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القسم او الفرع : اللغة الإنكليزية

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اسم المادة باللغة العربية : الشعر

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اسم المحاضرة الأولى باللغة العربية: مقدمة عن شعر عصر النهضة

اسم المحاضرة الأولى باللغة الإنكليزية: Introduction to Renaissance Poetry

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16th century Poetry (The Renaissance Age) مقدمة عن شعر القرن السادس عشر (عصر النهضة)

In order to understand Renaissance literature we need to take a little time to look at the Renaissance itself. The Renaissance was a cultural and intellectual movement that spread throughout Europe during the 16th century and had profound effects on literature. **The Renaissance**, meaning rebirth, was a period in European history taking place between 14th century and 17th century. Although started in Italy with its root and beginning in 13th century, it soon spread through Europe. The world was emerging from the Middle, or 'Dark,' Ages. The movement actually began in Italy and spread to England, and the English Renaissance occurred from 1500 to 1688. While some scholars and historians argue that the renaissance did not happen outside Italy, but we cannot doubt that the 16th century was indeed a golden age of English literature.

Characteristics of the Renaissance

One key characteristic of the Renaissance was the idea of the divine right of kings to rule. Another was the development of humanistic ideas, such as the dignity of man. It was a time of scientific inquiry and exploration. This was also the time of the Protestant Reformation, and the invention of the printing press. With the introduction and development of the sonnet and Drama under the hands of great writers and poets like William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Thomas Wyatt, etc.

Although literature saw great developments, England under the rule of Elizabeth I, also saw advancements in science, exploration, the arts, and even religion. With the discovery and colonization of the Americas and the other parts of the world England was able to expand its boundaries and power, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 forever marked England as one of the great powers at sea. And thus The 16th century is labeled The Golden Age.

Reformation was a division in Christianity started by Martin Luther in 16th century. The division resulted in conflict and war in Europe. And England got involved when King Henry VIII (1509-1547) converted from Catholicism to Protestantism, one reason for his conversion was that he wanted a divorce from Catherine of Aragon because she hadn't given him a son. So the King converted to Protestantism and appointed himself the head of the church, and got his divorce. Later he married Jane Seymour, who gave him a son and heir to the throne of England, Edward VI, who also became the first monarch to be raised as a Protestant.

The Printing Press was first brought to England by William Caxton in 15th century. It played a big role in the spread of literature and literacy in England especially, in 16th century.

Patronage became one of the ways with which writers made money. This was like sponsorship, where a rich person would pay a writer to write. This sometimes limited the writer within the limits of what the sponsor's beliefs were, and so his writings reflected the values of the sponsor, or what the sponsor wanted to read, or watch.

16th Century Poetry

The most popular form of poetry in 16th century was the Sonnet. Invented by Giacomo Da Lentini, an Italian poet from the 13th century. The sonnet was brought to England by Sir Thomas Wyatt, when he started translating the works of the Italian poet Petrarch. And later it was developed and shaped into English and popularized by the likes of Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey, Shakespeare, Marlowe, and others.

The Sonnet has three major types:

1. **Petrarchian (Italian)** has 14 lines, an Octave and a Sestet.
2. **Spenserian** has 14 lines, three quatrains, and a couplet.
3. **Shakespearean** has 14 lines, three quatrains, and a couplet that's considered a conclusion to the poem.

Sonnets can be in rhyme, or in blank verse, but it must always follow the iambic pentameter. The theme can vary depending on the poet, but the most popular in 16th century was courtly love (Platonic Love).

Poetic Form: A Sonnet

A popular poetic form that was a part of the Renaissance poetic and literary repertoire is called the sonnet which means "little song." The two most popular sonnets were Italian or Petrarchan and English or Shakespearean sonnets. While both have 14 lines written in iambic pentameter (sets of stressed and unstressed syllables), Petrarchan sonnets consist of an octave (8 lines) and a sestet (6 lines). Shakespearean sonnets feature three quatrains (4 lines) and a couplet (2 lines).

The structure of a sonnet usually follows this paradigm: in the first part an issue or a question is being presented, while in the second it is being answered or resolved. Sonnets are a useful poetic form for writing about emotions as their structure is tight and disciplined and as such forces the writer to use sparse and distilled language and rely on figures of speech. The themes of most sonnets fall into these three categories: the brevity of life, the ephemeral nature of love, and the trappings of desire.