

snapshot of medieval English society
centuries after its composition.

1.2.3. Long Answer Type Questions

Ques 1) Who were the primary authors in the time of Chaucer, and what is one notable work by each?

Ans: During Chaucer's time, several authors emerged whose works significantly influenced English literature and provided inspiration for Chaucer himself. Following are some primary authors contemporary to Chaucer:

- 1) **Pearl Poet:** The author referred to as the Pearl Poet, active around 1360 to 1400, crafted works like the dream vision "*Pearl*" and the Arthurian tale "*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*". Writing in a highly alliterative style within a West-Midland dialect, this poet, though preceding Chaucer, offered a genre that Chaucer drew upon for his own dream vision poems like "*Book of the Duchess*", "*House of Fame*," and "*Parliament of Fowls*."

The most notable work of Pearl Poet is "*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*". The poem follows the adventures of Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's court, as he encounters the mysterious Green Knight and embarks on a quest that tests his courage, honour, and integrity. It is renowned for its rich symbolism, intricate verse forms, and exploration of chivalric ideals in the face of temptation and adversity.

- 2) **William Langland:** Around the same period, William Langland composed "*The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman*", another dream vision. This work presents a satirical society through an allegorical lens, a characteristic that can confound contemporary scholars and readers due to its intermittently clear and obscure nature. Langland employs unrhymed alliterative verse, distinct from the structured rhyme scheme of the Pearl Poet. The poem follows the journey of the narrator, Will, as he seeks to understand the nature of sin, virtue, and salvation. Despite its occasionally perplexing narrative style, "*Piers Plowman*" is regarded as one of the pivotal works of the late 14th century.
- 3) **John Gower:** John Gower, who was once regarded on par with Chaucer, is now generally seen as slightly inferior as a poet. Nonetheless, Chaucer himself named Gower "Moral Gower" due to his addressing of social upheavals in English society, such as The Peasant's Revolt of 1381, in works like "*Vox Clamantis*" ("*The Voice of One Crying*"). Gower's most renowned piece, "*Confessio Amantis*" ("*The Confession of a Lover*"), offers a critical examination of English society and religion, presenting a collection of tales similar to some of Chaucer's moral narratives in "*The Canterbury Tales*". "*Confessio Amantis*" is a collection of allegorical tales and moral instruction