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eoconf.com - from 2024



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES AND EDUCATION: a collection scientific works of the International scientific conference – London, England, 2026. Issue 1

Languages of publication: Uzbek, English, Russian, German, Italian, Spanish

The collection consists of scientific research of scientists, graduate students and students who took part in the International Scientific online conference «**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES AND EDUCATION**». Which took place in London , 2026.

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Abstract. The Renaissance, which was marked by a resurgence of classical education, humanist philosophy, and creative innovation, represents a significant turning point in the history of English literature. The Renaissance, which had a significant impact on literature, education, and culture, began in Italy in the fourteenth century and made its way to England in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. While retaining close ties to moral and theological traditions, English Renaissance literature shows a rising interest in the individual, secular life, and intellectual inquiry. This article highlights the English Renaissance's enduring influence on the evolution of English literature by analyzing its historical context, key literary styles, prevailing topics, and representative authors.

KEYWORDS: English Renaissance, humanism, Elizabethan literature, drama, poetry, Shakespeare, classical revival

Introduction. The Renaissance, which translates to "rebirth," was a philosophical and cultural movement that marked the end of the medieval era and the beginning of the modern era. The early sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries (c. 1500–1660) in England are considered to be the Renaissance, which includes the Tudor and early Stuart eras. Significant shifts in philosophy, education, religion, and artistic expression occurred during this time, all of which influenced the creation of literature.

Classical Greek and Roman writings, which were rediscovered and studied by academics motivated by humanist principles, had an impact on the development of English Renaissance literature. In contrast to the purely religious focus of medieval literature, writers started to concentrate on human potential, individuality, and worldly experience.

European humanism, which placed a strong emphasis on education, classical education, and the study of humanities like philosophy, rhetoric, and history, had an impact on the development of the English Renaissance. Humanist scholars held that moral character and civic duty might be enhanced by studying ancient literature. The emergence of Renaissance literature in England was influenced by a number of historical causes. William Caxton's development of the printing press in 1476 promoted literacy and increased access to literature. The Protestant Reformation changed religious doctrine and undermined the Catholic Church's absolute power, giving authors more freedom to express their opinions. England's worldview was





broadened by exploration and scientific curiosity, which brought in fresh concepts and cultural viewpoints. Renaissance literature is marked by a strong interest in classical antiquity, particularly the works of Greek and Roman authors such as Homer, Virgil, Plato, and Aristotle. Writers adopted classical forms, genres, and themes while adapting them to English culture. A central feature of Renaissance literature is humanism, which focuses on the dignity, potential, and complexity of human beings. Literature increasingly explored individual emotions, ambitions, and moral conflicts. Secular themes such as love, power, beauty, and political authority gained prominence, although religious concerns remained important.

Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, introduced the sonnet form to English literature, adapting it from Italian poets such as Petrarch. Their work laid the foundation for later Elizabethan poets.

Edmund Spenser stands as one of the most important Renaissance poets. His epic poem *The Faerie Queene* (1590–1596) combines classical epic traditions with medieval romance and moral allegory. The poem celebrates virtues such as holiness, temperance, and justice, reflecting both Renaissance humanism and Protestant ethics.

Conclusion. A crucial phase in the evolution of English literature is the Renaissance. Renaissance literature changed the style and content of English writing by emphasizing humanism, classical education, and creative invention. Prose, drama, and poetry all attained unprecedented levels of complexity as authors examined the intricacies of the human condition in ways that still have an impact on modern literature. English literature became a significant cultural force thanks to the accomplishments of Renaissance writers, particularly in poetry and play. The Renaissance established the creative and intellectual foundation for the subsequent development of English literary history by fusing medieval customs with contemporary viewpoints.

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