

The English Renaissance covers the historical period from 1509, the year when Henry VIII ascend the throne, to 1660, the year which marked the beginning of the Restoration. The English Renaissance developed later than the European equivalent. Its main feature was its strong Protestant Basis.

The new literature was also influenced by the training in classical imitation of Humanist scholars and translators. Erasmus of Rotterdam stressed the importance of studying classical literature for the Christian student.

The Renaissance is also considered the "golden age" of poetry, because of the introduction of the sonnet. The sonnet was introduced into England by sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, from Italy, where it had been developed by Dante Alighieri and Petrarch(in the "Canzoniere"). Petrarch imitation also allowed Wyatt to construct a socially convenient persona in the Tudor court.

After a period of evolution, the English Sonnet came to be identified with the Shakespearean model.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford in April 1564, possibly on 23rd April, which is also the date of his death. His father was a yeoman(successful tradesman) until he met financial difficulties. William attended the local grammar school and he married Anne Hathaway when he was only 18. in 1584 he went to London, where he has been received into one of the acting companies at a very low level. in 1593 the theatres were closed because of the plague(peste). He needed the support of a private person, and he found it in a young nobleman. When the theatres reopened Shakespeare he was the shareholder of the most successful company in London. between 1590 and 1596 the wrote historical dramas, instead between 1593 and 1600 he put ten comedies onto the stage. he died in 1616 when he was 52 years old