

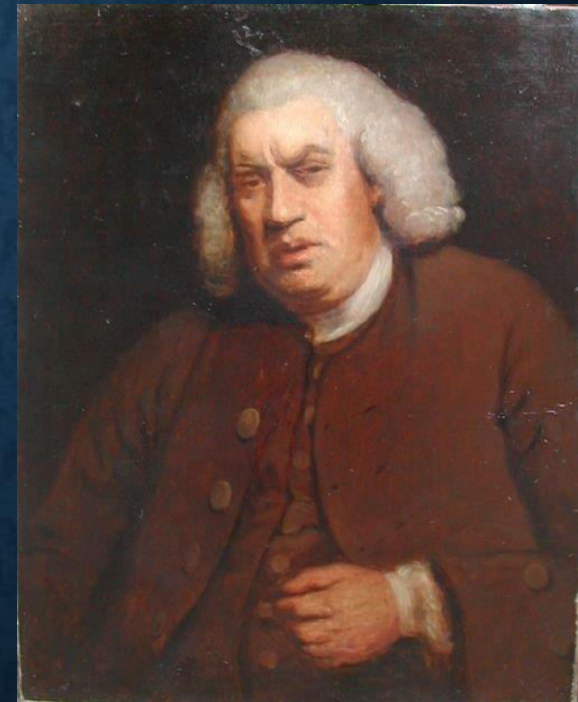
NEO-CLASSICAL AGE / AUGUSTAN AGE



Age of Pope



Age of Johnson



WHY AUGUSTAN AGE?

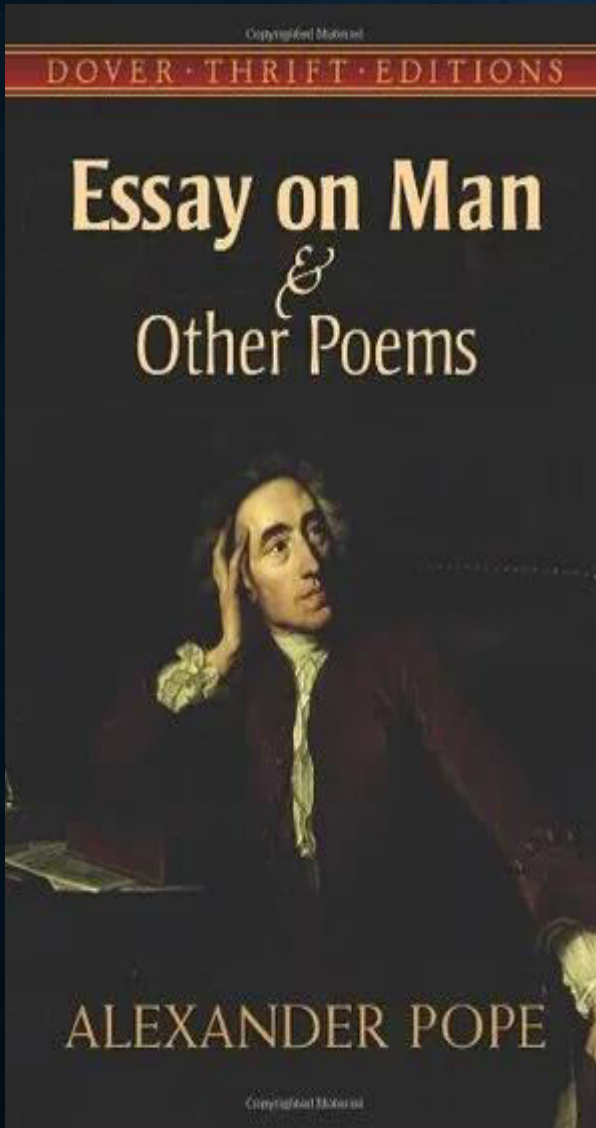
- The **age of Augustus @ Rome** as “the golden age in **Latin Lit.**” = the **age of Pope @ England**, as “the golden age in **English Lit**” (treatment, style, diction)
- Also called “**the Classic / Neo-Classical Age**” :
 - a) Latin Writers as best models & standards of literary taste
 - b) belief in laws & rules imposed by authority of past (Latin) than individual genius
- **Char. Of Lit.** : Predominance of **Logic & Reason**; lack of passion & emotion in Lit.; Celebrate **Town-life** alone; commonly **Satirical & Didactic** Poetry; written almost in **Heroic Couplet** (stereotyped poetic diction)
- **18th C divided into 2 literary ages (1700 -1798):**
 - 1) **The Age of Pope** : 1700 – 1745
 - 2) **The Age of Johnson** : 1745 – 1798

Why is this period known as the Augustan Period?

- The title of The Augustan Period refers to similarities between England at this time and Rome during the reign of Caesar Augustus, also known as Octavius (63 BC-14 AD).
- Octavius ruled in the time after Julius Caesar's assassination. He restored order and peace to the people of Rome and is often classified as its second founder.
- In a similar way, Charles II is taken from exile in France and restored England. He reopened playhouses, brought back a formal court, and had the body of Oliver Cromwell exhumed and decapitated.



POPE – THE POET OF AGE



- **Background** : England in **direction of moral regeneration** : sick of outrageous licentious behaviour of rich class, Religion - necessary for well-being, but against the fanaticism of Puritans,---- **Lit of intelligence, of wit and of fancy** (reason, not passion)
- Pope – unique figure & ‘the poet’ of that generation, influenced & reflected the spirit of his age, **only poet in Queen Anne’s – greatest master**
- Excluded from School & Univ. due to religion(RC), @ early age produced verses of trend, Friendship with **Wycherley, J.Swift, Addison & Steele**
- **Well-Known Works** : *An Essay on Criticism* (Storehouse of Critical maxims), *The Rape of the Lock* (mock-epic), *The Odyssey & The Illiad* (Trans. Homer), *The Dunciad* (Satire), *An Essay on Man* (poem in 4 epistles), *An Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (of Lord Harvey & Addison) - **holds high place as a Satirist**
- Consummate artist, **Perfected the Heroic Couplet**, Voltaire called, “ **the best poet of England, and at present, of the entire world**”

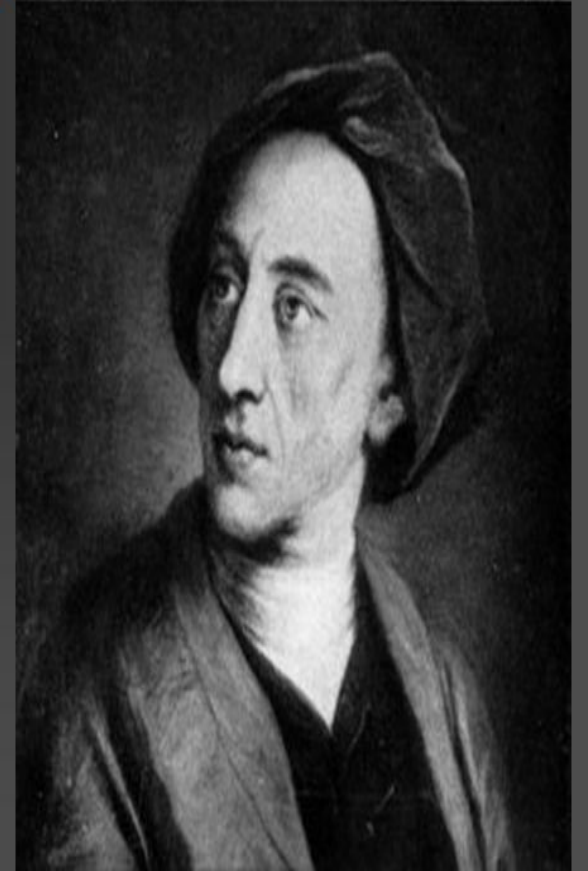
Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

- Poet of the Enlightenment and 18th Century England
- Admirer of Newton
- Staunch neoclassicist
 - ▣ Created new translations of Iliad and Odyssey
- Roman Catholic, self taught



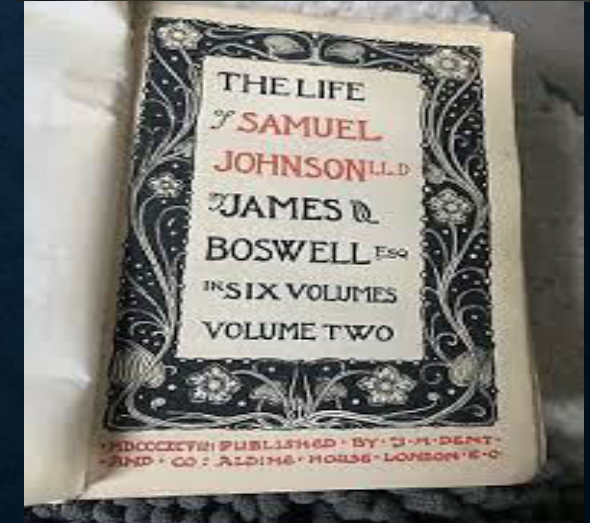
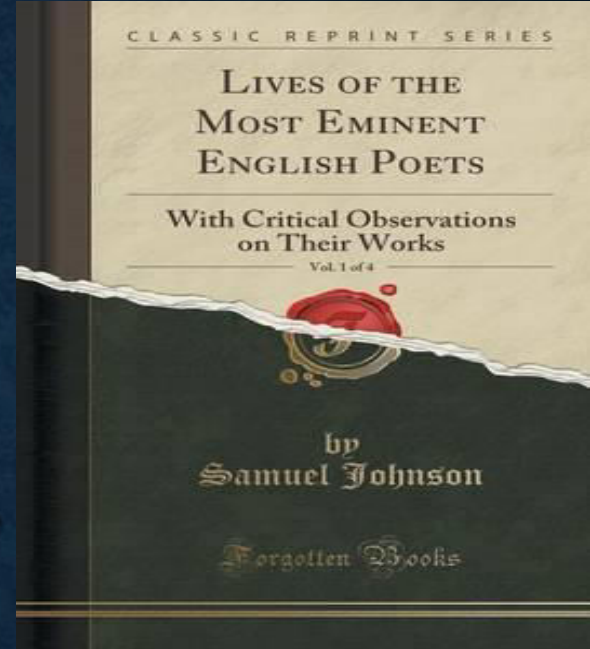
Alexander Pope: Major Works

- 1711 An Essay on Criticism
- 1712 *The Rape of the Lock*
- 1713 Windsor Forest
- 1715 Homer's Iliad
- 1717 Poems on Several Occasions
- 1725 The Works of Shakespeare Collated and Corrected
- 1726 Homer's Odyssey
- 1728 The Dunciad: An Heroic Poem (1743)
- 1733-34 An Essay on Man
- 1735 An Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot
- 1738 Imitations of Horace



DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON

- Period marked the **triumph of English Prose** – books, newspapers & journals – main instrument of nation's progress (due to votes & election)
- **Dr. Johnson** (1709 –1784) – greatest man of letters in 18th C – Poet, Playwright, Periodical Writer, First Lexicographer, Literary Critic, Editor
- **A Classicist & a Moralist** – works marked by common sense, with Clear, forceful & elegant Style ; essays, reviews, Parliamentary Reports - *Magazine*
- 1764 established **the Lit. Club** (as literary dictator) : Goldsmith, Burke, Gibbon, Garrick, Boswell - Smollett called him “**the great charm**” of literature
- Biographer : **James Boswell** (nature, temperament are recorded)
- Both a **Critic of Lit. & a Critic of Life** (Represent age) – very great writer
- “The memory of others is kept alive by their works. But the **memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive**” - **Macaulay**



HIS CONTRIBUTIONS

Early Life and Works

- ❖ **1728** He entered Oxford but was forced to leave after a year for lack of funds.
- ❖ **1729-1735** He sustained himself as a bookseller and schoolmaster.
- ❖ **1735** He married Elizabeth Porter, a widow 20 years his senior, and remained devoted to her until her death in 1752.
- ❖ **1737** Johnson settled in London and began his literary career in earnest. Edward Cave's *Gentleman's Magazine*—poetry and prose on subjects literary and political.
- ❖ **1738** Poem “*London*” published anonymously, praised by Pope; won Johnson recognition in literary circles.
- ❖ **1744** *Life of Savage*, a bitter portrait of corruption in London and the miseries endured by writers.
- ❖ **1749** *The Vanity of Human Wishes*.
- ❖ **1750-1752** *The Rambler*, essays.

- **Poetry** : “London”(early), **Didactic Tale** : *Rasselas* (reply to Shaftsbury & Pope)
- **Tragic Play** : *The Vanity of Human Wishes & Irene* ;
- **Periodicals** : *The Rambler* (1750), *The Adventurer*, *The Idler* (followed later) – imitating *The Spectator*
- **1747 -1755** : Compilation : *A Dict. of the English Lang.* (laid foundation of English Lexicography)
- **1765** – **Edited Shakespeare's** plays (famous **Preface**)
- **Greatest Work** : *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (Cowley to Gray) – **52 poets, except Goldsmith**; failed to **value Milton's** poetry, for his antipathy to Milton's politics & religion
- Dr.Johnson applied term “**metaphysical school of Poets**” to Abraham Cowley – as affected term (artificial)

PROSE : THE RISE OF FICTION

- **Daniel Defoe** (1660 – 1731) : Chief Prose Writer of this age
- Adventurous career (Soldier); moral & Social Reformer (to teach); biographies of **adventurers with fictional names** – journals intro. special form of prose fiction (fabrication classed as “**Fiction**”)
- **Other Terms** : Pseudo - history, fictitious biographies, in Sir Leslie Stephen’s words “history minus the facts”
- **Works** : *The Life & Adventures of **Robinson Crusoe*** (First great novel in English), *Captain Singleton*, *The Memoirs of a Cavalier*, *Moll Flanders*, *Colonel Jack*, *Roxana*, *Journal of the Plague Year*
- **Robinson Crusoe** : based on actual experience of a Sailor, Alexander Selkirk – 4 years alone on an island & of his survival
- Gifted with **realistic imagination**, minute realism & detailed description, Colloquial & homely Style, rejection of fantasy & romance, **interested in Contemporary life & events** – devl. of Novel

• Daniel Defoe English novelist, pamphleteer, and journalist, is most famous as the author of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), a story of a man shipwrecked alone on an island. Along with Samuel Richardson, Defoe is considered the founder of the English novel.



OLIVER GOLDSMITH

- 1728 – 1774 : Poet, Novelist, Dramatist, Essayist
- Close friend of **Dr. Johnson** (Literary Club)
- **Poetry** : *The Traveller, The Deserted Village* ; **Novel** : *The Vicar of Wakefield* (popular); **Comedies**: *The Good Natured Man, She Stoops to Conquer* ; **Essays** : *The Citizen of the World*
- *The Deserted Village* – memories of his Youth; *Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog* (witty elegy)- based on Swift's Satire
- **Style** : informal, intimate & easy, touch of pathos in humour (against moralisings of Sentimental Comedy) : known for **Anti-Sentimental Comedies** (Sheridan)
- (eg) *Good Natured...*- mocks @ false charity
- Revived the **spirit of true Comedy** in his plays

- **Four Wheels of the Van of the English Novel**
- 1) Samuel Richardson (1689 – 1761)
- 2) Henry Fielding (1707- 1754)
- 3) Tobias Smollett (1721 – 1771)
- 4) Lawrence Sterne (1713 – 1768)
- **Richardson** - wrote 3 Epistolary (letter) Novels ; *Pamela / Virtue Rewarded* – **I Novel in English**; *Clarissa Harlowe/ Adv of young Lady*; *Sir Charles Grandson* – in letter form; **Heroes- too artificial**
- **Fielding** - *Joseph Andrews* (inspired by Pamela), *The History of Tom Jones* : greatest novel of 18thC
- **Smollett** – *The Adv. of Roderick Random* (eg of picaresque novel) – Irish, Scottish, Welsh char.
- **Sterne** – *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* – in 9 volumes (1759 – 1767) – fore-runner of modern *Stream of Consciousness* novel (Woolf in 19thC)

JONATHAN SWIFT : SATIRIST



- Jonathan Swift, Irish author and journalist, the foremost prose satirist in the English language. Swift's best known work is *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). Swift was born in Dublin on November 30, 1667. He studied at Kilkenny Grammar School (1674-82) and at Trinity College in Dublin (1682-89), receiving his B.A. in 1688 and M.A. in 1692.



- One of the greatest of English Prose Writers / **greatest Satirist** – simple, direct, colloquial style – **few rivals and no superior**
- ***Gulliver's Tales*** (Children's book / 'bitterest Satires on mankind' ***A Tale of a Tub, The Battle of Books*** : finest prose satires
- ***Battle...*** (1704) – dispute b/w **Ancient & Modern Writers** @ King's Library, mock-heroic tone, allegorical touch, Bee - Spider episode
- ***Tale of Tub*** – best work – religious allegory : attack the RC & the Dissenters & fundamental principles of religion, on intellectual pride & religious hypocrisy, - Known for Wit & imaginative power
- ***Gulliver's Travels*** (1726) : longest & famous, imaginary story in 4 parts, 1) **Voyage to Lilliput** (pigmies), 2) **Voyage to Brobdingnag** (giants) 3) **Voyage to Laputa** (moonstruck philosophers), 4) **Voyage to country of Houyhnhnm** (race of horses) & **Yahoos** (their human serfs) Satirist : **general than personal attack, satire – cruel, coarse & violent, humour is bitter**

PERIODICAL ESSAYS : ADDISON & STEELE

- **Joseph Addison** (1672 – 1719) : well-known essayist in *Spectator* - periodicals became the vehicle of entertainment & moralizing
- **Richard Steele** (1672 -1729) : joint effort for Spectator, founded earlier -*The Tatler* (basis)- wanted reformation in social manners
- **The Spectator** : a faithful reflection of life of the age, short & simple sentences with colloquial touch, ordinary social, political and cultural themes in simple style (Addison dominate & popular)
- **Features** : fashions, head-dresses, practical jokes & polite conversations – indifferent & dispassionate observation, **aims to point out vices**: immorality, jealousy, death, drunkenness
- **Spectator Club** : as series, humorous & interesting – **Sir Roger de Coverly** – unforgettable character(‘Spectator’ all features of a novel)
- Insight into human **char- study personal & vital** (not of the Greeks), humour – ironical, gentlemanly, tolerant & urbane, a new kind of prose style – brought **prose from pomp & artificiality**
- Prose as ‘**an instrument for expression of social thought**’

Joseph Addison

- ▣ 1672-1719
- ▣ Educated, worked in politics, wrote poetry
- ▣ Founded a periodical (magazine) named *The Spectator* with his friend Richard Steele
 - Became the most celebrated journalists in England
 - Almost every magazine today uses an informal, popular style like the one they invented



Richard Steele Joseph Addison



S.VALARMATHI
ASST. PROF.
MGGAC