that "the sense of vision delighted his imagination, but that of sound wrapped his soul in ecstasy." Milton wrote in melodious phrases and cadences without conscious effort. With his remarkable gift of phrase and cadence, he could easily untwist "all the chains that tie the hidden soul of harmony" Milton's poetry is characterized by grandeur and sublimity of sentiments and swelling fullness and harmony of music.

In respect of the musical quality of Milton's poetry he is the greatest among English poets. As Mr. Matthew Arnold has observed: "In the sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction, he is as admirable as Virgil and Dante, and in this respect, he is unique amongst us".

John Milton's literary career can be divided into three clear and well-marked periods. Of these the first was the period of training, education and literary apprenticeship; the second was the period of political strife and turmoil; while the third was the period of the great poems. Milton's literary career can be divided into three clear and well- marked periods. Of these the first was the period of training, education and literary apprenticeship; the second was the period of political strife and turmoil; while the third was the period of the great poems.

First period (1608-1639) Born in London of a family in easy circumstances and Christian without undue strictness, he dedicated himself to poetry from adolescence. He was only twenty- one when he wrote his first masterpiece 'Ode on the Morning' of Christ's Nativity in which his mastery is apparent as in the poems of maturity. He was at Cambridge when he wrote this ode. He left there to live for time with his

father at Horton in Buckinghamshire. Between 1632 and 1638 in the studious quiet of Horton, he wrote the lovely poems of his youth. He shows his feeling for nature in the early *L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. Each poem evokes a distinct figure: the first, that of mirth, fresh, rosy and vigorous, dancing on tiptoe and the second, that of divine Melancholy like a pensive nun "devout and pure after the fragment of a masque-Arcades, John Milton wrote an entire masque-*Comus* (1634). It is hymn to chastity. The young heroine assailed in a wood by the magician *Comus*, God of wine and sensuality disdains his attacks and emerges from the trial. The poem is simple as an old morality. The morality of the poem is that of Milton, high, disdainful and solitary.

Lycidas (1657), probably the finest example of the pastoral elegy in English is a lament for a Cambridge fellow student who was drowned. The pastoral poetry of *Bion*, *Mosehus* and *Theocritus* inspires *Lycidas*. In all these poems, the mental conflict of the poet is evident. In outward form he adheres to the Renaissance, writing either masques or pastorals. He introduced classical machinery and copiously drew on Greek mythologies to decorate his poems. From the beginning of his poetic career, Milton had felt the conflict of the opposing forces-Paganism and Christianity and intermingled the two elements harmoniously by the impulse of a powerful will. He fused the spirit of the Renaissance and the Spirit of Reformation.

In 1637, John Milton went on an extensive tour through the continent, and after travelling largely in France, Italy and Switzerland returned home in June, 1639. His second period begins from 1639 and extends to 1660. It was the period of civil war in England and Milton plunged headlong into the vortex of the conflict between Charles and his people. He wrote a number of prose pamphlets on Church, Government, divorce and the justice and otherwise on the king's execution.

His greatest prose tract is *Areopagitica*- a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing. The sole exceptions to the prose were a dozen 'occasional' sonnets, among which are some of the noblest in English. Of these is the sonnet on his blindness: that which describes his vision of his second wife after death, and specially that in which his indignation bursts forth against the Piedmontese for having massacred the Vandois.

The third period: Restoration of 1660, in forcing Milton back into private life allowed him to return to the high aims of his youth. He was blind, old, and lonely and cut off from all communion with the world. And yet these last years of worldly loss and privation were the greatest in the poet's life. *Paradise Lost* appeared in 1665; *Paradise Regained* in 1671 and *Samson Agonistes* in 1671. He died shortly after in 1674.

Tennyson appropriately calls Milton the "God gifted organ voice of England". Halam says that "the sense of vision delighted his imagination, but that of sound wrapped his soul in ecstasy." Milton wrote in melodious phrases and cadences without conscious effort. With his remarkable gift of phrase and cadence, he could easily untwist "all the chains that tie the hidden soul of harmony" grandeur and sublimity of sentiments and swelling fullness and harmony of music characterize Milton's poetry. In respect of the musical quality of Milton's poetry, he is the greatest among English poets. As Mr. Matthew Arnold has observed: "In the sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction, he is as admirable as Virgil and Dante, and in this respect, he is unique amongst us".

Paradise Lost is Milton's greatest work. Here his imagination rose beyond time and space. He could conceive of the universe as immensity. Milton's hell is a vast indeterminate space where, in 'darkness visible', on the burning marle are Stretched gigantic beings, the vanquished angels changed to demons. He wrote the poem to justify the ways of "God to man" and "to assert eternal providence" but the central force of the poem is the poet's own personality; its beauty lies in his art- an art always that of the humanist. The rejection of rhyme is in the spirit of the poets of the Renaissance. The value of words, the syntax, the pauses recall the classics.

Milton's periods, the unrhymed verse, beautiful in its cadence, with its enjambment and inversions possess a solemnity and nobility inherited from ancient Rome. Paradise Regained is the complement of and reply to Paradise Lost. It is not an epic, being merely a semi- dramatic account, in four short books, of the commencement of Christ's ministry. It begins on the lowest key and the last book is magnificent. It is less intense and titanic than Paradise Lost and mediates between the epic and the dramatic point of view. In Paradise Lost, Milton wrote an epic that is classical in form but asserted the eternal providence.

Samson Agonists shows Milton writing a sacred tragedy using all his strength and wisdom. It is his most flawless single work of art in which he openly challenges comparison with Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Structurally, Milton's play reproduces with extraordinary precision the form of a Greek tragedy as Aristotle conceived it. In spirit, however, it is Hebraic and in effect it is the most autobiographical. Like Milton, Samson is a dedicated soul, an unwise marriage has embittered him, has suffered blindness, and been delivered into the hands of godless enemies, and Like Milton he is grappling with the problem of God's justice. This play with its noble bareness of style is a fitting close

to Milton's poetic career. His work is the product of an egoism, which is heroic, of a pride so high that it is often sublime. It is also the product of a matchless art, the delicate rhymed poems of youth being equaled, with a difference, by the mighty blank verse of his maturity. *Samson Agonists* is Hebraic in spirit but Hellenic in form. Here he takes the theme of Biblical story and casts it in the mould of a classical tragedy.

Milton's influence on later English poetry is tremendous. The musical quality of his verse inspired the later generations. There was a revival of Miltonic blank verse in the eighteenth century and Miltonic grandeur is seen in many later poets. The Romantic poets followed his style of sonnet writing and his moral passion and religious exaltation were an inspiration to many, but few could recapture them. Milton's prose is, however, intricate, involved and latinized. English prose develops in the direction of order, simplicity, clarity and lucidity.

12.5. Religious Views of John Milton

The religious views of John Milton influenced many of his works focusing on the nature of religion and of the divine. He differed in important ways from the Calvinism with which he is associated, particularly concerning the doctrines of grace and predestination. The unusual nature of his own Protestant Christianity has been characterized as both Puritan and Independent.

On the Soul

Milton believed in the idea of soul sleeping or moralism, which determines that the soul, upon death, is in a sleep like state until the Last Judgment. Similarly, he believed that Christ, when incarnated, merged his divine and human identities, and that both died during his Crucifixion. With such views on the nature of the human body and the soul, there is no possibility of a state of existence between death and the resurrection, and concepts such as Purgatory are outright denied. However, these views are not standard Calvinistic interpretations, but his views on what happens after the resurrection are orthodox Calvinistic doctrines: Christ, during the resurrection, would raise man up higher than the state he was in before the fall.

Religious Toleration

John Milton called in the *Areopagitica* for "the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties". "Milton argued for disestablishment as the only effective way of achieving broad toleration. Rather than force a man's conscience, government should recognize the persuasive force of the gospel.

12.6. Characteristics of Milton's Poetry

Shakespeare, Milton is the greatest English poet; which means that he is the greatest English poet outside the drama. Moreover, in the almost unanimous judgment of the critics, he is to be regarded as one of the world's three or four supreme poets. We have a wonderful union of intellectual and creative power in him, both at their highest. He is also a consummate literary artist, whose touch is as sure in delicate detail as in vast general effects. While many qualities thus go to the making of his work, the one which we most naturally think of, and which indeed we have come to denote by the epithet "Miltonic," is his sublimity.

He is the most sublime of English poets and our one acknowledged master of what Matthew Arnold calls "the grand style." In sustained majesty of thought and diction, he is unrivalled. His descriptive power, too, is astonishing, as we can learn for ourselves by turning, for example, to the scenes in Hell in the opening books of *Paradise Lost*; and, while he was entirely lacking in the true dramatic sense, the magnificent debate in the council of the fallen angels, and the whole conduct of the temptation of Eve, show an extraordinary insight into motive and character.

Though in theory an epic poem is supposed to be quite impersonal, Milton's epic is throughout instinct with the spirit of the man himself. Narrow he often is; he is often hard and austere. But there is an intensity of individuality in everything he writes which is singularly impressive; and the loftiness of his temper and passionate moral earnestness make us feel as we read that we are indeed in the presence of one "whose soul was like a star, and dwelt apart." In connection with the technical side of his poetry special note should be taken of the great and varied beauty of its style and versification.

His blank verse in particular deserves the closest study. Though this form, as we now know, had long been used in the drama, it had not thus far been adopted for any important non-dramatic poem. Milton was therefore making an experiment when he took as the measure of *Paradise Lost* "English heroic verse without rime." Of this measure he remains our greatest master.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

If the English romantics exalted Shakespeare's works as the greatest of their classics, his effect on the Germans was positively explosive. Rousseau is an important figure. He loved to go for long walks, Climb

Mountains, and generally “commune with nature.” His last work is called *Les Reveries du promeneur solitaire*.

Check Your Progress

1. Milton’s *Samson Agonists* is
 - a. A poetic play
 - b. An Epic
 - c. A Poetic Biography of Samson
 - d. A Narrative
 2. Milton wrote *Areopagitica*
 - a. To defend people’s Freedom of Speech
 - b. To defend the cause of the Regicides
 - c. to defend himself from love
 - d. None of the above
 3. In which book of *Paradise Lost* Adam and Eve meet for the first time?
 - a. Book IV
 - b. Book II
 - c. Book III
 - d. Book I
-

Glossary

Decline of Novel: The death of the novel is the common name for the theoretical discussion of the declining importance of the novel as literary form.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.a

2.a

3.a

Suggested Readings

1. Beer, Anna R. *Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature*. One world Publications. 2022.
2. Ellis, Roger et al. *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English*. Oxford University Press. 2010.
3. Peck, John and Martin, Coyle. *A Brief History of English Literature*. Second ed. Palgrave Macmillan. 2013.

Block-4: Introduction

Block-4: The Age of Dryden has been divided in to four Units.

Unit-13: Restoration of Drama explains about Introduction, Romanticism of Neo Classicism, Age of Dryden, The Forerunners of Dryden and Dryden's Life.

Unit-14: Development of Prose discuss with Introduction, Origins of Neo-Classicism, Comedy of Manners, Glorious Revolution of 1688 and Dryden's contribution

Unit – 15: Poetry of Dryden deals with Introduction, Dryden's Poetry, Butler's Poetry, Mac Flecknoe and Other Poetry Writers of the Period

Unit -16: Metaphysical Poets discuss with Introduction, Metaphysical Poets, History of Metaphysical Poets, Characteristics and Themes.

In all the units of Block -4 **The Age of Dryden**, the Check your progress, Glossary, Answers to Check your progress and Suggested Reading has been provided and the Learners are expected to attempt all the Check your progress as part of study.

Unit - 13

Restoration of Drama

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

13.1. Introduction

13.2. Romanticism of Neo Classicism

13.3. Age of Dryden

13.4. The Forerunners of Dryden

13.5. Dryden's Life

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit defines an overview of the growth of English Drama from the Restoration and also depicts a broad acquaintance with plays. The background provides the critical events, literary and intellectual influences and development in this period

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will able:

- To learn about restoration theatre and Puritan rule, with its strict moral codes.
- To comprehend the opening of the theatre's Restoration plays were lavish, often immoral by Puritan standards, and poked fun at both royalists and roundhead
- To understand types of drama such as Humour, Manners, and Intrigue.

13.1. Introduction

Restoration literature is the English literature written during the historical period commonly referred to as the English Restoration (1660– 1689), which corresponds to the last years of the direct Stuart reign in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. In general, the term is used to denote roughly homogeneous styles of literature that center on a celebration of

or reaction to the restored court of Charles II. It is a literature that includes extremes, for it encompasses both *Paradise Lost* and the Earl of Rochester's *Sodom*, the high-spirited sexual comedy of "The Country Wife" and the moral wisdom of "The Pilgrim's Progress". It saw Locke's *Treatises of Government*, the founding of the Royal Society, the experiments and holy meditations of Robert Boyle, the hysterical attacks on theaters from Jeremy Collier, and the pioneering of literary criticism from John Dryden and John Dennis.

The period witnessed news become a commodity, the essay develops into a periodical art form, and the beginnings of textual criticism. The dates for Restoration literature are a matter of convention, and they differ markedly from genre to genre. Thus, the "Restoration" in drama may last until 1700, while in poetry it may last only until 1666 (see 1666 in poetry) and the *annals mirabilis*; and in prose it might end in 1688, with the increasing tensions over succession and the corresponding rise in journalism and periodicals, or not until 1700, when those periodicals grew more stabilized.

In general, scholars use the term "Restoration" to denote the literature that began and flourished under Charles II, whether that literature was the laudatory ode that gained a new life with restored aristocracy, the eschatological literature that showed an increasing despair among Puritans, or the literature of rapid communication and trade that followed in the wake of England's mercantile empire.

13.2. Romanticism of Neo Classicism

If the Enlightenment was a movement which started among tiny elite and slowly spread to make its influence felt throughout society, Romanticism was more widespread both in its origins and influence. No other intellectual/artistic movement has had comparable variety, reach, and staying power since the end of the Middle Ages. Beginning in Germany and England in the 1770s, by the 1820s it had swept through Europe, conquering at last even its most stubborn foe, the French. It traveled quickly to the Western Hemisphere, and in its musical form has triumphed around the globe, so that from London to Boston to Mexico City to Tokyo to Vladivostok to Oslo, the most popular orchestral music in the world is that of the romantic era.

After almost a century of being attacked by the academic and professional world of Western formal concert music, the style has reasserted itself as neo romanticism in the concert halls. When John Williams created the sound of the future in *Star Wars*, it was the sound of 19th-century Romanticism-still the most popular style for epic film

soundtracks. Beginning in the last decades of the 18th century, it transformed poetry, the novel, drama, painting, sculpture, all forms of concert music (especially opera), and ballet. It was deeply connected with the politics of the time, echoing people's fears, hopes, and aspirations. It was the voice of revolution at the beginning of the 19th century and the voice of the Establishment at the end of it.

13.3. Age of Dryden

England now touched low- water mark in its social history. An immense change followed the Stuart Restoration in the general temper of the English people. A sweeping reaction against Puritanism and everything that it had stood for set in; and this reaction went so far that together with the galling restraints which religious fanaticism had unwisely imposed, moderation and decency were too often cast aside.

The court of Charles II. was the most shameless this country has ever known ; infidelity and profligacy became fashionable ; the moral ideals of Puritanism were turned into jest, and those who still upheld the cause of domestic virtue laughed at as hypocrites or denounced as sour sectaries. Even outside the narrow circle of court and aristocracy, where things were at their worst, the spirit of corruption spread far and wide, and while piety and goodness were of course cherished among individuals, the general lowering of the moral tone was everywhere apparent.

The effect of these conditions on literature will be anticipated by all who recall the great principle of interpretation, which preceding chapters have, now made clear, that literature is a social product and inevitably reflects the life of the era out of which it springs. The literature of the age of Dryden was at times openly and defiantly corrupt; while even at its best, though it had many admirable qualities, it was generally wanting in moral strength and spiritual fervour.

Real earnestness of purpose had passed away, and with this, strong passion, and with this again, great creative energy. The thoughts of men no longer scaled the heights; they moved along the plain. Literature ceased to soar and became pedestrian. Thus, with the Restoration we enter upon a period in which literature is intellectual rather than imaginative or emotional, and though often brilliant, is on the whole a trifle hard and un sympathetic. This is true even of poetry, which became prosaic, was made to do the work of prose, and was judged by the standards of prose. The poet did not allow his thoughts to wander off with Spenser into fairy land or explore the mysteries of heaven and hell

with Milton. He made his verse the vehicle of argument, controversy, personal and political satire.

The era of the versified pamphlet thus began. This is a striking illustration of the changed mood of the times. Even more significant, perhaps, is the fact that the men of the Restoration were the real creators of our modern English prose. In further illustration of the qualities of the literature of this period we must remember the direct and powerful influence exerted upon it by France. The European supremacy of Italy had now passed away, and France had become the world's great arbiter of taste.

The political relations between the two countries naturally tended to give vogue in England to all things French, including French taste and French ideas of art. Now the contemporary literature of France was characterized particularly by lucidity, vivacity, and because of the close attention given to form correctness, elegance, and finish. It was essentially a literature of polite society, and had all the merits and all the limitations of such a literature. It was moreover a literature in which intellect was in the ascendant and the critical faculty always in control. It was to this congenial literature that English writers now learned to look for guidance, and thus a great impulse was given to the development alike in our prose and in our verse of the principles of regularity and order and the spirit of good sense. As inverse pre-eminently these were now cultivated at the expense of feeling and spontaneity, the growth of an artificial type of poetry was the inevitable result.

13.4. The Forerunners of Dryden

Of this epoch Dryden, "the greatest man of a little age," as he has been called, was the one complete representative and exponent. But before we turn to his work, we must say a word about two writers, both some years his elders, whom he himself regarded as his masters, and who are still commonly considered the pioneers of the so-called "Classic" school of poetry EDMUND WALLER (1605-87) and SIR JOHN DENHAM (1615-1669). In general, these two writers were leaders in the reaction in taste against the excesses and obscurity of the metaphysical poets and in favor of good sense and of neatness and clearness of expression.

In particular, they were the reformers of English versification at a time when it had become insufferably rugged and harsh. It is indeed on this latter side mainly that they possess historical importance. This is especially true of Waller. "The excellence and dignity of rime," said Dryden, "were never fully known till Mr. Waller taught it; he first made writing an art easily; first showed us how to conclude the sense most

commonly in distiches, which in the verse of those before him runs on for so many lines together, that the reader is out of breath to overtake it." This re-shaping of the heroic couplet is Waller's principal claim to distinction. He brought into use that kind of heroic couplet which we know as the "classic" or "Closed" form, in which the rule is that, instead of the sense being allowed to flow on from couplet to couplet indefinitely, it should habitually close with the end of the second line; the metrical pause and the rhetorical pause thus coming together.

Dryden (who, as will be observed, writes extravagantly in Waller's praise) is wrong in supposing that this closed couplet was actually that poet's invention. It had been used from time to time by many earlier writers. But when Waller began his work, the tendency was wholly away from it towards a kind of verse so loose as to be almost formless, and it is from him that the new movement may fairly be said to date. The classic couplet did not reach its final shape in his hands. As a specific form, it evolved gradually and assumed perfection first in the work of its greatest master, Pope. But Waller led the way. Then Denham (now chiefly remembered for his descriptive poem *Cooper's Hill*) followed. Of Waller and Denham together Dryden wrote: "Our numbers [versification] were in their nonage till these last appeared."

13.5. Dryden's Life

JOHN DRYDEN was born at Aidwinkle All Saints, Nottinghamshire, in 1631; was educated at Westminster and at Trinity College, Cambridge, and settled in London about 1657. Soon after this he wrote his first poems of any importance, the *Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell* (1659), and (indicative of a rapid change of front) *Astraea Redux*, in celebration of the "happy restoration" of Charles

II. In 1663 he began to work for the stage, which was then the only profitable field for anyone who had to depend for his livelihood upon his pen; and for some fifteen years play-writing continued to be his chief occupation. In 1670 he was made poet laureate, and in 1681 opened a new chapter in his career with the publication of the first of his great satires in verse, *Absalom and Acidophil*.

This was followed by other works of the same character, and later by two theological poems, *Religio Laid* (1682), a defence of the Church of England, and *The Hind and the Panther* (1687), an elaborate argument in favour of Roman Catholicism, to which in the meantime he had been converted. The revolution of 1688 came upon him as a heavy blow because of this change of religion. He lost his position of poet laureate, and, all hopes of official recognition now being destroyed, devoted

himself for his remaining years to literature with praiseworthy courage and industry. He produced five more plays, translations of Juvenal, Persius, and Vergil, and a volume of Fables (or paraphrases from Homer, Ovid, Boccaccio, and Chaucer). These were published in November, 1699. Six months later in May, 1700 he died.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

If the English romantics exalted Shakespeare's works as the greatest of their classics, his effect on the Germans was positively explosive. Rousseau is an important figure. He loved to go for long walks, Climb Mountains, and generally "commune with nature." His last work is called *Les Reveries du promeneur solitaire*.

Check Your Progress

1. Which of the following refers to the restoration in the history of English Literature?
 - a. 1560
 - b. 1649
 - c. 1660
 - d. 1685
2. Who is the father of Restoration drama?
 - a. Wycliffe
 - b. Shakespeare
 - c. William Congreve
 - d. John Lyly
3. Which is the famous drama of restoration age?
 - a. Antony and Cleopatra
 - b. The Spanish Tragedy
 - c. All for Love
 - d. The Country Wife

Glossary

Dryden's Contribution: Dryden was his age's dominant literary figure and influence. He established the heroic couplet as a standard form of English poetry by writing successful satires, religious

pieces, fables, epigrams, compliments, prologues, and plays with it; he also introduced the alexandrine and triplet into the form.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.c

2.c

3.d

Suggested Readings

1. Chandler, James. *The Cambridge History of English Romantic Literature*. 1st pbk. ed. Cambridge University Press. 2012.
2. Ellis, Roger et al. *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English*. Oxford University Press. 2010.
3. Mullan, John. *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature*. Princeton University Press 2007.

Unit-14

Development of Prose

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

14.1. Introduction

14.2. Origins of Neo-Classicism

14.3. Comedy of Manners

14.4. Glorious Revolution of 1688

14.5. Dryden's contribution

Let Us Sum Up

Check your knowledge

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit critically analyse about origins of Neo-Classicism. Moreover, John Dryden is recognized as one of the greatest English poets of the seventeenth century. As a poet, Dryden distinct style of writing was perfected with the use of heroic couplets and the use of metric variations.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To analyse the significance of the Origins of Neo-Classicism
- To state the significant events in the life of John Dryden
- To identify the significant contribution of Dryden and the Glorious Revolution of 1688

14.1. Introduction

The earliest English prose work, the law code of King Aethelberht I of Kent, was written within a few years of the arrival in England (597) of St. Augustine of Canterbury. Other 7th- and 8th-century prose, similarly practical in character, includes more laws, wills, and charters. According to Cuthbert, who was a monk at Jarrow, Bede at the time of his death had just finished a translation of the Gospel of St. John, though this does

not survive. Two medical tracts, *Herbarium* and *Medicina de quadrupedibus*, very likely date from the 8th century.

14.2. Origins of Neo Classicism

Some of the earliest stirrings of the Romantic movement are conventionally traced back to the mid-18th-century interest in folklore which arose in Germany—with Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm collecting popular fairy tales and other scholars like Johann Gottfried von Herder studying folksongs and in England with Joseph Addison and Richard Steele treating old ballads as if they were high poetry.

These activities set the tone for one aspect of Romanticism: the belief that products of the uncultivated popular imagination could equal or even surpass those of the educated court poets and composers who had previously monopolized the attentions of scholars and connoisseurs. Whereas during much of the 17th and 18th centuries learned allusions, complexity and grandiosity were prized, the new romantic taste favored simplicity and naturalness; and these were thought to flow most clearly and abundantly from the “spontaneous” outpourings of the untutored common people.

In Germany in particular, the idea of a collective Volk (people) dominated a good deal of thinking about the arts. Rather than paying attention to the individual authors of popular works, these scholars celebrated the anonymous masses that invented and transmuted these works as if from their very souls. Nationalism The natural consequence of dwelling on creative folk genius was a good deal of nationalism. French Romantic painting is full of themes relating to the tumultuous political events of the period and later Romantic music often draws its inspiration from national folk musics. Goethe deliberately places German folkloric themes and images on a par with Classical ones in *Faust*.

14.3. Comedy of Manners

The Glorious Revolution was when William of Orange took the English throne from James II in 1688. The event brought a permanent realignment of power within the English constitution. The new co-monarchy of King William III and Queen Mary II accepted more constraints from Parliament than previous monarchs had, and the new constitution created the expectation that future monarchs would also remain constrained by Parliament.

The new balance of power between parliament and crown made the promises of the English government more credible, and credibility

allowed the government to reorganize its finances through a collection of changes called the Financial Revolution. A more contentious argument is that the constitutional changes made property rights more secure and thus promoted economic development. Historical Overview. Tension between king and parliament ran deep throughout the seventeenth century. In the 1640s, the dispute turned into civil war.

The loser, Charles I, was beheaded in 1649; his sons, Charles and James, fled to France; and the victorious Oliver Cromwell ruled England in the 1650s. Cromwell's death in 1659 created a political vacuum, so Parliament invited Charles I's sons back from exile, and the English monarchy was restored with the coronation of Charles II in 1660. Tensions after the Restoration The Restoration did not settle the fundamental questions of power between king and Parliament. Indeed, exile had exposed Charles I's sons to the strong monarchical methods of Louis XIV. Charles and James returned to Britain with expectations of an absolute monarchy justified by the Divine Right of Kings, so tensions continued during the reigns of Charles II (1660-1685) and his brother James II (1685-88)

Treaty of Dover

To regain fiscal autonomy and subvert Parliament, Charles II signed the secret Treaty of Dover with Louis XIV in 1671. Charles agreed that England would join France in war against Holland and that he would publicly convert to Catholicism. In return, Charles received cash from France and the prospect of victory spoils that would solve his debt problem. The treaty, however, threatened the Anglican Church, contradicted Charles II's stated policy of support for Protestant Holland, and provided a source of revenue independent of Parliament.

Moreover, to free the money needed to launch his scheme, Charles stopped servicing many of his debts in an act called the Stop of the Exchequer, and, in Machiavellian fashion, Charles isolated a few bankers to take the loss (Roseveare 1991). The gamble, however, was lost when the English Navy failed to defeat the Dutch in 1672. Charles then avoided a break with Parliament by retreating from Catholicism.

James II

Parliament, however, was also unable to gain the upper hand. From 1679 to 1681, Protestant nobles had Parliament pass acts excluding Charles II's Catholic brother James from succession to the throne. The political turmoil of the Exclusion Crisis created the Whig faction favouring exclusion and the Tory counter-faction opposing exclusion. Even with a majority in Commons, however, the Whigs could not force a reworking of

the constitution in their favour because Charles responded by dissolving three Parliaments without giving his consent to the acts. Due to the stalemate, Charles did not summon Parliament over the final years of his life, and James succeeded to the throne in 1685. Unlike the pragmatic Charles, James II boldly pushed for all of his goals.

On the religious front, the Catholic James upset his Anglican allies by threatening the pre-eminence of the Anglican Church. He also declared that his son and heir would be raised Catholic. On the military front, James expanded the standing army and promoted Catholic officers. On the financial front, he attempted to subvert Parliament by packing it with his loyalists. With a packed Parliament, “the king and his ministers could have achieved practical and permanent independence by obtaining larger revenue”.

William of Orange

The solution became Mary Stuart and her husband, William of Orange. English factions invited Mary and William to seize the throne because the couple was Protestant and Mary was the daughter of James II. The situation, however, had additional drama because William was also the military commander of the Dutch Republic, and, in 1688, the Dutch were in a difficult military position. Holland was facing war with France (the Nine Years War, 1688-97), and the possibility was growing that James II would bring England into the war on the side of France.

James was nearing open war with his son-in-law William. For William and Holland, accepting the invitation and invading England was a bold gamble, but the success could turn England from a threat to an ally. William landed in England with a Dutch army on November 5, 1688 (Israel 1991). Defections in James II’s army followed before battle was joined, and William allowed James to flee to France. Parliament took the flight of James II as abdication and the co-reign of William III and Mary II officially replaced him on February 13, 1689. Although Mary had the claim to the throne as James II’s daughter, William demanded to be made King and Mary wanted William to have that power. Authority was simplified when Mary’s death in 1694 left William the sole monarch.

New Constitution

The deal struck between Parliament and the royal couple in 1688-89 was that Parliament would support the war against France, while William and Mary would accept new constraints on their authority. The new constitution reflected the relative weakness of William’s bargaining position more than any strength in Parliament’s position. Parliament feared the return of James, but William very much needed England’s

willing support in the war against France because the costs would be extraordinary and William would be focused on military command instead of political wrangling. The initial constitutional settlement was worked out in 1689 in the English Bill of Rights, the Toleration Act, and the Mutiny Act that collectively committed the monarchs to respect Parliament and Parliament's laws. Fiscal power was settled over the 1690s as Parliament stopped granting the monarchs the authority to collect taxes for life. Instead, Parliament began regular re-authorization of all taxes, Parliament began to specify how new revenue authorizations could be spent, Parliament began to audit how revenue was spent, and Parliament diverted some funds entirely from the king's control.

14.4. Glorious Revolution of 1688

The Glorious Revolution was when William of Orange took the English throne from James II in 1688. The event brought a permanent realignment of power within the English constitution. The new co-monarchy of King William III and Queen Mary II accepted more constraints from Parliament than previous monarchs had, and the new constitution created the expectation that future monarchs would also remain constrained by Parliament. The new balance of power between parliament and crown made the promises of the English government more credible, and credibility allowed the government to reorganize its finances through a collection of changes called the Financial Revolution. A more contentious argument is that the constitutional changes made property rights more secure and thus promoted economic development.

14.5. Dryden's Contribution

Dryden was the dominant literary figure and influence of his age. He established the heroic couplet as a standard form of English poetry by writing successful satires, religious pieces, fables, epigrams, compliments, prologues, and plays with it; he also introduced the alexandrine and triplet into the form. In his poems, translations, and criticism, he established a poetic diction appropriate to the heroic couplet-Auden referred to him as "the master of the middle style"- that was a model for his contemporaries and for much of the 18th century. The considerable loss felt by the English literary community at his death was evident from the elegies that it inspired. Dryden's heroic couplet became the dominant poetic form of the 18th century.

The most influential poet of the 18th century, Alexander Pope, was heavily influenced by Dryden, and often borrowed from him; Dryden and Pope equally influenced other writers. Pope famously praised Dryden's

versification in his imitation of Horace's Epistle II. i: "Dryden taught to join the varying pause, the full resounding line, The long majestic march, and energy divine." Samuel Johnson summed up the general attitude with his remark that "the veneration with which every cultivator of English literature pronounces his name, is paid to him as he refined the language, improved the sentiments, and tuned the numbers of English poetry." His poems were widely read and often quoted, for instance, in Tom Jones and Johnson's essays.

Johnson also noted, however, that "He is, therefore, with all his variety of excellence, not often pathetic; and had so little sensibility of the power of effusions purely natural, that he did not esteem them in others. Simplicity gave him no pleasure." The first half of the 18th century did not mind this too much, but this was increasingly considered a fault in later generations. One of the first attacks on Dryden's reputation was by Wordsworth, who complained that Dryden's descriptions of natural objects in his translations from Virgil were much inferior to the originals. However, several of Wordsworth's contemporaries, such as George Crabbe, Lord Byron, and Walter Scott were still keen admirers of Dryden. Besides, Wordsworth did admire many of Dryden's poems, and his famous "Intimations of Immortality" ode owes something stylistically to Dryden's "Alexander's Feast". John Keats admired the "Fables," and imitated them in his poem Lamia. Later 19th century writers had little use for verse satire, Pope, or Dryden; Matthew Arnold famously dismissed them as "classics of our prose."

Critical interest in Dryden has increased recently, but, as a relatively straightforward writer his work has not occasioned as much interest as Andrew Marvell's or John Donne's or Pope's. He did have a committed admirer in George Sainsbury, and was a prominent figure in quotation books such as Bartlett's.

However, the next major poet to take an interest in Dryden was T. S. Eliot, who wrote that he was 'the ancestor of nearly all that is best in the poetry of the eighteenth century', and that 'we cannot fully enjoy or rightly estimate a hundred years of English poetry unless we fully enjoy Dryden. However, in the same essay, Eliot accused Dryden of having a "commonplace mind." Dryden is also believed to be the first person to posit that English sentences should not end in prepositions because it was against the rules of Latin grammar.

Dryden created the prescription against preposition stranding in 1672 when he objected to Ben Jonson's 1611 phrase the bodies that those souls were frightened from, although he didn't explain the rationale that gave rise to his preference. Dryden's reputation is greater today,

contemporaries saw the 1670s and 1680s as the age of courtier poets in general, and Edmund Waller was as praised as any. The court poets follow no one particular style, except that they all show sexual awareness, a willingness to satirize, and a dependence upon wit to dominate their opponents. Dryden, Rochester, Buckingham, and Dorset dominated verse, and all were attached to the court of Charles. Aphra Behn, Matthew Prior, and Robert Gould, by contrast, were profoundly royalist outsiders.

Each of these poets wrote for the stage as well as the page. Behn, Dryden, Rochester, and Gould deserve some separate mention. Dryden was prolific; and he was often accused of plagiarism. Both before and after his Laureateship, he wrote public odes. He attempted the Jacobean pastoral along the lines of Walter Raleigh and Philip Sidney, but his greatest successes and fame came from his attempts at apologetics for the restored court and the Established Church.

His *Absalom*, *Achitophel* and *Religio Laici* served the King directly by making controversial royal actions seem reasonable. He also pioneered the mock-heroic. Although Samuel Butler had invented the mock-heroic in English with *Hudibras*, Dryden's *MacFlecknoe* set up the satirical parody. Dryden was himself not of noble blood, and he was never awarded the honors that he had been promised by the King (nor was he repaid the loans he had made to the King), but he did as much as any peer to serve Charles II. Even when James II came to the throne and Roman Catholicism was on the rise, Dryden attempted to serve the court, and his *The Hind and the Panther* praised the Roman church above all others.

After that point, Dryden suffered for his conversions and was the victim of many satires. John Dryden was born at "Aldwinkle, Northampton shire", in 1631. He came from a Puritan family, which had been very active in the political world for years. Dryden was sent to school at Westminster. He published some verses at the age of eighteen. In 1650 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, and took a degree of B.A. four years later, but it is probable that he spent also the next three years at Cambridge. He went to London in 1657. His first important literary effort, *Heroic Stanzas to the memory of Cromwell*, was published in 1659. This was followed the next year by verses on the return of Charles.

In order to add to his slender income, he turned to the stage, and after two unsuccessful attempts he produced his first play, *The Wild Gallant*, in 1663. This comedy was not well received, and Dryden confesses that his forte was not comedy.

He produced *The Rival Ladies* the same year and married Lady Elizabeth Howard. *The Indian Queen* (1664), written in collaboration with Sir Robert Howard, his wife's brother, enjoyed considerable success. Dryden followed this with *The Indian Emperor* (1665). During the Plague Dryden lived with his father-in-law in Wiltshire, where he wrote his *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1668). Howard's preface to his *Four New Plays* (1665) called forth a reply from Dryden: *A Defense of an Essay of Dramatique Poesie* (1668). From the re-opening of the theaters in 1666, to 1681, Dryden wrote little except his plays. The production of Buckingham's satirical play *The Rehearsal* in 1671, in which Dryden was the chief personage, called forth the preface *Of Heroic Plays and Defense of the Epilogue* (1672).

All for Love, in all probability the poet's greatest play, was performed in 1678. He continued to produce plays to the end of his career. In 1681 he turned to satire and wrote *Absalom and Acidophil*, which achieved instant and widespread popularity. Other satires followed this. In 1687, after his conversion to the Catholic Church, he wrote *The Hind and the Panther*, a plea for Catholicism. His Catholic leanings lost for him the laureateship and other offices when the Revolution came. During his last ten years he translated many of the Latin classics: Virgil, Ovid, Lucretius, Horace, Theocritus, and others, and modernized Chaucer. He died in 1700, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Dryden's contribution to English literature, besides his poems and plays, was the invention of a direct and simple style for literary criticism. He improved upon the prose of the Elizabethan writers in the matter of ridding English of its involved forms, even if through that process he lost some of its gorgeous ornament and rugged strength. Jonson's method in criticism was not much more than the note-book method of jotting down stray thoughts, opinions, and reactions. Dryden elaborated his ideas, sought the weight of authority, argued both sides of the question, and adduced proofs. Dryden performed an inestimable service to his countrymen by applying true standards of criticism to the Elizabethans and showing them a genuine and sympathetic, if occasionally misguided love for Shakespeare.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

Critics agree that the masters of the comedy of manners were George Etherege (1635- 1692), William Wycherley (1640-1716), John

Vanbrugh (1664-1726), William Congreve (1670- 1729), and George Farquhar (1678-1707). Vanbrugh's *The Relapse: Or Virtue in Danger*

(1696) has two plots, only slightly connected, and include seduction, infidelity, impersonation, and the attempt to gain another's fortune.

Check Your Knowledge

1. Who was the chief writer of restoration prose?
 - a. Milton
 - b. Dryden
 - c. Congreve
 - d. Sackville
2. The Famous critical work of Dryden is
 - a. The History of Royal Society
 - b. Essay of Dramatic Poesy
 - c. The Pilgrims Progress
 - d. The Canterbury Tales
3. Next to _____, Bunyan was the greatest prose writer of the period.
 - a. Congreve
 - b. Sackville
 - c. Dryden
 - d. Chaucer

Glossary

Prose Fiction: The period saw the beginning, among other things, of English prose fiction of something like the later modern type. First appeared a series of collections of short tales chiefly translated from Italian authors, to which tales the Italian name 'novella' (novel) was applied.

The Comedy of Manners: The comedy of manners was first developed in the new comedy of the Ancient Greek playwright Menander.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.b

2.b

3.c

Suggested Readings

1. Craig, Hardin. *A History of English Literature*. Collier Books. 1962.
2. Cambridge University Press et al. *The New Cambridge History of English Literature*. Cambridge University Press. 1999.
3. Mullan, John. *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature*. Princeton University Press 2007.

Unit - 15

Poetry of Dryden

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

15.1. Introduction

15.2. Dryden's Poetry

15.3. Butler's Poetry

15.4. Mac Flecknoe

15.5. Other Poetry Writers of the Period

Let Us Sum Up

Check your progress

Glossary

Answers to check your progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

John Dryden was one of the best English poets of the seventeenth century. He has published plays, poetry, essays, and literary criticism. He is regarded as a satirist -Mac Flecknoe (1682). Dryden's poetic style was polished through heroic couplets and metric modifications.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To acquaint the learners with the critical ethos of Dryden's age.
- To Familiar the learners with the mode of Dryden's poetry
- To study Dryden's contribution to Butler's poetry

15.1. Introduction

John Dryden (9 August 1631 – 1 May 1700) was a prominent English poet, critic, translator, and playwright who dominated the literary life of the Restoration Age; therefore, the age is also known as the Age of Dryden. He was a Cambridge Scholar, literary genius and critic, and considering his extraordinary literary contribution he was credited with the honor of Poet Laureate of England in 1668. He was a critic of contemporary reality. His critical observation of contemporary reality is reflected in Mac Flecknoe (1682). Dryden's mature thoughts of literary criticism on ancient, modern and English Literature, especially on

Drama, are presented in dialogue forms in An Essay on Dramatic Poesy. In An Essay on Dramatic Poesy there are four speakers. Each one argues strongly as to which one is better, "Ancient or Modern, and French or English?"

15.2. Dryden's Poetry

We shall speak about Dryden's work in prose and drama in our next chapter. Here we have to deal only with his verse. As a poet, he ripened very slowly. His first poem, an elegy on the death of young Lord Hastings, written at eighteen, is almost incredibly bad; his Heroic Stanzas, written at twenty-seven, though they contain a few fine lines and images, are crude and bombastic.

For the time being he was greatly influenced by Cowley, whom he afterwards described as "the darling of my youth," and as a result, all the characteristic absurdities of the metaphysical school abound in these early works. They survive even in *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), in which, writing of the two great events of the "wonderful year" the war with Holland and the Fire of London he indulges from time to time in the most fantastic conceits; as when, for example, he depicts the Deity extinguishing the conflagration with a "hollow crystal pyramid," precisely in the way in which himself was accustomed to put out his own candle. But though its faults are numerous and glaring, the masculine vigour and lucidity of the poem reveal an immense development in the writer's genius.

For the full exhibition of his powers, however, we have to turn to the work of the last twenty years of his life, in which his emancipation from the false taste of themed physical writers is complete, and his style, no longer turbid and choked with all sorts of rubbish, flows clear and strong. This work, which marks the definite establishment of the classical school of poetry in England, may be dealt with under three heads

- (i) The political satires: *Absalom and Achitophel*, written amid the excitement following the alleged Popish Plot, to defend the king's policy against the Earl of Shaftesbury, and specially famous for its powerful character-studies, as of Shaftesbury himself under the name of Achitophel, and of the Duke of Buckingham under that of Zimri ; *The Medal*, a further invective against Shaftesbury ; and *Mac Flecknoe*, a scathing personal attack on a former friend, Thomas Shadwell, who had replied to *The Medal* in a poem filled with scurrilous abuse.

- (ii) The two great doctrinal poems, *Religion Laid* and *The Hind and the Panther*. These are not in the strict sense religious; there is nothing devotional or spiritual about them. They are theological and controversial; and written as they are from two opposed "points of view, they are curiously interesting as exhibiting Dryden's mastery in the conduct of an argument in verse, and his extraordinary skill in making the most of whatever position he might for the moment adopt. His mental flexibility and agility gave him remarkable power as special pleader.
- (iii) The *Fables*. These fine tales, written amid the anxieties of Dryden's last years and under the increasing burden of age and ill- health, so far from suggesting any flagging of energy, rather show the poet almost at his best, and give him a title to rank among our best storytellers in verse. *The Palamon and Arcite*, based upon the *Knights Tale* of Chaucer, provides an opportunity for a most instructive comparison between the method and art of the fourteenth century, and those of the seventeenth century poets. Dryden's poetry, in its limitations and merits, is thoroughly representative of the age. As a whole it is marked by a general want of what we are accustomed to call the essentially poetic qualities. It has little imaginative power, little depth of feeling, little spiritual glow or fervor; and except here and there, as in the two remarkable odes *To the Memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew* and *Alexander's Feast*, it rarely touches high lyrical note.

On the other hand, it is characterized by splendid intellectuality and a manly vigour of style. If Dryden is seldom poetic (using the word in the sense which we attach to it when we think of Coleridge or Keats), he at least gives us many passages of wonderful strength and eloquence. Therefore, it is easy to see why he holds his own as a satirist and reasoner in verse. In both these fields, the author of *Absalom and Achitophel* and *Religion Laid* is still our greatest master.

Dryden's influence and example lifted the classic couplet into the place it was to occupy for many years as the accepted measure of serious English poetry. When he began to write, he, like the literary world in general, was uncertain about the best form to adopt. Thus, we find him fluctuating between the "Gondibert" I stanza in the poem on *Oliver Cromwell* and in *Annus Mirabilis*, and the regular couplet in *Astraea Redux* and the *Panegyric on the coronation*. With *Absalom* and

Achitophel he made his final choice of the latter form, and by his splendid use of it he proved its capabilities and assured its success.

15.3. Butler's Poetry

Only one other poet of the period is important enough to detain us here, and he lives entirely on the strength of one work. This is SAMUEL BUTLER (1612-80), author of the famous *Hudibras*, the three parts of which were published in 1663, 1664, and 1678. A satire on the Puritans, *Hudibras* instantly hit the taste of the time, and by its popularity greatly stimulated the general reaction against the "saints" and their cause.

The machinery of the poem is obviously fashioned upon *Don Quixote*, for like that wonderful Spanish burlesque romance, it tells of the misadventures of a knight and his squire, and the knight's ill-fortunes in love. In the two central figures, the author holds up to our contempt two contrasted representatives of Puritanism : the Presbyterian Sir *Hudibras* himself being a military enthusiast who, though unconsciously a good deal of a hypocrite, is not consciously insincere ; while his attendant, *Ralpho*, is a vulgar, canting impostor, who merely assumes the mask of virtue for his own profit.

The story begins with an attempt of these two to put down a bear-baiting, which involves them in a tremendous conflict with the rabble, and leads to their being set by the heels in the parish stocks. This is the most amusing portion of the book. Other incidents follow which keep up the interest till well on into the second part; but after this the story lapses, and the rest of the poem is composed of odds and ends of epistles, digressions, and satiric tirades.

To modern taste, *Hudibras* is far too long; some of its best passages suffer from prolixity, and too much space is given to discussing various points of Puritan casuistry. The local and temporary nature of its subject matter is also a serious disadvantage in the eyes of the reader of to-day. Yet it is full of wit and vivacity, and even its doggerel meter and its astonishing double rimes, though we tire of them after a while, are, as Dryden said, fitted to the spirit and purpose of the burlesque.

It was Butler's intention to kill Puritanism by ridicule, and we can well understand that his poem delighted the court, and was the favorite reading of Charles II., who, by the bye, while he laughed over and praised it, none the less permitted the author to spend his last years in poverty. It need hardly be added, however, that we are not to take Butler's picture of Puritanism as complete and final. It is a mere caricature. He saw only the extravagance and charlatanism, which were often associated with Puritanism. But its greatness and strength the

elements which rendered it so important in the making of history he could not or would not see, or at least, he gave them no recognition in his work.

15.4. Mac Flecknoe

Mac Flecknoe is the poet-king of the realm of nonsense. After many years as ruler, however, it comes time for him to step down. Ultimately, he chooses his son Thomas Shadwell, a poet of unparalleled dreadfulness, as his successor. Shadwell is the worst writer in all the land, and thus, the perfect man for the job. Upon arriving in the city of August (a.k.a. London), Shadwell is crowned king of the realm of nonsense. Mac Flecknoe himself delivers a brief speech on his son's merits (or lack thereof) during the coronation. At this point all the action pretty much stops, as the poem devolves into a thinly-veiled, full-force condemnation of Shadwell's writing and character by the speaker. In the end, crowned and ready to rule in his father's footsteps, Shadwell is poised to sink poetry to an even lower level.

15.5. Other Poetry Writers of the Period

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE (1628-99), who is best known through his relations with Swift, and who wrote letters and essays in a plain but polished style, and JOHN TILLOTSON (1630-94), who, abandoning the older tradition of the pulpit, introduced a similar style into religious oratory, have a certain importance in the establishment of the new prose. The great value of that prose in philosophic exposition and discussion was distinctly shown by JOHN LOCKE (1632- 1704) in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, *Treatise on Government*, and *Thoughts on Education*. But the most interesting minor prose writing of the time for the general reader is to be found in the work of the two diarists, JOHNEVELYN (1620-1706) and SAMUEL PEPYS (1633-1703).

Evelyn's *Diary* is now read mainly as a record of contemporary events as seen from the point of view of a loyal, thoughtful, and high-minded royalist. It is written in a grave, simple style.

On the other hand, Pepys's *Diary*, apart from its historical value, is one of the most entertaining of books, and the most extraordinary thing of its kind in any literature. It covers a period of nearly ten years from 1st January, 1660, to 31st May, 1669, when the writer's eyesight gave out and therefore includes, among many other noteworthy occurrences, the Restoration, the Great Plague, and the Great Fire. But its principal interest lies in the vivid descriptions which it gives of the men and manners of the day, and the habits, fashions, and scandals of the "Town," in its reproduction of the gossip of the streets, the coffee-

houses, and the playhouses, and in its record of the personal life and doings, the domestic troubles, the jealousies, philandering's, successes and disappointments of the irrepressible diarist himself. Pepys did not write for the public eye, but for himself alone; he used a shorthand which was not deciphered till the early nineteenth century; and so certain was he of the inviolable secrecy of his journal, that he did not scruple to entrust it with his inmost thoughts and feelings. As a revelation of character from the inside, the Diary is unique.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

The second credibility story of the Glorious Revolution was that the increased credibility of the government's constitutional structure translated into an increased credibility for the government's commitments.

Check Your Progress

1. Between which sets of years did Dryden live ?
 - a. 1625-1700
 - b. 1628-1700
 - c. 1635-1700
 - d. 1631-1700
2. Which plays is not created and written by Dryden?
 - a. All For Love
 - b. Conquest of Granada
 - c. Love's Labour's Lost
 - d. Tyrannic Love
3. Dryden's All For Love is based on:
 - a. Samson Agonists
 - b. Antony and Cleopatra
 - c. Caesar and Cleopatra
 - d. Romeo and Juliet

Glossary

Dryden's Contribution: Dryden was his age's dominant literary figure and influence. He established the heroic couplet as a standard form of English poetry by writing successful satires, religious pieces, fables, epigrams, compliments, prologues, and plays with it; he also introduced the alexandrine and triplet into the form.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.d

2.c

3.b

Suggested Readings

1. Craig, Hardin. A History of English Literature. Collier Books. 1962.
2. Cambridge University Press et al. The New Cambridge History of English Literature. Cambridge University Press. 1999.

Unit -16

Metaphysical Poets

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

16.1. Introduction

16.2. Metaphysical Poets

16.3. History of Metaphysical Poets

16.4. Characteristics

16.5. Themes

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit discusses that Metaphysical poetry uses ambiguity, imagery, and humour to rouse readers. Metaphysical poetry ponders religion, faith, spirituality, and existence.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To define the characteristics and objectives of metaphysical poetry
 - To identify critical traits of the styles of several metaphysical poets
 - To analyze a metaphysical poem and present that information in an academic setting
-

16.1. Introduction

The term Metaphysical poets was coined by the critic Samuel Johnson to describe a loose group of 17th-century English poets whose work was characterized by the inventive use of conceits, and by a greater emphasis on the spoken rather than lyrical quality of their verse. These poets were not formally affiliated and few were highly regarded until 20th century attention established their importance. Given the lack of coherence as a movement, and the diversity of style among poets, it has

been suggested that calling them Baroque poets after their era might be more useful. Once the Metaphysical style was established, however, it was occasionally adopted by others, especially younger poets, to fit appropriate circumstances.

16.2. Metaphysical Poets

Metaphysical poet, any of the poets in 17th century England who inclined to the personal and intellectual complexity and concentration that is displayed in the poetry of John Donne, the chief of the Metaphysical. Others include Henry Vaughan, Andrew Marvell, John Cleveland, and Abraham Cowley as well as, to a lesser extent, George Herbert and Richard Crashaw.

Their work is a blend of emotion and intellectual ingenuity, characterized by conceit or “wit”- that is, by the sometimes violent yoking together of apparently unconnected ideas and things so that the reader is startled out of his complacency and forced to think through the argument of the poem. Metaphysical poetry is less concerned with expressing feeling than with analysing it, with the poet exploring the recesses of his consciousness. The boldness of the literary devices used- especially obliquity, irony, and paradox-are often reinforced by a dramatic directness of language and rhythms derived from living speech.

16.3. History of Metaphysical Poets

The term “metaphysical poets” was first used by Samuel Johnson (1744). The hallmark of their poetry is the metaphysical conceit, a reliance on intellectual wit, learned and sensuous imagery, and subtle argument. Although this method was by no means new, these men infused new life into English poetry by the freshness and originality of their approach. Nowadays the term is used to group together certain 17th-century poets, usually John Donne, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Thomas Traherne, Andrew Marvell and a few others.

Metaphysical poetry investigates the relation between rational, logical argument on the one hand and intuition or “mysticism” on the other, often depicted with sensuous detail. Reacting against the deliberately smooth and sweet tones of much 16th-century verse, the metaphysical poets adopted an energetic, uneven, and rigorous style. In his important essay, “The Metaphysical Poets” (1921), T. S. Eliot argued that their work fuses reason with passion; it shows a unification of thought and feeling which later became separated into a “dissociation of sensibility”.

Metaphysical poetry uses of ordinary speech mixed with metaphors, puns and paradoxes. Abstruse terminologies often drawn from science

or law are used in abundance. Often poems are presented in the form of an argument. In love poetry, the metaphysical poets often draw on ideas from Renaissance Neo-Platonism – for instance, to show the relationship between the soul and body and the union of lovers' souls. The poems often aim at a degree of psychological realism when referring to emotions.

Metaphysical conceits are of Central importance in metaphysical poetry. A (metaphysical) conceit is usually classified as a subtype of metaphor – an elaborate and strikingly unconventional or supposedly far-fetched metaphor, hyperbole, contradiction, simile, paradox or oxymoron causing a shock to the reader by the obvious dissimilarity, “distance” between or stunning incompatibility of the objects compared. One of the most famous conceits is John Donne's *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*, a poem in which Donne compares two souls in love to the points on a geometer's compass.

John Donne (1572 – 1631) was the most influential metaphysical poet. His personal relationship with spirituality is at the center of most of his work, and the psychological analysis and sexual realism of his work marked a dramatic departure from traditional, genteel verse. His early work, collected in *Satires* and in *Songs and Sonnets*, was released in an era of religious oppression. *Holy Sonnets* contains many of Donne's most enduring poems.

George Herbert (1593 – 1633) is recognized as "a pivotal figure: enormously popular, deeply and broadly influential, and arguably the most skillful and important British devotional lyricist." Throughout his life, he wrote religious poems characterized by a precision of language, a metrical versatility, and an ingenious use of imagery or conceits. In 1633, Herbert's poems were published in *The Temple: Sacred poems and private ejaculations*.

As a metaphysical poet, Andrew Marvell (1621 – 1678) is associated with John Donne and George Herbert. His poems include *To His Coy Mistress*, *The Garden*, *An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland*, *The Mower's Song* and the country house poem *Upon Appleton House*. Marvell's most celebrated lyric, *To His Coy Mistress*, combines an old poetic conceit (the persuasion of the speaker's lover by means of a *carpe diem* philosophy) with Marvell's typically vibrant imagery and easy command of rhyming couplets. Other works incorporate topical satire and religious themes.

Henry Vaughan (1621 – 1695) is considered one of the major Metaphysical Poets, whose works ponder on one's personal relationship

to God. He shares Herbert's preoccupation with the relationship between humanity and God. It was not until Vaughan's conversion and the writing of *Silex Scintillans* that he received significant acclaim. He was greatly indebted to George Herbert, who provided a model for Vaughan's newly founded spiritual life and literary career, in which he displayed "spiritual quickening and the gift of gracious feeling", derived from Herbert. Richard Crashaw (1613 – 1649) owed all the basis of his style to Donne. His originality was one of treatment and technique and he carried English prosody to a higher refinement, a more glittering felicity, than it had ever achieved. Among the secular poems of Crashaw, the best is *Music's Duel*, and *Wishes to his supposed Mistress*.

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 in that period and 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.

16.4. Characteristics

Grierson attempted to characterize the main traits of Metaphysical poetry in the introduction to his anthology. For him it begins with a break with the formerly artificial style of their antecedents to one free from poetic diction or conventions. Johnson acknowledged as much in pointing out that their style was not to be achieved "by descriptions copied from descriptions, by imitations borrowed from imitations, by traditional imagery and hereditary similes".

European Baroque influences, including use of conceits another characteristic singled out by Grierson is the Baroque European dimension of the poetry, its "fantastic conceits and hyperboles which was the fashion throughout Europe". Again Johnson had been partly before him in describing the style as "borrowed from Marino and his followers". It was from the use of conceits particularly that the writing of these European counterparts was known, *Concettismo* in Italian, *Conceptismo* in Spanish. In fact, Crashaw had made several translations from Marino. Grierson noted in addition that the slightly older poet, Robert Southwell (who is included in Gardner's anthology as a precursor), had learned from the antithetical, conceited style of Italian poetry and knew Spanish as well.

The European dimension of the Catholic poets Crashaw and Southwell has been commented on by others. In the opinion of one critic of the 1960s, defining the extent of the Baroque style in 17th-century English poetry "may even be said to have taken the place of the earlier discussion of the metaphysical". Southwell is a notable pioneer of the style, partly because his formative years were spent outside England. And the circumstance that Crashaw's later life was also spent outside England contributed to making him, in the eyes of Mario Praz, "the greatest exponent of the Baroque style in any language".

Crashaw is frequently cited by Harold Segel when typifying the characteristics of The Baroque Poem, but he goes on to compare the work of several other Metaphysical poets to their counterparts in both Western and Eastern Europe. As an example of the rhetorical way in which various forms of repetition accumulate in creating a tension, only relieved by their resolution at the end of the poem, Segel instances the English work of Henry King as well as Ernst Christoph Homburg's in German and Jan Andrzej Morsztyn's in Polish. In addition, Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress" is given as a famous example of the use of hyperbole common to many other Metaphysical poets and typical of the Baroque style too. The use of conceits was common across the Continent and elsewhere in England among the Cavalier poets, including such elegists of Donne as Carew and Godolphin.

"Europe supported by Africa and America", William Blake, 1796 The way George Herbert and other English poets "torture one poor word ten thousand ways", in Dryden's phrase, finds its counterpart in a poem like "Constantijn Huygens' Sondagh (Sunday) with its verbal variations on the word 'sun'. Wordplay on this scale was not confined to Metaphysical poets, moreover, but can be found in the multiple meanings of 'will' that occur in Shakespeare's "Sonnet 135" and of 'sense' in John Davies' "That the Soul is more than a Perfection or Reflection of the Sense". Such rhetorical devices are common in Baroque writing and frequently used by poets not generally identified with the Metaphysical style.

Another striking example occurs in Baroque poems celebrating "black beauty", built on the opposition between the norm of feminine beauty and instances that challenge that commonplace. There are examples in sonnets by Philip Sidney, where the key contrast is between 'black' and 'bright'; by Shakespeare, contrasting 'black' and various meanings of 'fair'; and by Edward Herbert, where black, dark and night contrast with light, bright and spark. Black hair and eyes are the subject in the English examples, while generally it is the color of the skin with which Romance poets deal in much the same paradoxical style. Examples include

Edward Herbert's "La Gialletta Gallante or The sun- burn'd exotic Beauty" and Marino's "La Bella Schiave" (The Beautiful Slave). Still more dramatically, Luis de Góngora's *En la fiesta Del Santísimo Sacramento* (At the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament) introduces a creole dialogue between two black women concerning the nature of their beauty.

Much of this display of wit hinges upon enduring literary conventions and is only distinguished as belonging to this or that school by the mode of treatment. But English writing goes further by employing ideas and images derived from contemporary scientific or geographical discoveries to examine religious and moral questions, often with an element of casuistry. Bringing greater depth and a more thoughtful quality to their poetry, such features distinguish the work of the Metaphysical poets from the more playful and decorative use of the Baroque style among their contemporaries.

Platonic influence

Ideas of Platonic love had earlier played their part in the love poetry of others, often to be ridiculed there, although Edward Herbert and Abraham Cowley took the theme of "Platonic Love" more seriously in their poems with that title. In the poetry of Henry Vaughan, as in that of another of the late discoveries, Thomas Traherne, Neo-Platonic concepts played an important part and contributed to some striking poems dealing with the soul's remembrance of perfect beauty in the eternal realm and its spiritual influence.

16.5. Themes

Long before it was so-named, the Metaphysical poetic approach was an available model for others outside the interlinking networks of 17th-century writers, especially young men who had yet to settle for a particular voice. The poems written by John Milton while still at university are a case in point and include some that were among his earliest published work, well before their inclusion in his *Poems* of 1645. His *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* (1629) and "On Shakespeare" (1630) appear in Grierson's anthology; the latter poem and "On the University Carrier" (1631) appear in Gardner's too. It may be remembered also that at the time Milton composed these, the slightly younger John Cleveland was a fellow student at Christ's College, Cambridge, on whom the influence of the Metaphysical style was more lasting.

In Milton's case, there is an understandable difference in the way he matched his style to his subjects. For the 'Nativity Ode' and commendatory poem on Shakespeare he deployed Baroque conceits, while his two poems on the carrier Thomas Hobson were a succession

of high-spirited paradoxes. What was then titled "An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet, W. Shakespeare" was included anonymously among the poems prefacing the second folio publication of Shakespeare's plays in 1632. The poems on Thomas Hobson were anthologized in collections titled *A Banquet of Jest*s (1640, reprinted 1657) and *Wit Restor'd* (1685), bracketing both the 1645 and 1673 poetry collections published during Milton's lifetime.

The start of John Dryden's writing career coincided with the period when Cleveland, Cowley and Marvell were first breaking into publication. He had yet to enter university when he contributed a poem on the death of Henry Lord Hastings to the many other tributes published in *Lachrymae Musarum* (1649). It is typified by astronomical imagery, paradox, Baroque hyperbole, play with learned vocabulary ("a universal metempsychosis"), and irregular versification, including frequent enjambment.

The poem has been cited as manifesting "the extremes of the metaphysical style", but in this it sits well with others there that are like it: John Denham's "Elegy on the death of Henry Lord Hastings", for example, or Marvell's rather smoother "Upon the death of the Lord Hastings". The several correspondences among the poems there are sometimes explained as the result of the book's making a covert Royalist statement. In the political circumstances following the recent beheading of the king, it was wise to dissemble grief for him while mourning another under the obscure and closely wrought arguments typical of the Metaphysical style.

The choice of style by the young Milton and the young Dryden can therefore be explained in part as contextual. Both went on to develop radically different ways of writing; neither could be counted as potentially Metaphysical poets. Nor could Alexander Pope, yet his early poetry evidences an interest in his Metaphysical forebears.

Among his juvenilia appear imitations of Cowley. As a young man, he began adapting Donne's second satire, to which he had added the fourth satire by 1735. Pope also wrote his "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady" (1717) while still young, introducing into it a string of Metaphysical conceits in the lines beginning "Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age" which in part echo a passage from Donne's "Second Anniversary". By the time Pope wrote this, the vogue for the Metaphysical style was over and a new orthodoxy had taken its place, of which the rewriting of Donne's satires was one expression. Nevertheless, Johnson's dismissal of the 'school' was still in the future

and at the start of the 18th century allusions to their work struck an answering chord in readers.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

Topics of interest often included love, religion, and morality, which the metaphysical poets considered through unusual comparisons, frequently employing unexpected similes and metaphors in displays of wit. The inclusion of contemporary scientific advancements was also typical.

Check Your Progress

1. What was the name of the poet who created the term 'Metaphysical Poets'?
 - a. John Dryden
 - b. Samuel Johnson
 - c. John Donne
 - d. Andrew Marvel
2. Which of the following is wrong about metaphysical poets?
 - a. They were lyric poets.
 - b. They belonged to the 17th century
 - c. Dr. Johnson coined the term
 - d. They wrote basically about Nature
3. Term is related to metaphysical poetry that proposes the tendency of these poets to display their learning in poetry?
 - a. Conceit
 - b. Discordia Concors
 - c. Wit
 - d. Metaphysical

Glossary

Metaphysical poets

(act. c. 1600–c.1690): is a label often attached to a loosely connected group of seventeenth-century poets, among whom the central figures are John Donne, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Andrew Marvell, and Richard Crashaw.

Metaphysical: The word metaphysical is a combination of the prefix of "meta" meaning "after" with the word "physical." The phrase "after physical" refers to something that cannot explain by science.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.b

2.d

3.c

Suggested Readings

1. Beer, Anna R. *Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature*. One world Publications. 2022.
2. Mullan, John. *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature*. Princeton University Press 2007.
3. Westland, Peter and Arthur, Compton-Rickett. *The Teach Yourself History of English Literature*. English Universities Press. 1950.

Block-5: Introduction

Block-5: The Age of Pope has been divided in to four Units.

Unit-17: Political Satire and Mock Epics deals with Introduction, Age of Pope, Characteristics of Classical Poetry, Pope's Life and Pope's Works.

Unit-18: Transitional Poets explains about Introduction, Influence of the French Revolution, Elements of Medievalism and Escapism, Supernaturalism.

Unit-19: Pre - Romantic Authors describes about Introduction, Characteristics of Pre-Romantic Works, Melancholy in Poetry, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Works of Thomas Grey.

Unit-20: 18th Century Novels presents about Introduction, 18th Century Novelists, the Rise of English Novel and Famous Novels of the 18th Century, Themes.

In all the units of Block -5 **The Age of Pope**, the Check your progress, Glossary, Answers to Check your progress and Suggested Reading has been provided and the Learners are expected to attempt all the Check your progress as part of study.

Political Satire and Mock Epics

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

17.1. Introduction

17.2. Age of Pope

17.3. Characteristics of Classical Poetry

17.4. Pope's Life

17.5. Pope's Works

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit deals with the early part of the 18th century, also known as the Classical Age, and is called the Age of Pope. Alexander Pope focused as an important person during this period. Moreover, called the Classical era the Age of Reason, Alexander Pope is considered the best poet of that time.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To familiarize with Pope and his major works
- To contextualize the poem given in your course for detailed study.
- To study the life of the Pope and his significant works, including

17.1. Introduction

Pope defines this literary movement in his "Essay on Criticism". The English Neoclassical movement drew upon classical and contemporary French models. The movement started with the Restoration in 1660 and lasted until the end of the eighteenth century when Romanticism fully emerged with the lyrical ballads of Coleridge and Wordsworth. Neoclassicism encompassed a fixed set of thoughts about the human

experience. Neo-classicists supported the ideals of order, logic, accuracy, restraint, and decorum.

17.2. Age of Pope

Though manners were coarse, politics scandalously corrupt, and the general tone of society brutal, the England of the early eighteenth century witnessed a resolute attempt in the direction of moral regeneration. As the reception accorded to Collier's Short View clearly proved, people were fast growing sick of the outrageous license which in fashionable circles had followed the return of the Stuarts, and had begun once more to insist upon those elementary decencies of life and conduct which the preceding generation had treated with open contempt.

As we shall presently see, the desire for improvement is a marked feature of not a little of the literature of this half-century, especially of the literature which emanated from middle-class writers, who were most strongly influenced by moral considerations. But, while revolting in this way against Restoration profligacy, the men of Pope's era were quite as hostile as their fathers had been to everything that savoured of Puritan fanaticism and religious zeal, and thus. However, England now began to regain lost ground morally, it did not recover the high passion or the spiritual fervour of the Elizabethan age.

In their dread of those emotional excesses which to them seemed almost as monstrous as the moral excesses of the roysterers, they fell indeed into the mood of chilly apathy. Virtue was recommended and preached, but any manifestation of earnestness, even in the pulpit, would have been regarded as dangerously suggestive of what was called "enthusiasm," and in shockingly bad taste. Good sense became the idol of the time; and good sense meant a love of the reasonable and the useful, and a hatred of the extravagant, the mystical, and the visionary. This is shown in the field of religion, in which the prevailing principles were rationalism and utility.

In the great Deistic controversy, which raged in England from the opening of the century to the death of Bolingbroke in 1751, the Deists, or advocates of a purely natural religion, kept up a persistent attack upon revelation and the miraculous, while far more noteworthy even than this is the fact that the orthodox defenders of Christianity themselves were just as rationalistic in spirit as their opponents. The assumption common to both parties was the supremacy of logic and reason. It was to the reason and to the good sense of their listeners that the greatest preachers appealed; they sought, not to stir the sluggish conscience through the feelings, but to convince the intellect; while on the whole

religion was conceived by them more as something necessary to the well-being of society, like an effective system of police, than as a power over the individual soul.

All the theological writings of the eighteenth century down to the beginnings of Wesley's evangelistic revival are characterized by this rationalistic and utilitarian temper. The same temper marks the literature of the age, which exhibits a similar coldness and want of feeling, and a similar tendency towards shallowness in thought and formality in expression. It is a literature of intelligence (though of intelligence which rarely goes much beneath the surface of things), of wit, and of fancy, not a literature of emotion, passion, or creative energy; and in its spontaneity and simplicity are sacrificed to the dominant mania for elegance and correctness.

This is true even of poetry, which seldom travelled beyond the interests of that narrow world of the "Town," by which men's outlook was commonly circumscribed, and finding its public in the coffee-house and drawing-room, drew for its substance upon the politics and discussions of the hour. Such poetry, however clever, was necessarily more or less fugitive; it inevitably lacked the depth and grasp of essential things that assure permanence in literature; and the quest for refinement in style resulted too often in stilted affectations and frigid conventionalism.

The Age of Pope is sometimes called the Classic Age and sometimes the Augustan Age of English literature. Neither of these terms can be commended, but they are so current that explaining the senses in which they should be understood may be well. The epithet "classic" we may take to denote, first, that the poets and critics of this age believed that the works of the writers of classical antiquity (really of the Latin writers) presented the best of models and the ultimate standards of literary taste ; and secondly, in a more general way, that, like these Latin writers, they had little faith in the promptings and guidance of individual genius, and much in laws and rules imposed by the authority of the past.-- When in 1706 Walsh wrote to Pope: "The best of the modern poets in all languages are those that have nearest copied the ancients," he expressed the principle of classicism concisely; and this principle Pope himself reiterated in some well-known lines in his *Essay on Criticism* :

"'Tis more to guide than spur the Muse's steed;
Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed;

The winged courser, like a generous horse,
Shows most true mettle when you check his course.

Those Rules of old discover'd, not devis'd, Are Nature still, but Nature methodiz'd ; Nature, like liberty, is but restrain'd

By the same laws which she herself ordain'd. . . .

Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem; to copy Nature is to copy them."

The other epithet, "Augustan," was applied in the first instance as a term of high praise because those who used it really believed that as the Age of Augustus was the golden age of Latin literature, so the Age of Pope was the golden age of English literature.

As this is not our view, the word's original meaning has disappeared. But we may still employ it as a convenient catchword, because it serves to bring out the analogy between the English literature of the first half of the eighteenth-century and the Latin literature of the days of Vergil and Horace. In both cases men of letters were largely dependent upon powerful patrons. In both cases a critical spirit prevailed. In both cases the literature produced by a thoroughly artificial society was a literature, not of free creative effort and inspiration, but of self-conscious and deliberate art.

17.3. Characteristics of Classical Poetry

To understand the course of English poetry during the eighteenth century, both along the main line represented by the work of the Augustans and their later adherents, and along the various lines of reaction against their influence, it is essential that we should have the salient features of the classical school clearly in mind. Though in the following epitome some repetition will be inevitable, this will be justified by the importance of the subject.

- (1) As we have said, classical poetry is in the main the product of the intelligence playing upon the surface of life. On the side of emotion and imagination it is markedly deficient. It is commonly didactic and satiric a poetry of argument and criticism, of politics and personalities.
- (2) It is almost exclusively a "town" poetry, made, out of the interests of "society" in the great centers of culture. The humbler aspects of life are neglected in it, and it shows no real love of nature, landscape, or country things and people.
- (3) It is almost entirely wanting in all those elements which we rather vaguely sum up under the epithet "romantic." In the Age of Pope, with its profound distrust of the emotions, a hatred of the "romantic" in literature was the logical accompaniment of a

hatred of "enthusiasm" in religion; romanticism and enthusiasm alike cut across all its accepted notions of reasonableness and good sense. The critical taste of the time was distinctly unsympathetic towards the "Ruder" Masters of our older literature towards Chaucer, for example, and Spenser, and even Shakespeare; and it was especially hostile to everything that belonged to the Middle Ages with their chivalrous extravagance, their visionary idealism, and their strong religious faith. This critical antagonism to romantic literature and art is everywhere reflected in contemporary poetry.

- (4) Extreme devotion to form and a love of superficial polish led to the establishment of a highly artificial and conventional style, which presently became stereotyped into a regular traditional poetic diction. Classical embroidery of all kinds was employed in and out of season until it was worn threadbare and made ridiculous by constant use. Simplicity and naturalness disappeared before the growth of a false conception of refinement, and grandiloquent phrases and pompous circumlocutions were substituted for plain and direct expressions even when the matter dealt with was of the most commonplace kind. Thus, when the classic poet undertook to refashion the crude stuff of an old ballad, he translated the downjight "God rest his soul" into the stilted "Eternal blessings on his shade attend," and honestly thought that he was thereby turning a vulgar colloquialism into beautiful poetry. This is a good illustration of that "gaudiness and inane phraseology" against which Wordsworth was presently to enter his emphatic protest.
- (5) Classic poetry adhered to the closed couplet as the only possible form for serious work in verse. A little attention will show that on account of its epigrammatic terseness this form lent itself admirably to the kind of poetry that was then popular. But it will be equally evident that it was bound to grow monotonous in the long run, and that it was too narrow and inflexible to be made the vehicle of high passion or strong imagination. The supremacy of the closed couplet should therefore be carefully noted.

17.4. Pope's Life

ALEXANDER POPE, the greatest master of this classic school, was born in London in 1688 during the Revolution and Bunyan's death. His father, a prosperous linen-draper, was a Roman Catholic, and on account of his religion Pope was excluded from the public schools and universities. The result was that he picked up most of his knowledge in a

haphazard way, and though he read widely he never became an accurate scholar. The want both of sound learning and of mental discipline is apparent in his work. Extraordinarily precocious (in his own famous words, he "lisp'd in numbers for the numbers came ") he published his Pastorals in 1709 and his Essay on Criticism in 1711. He lived with his parents first at Binfield on the skirts of Windsor Forest, and then at Chiswick, till the completion of his translation of Homer, the financial success of which enabled him (1719) to buy a house at Twickenham.

He passed the remainder of his life there, and he died in 1744. Long regarded as the foremost man of letters of his day, he was petted and spoiled by admiring friends, and might have enjoyed a far fuller mead of general esteem than actually fell to his share but for the petty spitefulness of his nature, which perpetually turned friends into foes. As it is, the history of his relations with his contemporaries is a tangled record of miserable jealousies and quarrels.

Our judgment upon him must nevertheless be tempered by recognition that his extreme irritability and peevishness were largely the consequence of chronic ill-health. As he puts it in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot (his devoted physician) his life was one "Long disease." Yet, despite his invalidism, he worked steadily almost to the last, and with a sincere love of literature for its own sake, which is the more noteworthy because it was very rare at the time.

17.5. Pope's Works

Pope's poetic career falls quite naturally into three periods an early and a late period of original work divided by a period (1715-25) of translation. (i) To the period before 1715 belong a number of miscellaneous poems, of which the most important are: Four Pastorals, short poems on spring, summer, autumn, and winter, closely fashioned on Vergil and in the most artificial manner of their class (cp. 25). The Messiah, a poetic rendering of the Messianic passages in Isaiah, in imitation of Vergil's fourth eclogue.

The noble impressiveness of the original is quite lost in the meretricious glitter of Pope's overwrought style. Windsor Forest, undoubtedly inspired by Denham's Cooper's Hill. In this it is easy to perceive the indifference of the classic school to the real beauties of nature. Pope's landscapes copied from the Greek and Latin poets rather than painted from first-hand knowledge of what he professes to describe.

The Essay on Criticism, which is certainly very remarkable performance for a man of twenty-one. It is not original in conception, for it was

inspired by Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Boileau's *L'Art Poétique*. Nor does it contain any fresh or independent thought, for, as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu cruelly said, it is "All stolen". But Pope had read with some care the standard critics of the time, especially the French critics, and he puts the ideas he had gathered from them into wonderfully terse, epigrammatic, and quotable verse.

The poem is of great interest as a popular interpretation of the literary creed of the age. *The Rape of the Lock* may be called Pope's masterpiece. This was founded upon an incident in the Roman Catholic society where he had many friends. A certain Lord Petrie cut a lock of hair from the head of a young beauty named Arabella Fermor (the Belinda of the poem).

This practical joke led to a quarrel between the two families, and Pope was appealed to by a common friend, John Caryl, to throw oil on troubled waters by turning the whole thing into jest. *The Rape of the Lock* was the result. Pope defines the poem as "heroic-comical." It is better to call it a Mock Epic. In Butler's *Hudibras* humorous matter had found appropriate setting in rough doggerel verse. On the contrary, trivial occurrences are handled with all the dignity and seriousness that properly belong to the epic.

This calculated and sustained discrepancy between theme and treatment is of the essence of this particular kind of parody; and the effect is further supported by the arrangement of the plot upon the regular epic plan, the employment of the "supernatural machinery" which every epic was supposed to require, and the many passages in which scenes and phrases from the great epics are directly imitated and burlesqued. So admirably is all this managed that *The Rape* is the perfect thing of its kind in our literature.

The general flippancy of its tone, and especially by its cynical attitude towards women, shows us something of that fundamental callousness of feeling which the superficial gallantry of Pope's age scarcely served even to veil. (2) The translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the former made single-handed, the latter with much help from others represents the labors of Pope's second period. His *Homer*, as the two parts are together popularly called, has never ceased to be enjoyed and praised; but it contains far more of Pope than of Homer.

He took up the task with a very meagre equipment of scholarship, and had to depend much on former translations. But this disadvantage was slight. The real difficulty lay in the fact that neither he nor his age could understand or enter into the spirit of Homer or the Homeric world. His

public, however, wanted neither a scholarly nor faithful version of the Greek poems, but a readable, drawing-room rendering of them in accordance with the taste of their own time. This Pope gave them. As Gibbon afterwards said, his translation has every merit except fidelity to the original. It is, in fact, not Homer, but a very striking and brilliant piece of eighteenth-century work.

After the publication of his Homer, Pope confined himself almost wholly to satiric and didactic poetry. 4 The principal works of this third period are: Satires and Epistles of Horace Imitated. The Prologue to these the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot is especially valuable as the most frankly personal of all Pope's writings. It contains among other well-known passages the famous character study of Addison under the name of Atticus. The Dunciad, a long and elaborate satire on the "dunces" the bad poets, pedants, and pretentious critics of Pope's Day.

The Essay on Man, a poem in four epistles (portions only of a larger plan never carried out) in which Pope undertakes a defense of the moral government of the universe and an explanation of the physical and moral evil in it, on the optimistic postulate that "whatever is, is right." Dryden's Mac Flecknoe obviously suggested the epic machinery of this; but the inspiration is to be sought in Pope's innumerable quarrels with all sorts of people. While it is extremely clever, the utter obscurity of most of the dunces attacked destroys much of its point for the modern reader.

Unfortunately, Pope was not a philosopher, he had no natural leanings towards philosophy, and no training for it; it was simply the influence of others, and especially of his Deistic friend, Lord Bolingbroke, which induced him to dabble in it; and he certainly never thought out for himself the large and difficult questions with which he rashly set himself to deal. In consequence, the Essay is hopelessly confused and self-contradictory.

Therefore, no one would dream of using it as a treatise. But it contains many passages which are justly famous, and are still often quoted, for their rhetorical beauty and power. Pope's merits and defects are those of the classical school. We can no longer regard him as a great poet. He had neither the imaginative power nor the depth of feeling without which great poetry is impossible. Nor was he a great thinker. His view of life was the narrow and shallow view so characteristic of his age. But he was the very embodiment of the kind of intelligence currently known as "wit," which that age cultivated and admired. He was also, within his limits, a marvelously clever and adroit literary craftsman, and the neat, compact, antithetic, and epigrammatic style of writing which was the classical ideal, assumed perfection in his hands. After Shakespeare he

is the most frequently quoted of English poets, and such familiar lines as these, which are taken just as they come, will suffice to show his extraordinary power of condensed and happy phrasing:

"Who shall decide when Doctors disagree? "A little learning is a dangerous thing."

"And fools rush in where angels fear to tread." " To err is human, to forgive divine."

"The proper study of mankind is man."

"The Right Divine of kings to govern wrong." "A wit's a feather and a chief a rod;

An honest man's the noblest work of God."

He is also the most consummate master of the classic couplet, which he trimmed of some of the licenses which Dryden had permitted himself, confining the sense more rigorously than ever within the two lines. Pope's perfected model was followed with slavish fidelity by all other poets who used the couplet till the early nineteenth century.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit you have learned about the following:

Pope, in short, represents the best as well as the worst in the poetic diction of the 18th century. Robert Bridges is a great stylist of the 20th century, who tries consciously to cultivate an effective and elevated poetic style. Satire differs from humor in that it has a definite moral purpose. "It is our purpose, Crites, to correct/and punish with our laughter" says Mercury in Cynthia's Revels.

Glossary

Poetic Diction: Poetic diction means the choice and arrangement of words in a line of poetry.

Mock epic: form of satire that adapts the elevated heroic style of the classical epic poem to a trivial subject.

Check Your Progress

1. The poetic form Mock – epic is associated with
 - a. Dr. Johnson
 - b. Alexander Pope
 - c. Mathew Arnold
 - d. A.L. Tennyson

2. What type of humor does mock-epic poetry generally employ?
 - a. White humour
 - b. Dark comedy
 - c. Slap stick
 - d. Satire
3. The Rape of the Lock is written by
 - a. Johnson
 - b. Congreve
 - c. Alexander Pope
 - d. None of the above

Answers to Check Your Progress

- 1.b
2.d
3.c

Suggested Readings

1. Beer, Anna R. *Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature*. Oneworld Publications. 2022.
2. Peck, John and Martin, Coyle. *A Brief History of English Literature*. Second ed. Palgrave Macmillan. 2013.
3. Westland, Peter and Arthur, Compton-Rickett. *The Teach Yourself History of English Literature*. English Universities Press. 1950.

Unit - 18

Transitional Poets

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

18.1. Introduction

18.2. Influence of the French Revolution

18.3. Elements of Medievalism

18.4. Escapism

18.5. Supernaturalism

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit focuses on the second half of the eighteenth-century transitional poetry and transitional poets' major impact on Europe and the New World. The French Revolution, which leads to Elements of Medievalism, Escapism and Supernaturalism

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To study the Influence of the French Revolution and its impact.
- To explore the information or to delight in the inapplicability to life during the 20th Century
- To learn to Elements of Medievalism , Escapism and Supernaturalism

18.1. Introduction

The second half of the eighteenth century is known as a transitional period. It was an era of change from pseudo-classicism to romanticism. The decline of party spirit and the democratic upsurge greatly influenced life and literature. Many 20th century authors entered the debate, often sharing their ideas in their fiction and non-fiction writings. The death of the novel is the common name for the theoretical discussion of the declining importance of the novel as literary form.

The transitional poetry marks the beginning of a reaction against the rational, intellectual, formal, artificial and unromantic poetry of the age of Pope and Johnson. A strong reaction against stereotyped rules marked it. The transitional poets derived inspiration from Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton. Unlike the Augustan poetry, it is poetry of countryside, of common and ordinary people, and not of the fashionable, aristocratic society and town life.

18.2. Influence of French Revolution

The French Revolution had a major impact on Europe and the New World. Historians widely regard the Revolution as one of Europe's most important events. In the short-term, France lost thousands of its countrymen in the form of émigrés, or emigrants who wished to escape political tensions and save their lives.

A number of individuals settled in the neighbouring countries (chiefly Great Britain, Germany and Austria), while some settled in Russia, and many also went to Canada and the United States. The displacement of these Frenchmen led to a spread of French culture, policies regulating immigration, and a safe haven for Royalists and other counterrevolutionaries to outlast the violence of the French Revolution. The long-term impact on France profoundly shaped politics, society, religion, ideas, and politics for more than a century. The closer other countries were, the greater and deeper was the French impact, bringing liberalism and the end of many feudal or traditional laws and practices. However, a conservative counter-reaction also defeated Napoleon, reinstalled the Bourbon kings, and somehow reversed the new reforms.

Most of the new nations created by France were abolished and returned to pre-war owners in 1814. However, Frederick Arts emphasizes the benefits the Italians gained from the French Revolution: For nearly two decades the Italians had the excellent codes of law, a fair system of taxation, a better economic situation, and more religious and intellectual toleration than they had known for centuries. Everywhere old physical, economic, and intellectual barriers had been thrown down and the Italians had begun to be aware of a common nationality.

Likewise in Switzerland the long-term impact of the French Revolution has been assessed by Martin: It proclaimed the equality of citizens before the law, equality of languages, freedom of thought and faith; it created a Swiss citizenship, basis of our modern nationality, and the separation of powers, of which the old regime had no conception; it suppressed internal tariffs and other economic restraints; it unified weights and measures, reformed civil and penal law, authorized mixed

marriages (between Catholics and Protestants), suppressed torture and improved justice; it developed education and public works.

The greatest impact came in France itself. In addition to effects similar to those in Italy and Switzerland, France saw the introduction of the principle of legal equality, and the downgrading of the once powerful and rich Catholic Church to just a bureau controlled by the government. Power became centralized in Paris, with its strong bureaucracy and an army supplied by conscripting all young men. French politics were permanently polarized-'left' and 'right' were the new terms for the supporters and opponents of the principles of the Revolution.

18.3. Elements of Medievalism

For the interdisciplinary study of the medieval period, see Medieval studies. The Middle Ages in art: a Pre-Raphaelite painting of a knight and a mythical seductress, the lamia (Lamia by John William Waterhouse, 1905) Medievalism is a system of belief and practice inspired by the Middle Ages of Europe, or by devotion to elements of that period, which have been expressed in areas such as architecture, literature, music, art, philosophy, scholarship, and various vehicles of popular culture. Since the 17th century, a variety of movements have used the medieval period as a model or inspiration for creative activity, including Romanticism, the Gothic revival, the pre Raphaelite and arts and crafts movements, and neo-medievalism (a term often used interchangeably with medievalism).

In the 1330s, Petrarch expressed the view that European culture had stagnated and drifted into what he called the "Dark Ages", since the fall of Rome in the fifth century, owing to among other things, the loss of many classical Latin texts and to the corruption of the language in contemporary discourse. Scholars of the Renaissance believed that they lived in a new age that broke free of the decline described by Petrarch. Historians Leonardo Bruni and Flavio Biondo developed a three-tier outline of history composed of Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. The Latin term *media tempestas* (middle time) first appears in 1469. The term *medium aevum* (Middle Ages) is first recorded in 1604. "Medieval" first appears in the nineteenth century and is an Anglicized form of *medium aevum*.

During the Reformations of the 16th and 17th centuries, Protestants generally followed the critical views expressed by Renaissance Humanists, but for additional reasons. They saw classical antiquity as a golden time, not only because of Latin literature, but because it was the early beginnings of Christianity. The intervening 1000-year Middle Age

was a time of darkness, not only because of lack of secular Latin literature, but because of corruption within the Church such as Popes who ruled as kings, pagan superstitions with saints' relics, celibate priesthood, and institutionalized moral hypocrisy. Most Protestant historians did not date the beginnings of the modern era from the Renaissance, but later, from the beginnings of the Reformation.

In the Age of Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries, the Middle Ages was seen as an "Age of Faith" when religion reigned, and thus as a period contrary to reason and contrary to the spirit of the Enlightenment. For them the Middle Ages was barbaric and priest-ridden. They referred to "these dark times", "the centuries of ignorance", and "the uncouth centuries".[10] The Protestant critique of the Medieval Church was taken into Enlightenment thinking by works including Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–89). Voltaire was particularly energetic in attacking the religiously dominated Middle Ages as a period of social stagnation and decline, condemning Feudalism, Scholasticism, The Crusades, The Inquisition and the Catholic Church in general.

18.4. Escapism

Escapism is mental diversion from unpleasant or boring aspects of daily life, typically through activities involving imagination or entertainment. Escapism may be used to occupy one's self away from persistent feelings of depression or general sadness. Entire industries have sprung up to foster a growing tendency of people to remove themselves from the rigors of daily life – especially into the digital world. Many activities that are normal parts of a healthy existence (e.g., eating, sleeping, exercise, sexual activity) can also become avenues of escapism when taken to extremes or out of proper context; and as a result the word "escapism" often carries a negative connotation, suggesting that escapists are unhappy, with an inability or unwillingness to connect meaningfully with the world and to take necessary action.

Indeed, the Oxford English Dictionary defined escapism as “The tendency to seek, or the practice of seeking, distraction from what normally has to be endured”. However, many challenge the idea that escapism is fundamentally and exclusively negative. Lewis was fond of humorously remarking that the usual enemies of escape were jailers and considered that used in moderation escapism could serve to refresh and expand the imaginative powers.

Similarly, J. R. R. Tolkien argued for escapism in fantasy literature as the creative expression of reality within a secondary (imaginative) world

(but also emphasized that they required an element of horror in them, if they were not to be 'mere escapism'). Terry Pratchett considered that the twentieth century had seen a more positive view of escapist literature over time. Apart from literature, music and video games have also been seen and valued as artistic media of escape.

Freud considers a quota of escapist fantasy a necessary element in the life of humans: "[T]hey cannot subsist on the scanty satisfaction they can extort from reality. 'We simply cannot do without auxiliary constructions', Theodor Fontane once said, "His followers saw rest and wish fulfilment (in small measures) as useful tools in adjusting to traumatic upset"; while later psychologists have highlighted the role of vicarious distractions in shifting unwanted moods, especially anger and sadness.

However, if permanent residence is taken up in some such psychic retreats, the results will often be negative and even pathological. Drugs cause some forms of escapism, which can occur when certain mind-altering drugs are taken, making the participant forget the reality of where they are or what they are meant to be doing.

Escapist societies

Some social critics warn of attempts by the powers that control society to provide means of escapism instead of bettering the condition of the people – what Juvenal called "bread and the games". Escapist societies appear often in literature. The Time Machine depicts the Eloi, a lackadaisical, insouciant race of the future, and the horror of their happy lifestyle beliefs.

The novel subtly criticizes capitalism, or at least classism, as a means of escape. Escapist societies are common in dystopian novels; for example, in the Fahrenheit 451 society, television and "seashell radios" are used to escape a life with strict regulations and the threat of a forthcoming war. In science fiction media escapism is often depicted as an extension of social evolution, as society becomes detached from physical reality and processing into a virtual one, examples include the virtual world of Oz in the 2009 Japanese animated science fiction film Summer Wars and the game "Society" in the 2009 American science fiction film Gamer, a play on the real-life MMO game.

Second Life. Other escapist societies in literature include The Reality Bug by D. J. McHale, where an entire civilization leaves their world in ruin while they 'jump' into their perfect realities. The aim of the anti-hero becomes a quest to make their realities seemingly less perfect to regain control over their dying planet.

Social philosopher Ernst Bloch wrote that utopias and images of fulfilment, however regressive they might be, also included an impetus for a radical social change. According to Bloch, social justice could not be realized without seeing things fundamentally differently. Something that is mere "daydreaming" or "escapism" from the viewpoint of a technological-rational society might be a seed for a new and more humane social order, as it can be seen as an "immature, but honest substitute for revolution".

Escape scale

The Norwegian psychologist Frode Stenseng has presented a dualistic model of escapism in relation to different types of activity engagements. He discusses the paradox that the flow state (Csikszentmihalyi) resembles psychological states obtainable through actions such as drug abuse, sexual masochism, and suicide ideation (Baumeister). Accordingly, he deduces that the state of escape can have both positive and negative meanings and outcomes. Stenseng argues that two forms of escapism exist with different affective outcomes dependent on the motivational focus behind the immersion in the activity.

Escapism in the form of self-suppression stems from motives to run away from unpleasant thoughts, self-perceptions, and emotions, whereas self-expansion stems from motives to gain positive experiences through the activity and to discover new aspects of self. Stenseng has developed the "escape scale" to measure self-suppression and self-expansion in people's favorite activities, such as sports, arts, and gaming. Empirical investigations of the model have shown that:

- the two dimensions are distinctively different with regard to affective outcomes
- some individuals are more prone to engage through one type of escapism
- Situational levels of well-being affect the type of escapism that becomes dominant at a specific time.

18.5. Supernaturalism

Supernaturalism, a belief in an otherworldly realm or reality that, in one way or another, is commonly associated with all forms of religion. Evidence of neither the idea of nature nor the experience of a purely natural realm is found among primitive people, who inhabit a wonder world charged with the sacred power (or mana), spirits, and deities. Primitive man associates whatever is experienced as uncanny or powerful with the presence of a sacred or numinous power; yet he

constantly lives in a profane realm that is made comprehensible by a paradigmatic, mythical sacred realm. In the higher religions a gulf usually is created between the sacred and the profane, or the here and the beyond, and it is only with the appearance of this gulf that a distinction becomes drawn between the natural and the supernatural, a distinction that is not found, for example, in the classical religious traditions of Greece and China.

Both the Olympian deities of ancient Greece and the Tao ("Way") of ancient China were apprehended as lying at the centre of what today is commonly known as the natural; yet they were described in language that was imbued with concepts of the sacred. Paradoxically, the most radical division between the natural and the supernatural is established by those forms of religion that posit a final or ultimate coincidence between the natural and the supernatural, or the sacred and the profane. This is true both in Indian mystical religion and in Near Eastern and Western eschatological religions, which are concerned with the last time that inaugurates a new sacred age.

Buddhism, from its very beginning, established a total distinction between the realm of life and individual (saṃsāra), which it identified interiorly as the arena of pain and suffering, and the goal of the Buddhist way, Nirvāṇa, which is understood in wholly negative terms as a final and total release from saṃsāra. As Buddhism developed in India, however, and did so in part by way of making the distinction between Nirvāṇa and saṃsāra ever more comprehensive and pure, it gradually but decisively reached the point of identifying Nirvāṇa and saṃsāra, and this identification, according to some scholars, became the foundation of Mahāyāna ("Greater Vehicle") Buddhism.

Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islām, which emphasize eschatology (the doctrine of last times), posit a radical dichotomy between the old aeon and the new aeon, or this world and the Kingdom of God. While normative Judaism cast off eschatology, although it was reborn in a mystical form in the Kabbala (Jewish mysticism), Christianity arose with an eschatological expectation of the immediate coming of the Kingdom of God. Primitive Christianity identified Jesus with the eschatological figure of the Son of man, a divine redeemer whose coming would inaugurate the Last Judgment and the end of the world. This early Christian faith went hand in hand with the belief that all things whatsoever will be transfigured into the Kingdom of God. Such a form of faith refuses to accept the world as simply world or nature but rather understands both nature and history as constantly undergoing a process of transformation that will issue in a wholly new creation or new world.

The secularization of modern Western civilization has created a gulf between the natural and the supernatural because of modern conceptions of the physical universe as being controlled by scientifically knowable and predictable laws and as existing apart from the influence or control of God. Hence, the world becomes a profane reality wholly isolated from the sacred and the supernatural.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

By definition, a low (also spelled plough) is a farm tool with one or more heavy blades that breaks the soil and cut a furrow (small ditch) for sowing seeds. This spirit of emancipation is nowhere seen as a better advantage than in the freedom women gradually acquired. This break-up of Victorian 'compromise', traditions and conventions was accelerated by the rapid advance of science. Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Carlyle, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold were affected by the condition of man in contemporary society.

Check Your Progress

1. Against which thing Transitional poetry was a reaction
 - a. New rules
 - b. Poetry of Chaucer
 - c. Conventional poetry
 - d. Anglo- Saxon poetry
2. Transitional period is a fusion of
 - a. Middle class
 - b. Lower class
 - c. Lower middle class
 - d. Upper middle class
3. The Age of Jonson is otherwise called as
 - a. age of tragedy
 - b. age of comedy
 - c. age of transition
 - d. one of the above

Glossary

- Karl Calls:** The moral urgency of a Conrad, the verbal gifts and wit of a Joyce, the vitality and all-consuming obsession of a Lawrence.
- The Agricultural Revolution:** It was a period of agricultural development between the 18th century and the end of the 19th century, which saw a massive and rapid increase in agricultural productivity and vast improvements in farm technology.

Answers to Check Your Progress

- 1.c
2.a
3.c

Suggested Reading

1. Beer, Anna R. *Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature*. One world Publications. 2022.
2. Laird, Mark. *A Natural History of English Gardening 1650-1800*. Yale University Press. 2015.
3. Peck, John and Martin, Coyle. *A Brief History of English Literature*. Second ed. Palgrave Macmillan. 2013.

Unit - 19

Pre - Romantic Authors

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

19.1. Introduction

19.2. Characteristics of Pre-Romantic Works

19.3. Melancholy in Poetry

19.4. Samuel Taylor Coleridge

19.5. Works of Thomas Grey

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit deals with poets from the Pre-Romantic era, often termed “transitional poets”. This period echoes a penchant for and return to the world of creativity, sensibility and imagination after the age of Enlightenment.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able :

- To give the learners an insight into pre-romantic poetry.
- To familiarize the learners with the major poets and their works.
- To acquaint the learners with the women writers of the age.

19.1. Introduction

Pre-Romanticism was, cultural movement in Europe from about the 1740s onward that preceded and presaged the artistic movement known as Romanticism (q.v.). Chief among these trends was a shift in public taste away from the grandeur, austerity, nobility, idealization, and elevated sentiments of Neoclassicism or Classicism toward simpler, more sincere, and more natural forms of expression. This new emphasis partly reflected the tastes of the growing middle class, who found the refined and elegant art forms patronized by aristocratic society to be

artificial and overly sophisticated; the bourgeoisie favored more realistic artistic vehicles that were more emotionally accessible.

A major intellectual precursor of Romanticism was the French philosopher and writer Jean- Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau introduced the cult of religious sentiment among people who had discarded religious dogma, and he inculcated the belief that moral development was fostered by experiencing powerful sympathies. He also introduced the idea that the free expression of the creative spirit is more important than strict adherence to formal rules and traditional procedures. He emphasized the free expression of emotion rather than polite restraint in friendship and love, repudiated aristocratic elegance and recognized the virtues of middle-class domestic life, and helped open the public's eyes to the beauties of nature.

19.2. Characteristics of Pre-Romantic Works

Characteristics of Pre-Romantic Poetry Their poetry is not altogether intellectual in content and treatment. They value passion, emotion, and the imagination above the cold light of intellectuality. They naturally return to the lyric. Neoclassical poetry had mostly neglected.

The age of classicism is followed by a transitional period known as the pre-romantic age which comes from 1770 to 1798 about the last thirty years of the 18th century. In fact in this period, in the second half of the 18th century, we can observe a new sensibility in poetry and a new generation of poets was arising.

The best pre-Romantics poets were Thomas Gray and Robert Burns. The most important figure of the first generation of Romantic poets were: William Blake, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. They are characterized in general by the e emphasis of the self and it's relationship with the nature.

19.3. Melancholy in Poetry

Even if you are really sad, does not drink from the waters of the Lethe River, which would make you lose your memory, and don't pull wolf's-bane plants from the ground to poison yourself or dull your pain. Don't let your weak self-come into contact with a deadly nightshade plant, or drink wine from the mythical Queen of the Underworld. Don't make a rosary bead necklace from poisonous yew-berries, and don't become obsessed with symbols of death and decay like beetles or death-moths. And don't join forces with the owl in order to intensify your mysterious sadness. Doing any of the above will bring too much darkness and numb you to your pain.

When a melancholy mood strikes you-like a sudden thunderstorm that makes the sky weep, pounds down on the flowers, and covers all the greenery with an April fog-then feed your pain by gazing upon a rose that blooms only in the morning, or the rainbows over the sea, or bounteous peony flowers. Or if your lover is really angry, just hold her soft hand and let her express that anger while you gaze deeply into her beautiful eyes.

Melancholy is inseparable from beauty, because beauty doesn't last forever. It exists within Pleasure, which is already turning to poison even as the bee sips its nectar. And melancholy is also a part of Joy, who is always holding his hand up to his mouth, ready to wish people good bye. Indeed, melancholy is contained within all of life's good things, like a queen dwelling, partially hidden, within a temple. She can only be seen by those who fully embrace joy and beauty-who pop the metaphorical fruit of joy into their discerning mouths. The person who does so will taste Melancholy's sad power, and she will keep his soul as a symbol of her inevitable victory.

19.4. Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (21 October 1772 - 25 July 1834) was an English poet, literary critic, philosopher, and theologian who, with his friend William Wordsworth, was a founder of the Romantic Movement in England and a member of the Lake Poets. He also shared volumes and collaborated with Charles Lamb, Robert Southey, and Charles Lloyd. He wrote the poems *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan* and the major prose work *Biographia Literaria*. His critical work, especially on William Shakespeare, was highly influential and helped introduce German idealist philosophy to English-speaking cultures. Coleridge coined many familiar words and phrases, including "suspension of disbelief". He had a major influence on Ralph Waldo Emerson and American transcendentalism.

Throughout his adult life, Coleridge had crippling bouts of anxiety and depression; it has been speculated that he had bipolar disorder, which had not been defined during his lifetime. He was physically unhealthy, which may have stemmed from a bout of rheumatic fever and other childhood illnesses. He was treated for these conditions with laudanum, which fostered a lifelong opium addiction. Coleridge was born on 21 October 1772 in the town of Ottery St Mary in Devon, England. Samuel's father was the Reverend John Coleridge (1718 - 1781), the well-respected vicar of St Mary's Church, Ottery St Mary and was headmaster of the King's School, a free grammar school established by King Henry VIII (1509–1547) in the town. He had previously been master

of Hugh Squier's School in South Molton, Devon, and lecturer of nearby Molland. John Coleridge had three children by his first wife.

Samuel was the youngest of ten by the Reverend Mr. Coleridge's second wife, Anne Bowden (1726–1809), probably the daughter of John Bowden, Mayor of South Molton, Devon, in 1726. After John Coleridge died in 1781, 8-year-old Samuel was sent to Christ's Hospital, a charity school which was founded in the 16th century in Greyfriars, London, where he remained throughout his childhood, studying and writing poetry. Coleridge suggests that he "took no pleasure in boyish sports" but instead read "incessantly" and played by himself.

At that school Coleridge became friends with Charles Lamb, a schoolmate, and studied the works of Virgil and William Lisle Bowles. In one of a series of autobiographical letters written to Thomas Poole, Coleridge wrote: "At six years old I remember to have read Belisarius, Robinson Crusoe, and Philip Quarll - and then I found the Arabian Nights' Entertainments - one tale of which (the tale of a man who was compelled to seek for a pure virgin) made so deep an impression on me (I had read it in the evening while my mother was mending stockings) that I was haunted by spectres whenever I was in the dark - and I distinctly remember the anxious and fearful eagerness with which I used to watch the window in which the books lay - and whenever the sun lay upon them, I would seize it, carry it by the wall, and bask, and read." Coleridge seems to have appreciated his teacher, as he wrote in recollections of his school days in *Biographia Literaria*: I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though at the same time, a very severe master [...] At the same time that we were studying the Greek Tragic Poets, he made us read Shakespeare and Milton as lessons: and they were the lessons too, which required most time and trouble to bring up, so as to escape his censure.

I learnt from him, that Poetry, even that of the loftiest, and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more, and more fugitive causes. [...] In our own English compositions (at least for the last three years of our school education) he showed no mercy to phrase, metaphor, or image, unsupported by a sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words... In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your Nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian Spring? Oh aye! The cloister-pump, I suppose! [...] Be this as it may, there was one custom of our master's, which I cannot pass over in silence, because I

think it ... worthy of imitation. He would often permit our theme exercises, to accumulate, till each lad had four or five to be looked over. Then placing the whole number abreast on his desk, he would ask the writer, why this or that sentence might not have found as appropriate a place under this or that other thesis: and if no satisfying answer could be returned, and two faults of the same kind were found in one exercise, the irrevocable verdict followed, the exercise was torn up, and another on the same subject to be produced, in addition to the tasks of the day. In the poem *Frost at Midnight*, he later wrote of his loneliness at school: "With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt/of my sweet birthplace."

From 1791 until 1794, Coleridge attended Jesus College, Cambridge. In 1792, he won the Browne Gold Medal for an ode that he wrote attacking the slave trade. In December 1793, he left the college and enlisted in the 15th (The King's) Light Dragoons using the false name "Silas TomkynComberbache", perhaps because of debt or because the girl that he loved, Mary Evans, had rejected him. His brothers arranged for his discharge a few months later under the reason of "insanity" and he was readmitted to Jesus College, though he would never receive a degree from the university.

19.5. Works of Thomas Grey

Thomas Gray (26 December 1716 – 30 July 1771) was an English poet, letter-writer, classical scholar, and professor at Pembroke College, Cambridge. He is widely known for his *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, published in 1751. Gray was a self-critical writer who published only 13 poems in his lifetime, despite being very popular. He was even offered the position of Poet Laureate in 1757, though he declined. His writing is conventionally considered pre-Romantic, but recent critical developments deny such teleological classification. Thomas Gray was born in Cornhill, London. His father, Philip Gray, was a scrivener and his mother, Dorothy Antrobus, was a milliner.

He was the fifth of twelve children, and the only one to survive infancy. He lived with his mother after she left his abusive and mentally unwell father. Gray's mother paid for him to go to Eton College, where his uncles Robert and William Antrobus worked. Robert became Gray's first teacher and helped inspire in Gray a love for botany and observational science. Gray's other uncle, William, became his tutor.

He recalled his schooldays as a time of great happiness, as is evident in his "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College". Gray was a delicate and scholarly boy who read and avoided athletics. He lived in his uncle's household rather than at college. He made three close friends at Eton:

Horace Walpole, son of the Prime Minister Robert Walpole; Thomas Ashton; and Richard West, son of another Richard West who was briefly Lord Chancellor of Ireland. The four prided themselves on their sense of style, sense of humour, and appreciation of beauty. They were called the "quadruple alliance".

In 1734, Gray went up to Peterhouse, Cambridge. He found the curriculum dull. He wrote letters to friends listing all the things he disliked: the masters ("mad with Pride") and the Fellows ("sleepy, drunken, dull, illiterate Things"). Intended by his family for the law, he spent most of his time as an undergraduate reading classical and modern literature, and playing Vivaldi and Scarlatti on the harpsichord for relaxation.

According to college tradition, he left Peterhouse for Pembroke College after being the victim of a practical joke played by undergraduates. Gray is supposed to have been afraid of fire, and had attached a bar outside his window to which a rope could be tied. After being woken by undergraduates with a fire made of shavings, Gray climbed down the rope but landed in a tub of water which had been placed below his window.

In 1738, he accompanied his old school-friend Walpole on his Grand Tour of Europe, possibly at Walpole's expense. The two fell out and parted in Tuscany because Walpole wanted to attend fashionable parties and Gray wanted to visit all the antiquities. They were reconciled a few years later. It was Walpole who later helped publish Gray's poetry. When Gray sent his most famous poem, "Elegy", to Walpole, Walpole sent off the poem as a manuscript and it appeared in different magazines. Gray then published the poem himself and received the credit he was due.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

"The romantic movement" says William J. Long, "was marked, and is always marked, by a strong reaction and protest against the bondage of rule and custom which in science and theology as well as literature, generally tend to fetter the free human spirit."

The Romantic Movement was a revolt not only against the concept of poetry held by the neo-classicists, it was also a revolt against traditional poetic measures and diction. The romantic revolt against social authority took as many shapes as the one against literary tradition.

Check Your Progress

1. Wordsworth realized that to love nature is to
 - a. Love God
 - b. Love human
 - c. Love animal
 - d. Love women
2. Wordsworth revisited Tintern Abbey after
 - a. Seven years
 - b. Twelve years
 - c. Three years
 - d. Five years
3. La Belle Dame Sans Merci is a poem by
 - a. Shelley
 - b. Byron
 - c. Keats
 - d. Wordsworth

Glossary

- Bastille on July 14, 1789:** The more radical revolution in France, which started with the storming of the prison called the Bastille on July 14, 1789, had far more serious repercussions.
- The French Revolution:** The storm center of the political unrest was the French Revolution, that Frightful uprising which pro-claimed the natural rights of man and the abolition of class distinctions.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.b

2.a

3.c

Suggested Reading

1. Chandler, James. *The Cambridge History of English Romantic Literature*. 1st pbk. ed. Cambridge University Press. 2012.
2. Peck, John and Martin, Coyle. *A Brief History of English Literature*. Second ed. Palgrave Macmillan. 2013.
3. Westland, Peter and Arthur, Compton-Rickett. *The Teach Yourself History of English Literature*. English Universities Press. 1950.

Unit - 20

18th Century Novels

STRUCTURE

Overview

Objectives

20.1. Introduction

20.2. 18th Century Novelists

20.3. The Rise of English Novel

20.4. Famous Novels of the 18th Century

20.5. Themes

Let Us Sum Up

Check your Progress

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Suggested Readings

Overview

This unit provides a general introduction to eighteenth-century British literature and culture. The collection includes plays, novels, diaries, poems, and letters arranged into themes that characterise eighteenth-century life: the emergence of the novel, space and scenery, satire, and objects and materials.

Objectives

After completion of this unit, you will be able:

- To study the author's evolution from romance to modern novel in the eighteenth century, especially the differences between the modern novel and comparable publications from prior eras.
 - To acquire a taste for novels by reading, analysing, and discussing two major works and passages from numerous popular books.
 - To understand eighteenth-century novel structures and appreciate period writers' abilities.
-

20.1. Introduction

The art of fiction often involves the close imitation of true narratives. During the eighteenth century a number of innovations in both subject matter and narrative techniques took shape. The novelists had to

reconcile the demands of narrative order and the realistic portrayal. The novelists adopted various techniques to present their works' form and content. Some of them, like Defoe, Defoe adopted the episodic technique, which more often than not produced a loose baggy form of a novel, without much sense of narrative order or progression or organic unity.

Later Fielding self-consciously uses Chapters and Books as in his novel *Joseph Andrews*. This conflict between the demands of realistic presentation and aesthetic narrative order is evident in Sterne's anti-novel *Tristram Shandy*. Sterne blasts the conventions of the Novel even before this genre has had a chance to become a settled form.

The genre's new understanding of itself resulted in the first Meta fictional experiment, pressing against its limitations. Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759-1767) rejected continuous narration. It expanded the author-reader communication from the preface into the plot itself - *Tristram Shandy* develops as a conversation between the narrative voice and his audience.

20.2. 18th Century Novelists

The novel was well-defined by the 19th century. In the 20th century, however, many writers began to rebel against the traditional structures imposed by this form. This reaction against the novel caused some literary theorists to question the relevancy of the novel and even to predict its 'death.' Some of the earliest proponents of the "death of the novel" were José Ortega y Gasset, who wrote his *Decline of the Novel* in 1925 and Walter Benjamin in his 1930 review *Krisis des Romans*.

In the 1950s and 1960s, contributors to the discussion have included Gore Vidal, Roland Barthes, and John Barth. Tom Wolfe in the 1970s predicted that the New Journalism would displace the novel.

Italy Calvino is considered to have turned round the question "is the novel dead?", as "is it possible to tell stories that are not novels?" The years around the termination of World War II (1945) constitute something like a watershed in the history of the English novel.

Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, among the greatest of the Modernists, died in 1941. And it seemed that a great era had come to an end with them. Thereafter is a perceptible decline in the British novel. The post-*Ulysses* novel lacks, what Karl Calls, "the moral urgency of a Conrad, the verbal gifts and wit of a Joyce, the vitality and all-consuming obsession of a Lawrence."

On the whole, there has been less of experiment and innovation in the post-1950 English novel and more and more of parochialization and what is called “Little Englandism” Lacking the force and originality of their great Modern predecessors, the English novelists of recent years sometimes look like feeble imitators of the giants gone by. “One common characteristic” of most novelists of recent years is, in Karl’s words, “their inability to deepen and develop with time.

When Elizabeth Bowen, for example, experiments in *The Heat of the Day*, she does little more than what Virginia Woolf had tried in *Mrs. Dalloway* fifteen years earlier. When Joyce Cary in *The Horse’s Mouth* and elsewhere tampers with language, he barely scrapes the surface of what Joyce attempted with words. When Durrell talks about love in his *Alexandria Quartet*, he points towards but hardly reaches Lawrence’s examination of love. When Graham Green uses moral issues without a religious frame of reference, he is dealing with a subject that many nineteenth-century novelists wrote about extensively and with greater range.”

20.3. The Rise of English Novel

The rise of the English novel occurred primarily in the 18th century; this does not mean that there was no form of novel before this time. It only means that there was an increased release of novels and novelists during this period. The 18th century was a period that lasted from 1685 – 1815. Most often, the term is used to refer to the 1700s. This is the century between January 1, 1700, and December 31, 1799. This period witnessed a great revolution that shook the society structure of its time. The elements of enlightened thinking were at the fore of this revolution. This was experienced in the French, American, and Haitian revolutions.

On a larger scale, slave trading and human trafficking were at their peak. These revolutions were pivotal, so much so that they began to challenge the structure that threatened to asphyxiate its emergence from the monarchical system to the aristocratic privileges, especially the systems that nurtured to flame the slave trade.

In retrospect, a more profound sense of appreciation can be ascribed to this revolution that was seen as a threat but somehow waded through all the hurdles in its way. Without this revolution, a lot of privileges we partake in presently would not have been a thing to imagine, think, talk more of experience. Thanks to the revolution of the 18th century, we have and experience life with its modern perks. This century was called the ‘century of Light’ or the ‘Century of Reason.’ By this, you can tell that several idiosyncrasies were changed from being accepted as the norm,

ranging from European politics, philosophy, communications, and science experience a total upheaval throughout the termed “long 18th century” (1688-1815).

This Age of Reason, also called the Enlightenment bore cutting- edge schools of thought. From thinkers in Britain to France and even throughout Europe. These thinkers began to question the traditional normalcy they were born into and had adopted through their lives. These thinkers tasted the efficacy of rational thinking, logic and knew that their lives and reality as a whole were never going to be the same. They discovered that their lives as humans and others’ lives, in its entire vicissitudes, can be enhanced through rational thinking.

In an essay called, ‘What Is Enlightenment?’ (1784), Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher summarized the era’s dominance succinctly, as the: ‘Dare to know! Have courage to use your own reason!’ era. Not only Immanuel Kant’s essay came to thrive, but also an influx of other essays. This era saw the evolution of literature.

The major revolutions, the American and French Revolutions, were influenced by the 18th century. Just like childbirth, a mother goes through all the birth pangs in lieu of the joy she gets to carry through life. The 18th century is symbolic of this because all the rationale behind the chaos finally gave birth to the 19th-century, called The Romantic Era or Romanticism. Also, it gave life to numerous essays, inventions, books, laws, scientific discoveries, revolutions, and wars.

20.4. Famous Novels of the 18th Century

TYPES of NOVELS

1. Picaresque Novel.
2. Sentimental or Epistolary Novel.
3. Domestic Novel.
4. Gothic Novel.
5. Picaresque Novel

This form originated in Spain. The word Picaresque came from the Spanish word “Picaro’ which means a rogue. Cervantes was a Spanish writer who wrote a novel called “Don Quixote’ (1605) and with it begins the history of the Picaresque novel. “The Unfortunate Traveller” is the best example of the picaresque novel in English. This term is applied for any long story in which a number of separate events, sometimes comic or violent, were joined together only by the fact that they happened to the chief character. It basically deals with the adventure of the Hero, who

moves from one place to another in English; Daniel Defoe was the first to write a Picaresque novel.

Henry Fielding drew on the picaresque tradition to set his characters on the road by involving them in a great variety of adventures. Smollett made the picaresque novel quite popular. He was acquainted with the French and Spanish Picaresque novels. He had also translated a few and took the hero on series of adventures on land and sea. According to Edwin Muir, this genre is a very striking class in English fiction. This novel type is realistic in manner, episodic in structure and satirical in aim.

Sentimental Novel

It is also called as Epistolary novel. Epistolary came from the word "Epistle" which means letter. This kind of novel is written in form of series of letters. Here the main character corresponds with others through letters. Samuel Richardson, the father of the English novel. His famous novels are "Pamela or Virtue Rewarded", "Clarissa Harlowe" and "Sir Charles Grandison." one striking feature of his novels is that all are titled after the name of the protagonist. His works are largely the reflection of man himself and in spite of their faults, they are of immense importance for development of the Novel.

Domestic Novel

Frances or Fanny Burney is another important figure in the history of domestic novel. In this type of novel, the writer deals with the people's social life and the characters' daily lives. Fanny Burney makes the beginning but the most popular exponent is Jane Austen. Her novels are written with fine simplicity of style and show her to possess a considerable narrative faculty and a greatest for life. Her observation of life was keen and close, and her description, of society are in a delightful satirical vein in many ways like that of Jane Austen.

Gothic Novel

The term 'Gothic' originally referred to 'Goths'- a Germanic tribe, then came to signify 'Germanic' and then medieval. Towards the end of the eighteenth century grew the Novel of Terror or Gothic Novel better known as Gothic Romances. The English Romantic Movement which found its supreme expression in poetry, was reflected in a somewhat cruder and more primitive manner in the novel, where it helped to inaugurate a new literary genre- the thriller.

The first terror novel emerged with Horace Walpole's "The Castle of Otranto." The extraordinary change that emerged in the last quarter of

the eighteenth century is difficult to define, the Romantic Movement was essentially complex and changes in sensibility had long been in progress.

20.5. Themes

Most eighteenth century novels shared a number of themes. Some of these themes included: gender, money, love, travel, society/class, vanity, repentance, criminality, and identity.

Rise of the novel

Discover how the novel emerged as a new literary form in the 18th century and examine pioneering texts, from *Oroonoko* and *Robinson Crusoe* to *Gulliver's Travels* and *Pamela*.

Gender and sexuality

Examine representations of gender and sexuality in Restoration and 18th-century literature, including *Paradise Lost* and *The Rape of the Lock*, and explore the works of early women writers such as Aphra Behn, Frances Burney and Margaret Cavendish.

Theatre and entertainment

From Restoration comedy to *The Beggar's Opera*, *She Stoops to Conquer* and *The School for Scandal*: examine key plays alongside the history and conventions of Restoration and 18th-century theatre.

Politics and religion

The Civil Wars and the Restoration of the monarchy, the Enlightenment or 'Age of Reason', and British colonialism: investigate the political and religious contexts of Restoration and 18th-century literature.

Georgian society

Explore the Georgian period in its social, political and historical contexts, with overviews of popular politics, the rise of consumerism and entertainment.

Travel, colonialism and slavery

From *Robinson Crusoe* to the anti-slavery activism of Olaudah Equiano and the letters of Ignatius Sancho: explore a range of writing produced during an age of travel, trade and colonial conquest, in which Britain vastly expanded its Empire, fuelled by its involvement in slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

Satire and humour

Discover how writers of the 17th and 18th centuries used satire and humour to address issues around politics and power, inequality and class, gender and marriage – as well as to entertain readers and audiences.

Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, you have learned about the following:

This spirit of emancipation is nowhere seen as a better advantage than the freedom women gradually acquired. This break-up of Victorian 'compromise', traditions and conventions was accelerated by the rapid advance of science. Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Carlyle, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold were affected by the condition of man in contemporary society.

Check Your Progress

1. Who is the father of 18th century novel?
 - a. Henry Fielding
 - b. John Dryden
 - c. Walter scott
 - d. None of the above
2. 18th century is otherwise called as
 - a. Age of happiness
 - b. Age of romance
 - c. Age of nature
 - d. Age of Reason
3. 18th century novels focused on
 - a. Modernism
 - b. Realism
 - c. Post Modernism
 - d. Post colonialism

Glossary

Picaresque: picaresque novel, early form of novel, usually a first-person narrative, relating the adventures of a rogue or lowborn adventurer (Spanish pícaro) as he drifts from place to place and from one social milieu to another in his effort to survive.

Answers to Check Your Progress

1.a

2.d

3.b

Suggested Reading

1. Mullan, John. *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature*. Princeton University Press 2007.
2. Beer, Anna R. *Eve Bites Back: An Alternative History of English Literature*. One world Publications. 2022.
3. Peck, John and Martin, Coyle. *A Brief History of English Literature*. Second ed. Palgrave Macmillan. 2013.

References Books

1. Abrams, M H. Norton, The Norton Znthology of English Literature. New York, 1987
2. Alexander, Michael. A hlstory of English Literature. London: Macmillan, 2000.
3. Blamires Harry, A short History of English Literature. London, Routledge, 2020
4. Brink, Bernhard Ten. History of English Literature. London: G.Bell, 1986.
5. Francies Collier William, A History of English Literature a series of Biographigal Sketches, Norderstedt Hans eBooks GmbH 2017.
6. King Bruce, The Internationalization of English Literature. New York, Oxford University, 2004
7. Long, William J. Outlines of English Literature: With Readings. Boston: Ginn.
8. Pinfree David, Burnett Charles. Studies in the History of the Exact Sciences in Honour of David Pingree. Boston Brill, 2004.
9. Quennell, Peter. A History of English Literature. London: Ferndale Editions, 1981.
10. Sampson, George. The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature. New York: Cambridge University, 2010.

Journals

1. Bond, Richmond P. "English Literature, 1660-1800: A Current Bibliography." *Philological Quarterly*. (1938): 17-20.
2. Fowler, Alstair. "A history of English literature." *The Scriblerian and the Kit-Cats* 21.1 (1988): 81.
3. Hug, Sven E., Michael Ochsner, and Hans-Dieter Daniel. "Criteria for assessing research quality in the humanities: a Delphi study among scholars of English literature, German literature and art history." *Research evaluation* 22.5 (2013): 369-383.
4. Johns, Ann M. "The history of English for specific purposes research." *The handbook of English for specific purposes* 5 (2013): 30.
5. Lerer, Seth. "Medieval English literature and the idea of the anthology." *PMLA* 118.5 (2003): 1251-1267.

Web Links

1. <https://www.gradesaver.com/>
2. <https://www.enotes.com/>
3. <https://www.jstor.org/>
4. <https://www.sparknotes.com/>
5. <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/>
6. <https://englishLet Us Sum Up.com/>
7. <https://www.pdfdrive.com/category/35>
8. <https://www.copyright.gov/register/tx-examples.html>

Model End Semester Examination Question Paper

B.A. (Hons)English

Course Code: **DCBEN-12**/Course Title: **History of English Literature-I**

Max Marks: 70

Time: 3 hours

PART – A (2 Marks) 5x2=10 Marks

Answer any FIVE questions out of EIGHT questions

[All questions carry equal marks]

- (1).Who wrote *The Canterbury Tales*?
- (2).What is puritanism?
- (3).Define morality plays.
- (4).What is an interlude?
- (5).List out some of Shakespeare's predecessors.
- (6).Define metaphysical poetry.
- (7).What is melancholy in Poetry?
- (8).What are dialects?

PART – B (5 Marks) 4x5=20 Marks

Answer any FOUR questions out of SEVEN questions

[All questions carry equal marks]

- (9).Give a note on the Indo-European language family.
- (10).Briefly explain *The Canterbury Tales*.
- (11).Write a brief note on the university wits.
- (12).What are the characteristics of Elizabethan poetry?
- (13).Give a note on the Elizabethan Age.
- (14).What was John Milton's contribution to English Literature?
- (15).Why was John Donne called a metaphysical Poet?

PART – C (10 Marks) 4x10=40 Marks

Answer any FOUR questions out of SEVEN questions






[All questions carry equal marks]

- (16).Trace the origin of English Literature.
- (17).Give a detailed note on Drama and its types.
- (18).Write about Shakespeare's life and contribution.
- (19).What is Dryden's contribution to English Literature?
- (20).Narrate the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in detail.
- (21).Write a note on the rise of English Novels.
- (22).Give a detailed account of the life and literary contributions of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Document Information

Analyzed document	HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE-I -2 (1).doc (D162414684)
Submitted	2023-03-28 13:33:00
Submitted by	Dr.M.Nagalakshmi
Submitter email	nagalakshmi.sl@velsuniv.ac.in
Similarity	9%
Analysis address	nagalakshmi.sl.vels@analysis.arkund.com

Sources included in the report

W	URL: https://englishessayhub.com/introduction-to-english-literature/ Fetched: 2022-10-03 08:32:43	 2
W	URL: https://archive.org/stream/in.ernet.dli.2015.170244/2015.170244.A-History-Of-English-Literatur... Fetched: 2021-11-19 18:03:59	 45
W	URL: https://www.kngac.ac.in/elearning-portal/ec/admin/contents/3_18K2EAE2_2021012902402549.pdf Fetched: 2021-11-01 10:26:46	 18
W	URL: https://sjctni.edu/Department/en/eLecture/II%20History%20of%20English%20Literature.pptx Fetched: 2021-11-08 11:49:24	 10
W	URL: https://pdfcoffee.com/download/a-comprehensive-history-of-english-literature--pdf-free.html Fetched: 2021-11-08 04:48:25	 9

Entire Document

BLOCK 1
UNIT -1
THE ORIGINS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
STRUCTURE
Overview
Objectives
1.1 Introduction
1.2 Themes in the Period
1.3 Indo-European Language Family
1.4 The Germanic Languages
1.5 Historical Relationship of English to German
1.6 Techniques of Historical Language Study
1.7 What is a History of English Literature?
1.8 English Literature and English History
1.9 The Periods of English Literature
Let Us Sum Up

SWAYAM PRABHA

The SWAYAM PRABHA is a group of 40 DTH channels devoted to telecasting of high-quality educational programmes on 24X7 basis using the GSAT-15 satellite. Every day, there will be new content for at least (4) hours which would be repeated 5 more times in a day, allowing the students to choose the time of their convenience. The channels are uplinked from BISAG-N, Gandhinagar. The contents are provided by IITs, UGC, CEC, IGNOU. The INFLIBNET Centre maintains the web portal.

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students of Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies(VISTAS) are advised to use the SWAYAM PRABHA (A good initiative of Ministry of Education, Government of India) as part of supplementary learning materials in addition to the Self Learning Materials(SLM) supplied to the students.

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students of VISTAS can also visit **<https://swayamprabha.gov.in/>** and under Higher Education can view the videos uploaded in the website.



SWAYAM PRABHA

An initiative by Ministry of Education

SWAYAM PRABHA is a group of 40 channels devoted to telecasting of high-quality educational programmes on 24X7 basis using the GSAT-15 satellite

Connect with us

<https://www.swayamprabha.gov.in/>



Feedback /Queries
+91 7604974865



SMS Service
Call Us Now
+91 800992222



Mobile App

Turning every TV into classroom because education is not a privilege, but a Right

- With atleast 4 hours of fresh content repeated about 5 times daily, students have the privilege of choosing the viewing time as per their convenience
- Content creation is coordinated by IITs, CEC, IGNOU & UoH.
- BISAG-N uplinking the 40 SWAYAM PRABHA channels
- INFLIBNET centre maintains the SWAYAM PRABHA web portal
- AI - enabled SMS based schedule retrieval system
- 1.2 Lakhs + videos cover curriculum based course contents of UG/PG level of divers discipline including technical, non-technical & competitive exams
- SWAYAM PRABHA channels can be accessed through DDFree Dish | Dish TV | JiO Mobile App
- Archive videos & programme schedule for all channels
- Learn from eminent professors at your home
- IIT PAL: To assist the students for classes 11 and 12, who are aspiring to join IITs

Our Partners



Contact

Office of the Chief Coordinator
MSB 150, Department of Chemical Engineering
Indian Institute of Technology Madras
E-mail: swayamproiitm@dth.ac.in

SWAYAM Prabha Channels Information



Channel Number	Channel Description
Channels 01 – 10 & 40 are managed by CEC, New Delhi.	
1	Language and Literature
2	History, Culture & Philosophy
3	Social & Behavioral Sciences
4	Education and Home Science
5	Information, Communication and Management Studies
6	Law and Legal Studies
7	Economics and Commerce
8	Physical and Earth Sciences
9	Life Sciences
10	Applied Sciences
40	Arts/Literature, Social Science, Management and other Professional Courses, Natural and Applied Science
Channels 11 to 16 are Managed by IGNOU, New Delhi	
11	Social Sciences & Humanities
12	Basic and Applied Sciences
13	Professional Education
14	State Open Universities and Gyandarshan
15	Capacity Building and Teacher Education
16	Skill and Vocational Education
Channels 17 to 20 are managed by IIT Bombay	
17	Biotechnology and Biochemical Engineering
18	Electronics and Communication Engineering
19	Electrical Engineering
20	Physics

Channels 21 to 22 are managed by IIT Delhi	
21	Textile Engineering
22	IIT PAL (JEE competition assistance)
Channels 23 is managed by IIT Gandhinagar	
23	Civil Engineering
Channels 24 to 28 are managed by IIT Kanpur	
24	Aeronautical Engineering
25	Humanities and Social Sciences
26	Management, Law, Economics; Business Analytics, Communication, Cooperative Management
27	Mechanical Engineering, Engineering Design, Manufacturing E & T and allied subjects
28	Visual communications, Graphic design, Media technology
Channels 29 to 30 are managed by IIT Kharagpur	
29	Architecture & Interior Design.
30	Computer Sciences Engineering / IT & Related Branches
Channels 31 to 35 are managed by IIT Madras	
31	Instrumentation, Control and Biomedical and Engineering
32	Bridge Courses, Impact Series
33	Chemical Engineering, Nanotechnology, Environmental and Atmospheric Sciences
34	Health Sciences
35	Metallurgical and Material Science Engineering, Mining and Ocean Engineering
36	Skills and Logistics (IT - Enabled Sector, Banking, Financial and Insurance sector Skills Logistics, Supply Chain Management and Transportation, Life skills)
Channels 37 to 38 are managed by IIT Tirupati	
37	Chemistry, Biochemistry and Food Processing Engineering
38	Mathematics
Channels 39 is managed by University of Hyderabad and National Sanskrit University	
39	Performing Arts (Indian Classical Music and Dances), Theatre Arts, Film making and Painting



SATHEE

Self Assessment, Test and Help for Entrance Exams for Competitive Exams



Mentoring and live sessions from the students of Premier colleges of India



Video Lectures for Subject experts



Comprehensive E-Study Material



Test Series: All India Mock Tests Topic wise, Subject wise, Weekly Test



Discussion Forum & Problem solutions



Learning material available in English + 12 Regional languages

English

हिन्दी

বাংলা

मराठी

తెలుగు

മലയാളം

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ

ಕನ್ನಡ

ગુજરાતી

اردو

ಕನ್ನಡೆ

ଓଡ଼ିଆ

অসমীয়া



Sathee on App Store



Sathee on Play Store



Sathee Website

SATHEE is **LIVE** on **SWAYAM PRABHA!!** DTH CHANNELS SATHEE (COMPETITIVE EXAM)



CH 01: SATHEE-ENGINEERING
IIT Kanpur
▶ LIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



CH 02: SATHEE-MEDICAL
IIT Kanpur
▶ LIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



CH 04: SATHEE-AGRICULTURAL
IIT Kanpur
▶ LIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



CH 07: SATHEE-RRB
(Railway)
IIT Kanpur
▶ LIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



CH 03: SATHEE-LAW
IIT Kanpur
▶ LIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



CH 05: SATHEE-SSC
IIT Kanpur
▶ LIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



CH 06: SATHEE-BANK
IIT Kanpur
▶ LIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



<https://swayamprabha.gov.in/index.php/about/competitive>

+91-8953463074

prutor@iitk.ac.in

<https://sathee.prutor.ai>

*Marching Beyond **30** Years Successfully*
***43** Institutions, **36,000** Students **6000** Staff Members*



VELS



INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED STUDIES (VISTAS)
 (Deemed to be University Estd. u/s 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)

PALLAVARAM - CHENNAI

www.vistas.ac.in



VELS

MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL
 Under VELS INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED STUDIES (VISTAS)

(Deemed to be University Estd. u/s 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)

Uthukottai Taluk, Tiruvallur District - 601 102

www.velsmedicalcollege.com



**MAHAVIR INSTITUTE OF
 MEDICAL SCIENCES (MIMS)**

VIKARABAD, HYDERABAD- TELANGANA

www.mahavirmedicalcollege.org



**SRI VENKATESWARA
 DENTAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL**

Thalambur, Chennai

www.svdentalcollege.com



**MEGHNA INSTITUTE OF
 DENTAL SCIENCES (MIDS)**

NIZAMABAD, HYDERABAD - TELANGANA

www.meghnadentalcollege.com



**VEL
 NURSING COLLEGE**

Under VELS INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED STUDIES (VISTAS)

(Deemed to be University Estd. u/s 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)

www.velnursingcollege.com



**VENKATESWARA
 NURSING COLLEGE**

Thalambur, Chennai

www.venkateswaranursing.ac.in



VELS

VIDYASHRAM
 CBSE

Pallavaram - Thalambur - Cantonment

www.velsvidyashram.com



VELS GLOBAL SCHOOL

TAMIL NADU | KARNATAKA | DELHI - NCR | WEST BENGAL

www.velsglobalschool.com



VAELS

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

KKIC / CISCE / CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL
 NEELANKARAI - INJAMBAKKAM

www.vaelsinternationalschool.com



**KINDLE KIDS
 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

SLF Building, 510 Thomson Road #B2-00, Singapore

www.kindlekids.sg



**VELS
 KINDER KIDS**

No. 9, Dr. Ranga Road,
 Mylapore, Chennai

www.velskinderkids.com



South Croydon, Greater London
www.ctc.ac.uk



**SHRI ISARI VELAN
 MISSION HOSPITAL**

A Comfort Care Centre

150 Bedded Multi Speciality Hospital

www.velanhospital.com