



L'ESCHERE
EDITORE

The Historical, Social and Literary Context



Main Social Features

National Identity

- The Tudors strengthened the **role of the Crown** and controlled Parliament.
- A sense of **national identity** developed.
- The nation started to **expand abroad**.



Main Social Features

Religious Controversies

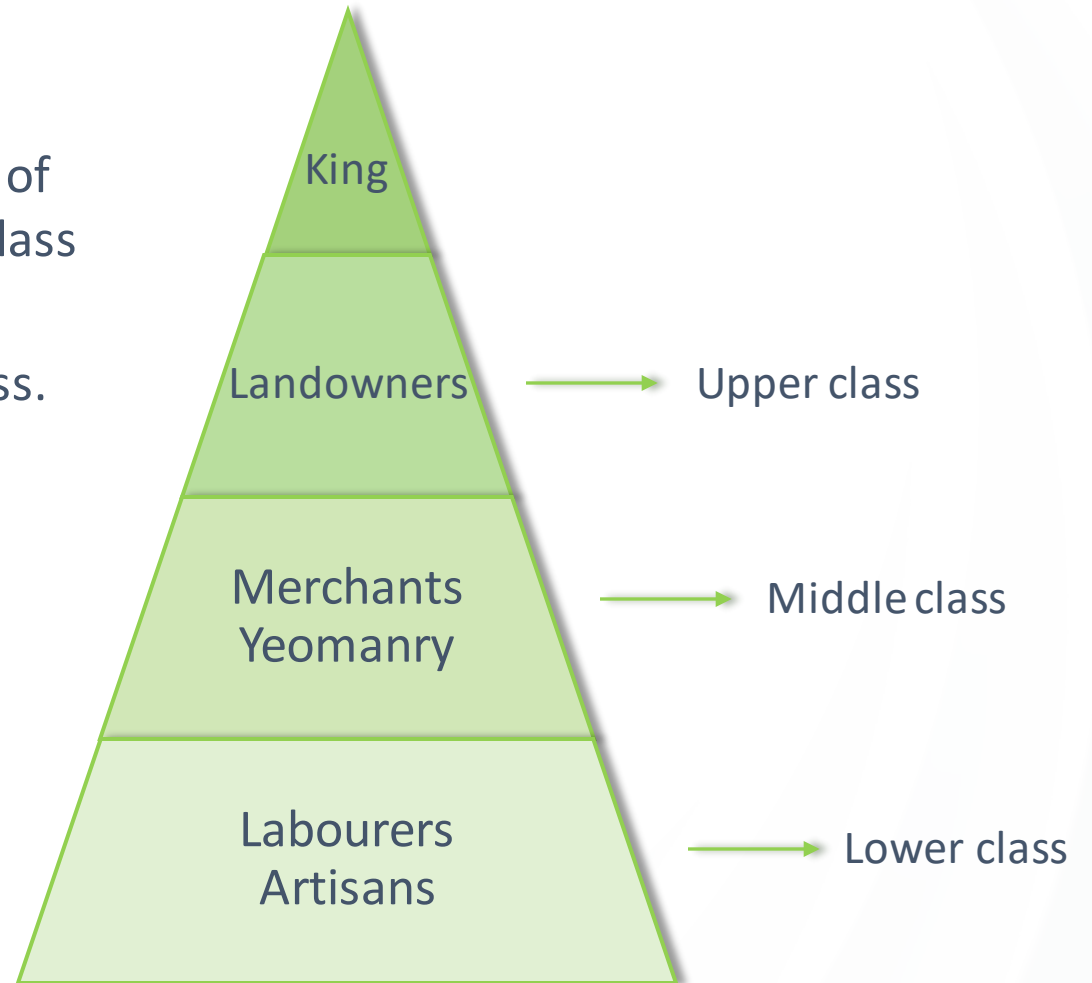
- After the Act of Supremacy, the official religion was **Anglicanism**.
- **Puritanism** was a branch of Protestantism with stricter moral values.
- **Puritans** soon became a powerful force in the country.



Main Social Features

Social Classes

- The dissolution of monasteries and the acquisition of land by merchants created a new powerful social class of **landowners**.
- **Merchants** and **yeomanry** made up the middle class.
- **Labourers**, **artisans** and all those who worked with their hands belonged to the lower class of society.
- Marriages started to become a means of **social mobility**.



Main Social Features

Living Conditions

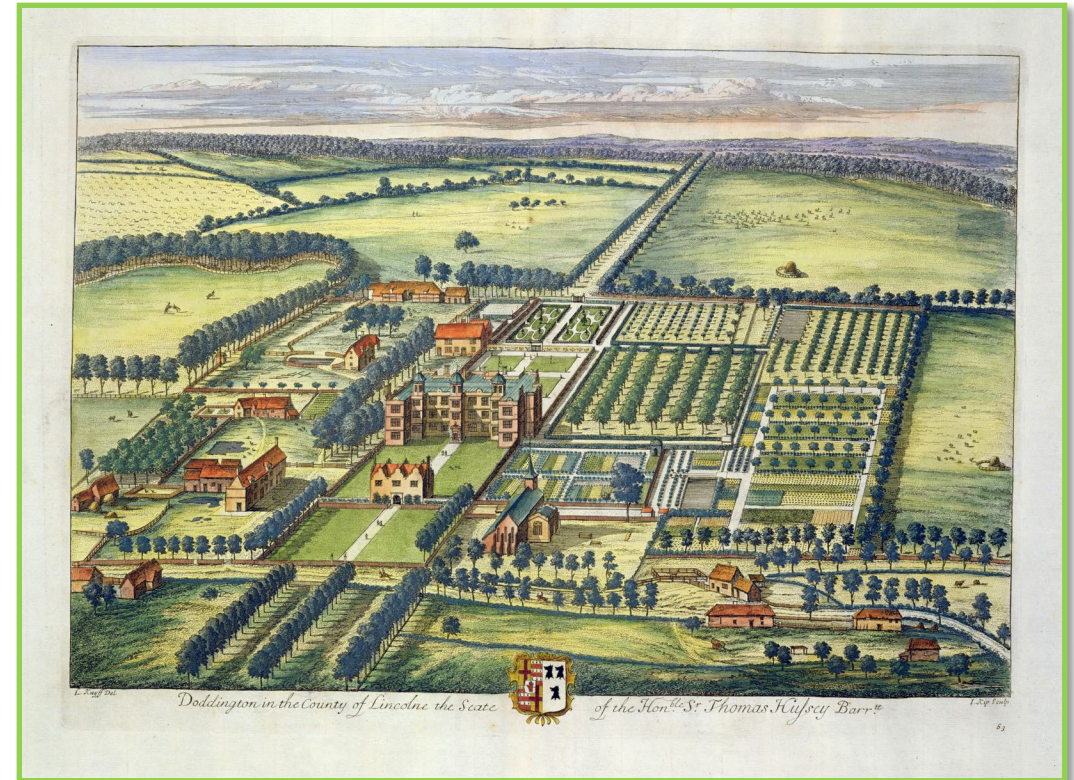
- Sheep farming, wool production, textiles, metal industries, boat making and banking were the main **sources of wealth**.
- People resided mainly in **rural areas**.
- **Towns** developed, but the living conditions were still dangerous both from a sanitary and social point of view.



Main Social Features

The Social Impact of Enclosures

- The **policy of enclosure** had a destructive impact on village life and created poverty.
- A **Poor Law** was passed in **1601** to assist people who could not support themselves.



Main Social Features

Education

- Many new **grammar schools** were founded and literacy increased.
- The **court** became the most important cultural centre.
- **Patronage** became a powerful tool for the diffusion of culture.



Sources and references

- Slide 1: *Queen Elizabeth I in procession with her court*, by Sarah Countess of Essex, 19th century. Private collection/Public Domain.
- Slide 2: Tudor dynasty - Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I, Elizabeth I. © Annalisa Jones/Shutterstock.
- Slide 3: Bible on altar inside an Anglican church. © coldsnowstorm/Istockphotos.
- Slide 5: *16th century map of Tudor London, entitled “Londinum Feracissimi Angliae Regni Metropolis”*, by Joris Hoefnagel, 1572, Private Collection. Wikimedia Commons/diglit.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/Public Domain.
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