



# **CHAUCER'S AGE**

**(1340-1500)**

# *In the all-European context*

- **Dante Alighieri, Petrarch, Giovanni Boccaccio**
- **Venice, Florence, Genoa**
- **Mid-XVth C – the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg, a goldsmith**
- **1492 – Columbus' discovery of America that gives rise to numerous sea voyages and expeditions and finally changes England's inner policy and its international status**
- **late 15<sup>th</sup> C - the first printing books appear in England**

# Historical events in England

- 1337-1453
  - Hundred Years' War
- 1381
  - Peasants' Revolt against feudals in Kent under the leadership of Wat Tyler
- 1382
  - The Bible was translated into English by John Wycliff
- 1455-85
  - Wars of Roses between the Yorks and Lancasters

## William Langland (1330? – 1400?). *The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman*

- Visionary literature. A vision is a literary device in which a dream or vision is recounted as having revealed knowledge or a truth not available to the dreamer in a normal waking state.
- Allegory. A common language of medieval art. A literary device in which ideas and concepts are represented through personified images. E.g. allegory of deadly sins (Greed, Pride, Gluttony, etc.)

# Medieval allegories



# “Pearl Poet”

- 4 poems dating back to late XIV – early XVth C:

Pearl

Purity

Patience

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

# Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400)

- The translation of “Roman de la Rose”, “The Book of the Duchess”
- The translation of *De Consolatione Philosophiae* written by Boece, “The House of Fame”, an unfinished allegorical poem, “Troilus and Criseyde”, “The Legend of Good Women”
- “The Canterbury Tales”