

Renaissance Literature Reveal Reawakening of Human Mind

Faria Saeed Khan

Department of English Literature,
University of Balochistan, Quetta, PAKISTAN.

ABSTRACT

By the turn of fourteenth century, the Christendom was stimulated by the Arabic translations of the manuscripts of Greek and Roman writers such as Aristotle and Plato. Many lost works of ancient Greek writers flooded into Europe. Classical literature was an expression of a wider love for man and nature. It did not abhor nature as a prison or human flesh as evil. Classical literature came to be called as Humanities and the scholars who advanced the movement came to be called as Humanists. Humanism was the philosophical view emphasizing human worth and secular studies in contrast with religious belief. Humanists consciously rejected medieval religious authority, returned to classical ideals, and maintained that the ideal person embodies all human excellences, including music, art, poetry, science, and virtue. For humanists virtue did not lie in monastic life but in a free and natural environment in which human potentialities could unfold.

Keywords: Renaissance, humanism, education

INTRODUCTION

The doctrine of humanism was original goodness where as that of church was original sin. Erasmus was the greatest humanist of the period. He composed *In Praise of Folly* his most famous and controversial work. In 1517 Erasmus was released from some of the constraints of his monastic vows, which allowed him greater freedom for travel and scholarship. He was sympathetic to the efforts of early reformers, who, in return, admired Erasmus's own attacks on Catholic hypocrisy. Although at times he seemed to straddle the fence between Catholic and Protestant sympathies, he remained in good Catholic standing and in his final days there was talk of making him a Cardinal. True to the humanist spirit, Erasmus believed that some pagans, such as Socrates, might be saints: "Perhaps the spirit of Christ is more widespread than we understand." This attitude is particularly present in *In Praise of Folly*. Modeled after Lucian's classic *Charon*, the essay is written as an oratory delivered by the personification of Folly, in which Folly ironically praises foolish activities of the day. The work is an attack on the superstitious religious practices, uncritical theories held by traditional scientists, and the vanity of Church leaders. Folly opens the essay explaining his plan.

'If you ask me why I appear before you in this strange dress, please lend me your ears, and I'll tell you. Don't listen, though, as you do in church, but, instead, listen as you would to jugglers, fools, and clowns, just as our friend Midas once gave to Pan. For I'm willing to play the sophist with you for a while. However, I'm not the sort who nowadays fills young people's heads with empty ideas and interesting tidbits yet teaches them nothing except an old nag's way of arguing. Instead, I'll imitate the ancients who chose to be called "sophists" rather than go by the disreputable name of "philosopher." Their business was to celebrate and praise the gods as well as valiant people. And similar praises you will hear from me, but neither of Hercules nor Solon. Instead, I will praise my own dear self: Folly.'
(<http://www.gradesaver.com/praise-of-folly/e-text/section2>) [1]

Humanism was not against religion but against the abuses and evil practices of the church. During the Renaissance period the medieval values did not vanish completely. There were two pictures superimposed upon each other, one fading, and the other emerging.

Renaissance is considered as an era of educational revolution. During this period education was reformed in the sense of secularism. The European students and scholars mastered Latin and Greek in-order to know and appreciate these classics. The wisdom of the ancient works originated, mainly, from the works of four writers: Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Seneca. Their teachings emphasized that human society depends on every member practicing such virtues as courage, generosity, and temperance. Queen Elizabeth translated Seneca's epistles. Thomas Lodge, wrote the Euphuistic tale *Rosalynde*. Which later became the source of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. Sir Roger L'Estrange published Seneca's *Morals by Way of Abstract*. Similarly, Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Defence of Poetry* says that poetry leads men to virtuous actions. In *Arcadia*, by setting his story in Ancient Greece Sidney implies that the classical virtues are sufficient to teach virtue, without the help of the Bible. According to Bloom: "the philosophers and poets of the classical world are those from whom we have most to learn, because the big issues they raised have not changed as the years have passed. They still have the power to inform and transform us, ...to move us, and to make us wise." (Cited Watson, 2006, 165)² The Greeks gave a new concept of a simpler and a purer world and of free intercourse with God. Odysseus is capable of rational thought, independent of gods. Greeks were the first to know what life is for and the value of human mind. Their characters were not puppets, stuffed and wired, but living men and women, having their own dreams, thinking their own thoughts, and working out their own destiny. Faustus desires to be more powerful than any other man, he pursues the forbidden attainment of the black arts and cares not if those consequences mean perishing in hell. Shakespearean tragic heroes are great and admirable in both their powers and opportunities. They are Well-placed member of society but they display one significant weakness which ultimately overcomes the other virtues of the hero and results in his downfall. The history plays of Shakespeare reflect his admiration for classical learning. Shakespeare wrote several plays based upon Roman history such as *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Plutarch was the main source for Shakespearean Roman plays. The effect of humanism on English literature was wide and far-reaching. Shakespeare, Marlowe and Ben Jonson took subject matter for their plays and their poetry from classical sources. Shakespeare wrote *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Julius Caesar*. The poems and plays of Ben Jonson often center on the difference between virtue and vice; he considers sincerity, honesty, self-discipline to be chief virtues, while lying, or masking of identity is vicious behavior. In the main plot of *Volpone*, the gullibility of the main characters is inspired by their greed. In the sub-plot Jonson attacks human vanity. *Sir Politic Would Be* considers himself wise and learned, and wants everyone to see him that way. His name gives us the indication of his vice, that he would be politic, or knowledgeable. In trying hard to appear knowledgeable, he appears stupid to anyone who meets him. Critics believe that Ben Jonson wrote morality plays to teach people, effectively, the difference between right and wrong. Shakespeare in his play such as the *Tempest* depicts a character (Prospero) who embodies a full range of human abilities: father, creator, ruler, magician, master, and scholar.

Almost all genres of Renaissance literature reflect the influence of classicism. One factor that had the greatest effect upon English literature was the translations of Plato's *Symposium* by Marsilio Ficino and of Aristotle's *Poetics* by Giorgio Valla. In accordance with Plato, Sidney emphasizes the superiority of idealized or platonic love over physical desire. Astrophel feigns an adulterous love for Stella, which serves as a foil to offset her inviolable chastity in repelling him. By overcoming his sensual desires, he, in turn, is led up the stair of

love, as it were, toward the intellectual love of God. Sidney's sonnets are filled with Platonic conceits. Similarly The Defense of Poesy epitomizes the literary criticism of the Renaissance. The Renaissance humanists greatly added to the quantity of classical literature. They were the harbingers of the modern world.

Renaissance Humanists paved way for new knowledge and scientific breakthrough. During the dark ages, freedom of mind was restraint and humanity was given a humble place. But Renaissance men were mathematicians, skilful draughtsman, scientists, philosophers, astronomers, poets and musicians. The education system became more vigorous, more purposeful, and better equipped than before. There was advancement in all fields of knowledge. The era took a quantum leap in literature, art and science. Renaissance is regarded as marking a radical change in patterns of thought- scholasticism gave way to humanism and individualism, religion to secularism, and superstition to science. The thinkers of the time argued that the aim of education should be development of individual's personality. They insisted upon retention of one's precious self. The highest aim of education was to strengthen the individual's qualities by cultivating his originality and uniqueness. A French humanist Charles de Bovelles states: "The nature of all other creatures is defined and restricted within laws which We have laid down; you, by contrast, impeded by no such restrictions, may, by your own free will, totrace for yourself the lineaments of your own nature. shaper of your own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer. It will be in your power to descend to the lower, brutish forms of life; you will be able, through your own decision, to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine." (<http://www.historyofideas.org/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv4-19>) [3]

The Renaissance Scholars studied antiquity along with traditional religious work. They criticized the old and orthodox values and promoted the study of intellectual, imaginative and spiritual works wherever it was found. By 1500 humanism spread to Western Europe and found expression in the writings of Dutch monk Desiderius Erasmus. Erasmus, in his work The Praise of Folly satirizes the monastic life and the indulgences and abuse of the church. He composed several progressive manuals for his students, the best known of these being his Familiar Colloquies. Desiring more freedom to study and write, he became a wandering scholar, tutoring and writing for his income. Erasmus believed that some pagans, such as Socrates, might be saints. His attitude is reflected in his In Praise of Folly. The essay is written as an oratory delivered by the personification of Folly, in which Folly ironically praises foolish activities of the day. Included are attacks on superstitious religious practices, uncritical theories held by traditional scientists, and the vanity of Church leaders. Erasmus satirizes the monks of his time and says that the monks think highly of themselves but the people detest them extremely. The monks think that it is essential to piety to be illiterate. Also, they recite their daily psalms and prayers by repetition rather than through understanding. In doing so, they believe God is exceptionally pleased with their whinnying. Some, in fact, make a substantial living by begging as they go door to door for their food. Indeed, there is scarcely an inn, wagon, or ship which they don't visit, and do much better than the typical beggar. Erasmus attacks superstitious as well as Christian rituals involving prayers to the saints. One such superstition involved the sale of indulgence certificates by the Catholic Church. The humanist of the time believed in the Christianizing of Epicureanism. Erasmus argued that the Christian virtues are actually Epicurean since the Christian is to have a life full of true pleasure. One of the clearest expressions of humanistic Epicureanism is given by English statesman Thomas More, in his famous Utopia. More describes an ideal island containing a society founded on reason. The work has been variously interpreted as a satire on the evils of his times, a dream world for scholars, or a forecast of communism.

Renaissance was an effort to rescue human knowledge from the oppression of religious authority and to introduce and promote modern aspects of teaching and learning. The humanists of the time emphasized human worth and secular studies and looked to classical antiquity for a moral and intellectual revival. They established schools for the study of classical literature and contributed new ideas to the advancement of social and natural sciences. Leonardo's work embodied Renaissance feeling that every individual carries in him unlimited potentialities, and requires not a lifetime of monastic devotion but the proper environment in which he can unfold. Machiavelli introduced a revolution in political thinking. The Prince was the outcome of the political problems which Italy was facing at that time. The Prince reflects Machiavelli's acceptance of classical authors as models and his secular attitude towards life. Unlike The Prince, Thomas More's Utopia shares the idea of a state that exists for its members. The church believed that the cause of social evil was in the curse of original sin. But Thomas More found it in the social structure built by man. He, like other humanists showed interest in active and secular life. This indicated the tendency of scholars to serve the state rather than the church. Utopia is an indication of what states might be if based simply on human reason. Thus the spirit of Utopia is a secular, a humanist one.

Christopher Marlowe's Edward II is one of the earliest history plays; it paved the way for Shakespeare's histories such as Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V. Edward II. Shakespeare wrote ten plays about English kings- from John to Henry VIII. Shakespeare, for his Roman history, Julius Caesar drew heavily on Plutarch. According to Neilson, "...The facts of history do not always lend themselves to effective theatrical representation, and in the attempt to combine history and drama both frequently suffered. But surprisingly often the playwrights found opportunity for such studies of character as that of the King in Marlowe's tragedy, for real dramatic structure as in Shakespeare's "Richard III," or for the display of gorgeous rhetoric and national exultation as in "Henry V." The authors sought to give the actors fine lines to deliver, without seeking to imitate the manner of actual conversation; and if the story was conveyed interestingly and absorbingly, no further illusion was sought. If this implied some loss, it also made possible much splendid poetry."

(<http://www.bartleby.com/60/203.html>) [4]

Renaissance stands for making scientific inquiry into the mysteries of life. The ancient Greek spirit of scientific inquiry inspired all educated men. Sir Francis Bacon was deeply influenced by the Renaissance spirit. He applied the principles of rational inquiry to the study of the natural world and in doing so he established the scientific way of investigation as a powerful means of gaining knowledge of the physical world. The mode of inquiry turned away from pious Christian thinking towards empirical experience in the search of knowledge of truth. Bacon rejected the medieval scholastic philosophy. He did not admire a contemplative life; for him apathy was a premature death. In his pamphlets on the Church of England, he emphasized on moderation of religion. Bacon is considered as the prophet of scientific knowledge, based on empirical method of learning. In his book New Atlantis, he places the key of advancement in the hands of science. He was of the view that the progress of mankind is possible only through scientific means. Rupert Sheldrake, writes in his book The Presence of The Past that '...scientists and technicians who studied nature by experimental method. Nature was to be forced to give up her secrets, so that they might be used to benefit mankind. The scientists and technicians worked in a prototypic scientific research institute called Salomon's House, wore special robes, and were in effect a kind of scientific priesthood..... The Royal Society of London for improving Natural Knowledge was a deliberate realization of Bacon's vision....The success of science and the growth of new industries confirmed the faith in scientific progress....' (Sheldrake, 42,1981) Sir Francis Bacon was of the view that, '....mind...if it works upon the matter, worketh according to the

stuff, and is limited thereby; but if it work upon itself, as the spider worketh his web, then it is endless, and bringeth forth indeed cobwebs of learning, admirable for the fineness of thread and work, but of no substance or profit.’(Cited;Durrant,105,1961) Bacon argued that knowledge unapplied in action was academic vanity. He places emphasis on experience, in other words, on pragmatism. Every intellectual of the time must try to interpret the various phenomenon of the universe according to their own scientific approach. Instead of following the established values of life the philosophers and the thinkers should rely upon the dictates of their personal observations and experience.

Bacon tried to approach various issues of life according to the principles of Individualism. He allowed every action that ‘broadens, deepen, sharpen or strengthen human mind’. He condemned no man’s observations, and shared the light of every torch. The scientific method of inquiry proved to be one of the most important and far reaching changes which grew out of Renaissance. It placed emphasis on the individual and his place in this universe and gave a new outlook about the universe. It rejected the medieval concept of universe and ideas drawn from Aristotle and the Christian theology. Previously it was believed that earth was the centre of the universe. Objections against the medieval concept of the universe had been raised. Leonardo had said once ‘the sun does not move.’ But a convincing system had not been put forward till in the year 1543 Copernicus did not discover that the earth moves. He discovered that the sun rules the family of stars. Kepler further extended the views of Copernicus. He discovered that the planets moved in their orbits. The mood of the time created an atmosphere for new discoveries and new ideas in every field. Gilbert is remembered today largely for his book *De Magnete* (1600), and is credited as one of the originators of the term "electricity". He is regarded by some as the father of electrical engineering or electricity and magnetism. But it is significant to note that the prophet of the movement was Sir Francis Bacon. He saw within man’s grasp a vast unexplored kingdom of knowledge. It was largely due to his eloquence and his command of language that Bacon created for science, a wider field among the people of his times. He was a source of inspiration to the scientists who were inspired by his thirst of knowledge.

The widespread interest which Bacon and other humanists took in advancement of knowledge dislodged the medieval hierarchical cosmos. They focused on returning to those capacities, power, and attitudes of men that medieval culture had obscured or negated. Now human dignity resided in capacity of free action and will. Man shaped his own world. His mind could contemplate and touch the angelic heights and bestial depths at will. He had the power to degenerate among the inferior beings or regenerate among superior and divine beings. This confidence was shared by all great men of letters such as Sidney, Shakespeare, Marlowe, and many others. Pico has God address man as follows: ‘ man is ...the expression and natural mirror of all, set outside and separated from the order of the universe God longed for some creature which might comprehend the meaning of so vast an achievement, which might be moved with love at its beauty and smitten with awe at its grandeur.’

<http://www.historyofideas.org/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv4-19> [7]

Man’s quest for life, pursuit of happiness over-shadowed a life style of Christian values which was lived for reward that would be received in a life after death. The literature of the Era shifted from being heavily religiously influenced like the mystery and morality plays of medievalism to writings that focused more on the contemporary controversial topics. As mentioned earlier, rise of modern science caused doubt in human mind about old values, but the old ideas were not completely replaced. The intellectuals of the time, in spite of their emphasis on secular ideals, were religious believers. Sir Francis Bacon sets three limits on the pursuit of knowledge. He says that man cannot transcend the limits of morality or try to attain

the mysteries of God. It can be said that the Renaissance men lived between two worlds; the world of medieval Christianity where a set of rules were blindly followed and a world of scientific exploration and quest for greater knowledge as well as power. This signifies the duality in the Renaissance society. Renaissance men were suspended between faith and reason. They felt encountered by their conscience on one side and their strong desire to attain knowledge on the other. In Shakespeare's play Antony and Cleopatra, Cleopatra says: 'I am fire and air, my other elements/I give to baser life.' Jonsonian Comedy is based on medieval physiology. Christopher Marlowe's play Dr. Faustus shows the dilemma faced by the man of Renaissance. The play possesses both medieval and renaissance values. In the opening scene of the play Dr. Faustus after having acquired the knowledge of medicine, religion and superb skill in astronomy grows dissatisfied with the limitations of this traditional knowledge. This German scholar now aspires to seek the condemned art of necromancy when he says: "These metaphysics of magicians,/And necromantic books are heavenly;/Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters;/Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires./O, what a world of profit and delight"(1.i) proving to be the "renaissance man" who defies the medieval belief of adhering to the limitations set by Christian religion. Faustus' determination to explore the condemned is a trait of the renaissance humanists who believed in the emerging idea of individualism and scientific discoveries, an ambition that the Renaissance spirit celebrated but that medieval Christianity denounced as an expression of sinful human pride. The intellectual curiosity of Dr Faustus exceeds its moral limits and this brings about his disaster. The church preached that Lucifer's fall was the result of his pride when he revolted against God. Thus, it could be said that like Lucifer, Dr Faustus, being blinded by his pride, attempts to outwit God. The play Dr Faustus presents the stark contrast between the medieval values and the renaissance ideals. In the medieval academy, theology was known as "the queen of the sciences" whereas in the Renaissance period secular matters had started to take the center stage.

Shakespeare's play, The Tempest, debates on the drawbacks of medieval education system. The protagonist of the play, Prospero, is depicted as an educationist who uses his authority to manipulate his students. He hides his vices under the cloak of piety. He is fussy and disciplinarian in his tutelage. Prospero's students are robbed of their will. Prospero regards Caliban as 'inferior' and incapable of civilised behaviour:

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick; (4:1:188-189)

Prospero's treatment of Caliban in teaching him his language and values reflect his narrow mindedness. Prospero seeks to impose his ideals upon his students by force and by severe punishments.

If thou neglect'st or dost unwillingly what I command,
I'll rack thee with old cramps.
Fill all thy bones with aches,
Make thee roar that beasts shall tremble at thy din.

Prospero's harshness is mingled with the frustration of the teacher who has failed with a difficult pupil:

On whom my pains,
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost,
(4:1:189-190)

Prospero keeps Caliban in order with ‘pinchings’ ‘old cramps’ ‘aches’ and so-on. Caliban is clearly afraid of him, and seeks to rebel.

You taught me language; and my profit on't
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language. (1:2:365-367)

Prospero is not a teacher but a tyrant who expects absolute obedience from his pupil. To Ariel he says:

If thou more murmur'st I'll rend an oak
And peg thee in his knotty entrails till
Thou has howled away twelve winters.

Physical punishments played an important part in the medieval educational system. Prospero inhumanly punished his subjects. He treats his students inhumanly. In response to Caliban's disobedience Prospero orders ‘Cramps and pinches’.

For this be sure tonight thou shalt have cramps, side-stitches
That shall pen thy breath up. Urchins shall,
For the vast of night that may work, all exercise on thee.
Thou shall be pinched as thick as honeycomb,
Each pinch more stinging than bees that make them.

Prospero sends spirits to torture Caliban and fill his head with frightful images and Sounds. Caliban says:

For every But trifle are they set upon me,
Sometimes like apes that mow and chatter at me,
And after bite me ,
Then like hedgehogs, which lie tumbling in my barefoot way,
And mount their pricks at my footfall;
Sometimes am I all wound with adders,
Who with cloven tongues,
Do hiss me into madness.

Prospero is the puppet master who uses his art to control the moves of his subservient. In Act 5 he says, ‘my charms I'll break ,their senses I'll restore./And they shall be themselves’. Caliban hates Prospero. He plans to kill Prospero, burn his books and take over the island in order to ensure his freedom. He is an unwilling student, a professed enemy of books. He personifies books as source of his punishment. He says:

Remember first to possess his books,
For with out them he's but a sot as I am,
Nor hath not one spirit to command
They all do hate him as rootedly as I

Burn his books.

He has brave utensils, for so he calls them,

Which when he has a house he will deck withal.

Caliban says that books make possible Prospero's authority on the island. Books are Prospero's utensils and his instruments of power and a way to authority. He emphasizes that without possession of the books Prospero will be 'as I am.' Prospero by the help of his Art punishes and controls his students.

If thou more murmur'st I'll rend an oak

And peg thee in his knotty entrails till

Thou has howled away twelve winters.

The Tempest does not present the idealistic image medieval education- it emphasizes the fact that education if is used properly, can refine people but if misused it can be a dangerous to humanity. What is absorbed from books should be weighed well before introducing them in one's life. Bacon in his essay *Of Studies* says, 'Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.' Bacon has confidence in human power of reason as a means to achieve the good life. Alexander Pope in *Essay on Man* portrays an American Indian who is less civilized than his counterpart Europeans but he is more content and morally strong. He says:

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind

Sees God in clouds, or hear him in the wind;

His soul proud science never taught to stray

Far as the solar walk or milky way;

Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,

Behind the cloud-topp'd hill, a humbler heav'n;

Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,

Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,

Where slaves once more their native land behold,

No fiends torment, no Christian thirst for gold!

To contents his natural desire;

He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire:

But things, admitted to that equal sky,

His faithful dog shall bear him company.

<http://www.blupete.com/Literature/Poetry/PopeManA.htm>⁸

Elizabethan literature was emerging from darkness and Shakespeare was one of the most famous dramatists of his time.

The influence of Renaissance appears more clearly in the Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements by John Rastell. The story is of a man who is diverted, by the allegorical figures of Sensual Appetite and Ignorance, from the study of geography, into which Natura naturata and Studious Desire are about to initiate him; the latter shows him, in a map, the new countries discovered twenty years ago, and expresses his regret that the English cannot claim

the glory of having been the discoverers. The writer of the play is not inspired by religion but by the desire for knowledge.

Prose and poetry alike rang with a fervid enthusiasm for life in its most varied aspects. The nation's intellect was permeated by a wealth of ideas and aspirations which were new. The powerful individuality of Elizabethan literature is unmistakable, and in the work of Shakespeare it scaled heights unsurpassed in the literature of the world. Renaissance literature was colored by the national idiosyncrasy. The enthusiasm for the Greek and Latin classics, the passion for extending the limits of human knowledge, the resolve to make the best and not the worst of life upon earth, the ambition to cultivate the idea of beauty, the faith in man's physical, moral, and intellectual perfectibility, the conviction that man's reason was given him to use without restraint, all these sentiments were the foundation of the Renaissance literature.

CONCLUSION

The unbounded optimism and humanist spirit of the Renaissance could not go on forever. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the quest for human perfection had given way to decadence, cynicism, and an introversion which would stifle creativity for a long time to come. In England, the rise of Puritanism slowed down the pursuit of knowledge and aesthetic endeavors. Another factor leading to the end of the English Renaissance was the failure of Queen Elizabeth to produce an heir. The power vacuum she left behind was immense, and set the stage for violence and intrigue. In a nation fraught with such political uncertainty, the arts invariably suffered a decline. In the year 1642 English Civil War started. It resulted in the closing of the playhouses during the Puritan period. The settling of events with the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 did not seem to improve things. A tendency towards crude behavior and dissoluteness seemed to pass from Charles II's court into English public life. Some of the writers were not very much influenced by science. John Donne in *An Anatomy of the World* says:

And new philosophy calls all in doubt,
The element of fire is quite put out,
The sun is lost, and th'earth, and no man's wit
Can well direct him where to look for it.
And freely men confess that this world's spent,
When in the planets and the firmament
They seek so many new; they see that this
Is crumbled out again to his atomies.
'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone,
All just supply, and all relation;
Prince, subject, father, son, are things forgot,
For every man alone thinks he hath got
To be a phoenix, and that then can be
None of that kind, of which he is, but he.

But still the poets could not stop themselves from using metaphors and analogies from the instruments of science rather than from classical stories or legends. Instead of going back to the world of myths and legends for similes and metaphors literary they drew metaphors and analogies by references to pulleys, magnets or compasses. In A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning John Donne says:

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if the other do.
And though it in the center sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.
Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.

By the end of the 1600s things began to look up, and the advent of the 1700s once again saw a rebirth of literary culture in England.

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