

Ques:

Brief account of social, political and literary tendencies of Age of Dryden or Restoration Period?

"The work of restoration cannot begin until a problem is fully solved."

- Historical Overview of Restoration Age
- The period from 1660 to 1700 is known as the Restoration period or the Age of Dryden. Dryden was the representative writer of this period. The restoration of King Charles II in 1660 marks the beginning of a new era both in the life and literature of England. The king was received with wild joy on his return from exile. The change of government from Commonwealth to kingship corresponded to a change in the mood of the nation. In this period the Renaissance delight in this world and the unlimited possibilities of the exploration of world. The historical events like the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, the religious controversy and the revolution of 1688 deeply influenced the social life and the literary movements of the age.

The Restoration of Charles II brought about a revolutionary change in life and literature. During this period gravity, moral earnestness and decorum in all things, which distinguished the Puritan period were thrown to the winds. The natural instincts which were suppressed during the previous era came to violent excesses. The King had a number of mistresses and numerous children. He was surrounded by corrupt and degenerate ministers. The Great Fire of 1665 and the Plague that followed were popularly regarded as suitable punishments for the sins of the profligate and selfish king. While London was burning and the people were suffering, the king and his nobles kept up their revels. The beginning of the Restoration began the process of social transformation. The atmosphere of gaiety and cheerfulness and moral laxity was restored. The theatres were ~~restored~~ reopened. During the Restoration period there was a rapid development of science. The establishment of the Royal Society was a landmark in the history of England. The interest in science began to grow. The French manners and fashion moved from the court to the aristocracy.

religious and Political Conflicts:
This era also witnessed the rise of two political parties the Whigs and the Tories. These parties were to play a significant role in English politics. The Whigs sought to limit the powers in the interest of the people and the Parliament. The Tories supported the Divine Right theory of the King, and strove to restrain the powers of the people in the interest of the hereditary rulers. The rise of these political parties gave a fresh importance to men of literary ability. As Charles II had no legitimate heir, it was certain that after him his brother James, a Catholic would succeed to the throne. Efforts were made to exclude James from the throne. The King sided with his brother and he removed all obstacles for the accession of James. Dryden's famous poem *reflects* [Absalom and Achitophel] reflects these religious and political conflicts of the day.

'Faith without Action is dead.'

James II ascended the throne in 1685. He soon revealed his Roman Catholic prejudices and he secretly tried to establish Catholicism in the country. He became unpopular within three years and the whole nation rose against him. The bloodless revolution of 1688 called the Protestant William and Mary of Orange to the throne. The country was once again restored to health and sanity. These deep and vigorous movements brought about certain changes in the inner social life. It can be said that the last years of the seventeenth century form a distinct period. It is a brief but well marked transition separating the

They turned to the ancient writers for guidance and inspiration. Thus grew up the Neo-Classical school of poetry.

Imitation of France:

The Restoration era was an era of France influence both in literature and social life. The famous French writers - Corneille, Racine and Boileau were imitated. Boileau's 'Good Sense' ideal became very popular. English writers learned to look for guidance of the French writers and their styles like lucidity, veracity.

Correctness

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opinions, strict care and accuracy in poetic techniques.

4. Realism and Formalism

Restoration literature is realistic and urban. It was mainly concerned with life in London and details of dress, fashion and manners. The Restoration writers sought to paint realistic pictures of corrupt court and society, and emphasized vices rather than virtues.

5. Directness and simplicity of expression: The Restoration writers eschewed all extravagances of thought and language and aimed at achieving directness and simplicity of expression. To reform English prose, the Royal Society got rid of 'swellings of style' and adopted the use of 'naked, natural way of speaking.'

Imitation of ancient, imitation of the French, the correct school, Realism, directness and simplicity of expression marked the salient features of Restoration period.

"A lonely day is God's way of saying he wants to spend some quality time with you."

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