

# Research on the Development of University's Colleges in Tudor Dynasty

**Dong LI**

*Suzhou Vocational University, Suzhou 215104, China  
Email: lidongtjnu@163.com*

**ABSTRACT.** *During the Tudor Dynasty, Oxford University and Cambridge University developed very rapidly. Many colleges were built in both universities, and many colleges were rebuilt. Both the kingship and the church wanted to strengthen their control over universities by building or rebuilding colleges. However, in the conflict between the two sides, the university has reaped the greatest benefits and achieved huge expansion.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Tudor dynasty, Cambridge university, Oxford university, College, Development*

## 1. Introduction

In the beginning, because Oxford University and Cambridge University had not set up colleges as their basic teaching and administrative units, many students often gathered in rental houses to discuss problems and exchange ideas. Over time, these rental houses became lecture halls (or hotels). A lecture hall has its own tutor or another tutor is hired to carry out teaching activities with students. This form of lecture hall is the prototype of the college. Then, as its influence continued to expand, Oxford and Cambridge began to take over these lecture halls. In the 1580s, Oxford University had 10 colleges at the time. Since then, about 60 lecture halls have been included in the management of Oxford University, and the college system has slowly absorbed almost all lecture halls. From the standpoint of the university, the most obvious benefit of a college-style organization is that students can be concentrated in the college for accommodation, which is easier to manage. During the Tudor dynasty, many colleges were built in Oxford and Cambridge, and many colleges that existed in the past were rebuilt. However, it is obvious that during this period the academy has clearly become a battleground for the conflict between the royal family and the Catholic forces. The construction of the academy more reflects the theme of the conflict between the two forces and is one of the ways in which they expand their influence.

## 2. Development of Oxford University

In 1485, Oxford University had 10 colleges; by 1603, Oxford University had 16 colleges. In other words, during the Tudor Dynasty, Oxford University built or rebuilt 6 colleges. Among the oldest universities in Oxford, University College (established in 1249), Merton College (established in 1264), Balliol College (established in 1263-1268), Egypt Exeter College (established in 1314), Oriel College (established in 1326), Queen's College (established in 1341), and New College (established in 1479) are all Established in the 14th century. In the 15th century, Lincoln College (established in 1427), All Souls College (established in 1438), and Magdalen College (established in 1458) were established. During the Tudor period, six colleges were established between 1512 and 1571. Taking the Reformation as the dividing line, "three colleges were established before the Reformation, and three colleges were established after the Reformation." Brasenose College (established in 1509) and Corpus Christi College (established in 1517) were both established during the period of Catholicism. In the later Reformation period, these two colleges were burned and looted. Cardinal College (Cardinal College), later Christ Church College (founded in 1546), was founded by Henry VIII and appointed as the new bishopric of Oxford. The original purpose of the establishment of the School of the Eucharist was to train monks, but with the rise and development of the Reformation and the Renaissance, it gradually became a place for people to learn about humanities and science, and played an important role in the religious disputes in the UK. . Trinity College (established between 1554-1555) and St. John's College (established in 1555) were Catholic colleges founded during the reign of Queen Mary. Trinity College was founded by Sir Thomas Pope, a consultant to the Privy Council trusted by Queen Mary, and St. John's College was founded by Sir Thomas White, a wealthy businessman in London. Jesus College (founded in 1571) is the only college established by Oxford University during the time of Elizabeth I. As an affiliate of these colleges, the number of lecture halls "was drastically reduced from 6, 70 to 8 between 1450 and 1600." These disappeared lecture halls either became student dormitories or were annexed by the college. The remaining eight lecture halls are: St. Edmund, Broadgates, Magdalen, and St. Edmund. Mary (St. Mary's), Bucks (Hart), New Inn (New Inn), St. Alban's, Gloucester. Slowly, these lecture halls began to be incorporated into various colleges, such as the White Hall (White Hall) and later owned by Jesus College. But the lecture halls did not disappear. At the time of Charles I, there were still 7 lecture halls in existence.

## 3. Cambridge University College Development

Among the colleges of Cambridge University, the oldest should be Peterhouse (established in 1284), which was founded in the 13th century. It gradually developed from the original St. John's Lecture Hall, with its own houses, churches and lecture places, and developed into a college. In the 14th century, the early Clare College (Clare College, 1326) was a small lecture hall. Later, with the support of Mrs. Clare, it officially became a college in 1326. Pembroke College (established in 1347),

Gonville College (founded in 1348, and later renamed Gonville and Caius College during the reign of Elizabeth I), Trinity Hall (established in 1350) and Corpus Christi College (Established in 1352) were successively established. By the 15th century, Magdalene College (established in 1428), King's College (established in 1441), Queen's College (established in 1448), and St Catharine's College (established in 1473) have also been established one after another. During the Tudor Dynasty, a total of 6 colleges were established from 1485 to 1596, namely Jesus College (founded in 1497), Christ's College (founded in 1505), and St. John's College (Established in 1511), Magdalene College (rebuilt in 1542), Trinity College (established in 1546), Emmanuel College (established in 1584). Like Oxford University, Cambridge University also has many colleges and lecture halls, but by 1600 years ago, many colleges and lecture halls disappeared or merged with the new college. For example, Michaelhouse and King's Hall were merged into Trinity College, God's House was merged into Christian College, and Buckingham College was merged into Magdalen College.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In the middle Ages, most of the founders of Oxford and Cambridge colleges were churches or church-related personnel, and their behavior was basically carried out as Catholics for religious purposes. Therefore, the establishment of a college in medieval England was regarded as a religious act, just like building a monastery. After the Reformation, the establishment or reconstruction of the two universities mainly relied on the royal family and the emerging bourgeoisie represented by it, including kings and queens, officials and businessmen. They actively participate in the construction and reconstruction of the college, with a strong purpose. In the early days of the Tudor dynasty, Henry VII's mother, Mrs. Margaret, had donated colleges and professorships to Oxford and Cambridge universities on behalf of the royal family. During this period, the two universities were still under the control of the Catholic Church. Mrs. Margaret's donation can be understood as a religious act, but it also represented a way for the royal family to increase its influence on the university. After the Reformation, which was the time when the conflict was open, the royal family and others' generous donations to the university had a different meaning. During the period of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I, the main purpose of building or rebuilding colleges was to cultivate the talents they needed through the newly built or rebuilt colleges, to train pastors for Protestants, and to gain support from universities during the conflict. The right to speak and initiative to suppress each other. The secular kingship and the emerging bourgeoisie intend to use the academy to promote their Protestant religious ideas; expand their influence; and cultivate ruling talents and business professionals. "With the evolution of domestic politics, economy and religion in the UK at that time, the colleges of this period all reflected the characteristics of the times and the traces of change." For example, during the reign of Queen Mary, Oxford University established Trinity College and St. John's College. These two colleges are the products of Queen Mary's Catholic restoration period, which aims to restore the Catholic dominance in universities. During the time of Elizabeth I, only one college was built, namely Jesus

College at Oxford University. During the period of Elizabeth I, the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism was settled, and development became the top priority. Therefore, the purpose of the new college was to cultivate Protestant talents and develop academics. In summary, behind the construction or reconstruction of colleges during the Tudor Dynasty was a process of game between the two parties in the conflict.

### **Acknowledge**

Project for Youths under the 13th Five-Year Plan of Suzhou Educational Science 2019: Conflict and Compromise: the Growth of Universities in Tudor Dynasty of the U.K.(192112579).

### **References**

- [1] James McConica (1986). The History of the University of Oxford Vol III: The Collegiate University[M]. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.521.
- [2] Zhou Changming (2012). History of Oxford University[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Jiaotong University Press, pp.21-22.