

Renaissance (1500-1660)

Renaissance → French word → Intellectual Rebirth → classical life and learning
→ Free from church rule

A word which comes from the Italian **Rinascita**, which was first used in the 14th century.

Renaissance → division

Early Renaissance
13th/14th century

High Renaissance
15th century

Late Renaissance
16th century

⇒ The term Renaissance was first used by French historian Jules Michelet.

⇒ It started in the late 13th century
Florence. It started with the writing
of Dante and Petrarch.
↓ ↓
Divine Comedy Sonnet

The Renaissance began in Italy in the 14th century

⇒ In 15th century it spread from Florence to Italy and later in Europe.

⇒ In this time period Johannes Gutenberg
invented Printing press

↓
German painter.

Renaissance characteristics:

Humanism, free thought, Science, Music, Self-Awareness

⇒ Fall of Constantinople → capital of Byzantine Empire
↓
1453
↓
Attack by Turkey

⇒ Petrarch is traditionally called the father of Humanism and considered by many to be the father of Renaissance

⇒ Raja Ram Mohan Roy ⇒ Father of Indian Renaissance.

Renaissance meaning

The word Renaissance literally means 'new birth'. It was an era spanning the 15th and 16th centuries and a bridge between the Middle Ages and the modern world, which arguably started in the 18th century. The reason it is called 'rebirth' is that it was a conscious effort to bring back to life the ideals, art, and accomplishments of the ancient or classical civilisations of Greece and Rome. This ancient era is sometimes called 'classical antiquity'.

Deep dive

Some historians think of the Renaissance as a far longer period. They date it from the 14th to the 17th centuries. See the discussion below about dating the Renaissance.

Renaissance history

Before the Renaissance, there were several situations that historians believe led either directly or indirectly to the new era. In the 14th and 15th centuries, two severe problems confronted Europe. The first was the **Great Famine** (1315-1317). The second was the **Black Death** (1347-1351).

Deep dive

The **Great Famine** ended a time of wealth and prosperity in Europe. There were several reasons for the famine, including unusually warm weather, which caused crops to fail and disease and death among livestock populations.

The **Black Death** (also known as the Bubonic Plague) was a European pandemic which affected a vast area as far south as North Africa and as far east as parts of the modern Middle East. In total, it is estimated to have killed around 75-200 million people. No one knows exactly where the Bubonic plague came from, but it was first found in Crimea in 1347, from where it may have travelled via carriers such as fleas and black rats into Europe.



be the subject of study, and not God, as the Church had taught during the medieval period.

The Printing Press



- Johannes Gutenberg is credited with inventing the first printing press in Germany around 1400. By 1476 William Caxton had his own printing press up and running in Westminster, England.

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The Printing Press

The Printing Press



- **The Printing Press:** William Caxton was the person who introduced printing in England. Before that, the books were written out in longhand, what meant a very slow job.



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Thomas More was born on 7 Jan. 1478 in London. He was a lawyer, philosopher, writer, and statesman. He is best known for his book 'Utopia'.

Thomas More: (1480-1535)



- Thomas More was is considered one of the greatest of all English humanists, mainly for the book "Utopia", written in Latin, in which were about an imaginary island where everything is perfect.

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Utopia



- Utopia means "nowhere" in Greek; Thomas knew clearly that such an island could never exist. This dream of a place where happiness reigns and sorrow is banished is the most persistent of human fantasies and became a recurrent theme in many other British literature.

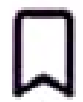
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As a philosophical movement, the Renaissance is associated with the term **humanism**. This is not to be confused with the modern idea of secularist humanism. It is, rather, related to Greek and Roman ideas about human beings being at the centre of life.

Definition

Secularist humanism is the idea that people can do very well on their own without the need for a God.

RENAISSANCE



- The Renaissance was a cultural movement that started in Italy and spread all over Europe.
- It is considered to be the division between the Middle Ages and the Modern era.

RENAISSANCE



- The thinkers of this period, also called "humanists", believed that the man should be the subject of study, and not God, as the Church had taught during the medieval period.

search for truth everywhere, as men sought for new lands and gold and the Fountain of Youth—that was the new spirit, which awoke in Europe with the Revival of Learning.

✓ In England there was an important change in religion and politics when King Henry VIII made himself the head of Church of England, bringing church and state together (1529-39). He cut all contact with the Catholic Church and the Pope in Rome, part of a reaction against the Catholic Church in many parts of Europe. Protestantism became more and more important, and gave a whole new vision of man's relation with God. The king or queen became the human being on earth who was closest to God, at the head of the Great Chain of Being which led down to the rest of mankind, animals, and insects and so on.

✓✓ The chief characteristic of the Renaissance was its emphasis on Humanism, which means man's concern with himself as an object of contemplation. This movement was started in Italy by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio in the fourteenth century, and from there it spread to other countries of Europe. In England it became popular during the Elizabethan period. This movement which focused its interest on 'the proper study of mankind' had a number of subordinate trends. The first in importance was the rediscovery of classical antiquity, and particularly of ancient Greece. During the medieval period, the tradition-bound Europe had forgotten the liberal tone of old Greek world and its spirit of democracy and human dignity. With the revival of interest in Greek Classical Antiquity, the new spirit of Humanism made its impact on the Western world. The first Englishman who wrote under the influence of Greek studies was Sir Thomas More. His *Utopia*, written in Latin, was suggested by Plato's *Republic*. Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesie* accepted and advocated the critical rules of the ancient Greeks.

The second important aspect of Humanism was the discovery of the external universe, and its significance for man. But more important than this was that the writers directed their

gaze inward, and became deeply interested in the problems of human personality. In the medieval morality plays, the characters are mostly personifications: Friendship, Charity, Sloth, Wickedness and the like. But now during the Elizabethan period, under the influence of Humanism, the emphasis was laid on the qualities which distinguish one human being from another, and give an individuality and uniqueness. Moreover, the revealing of the writer's own mind became full of interest. This tendency led to the rise of a new literary form—the Essay, which was used successfully by Bacon. In drama Marlowe probed down into the deep recesses of the human passion. His heroes, Tamburlaine, Dr. Faustus and Barabas, the Jew of Malta, are possessed of uncontrolled ambitions. Shakespeare, a more consummate artist, carried Humanism to perfection. His genius, fed by the spirit of the Renaissance, enabled him to see life whole, and to present it in all its aspects.

It was this new interest in human personality, the passion for life, which was responsible for the exquisite lyrical poetry of the Elizabethan Age, dealing with the problems of death, decay, transitoriness of life etc.

Another aspect of Humanism was the enhanced sensitiveness to formal beauty, and the cultivation of the aesthetic sense. It showed itself in a new ideal of social conduct, that of the courtier. An Italian diplomat and man of letters, Castiglione, wrote a treatise entitled *Il Cortigiano* (The Courtier) where he sketched the pattern of gentlemanly behaviour and manners upon which the conduct of such men as Sir Phillip Sidney and Sir Walter Raleigh was modelled. This cult of elegance in prose writing produced the ornate style called *Euphuism* by Lyly. Though it suffered from exaggeration and pedantry, yet it introduced order and balance in English prose, and gave it pithiness and harmony.

✓ Another aspect of Humanism was that men came to be regarded as responsible for their own actions, as Casius says to Brutus in *Julius Caesar*:

The Fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

Instead of looking up to some higher authority, as was done in The Middle Ages, during the Renaissance Period guidance was to be found from within. Lyly wrote his romance of *Euphues* not merely as an exercise in a new kind of prose, but with the serious purpose of inculcating righteousness of living, based on self-control. Sidney wrote his *Arcadia* in the form of fiction in order to expound an ideal of moral excellence. Spenser wrote his *Faerie Queene*, with a view "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle disposition". Though we do not look for direct moral teaching in Shakespeare, nevertheless, we find underlying his work the same profoundly moral attitude.

(A) ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

CHARACTERISTICS :-

- Rise of Hellenism ; passionate love for Greek Mythology, Literature
- Rise of Humanism ; Humanism emphasizes that Man is the center of the universe
- Emphasis on Individualism ; Everyman is free to do what he wants or thinks accordingly.
- Diffusion of New Learning ; Study of classical Writers of ancient Rome and Greece studied with great interest

How it began?

1453, Renaissance started from Italy -

'Constantinople' - A city of Greek and Latin learning, of ancient Manuscript

'Constantinople' attacked by Turks in 1453

So the Scholars of Constantinople fled the city carrying the learning of Greece and Rome with them, they ran to Europe

That event led to the revival of learning in Europe.

* (Constantinople) → Europe → Italy → France → England

'The War of Roses' - civil war, political conflict, 30 years struggle for power
1455 - 1485, b/w

House of York and House of Lancaster



Badge of York

Badge of Lancaster

Was 'White Rose'

'Red Rose'



Richard III

Henry VII

Also known as civil war, this was ended

Battle of Barnet

→ House of York and House of Lancaster
Badge of York was 'White Rose'
↓
Richard III

Badge of Lancaster was 'Red Rose'
↓
Henry VII

Also known as civil war, this was ended at
Battle of Bosworth field
Henry VII became the King of England.

Inaugurated 'Tudor Dynasty'

Themes of this Age

Love, beauty, power
Romance, lust, Money
Imagination, metaphysical
supernatural, Mythology
Liberty, Civilization development
Humanism, Comedy, Tragedy
dramatic romance, Novels, Humors



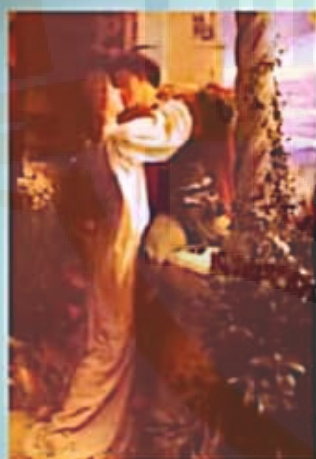
William Shakespeare: (1564-1616)



- William is considered the greatest of all English authors; his texts and plays are known worldwide and are updated constantly.



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Romeo and
Juliet



Hamlet



A Midsummer Night's Dream



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Three Sonnet Types



- Petrarchan (Italian)
- Shakespearean (English)
- Spenserian

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Sonnets



Characteristics of ALL sonnets:

- meter = iambic pentameter
- rhyme = definite, but varies from sonnet to sonnet
- 14 lines long



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Authors of the Renaissance Period

Renaissance authors wrote plays, poetry, and songs, and many of them came to be known as some of the greatest English writers of all time.

- **William Shakespeare:** Widely considered one of the greatest playwrights of all time, Shakespeare was so well-respected for his work that a specific **type of sonnet**, the **Shakespearean sonnet**, is named after him. During his life, he wrote dozens of plays and coined more than 1,700 words still used in English today such as "critic," "eyeball," and "zany."
- **Edmund Spenser:** Spenser is best-known today for his epic poem *The Faerie Queen*, widely acknowledged as one of the best in the canon. The poem was a glorification of England and its language. Later writers like Lord Byron and Percy Shelly would be directly inspired by him.
- **John Milton:** Milton was a **Puritan writer** who wrote *Paradise Lost*, another poem often ranked as one of the greatest in history. His work was infused with his religious beliefs while also embracing some of the newer thoughts of the Renaissance, such as the ability of humans to achieve great things.

Literary Characters of the 1600s

During the Renaissance, literature examples from poetry to plays showed a wide range of people who



Poets

Thomas Sackville
Thomas Norton
George Gascoigne
Edmund Spenser
Thomas Wyatt
Henry Howard
Sir Philip
Sydney Samuel
Daniel Michael
Drayton

Dramatists

W. Shakespeare
Ben Jonson
Thomas Middleton
John Webster
John Ford
Francis Beaumont
Philip Massinger
Thomas Dekker
Shirley
John Marston
Thomas Heywood

Prose

Sir Philip Sydney
Francis Bacon
Raleigh
Hooker
William Webbe

University Wits

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

takeaways

- The word Renaissance literally means 'new birth'.
- It was a conscious effort to bring back to life the ideals, art, and accomplishments of the ancient or classical civilisations of Greece and Rome.
- Two crises led to the Renaissance: the first was the **Great Famine (1315-1317)** and the second was the **Black Death (1347-1351)**.
- Two of the most important contributors to English Renaissance literature were Edmund Spenser (1552-1599) and **William Shakespeare (1564-1616)**.
- In the domain of scientific enquiry, the Renaissance merged art with science. Artists like Da Vinci drew careful and precise depictions of the human body and anatomy.



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Frequently Asked Questions about Renaissance

When was the Renaissance?

It was a movement during the 15th and 16th centuries in Northern Europe, which originated in Italy in the 14th century.

What is Renaissance?

Renaissance means 'rebirth'.

What is the Renaissance as a movement?

It was an attempt in the arts and literature to recover the ideas of classical antiquity.

What are 5 facts about Renaissance?

1. The word Renaissance literally means 'new birth'.
2. It was a conscious effort to bring back to life the ideals, art, and accomplishments of the ancient or

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