

DEVELOPMENT OF PERIODICAL ESSAYS IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Introduction

The eighteenth century occupies an important place in the history of English literature. It was an age of reason, criticism, social change, political debate, scientific development, and expanding literacy. One of the most significant literary developments of this period was the rise of the **periodical essay**.

The periodical essay was a form of prose writing published regularly in newspapers, journals, and especially periodical publications. Unlike the formal philosophical or political treatises of earlier writers, periodical essays dealt with subjects connected with everyday life. They discussed manners, fashion, morality, literature, education, marriage, family life, politics, social behaviour, and human weaknesses. Their language was generally accessible, making them attractive to the growing middle-class reading public.

The periodical essay became particularly successful through the work of **Joseph Addison and Richard Steele**, whose journals *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* transformed English prose and journalism. Their essays combined entertainment with moral instruction. They attempted to improve society by presenting amusing observations on contemporary life and encouraging readers to develop good manners, rational judgement, and moral conduct.

The development of periodical essays was therefore not simply a literary phenomenon. It was closely connected with the development of **print culture, coffee-house culture, urban society, literacy, journalism, and the growing influence of the middle class**.

1. Meaning of the Periodical Essay

The word “periodical” refers to something published at regular intervals. A periodical essay is therefore an essay published regularly as part of a newspaper, magazine, or journal.

The periodical essay generally has the following characteristics:

- it is relatively short;
- it deals with contemporary subjects;
- it is written for a general reading public;

- it uses accessible prose;
- it often combines entertainment with instruction;
- it comments on social manners and behaviour;
- it frequently discusses literary and cultural subjects;
- it may use fictional speakers or characters to create continuity.

The periodical essay differs from the long formal essay or philosophical treatise because it is closely connected with the **daily life of society**.

The eighteenth-century essayist does not usually speak only as a scholar addressing other scholars. Instead, the essayist speaks to an expanding public of readers who are interested in what is happening around them.

2. Background of the Eighteenth Century

To understand the development of periodical essays, it is necessary to understand the social and intellectual environment of the eighteenth century.

The eighteenth century is often called the **Age of Reason** or the **Age of Enlightenment**. Reason, observation, common sense, empirical knowledge, and intellectual debate were highly valued.

The influence of thinkers such as **John Locke** encouraged interest in human understanding and experience. Scientific developments also strengthened the belief that the world could be studied through observation and reason.

At the same time, English society was undergoing major changes. London was becoming an increasingly important centre of commerce, politics, fashion, publishing, and social interaction.

A growing middle class developed. Merchants, professionals, businessmen, lawyers, teachers, and other educated groups became increasingly important in public life.

These developments created a new reading public.

People wanted literature that was not restricted to classical mythology, courtly culture, or theological controversy. They wanted to read about **themselves and their society**.

The periodical essay responded to this demand.

3. Growth of Print Culture

The development of periodical essays was closely connected with the expansion of printing and publishing.

By the eighteenth century, printed material had become increasingly important in English public life. Newspapers, pamphlets, journals, and periodicals circulated among readers.

The growth of printing created new opportunities for writers. A writer could now communicate regularly with a large and diverse audience.

The periodical essay was particularly suitable for this new print culture because it could be produced quickly and published frequently.

Instead of waiting for the publication of a complete book, readers could purchase or obtain individual issues and follow the essays from one publication to another.

This regular relationship between writer and reader helped create a new form of literary communication.

4. Rise of the Reading Public

One of the most important reasons for the success of periodical essays was the growth of literacy.

Education was becoming more widely available, particularly among the middle classes. As more people learned to read, the demand for printed material increased.

The new reading public included:

- merchants,
- businessmen,
- lawyers,
- teachers,
- students,

- professionals,
- educated women,
- members of the urban middle class.

This audience wanted writing that was intelligent but not excessively difficult.

The periodical essay was perfectly suited to this need.

It dealt with familiar situations and used a style that could be understood by educated general readers.

5. The Coffee-House Culture

The eighteenth-century coffee house played an important role in the development of periodical literature.

Coffee houses were not simply places where people drank coffee. They became centres of social and intellectual communication.

People gathered there to:

- read newspapers,
- discuss politics,
- exchange information,
- debate literature,
- discuss business,
- meet writers and intellectuals,
- hear news and gossip.

The coffee house therefore functioned as an informal public sphere.

Periodical publications circulated widely in these spaces. Writers could observe contemporary society directly, while readers could discuss what they had read.

This environment provided ideal conditions for the development of the periodical essay.

6. Journalism and the Periodical Essay

The periodical essay developed alongside English journalism.

Newspapers and journals created a demand for short prose pieces that could comment on current events and social issues.

However, the periodical essay was different from straightforward news reporting.

Its purpose was not merely to inform the reader about what had happened. It attempted to **interpret, criticize, educate, and entertain.**

The periodical essayist became a social commentator.

The writer observed society and then transformed those observations into literary prose.

7. Earlier Origins of the Essay

The eighteenth-century periodical essay did not appear suddenly. It developed from earlier traditions of prose writing.

One important predecessor was **Francis Bacon**, whose *Essays* had established the essay as an important English literary form.

Bacon's essays were concise and intellectual. They dealt with subjects such as truth, friendship, ambition, studies, marriage, and human behaviour.

However, Bacon's essay was very different from the later periodical essay.

Bacon generally addressed serious philosophical and moral questions in a compressed style. The eighteenth-century periodical essay, by contrast, was more conversational, social, humorous, and accessible.

The development can therefore be understood as a movement from the **formal essay toward the social and journalistic essay.**

8. Influence of French and European Periodical Writing

The English periodical essay also developed within a broader European literary context.

The growth of journals and periodical publications in Europe demonstrated the possibilities of regular prose communication with a general audience.

English writers adapted these developments to their own social and literary environment.

The result was a distinctly English form of periodical writing that combined:

- journalism,
 - moral criticism,
 - social observation,
 - humour,
 - literary criticism,
 - fictional characterization.
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9. Daniel Defoe and Early Periodical Writing

Daniel Defoe was an important figure in the development of English journalism and periodical prose.

His *Review*, which began publication in 1704, represents an important stage in the development of periodical literature.

Defoe's writing dealt with political, economic, social, and commercial questions. His prose demonstrates the increasing importance of regular printed discussion.

Although the *Review* differs from the later *Tatler* and *Spectator*, Defoe helped establish the periodical as a significant medium of public communication.

His work shows how journalism could move beyond simple news reporting toward sustained commentary and argument.

10. Richard Steele and *The Tatler*

The development of the periodical essay reached a major stage with **Richard Steele**.

Steele founded **The Tatler** in 1709.

The journal appeared regularly and contained essays dealing with:

- politics,
- literature,
- theatre,
- fashion,
- social behaviour,
- morality,
- everyday life.

Steele used a fictional persona named **Isaac Bickerstaff** as the supposed author or observer.

The use of a fictional identity gave the periodical a sense of continuity and personality.

Steele's writing was particularly concerned with manners and moral behaviour. He wanted to make society better, but he did not usually adopt the tone of a severe moral preacher.

Instead, he combined moral instruction with humour and entertainment.

11. The Importance of *The Tatler*

The Tatler was important because it established many features that would later become central to the periodical essay.

It created a regular relationship between writer and reader.

The reader became familiar with the personality of the supposed essayist and returned to the publication for further observations.

The journal also demonstrated that everyday social behaviour could become a legitimate subject of literature.

Steele could discuss:

- fashionable society,
- theatre audiences,

- gossip,
- manners,
- marriage,
- drinking,
- gambling,
- social pretension.

In doing so, he transformed ordinary social life into literary material.

12. Addison and *The Spectator*

The greatest development in the periodical essay came with the collaboration between **Joseph Addison and Richard Steele**.

In 1711, they established **The Spectator**.

The Spectator became one of the most influential periodicals in English literary history.

It aimed to entertain while also improving the moral and intellectual habits of its readers.

The essays dealt with:

- manners,
- morality,
- literature,
- education,
- marriage,
- family life,
- fashion,
- religion,
- social behaviour,
- human nature.

The journal adopted a polished and conversational style that made serious subjects accessible to ordinary readers.

13. The Purpose of *The Spectator*

The main purpose of *The Spectator* was to **reform society through gentle criticism and entertainment**.

Addison and Steele believed that literature could improve people's behaviour.

Instead of directly preaching against social weaknesses, they often presented examples of foolish or undesirable behaviour and allowed readers to recognize the problem for themselves.

Their method was therefore based on:

instruction + entertainment + social observation + humour.

This approach made moral criticism more attractive.

The periodical essay could discuss serious issues without becoming a formal sermon.

14. The Spectator Club

One of the most successful literary devices in *The Spectator* was the creation of the **Spectator Club**.

The club consisted of a group of fictional characters representing different sections of eighteenth-century society.

Important characters included:

- **Sir Roger de Coverley**
- **Sir Andrew Freeport**
- **Captain Sentry**
- **Will Honeycomb**
- **The Templar**
- the Spectator himself.

Each character represented a particular social type.

Sir Roger represents the traditional country gentleman. Sir Andrew represents the successful merchant and commercial middle class. Will Honeycomb represents fashionable urban society.

Through these characters, Addison and Steele could present different viewpoints on contemporary society.

The club also provided a structural framework for the essays.

15. Sir Roger de Coverley

Among the characters of *The Spectator*, **Sir Roger de Coverley** is particularly important.

He is an elderly country gentleman with traditional ideas and a kindly nature.

He is sometimes old-fashioned and eccentric, but he is also generous and humane.

Addison uses Sir Roger both for humour and social commentary.

The character is not merely a comic figure. He represents a changing social world in which traditional rural values encounter the developing urban and commercial culture of eighteenth-century England.

The essays involving Sir Roger demonstrate Addison's ability to combine:

- humour,
- characterization,
- social observation,
- sympathy,
- moral criticism.

Sir Roger therefore became one of the most memorable characters in eighteenth-century periodical literature.

16. The Essay as Social Reform

The periodical essay served an important reforming function.

Addison and Steele criticized various social weaknesses, including:

- vanity,
- hypocrisy,
- excessive fashion,
- gambling,
- drinking,
- cruelty,
- ignorance,
- poor manners,
- superficiality.

However, their criticism was generally moderate.

They preferred **ridicule and gentle satire** to aggressive denunciation.

If readers laughed at a foolish character, they might also recognize similar behaviour in themselves.

The essay therefore attempted to reform society by encouraging **self-awareness**.

17. Treatment of Women

The periodical essay also addressed the changing role of women in eighteenth-century society.

Women formed an increasingly important part of the reading public.

Addison and Steele wrote about:

- women's education,
- marriage,
- courtship,
- fashion,
- manners,

- domestic life,
- social behaviour.

The periodicals encouraged women to participate in polite intellectual culture.

However, modern readers should also recognize the limitations of these discussions. The essays often reflected the gender expectations of eighteenth-century society.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of women as readers and subjects was an important development in English periodical culture.

18. The Periodical Essay and Literature

The periodical essay was not limited to social criticism.

Addison was also an important literary critic.

He discussed:

- poetry,
- drama,
- imagination,
- literary taste,
- classical literature,
- contemporary writing.

His famous series on the “**Pleasures of the Imagination**” demonstrates his interest in aesthetics and literary response.

The periodical therefore became a medium through which ordinary readers could be introduced to literary criticism.

This helped establish criticism as an important part of public literary culture.

19. Addison's Prose Style

Joseph Addison is particularly famous for his prose style.

His writing is generally:

- clear,
- balanced,
- graceful,
- polished,
- conversational,
- moderate,
- easy to understand.

His sentences are carefully constructed but rarely unnecessarily complicated.

Addison's great achievement was to make prose both **literary and accessible**.

His style became highly influential in eighteenth-century English prose.

He demonstrated that serious ideas could be communicated without excessive ornament or difficult scholarly language.

20. Steele's Prose Style

Steele's style differs somewhat from Addison's.

Steele is often more emotional, personal, spontaneous, and direct.

His essays frequently show greater involvement with social and moral questions.

Addison tends to be more polished and controlled, while Steele often appears more energetic and conversational.

Their differences nevertheless complemented each other.

Together they created a highly successful form of prose that combined Steele's warmth and immediacy with Addison's elegance and intellectual control.

21. The Periodical Essay as a “Middle-Class” Literature

The periodical essay is closely associated with the rise of the middle class.

The expanding commercial society of eighteenth-century England created a new group of readers who were neither members of the traditional aristocracy nor part of the poorest sections of society.

These readers were interested in:

- business,
- education,
- social advancement,
- manners,
- fashion,
- morality,
- literature,
- public affairs.

The periodical essay addressed these interests directly.

It therefore helped create a literature of **polite middle-class culture**.

22. Moral Purpose

The moral purpose of the periodical essay should not be overlooked.

The essayists believed that literature could improve individuals.

They encouraged readers to develop:

- self-control,
- rational judgement,
- politeness,
- moderation,

- compassion,
- honesty,
- social responsibility.

Their method was different from religious preaching.

Instead of threatening readers with punishment, they often used humour and social examples.

The result was a new form of **secular moral education**.

23. Satire and Humour

Satire was an important feature of the periodical essay.

The essayist observed social weaknesses and exposed them through humour.

For example, a person obsessed with fashion might be presented in an exaggerated manner. A foolish social habit might be described so humorously that the reader recognizes its absurdity.

The purpose of satire was therefore corrective.

The writer wanted readers to laugh at social foolishness and, ideally, to avoid such behaviour themselves.

This approach made the periodical essay entertaining as well as educational.

24. Character Sketches

The periodical essay developed the art of the **character sketch**.

Instead of merely describing an abstract social problem, the essayist could represent it through an individual character.

Sir Roger de Coverley is the best example.

Through him, Addison could explore:

- rural society,
- traditional values,

- eccentricity,
- kindness,
- social hierarchy,
- changing cultural attitudes.

Character sketches made the essays vivid and memorable.

They also contributed to the development of later English prose fiction.

25. The Periodical Essay and the Novel

The development of periodical essays contributed indirectly to the development of the English novel.

The eighteenth century was also the great age of the early English novel, with writers such as:

- Daniel Defoe,
- Samuel Richardson,
- Henry Fielding,
- Tobias Smollett,
- Laurence Sterne.

The periodical essay helped create a reading public accustomed to prose narratives, characters, social observation, and everyday situations.

The interest in ordinary human beings that appears in periodical essays can also be found in the emerging novel.

The two forms therefore developed within the same expanding culture of print and middle-class reading.

26. Other Important Periodicals

Although *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* are the most famous, they were not the only periodicals of the eighteenth century.

Other important publications included:

- *The Guardian*
- *The Examiner*
- *The Rambler*
- *The Idler*
- *The Adventurer*

These publications demonstrate the popularity of the periodical essay form.

27. Samuel Johnson and *The Rambler*

Samuel Johnson continued the tradition of periodical essays with **The Rambler**, published from 1750 to 1752.

Johnson's essays are more serious and philosophical than those of Addison and Steele.

He discussed:

- morality,
- human weakness,
- literature,
- education,
- ambition,
- happiness,
- social behaviour.

His prose is characterized by logical structure, moral seriousness, and a distinctive vocabulary.

Johnson used the periodical essay to examine human nature.

Where Addison often presents society through humour and elegant observation, Johnson frequently adopts a more reflective and moral tone.

28. Johnson's *The Idler*

Johnson later contributed essays to **The Idler**, which appeared from 1758 to 1760.

These essays were generally shorter and somewhat lighter than those of *The Rambler*.

They continued Johnson's interest in human behaviour and social life.

Through both *The Rambler* and *The Idler*, Johnson demonstrated the flexibility of the periodical essay.

It could be humorous, philosophical, moral, literary, or social depending on the writer's purpose.

29. Oliver Goldsmith and the Periodical Essay

Oliver Goldsmith also contributed significantly to eighteenth-century periodical prose.

His essays are collected in works such as **The Citizen of the World**, and he contributed to journals including *The Public Ledger*.

Goldsmith's prose is characterized by:

- simplicity,
- warmth,
- humour,
- sympathy,
- social observation.

He was particularly interested in human character and social behaviour.

His essays often combine criticism with compassion.

Rather than simply attacking human weaknesses, Goldsmith frequently encourages readers to understand the circumstances behind those weaknesses.

30. Decline and Transformation of the Periodical Essay

The popularity of the traditional periodical essay gradually changed as the eighteenth century progressed.

The rise of the novel, specialized journals, newspapers, political journalism, and other forms of print culture altered the literary environment.

Readers increasingly had access to different types of prose writing.

The periodical essay did not disappear completely. Instead, it evolved into other forms of journalism, criticism, commentary, magazine writing, and literary prose.

Its influence can still be seen in the modern newspaper column, magazine essay, editorial, cultural commentary, and personal essay.

31. Major Characteristics of the Eighteenth-Century Periodical Essay

The periodical essay developed a distinctive set of characteristics.

31.1 Regular Publication

The most basic feature was regular publication. Essays appeared daily, weekly, or at other fixed intervals.

This created a continuous relationship between writer and reader.

31.2 Contemporary Subject Matter

The essays dealt with current social life rather than only abstract philosophical questions.

Fashion, theatre, marriage, education, manners, politics, and social customs could all become subjects.

31.3 Accessibility

The language was generally clear and suitable for a broad educated audience.

The essayist avoided excessive scholarly complexity.

31.4 Moral Purpose

The essays often attempted to improve society by criticizing undesirable behaviour and encouraging moderation and good sense.

31.5 Humour and Satire

Entertainment was combined with instruction.

Social weaknesses were frequently exposed through humour.

31.6 Characterization

Fictional characters such as Sir Roger de Coverley provided continuity and allowed the writers to represent different social types.

31.7 Literary Criticism

The periodical essay became an important medium for discussing poetry, drama, imagination, taste, and literary standards.

31.8 Conversational Tone

The writer often appeared to be speaking directly to the reader.

This gave the essays an intimate and accessible quality.

32. Difference Between Bacon's Essay and the Periodical Essay

It is useful for students to understand the difference between Bacon's essay and the eighteenth-century periodical essay.

Bacon's essays are generally compact, philosophical, and aphoristic. They present observations about life in a highly concentrated form.

The periodical essay, on the other hand, is more social and conversational.

Bacon asks questions such as what friendship, ambition, or studies mean in human life.

Addison and Steele ask how people behave in coffee houses, drawing rooms, theatres, streets, and homes.

Thus, the movement can be described as:

Bacon → philosophical essay

Addison and Steele → social periodical essay

The latter brought the essay closer to everyday life.

33. Difference Between the Periodical Essay and Newspaper Journalism

Although the periodical essay developed alongside journalism, the two forms are not identical.

Newspaper journalism primarily provides information about events.

The periodical essay interprets human behaviour and social experience.

A newspaper may report that a particular event has occurred.

An essayist may use the event as an opportunity to discuss morality, social behaviour, politics, or human nature.

The periodical essay therefore occupies a space between **journalism and literature**.

34. Contribution to English Prose

The periodical essay made a major contribution to the development of English prose.

It encouraged:

- clarity,
- simplicity,
- conversational expression,
- balanced sentences,
- social observation,
- literary criticism,
- accessible moral argument.

Addison's prose in particular became a model of eighteenth-century English style.

The periodical essay helped establish the idea that prose could be both intellectually serious and widely accessible.

35. Contribution to Social Awareness

The periodical essay also played a significant role in creating social awareness.

The essayists examined contemporary institutions and customs and encouraged readers to think critically about them.

They addressed issues such as:

- education,
- marriage,
- women's position,
- class behaviour,
- religious attitudes,
- commercial culture,
- fashion,
- leisure,
- morality.

The periodical essay therefore became a form of **public conversation**.

It allowed readers to reflect upon the society in which they lived.

36. Contribution to Literary Criticism

The periodical essay helped bring literary criticism into the public sphere.

Addison's discussions of imagination, poetry, drama, and literary taste introduced literary concepts to a general readership.

The critic was no longer addressing only scholars.

Literary discussion became part of public culture.

This development contributed to the growth of English literary criticism as a recognized discipline.

37. The Periodical Essay and the Public Sphere

The periodical essay can also be understood in relation to the idea of the **public sphere**.

The eighteenth century witnessed the growth of spaces in which people could discuss political, cultural, and social questions outside formal institutions.

Coffee houses, clubs, newspapers, journals, and periodicals provided such spaces.

The periodical essay participated in this process by presenting social issues for public discussion.

Readers were encouraged to form opinions, question social behaviour, and participate intellectually in contemporary culture.

38. Historical Significance

The rise of the periodical essay reflects a major change in English society.

Literature was no longer restricted primarily to aristocratic or courtly audiences.

A larger reading public had emerged.

The writer now had a direct relationship with ordinary educated readers.

The periodical essay was therefore both a product and an instrument of social change.

It reflected the rise of:

- urban culture,
 - commercial society,
 - literacy,
 - print culture,
 - middle-class values,
 - public debate.
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39. Literary Significance

Literarily, the periodical essay occupies an important position between earlier forms of prose and later journalism, criticism, and fiction.

It helped develop:

- modern prose style,
- social criticism,
- character sketch,
- literary journalism,
- popular literary criticism,
- conversational prose.

It also prepared the ground for the development of the English novel.

The periodical essay should therefore be studied not as an isolated genre but as part of the larger transformation of English prose during the eighteenth century.

40. Conclusion

The development of periodical essays in the eighteenth century was one of the most important achievements of English prose literature.

The genre developed in response to major changes in eighteenth-century society, including the growth of literacy, print culture, journalism, coffee-house culture, urban life, and the middle-class reading public.

Early periodical writers such as Daniel Defoe contributed to the development of regular prose journalism. Richard Steele's *The Tatler* established an influential model of social and moral commentary. The collaboration between Steele and Joseph Addison in *The Spectator* brought the periodical essay to its highest literary achievement.

Through characters such as Sir Roger de Coverley, the essayists transformed contemporary society into literary material. They discussed manners, morality, fashion, literature, education, marriage, and human behaviour while combining instruction with entertainment.

Samuel Johnson later gave the form greater philosophical and moral seriousness through *The Rambler* and *The Idler*. Oliver Goldsmith added warmth, humour, sympathy, and social observation to the tradition.

The periodical essay ultimately became more than a literary genre. It became a form of **public conversation**. It educated readers, entertained them, criticized social weaknesses, encouraged moral reflection, and helped establish a modern relationship between literature and everyday life.

Its influence continues in the modern **newspaper column, magazine article, editorial, literary review, social commentary, and personal essay**. The eighteenth-century periodical essay therefore represents a crucial stage in the development of modern English prose and journalism.

Chapter Summary

The eighteenth-century periodical essay developed as a regular form of prose publication intended for a growing educated reading public.

Its development was encouraged by the rise of literacy, print culture, journalism, coffee houses, urban society, and the middle class.

The form had earlier connections with essayists such as Francis Bacon, but it became more social, conversational, and accessible in the eighteenth century.

Daniel Defoe's *Review* represents an important early stage in periodical journalism.

Richard Steele founded *The Tatler* in 1709 and introduced a successful combination of social observation, humour, and moral instruction.

Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *The Spectator*, begun in 1711, became the most influential example of the periodical essay.

The Spectator Club and characters such as Sir Roger de Coverley allowed the writers to represent different aspects of eighteenth-century society.

Samuel Johnson continued the tradition through *The Rambler* and *The Idler*, giving the essay greater moral and philosophical seriousness.

Oliver Goldsmith contributed a more sympathetic and humorous form of social observation.

The periodical essay helped develop English prose, literary criticism, social commentary, and the reading public, and it contributed indirectly to the development of the English novel.

Key Terms

Periodical: A publication issued at regular intervals.

Periodical Essay: A short essay published regularly in a newspaper, journal, or periodical publication.

The Tatler: A periodical founded by Richard Steele in 1709.

The Spectator: A famous periodical founded by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele in 1711.

Spectator Club: A fictional group of characters used by Addison and Steele to represent different sections of eighteenth-century society.

Sir Roger de Coverley: A memorable fictional country gentleman in *The Spectator*.

Coffee-House Culture: The social and intellectual culture associated with eighteenth-century coffee houses, where people met to read, discuss, and exchange ideas.

Public Sphere: A social space in which individuals discuss political, cultural, and social matters.

Satire: The use of humour, irony, or ridicule to expose human or social weaknesses.

Social Commentary: Discussion and criticism of contemporary social behaviour and institutions.

Middle-Class Reading Public: The expanding group of educated readers who became an important audience for eighteenth-century print culture.

Important Writers and Their Periodicals

Writer	Important Periodical/Work	Major Contribution
Daniel Defoe	<i>The Review</i>	Early periodical journalism and social/political commentary

Richard Steele	<i>The Tatler</i>	Social observation, moral essays, humour
Addison and Steele	<i>The Spectator</i>	Development of the mature periodical essay
Samuel Johnson	<i>The Rambler</i>	Moral and philosophical essays
Samuel Johnson	<i>The Idler</i>	Shorter social and moral essays
Oliver Goldsmith	<i>The Citizen of the World</i> and periodical essays	Humour, sympathy, social observation

Review Questions

Short-Answer Questions

1. What is a periodical essay?
2. Why did the periodical essay become popular in the eighteenth century?
3. What was the importance of coffee houses in the development of periodical literature?
4. Who founded *The Tatler*?
5. When was *The Tatler* established?
6. Who founded *The Spectator*?
7. What was the main purpose of *The Spectator*?
8. Who was Sir Roger de Coverley?
9. What is the Spectator Club?
10. What contribution did Samuel Johnson make to periodical essay writing?
11. What is the role of satire in the periodical essay?
12. How did periodical essays contribute to the development of English prose?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the development of the periodical essay in eighteenth-century England.
2. Examine the social and historical background of the rise of periodical essays.
3. Discuss the contribution of Richard Steele to the development of the periodical essay.
4. Examine Joseph Addison as a master of the periodical essay.
5. Discuss the significance of *The Tatler* in the history of English prose.
6. Examine *The Spectator* as a social and moral document of eighteenth-century England.
7. Discuss the importance of the Spectator Club and Sir Roger de Coverley.
8. Examine the prose style of Addison and Steele.
9. Discuss Samuel Johnson's contribution to the development of periodical essays.
10. Examine the relationship between the periodical essay and the rise of the English novel.
11. Discuss the role of the periodical essay in eighteenth-century social reform.
12. "The periodical essay is a combination of instruction and entertainment." Discuss.
13. Examine the contribution of the periodical essay to the development of English prose.
14. Discuss the relationship between print culture, coffee-house culture, and the development of periodical essays.
15. Trace the development of the periodical essay from Defoe to Johnson and Goldsmith.