



M.A. (English)
FIRST YEAR
MAE-404

FICTION



INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
IDE
Rajiv Gandhi University

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FICTION

MA [English]

First Year

MAE - 404



RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Arunachal Pradesh, INDIA - 791 112

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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

About IDE

The formal system of higher education in our country is facing the problems of access, limitation of seats, lack of facilities and infrastructure. Academicians from various disciplines opine that it is learning which is more important and not the channel of education. The education through distance mode is an alternative mode of imparting instruction to overcome the problems of access, infrastructure and socio-economic barriers. This will meet the demand for qualitative higher education of millions of people who cannot get admission in the regular system and wish to pursue their education. It also helps interested employed and unemployed men and women to continue with their higher education. Distance education is a distinct approach to impart education to learners who remained away in the space and/or time from the teachers and teaching institutions on account of economic, social and other considerations. Our main aim is to provide higher education opportunities to those who are unable to join regular academic and vocational education programmes in the affiliated colleges of the University and make higher education reach to the doorsteps in rural and geographically remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh in particular and North-eastern part of India in general. In 2008, the Centre for Distance Education has been renamed as "Institute of Distance Education (IDE)."

Continuing the endeavor to expand the learning opportunities for distant learners, IDE has introduced Post Graduate Courses in 5 subjects (Education, English, Hindi, History and Political Science) from the Academic Session 2013-14.

The Institute of Distance Education is housed in the Physical Sciences Faculty Building (first floor) next to the University Library. The University campus is 6 kms from NERIST point on National Highway 52A. The University buses ply to NERIST point regularly.

Outstanding Features of Institute of Distance Education:

- (i) At Par with Regular Mode
Eligibility requirements, curricular content, mode of examination and the award of degrees are on par with the colleges affiliated to the Rajiv Gandhi University and the Department(s) of the University.
- (ii) Self-Instructional Study Material (SISM)
The students are provided SISM prepared by the Institute and approved by Distance Education Council (DEC), New Delhi. This will be provided at the time of admission at the IDE or its Study Centres. SISM is provided only in English except Hindi subject.
- (iii) Contact and Counselling Programme (CCP)
The course curriculum of every programme involves counselling in the form of personal contact programme of duration of approximately 7-15 days. The CCP shall not be compulsory for BA. However for professional courses and MA the attendance in CCP will be mandatory.
- (iv) Field Training and Project
For professional course(s) there shall be provision of field training and project writing in the concerned subject.
- (v) Medium of Instruction and Examination
The medium of instruction and examination will be English for all the subjects except for those subjects where the learners will need to write in the respective languages.
- (vi) Subject/Counselling Coordinators
For developing study material, the IDE appoints subject coordinators from within and outside the University. In order to run the PCCP effectively Counselling Coordinators are engaged from the Departments of the University. The Counselling-Coordinators do necessary coordination for involving resource persons in contact and counselling programme and assignment evaluation. The learners can also contact them for clarifying their difficulties in their respective subjects.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

Fiction

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Unit 3: Charles Dickens : Great Expectations Thomas Hardy : The Return of the Native	Unit 3: Nineteenth Century Fiction (Pages 67-110)
Unit 4: DH Lawrence : Sons and Lovers Graham Greene : The Power and the Glory	Unit 4: Fiction: Twentieth Century - I (Pages 111-141)
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- 5.8 Further Reading

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

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Literature as a term is used for describing whatever is written or spoken. It basically comprises creative writing, innovative style and imagination. Literature has various forms; some popular ones are fiction, drama, prose and poetry.

Fiction is the most popular form of literature present in today's world. It is any narrative that deals with events that are not factual, but rather imaginary. It is often applied to theatrical and musical work. Fiction writing is mostly a form of entertainment for readers. The *Harry Potter* series, the *Twilight* series and *Da Vinci Code* are some of the perfect examples of modern-day fiction.

Fiction has been designed keeping in mind the self-instruction mode format and follows a simple pattern, wherein each unit of the book begins with the Introduction followed by the Unit Objectives for the topic. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with Check Your Progress questions to reinforce the reader's understanding of the topic. A list of Questions and Exercises is also provided at the end of each unit. The Summary, Key Terms, Further Reading and Activity further act as useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

This book is divided into 5 units:

Unit 1 examines the growth of English literature from 7th century AD to the twentieth century.

Unit 2 traces the origin and growth of fiction in Great Britain in the eighteenth century. The first fiction writing included *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Spectator*.

Unit 3 shifts focus to the nineteenth century. By this time, many more writers had joined the fiction fray. Some nineteenth century authors that are still revered and widely read are Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy.

Unit 4 moves on to cover the twentieth century authors such as Graham Greene and D.H. Lawrence.

Unit 5 is the last unit and explores the writings of authors like Alice Walker, a Pulitzer Prize winner, and those of E.M. Forster.

UNIT 1 FROM BEGINNING TO THE 20TH CENTURY

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Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Unit Objectives
- 1.2 Old and Middle English (600–1485)
 - 1.2.1 Personal and Religious Voices
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Old English came into existence sometimes around the fourth and the fifth centuries. England, at that point of time, was also known as Angleland i.e., land of the Angles. The Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes were the first to invade Britain and occupy it. The original inhabitants of England went to Wales after being driven out by the invaders. That is how they came to be known as the Welsh. This phase of Old English period was identified as the Dark Ages or The Age of Savages by the Romans. It was around this time that after coming in contact with the Old English people, the Romans introduced the concept of Noble Savage (though savage yet they had something which was 'noble' that could be imitated by decadent Rome).

Rome was the home of Christianity during the Old English period. England was Christianized in 597 after the arrival of Augustine and other monks to Kent. The King of Kent, Ethelburg, was the first to be Christianized. The Pre-Christian era is synonymous with the Pagan/Heathenic civilization. The practice of writing or record-keeping began only after the process of Christianization began.

Bede, also referred to as Saint Bede or the Venerable Bede, composed the *Ecclesiastical History of Britain* in the ninth century. King Alfred was the first patron of English prose. Old English poetry was written in single meter. It was a four stress line and contained a caesura (a distinct pause within a line) between the second and the third stress. The alliteration links the two halves of the line. Old English was not static, and its usage covered a period of approximately 700 years, from the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain in the fifth century to the late eleventh century, sometime

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after the Norman invasion. The oldest surviving text of Old English literature is *Cædmon's Hymn*, composed between 658 and 680.

The history of Old English can be sub-divided into:

- Prehistoric Old English (c. 450 to 650)
- Early Old English (c. 650 to 900), the period of the oldest manuscript traditions, with authors such as *Cædmon*, *Bede*, *Cynewulf* and *Aldhelm*.
- Late Old English (c. 900 to 1066), the final stage of the language leading up to the Norman Conquest of England and the subsequent transition to Early Middle English.

The Old English period is followed by Middle English (twelfth to fifteenth century), Early Modern English (c. 1480 to 1650) and finally Modern English (after 1650).

In this unit, you will learn about the development of the language and the resultant literature in English. You will also learn about the various trends, styles of writing and the genres that emerged and became popular, up till the 20th century.

1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Identify the writings from the 7th century, till the 15th century
- Trace the styles and genres of writing in the Renaissance era from 15th to the 17th century
- Discuss the novel writing styles of the period
- Identify the writings of the nineteenth and early twentieth century

1.2 OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH (600–1485)

The extant 30,000 lines of Anglo-Saxon poetry have survived in four manuscripts. These are:

- MS Cotton Vitellius, in the British Museum. It contains the epic poem *Beowulf* and *Judith* along with three prose works and is dated c. 1000.
- The Junius Manuscript in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It contains the so-called *Caedmonian* poems *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Daniel* and *Christ and Satan*.
- The Exeter Book donated by Bishop Leofric to Exeter Cathedral circa 1050. It contains two poems with *Cynewulf's* runic signature and *Christ*, *Juliana*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *Widsith*, *Deor* and also other short poems.
- The Vercelli Book in the Cathedral Library at Vercelli near Milan. It contains *Andreas*, *The Fates of the Apostles*, *Address of the Soul to the Body*, *The Dream of the Rood* and *Elene*. *Elene* contains *Cynewulf's* runic signature. It contains works on exclusively religious themes

These extracts from before the Norman Conquest in 1066 form a substantial body of work. Since the monks and nuns in the monasteries were the only ones who could

read and write, they became the guardians of culture. It is interesting that most of the native English culture they preserved is not in Latin, the language of the church, but in Old English, the language of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes (the Anglo-Saxons). In fact it is through the texts preserved by the Church over time that we can trace the development of language towards Early Middle English in the thirteenth century.

1.2.1 Personal and Religious Voices

The first fragment of literature is *Caedmon's Hymn* from the late 7th century. *Caedmon* is said to have been a lay worker in the monastery at Whitby. One day God's voice came to him and he began composing hymns. *Caedmon's Hymn* is the first song of praise in English culture, and the first Christian religious poem in English. It is the overtly religious piece of Anglo-Saxon poetry.

The Seafarer describes the day-to-day life of a seafarer. *Deor's Lament* recounts the day-to-day trials of life, naming several heroes of Germanic origin and their sufferings, with the repeated chorus, 'That evil ended. So also may this!' After this recounting, the poet moves to his own troubles: he was a successful bard, or minstrel, who sang for an important family, but now another bard has taken his place. He believes that just as the sufferings of the heroes of antiquity ended so will his one day: everything passes. *The Wanderer*, like the other two poems, is also an elegiac poem of solitude, exile, and suffering. The poem deals with the suffering of an outcast who has lost the protection of his noble lord. In this poem too, memory plays a significant part in the speaker's thoughts. *The Dream of the Rood*, found on the Ruthwell Cross, written at the end of the 7th century is in Old English. It deals with suffering and redemption and the sense of being alone and the need of spiritual support from the cross. Like other texts of the time, it has many references to Latin hymns and liturgy. Though Anglo-Saxon poetry primarily focuses on martial prowess, one can find some type of love poetry during the age. Poems like *The Wife's Lament* and *Wulf and Eadwacer* could be said to belong to this genre.

Cynewulf is the only other poet known to us. He probably lived in the eighth or ninth century. He is credited with the authorship of four poems: two in *The Exeter Book* and two in *The Vercelli Book*. His poems include stories of saints, *The Fates of the Apostles*, and *Christ's Ascension*.

The church preserved a variety of texts in various genres. The focus was on works with a religious element. It is thought that works with a predominantly pagan element were either Christianized and preserved or were saved inadvertently by the monks. Historical works like *Bede's Latin Ecclesiastical History of the English People* and *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* were some of the works the Church fathers created and preserved. Other genres that the church writers focused on and preserved were devotional works like *Ancrene Rewle* (12th century). The philosophical writings of *Alcuin* and *Saint Anselm* also fall in this category. These mark the beginnings of a philosophical tradition. Parts of the Bible, especially the Book of Genesis were translated. One version was translated from Saxon into Old English. This attempt to familiarize the population with the Christian story reflects the desire of the Church to strengthen the Christian faith throughout the island and to assert a local linguistic and cultural identity.

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1.2.2 French Influence and English Affirmation

The Norman Conquest in 1066 was a game changer in the history of English literature. It led to the introduction of French language and culture to England. For the next two centuries the two languages, French and English, struggled to integrate. French became the language of the court and was widely used from the 12th to the late 14th century. The transition to English as a court language began only after 1204 when the Norman aristocracy started developing an English identity. More French words started entering the English language. Rising lay literacy meant that more books were produced for consumption. By this time London had been established as the capital city and its dialect, which was influenced by the Midlands, became the dialect of the country. However it was only in 1415 that King Henry V finally rejected French and declared English the official language of the country. This in turn paved the way for the construction of an English identity and the creation of a uniquely English literature.

The first major author of the English affirmation is Layamon. He is the first voice in Middle English. He wrote *Brut*, in the early thirteenth century. Layamon's *Brut* is the first national epic in English. It draws tales from the Dark Ages and goes up to the arrival of Saint Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, in 597. King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table also figure here. His immediate source is the 12th century French work by Wace. This in turn is based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's history and traces Britain's foundation back to Brutus, Aeneas' great grandson. This search for classical roots reveals a desire for historical continuity and for an element of political myth-making. In this epic, one can see the desire to subsume the dominating French influences into an essentially dominant English culture. In other words, it is an attempt to create and define Englishness in the face of French influences.

In Provence in the south-east of France, poets called 'troubadours' gave voice to the concept of courtly love. For these poets love was akin to religious passion, and the greatest love was that which remained unfulfilled. This gave rise to the concept of ideal love which was chaste but passionate. This love often took on a religious note and explains the worship of the Virgin Mary that began to spread in the 12th century in Europe. The Crusades, the fight for the Holy Land against the infidel Muslims, began around this time as well. This meant that warriors were absent from their homes and away from their women for long periods. The women were expected to wait at home embodying patience, beauty and ideal virtue. This in turn gave rise to the romantic notion of fidelity embodied in the cult of the rose. *Le Roman de la Rose* (The Romance of the Rose) is the most influential text of the early Middle English period. Imported from France, it established a code of behaviour which placed great value on chastity and placed women in a subordinate role vis-a-vis men. Within this framework, the rose symbolized the lady's love. *Le Roman* is not a treatise on love and is full of sexuality. In fact it is a multi-faceted examination of the nature of love in all its forms, from the idealized to the earthy, from a male point of view. This type of love poetry romanticized love but did not allow it to become anarchic and subvert the order of things. While this courtly love tradition was developing under French influence, a local tradition of songs and ballads was also growing. While the lyric celebrated the seasons and had a happy ending; the ballad generally told a story based on a character and ended tragically. The ballad of *Lord Randal* is an example.

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The Old English period lasted till the Norman Conquest in 1066 and was followed by a period of French influence. The Middle English period began in the late 12th century and ended in 1485. Language was in flux and writers wrote not only in English but also in French and Latin. Robert Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* derived from a French source is a verse treatise on the Ten Commandments and the Seven Deadly Sins. John Gower also wrote *Confessio Amantis* in English. *Vox Clamantis* is in Latin while *Mirour de l'Omme* is in French. English received a fillip later. Chaucer wrote exclusively in English, though he drew inspiration from his works from other European sources like Latin and Italian.

This period saw the consolidation of the London dialect as the preferred language of artistic expression. The foundation of the university cities of Oxford and Cambridge in the 13th century further cemented this position. London finally became the centre of court, law, trade and literature. While Chaucer and Langland used this dialect, literature was written in other dialects as well. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Patience*, *Pearl* and *Cleanness* are some examples. Anonymous works like *Winner and Waster*, *Pearl*, and *Patience* are part of the Alliterative Revival (1350 to early 15th century) and recall the earlier Anglo-Saxon use of alliteration. *Pearl* is a forerunner of utopian writing about a perfect world and also examines human limitations and knowledge. Nevertheless as the use of English became more pronounced the writers developed a more colloquial and familiar style, using idioms and proverbs to bring their writing closer to the reader. This in turn is indicative of the increasing assertion of a national linguistic identity despite centuries of Latin (the language of religion) and French (the language of the conquerors) hegemony.

1.2.3 Works of the Old English Period

The Owl and the Nightingale (1225) is a debate (*conflictus*) to show differing attitudes and values, and uses the English countryside as a setting. The debate between the serious (the owl) and the light-hearted (the nightingale) reflects the period's concerns between religious issues and the new thoughts of love. *Winner and Waster* (1360) is a more serious debate contrasting a miserly and carefree approach to money. *King Horn* (1225) is the earliest surviving verse romance in English. It is a tale of love, betrayal, and adventure. A study of the text reveals that the characteristics of French courtly stories have been assimilated and adapted by the British to a local setting.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight takes the fantasy element to new heights. Sir Gawain is one of the Knights of the Round Table. The poem operates under the ideal of courtly love. However, this tradition is subverted when the Green Knight offers the severing of his head if he gets the opportunity to strike a return blow one year later. In other words, the value of heroism and historical myths is questioned.

Mandeville's *Travels* (published 1356-67) is one of the first travel books which introduce Europeans to the Orient. It is a guide to the Holy Land, Tartary, Persia, India and Egypt. It is a highly entertaining book which inter-mingles scientific details with marvels and fantasy.

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Chaucer

Chaucer was a professional courtier, a kind of civil servant. He wrote in English. It was the extensive range and variety of his English that helped establish it as the national language. Chaucer also contributed much to the formation of standard English based on the dialect of the East Midlands region which was basically the dialect of London which he himself spoke. He visited France and Italy during the course of his work and met Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio.

His Works

His first work, *The Book of the Duchess* (1368) is a dream-poem written on the occasion of the death of Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, and wife of John of Gaunt. It is a consolation poem and has a simplicity and directness of emotion. *The House of Fame* (c.1374–85) too is a dream poem and reveals the influence of Dante's *The Divine Comedy*. In this poem Chaucer is an active participant and visits Ovid's 'house of fame' to learn about love. *Troilus and Criseyde* draws inspiration from Boccaccio. It brings together the classical Trojan war story, the Italian poetic version of that story, and the sixth-century philosophical work of Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*. It has been called 'the first modern novel' and draws attention to the poet's descriptive capacity. As part of this he uses the reader's ability to recognize and identify with what is being described. *The Legend of Good Women* also deals with the theme of joy and pain that love brings. A salient feature of this poem is that assumes a primarily female audience. It is also the first poem to use heroic couplets.

Chaucer's fame rests on *The Canterbury Tales* probably written between 1387 and his death in 1400. He uses the idea of *The Legend of Good Women*; i.e. the use of a series of linked stories. A major innovation is the use of the 'here and now': the London area and English society of the time. The *Tales* comprise a series of stories told by the pilgrims as they journey from Southwark to Canterbury. These two places are used because they connect the religious and the secular. The inn at Southwark represents the city while Canterbury is the site of the martyrdom of Saint Thomas Becket in 1170. The stories reveal the new social order, apart from the aristocracy and the lower peasants that are arising due to changing social situations. Even though Chaucer individualizes the various characters, the reader is aware that they are also stereotypical characters. The poet merely presents the characters and does not pass any kind of judgment on them. Through the simple storytelling framework, Chaucer gives a view of the 14th century world and its people and its literary, historical, religious, social, and moral concerns.

Characteristics of his works

1. Though Chaucer wrote in English we find words of French or Latin via French origin in his works. There is extensive use of everyday colloquial speech which contains Old English-derived words.
2. Even though his characters are presented realistically, a tone of irony permeates this description.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. In which language is most of the native English culture in the monasteries preserved?
2. What was the role of Norman Conquest in English literature?

1.3 THE RENAISSANCE (1485–1660)

The 15th century was marked by radical changes. The War of Roses ended and the Tudors assumed the throne, Columbus discovered the new world and Caxton published Mallory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*. These brought new ideas and learning and acted as the precursors to the Renaissance.

In his desire for a son, Henry VIII wanted to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Since the Catholic Church refused to allow this he took the drastic step of breaking from it and established himself as the head of the church and the state. This is the Reformation. Its impact was drastic. The King became the 'Defender of the Faith' and was the closest human being to God; England became Protestant and its political and religious identity were redefined; Protestantism became the official national religion and the King became the head of the church. In response to the Reformation, England reaffirmed its identity historically in two ways: conquest of the Empire, and the domination of the seas.

Erasmus' and Martin Luther's beliefs played an important role in this break. Erasmus' enthusiasm for classical literature was influential in the revival of classical learning. He decried narrow Catholic monasticism, found its rituals unnecessary and the sale of pardons and relics reprehensible. Though he criticized the Catholic Church he wanted to reform it and not break away from it. Luther's reaction was more extreme in his total rejection of the Catholic Church. In fact many historians consider 1517, when he pinned his *95 Theses against the Sale of Papal Indulgences*, the start of Reformation and the birth of Protestantism. Though he was excommunicated it did not stop the spread of the idea of religious individualism in Northern Europe. Jean Calvin further developed Luther's ideas. He considered the Bible the literal word of God and followed it strictly. As a result an austere lifestyle was promoted in Geneva, his centre. Drama was censored, adultery punished severely and patriarchy strengthened. These ideas influenced and triumphed in Cromwell's Puritan Commonwealth.

The Reformation led to a reevaluation of man's relationship to God, and of man's place in the world. When Columbus discovered the new world and Copernicus and Galileo proved that the earth was not the centre of the universe they only furthered this exploration. In light of this, Erasmus' humanistic thinking becomes extremely important.

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Characteristics of the Reformation

1. Individual expression and meaning, and not the church ethos, became the ordering principle of life. This explains the increasing influence of Greece with its ideals of harmony of the universe and the perfectibility of mankind.
2. A questioning and reevaluation of held mores occurred on all fronts. This is reflected in the experimentation with form and genre, modes of expression and linguistic and literary innovations.
3. Reason became the driving force in the search for rules to govern human existence. The marvelous ceased to matter and the focus shifted to man's ability to use his powers, capability and free will. In many ways it was a project to redefine what it meant to be human.

The impact of the Reformation was massive. It gave a cultural, philosophical and ideological impetus to English Renaissance writing. Since old beliefs no longer applied, the search for a new order resulted in the birth of modern science, mathematics and astronomy. The Copernican system replaced Aristotle's view of the universe, Harvey discovered the flow of blood in the body, and clocks, telescopes and thermometers etc. were designed to study the visible and invisible world. It the field of literature it led to a new religious, social and moral identity.

Elizabeth's reign though prosperous was also an unsettled time. The Catholic dissent (the Counter-Reformation) culminated in the Gunpowder Plot, Catholic persecution was common and the Puritan threat was constant. Despite these disruptions her reign is marked by a sense of national stability and triumph which was further cemented by the victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588. This increasing prosperity and importance of England lay the foundation of theatre. In fact the first public theatre was built in 1576.

1.3.1 Renaissance Prose

Classical influences are reflected in prose as well. John Lyly's *Euphues* (1578–80) is an example. Bacon's essays (*The Advancement of Learning* and more importantly his *Essays*) modeled on Montaigne's French essays perfected the form in English. He wrote on aspects of law, science, history, government, politics, ethics, religion and colonialism, as well as gardens, parents, children and health. He considered the pursuit of knowledge useful for the individual and society. Richard Hooker wrote *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Poltie* (published in 1593 and 1597). It is a defense of Anglicanism against Puritanism, advocates intellectual liberty and opposes dogma. While Bacon criticizes traditional beliefs, Hooker affirms a new outlook. The Marprelate tracts were published anonymously in 1588–89 using the name Martin Marprelate. They are an exceptional piece of satirical writing. Books on manners were also written in this period. *The Courtyer* (1561) described how young gentlemen of style should behave. How to books were also published: *The Book Named the Governour* (1531) by Sir Thomas Elyot and *The Gull's Hornbook* (1609) by Thomas Dekker. The large number of sermons, religious tracts, and versions of the Bible show the use of prose for argumentative and descriptive purposes. Travel writing also spread. It began with Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), written in Latin. Richard Hakluyt was a master in this format. Most of his writing focuses on Drake, but he

also highlighted the discoveries of other navigators. *A Discourse Concerning the Western Planting* (1584) reflects his support to Raleigh's plan to colonize Virginia. Samuel Purchas, his assistant also wrote travel books about China and Japan. Raleigh, the archetypal man of the Renaissance wrote *History of the World* (1614). Nash is credited for having 'invented' modern narrative, particularly with *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594). It is a mixture of genres and styles from picaresque to mock-historical, from parody to character comedy. Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) was a profoundly important analysis of human states of mind – a kind of early philosophical/psychological study. He sees 'melancholy' as part of the human condition, especially love melancholy and religious melancholy. Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici* (1642) also had a medical thrust. Browne's *Urn Burial* (also known as *Hydriotaphia*, 1658) is an early work of archaeology. It uses the idea of the fragility of monuments to underscore the affirmation of faith.

1.3.2 Translations of the Bible

King James I commissioned the authorized or King James Version of the Bible, in 1604. It can be seen as confirmation of the domination of English language in England. Bible translation has a long tradition in England: it began with Aelfric in the Anglo-Saxon era and continued to Wycliffe's Lollard Bible (late 14th century). Both these translations were from the Latin Vulgate. In the Renaissance translations took a new turn. Tyndale translated the New Testament from Erasmus Greek text and the Old Testament from a Hebrew text. The Miles Coverdale Bible (called Geneva Bible) was produced after the formation of the Anglican Church. The Bishop's Bible (1568) was translated from the Latin Vulgate and tried to counterbalance the Calvinist Geneva Bible. The King James Version was largely based on the Bishop's and Geneva Bibles. It can be seen as affirmation of Protestant England and a celebration of its freedom from Rome.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

3. What were the subjects of Bacon's essays?
4. What differences did Renaissance bring about in translation of the Bible?

1.4 RESTORATION TO ROMANTICISM (1660–1789)

The monarchy was restored in 1660 when Charles II was crowned king. However, in reality monarchical power was replaced by a parliamentary system with two parties—the Tories and the Whigs. Both parties benefited from a system which encouraged social stability rather than opposition. The Age relied on reason and facts rather than on speculation. Flights of fancy and risk taking were abhorred. A society, Puritan, middle class and unthreatened by any repetition of the huge and traumatic upheavals of the first part of the seventeenth century emerged. This explains why James II's overthrow in 1688 is called the 'Glorious' or 'Bloodless' Revolution. The focus of society was on commerce, respectability and institutions. This idea is best reflected in Hobbes' *Leviathan*. The Royal Society represents the trend towards the

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institutionalization of scientific investigation and research in this period. The other highly significant institution, one which was to have considerably more importance in the future, was the Bank of England, founded in 1694. There was also a return to religion and traditional religious beliefs. Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* need to be seen in this context.

Some characteristics of the age are:

1. Growth of a city-based middle-class economy
2. The rise of the novel as a popular if critically unprestigious genre;
3. The growth of journalism and magazines, with a corresponding growth in professional authorship;
4. A noticeable increase in literary criticism, leading to the establishment of what was critically acceptable and what was not;
5. A decline in the reputation of contemporary drama, while the theatre attracted increasing support;
6. A reaction to Augustan neoclassicism in poetry, with moves towards the funereal mode, or the rediscovery of simpler values;
7. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, an attraction for the fantastic, the exotic and the primitive.

Journalism

The rising middle classes increased the readership of journal and newspapers. Richard Steele found *The Tatler* (ran from April 1709 to January 1711). He, together with Joseph Addison, began *The Spectator* which ran till 1714. The latter became the journal of a gentleman's club. Its spokesperson Sir Roger de Coverley was a fictional character through whom issues like the relation of the city and the country between social classes etc. were discussed. This established the tradition of the witty observation of and comment on life. There was no direct engagement with the issues of the time and a conscious distance was maintained and this in turn perpetrated class values. *The Gentleman's Journal*, *Gentleman's Magazine*, *The Grub Street Journal* and *The Monthly Review* were other journals published during the time. They established London as the cultural capital of the country.

Many journals did grapple with the controversial issues of their time. Daniel Defoe's *The Review* was one such. He later went on to edit the trade journal *The Mercator* before becoming a novelist. His strong opinions often put him on the wrong side of libel laws. Like him Dr. Johnson also practiced journalism before launching his literary career.

Scottish Enlightenment, Diarists and Gibbon

The Scottish Enlightenment occurred in the 18th century in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Its aim was 'improvement' based on philosophical enquiry and its practical applications. Its effect can be seen in Thomas Reid's *Nature* which gives the cause and effect of man's relationship with God using the 'common-sense' approach. Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) revolutionized concepts of trade and foretold the rise of America.

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Writing for private consumption increased. This explains the rise in diary and letter writing in the new literate middle class. The *Diary of Samuel Pepys* is one example and gives an essentially private and highly personal insight into his life. It also gives an account of the Great Plague (1664–65) and the Great Fire of London (1666). These are also found in John Evelyn's *Diary* (or *Memoirs*). The best known letters are Lord Chesterfield's to his son, from 1737 until the son's death in 1768. When they were published in 1773 they became a kind of handbook of good behaviour, a vivid manual of how society saw itself, and an indication of how appearance and 'manners maketh the man'. The rise of publishing gave spurt to historical writing and *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was published between 1776 and 1788.

1.4.1 The Novel

The Augustan concern with experience meant that the novel and fiction became the dominant forms. The genre built up on travel accounts from the 14th and 16th century after it was subsumed into an English middle-class way of thinking. In the picaresque novels therefore, the experience was within recognizable bounds. The readership was largely female and upper or upper-middle class. In many novels a new morality covering relationships between the sexes and figures of authority is seen. Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* deals with slavery. She wrote this 'novel' 30 years before Defoe, who is credited with writing the first proper novel. She was politically active and spoke for women's rights and sexual freedom. She was accused of lewdness and of plagiarism. Delarivier Manley wrote *The New Atalantis* (1709), a political allegory dealing with rape, incest and homosexuality. Her work was also considered immoral and anti-government. *The Secret History of Queen Zarah* (1705) is a refined political satire on contemporary politics. It is clear that scandalous novels – one which dealt with sexual themes, asked difficult questions regarding the religious or political situation were deemed unacceptable and muzzled. Propriety became a key concept in literature, and was directly related to the critical concerns of the Augustan, or neoclassical age.

Daniel Defoe's novels reflect the thinking of the 18th century. *A Journal of the Plague Year* is a quasi-factual journalistic account of London between 1664 and 1665. *Robinson Crusoe* is his most famous work. This novel shows the working out of Hobbes's belief that life is 'brutish' and that it is important to establish and accept authority. This is what Crusoe, a colonizer, does on the island. He is the first capitalist hero who overcomes extreme difficulties to reach economic security. Similarly, Moll Flanders, his famous heroine in the novel by the same name may spend her life as a prostitute and incestuous wife; but she does it only after she has been accepted back into society and has improved her behaviour. The novel is also a social comment on the distinction between the haves and have-nots of society. These novels reflect the triumph of the middle-class ethos, where money is the driving force.

Jonathan Swift criticized authority figures with increasing venom in his work. *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is seen as a children's tale. But it is a severe attack on the political parties of the time, the pointlessness of religious controversies between different denominations within Christianity (through the debate between the Big-endians or Little-endians), the scientific institutions of the time and the preference to reason over emotion (through the contrast between the yahoos and the Houyhnhnms). He also wrote *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), on corruption in religion and learning and *The Grand Question Debated*, in 1729.

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Samuel Richardson made his money as a writer and printer. He first published a version of *Aesop's Fables* and a manual of letter-writing. He turned this into the epistolary novel, *Pamela* (1740). The novel traces Pamela's journey till her marriage to Mr. B. The novel established the prototype of male domination with its implied sensuality and female submission with its implication of restraint, submission and virtue. Fielding parodied this novel in his *Shamela*.

Richardson's next epistolary novel, *Clarissa* (1747–48), has four letter writers and marks a major step forward. This allows for greater detailing of character. In his work the novelist is concerned with male and female roles and identities, and the interplay of his characters' psychology. Further, the epistolary form allows the correspondents to present multiple points of views, and through this creates the impression of diversity leading to consensus.

Fielding began his career with *Shamela*. His next work *Joseph Andrews* (1742) was also intended as a parody until it took on a life of its own. With an omniscient narrator it is a humorous and ironic tale. His focus is on male characters and manners. In contrast to the chaste Joseph Andrews, his next hero Tom, in *Tom Jones* (1749), is a foundling enjoying his freedom. Both these novels are picaresque journeys from innocence to experience, from freedom to responsibility. The hero undergoes a personal crusade until he gains respectability in the end. A difference in mores with respect to sex is seen: while a woman 'falls' if she indulges in carnal relations, for a man it is a matter of pleasure and enjoyment. *Jonathan Wild the Great* (1743) presents one of the first real anti-heroes in English literature. It is an epistolary novel with a satiric strain to reveal the hypocrisy and double dealing of the times. The novel shows how the criminal Jonathan escapes Newgate. A contrast between the two novelists reveals that while Richardson wrote what could be called a psychological novel; Fielding's novels were more social and comic in tone.

Eliza Haywood was a female writer who wrote *Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) and ran the periodical *The Female Spectator*, one of the first magazines intended specifically for a female readership. *Betsy Thoughtless* is a 'quest' novel. Oliver Goldsmith published *The Vicar of Wakefield*, pastoral parable in 1766. It is inspired from *Don Quixote*.

Johnson

Dr Samuel Johnson was a journalist and is remembered for his *Dictionary*, the *Rasselas* (1759), and *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749). He also wrote *Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81) which blends biography with literary criticism. Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, published in 1791, carries on Johnson's own contribution to the growing art of biography, and consolidates Johnson's position as a major literary figure, who, although a poet and a novelist, is remembered more for his academic and critical achievement than for his creative writings.

Sterne, Smollett and Scottish Voices

The rationalism of the early years of the 18th century gave way to humour and expression of emotion in the middle of the century. The novel form took on greater range and diversity to become the dominant art form.

Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* can be seen as the originator of the 'stream of consciousness' movement. The novel parodies the conventions of the novel as a

genre as practices in his time and points out the absurdity of relating time, space, reality, and relationships in a linear form. He breaks the traditional order of a beginning, middle, and end in the structure of the novel. While Fielding's omniscient author/narrator establishes a direct relationship with the reader, Sterne's narrator addresses the reader directly. He rambles on wherever his thoughts take him. His *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1767) is a parody of the travel journal.

Scottish writing played an important role in the 18th century. The major figures are the novelists Tobias Smollett and Henry Mackenzie, and the poets Robert Fergusson, Ossian and Robert Burns. Smollett's novel *Humphry Clinker* (1771) underlines the differences rather than unity in the United Kingdom, created by the Union of the Parliaments in 1707. Smollett was a journalist whose work is marked by anger. He also wrote picaresque novels which reflected his interests and experiences. His characters (Roderick Random, Ferdinand Count Fathom, Sir Lancelot Graves, and Humphry Clinker) come from all levels of society and undergo a variety of experiences. *Roderick Random* (1748) was a defense of homosexuality. *Complete History of England* (1757–58) and *The Present State of All Nations* (1768–69) are non fictional works. Smollett keeps alive the tradition of bawdiness of English Literature. He uses rude wordplay for social observation and criticism.

The Man of Feeling by Henry Mackenzie also typifies the opposing tendency towards 'sensibility.' It has a new type of hero: the man who cries. Harley is an innocent and represents the acceptance of the 'feminine' elements in the masculine hero. This type of hero continues the exploration of sexual roles in contemporary society. The novel takes the form of the mutilated manuscript from which whole sections have been lost.

James Macpherson wrote *Fingal* (1762) and *Temora* (1763), which purported to be translations of Gaelic epics by Ossian in the same form. He went to Gaelic roots not just for sentimental reasons but also to prove that the roots of British literature lay in a Northern culture. Primitive here meant simple and natural values as opposed to the city values of a sophisticated society. To a certain extent, this was also a reaction against neoclassical theory and practice, a return to a time of innocence and goodness.

The Gothic and the Sublime

There is a shift to 'the sublime' in the poetry of the 18th century. In *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757–59) Burke explains this concept. The sublime goes beyond natural beauty. The link between the sublime and terror is most clearly seen in the imaginative exaggeration of the Gothic novel—a form which concentrated on the fantastic, the macabre and the supernatural. Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is the first novel of this genre. Ann Radcliffe was an accomplished writer of gothic novels. Her *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) is her most famous work. Other novels are Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* (1777) and Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* (1806). A fashion for exotic locales and action, closely related to the Gothic, led to such outrageous works as *Vathek* (1786) by William Beckford.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

5. What was the aim of Scottish Enlightenment?
6. What is the specialty of the epistolary form?
7. Which work marks the beginning of the 'stream of consciousness' style of writing?

1.5 THE ROMANTIC PERIOD (1789-1832)

The period begins with the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 and ends in 1832 when the First Reform Bill was passed. It was an age of political and social revolution. The country changed from an agricultural to an industrial one. Power passed from the landed aristocracy to the mercantile class. The enclosure system was introduced to increase efficiency and led to the displacement of many farmers. They migrated to the city and became the new laborers or the working class concentrated in cities. Increased mechanization in cities resulted in unemployment and pollution. This prompted Disraeli to say that the country had 'two nations.' American independence in 1778 and the French Revolution in 1789 influenced the intellectual climate in Britain. Debate in England was polarized between the radical beliefs espoused by Tom Paine in *Rights of Man* (1791) and the conservative ideology of Edmund Burke in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). Godwin advocated a gradual move towards eradication of poverty and an equitable distribution of wealth. Individuals professing such beliefs were called Jacobins or radicals. As the French Revolution developed, support for it in Britain declined. The violence and bloodshed of the aristocracy eroded support for the Revolution in England. This feeling of dismay is evident in Wordsworth's changing responses from ecstasy to a feeling of lost opportunity. England's defeat of France resulted in social unrest when soldiers came home and found themselves unemployed. To suppress them the ruling classes adopted harsh methods culminating in the 'Peterloo Massacre' of 1819 when soldiers charged on a group of workers. This event is described by Samuel Bamford in *Passages in the Life of a Radical* (1884).

The Preface to the 1800 edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* is a poetic manifesto. The move towards greater freedom in political affairs is reflected in the creation of a new poetic order: poets would now use 'the real language of men.' Romantic temperament prefers feelings and intuition. The Romantics believe that since the child is close to God he is innocent and pure and can only be corrupted by civilization. For them the child is the source of all natural and spontaneous feeling. Another important aspect of this poetry is that it is inward looking into the life of the imagination. For this reason the irrational, mystical and supernatural world assumes importance. Since this poetry celebrates the individual, it is critical of society and its injustices. The rising middle classes colluded with the working classes and the liberals (the Whigs) to pressurize the Tories to pass the First Reform Bill to extend the electorate.

The highlight of the Romantic age was a reaction against the ideals of Enlightenment and the evils of Industrialization. It was an intellectual movement that

informed the literary, artistic, cultural and philosophical modes of the eighteenth century. In contrast to the austerity and scientific rationalization of the age of Enlightenment, Romanticism was in favour of uninhibited, untamed expression of strong emotions and indulging in the richness and sublimity of aesthetic experience. The predominant theme of literature written during this age was treatment of nature. While even earlier in the works of writers such as Cowper, Gray, Crabbe etc., nature was abundantly used as a literary theme; their manner of treating the same was very different from how the writers of the Romantic Age perceived nature. As Edward Albert says,

In the work of Cowper, Crabbe and Gray, the treatment is principally the simple chronicle and sympathetic observations of natural features. In the new race of poets, the observation becomes more matured and intimate. Notably in the case of Wordsworth, the feeling for nature rises to a passionate veneration that is love and religion too. To Wordsworth, nature is not only procession of seasons and seasonal fruition: it is the eye of all things, natural and supernatural, into which the observant soul can peer and behold the spirit that inhabits all things. Nature is thus amplified and glorified; it is to be sought, not only in the flowers and the fields, but also in the light of the setting suns,

And the round ocean and the living air;

And the blue sky, and in the mind of man

Broadly speaking, the term Romanticism is used to connote the ideals and works of certain writers, artists, as well as philosophical and social thinkers who were deeply influenced by the ideologies of the French Revolution. The most discerning aspect of the Romantic Age is its pervasive theme of return to nature. Disillusioned by the inhuman conditions that prevailed with the onset of Industrial Revolution, intellectuals all over Europe pinned their hopes upon the French Revolution. The Revolution was seen as the harbinger of a new era with its ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Wordsworth, in particular, was deeply influenced by the ideals that informed the French Revolution and much of his early writings are infused with the spirit of liberty that defined the French Revolution. However, as the fervour of French Revolution declined and its ideals turned to dust, disappointment, dejection, despair and disillusionment took precedence. This is especially true of Wordsworth's later writings, which are expressive of his feelings of discontent and sorrow at the hollowness of the ideals of the French Revolution.

The Novels

Sir Walter Scott gave up writing poetry in 1814. The same year he produced *Waverley*; it was published anonymously. This was followed by *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *The Black Dwarf*, *Old Mortality*, *The Bride of Lammermoor* and other novels. These novels deal with scenes of Scotland. He also wrote *Ivanhoe* set in Plantagenet England; and *The Monastery* and *The Abbot* which are again set in Scotland. His last works are *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous* and reflect his bodily and mental anguish. Most of his novels were composed hurriedly to pay debts, so they are haphazard in composition, are hurriedly developed and carelessly finished. He uses an ornate style but because of a lack of rhythm the sentences are shapeless. Scott's greatest contribution is that he brought to life the historical novel. He was also instrumental in developing the domestic novel through the *Waverley* series. His

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characterization leaves much to be desired: the villains are melodramatic and the hero and heroine are wooden and dull. Though his style lacks suppleness it is powerful. The use of the Scottish vernacular gives it a naturalness it would otherwise not have had.

Jane Austen is quite different from any novelist before her, and an important part of the difference is that for many years she was not consciously writing for publication. What Jane Austen did – and no author before her had attempted it so successfully – was to apply the techniques of the novel to the acute observation of society in microcosm. She deliberately avoids effect, exaggeration and excess. Her novels do not have a didactic, moral or satiric purpose. They are simply representations of universal patterns of behaviour and documents of an aspect of the provincial society of her time. Her achievement was to create in each novel a fully realized and populated world, strictly limited in scope, such that the reader can observe – without being made to judge – a group of characters whose emotions are recognizable, whose faults are human, whose traits are familiar. The ‘issues’ may seem small-scale, when compared to the wars being waged outside the limits of the village; but it is precisely the universality of the characters’ preoccupations that makes these issues, and their expression, attractive in a lasting way to a great many readers. Her major novels are *Sense and Sensibility*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma* and *Persuasion*. *Northanger Abbey* begins as a burlesque of the Radcliffian horror.

Frankenstein is a Gothic horror story in the tradition established in the late eighteenth century by Ann Radcliffe, William Beckford and Horace Walpole. They continue a tradition which challenges the emphasis on reason, control and order which characterizes early eighteenth-century literature. Gothic novels such as *Frankenstein* explore the deepest recesses of human psychology, always stressing the macabre, the unusual and the fantastic and preferring the realities of the subjective imagination. *Frankenstein* underlines a shift in sensibility and a movement towards the uncanny, the marvelous, the rationally uncontrollable and the psychologically disjunctive. Such a shift also has political repercussions in that the worlds depicted represent a clear challenge to the existing order and to rational modes of thought and of social organization.

1.6 THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (1832–1900)

The Victorian age began when Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1832. This was a period of economic expansion and development. Britain became the centre of trade and industrial inventions. It was an age of optimism, but ‘The Victorian compromise’ wherein national success went hand in hand with the exploitation of lower classes. It was a compromise between philanthropy and repression. The First Reform Bill excluded the working classes from suffrage and caused dissent. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was the high point of Victorian faith in itself. It was badly shaken by the Crimean War and the publication of Darwin’s *Origin of Species*.

Dickens

Charles Dickens is the dominant figure of the Victorian Age and started out as a journalist. His novels were serialized. His *Sketches of Boz* (1836) are humorous

sketches. *Pickwick Papers*, with their use of class and dialect difference are also written in the same vein. *A Christmas Carol* has a clash of wealth and poverty but nevertheless has a happy ending. A more serious study of social problems is seen *Oliver Twist* onwards. This novel highlights the condition of the poor children in workhouses. *Nicholas Nickelby* also deals with the exploitation of children in the schools of Yorkshire. Though these novels of the 1840s are realistic, Dickens remains optimistic as is evident in the happy ending of *David Copperfield*. His novels of the 1850s expand beyond the individual to examine society: *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Great Expectations* fall in this category. *Hard Times* too examines the dehumanizing impact of industrialization.

Harison Ainsworth combined history with gothic elements. He was primarily an entertainer who capitalized on the Victorian liking for historical fantasy. He, along with Lytton, also wrote on fictional criminal subjects. Charles Reade was a ‘reforming’ novelist who wrote of prison life. Carlyle was a major influence of Dickens. He had strong views on leadership, which novelists translated into heroic behavior. Such actions were important in an unheroic age. He also influenced George Eliot. Macaulay was another historian who wrote during the time. Marx’s *Das Kapital* was the most influential work of the age. In it he is critical of private property and advocates a class war. The Oxford Movement, when Anglicans moved to Catholicism, occurred during this time. Cardinal Newman’s autobiography deals with this issue. Religious debate begins again.

Mid 19th century saw a glut of self-improvement handbooks. Smiles’ *Self-Help* is an example. Disraeli wrote political novels and wanted to influence political opinion through them. He wrote the trilogy *Coningsby*, *Sybil* and *Tancred*. Thackeray was a journalist. *Vanity Fair* is written in the perspective of the Napoleonic War. The lives of his heroes are a ‘series of defeats’ to be overcome and not the simple Victorian progression to prosperity. He also wrote *The Virginians* and *The Newcomes*.

The provincial novel developed in the early 19th century in Ireland and Scotland. Trollope was a novelist whose novels earned him fame. His novels give insight into Victorian ‘progress.’ He wrote the Barsetshire and Palliser series of novels. These novels are marked with many complications. Meredith wrote novels of discovery and self-discovery.

George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell and the Bronte sisters are some of the female authors of the time. They adopted acronyms so that they would be taken seriously. Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* is a *bildungsroman*. It shows the victory of the good character after it has undergone suffering. Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* is a cyclical novel which moves from harmony to violence to harmony again. Anne Bronte wrote *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. It depicts a woman’s departure from an unhappy marriage in search for happiness. These works are novels of psychological exploration and offer a new way of portraying women.

George Eliot’s novels focus on social and philosophical concerns and moral commitment. In novels like *Daniel Deronda* and *Middlemarch* she touches the concerns of her age. She also wrote *Adam Bede*, *Silas Marner* and *Mill on the Floss*. These show her concern for the outsider in society.

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Mrs. Gaskell, Samuel Butler, George Gissing and George Moore are late Victorian novelists. Mrs. Gaskell wrote social novels on the Manchester scene. Butler satirized the Victorian ideal of family life with the father as the moral centre. Gissing was a naturalist writer whose work shows a sympathy for the poor. Moore wrote realistic novels on a variety of themes. He presented social realism in his 'seduction novels.' Arthur Morrison wrote 'proletarian' novels depicting the condition of the working poor. W. E. Tirebuck wrote industrial novels on the 'Two Nations' theme.

Victorian Fantasy

As the Victorian world became unpalatable there was a rise of the fantasy novel: science fiction, detective stories, ghost stories, utopian writing and children's books. Lewis Carroll wrote fantasies, like *Alice in Wonderland*. Wilkie Collins wrote detective fiction. Sheridan Le Fau wrote stories with a gothic strain. William Morris wrote utopian fantasies. The rise of the middle class meant that there was an increasing demand for 'wholesome' children's literature. This was found in the works of Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hughes and Charlotte M. Young. R. L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island* also belongs to this category.

Wilde and Aestheticism

The Aesthetic Movement insisted on the idea of 'Art for Art's sake.' The Victorian search for absolutes in an ever changing world meant that even abstract ideas like art and beauty were given absolute values. John Ruskin and Walter Pater were involved in the re-evaluation of art. Ruskin is the first art critic who preserved architecture in the face of industrialization. Pater was an academic whose study of Italian Renaissance painting influenced Wilde. Wilde was a dandy. Therefore when he was tried and sentenced for homosexuality, the dichotomy of his personal life versus his public persona can be taken to be indicative of the crises of Victorian morals. The divergence between Victorian assumptions and values is seen in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Critics read the story as a criticism of the Aesthetic movement.

Hardy and James

Hardy's work shows the exploration of moral issues and responsibility. His protagonists are individuals whose natures make them outsiders even as they fall victim to the changing economic, social and sexual mores. This is seen in the novels *Tess of the D'urbervilles*, *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *The Woodlanders*. He wrote tragedies showing that ironies govern life. His novels are episodic and show the disruption caused to rural communities by mechanization. The 1890s marked the end of the 'triple decker.' Soon shorter novels were being written which people could buy and keep at home. This sounded the death knell for the lending libraries.

The pre-Raphaelites

They stressed their admiration for the Italian art during the High Renaissance. They favored medieval simplicity, closeness to nature in representational clarity and moral seriousness of intent. The main figures of the movement are the Rossetti brothers. Their view of nature is mystical. They influenced the visual arts more than writing. Swinburne, William Morris and Ernest Dowson were influenced by them.

In Hopkins' work Victorian despair reaches its apotheosis. He carries Victorian doubt into the 20th century. His major poem is *Wreck of the Deutschland*.

Victorian Drama

Dramatists couldn't compete with the novel form. Realistic drama began in the 1860s. Robertson wrote plays like *Society, Caste, and School*. He was the first playwright to insist on a realistic setting and gave rise to the 'cup and saucer drama.' Shaw's and Wilde's plays indicate the flood of new ideas that were coming. Wilde staged epigrammatic comedies.

The Modern Age (1900 to the Present)

By the turn of the 20th century most people in England lived in cities. The idea of local communities had given way to the anonymous existence of cities. The 20th century also saw the Empire being challenged and its eventual break up. The rise of literacy is another feature. This led to a large reading public and the growth of a low brow culture which was perpetually in opposition to the esoteric avant-garde. The century is also marked by the death of all certitudes and the democratization of institutions. The drama form revived and there were experiments in other art forms.

The novel – 19th and 20th Century

Together with the increase in objectivity given by outsiders, who permitted a different view of English society – or, in Conrad, Kipling, and Forster, a clearer depiction of colonialism and its effects – there can also be found a greater degree of subjectivity in the novels of writers whose concern was more with the inner life of characters. The early years of the century produced the novels of Hardy and Gissing, Wilde and George Moore, as well as the realism of Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy, and the new 'great tradition' of writers such as James, Conrad, Lawrence, Joyce and Woolf. The definite shape of a novel's *plot*, which organizes characters and events, gave way to less logical and sequential modes of organization. There was a stress on the individual's sense of what is valid in experience, and techniques of subjectivity were evolved to represent this. The whole nature of what made a fictional hero or heroine was also questioned. The individual could no longer be a *model* for behavior. The 'stream of consciousness' technique was developed in various ways by writers in order to render directly and in depth, the experience of individual characters. Time was not a series of separate chronological moments, and consciousness was seen as a continuous flow, with past and present merging. Under the general influence of work by psychologists such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, writers came to believe that we are our memories, that the present is the sum of our past and that the form and style of the novel have to capture this understanding. One result was that the novel concentrated less on a social, public world and more on the inner world of unique and isolated individuals or the shapeless, unstructured sensations of life. In all, the novel became a less rigid, plotted and naturalistic form. Henry James was concerned with the study of how characters reacted in unfamiliar situations. He was obsessed with technique as is apparent from the reworking of his earlier novels. His novels focus on the charm of the Old World on the American outsider and the adjustment needed to live here. Conrad was a sailor and his novels are set in exotic surroundings. He reveals

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character in flashes so that a composite picture is created when the novel ends. Hough he had a profound sense of the tragedy of life he was not bitter about it. He was influenced by Flaubert and Maupassant. He presents the story in an easygoing manner through a narrator. H.G. Wells wrote scientific romances, the most famous being *Time Machine*. His novels reflect his concern with contemporary issues especially the problems individuals face in conforming to social rules and expectations. He supported women's education and political equality.

D. H. Lawrence's novels present the reader with a personal interpretation of life. He is concerned with the basic problems of human existence and with man's relationship with others and the larger universe around him. His novels reflect a hatred of the mechanized world and a love of the primitive. James Joyce presents his narrative in a straightforward manner. His subject is human relationships. In *Finnegan's Wake* Joyce used a 'private' style of broken narratives and abrupt transitions. Virginia Woolf reacts against the novel of social manners and uses the 'stream of consciousness' method in her novels. Aldus Huxley also wrote during this time.

The uncertainty of the second world war is reflected in the novels of the mid 20th century. The novels deal with a disintegration of society, a lack of positivism and sadism. The novels are a mixture of realism, cynicism and dark comedy. American fiction flooded England during this time. The major writer in England was Graham Greene who presents actions as being fundamentally right or fundamentally wrong in his work. Charles Snow gives an insight into the 1920s society. Evelyn Waugh's work is great satire. He criticizes the world for valuing nothing more than money. His main characters are snobs whose cardinal sin is vulgarity. One feature of the modern novel which takes on great importance is the use of dialogue and conversation, especially when presented with very little narratorial intervention. This gives the reader the challenge of filling out the 'script' – it is minimalism of quite a different kind from the interior monologue mode. Novelists as different as Evelyn Waugh in the 1920s and 1930s and Iris Murdoch in the 1960s and 1970s have experimented with this kind of speech presentation. William Cooper and Kingsley Amis are also late 20th century novelists. Cooper may be considered the original angry young man. Kingsley Amis deals with the anti-hero infiltrating society only to be disillusioned by it.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

8. What is the focus of George Eliot's novels?
9. What is generally the theme of D.H. Lawrence's novels?

1.7 SUMMARY

- Old English came into existence sometimes around the fourth and the fifth centuries. England, at that point of time, was also known as Angleland i.e., land of the Angles. The Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes were the first to invade Britain and occupy it. The original inhabitants of England went to Wales after being driven out by the invaders. That is how they came to be known as the

Welsh. This phase of Old English period was identified as the Dark Ages or The Age of Savages by the Romans.

- The first fragment of literature is *Caedmon's Hymn* from the late 7th century. Caedmon is said to have been a lay worker in the monastery at Whitby. One day God's voice came to him and he began composing hymns. *Caedmon's Hymn* is the first song of praise in English culture, and the first Christian religious poem in English. It is the overtly religious piece of Anglo-Saxon poetry.
- *Beowulf* is the best-known epic Anglo-Saxon poem and recalls a shared heroic past in the general consciousness of the audience. The people and the setting are Germanic. The poem details his victory over Grendel, the years of his reign and ultimately his death. The epic concerns itself with time and what it can do to man.
- The Norman Conquest in 1066 was a game changer in the history of English literature. It led to the introduction of French language and culture to England. For the next two centuries the two languages, French and English, struggled to integrate. French became the language of the court and was widely used from the 12th to the late 14th century.
- *The Owl and the Nightingale* (1225) is a debate (*conflictus*) to show differing attitudes and values, and uses the English countryside as a setting. The debate between the serious (the owl) and the light-hearted (the nightingale) reflects the period's concerns between religious issues and the new thoughts of love. *Winner and Waster* (1360) is a more serious debate contrasting a miserly and carefree approach to money.
- The origin of English theatre is religious. The earliest church drama was aimed at presenting biblical stories to a wider audience, thus liturgies were born. The first liturgies were Christ's miracles, the mysteries of the nativity and the resurrection, heaven and hell.
- Renaissance drama drew inspiration from many sources. The early comedies are derived from the plays of Terence and Plautus while the tragedies are from Seneca. The mediaeval miracle and mystery plays and the interludes were also influential. Native influences are apparent in the humour, use of ballad, poetry, dance and music and tendency towards allegory and symbolism.
- King James I commissioned the authorized or King James Version of the Bible, in 1604. It can be seen as confirmation of the domination of English language in England. Bible translation has a long tradition in England: it began with Aelfric in the Anglo-Saxon era and continued to Wycliffe's Lollard Bible (late 14th century).
- In the first quarter of the 17th century, the distinction between comedy and tragedy became clearer. Comedy became the more localized city comedy based on London and its people; and tragedy focused on a world of corruption, perversion, blood and passion. The atmosphere of sexual and moral corruption is central to Jacobean tragedy. Major dramatists, beside Shakespeare and Jonson, are Thomas Middleton, John Webster, Thomas Dekker, Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher (usually in collaboration), Thomas Heywood, and Philip Massinger.

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- Drama saw a decline from 1707 to 1737 not only due to Collier's attacks but also because the increasing middle class was turning to journals, newspapers and the newly developing form of the novel. In such an environment farce and musicals were successful. John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) was one such.
- The Augustan concern with experience meant that the novel and fiction became the dominant forms. The genre builds up on travel accounts from the 14th and 16th century after it was subsumed into an English middle-class way of thinking. In the picaresque novels therefore the experience was within recognizable bounds. The readership was largely female and upper or upper-middle class.
- The Romantic period begins with the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 and ends in 1832 when the First Reform Bill was passed. It was an age of political and social revolution. The country changed from an agricultural to an industrial one. Power passed from the landed aristocracy to the mercantile class. The enclosure system was introduced to increase efficiency and led to the displacement of many farmers.
- Jane Austen is quite different from any novelist before her, and an important part of the difference is that for many years she was not consciously writing for publication. What Jane Austen did – and no author before her had attempted it so successfully – was to apply the techniques of the novel to the acute observation of society in microcosm. She deliberately avoids effect, exaggeration and excess. Her novels do not have a didactic, moral or satiric purpose. They are simply representations of universal patterns of behaviour and documents of an aspect of the provincial society of her time.
- The Victorian age began when Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1832. This was a period of economic expansion and development. Britain became the centre of trade and industrial inventions. It was an age of optimism, but 'The Victorian compromise' wherein national success went hand in hand with the exploitation of lower classes. It was a compromise between philanthropy and repression.
- Tennyson is the major figure of the Victorian age. *In Memoriam* is an elegy to his friend. Its melancholic tone became the keynote of the late Victorian period. In his poetry he also recorded social reality (*Locksly Hall*). There is a sense of doubt and loss in his poetry. His best poems are dramatic monologues. Kipling wrote patriotic pieces, e.g. *The Charge of the Light Brigade*.

1.8 KEY TERMS

- **Noble Savage:** individuals though savage yet they had something which was 'noble' that could be imitated by decadent Rome
- **Norman Conquest:** The invasion and settlement of England by the Normans following the battle of Hastings (1066) battle of Hastings. Hastings was the decisive battle in which William the Conqueror (duke of Normandy) defeated the Saxons under Harold II (1066) and thus left England open for the Norman Conquest

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- **Troubadours:** One of a class of lyric poets and poet-musicians often of knightly rank who flourished from the 11th to the end of the 13th century chiefly in the south of France and the north of Italy and whose major theme was courtly love.
- **Alliteration:** The occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.
- **Reformation:** In his desire for a son, Henry VIII wanted to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Since the Catholic Church refused to allow this he took the drastic step of breaking from it and established himself as the head of the church and the state. This is known as Reformation.
- **Sonnets:** A sonnet is fundamentally a dialectical construct which allows the poet to examine the nature and ramifications of two usually contrastive ideas, emotions, states of mind, beliefs, actions, events, images, etc., by juxtaposing the two against each other, and possibly resolving or just revealing the tensions created and operative between the two.
- **Masques:** Masques were private performances held for the king and his court. They were generally held in royal halls and were an expensive proposition with lavish costumes, elaborate stage designs and machinery and spectacular effects.

1.9 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. It is interesting that most of the native English culture they preserved is not in Latin, the language of the church, but in Old English, the language of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes (the Anglo-Saxons). In fact it is through the texts preserved by the Church over time that we can trace the development of language towards Early Middle English in the thirteenth century.
2. The Norman Conquest led to the introduction of French Language and culture to England.
3. He wrote on aspects of law, science, history, government, politics, ethics, religion and colonialism, as well as gardens, parents, children and health.
4. In the Renaissance period, translations took a new turn. Tyndale translated the New Testament from Erasmus Greek text and the Old Testament from a Hebrew text.
5. The aim of the Scottish Enlightenment was 'improvement' based on philosophical enquiry and its practical applications.
6. The epistolary form allows the correspondents to present multiple points of views, and through this create the impression of diversity leading to consensus.
7. Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* can be seen as the originator of the 'stream of consciousness' movement. The novel parodies the conventions of the novel as a genre as practices in his time and points out the absurdity of relating time, space, reality, and relationships in a linear form.
8. George Eliot's novels focus on social and philosophical concerns and moral commitment. In novels like *Daniel Deronda* and *Middlemarch* she touches the concerns of her age. She also wrote *Adam Bede*, *Silas Marner* and *Mill on the Floss*. These show her concern for the outsider in society.

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9. D. H. Lawrence's novels present the reader with a personal interpretation of life. He is concerned with the basic problems of human existence and with man's relationship with others and the larger universe around him. His novels reflect a hatred of the mechanized world and a love of the primitive.

1.10 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What were some of the religious writings in old English? What was the role of the church in these writings?
2. What was the English Affirmation? Write about some authors associated with this period.
3. Write a short note on the writing of Charles Dickens.
4. Why did the novel gain popularity in the 19th century?

Long-Answer Questions

1. What were the characteristics of Chaucer's works? Explain with examples.
2. List the characteristics and impact of Reformation.
3. State the characteristics of the Romantic age.

1.11 FURTHER READING

- Sanders, Andrew; *Short Oxford History of English Literature*, Oxford University Press, London, 2004.
- Deacon, Terrence W.; *The Origin of Language*, Penguin Publications, London, 1997.
- Courthope, William John; *A History of English Poetry*, Macmillan and Company, California, 1904.
- Beum, Robert and Shapiro, Karl; *The Prosody Handbook: A Guide to Poetic Form*, Dover Publications, London, 2006.

UNIT 2 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY FICTION

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Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Unit Objectives
- 2.2 Literary History of Augustan Age
- 2.3 Daniel Defoe: Moll Flanders
- 2.4 Jane Austen: Emma
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 Key Terms
- 2.7 Answers to 'Check your Progress'
- 2.8 Questions and Exercises
- 2.9 Further Reading

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The English novel became the most popular and prolific literary form in the 18th century due to an increase in the middle class reading public. *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe was one of the major early works in this genre. Most of the 18th century novels were said to be loosely structured and their plots were based on the themes of love, marriage, quarrelling, reconciliation, gain or loss of money and social status.

The seventeenth century writers devised a technique of psychological portrayal of characters. This technique was available to Joseph Addison and Richard Steele. They created the popular characters of Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport in *The Spectator* with the help of this technique. In addition to this, the narrative style used by John Bunyan in *The Pilgrim's Progress* provided the background for the emergence of the English novel.

Some of the popular English novels of the 18th century were:

- *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe (1719)
- *Love in Excess* by Eliza Haywood (1719)
- *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson (1740)
- *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding (1749)
- *Tristram Shandy* by Laurence Sterne (1759-1767)
- *Evelina* by Frances Burney (1778)
- *The Mysteries of Udolpho* by Ann Radcliffe (1794)
- *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* by Mary Hays (1796)
- *The Monk* by Matthew Lewis (1796)

This unit critically discusses two novels in detail—*Moll Flanders* by Daniel Defoe and *Emma* by Jane Austen.

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2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the growth of the English novel in the Augustan age
- Discuss the life and important works of Daniel Defoe, including *Moll Flanders*
- Discuss the life and important works of Jane Austen, including *Emma*

2.2 LITERARY HISTORY OF THE AUGUSTAN AGE

The English literature in the eighteenth century is termed as the Age of Reason, the Neoclassical Age and the Augustan Age. The Augustan Age, which started after the Restoration era, was one of the most illustrious periods in Latin literary history, from approximately 43 BC to AD 18. Virgil, Horace and Ovid were the remarkable writers of this period whose work and style were copied by a several writers. Other important writers of this period were Pope and John Dryden for poetry while Jonathan Swift and Joseph Addison were the chief prose writers.

John Dryden's writings forged a connection between the Augustan and Restoration literature, though his writings in the Restoration age were mainly ribald comedies. His satirical verses were sought after by many poets who copied his style but his literary writing style was in a neoclassical genre.

Though Jonathan Swift and Daniel Defoe had a lasting influence on the Augustan Age, it was Alexander Pope whose name is deeply connected with this Age. This was partly because most of the early prose narrative prevalent widely during this time did not fit into a literary era which was at that time predominantly neoclassic. The literary work of this age conformed to Pope's aesthetic style and values, which thereby qualified to be 'Augustan' and is very eminent by its precision, harmony and its sophistication. It is also known for its reproduction of classic works by Cicero, Virgil, Homer and Horace.

In this period, the heroic tense verse was commonly used for free verse while satire was mainly used for the prose essay. The first half of the eighteenth century had only the neoclassic style of literature and any definition given for this period would be highly misleading. The representatives of the neoclassic period were very important and had influential voices in the literary circle. Therefore, some characteristics of 'neoclassicism' were used to depict this era.

Neoclassicism

Dryden's *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668) and Pope's *Essay on Criticism* (1711) are most important documents of the neoclassical age which display qualities of clarity, order and stylish politesse as presented by the literary works of Pope, Swift, Dryden, John Gay, Addison and many of the contemporaries. The major works by these writers, which formed the basis for modern English literature criticism, insist that 'nature' is the true model and standard for writing. The 'nature' was derived from the classical theory and not the spiritual and wild nature that was later idolized by the romantic Augustan poets. It was a comprehensive and rational moral order of the universe

which demonstrated the fortunate design of God. Homer was accepted as the best and most excellent ancient poet who excelled in his description of nature. Therefore, the literary circle around Pope concluded that any writer who 'imitates' Homer is writing and describing nature. In *Essay on Criticism*, Pope has put forth the rules based on the classics in the following words

'Those rules of old discovered, not devised,

Are natures still, but nature methodized?'

The Tatler (1709–11) by Joseph Addison and *The Spectator* (1711–12) by Richard Steele were the two most influential periodicals published in the literary circles of the early eighteenth century. Addison and Steele were instrumental in raising the cultural levels of the middle class of England and were known as the minor masters of the prose style in English literature.

Steele was a dedicated crusader for morality and represented the typical mood of the post-Restoration period and his purpose as stated in *The Tatler* was 'to enliven Morality with Wit, and to temper Wit with Morality'. Addison used *The Spectator* to further his purpose of introducing the middle-class English public to new and recent developments in literature and philosophy, and in a way further educate their tastes. The gossip was written often in a highly refined and ironic manner while the essays were based on discussions of current events and literature.

The philosophy of John Locke and the literary reputation of John Milton was promoted and popularized by Addison and Steele, among others. Addison and Steele had enormous influence on their contemporaries and their essays popularized the ideas by circulating them among the intellectuals of that period, even though their publication ran for two years only. It is easy to say that the literary circle around Addison, Swift, Steele and Pope was able to dictate the accepted taste in literary works during the Age of Augustan with the wide-spread reach and influence of their publications. Addison in one of his essays written for *The Spectator* criticized all the metaphysical poets for their lack of clear ideas and ambiguities propagated by them, and this critical stance continued to influence the literary circles till the twentieth century. These writers were criticized often by the literary circle who sought to justify their criticism using classical precedents.

The classical forms like mock epic, imitation and translation formed the base of the adaptations of important genres of work of that period. Most of Pope's work belongs to the imitation category and this shows the artificiality of the period of neoclassicism more than any other literary form of that period.

Pope addressed George II very satirically as 'Augustus' and used the style of Horace's informal conversational tone and candour in his verse epistles and satires. He also applied the standards used in the original Augustan Age to his own time. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* was translated by Pope, and after concluding this enormous and demanding task, he started work on his most sarcastic literary satire named *The Dunciad* (1728).

The Dunciad is a satire in the form of a mock epic in which the commonplace subjects are described in the elevated, heroic style of classical epic. Pope uses parody and deliberately misuses the heroic language and conventions of literature to highlight

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the triviality of the subject, and this is clearly measured against the human potential of the highest standards. Apart from *The Dunciad*, John Dryden's *MacFlecknoe* (1682) and Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) are also the most well known mock epic poems of that period.

The Rape of the Lock is generally considered to be one of the greatest contributions to the genre of the mock epic poetry. Although the heroic action is maintained in this the mock epic poetry, the scale is greatly reduced. In this poem, the preparation for combat by the hero is transposed to a very fashionable ride on the boat up the Thames and the battle which follows is a card game. When the heroine is pouring coffee, the hero steals the titular lock of hair.

Besides poetry, the influence of the mock epic mode was also found in dramas, the most notable of which was the famous work of John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728). *The Beggar's Opera* is a satire on Sir Robert Walpole, who was the prime minister of England at that time, and it ludicrously combines the elements of Italian opera and ballad. The characters used were prostitutes and criminals while the vehicle was opera. Gay's magnificent opera was an unprecedented stage success and centuries later, inspired the German dramatist Bertolt Brecht to pen his most successful and best-known work *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Three Penny Opera*, 1928).

Jonathan Swift's *The Battle of the Books* (1704) is one of the better known mock epic works in prose form from that period and depicts the old battle between the ancient and modern writers which is fought out in a library between The Bee and The Spider.

The Rise of the Novel

Daniel Defoe was the most important lasting literary influence of that period, unquestionably. His work brought about a difference in the Augustan period, despite being a writer of satire and social criticism before turning to write novels. Pope and his contemporaries ruled the literary establishment of that period whereas Defoe was a complete stranger and outsider from such a literary establishment. Defoe did not belong to the established literary world and hence was ridiculed by them and his works went completely unnoticed. For example, Swift in 1709 referred to Defoe as 'the Fellow that was Pilloryed, I have forgot his name'.

Defoe is remembered mainly for his works of fiction like *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). These works belong less to the refined impulse and the satirical style mainly used by the Augustan tradition, and more to an opposing tradition of early prose narrative used by prominent women writers like Aphra Behn, Mary Delariviere Manley and Jane Barker. Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* (1957), an influential study, has made the literary historians come to an opinion that Defoe was one of the prime originators of down-to-earth fiction writing in the eighteenth century and Defoe's first successful English novel was *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe would have not attempted writing prose narrative if his female predecessors had not created an audience for it, and for this, he was always grateful and thankful to them.

The women writers had already anticipated the usage of psychological realism and consistent narrative voice as elements of narration and all these elements of the modern novel were attributed to Defoe. The main contribution of Defoe was putting

all these elements together and bringing out sustained prose narrations using physical and psychological realism. Defoe in his major works, like *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* (1724), portrayed his characters facing difficulties to survive in a world of ever changing modern economic forces.

Given his capitalist philosophy, it is not surprising that most of Defoe's protagonists are resourceful and self-reliant individuals who freely express Defoe's middle-class values. Defoe wanted to balance economic realism and individualism and a belief in providence of God. Therefore, he created multi-faceted protagonists who could ask forgiveness and repentance for past sins and misdeeds, and at the same time are able to celebrate their power of being able to survive in a modern hostile environment. The intellectual literary circle mainly represented by Pope and Swift looked down on Defoe and his female contemporaries.

However, the later developments in the literary history have shown that it is Defoe and his female contemporaries who have defined the new age literature and not the Augustan writers. The novel remains the most popular and dominant literary form in the twentieth century, while mock epic is an element constituent used occasionally in comedy. *The Rape of the Lock* finds a mention in history books while *Moll Flanders* and *Robinson Crusoe* are being read universally even in this century. In spite of Jonathan Swift penning the brilliant and lasting classic *Gulliver's Travels*, Daniel Defoe always saw writing as 'a considerable branch of the English commerce' (*Essay upon Literature*, 1726), and is considered by the literary circle as the Father of the English novel.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Name three important epic poems of Augustan Age.
2. What was Defoe's writing style?

2.3 DANIEL DEFOE: MOLL FLANDERS

Daniel Defoe's birth year is not clearly recorded and he was believed to have been born sometime between 1659 and 1661. Daniel Defoe was one of the precursors of the modern novel. His original name was Daniel Foe. He added 'De' to his name to claim lineage of the aristocratic family of De Beau Faux. He wrote a number of articles, biographies, ghost stories, journals, memoirs, satires, and essays on religion, projects, reform and trade. All these forms were written in picturesque style with minutest of details. The details used in these writings made them look like true chronicles. A critic commenting on realistic *Journal of the Plague Year* and *Memoirs of a Cavalier* says 'Defoe wrote history, but invented the "facts"'. Another says that 'the one little art of which Defoe was past master was the art of forging a story and imposing it on the world as truth.' Defoe lacked creative imagination and a sense of structure yet he had the 'ability to lie like the truth'. That is why he is called 'the father of English novel'.

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He was born in a family of Presbyterian dissenters probably in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate in London. The children of dissenters were barred from Oxford and Cambridge universities. So, he was educated in a dissenting academy at Newington Green which was run by Charles Morton. Though a Christian, Defoe decided not to become a dissenting minister. Instead he entered the world of trade as a general merchant. He traded in a wide range of goods including stockings, wine, tobacco, and oysters. He was so interested in trade and economics that he wrote a number of essays and pamphlets on economic theories, which were ahead of their times.

He was up in arms against Catholic King James II. He had to flee to London to escape the gallows. When the King was deposed, he volunteered to become a guard of honour and escorted King William of Orange and Mary. He faced bankruptcy in 1692 and fled to debtors' sanctuary in Bristol. He won King William's favour and was appointed as a commissioner of the Glass Duty. Gradually, he became the King's confidante and advisor. Once he had to go into hiding to save himself when he offended the church and state sensibilities by attacking them in the satire *The Shortest Way*. The satire revealed how these two institutions dealt with the dissenters. He was betrayed and put on trial for seditious libel against the church. He was later jailed and had to suffer humiliation. He was granted pardon but he landed himself into debtor's prison where a timely grant saved him.



Fig. 2.1 Daniel Defoe

Published in 1697, Defoe's first distinguished publication was *An Essay upon Projects*, a series of proposals for improvement in the social and economic sphere. Defoe also witnessed the Great Storm of 1703 which caused severe damage to London and Bristol. The event became the subject of Defoe's *The Storm* (1704). It included the witness accounts of the storm. Many people consider these accounts as one of the world's first exemplars of modern journalism.

After the death of Queen Anne, Defoe worked for the Whig government and wrote 'Tory' pamphlets that destabilized the Tory viewpoint. Some of the popular essays written by Defoe are as follows:

- Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe (1720)
- The Complete English Tradesman
- An Essay Upon Projects
- An Essay Upon Literature (1726)
- Mere Nature Delineated (1726)
- Conjugal Lewdness (1727)
- A Plan of the English Commerce (1728)

Defoe also wrote a number of novels. Some of the novels written by Defoe are:

Robinson Crusoe- The novel was first published in 1719. It is a fictional autobiography of the protagonist—Robinson Crusoe. He is a castaway and spends 28 years on a tropical island near Trinidad. He encounters captives, cannibals and mutineers on the island. Before the end of 1719, four editions of the novel had been published. The book became so popular that it was translated into a number of languages. The popularity of the book encouraged Defoe to write its sequel *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. Later, he also wrote *Serious Reflections during the Life & Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*.

Captain Singleton- Published in 1720, the novel describes the life of an Englishman who was stolen from a rich family as a child and was reared by gypsies. The Englishman named Singleton makes his way to seas. The first half of the novel describes how he crosses Africa and the latter part of the novel deals with his life as a pirate in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea.

Roxana (1724) - The novel deals with the story of an unnamed 'fallen woman' who takes on various pseudonyms including 'Roxana'. The novel explains her fall from being a rich woman to a prostitute after her husband who is a 'fool' abandons her. After being abandoned, she accumulates wealth from an ersatz marriage to a jeweller, by secretly courting a prince and from a Dutch merchant who proposes to her.

Colonel Jack- The novel was published in 1722. It is the story of an orphan boy who rises to colonial prosperity after spending his life in poverty and crime.

Moll Flanders is also considered to be one of the interesting novels by Daniel Defoe. Let us discuss this novel in detail, from its various aspects.

Narrative Technique in *Moll Flanders*

In his preface, Daniel Defoe asserts that *Moll Flanders* is not a work of fiction but a 'private history'. The book was published in 1722, when the novel as a literary genre was still a fledgling. The statement that '...the world is so taken up of late with Novels and Romances' can only refer to his own *Robinson Crusoe* and *Captain Singleton*. Both the texts were fictional narratives masquerading as true autobiographical accounts. Clearly, Defoe wanted his readers to accept *Moll Flanders* as genuine, while acknowledging that he must be content '...to leave the reader to pass his own opinion...and take it just as he pleases' at the same time. Moreover, he goes to great lengths to give the work an internal consistency and the hallmarks of an autobiographical confession.

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Factual Narrative

The story of *Moll Flanders* is narrated by a seventy year old woman, a reformed criminal, looking back on her life and commenting on her youthful self from the vantage point of maturity and repentance. Thus, the narrator is simultaneously the rebellious girl who moves at breathtaking pace through a sequence of picaresque adventures and the mature woman unfolding her story to the reader with mingled understanding and regret. This alone would be sufficient to account for the novel's duality, but there is a deeper ambivalence behind this. The story is fictitious and is a product of the author's own invention, though it is based on his actual observations of life. The situations are so aptly presented in the life of the protagonist that it looks lively through the autobiographical narrative. It is noteworthy that in subsequent novels, the episodic narrative technique is used between different first person narratives.

In the geographical and chronological details of *Moll Flanders*, its time scheme, its references to actual people and places and its overall air of veracity of the novel is one of Defoe's most convincing and satisfying productions. R. Hammond, in *A Defoe Companion*, points out that the creative powers of Defoe are so superior that readers have to constantly remind themselves that they are dealing with a work of fiction. To elaborate this point, let us take into consideration specific instances from the novel. Moll, newly married and putting up at an inn, glances out of the window and to her distress locates her former husband:

'...I say there was no room to question the Truth of it, I knew his Clothes, I knew his Horse and I knew his Face'.

Unquestionably, this has the feel of reality. The reader would have to make the conscious effort to understand that neither Moll, nor her husband, had any solidity and existence outside the novel. However, Defoe, in a single paragraph, has etched the scene indelibly before us. The narrator's assertion of its actuality is very convincing.

Another example of the technique occurs when Moll is first tempted into an act of theft:

'...I dress'd me, for I still had pretty good clothes...whither I was going or what I did...pass'd by an Apothecary's shop in Laden-hall street, where I saw Lye on a stool just before the counter, a little Bundle wrapt in a white cloath...this was the Bait...I put my hand behind me and took the Bundle, and went off with it...'

The entire description has the vividness of a Pre-Raphaelite painting. As it usually happens in Defoe's fiction, the actual theft is prefaced by an assertion of its randomness. This is followed by exact details of the location, the name of the street, the details of the shop, and a detailed description of the interior of the shop. The details have the nuances and specificities of a stage direction making the whole shop appear as precise as a photograph. Readers are also told where the apprentice and the maid are standing, and the direction towards which they are facing. When Moll hears the voice over her shoulder, '...take the Bundle, be quick; do it this Moment,' it is as if the readers also hear the voice and share her moment of temptation. The theft is immediately followed by flight and remorse.

The entire episode of the stealing and the panic-stricken journey possesses many touches we have come to identify with Daniel Defoe's writings; precise details of time and location, pictorial clarity of the events taking place, a powerful sense of immediacy and involvement and an overriding impression of reality. In addition to this is an impression into the narrator's thought and motive, which is engaging in its frankness. It is as if Moll is anxious to conceal nothing and be completely honest with her reader, even at the risk of incrimination:

'...I am very sure I had no manner of Design in my Head, when I went out...'

The style seems so plain and straight-forward that it is easy to miss the authorial presence. This is an illusion, because behind each episode is a controlling and guiding intelligence.

Relationship between the Narrator and the Reader

In the novel, we can find an intimate relationship between the reader and the narrator, a bond reminding one of that achieved by Dickens in *David Copperfield*. Moll shows the tendency of addressing her reader conversationally. For example she uses words like, '...It is enough to tell you...', '...so you may give me leave to speak to myself...', etc. As the novel is in the first person narrative, it makes the reader feel that Moll is talking to the reader directly, establishing a close bond between the reader and text which strengthens the illusion of reality.

A writer, we all know, is influenced by the society in which he lives and in turn a conscious writer influences society. Needless to say, the reforms that took place in Newgate prison after the publication of this novel only substantiates the authenticity of facts produced in the novel. The publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had witnessed such an impact which played a seminal role in abolition of slavery.

Moll Flanders succeeds in engaging our sympathy and understanding largely because we identify with her struggle to bring life under control and master her own destiny. Defoe was also aware that he had to maintain a degree of psychological insight into the character and first person narrative offered that scope.

The strength of the autobiographical narration is in the charged feelings that can be created in several episodes. For instance, when Moll discovers she has committed incest, the narrative depicts heightened feelings. Again, when she is pushed into Newgate, everything crystallizes around her and reveals the agony of an entire generation of criminals who languish from minor thefts.

Though Daniel Defoe was a master of the autobiographical form, its limitation is that the readers see the narration from only one point of view. There is no perspective except Moll's own (the only exception being the preface, where there is an attempt to summarize her life and behavior from the standpoint of a judicious observer). The consequence is that Moll is her own accuser. She evaluates her action and passes moral judgment on her own lapses, but we do not see her from the outside. Had Defoe chosen to tell her story in a third person it would be interesting to see her from a different perspective, for example, that of her first lover or one of her husbands. She is both jury as well as the central figure in a long and diverse narrative seen from a single focus.

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Another weak point of the novel is that there is very little distance between the author and the narrator. Having a woman as a central character who is preoccupied with accumulation of wealth, Defoe is simply commending himself as an exceptional writer. Ian Watt, author of the influential *The Rise of the Novel*, launches a powerful attack when he asserts that in spite of individual instances of patent and conscious irony, nothing in the fiction itself clearly indicates that Defoe viewed either his central character or his purported theme differently from Moll.

Due to the use of first person narrative, the entire sequence of events have to be treated in flashback and consequently, the voice of the adult Moll clashes with that of the adolescent Moll. When the elder brother seduces Moll, she describes her experience as follows:

'My colour came, and went, at the sight of the purse, and with the fire of his proposal...thus I finish'd my own Destruction at once.'

The older Moll's description of events leading to the seduction reveals the qualities of her mind that she mastered to perfection later in life. With the passage of time, Moll's extraordinary mind learnt to approach each experience as a network of possibilities, which is in stark contrast to the innocent young mind which rushed in to the act quite spontaneously.

There is a larger scheme of irony that is used by Daniel Defoe often where the autobiographical narrative betrays the inner turmoil within Moll. For instance, after Moll had been reunited with her American son, who proved to be affectionate and unsuspecting, gifted her with a 'deerskin bag' and 'five and fifty Spanish pistoles in it'. During her subsequent visit, she presents him with a gold watch. Moll is anxious to assure her readers that she has not cheated her son in terms of money and the watch she gave him was valued twice as much in the colonies as in London. However, she has ridiculed him by passing a mischievous verbal fiction on him. His kissing a stolen watch, believing that it was of great sentimental value to his mother, makes Humphrey look ridiculous to a reader. The irony here is clearly against Moll.

The most significant problem is created because of rapid shifts from the convention of criminal biography with that of the novel narrative. Moll seems to be forever alternating between later stages of life and repenting for earlier actions. As a result the reader is often confused and the narrative snags. The circumstantial method is to be found in all of Daniel Defoe's fictitious narratives. It is the way he thinks a story should be told, as a means of giving fiction the appearance of truth. However, it works quite well and the cumulative effect is overwhelming.

It must be remembered that at this point of time, Defoe was experimenting with a recent generic form. The autobiographical narration is primarily used to satisfy the audience of the eighteenth century's desire for authenticity. However, the conflicting demand of criminal biography and informative literature creates a split within the narrative. Thus, both advantage and disadvantage of an autobiographical narrative exist in *Moll Flanders*.

Moll Flanders as a Picaresque Novel

Picaresque was a narrative form that was popularized during the early half of the eighteenth century. It originated in Spain and France, where its origin was associated

with the satirical reaction against the pastoral and heroic romances. The first picaresque novel *Gil Blas* was published by Le Sage in 1715, and by the year 1720, it was a rage all over the continent. It derives its etymology from the Spanish word 'pícaro', signifying a criminal or a rogue.

Structurally, a picaresque novel is divided into a number of episodes that trace the adventures of the hero from different shifts in social strata. A humble character, usually employed as a servant and possibly driven to petty cheating or thieving by the narrowness of his circumstances was given a place of importance in the story; where as in a romance such a position was always sanctioned to a man of high degree and heroic character. The picaresque romance mostly concerned itself with the petty and often ridiculous doings of a servant. Ridicule was cast not only on the rogue/servant but also on his master or succession of masters. The tone was gaily satirical rather than sober and sympathetic. Although, the rogue might be a victim to some extent, he was usually depicted glorifying in his roguery. The reader could find pleasure in his tricks to cheat others without sympathizing with him personally. The satiric thirst is one of the principal features of the picaresque novelists. As R.S Craine points out 'the picaresque novel is predominately a novel of incident that could be linked with the eighteenth century vogue for social satire.' In Le Sage's work, the social mobility and class behavior were important factor in organizing the narrative.

Daniel Defoe was closer to the spirit of the criminal biographies of his day than to the ironical and socially motivated novels of the France and Spain. The picaresque novel, though it often fell to pandering in the gross desire for sensation, showed, in its finer manifestations, a more intellectual attitude. It had a relish of experience and a sense of maturity which came from a detached contemplation of a man's frailty and folly, rather than the almost exclusive absorption in the affair of the moment which is characteristic of Defoe. Moll, a sympathetic figure, never appears as ridiculous. She tells her story soberly and earnestly, not in the mocking manner of picaresque hero. She does not wantonly rejoice in her rogueries. Her creator concentrates so intently upon his subject that the atmosphere of his story seems almost painfully unrelaxed as compared with the genial mood and episodic manner of picaresque novel.

The relationship of *Moll Flanders* with the picaresque tradition is ambiguous. Defoe was well conversant with *Gil Blas* and it has been argued especially by Macmillan that both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders* are picaresque in their traditions. Let us consider the number of picaresque motifs that the novel uses. Moll was a five-times-wife, a whore and finally a thief. The novel concentrates on its depiction of the London underworld, where the episodic structure is connected by the personality of Moll. In fact, a considerable degree of social satire is invoked and the tradition of criminal biography to which the picaresque owed its origin is undeniable.

Another major picaresque theme that Defoe invokes is the exploration into the contemporary class dynamics. The five marriages of *Moll Flanders* depict the entire gamut of social strata in contemporary England. Daniel Defoe is actually conscious of the rise of the merchants of the middle class, bank clerks and the highwaymen who existed on the margins of society. One crucial difference exists—the amalgamation of Moll within the landed gentry in Virginia is not a solution that can be stressed in picaresque novels but to turn the novel as picaresque as an absolute would be misnomer. The depiction of a mediocre life in London no doubt follows the tradition but Defoe's

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analysis of the way in which the underworld functions is comprehensive. The London underworld is revealed to function almost as a syndicate with the figure of governess providing both a shelter and outlet for Moll. The other important agent that Defoe is more concerned about is about the penal system of London. Newgate prison is elevated to the mythical equivalent of inferno and from a mere satire, Defoe's novel becomes an agent for reform.

There is also the presence of a consistent ideology in *Moll Flanders* that segregates it from the picaresque. The ideology is one of mercantile capitalism. Moll always retains a resourceful nature, which a life of crime seems to sharpen rather than dull. When in Newgate prison, she says of herself, that she became thoroughly degenerated because of the horrible influences of the place. In reality, however, her enterprising nature is displayed with all her accustomed zeal when she discovers that one of her earlier husbands is also an inmate of the prison. Not only Moll but the entire population seems to share an acquisitive tendency.

Moll Flanders goes beyond the picaresque to invoke a number of generic features. It uses the autobiographical form and the ideology of colonization is also significant. Moll's quest is always for settlement through property and Defoe's suggestion seems to be that England could be rid of its criminal population by exporting them to America. Moll's colonial enterprise finally witnesses her settlement and prosperity. Therefore, the character of Moll is similar to Robinson Crusoe. Defoe's portrayal of the colonial settler, turning barren land into profitable returns, depicts that when Moll returns to England, she brings not only moral capital in shape of a reformed criminal but also substantial material wealth that helps in the prosperity of England. A picaresque novel definitely lacks such ideological insight.

However, the most important factor that denies *Moll Flanders* its picaresque categorization is its moralizing content. Defoe is careful to balance the genre of criminal narrative with the narrative of Christian repentance. As a matter of fact, Robert Allan Denavan suggests that the two generic demands creates two different Moll Flanders, one who is constantly in search of money and stability, and the other who is constantly in search for spiritual stability. Moll herself tells us that her decision to tell the story of her life in such detail has a didactic intention. The amassing of possessions becomes an end in itself, justifying theft, duplicity and immortality in its pursuit. Moll is always willing to justify her actions. Considerable critical debate has focused on the genuineness of Moll's reformation. There can be no doubt that she convinces herself of the reality of her transformation, but whether the readers share her conviction is uncertain.

The quality of the narrative is severely disturbed by the alternate generic signals. It seems to pick up its tempo each time Moll describes one of her escapes. Defoe, like Le Sage, captures dramatic tension and unlawful acts, but almost immediately the narrative is punctured by Christian passages and the linear narrative of the picaresque is disturbed. One must remember that picaresque was a narrative to be enjoyed. Moll Flanders could also work as a guide book to women of the time. Defoe was catering to a readership which he felt he had to educate. *Moll Flanders* is one of the earliest narratives that experiments with the picaresque form. It adopts its episodic structure, its depiction of unlawfulness and its representation of social vices, but it is also a

novel which also has significant didactic content. It is a novel marked by ideology towards mercantile society. *Moll Flanders* shares many features of the picaresque, though it would not be adequate to simply label it as a picaresque novel.

Episodic Structure and Thematic Unity of *Moll Flanders*

The flat episodic nature of the narrative in *Moll Flanders* leaves Moll as the only immediately noticeable principle of unity in the book. Moll relentlessly tells us about her seventy years of life in a collective matter of fact tone without formal pauses and without breaking her story into any chapters or sections.

The purpose in examining *Moll Flanders* is to suggest that the episodes themselves afford a unity which complements the unity supplied by the novel's female protagonist. All aspects of the novel's unity, of course, involve Moll herself as the principal actor, but in conjunction with the natural psychological progression in the book, there exists a formal pattern of circumstances shaped consistently by the episodes which structure Moll's experience.

In the second part of the book, Moll introduces to the readers her career as a thief. This leads to her arrest, her reunion with Jemmy in Newgate, and finally, her return to America. These adventures connect Moll's earlier life with her later one, which is clear even from a cursory glance at the plot. However, if we examine the details of the theft, we find that the second part of the novel operates as an attempt to win back the relative security which manifests itself in the first part. Moll's desire for economic security manifests itself in a series of adventures which testify to the quality of these desires by falling into a significant episodic pattern.

Moll begins her career of thievery at the age of fifty, after five unsuccessful marriages. With the devil prompting her, she first takes a bundle from a manservant and steals a necklace from a child. After this, she breaks a window and steals two rings, one diamond and the other, gold. Shortly afterwards, she steals a watch from a pregnant woman.

The significant patterns of the thefts begin to take suggestive shape. Moll steals several watches because the current trend gave an opportunity for their theft. Moll only steals real objects that come her way, begging for her attention. She begins to steal on impulse, not a predestined plan. Her early thefts are uncharacteristic actions, lacking in shrewdness and conscious design. Initially, Moll had no way to discard the stolen goods. She was threatened with economic stagnation, a grave threat to capitalist world in itself. The pattern of these impulsive thefts suggests her to get back to her reliable 'goods' that have departed. This may also be synonymous to her fertility and the accompanying sexual attractiveness of the younger days. She steals baby clothes, necklaces, wedding rings, etc. Moll is suddenly struck with a love for marriage and children. We know that Moll never approved of children despite her repeated lectures on maternal duty, saying that they were a nuisance in her life. At this juncture of her life, Moll wanted to get back her lost powers. In order to survive in such a competitive world one had to produce or be capable of producing. Thus, Moll steals a lot of watches, as it depicted stealing back time and capturing the symbolic essence of the business oriented clockwork around her.

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The incident where Moll rushes hopefully to a fire only to have a feather bed thrown upon her from an upper window only serves as comic prelude to her affair with the anonymous gentleman whom she meets in Bartholomew Fair. In this first sexual encounter since the death of her banker husband, it is the role of a thief which leads her to the gentleman's bed. She was neither interested in the love-making, nor was she bothered by moral scruples. This was the first time that she brought sex and theft together. She was aware that she indeed looked younger than her actual age though not young enough to be mistaken for a girl. The adventure, as Moll puts it was 'indeed unlooked for,' nonetheless; she continues it 'for about a year.' In this whole year and almost three months after, she did not indulge in stealing, as the gentleman provided her with sufficient money to get back to her old trade.

The affair is an 'interval' in which she has been forced to adopt the disguise of a youth by using 'paint' for the first and only time. She again turns to thievery. However, this time her mode of theft takes an aspect of caricature. Without knowing why and feeling uneasy in her disguise, Moll dresses as a beggar in coarse and despicable rags, walking around 'peering and peeping into every door and window.' She steals a horse and abandons it as it was of no use. She is even invited to join a gang of counterfeiters, but Moll refuses to disguise money. As if rehearsing for a voyage, she steals a portmanteau during a tour of theft that included Cambridge, Ipswich and Harwich. It is this journey that leads her back to Colchester, to the place where she had had a sexual affair with the elder brother. Moll realizes everything had changed and to continue surviving, she needed to go back to London.

Stealing from a private house brings Moll back to Newgate. The novel's large narrative movement to regain the past and the promise it once held for Moll is now completed, for Moll, sixty years of age, is literally back to where she began. Her disguised return as a man had proven false. Her return to sexual activities, sufficient while it lasted, had proven unproductive. However, her return to Colchester, for practical purposes, had proved futile. Thus, Moll makes the great return, to the place of her birth, a place of 'hellish noise', which she dreads and from where she expects 'no redemption but by an infamous death.'

Daniel Defoe employs a variation on the not uncommon conception of Newgate as a kind of hell. As a 'mere Newgate bird' Moll undergoes a psychic metamorphosis. She becomes one of the 'hell hounds', part of the total 'emblem of hell', that is Newgate. When Moll's Lancashire husband, Jemmy, is brought to Newgate, she is 'overwhelmed with grief for him.' The 'for him' in this sentence is significant. She reproaches herself

‘... in a word, I was perfectly changed, and became another body.’

Faced with a death sentence, Moll repents under the gentle spiritual pressure of the minister. She recapitulates her life history and chooses heaven rather than hell, redemption (which she did not accept out of Newgate) rather than damnation. Her reprieve rather creates a third alternative which she prefers to heaven or hell. In keeping with her character and her economic motivation throughout sixty years of her life, Moll prefers secular redemption. She is reborn to a natural not supernatural life. 'Really ...not so solicitous' about heaven now, she must placate the genuinely concerned minister, who would be successful in sending her to heaven.

After her rebirth, Moll reveals her identity to Jemmy. Jemmy also recounts his career to her. From prison, converted from an entrance into hell to an obvious new-gate, they go to America to be 'new people in a new world.'

Terence Martin in *The Unity of Moll Flanders* suggests that the structure of the novel makes it necessary for Moll to undertake a second voyage to America. Her initial tour had left her with two identities, that of a wife and a sister, and also introduced Moll to her mother. The final trip is with her 'new' husband (as Moll addresses Jemmy), the means to reintroduce Moll to her old life. Though the necessary self-theft being the means to reintroduce Moll to her old life. Though the necessary self-revelation threatens grave social embarrassment which gives her pause, she cannot resist the desire to make herself known, a desire burning out of her curiosity to decipher how much money her mother had bequeathed to her. The human desire to establish identity is laced neatly within an economic motive.

In America, she meets her 'one and only child'. At an advanced age and after eight years in America, Moll returns to England, at last equipped to live as a gentlewoman, having expressed gratitude to providence for material success.

The unity of *Moll Flanders* lies with its protagonist and involves a definable and coherent structural pattern, circumstances resulting from Moll's different attempt to reach the same goal. Contributing to the unity of the novel are the manner in which Moll speaks of theft and the significance of her passion for watches, both of which relate to her middle class Puritan manner of conceiving reality. Defoe's characterization of Moll is efficiently increased by the modes and patterns of her conduct. She does not achieve a neat combination of elements in her life. At one point of time, she seriously considers that it was a bad decision to bring along Jemmy with her. In America, she still practices her secret economy of personal prudence by not telling Jemmy about all her money, which is a middle class habit. At the end of the novel, Moll has no financial secret, and even if she has, it is hidden from Jemmy as well as from us. It has taken Moll a biblical amount of time to achieve her goal.

There should have been a more sophisticated structural unity involving theme, character and tone. Moll is always, in a sense, talking about herself and dispersing the

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reality of those around her into countable units, undercutting the autonomy of everyone but herself. In its way, this is a feat of the narrative, although, we may see that its outcome is to prelude the achievement of a more twisted and complex kind of novelistic unity. However, within the range of determinacy established by the narrative, Defoe sets forth in *Moll Flanders* a novel coherent in episode, unified in and by circumstances.

Moll Flanders: Summary

The title of *Moll Flanders* summarizes the plot of the novel: 'The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders, Etc. Who was born in Newgate, and during a life of continu'd Variety for Threescore Years, besides her Childhood, was Twelve Year a Whore, five times a Wife (whereof once to her own brother), Twelve Year a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon in Virginia, at last grew Rich, liv'd Honest and died a Penitent. Written from her own Memorandums.'

In the beginning of the novel, Moll Flanders' mother is shown to have been convicted at the Newgate Prison in London. Soon after her birth, her mother is taken to America. Moll Flanders is brought up until adolescence by a godly foster mother. The kind lady teaches her mannerisms of a lady and the art of needlework. Moll Flanders grows up into a beautiful girl. She gets attached to a household as a servant where both sons of the house fall in love with her. The elder son persuades her to 'act like they were married' in bed. Later he refuses to marry her and convinces her to marry his younger brother. His younger brother also dies after a few years.

Widowed, she leaves her children in the care of her in-laws. She then starts perfecting the skill of passing herself off as a rich widow to attract a man who will marry her. She marries a draper who becomes insolvent and runs away to the Continent, leaving her alone. Once again, she marries a kind-hearted man who takes her to Virginia and introduces her to his mother. After giving birth to three children (one dies), Moll Flanders comes to know that her mother-in-law is her biological mother. On this revelation, she dissolves her marriage with her half-brother. She leaves her two children to the care of her mother and half-brother, and goes back to England. She starts living in Bath to look for a new husband. She develops a relationship with a man in Bath whose wife is confined due to insanity. Initially, their relationship remains platonic but eventually Moll becomes his mistress and gives birth to three children and two of them die. After a severe disease the man repents, breaks off the arrangement, and goes back to his wife. Then, a banker whose wife has been 'disloyal' to him, proposes to her. She gets ready to marry him provided he divorces his wife. In the meantime, she marries a 'rich' man in Lancashire. Later on, she comes to know that the man lied to her about his wealth and he is as poor as she is. After this revelation, she leaves him as well and goes back to the banker. She comes to know that the banker has divorced his wife. Although pregnant at that time, she convinces the banker that she is available and is expecting him to return. She gives birth to her child and leaves the infant to be reared by a countrywoman in exchange of £5 a year. She then marries the banker and they live in happiness for five years. After that, he becomes insolvent and dies of misery.

After spending a few years as a poor woman, she begins a 'career' of clever thievery. She uses her intelligence, beauty, femininity, as well as her callousness and

wickedness in this 'career'. She feels that she is quite talented at this 'trade' and soon becomes a rich expert thief. In due course, she is imprisoned. In prison, she reunites with her Lancashire husband, who has also been imprisoned. Moll convinces a minister of the prison of her remorse, and is sent to the Colonies along with her Lancashire husband in order to avoid hanging. They live happily there.

In the colonies, she comes to know that her mother has left a plantation for her and that her son (by her brother) as well as her brother/husband is alive. Moll introduces herself to her brother and their son. With the help of a Quaker and her son, she finds a farm with 50 servants in Maryland. Moll then discloses her identity to her son who hands over her mother's inheritance (a farm) to her. She makes her son her steward in the farm and asks him to give her an income of £100 a year. She also makes him her heir and gifts him a (stolen) gold watch. When her brother/husband dies, Moll tells her Lancashire husband the entire story about her marriage with her half-brother. He 'understands' her and both of them go back to England to spend their life 'in sincere penitence for the wicked lives' they have lived.

Moll Flanders: Themes

The theme of repentance is recurring in *Moll Flanders*. Moll Flanders constantly entertains the desire to repent. Lacking true moral persuasion, these repentances are, until the end, halfhearted and insincere. She lacks moral strength; her 'moral fiber' is quickly defeated on several occasions by the slightest pressures or inducements. Her will at times seems to be completely enslaved.

Her first repentance comes when Robin asks her to marry him: 'I was now in a dreadful condition indeed, and now I repented heartily my easiness with the eldest brother; not from any reflection of conscience, for I was a stranger to those things, but I could not think of being a whore to one brother and a wife to the other.'

Actually, Moll's repentance seems more like regret for she feels that she has underestimated her chances for a better arrangement. It is evident as the book unfolds that Moll has not been 'led astray.' She has shrewdly calculated the course of her life. Throughout the story, Moll considers or reflects on the path of her life. The occasion of Robin's marriage proposal causes Moll to say to the elder brother, 'Upon serious consideration, for indeed now I began to consider things very seriously and never till now had I resolved to tell him of it.' Again, Moll considers what to do when she realizes she is not as bad as the people living in the Mint. She says, 'I was not wicked enough for such fellows as these yet. On the contrary, I began to consider here very seriously what I had to do; how things stood with me, and what course I ought to take.'

When the gentleman at Bath rejects any further contact with Moll, she reports 'I cast about innumerable ways for my future state of life, and began to consider very seriously what I should do, but nothing offered.' After her Lancashire husband leaves and Moll is back in London alone she says that 'here being perfectly alone, I had leisure to sit down and reflect seriously upon the last seven months' ramble I had made...'

When she receives a letter from the banker saying he wants to see her again Moll says she is 'exceedingly surprised at the news, and began now seriously to

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reflect on my present circumstances . . . ' She appears to reproach herself just before she marries him: 'Then it occurred to me, 'What an abominable creature am I! And how is this innocent gentleman going to be abused by me!' How little does he think, that having divorced a whore, he is throwing himself into the arms of another!'

Nevertheless, she marries him and after his death begins her criminal 'career'. As can be noted, many of her partial repentances dissipate into further scheming. Ironically, Moll's energies are too consumed in maneuvering herself out of a bad situation to worry seriously about saving her soul.

When Moll first comes to Newgate, she makes the following statement: 'Then I repented heartily of all my life past, but that repentance yielded me no satisfaction, no peace, no, not in the least, because, as I said to myself, it was repenting after the power of further sinning was taken away. I seemed not to mourn that I had committed such crimes, and for the fact, as it was an offense against God and my neighbour, but that I was to be punished for it. I was penitent, as I thought, not that I had sinned, but that I was to suffer and this took away all the comforts of my repentance in my own thoughts.' This passage clearly shows another shallow repentance by Moll. She fears not for her spiritual state but for her physical being.

Even during her stay in Newgate, Moll does not appear to really repent until quite some time after her talk with the pastor. And perhaps even then Moll is really worried about being hanged. The fact that she insists on securing her inheritance shows how the possession of earthly goods has deeper meaning for Moll than the acquisition of spiritual well-being. In fact, we see a meaningful contrast between Moll's character and that of the governess, a former crook who seemingly has truly repented.

The tears Moll sheds from time to time are merely an emotional release rather than a sign of true repentance, for even after shedding tears, her heart quickly hardens against her victims and she continues their victimization. This is shown when she steals the bundle from the burning house. Whatever regret Moll has is weak indeed: 'With all my sense of its being cruel and inhuman, I could never find in my heart to make any restitution.'

Vanity is another important theme of *Moll Flanders*. It prevails prominently in the first half of the story. It is the controlling idiom in the marriages and love life of Moll. Moll becomes a victim of her vanity when the elder brother seduces her. In a way, vanity is reflected in all her actions and behaviour. Another significant feature in Moll's attitude is her irrepressible greed, which impels her to go into prostitution, thievery, and moral disintegration. Moll considers people as commodities and her relationship with them is equivalent to business dealings. She is in love with the eldest brother but had no qualms in asking for money to marry his younger brother, Robin. When the eldest brother dies she says, 'I had preserved the elder brother's bonds to me to pay me £500, which he offered me for my consent to marry his brother; and this, with what I saved of the money he formerly gave me and about as much more by my husband, left me a widow with about £1200 in my pocket.'

She feels lucky to leave her children to the care of their grandparents and says, 'My two children were, indeed, taken happily off of my hands by my husband's father

and mother . . . ' She 'selects' husbands for herself after considering their wealth and their social class. She indulges herself in prostitution and steals money.

It seems that Defoe wants his readers to believe that Moll Flanders is a greedy person. He explains her first criminal transaction by saying ' . . . I found there was a suit of child bed linen in it, very good and almost new, the lace very fine; there was a silvery porringer of a pint, a small silver mug and six spoons, with some other linen, a good smock, and three silk handkerchiefs, and in the mug, in a paper, 18s. 6d. in money.' Many critics believe that Defoe did not try to explain Moll's interior life. In this regard, Kenneth Rexroth says, 'Moll Flanders has no interior life at all, and the material facts with which her character is constructed do not increase her individuality. They are chosen as facets of her typicality.'

Though in the Preface of the book, Defoe says that he is writing this book to 'give the history of a moral life repented....' yet the characterization of Moll is not in tandem with the statement. Moll seems to prosper in her life of crime, therefore, the message one gets from the book is that of using all possible ways to survive. This book is written in the context of capitalistically oriented England wherein spending life like a genteel woman might have meant poverty for Moll. Here Moll Flanders can be a representative of criminals of that time who were forced into criminal life due to their social conditions, as they were in the constant battle for survival which society imposed on the poor people.

Moll Flanders: Characters

Moll Flanders

She is the narrator as well as the central character of the novel. She is given this name by her criminal public when she leads her life as an expert thief. She is an orphan but her character portrayal shows that she lives an exciting life. She marries a number of times and spends her life as a highly successful thief before she takes 'retirement' from this work and repents her past actions.

Moll's Mother

She is arrested for her criminal acts. When Moll marries her half-brother unknowingly, she meets her as her mother-in-law during the couple's trip to Virginia. She also leaves an inheritance for Moll when she dies. The inheritance is claimed by Moll towards the end of the novel.

The Elder Brother

He loves Moll and Moll becomes his mistress under the impression that he intends to marry her.

Robert

He is the younger brother of 'the elder brother'. He falls in love with Moll and marries her even though his family is not happy about their union. He dies after five years of marrying Moll.

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The Draper

The Draper is a tradesman and Moll's second husband. Due to his carelessness, he loses a lot of money and escapes to France as a fugitive.

The Plantation Owner

He marries Moll thinking that she is a wealthy woman. Both of them move to Virginia where he has his plantations. In Virginia, she comes to know that he is her half-brother. After this revelation, she leaves him and returns to England.

The Gentleman

He is a rich man whose wife is insane. Initially, he befriends Moll and later makes her his mistress. He keeps Moll for six years and leaves Moll after a religious experience.

The Banker

He is also a wealthy man and Moll agrees to marry him on a condition that he divorces his disloyal wife. Moll and the banker live happily but he dies after a few years.

Jemy

He is also called James and Moll refers to him as 'my Lancashire husband'. He is the only man whom Moll really loves. They marry each other under a mutual deception and then part ways. Eventually they meet again in prison and start a new life together in America.

Humphrey

He is Moll's son by the husband who was Moll's brother as well. She meets him with affection when she returns to America and he too helps her in settling down in America.

Critical Analysis of *Moll Flanders*

Moll Flanders was written by Defoe during a period when there was still little precedent for the novel as a genre, which accordingly compelled him to his book by presenting it as a true story. He presents the novel as a journey of a person who, even though fictional, is an amalgam of real people who have experienced actual events in London during Defoe's time. He used the reputable norms of the rogue biography—a genre that portrayed the lives and adventures of real criminals in a semi-fictionalized, amusing and interesting ways. The novel represents the everyday necessities of a woman who does not have any long-term social foothold or financial security. It covers every factual detail which stands as an evidence to the truthfulness of the writing.

Defoe's language, which is represented through Moll throughout the novel, is simple and not literary. The prose is not allusive, decorative or rhetorical; rather, it is dependent on the combination of journalistic precision and a strong personal voice to articulate authentic effects.

In the Preface to the *Moll Flanders*, Defoe highlights that the novel is intended to communicate a serious moral, despite the fact that it talks in detail about the protagonist, Moll's immoral sexual and criminal adventures. Therefore, we see that moralizing is kept to a minimum, especially traditional Christian moralizing. Moll's

immoral actions do not have any actual consequences and her behaviour seems to be excused by the narrative as it refers to it as a material necessity. According to E.M. Forster, the book was 'a masterpiece of characterization'. It is also seen as an indication of the psychological shades and liveliness of her character, which makes the readers like Moll more than criticizing her.

Defoe is successful in making the reader develop an endless interest in Moll's character, despite her unethical lifestyle, which is clearly revealed. Through his vision, the reader can identify the personal qualities of self-dependence and perseverance, and also honours human labour, even when it takes the form of crime.

However, we see that Defoe's own attitude towards Moll's character and her adventures are not very clear. This is evident in his final judgment on the questions and conflicts which are raised by life story. Defoe's fascination with moral uncertainty and with the solitary life of an individual is strongly evident in the novel. Through her characterization, Moll Flanders bravely represents the kinds of intentions that come up to the surface in life due to hardship and compulsion. It also portrays her honesty and openness, which helps her discuss her own intentions. Therefore, the novel is successful in creating a conflict between absolute Christian moralities on the one hand and the conditional ethics of measurement and pragmatism that govern the business world, as well as the human struggle for survival, on the other.

While writing *Moll Flanders*, Defoe was conscious that he was writing within the twin framework of criminal biography and the autobiographical narrative. He had to condemn Moll's actions for moral purposes.

Moll is a victim of the society, showing the workings of social and economic compulsions, an unfortunate adventuress showing the workings of chance and random circumstances, a cool exponent of self interest, systematically trying to figure profit and loss in business, love and crime. Though an outcast from the middle-class, she carries many of its standards with her.

Defoe was also conscious of the process of exploitation that a single woman was subjected to in the early-half of the eighteenth century. Moll is neither a born criminal nor a whore, but is progressively transformed into one due to acute poverty. J.R. Hammod, in *A Defoe Companion*, argues that Defoe's attitude towards his female protagonist ultimately remains dubious, thus making the end seem unresolved. Through the various levels of life that Moll undergoes, her attitude seems totally utilitarian. She seems least bothered about the persons she frauds. It remains unclear whether Defoe actually approves or disapproves of such actions of her protagonist and how he expects his readers to react to such a character. It is definitely true that Moll possesses certain traits which are immediately identified by readers and many may admire them. She is tough, resourceful, a woman of spirit and full of determination. Yet, simultaneously, she possesses qualities which are less desirable. She is obsessed with money and status and is self-centered to the extent that she is concerned only with herself. One of the major setbacks for the novel is the small distance between the author and the narrator, that in having a woman preoccupied with accumulation of wealth as his central character, Defoe was simply extolling attitudes that he himself thought were exceptional. Moll is an extremely unattractive character. She is by her own admission, a liar, a thief, a petty criminal and a whore. Yet, Defoe vividly imbues

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her with life that the reader identifies as her quest for happiness, admiring her toughness and intelligence in the face of all misfortunes. The most remarkable feature of the novel is Defoe's ability to reach inside her mind, to see her emotions and thought process and convey these to the readers in a totally convincing way. The novel is dominated by her personality, her resourcefulness and resilience through the journey of life.

The gusto of Defoe's characterization of Moll indicates his mixed feelings about her. In a way, he was quite fond of her. He did not consider her truly evil like Jonathan Wilde, the corrupter of others. What triggers her repentance in Newgate is her mistaken notion that she has been responsible for her Lancashire husband's turning into a highwayman. Moll does not execute unnecessary harm, she is good-natured, and above all, unlike Roxana, she does not lose control of herself, except towards the end of her criminal character, when she cannot stop herself from stealing. For that lapse, Defoe punishes her severely with incarceration in Newgate.

Daniel Defoe's worries about Moll's reformation, along with his fondness for her, his feeling of superiority over his readers and dissatisfaction about his medium would account for curious ambivalence of the ending of *Moll Flanders*. It is as if with one hand he was giving what convention was required by his own consciousness, but on the other, he was secretly taking it away. By the sanction of his readers, he expects Moll to possess good fortune. Defoe is, in effect, implicating them as accomplices in his own secret hoax, a pretence that will not produce explicit action among readers but will deceive them from his financial gain and private amusement. He does not want his contemporary readers to recognize that the face of respectability, sufficient to win the approval of society, enables most of us rogues to conceal the feral nature of our instinctual drives behind abstractions like 'penitence', 'modernization' or 'sobriety'.

Moll has sympathetic consideration towards what society makes of orphans and her potent attack on criminal justice. Real eighteenth century criminals were indeed products of vicious circumstances and partly produced by the states' indifference to child welfare. As Moll's mother is transported to Virginia, her prospects are quite dreary. Newgate seems to be a place that haunts her throughout life. Defoe suggests that reformation in both these areas is absolutely necessary, making Moll his vehicle for articulate social criticism. For Defoe, Moll is not just a character; she is an embodiment of the early spirit of mercantile capitalism in England. She undertakes her second trip to America with Jemmy. Though the necessary self-revelation threatens grave social embarrassment, she cannot resist the desire to make herself known, a desire burning out of her curiosity to decipher how much money her mother had left for her. The human desire to establish identity is laced neatly within an economic motive. In Virginia, Moll establishes her own plantation, manages it and looks after Jemmy. Moll's hunt for respectability, her ability to translate every action into opportunity and her entrepreneurial skills make her a perfect embodiment of mercantile spirit of the eighteenth century. As Moll is both a character as well as an embodiment of an attitude, Defoe, at times forgets that she is a woman.

Daniel Defoe cannot rectify Moll's immoral actions and a certain degree of irony is directed towards her. At the same time, Defoe sympathetically brings out the psychological and social motivation for her slipping into a life of crime and prostitution,

but beyond that, she remains an embodiment of colonialism and capitalism in the contemporary world. On the other hand, it can be argued that critical debate concerning authorial intention regarding Moll Flanders is finally irrelevant and that Defoe is content simply to present a detailed account of the realities of a particular life, leaving his readers to formulate their own conclusions.

Moll Flanders is a moral fable, a parable on the theme of degeneration and redemption, or it has no moral and is simply an attempt to present a specimen human life. In the book, Moll arrives at her second career, thievery, after being dejected by the first (that of a wife). Very little is known about women's position in the eighteenth century society, but the general outlines are clear. Even Ian Watt, in his *The Rise of the Novel*, has notably contributed in drawing our attention to many problems existing in the contemporary society. All the evidence points to the conclusion that Moll is right that to be a maidservant in that period meant the end of any possibility that could conceivably be considered under the words of 'freedom' or 'independence'. Given Daniel Defoe's gift for reaching inside the personalities of his central character and his intention to present a human life in all its variety, it is difficult to see how else he could have told the story. What mattered was the panorama of Moll's life, her journey through innocence, maturity, degeneration and redemption, as well as the lessons she learnt from her experiences. He is drawing our attention when he writes in the Preface that:

'It is to be hoped that such readers will be much more pleased with the Moral, than the Fable; with the Application, than with the Relation, and with the End of the Writer, than with the life of the person written of.'

One can only applaud the heroism of Defoe's endeavor to depict a vibrant central figure, who embodies the competing tensions and contradictions of his age.

Significance of Newgate in *Moll Flanders*

Before 27 January 1722, there was probably no considerable literary work in the world which was based on an intelligent and sympathetic understanding of an unprotected woman in contemporary society. Vice and crime were not for scorn or mirth but for sympathetic concern to Defoe, who always perceived human experience with a social historian. Often, it was society itself which caused the original crime, even in an attempt to correct other wrongs. Moll Flanders, born in Newgate, is allowed to speak on behalf of the author who created her:

'...there are more thieves and rogues made by that one prison of Newgate than by all the clubs and societies of villains in the nation.'

On 20 May 1703, due to several political reasons, Daniel Defoe was arrested and taken to prison. His experience as a prisoner in Newgate almost entirely made a deep and lasting impression. His keen interest in the lives and minds of rogues and criminals develops from this period. Therefore, he could describe the feelings of Moll Flanders quite vividly when she is sent to Newgate.

In *Moll Flanders*, Newgate prison has great significance. Moll's greatest test and perhaps the most interesting sequence in the book is the Newgate episode. Throughout the crime sequence, Moll has said that Newgate is the dread alternative to crime, and when she is actually confronted with it, she writes her most impassioned paragraph:

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'...and I was carried to Newgate; that horrid Place! My very blood chills at the mention of its Name...the place that had so long expected me, and which with so much Art and Success I had so long avoided.'

This paragraph raises once more the question of literary personality and our perception of it as readers. Moll's fear of Newgate is perfectly plausible, if somewhat melodramatically rendered. One can already talk about its sources at the deepest levels of behavior. Infantile tantrum cooperates with and intensifies adult experience. However, such pathology is invoked at this moment by Moll's rhetoric rather than being sustained by action. We are asked as readers to imagine at this particular moment what Moll is confronted with. The reality of Newgate with such limitations is a means towards structural end rather than an end in itself. This emotional moment establishes a personal depth to Moll's fears which is parallel to the structural depth of experience at Newgate in relation to other experiences in the book. Moll's fear is an indicator and an intensifier of the central structural opposition of the book, which emerges here at its clearest. Newgate is simply pure compulsive circumstance, a place where the self is so restricted and oppressed that it loses all independence and becomes habituated to an environment which embodies personal destruction. It is not only that Newgate is 'an Emblem of Hell itself,' its inhabitants are changed to part of the prison. The most horrible implication of all is that they are brought to the point of accepting death. Moll's defeat lies in her unprecedented transformation by these oppressive circumstances into something that she does not wish to be:

'I was become a mere Newgate bird ...'

Such a clear and coldly abstract emphasis on metamorphosis and a kind of thorough amnesia of the self does not serve probability. The radical break with the past may be a deliberate violation of the psychological continuity. This episode originally invoked power and meaning.

The prison is a concrete embodiment of social restrictions, unlike anything Moll has had to deal with in its effective concreteness, its real and effective exemplification of control that the society aspires to exercise over the self. Yet, even Newgate can hardly be graphically rendered. Dickens' prisons and confining houses along with Defoe's Newgate are barely presented as real places. Defoe's austere style and almost abstract imagination are interested primarily in relationships rather than images. What matters about Newgate is not its concrete existence as a wretched habitation but its power to suppress and transfer self. Therefore, Newgate is primarily an irresistible social fact and distilled a compulsion that escaped Moll by instinct and luck as a child in Colchester, and which now gathers its forces for one great assault on her extraordinary freedom. Newgate violates the dialectic we have seen operating in the narrative by resisting the energies of the self. If Newgate did not appear in this dehumanizing form, it would become imperative for the storyteller to invent it.

Moll's recovery is a matter of re-establishing contact with the world outside the prison. It is about re-entering relationships in which she can exercise His being in all its craft and power. The sincerity of Moll's repentance in Newgate need not be debated. It is an effective means for restoring her consciousness and underlining the gravity of her situation. It proves the perspective that is otherwise fatally lacking in Newgate.

Three things are evident from the Newgate episode. First, Moll's progress is not simply from fear to moral stupidity to repentance. Such a bold moral summary neglects the actual strategy of the narrative, the implication of Moll's language (a mixture of jargon of repentance and the familiar means of self analytical summarizing that is her means of self assertion and the context of her career. Moll's progress is from total helplessness to relative freedom. Secondly, that progress is a matter of re-entering relationships with Jemmy and the governess. The self can only be aware of itself as such when it sees itself operating upon others, and Moll's narrative revives her by granting her responsibility of sorts for Jemmy's career and responsibility for her governess' frantic spasms of repentance. With those relationships in hand, Moll is powerful and secret once more. The third implication of the Newgate sequence is the result of the former two. The entire episode is the clearest example in the story regarding the manner in which Moll Flanders enacts the novelistic solution for the problem of the individual consciousness. The relative freedom that Moll achieves by virtue of her narrative arrangements in the face of the ultimate compulsion of the prison and death represents, in dramatic terms, a solution to the problem of survival in a dramatic society. *Moll Flanders* is part of the century's expanding literature of privacy. From the real journals to fictional memoirs of private life, the problem that the writers of the period face repeatedly is the alignment of the self and the world. What can clearly be asserted is that *Moll Flanders* is clearly an effort to tell a story in which the private self, by means of various strategies, preserves itself without falsifying the destructive truth of public experience.

Gender in *Moll Flanders*

A piece of fiction composed by a male with a female protagonist calls for a deeper look into the role of gender. Moll Flanders, during the course of her life, interacts with numerous men and each of her association depicts her performing the role as expected by her contemporary society. Sexual differences, instead of being accepted as natural, actually form the basis of differentiation. Moll's social position as well as her gender makes her a vulnerable victim of life. Despite her humble origins and orphan existence, Moll even for once, does not lose her indomitable spirit to lead the world as she wishes. She is abused by both men and women alike, physically as well as mentally. Not even once is she allowed to forget her unequal positioning.

The eighteenth century notion of womanhood was decorated with regressive moral codes and was dictated by conduct books. Women were most often than not reserved for the sheltered domesticity and being adorned as wall flowers. Women were distanced from the outside world and never participated in the 'rational' world of men. They were associated with emotions or attitudes which were devoid of reason. Moll, due to her disadvantageous position, was not able to pitch herself for any worldly-wise professional role. Even her limited education of needlework and lady-like conduct made her a probable marriage-worthy candidate, limiting her options for a career.

The eighteenth century society was conscious of the power of sexuality. However, sexuality was a matter of worth when it was accompanied by other aspects like class or politics. Moll is aware of her physical appeal. Her attractiveness plays a pivotal role in getting male attention, but sooner or later, she is held responsible for such unceremonious illicit alliances. Not just outsiders, but even men dub her as

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responsible for their downfall. Moll's economically backward status makes her an easy prey for the socially affluent masculine power. Yet, at the same time her use of her sexual power is triggered by her financial distress, which makes it imperative for her to earn a livelihood by any means possible. Moll tightropes between the extremes of being morally incorrect, and yet, being extremely liberated at the same time. Though Defoe expects his audience to sympathize with his female protagonist for her transgressions, one cannot deny that within these realms of sympathy he expects the readers to realize that Moll is also consciously breaking conventions in her way. Moll's actions also highlights the dichotomous position that the middle class (which was emerging recently) held in trying to earn social acceptability. Though, as we reach the end of the book, we realize that Moll is no longer the medium or symbol of change. With the passage of time, Moll seems to have acquired her desired position in the society, renouncing her radical self and accepting a life of dormancy, where she is able to project herself as a respectable lady, associating herself with the money-making middle class.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

3. Name some of the fictional works of Daniel Defoe.
4. Who takes care of Moll in her growing years?
5. Which is the most recurring theme in Moll Flanders?
6. How does Moll come to know that 'the plantation owner' is her half-brother?

ACTIVITY

Select any other novel by Daniel Defoe and study it. What are the comparisons you can draw with Defoe's writing of *Moll Flanders*?

2.4 JANE AUSTEN: EMMA

Jane Austen was the greatest of all novelists of manners who raised the genre of novel to a new level of art. She produced some of the greatest novels in history with her quietly penetrating vision of man, her ironic awareness of the claims of personal morality and those of social and economic propriety, her polished and controlled wit and her steady moral assessment of the nature of human relationships.

Since her childhood, she was encouraged to write and pen down her ideas. Her life in the midst of the English country provided her with the opportunity to learn about the world of social pretensions and ambition, of dance balls and visits, and speculations about marrying.

Jane Austen was born on 16 December 1775 at the church house in Hampshire. She was the seventh child of George Austen and Cassandra. She was educated mainly at home. She was extremely close to her elder sister, Cassandra. She read extensively using her father's library and got material from there in order to write short satirical

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sketches when she was a child. She had begun writing at an early age though only for her family circle. She found the raw materials for her novels in her daily routine, visits, shopping, sewing, gossip and other trivial matters. The world, which her books present to us, is essentially the 18th century world in its habits, tastes and appearances.

Sometime around Jane's pre-adolescence phase, she and Cassandra were sent to boarding school so that they could gain more concrete and formal knowledge. Unfortunately, both Jane and Cassandra fell victim to typhus, and it seemed impossible for Jane to recuperate back at that time. Post recovery, the sisters spent some more time attending school, but their education was unexpectedly terminated as the family underwent severe financial crisis. Due to this, the sisters returned home and resided with their family.

She did not gain her due as a writer during her own time. But Austen's tongue-in-cheek take on the amorous lives of the landed gentry found its due popularity only after 1869. Her stature as a writer of substance evolved more prominently in the twentieth century. Her popular novels like *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Persuasion*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Mansfield Park* hold great significance as they are literary classics, bringing about a seamless blending of romance and realism of the Victorian Age. The leading characters of her novels were women of fine upbringing and contemporary views. Since her novels did not conform to the Victorian and Romantic expectations that strong emotions need to be authenticated by a superfluous display of colour and sound in the writings, nineteenth century audiences and critics usually preferred the works of George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and Charles Dickens. Although her novels were re-published in England in the 1830s and remained continual sellers, they were not able to gain the privilege of becoming bestsellers.

Jane Austen was forever attracted towards stories. Her fascination for them initiated her to write in notebooks in the early stages of her writing career. During the 1790s, when Jane was in her adolescence, she composed her novel *Love and Freindship*. It was a collection of a parody of amorous letters which were written with the intention to sketch the genre of romantic fiction. This work set the tone for her later writing. It clearly displayed Jane Austen's dislike for an excessive romantic attitude or sensibility. The year after completion of *Love and Freindship*, Jane wrote *The History of England*. It was another parody which ridiculed the historical writing. This thirty-four page work also contained illustrations sketched by her sister Cassandra. These notebooks of Jane Austen, containing her short compositions, poems, novels and dramas are collectively called Jane's *Juvenilia*.

Jane's youth was spent trying to help maintain her family. She also played the piano and like a good Christian, was a regular at Church. She socialized with the people in her neighbourhood as well. She was an accomplished dancer and regularly read aloud to her family during the evening hours. In the meantime, she kept honing her writing skills and developing her distinctive style. In her youth, she wrote *Lady Susan*, a more accomplished work than her previous attempts. This was also an epistolary story which dealt with the life of a woman who knew how to manipulate situations to suit her purposes by using her charm, intelligence and sexuality. She also started composing *Elinor and Marianne*, another epistolary effort, which was later published as one of her famous masterpieces, *Sense and Sensibility*.

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Fig. 2.2 Jane Austen

Jane Austen's first three novels fetched her both commercial as well as critical success, which she was able to experience in her lifetime. But it was only after her demise that her brother revealed to the world that his sister was an author of high repute and immense talent by publishing her later works.

Jane Austen is definitely one of the most popular authors of our times, her novels genuinely liked and widely read by all. She has been a darling of both critics and readers alike.

Jane Austen did for the English novel precisely what the Lake poets did for English poetry. One of the ways in which Jane Austen is different from other eighteenth century novelists is that she does not share their standard picaresque form and comic epic in prose. On the contrary, she isolated herself from the elements of mock-heroic and picaresque, which were the hallmarks of the eighteenth century novel. The primacy of emotion, preference for the marriage of love, urges for adventure, attraction for the uncommon, and above all, the superiority of sensibility in the novels of Jane Austen are definitely romantic traits. All of Austen's major novels are dominated by the female protagonists and are primarily concerned with the twin themes of love and marriage.

Jane Austen stays on the middle ground between the extremes of sense and sensibility, which constitutes one of the shades on the spectrum of Romanticism. Her concern with the inner life of her characters rather than their external interests is what stands out conspicuously in her novels. Beneath the outward pursuit of marriage, security and status, the driving force in her female protagonists is always the inner, human urge for a delicate life of sense and emotion as well as peace and harmony.

In the year 2002, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) conducted a poll where she was honoured with the seventieth position on a list of '100 most famous Britons of all time'. Scholars of the 1920s have contributed immensely towards

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'rediscovering' Austen as a great literary figure and re-establishing her popularity. The fans of Jane Austen prefer to call themselves 'The Janeites'. The widespread popularity of her writing in the modern period is established from the fact that her work has been adapted into films and TV programmes. In the year 2007, author David Lassman submitted various manuscripts of Jane Austen with very few modifications under a disguised name to some publishing houses. He was shocked to discover that all the manuscripts were rejected. He wrote this experience in one of his articles called 'Rejecting Jane'. This article was a tribute to the author who was an unbeatable champion of wit and humour.

In July 1809, the women of the Austen house moved back to Hampshire countryside when their brother Edward offered them a permanent home at his Chawton Estate. The place provided a perfect setting for Jane Austen to write. She stayed in this house for seven and a half years and these years turned out to be a phase of intense literary activity for her. Between 1811 and 1813, she revised *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* and published them. *Mansfield Park* was published in 1814 and *Emma* in 1816 and she completed *Persuasion* (which was published together with *Northanger Abbey* in 1818, the year after her death). All her novels were said to be written 'By a Lady'. She died on 18 July 1817 when she was 41 years old. She is buried in Winchester Cathedral.

Let us list out some of the popular novels by Jane Austen:

- *Sense and Sensibility* – Published in 1811, it was Austen's first published novel. The novel is about Eleanor and Marianne, two daughters of Mr. Dashwood, who encounter the sense and sensibility of life and love through the course of the novel.
- *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) – The novel was first published in 1813. The story follows the protagonist Elizabeth Bennet as she deals with issues of etiquettes and marriage in the society of the 19th-century England.
- *Mansfield Park* (1814) – *Mansfield Park* was written when Austen was at Chawton Cottage.
- *Northanger Abbey* (1818, posthumous) – At first, the novel was called *Susan*. It was written in 1798–99. Austen revised it in 1803 and sold it to a London bookseller for £10. The publisher decided not to publish the novel. In 1817, the bookseller sold it back to Henry Austen, Jane Austen's brother for £10 not knowing the popularity of the author at that time. The novel was further revised and was published in 1818.
- *Persuasion* (1818, posthumous) – *Persuasion* is another novel by Jane Austen that was published after her death.

Short fiction written by Jane Austen:

- *Lady Susan* (1794, 1805)

Unfinished fiction written by Jane Austen:

- *The Watsons* (1804)
- *Sanditon* (1817)

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Other works by Jane Austen:

- *Sir Charles Grandison* (adapted play) (1793, 1800)
- *Plan of a Novel* (1815)
- *Poems* (1796–1817)
- *Prayers* (1796–1817)
- *Letters* (1796–1817)

Juvenilia — Volume the First (1787–1793)

- *Frederic & Elfrida*
- *Jack & Alice*
- *Edgar & Emma*
- *Henry and Eliza*
- *The Adventures of Mr. Harley*
- *Sir William Mountague*
- *Memoirs of Mr. Clifford*
- *The Beautifull Cassandra*
- *Amelia Webster*
- *The Visit*
- *The Mystery*
- *The Three Sisters*
- *A beautiful description*
- *The generous Curate*
- *Ode to Pity*

Juvenilia — Volume the Second (1787–1793)

- *Love and Freindship*
- *Lesley Castle*
- *The History of England*
- *A Collection of Letters*
- *The Female Philosopher*
- *The First Act of a Comedy*
- *A Letter from a Young Lady*
- *A Tour through Wales*
- *A Tale*

Juvenilia — Volume the Third (1787–1793)

- *Evelyn*
- *Catharine, or the Bower*

Now, let us discuss *Emma* by Jane Austen in detail.

DID YOU KNOW?

The earliest recorded use of the word 'baseball' in an English novel is in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* written in 1798–1799.

Emma: Summary

The twenty year old protagonist Emma is a resident of the village of Highbury. Although she is convinced that she herself will never marry, she imagines herself to be naturally endowed with the ability to conjure love matches. She is thrilled with the successful matchmaking between her governess and Mr. Weston, a widower.

Emma takes up the responsibility to find a suitable match for Harriet Smith. The parentage of Harriet is not known. However, Emma believes that Harriet deserves to be a gentleman's wife and asks her friend to consider Mr. Elton for marriage, who is the village vicar. Harriet is inclined towards Robert Martin, a well-to-do farmer, but Emma convinces Harriet to reject his marriage proposal. Due to continuous encouragement by Emma, Harriet starts to develop feelings for Mr. Elton. The situation becomes ironical when Emma fails to realize that Elton is inclined towards her and not Harriet. Emma feels shocked when she realizes that she is losing touch with the reality of life due to her obsession with matchmaking.

Mr. Knightley, Emma's brother-in-law and her good friend, critically observes Emma's matchmaking efforts. He considers Mr. Martin as a worthy match for Harriet. Mr. Knightley and Emma quarrel with each other over the latter's meddling role in Harriet's matchmaking. Mr. Knightley proves to be a wise person in this quarrel.

During a conversation with Elton, Emma's implication that Harriet is his equal offends him and he leaves for the town of Bath and immediately marries a girl there. Emma tries to comfort her friend. Emma then speculates about Mr. Weston's son, Frank Churchill, who is expected to visit Highbury. Frank is raised by his aunt and uncle in London and they have taken him as their heir as well. He has not visited his father for a long time. Mr. Knightley is suspicious towards Frank and the incident of Frank's rushing back to London just to have his haircut makes him more suspicious towards him. On the other hand, Emma finds Frank charming and feels that he is inclined towards her. She decides to discourage these charms but ends up flirting with the young man. Emma meets Jane Fairfax, another visitor to Highbury. Jane is beautiful but Emma does not like her. Mr. Knightley defends Jane saying that she deserves empathy because she does not have an independent fortune and might have to leave home to work as a governess. According to Mrs. Weston, Mr. Knightley's defence is due to his romantic feelings towards Jane but Emma opposes this opinion. Everyone feels that Frank and Emma are inclined towards each other but Emma dismisses Frank as a prospective match for her and sees him as a suitor for Harriet.

At a village ball, Knightley offers to dance with Harriet because she was humiliated by Mr. Elton and his new wife. This kindheartedness of Knightley helps him earn Emma's approval. The next day, Frank saves Harriet from Gypsy beggars. When Harriet shares with Emma that she is in love with a man who is above her social class, Emma thinks that she is talking about Frank. Knightley suspects that

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Frank and Jane are inclined towards each other and he tries to warn Emma. Emma feels amused by Knightley's implication and laughs at him. She again flirts with Frank and insults Jane's aunt, Miss Bates, who is a kindhearted spinster. Knightley reprimands Emma for this action.

Everyone comes to know that Frank has lost his aunt. This event paves the path for the unfolding of the secret that Frank and Jane have been secretly engaged and he flirted with Emma in order to conceal his engagement with Jane. With his uncle's approval, Frank later marries Jane.

Emma feels worried about Harriet but comes to know that Harriet is in love with Knightley, not Frank. Harriet believes that Knightley also loves her. Emma feels sad with this revelation and her sadness on this revelation makes her realize that she is in love with Knightley. After this, Emma expects that Knightley would tell her that he loves Harriet but to her joy, Knightley declares his love for Emma. Robert Martin proposes to Harriet and she accepts his offer. The novel ends with the marriage of Emma and Mr. Knightley and that of Harriet and Mr. Martin.

Emma: Themes

Emma is the story of a girl who is clever as well as rich. She genuinely desires to change the lives of her social inferiors as well as her equals. Her overconfidence and her desire to change people's lives make her go through some shocks, which later help her achieve a higher degree of self-knowledge. This self-realization helps her find her true love, Mr. Knightley, who is the brother of her elder sister's husband.

Her self-deception and haughtiness sometimes turns her into a comic figure. It is through her that the theme of self-deception is presented in the novel. In spite of this, she does not lose the sympathy of her readers. In the opening line, Austen explains: 'Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.'

There are a number of traps for Emma's vanity and self-importance throughout the novel and she falls into each one of them. She decides to protect Harriet Smith, 'the natural daughter of somebody', and decides to find a suitable match for her. In this attempt, she goes to the extent of breaking off Harriet's incipient love affair with Mr. Martin, a worthy and suitable match for her. Emma feels that Mr. Elton is a more suitable match for Harriet but Mr. Elton, a foolish young man, misunderstands Emma's behaviour and proposes to her.

In her second attempt to marry off Harriet, Emma gets involved in serious trouble. She tries to get Harriet interested in Frank Churchill. Harriet, misunderstanding Emma's elegant hints, thinks she is referring to Mr. Knightley and falls in love with him. It is a shock for Emma when Harriet makes clear that she would not allow anyone to marry Mr. Knightley but herself. The moral pattern is carefully woven and Emma's attempt to play God involves her in a variety of situations, which contribute to her self-knowledge in the end. Emma wants Frank Churchill to marry Harriet but she is also attracted to him. There is an interesting tension between her admiration for his vitality and wit and her half-realized love for Mr. Knightley 'one of the few people who could see faults in Emma Woodhouse'. Mr. Knightley is a wealthy landowner,

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around seventeen years older than Emma. He is generous, kind to his tenants, intolerant towards deceit and cruelty and does not have superficial gaiety like Frank Churchill.

While Emma is scheming for Frank and Harriet's match, Mr. Knightley feels that she herself is falling in love with Frank. The situation is enriched with ironies with the introduction of Jane Fairfax. Jane is a foil for Emma; she has no fortune but is equally talented and at music, even more talented than Emma. This fact perhaps raises an unconscious jealousy in Emma. Emma amuses herself by hinting and speculating about Jane's relationship with Mr. Dixon and joking about it with Frank. It appears that Frank and Emma make fun of Jane. The fun is not wholly innocent on Emma's part; there is an element of jealousy in it if not spite. Further, Jane's lack of fortune means that if she does not marry soon she will have to take up a position as a governess and the horrors and humiliation of that kind of work are made abundantly evident through Mrs. Elton's insufferably patronizing offers to help her in getting a job. Emma therefore has no moral right to laugh either at Jane or at her garrulous aunt, a character on whom Emma vents a momentary irritation and Mr. Knightley castigates Emma for this. It emerges at last that the relationship between Jane and Mr. Dixon, which Emma has conjured up and about which she has joked so often with Frank, has no basis and Jane and Frank are secretly engaged. Emma suddenly realizes that she is and has been a dupe. At every point, Emma's wit and knowingness leads to her humiliation but Mr. Knightley stands by her. The exploration of different kinds of selfishness as well as the sharply ironic character sketches of characters like the Eltons and Miss Bates gives the novel real depth underneath the surface brilliance.

The character of Emma's father, whose concern for other people is a way of implementing a profound selfishness, opens and closes the book. The novel symbolizes the ambiguities of selfishness, which is one of the themes of this novel. The moral pattern is spelled out more clearly in *Emma* than in *Pride and Prejudice*, but in other respects, it is a less sharply drawn novel, standing midway with respect to subtlety and complexity between *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park*.

In the early 19th century, the status of women was defined in terms of their accomplishments that would make them a suitable 'property' to get married and acceptance of marriage proposal by a person of high social status. Every mother desired to marry off their daughters in wealthy families because they saw this as the shortest and surest way to climb the social ladder. The bride's family would choose a suitable match for her on the basis of the family's reputation and their inheritance. It was the only area laid open by society for women to exercise their choice and freedom and feel the sense of empowerment on getting the right groom. The entire structure of the novel *Emma* is based on the theme of marriage.

There is a significant point raised in the novel. The ritual of marriage should be consummated between families of equal social status only then would they be successful otherwise they become void. Mr. Weston's marriage to Miss Churchill was not successful and suffered many hardships. On the other hand, his marriage to Mrs. Weston, shown in the beginning of the novel, is quite successful as both the families stand on equal footing. Mrs. Weston was a governess before marriage and Emma's fruitless attempts to consummate the marriage of the otherwise incompatible Harriet and Mr. Elton form another point. She compels Harriet to reject her feelings for Robert Martin who would have proved

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a suitable match for Harriet. Martin hails from the family of tradesmen so he would have been a suitable match for Harriet. Frank Churchill's engagement to Jane Fairfax is a relationship in question. The marriage of Emma with Mr. Knightly is successful because they have a similar social status, compatibility and temperament.

During this period, the privileges given to women were shockingly limited. If she had the freedom to go out, it was not for work but for social visits, charity visits or music and art. The limitation of social space for women hampered their development of personality. There was little room to display their intellectual abilities. Their entire energies and capabilities were directed towards fulfillment of marital aims. The only active work they could do was getting the right kind of marriage proposal, preparing for the marriage and working towards successful consummation of it. Quiet shockingly, there were characters like Jane Fairfax, who saw marriage as a route to be a woman of fortune without undergoing the drudgery of working for it. For example, Jane compared the work of governess to slave trade.

Another significant feature of the novel is the way in which it brings forth the idiosyncrasies of personal prejudices of the characters. Thus, the novel also deals with the theme of prejudices of people. Emma guides Mr. Elton in pursuing his love because she thinks that he is in love with Harriet. Meanwhile, Mr. Elton misunderstands her concern and proposes to her. Emma and Mr. Elton's personal prejudices blind them to the real situation. Both are them were oblivious to each other's feelings and desires. Emma tries to build a relationship between Harriet and Frank but it takes a turn when Harriet develops desires for Mr. Knightley. Frank's desire to use Emma as a screen for his real preference makes him believe that Emma is aware of the relationship between him and Jane. A detached narrator can see that the personal prejudices of characters create a lot of misunderstandings. It creates a lot of humour and a dramatic space for the interplay of irony.

Does that mean that interactions among the characters on various platforms of social propriety like the dance balls, music and art circles etc. should be minimized or eliminated as they give rise to a lot of misunderstanding and confusion? According to Austen, elimination is not the answer but restraint should be practiced. She says that the emphasis should be on clear communication and open expression among the interacting partners. Austen says that there should be certain codes of communication and verbal decency. The bantering of Emma is misleading because it is full of gregariousness and vanity. She hurts Miss Bates and hates Jane in an indiscreet fashion. Mr. Elton has a flimsy, ostentatious and insincere style of praising people. Frank also tells people what they want to hear. Mr. Knightley proves right in being suspicious of Frank's integrity.

Emma: Characters

Emma

In the opening lines, she is described as 'handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition,' Emma 'had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.' However, the narrator also tells us that Emma possesses 'the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself.'

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Emma's obstinacy produces many conflicts in the novel. In the novel, Emma makes three major mistakes. First, she tries to help Harriet marry a gentleman when Harriet's social position commands that the farmer, who loves her, is best suited to her. Second, she flirts with Frank Churchill even though she does not have any intention to marry him and makes unfair comments about Jane Fairfax. Third, she claims that she is committed to staying single and does not realize her own feelings that she is in love with Mr. Knightley and wants to marry him. These mistakes threaten Harriet's happiness, make Emma embarrassed and create problems in Emma's path to find her true love.

Although the omniscient narrator speaks in the third person yet many events are observed through Emma's point of view. This narrative strategy forces the readers to sympathize with Emma and make ironic judgment on her behaviour. It also makes Emma a multidimensional character.

Emma is compared implicitly with other women in the novel. This allows the readers to assess her character. There are a lot of similarities between Jane and Emma but the fact that Jane is not financially independent highlights Emma's privileged nature. Mrs. Elton is independent like Emma but the former's crude behaviour and pride forces the readers to observe Emma's refined nature. Emma's sister, Isabella, is described as a stereotypical traditional woman who is tender and entirely devoted to and dependent on her family. The narrator seems to prefer Emma's independence to her sister's traditional outlook.

Mr. Knightley

In the novel, Mr. Knightley is a model of good sense. Right from the beginning of the novel, we find him correcting the excesses and mistakes of people around him. He is honest but knows where to temper his honesty with diplomacy and compassion. Readers find him a trustworthy person who can provide them the accurate assessment of the other characters' behaviour. He is compassionate and protective towards women. He is considerate towards Jane, Harriet, and Miss Bates and helps them as well.

Knightley's love for Emma is the only emotion, which he is not able to handle properly. He decides that Frank is not a good person even before meeting him. Gradually, the unfolding of the events reveals that he is jealous of his 'rival'. When Knightley notices that Emma is a bit inclined towards Frank, he acts impulsively and leaves for London. When he comes back, he declares his love for Emma in an uncontrollable manner. However, this fact does not make him a failure but humanizes his character.

Knightley is also compared implicitly with various male members of his community. His brother, Mr. John Knightley is clear-sightedness but not kindhearted and tactful like him. Both Frank and Knightley are intelligent, observant, affectionate and vibrant; but Frank uses his intelligence to conceal his true emotions and please others, whereas Knightley uses his intelligence to correct the excesses and mistakes of people around him.

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Frank Churchill

Frank Churchill is known for his attractive personality. He uses Emma as a screen to hide his secret engagement with Jane. He flirts with Emma even though he does not love her. He says what people want to hear in order to please them.

Jane Fairfax

Jane is a foil for Emma. The fact that she is not financially independent highlights Emma's privileged nature. She has no fortune but is equally talented and at music more talented than Emma. She sees marriage as a route to be a woman of fortune without undergoing the drudgery of a working woman. Her lack of fortune means that if she does not marry soon she will have to take up a position as a governess. She compares the work of governess to slave trade.

Harriet Smith

She is Emma's friend in the novel. Emma takes the responsibility to find a match for her. In the beginning of the novel, Harriet is believed to an illegitimate child though her parentage is not known. It is only at the end of the novel that we come to know that she is a daughter of a well-to-do tradesman. Harriet is easily led by others; for instance, she refuses to marry Robert Martin just because Emma feels that he is not a 'gentleman' and is beneath her in social status. She is a catalyst through which Emma's misguided matchmaking attempts are depicted in the novel. It is because of her attraction towards Mr. Knightley that makes Emma realize that she loves Mr. Knightley. At the end of the novel, Emma supports Harriet's desire to marry Mr. Martin.

Philip Elton

He is a good-looking young vicar. Emma feels that he is a suitable match for Harriet. However, the situation becomes ironical when Emma comes to know that he is inclined towards her and not Harriet. Emma's implied remark that Harriet is his equal offends him and he quickly rushes to Bath and marries another girl there.

Augusta Elton

She is Philip Elton's wife. She is wealthy but a dominant and ostentatious woman who always tries to seek people's attention. Emma does not approve of her behaviour and dislikes her. She patronizes Jane Fairfax in the novel.

Mrs. Anne Weston

Formerly known as Miss Taylor, she was Emma's governess for 16 years before she marries Mr. Weston due to Emma's matchmaking attempts. She admires and adores Emma and remains her confidante throughout the novel. She also acts as her surrogate mother.

Mr. Weston

He marries Miss Taylor who was Emma's governess. He is Frank Churchill's father by his first marriage. In the novel, he is shown as a cheerful man who loves socializing.

Isabella

She is Emma's elder sister and John Knightley's wife. In the novel, she is shown as a traditional girl who spends most of the time in taking care of her house and her children.

John Knightley

He is George Knightley's younger brother and Isabella's husband. He indulges in visits and vacations as per his family's wishes. However, he personally prefers to stay at home.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

7. Where did Austen get 'raw material' for her novels?
8. What offends Elton when he talks to Emma?
9. What is Emma's major flaw?

2.5 SUMMARY

- Daniel Defoe was one of the precursors of the modern novel. He wrote a number of articles, biographies, ghost stories, journals, memoirs, satires, and essays on religion, projects, reform and trade. All these forms were written in a picaresque style with minutest of details. The details given in these writings made them look like true chronicles. He was born in a family of dissenters in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate, London. Initially, Defoe was a commission agent and traded in a wide range of goods including stockings, wine, tobacco, and oysters. He was so interested in trade and economics that he wrote a number of essays and pamphlets on economic theories, which were ahead for his time. He was up in arms against catholic king James II. He had to flee to London to escape gallows. Some of his popular writings include *Captain Singleton*, 1720, *Moll Flanders* and *Colonel Jack* 1722, *Roxana*, 1724 and *Captain George Carlton*, 1728.
- *Moll Flanders* is an autobiography of a prostitute. In the beginning of the novel, Moll Flanders' mother is shown to have been convicted. Moll Flanders is reared and brought up until adolescence by a godly foster mother. She grows into a beautiful girl and a gentleman proposes to her. After some time, he abandons her and she is forced to marry his younger brother. His younger brother also dies few years later. She then marries a draper who soon flees from the country. Once again, she marries and moves to America. After some time, when she comes to know that her husband is her half-brother, she leaves him and returns to England. After leaving him, she meets a man whose wife is insane and she becomes his mistress. After a religious experience, the man leaves Moll. Then, a banker whose wife has been disloyal to him, proposes to her. She accepts his proposal on the condition that he divorce his wife. In the meantime, she marries a 'rich' man in Lancashire. Later on, she comes to know that the 'rich' man lied to her about his wealth; she leaves him and goes back to the banker. She comes

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to know that he has divorced his wife and they marry each other. He also dies after a few years. Then, she becomes a thief and is imprisoned after some time. In prison, she reunites with her Lancashire husband, who has also been imprisoned. Both of them manage to get their sentences reduced and they move to the colonies. In colonies, they become plantation owners. In America, Moll finds her brother/husband and her son and claims the property, which her mother had left for her. At the end, she along with her Lancashire husband returns to England, prosperous and repentant.

- Jane Austen produced some of the greatest novels in history with her quietly penetrating vision of man. She was born on 16 December 1775 at the church house in Hampshire and was the seventh child of George Austen and Cassandra. Since her childhood, Jane was encouraged to write and pen down her ideas. She read extensively using her father's library and got material from there in order to write short satirical sketches when she was a child. She found the raw materials for her novels in her daily routine, visits, shopping, sewing, gossip and other trivial matters. The world, which her books present to us, is essentially the 18th century world in its habits, taste and appearances. In July 1809, the women of Austen house moved back to Hampshire countryside when their brother Edward offered them a permanent home in his Chawton Estate. The place provided a perfect setting for Jane Austen to write. She stayed in this house for seven and a half years and wrote many novels during this period. She died on 18 July 1817 when she was 41 years old.

- Emma is a resident of the village of Highbury. Although she is convinced that she herself will never marry, she imagines herself to be naturally endowed with the ability to conjure love matches. Emma takes up the responsibility to find a suitable match for Harriet Smith. Emma believes that Harriet deserves to be a gentleman's wife and asks her friend to consider Mr. Elton for marriage. Harriet is inclined towards Robert Martin but Emma convinces Harriet to reject his marriage proposal. Mr. Knightley considers Mr. Martin as a worthy match for Harriet. Mr. Knightley and Emma quarrel with each other over the latter's meddling role in Harriet's matchmaking. During a conversation with Elton, Emma's implication that Harriet is his equal offends him and he leaves for the town of Bath. Emma tries to comfort her friend. Emma then speculates about Mr. Weston's son, Frank Churchill. Mr. Knightley is suspicious towards Frank but Emma finds Frank charming and feels that he is inclined towards her. Emma meets Jane Fairfax, another visitor to the Highbury. Everyone feels that Frank and Emma are inclined towards each other but Emma dismisses Frank as a prospective match for her and sees him as a suitor for Harriet. Everyone comes to know that Frank has lost his aunt. This event unfolds that Frank and Jane have been secretly engaged and he flirted with Emma in order to conceal his engagement with Jane. With his uncle's approval, Frank later marries Jane. Emma comes to know that Harriet is in love with Knightley. Harriet believes that Knightley also loves her. Emma feels sad with this revelation. After this, Emma expects that Knightley would tell her that he loves Harriet but to her joy, Knightley declares his love for Emma. Robert Martin proposes to Harriet. The novel ends with the marriage of Emma and Mr. Knightley and that of Harriet and Mr. Martin.

2.6 KEY TERMS

- Picturesque:** It is an aesthetic ideal introduced into English cultural debate in 1782 by William Gilpin in *Observations on the River Wye, and Several Parts of South Wales, etc. Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty; made in the Summer of the Year 1770*, a practical book which instructed England's leisure travelers to examine 'the face of a country by the rules of picturesque beauty'.
- Modern novel:** It is a long prose narrative that describes fictional characters and events in the form of a sequential story, usually.

2.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

- Pope's *The Dunciad* (1728), John Dryden's *MacFlecknoe* (1682) and Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) are also the most well known mock epic poems of that period.
- He wrote in a satirical vein used mainly in the Augustan Age. He was a pioneer of the down-to-earth fiction writing in the eighteenth century.
- Some of the fictional works of Daniel Defoe are *Robinson Crusoe*, *Captain Singleton*, *Moll Flanders*, *Colonel Jack*, *Roxana*, and *Captain George Carlton*.
- A kind woman takes care of Moll as her foster mother during her growing years.
- The most recurring theme in *Moll Flanders* is repentance.
- When Moll and the plantation owner move to Virginia, she meets her mother there and comes to know that he is her half-brother.
- Austen found the raw materials for her novels in her daily routine, visits, shopping, sewing, gossip and other trivial matters.
- Emma's implication that Harriet is his equal offends Elton.
- Emma's major flaw is that she imagines herself to be naturally endowed with the ability to conjure love matches.

2.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

- Describe briefly the theme of greed in the novel *Moll Flanders*.
- List three mistakes that Emma makes during the course of the novel.
- Write a note on the representation of Emma in the novel *Emma*.
- Describe the character of Mr. Knightley in the novel, *Emma*.
- Trace the origin of the novel.

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Long-Answer Questions

1. Critically analyse the theme of repentance in the novel *Moll Flanders*.
2. Explain the theme of marriage in the novel *Emma*.
3. Assess the flaws in Moll's character and how they help to shape her choices in life in the novel, *Moll Flanders*.

2.9 FURTHER READING

Byrd, Max; *Daniel Defoe: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1976.

Hammond, J.R.; *A Defoe Companion*, MacMillan, New York, 1993.

Bloom, Harold; *Jane Austen*, Chelsea House, New York, 1986.

Booth, Wayne; *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Penguin, New York, 1991.

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UNIT 3 NINETEENTH CENTURY
FICTION

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Genres of Novel
- 3.3 Charles Dickens: Great Expectations
- 3.4 Thomas Hardy: The Return of the Native
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Terms
- 3.7 Answers to 'Check your Progress'
- 3.8 Questions and Exercises
- 3.9 Further Reading

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The novel as a genre in comparison to other literary forms such as epic, drama, poetry, prose, etc, is of relatively recent origin. Critics have tried to establish the century in which the novel as a genre originated but it is a much debated issue with different literary theorists temporally situating the novel in different ages. For instance, the conservatively held view is that novel as a genre emerged with the publication of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* whereas the contemporary Russian cultural theorist, Mikhail Bakhtin asserts that novel had its origin in the time of Hellenistic Greece in the form of Hellenistic romances. While it is difficult to authoritatively establish (temporally speaking) the genesis of novel, it is equally difficult to define the novel as a genre. Literary theorists have tried to define it in multiple ways but an exhaustive definition of novel is still lacking. William Hazlitt, as early as in the eighteenth century, defined the novel as, '...a close imitation of man and manners; (where) the very web and texture of society (is represented) as it really exists, and as we meet it when we come into the world. If poetry has 'something more divine' in it, this savors more of humanity. We are brought acquainted with the motives and characters of mankind, imbibe our notions of virtue and vice from practical examples, and are taught knowledge of the world through the airy medium of romance.'

Lionel Trilling in his celebrated critical work, *The Liberal Imagination* writes in appreciation of this genre saying that, '...its greatness and its practical usefulness lay in its unremitting work of involving the reader himself in the moral life, inviting him to put his own motives under examination, suggesting that reality is not as his conventional education has led him to see it. It taught us, as no other genre ever did, the extent of human variety and the value of this variety. It has the literary form to which the emotions of understanding and forgiveness were indigenous, as if by the definition of the form itself.'

German philosopher Hegel saw novel as the 'epic of a prosaic modern world. It has all the range and richness of the epic, without, for the most part, its supernatural dimension. The novel resembles the classical epic in its consuming interest in narrative,

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dramatic action and the material world. It differs from it, however, in being a discourse of the present rather than of the past. ...the epic deals with a world of nobles and military heroes, whereas the novel deals with the common life. It is the great popular genre, the one mainstream literary mode which speaks the language of the people.'

Interestingly, as novel emerged after epic poetry, dramatic form, prose had reached their pinnacle as literary genres; its definition is always done in context of these literary forms. To explain further, both Hazlitt and Trilling's definition of novel is in context of a comparative analysis of novel with regards to other literary forms.

In fact Terry Eagleton states that the novel comprises different attributes of all genres. In his work, *The English Novel*, Eagleton defines the novel as 'a piece of prose fiction of a reasonable length.' Although Eagleton's definition appears to be complete, he himself goes on to denounce this very simplistic definition of novel as having too many loopholes. For instance, as he himself points out not all novels are written in prose; for example, Vikram Seth's *Golden Gate* is a novel in verse. Then again the question arises what suffices as reasonable length? The question arises that how does one differentiate between a novel, a novella and a short story? If length is one criterion then Eagleton argues how we can classify Anton Chekhov's *The Duel* as a short story and Andre Gide's *The Immortalist* as a novel when both are of relatively same length. Eagleton thus argues his point only to establish that according to him novel as a literary form is a genre which defies precise or exact definition. He says that it is a form which weaves together several literary modes so as to defy being classified as a one single pure genre. To quote Eagleton, 'You can find poetry and dramatic dialogue in the novel, along with epic, pastoral, satire, history, elegy, tragedy and any number of other literary modes... The novel quotes, parodies and transforms other genres, converting its literary ancestors into mere components of itself. ...' Hence, one can safely conclude that the rapid growth of novel was largely possible because it merged in itself the most appealing features of almost all literary genres. Thus after having discussed and defined novel as a genre let us study the beginnings of novel as a genre.

Beginnings

A study of the growth of English literature reveals that the novel as a literary form gained ascendancy around the turn of the seventeenth century. There were several factors that precipitated this surge. Every new genre that gained popularity, be it Elizabethan drama or prose in the Augustan age, it was the result of interplay of social, cultural, literary forces. For instance, around the years 1580 - 90 there was a sudden manifestation of Elizabethan drama with the flowering of Marlowe, Kyd and the greatest of all dramatists, Shakespeare. Prior to that only mystery and morality plays had existed and nothing anticipated the rapid growth of drama as a literary form. With novels, again there were no signs signaling the emergence of this genre.

Moreover, there was not even a classical model to serve as a precursor. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* is often cited as one of the most significant influences that shaped the modern novel. Coming back to Cervantes' *Don Quixote* even after its translation into English another 130 years were to pass before Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* was published. The earliest works that are often cited as being close to the

genre of a novel are Geoffrey Chaucer's prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*, *Troilus and Criseyde* etc. Besides this, Bunyan's work *The Pilgrim's Progress* published in 1678 is also regarded as a significant precursor of the modern novel.

Initially novels were looked upon with disdain, most critics regarded it as trash to be pursued only by females and servants as it was considered as a low genre and not to be taken seriously. It was with the publication of Richardson's *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* that the novel started to be regarded as a serious art form.

Walter Allen in his very significant critical work, *The English Novel*, says that the time period for which novel as an art form flourished was very short lived. To quote Allen, 'The first great flowering of the English novel began in 1740, with Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* and ended thirty-one years later with Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker*.'

Commenting on its origin and growth as a literary genre, Eagleton opines that it is difficult to assert with precision when the form gained ascendancy. He differs with the most commonly held view that Cervantes *Don Quixote* and Daniel Defoe's works can be said to be the first precursors to the English novel; rather Eagleton quotes the cultural theorist Mikhail Bakhtin in whose view the novel can be traced back to ancient Hellenistic romance which as a literary form does not develop as a mode consistently. Virginia Woolf regarded novel as the most pliable of all literary forms.

The nineteenth century was a great age of English novel. This was to some extent because this essentially middle class form of literary art was bound to flourish increasingly. The middle class rose in power and importance partly because of the steady increase of reading public with the growth of lending libraries and development of publishing in the modern sense. The novel presented the picture of life lived in a given society against the stable background of social and moral values. The people who wrote the novels were recognizably like the people encountered by the readers and the novels painted the kind of picture of life the middle class reader wanted to read about.

Hardy criticizes certain social constraints that hindered the lives of those living in the 19th century. Hardy's characters often encounter crossroads, which are symbolic of a point of opportunity and transition. The hand of fate is an important part of many of Hardy's plots. Thomas Hardy's works reflect the impact of 19th century evolutionary thought and naturalistic doctrines. He saw man as an alien in an impersonal universe, at the mercy of environment, heredity, and blind chance. Most of his fiction poignantly presents tragic human situations, and thus Hardy earned a reputation for pessimism.

In this unit, we will discuss the work of the nineteenth century fiction writers—Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy. Dickens was, in his social origin and in his ultimate social position, a petit bourgeois. His actual life experience was, at the outset so much that of the lower strata of the petit bourgeoisie as to coincide, at points, with that of the proletariat. He was born into the swiftly accelerating period of the industrial revolution and lived on through its culmination into the phase of the neo-feudalism of finance capital, of aborted development, disintegration, international wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions.

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3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the life and important works of Charles Dickens, with special emphasis on *Great Expectations*
- Discuss the life and important works of Thomas Hardy, with special emphasis on *The Return of the Native*

3.2 GENRES OF NOVEL

Novel of incident (1719–1731)

As a prolific prose writer and journalist, Daniel Defoe (1607 – 1731) contributed with *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* to the early eighteenth century English novels. *Robinson Crusoe* is a story and fictional autobiography of the protagonist who is a castaway who spent 28 years on a remote, tropical island near Venezuela, facing Native Americans, captives and persecutors before he is rescued. Alexander Selkirk, a famous Scottish castaway was the influence behind this novel who had survived for four years on the Pacific island called Más a Tierra later to be called Robinson Crusoe Island in 1966 in Chile. Defoe was inspired by the translations of Tufail's Hayyibn Yaqhdhan, a novel set on a desert island. It is also influenced by Cervantes as it is in the famous picaresque tradition.

Crusoe, a surname from German Kreutznaer or Kreutznar sets on a voyage from Queen's Dock in Hull, in August 1651. He is on a journey beyond his parents' wish who want him to stay home and pursue a career in law. His journey is perilous having borne a ship-wreck by a storm but he sails again. He is a passionate sailor who is abducted by sea pirates. They make him a slave to a moor where after two years' slavery, he is rescued in a boat with a boy called Xury. Later on, Crusoe is befriended by the captain of a Portuguese vessel off the west coast of Africa. That ship had to sail to Brazil. In Brazil, Crusoe becomes the owner of a plantation with the help of the captain. Years after, he participates in an expedition which is to bring slaves from Africa though in this voyage too, he faces ship-wreck in a storm when they are forty miles away in the sea on an island; Crusoe called it the island of Despair, in 1659. All people who travelled with him are dead except for three animals.

His tools from the sinking ship help him erect a habitation. Singly, he survives having searched means to stay on and creates a world to live with agriculture and animal husbandry. He keeps a parrot, reads the Bible and becomes religious. He is thankful to God for keeping him alive, though he misses human company. He meets native cannibals who visit to kill and eat prisoners. He decides to murder them first but later sensible wisdom dawns on him where he feels the cannibals did not commit a crime knowingly. He helps a prisoner to escape, tames him to learn English and converts him to Christianity. Now these two bring a crusade against the cannibals in favour of the prisoners. They come to know of other civilized men and Spaniards on that island before they leave for England. By this time his family had declared him

dead and left him no will. Crusoe returns to Lisbon to reclaim his estate in Brazil; he brings that to England. The rescued prisoner, Man Friday, now his faithful friend, accompanies him.

His *Moll Flanders* (1722), another fictional autobiography portrays much that Defoe underwent in his own life. It is the story of a girl born to a convict, who serves as a servant in a family, where she is married to one of the sons, after many adventurous happenings, she comes to know that her mother-in-law had actually been her biological mother, her husband her half-brother. She leaves that past to come back to England, leaving two of her own kids behind, and goes to Bath with a new husband. She develops some relationships there too like earlier. At 42, she has another lover who is a banker, then after him she again marries another. She has several children by many men here; later she turns a thief and calls herself Moll Flanders. In the end, she repents her misdeeds to reunite with her Lancashire husband. There is revelation of a long history and relations, wealth and plantations till she is 69 years of age. She returns to England. Defoe's characters are convincingly set in a solidly realized world. This was the first example of the Novel of incident (M.H. Abram). His novels are deeply realistic and portray lives of ordinary human beings. They are often deeply critical of the then English society. England and her colonies, voyages, continent tours, a human greed, illegitimate child, nameless heirs of street, difficult struggling life, a strong moral instruction— all colour the canvas of Defoe's novels at one stroke. His realistic approach inspires later generations to keep his tradition alive.

Picaresque novel (1742–1768): Picaresque as a term means relating to an episodic style of fiction dealing with the adventures of a rough and dishonest but appealing hero. Its origin is from French, and Spanish picaresco, or picáro meaning 'rogue' in the sixteenth century. 'Picaro' means 'rogue' in Spanish. Such a story deals with the escapades of a careless young man who lives by his wits and is hardly subject to change of character through the succession of adventures which he undergoes. Spanish writer Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605) is its most celebrated example. 'Gil Blas' (1715) by Le Sage, a Frenchman is also a very famous picaresque narrative. This kind of novel is realistic in style, episodic in structure, and often satiric and ironical in tone. This is an episodic recounting of the adventure of a single hero or an anti-hero on the road. In England, the followers of this tradition were many and all presented stories through their own point of view adding some new element to it.

Henry Fielding (1707–1752): Fielding is one of the most well known figures of English letters. He was a great explorer of human nature and had wide experience of life. His works were lively and strong. Though in his lifetime, he was seen as 'dirty and low' as a writer, he appears to have influenced the authors of the following centuries. He had been the pioneer of English novels. His masterpiece *Tom Jones* (1749) is ranked by Maugham among the ten greatest novels of the world. His novels are categorized as novels of reason. He had lively realism, great play of humour, irony and satire; tolerance for human weaknesses, keen eye for humour, engaging narrative, gift of strong plot and theme, vivid characterization, and plenty of comic dialogues. Through Fielding's narrative – a reader is never bored. He was frank in describing human folly.

Fielding's Contribution: A sound technique and logical following of life are Henry Fielding's gift to English novels. Fielding influenced the posterity more than any

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other novelist of his age. As far as development of novel as a form of art is concerned, Fielding's contribution remains far above his contemporaries. He can be called the father of the modern English novel.

Realism: Fielding is a pioneer of realism in English literature. In fact, the English novel was born out of the characteristic of realism. He began novel writing late in reaction to Richardson's *Pamela* and sentimental novels of morality. It did not mean that he was immoral. His novels too instruct but with comic and humour. His sentiments are in the right place without exaggeration. His canvas is big with a wide range of characterization. His prose is realistic and at ease. Even tense or pathetic situations are imbued with irony and humour like in the works of Ben Jonson. His novels are pictures of his Age and people. He speaks his truth pungently but through the vein of comic. He speculates into the nature of man very deeply in an intellectual and moral way.

Humour, Comic and Irony: He is considered one of the greatest humorists of his age. In fact, it was after Fielding's political satires that the Licensing Act was passed. He had followed into Cervantes's footsteps. His humour has a wide range: it may be a humorous fight of his hero on a highway or the pathetic side of human life viewed ironically. His humour is subtle, not boisterous. It is soft, mild and unpretentious. His humour is not pungent but pleasant and full of irony. He his Tom Jones is considered among world's ten best novels. He considered his Joseph Andrews a 'comic epic in prose'. The character Parson Adams is influenced by Sancho Panza of Don Quixote. Fielding is considered 'a cheerful, sunshiny, breezy spirit that prevails everywhere strongly'.

Philosophy and Moral: Fielding began writing *Joseph Andrews* as a parody of Richardson's *Pamela*. He made Joseph Andrews Pamela's brother. It was in order to laugh at the exaggerated morality and sentimentality of Richardson. In *Joseph Andrews*, he shows an intellectual depth with greater human philosophy having broad insight into human nature. His characters are genuine products of higher intellect and observation of morality and ethics. It is inherent in their nature. Born in a rich family, Fielding himself had seen quite a lot of human life because of the vicissitudes that he underwent. His characters are generous, good humoured and thoughtful. They act with wisdom and presence of mind.

Gift of Solid Plot: Fielding is known for strong plot narrative. Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, Amelia, and Jonathan Wilde are all great examples of good plot-construction. Coleridge compared him with Sophocles and Ben Jonson in this regard. A strong plot means that a story never falls down the level of interest through different incidents. His novels are considered an 'amazing tour de force of plot construction.'

Art of Characterization: Plot moves through various incidents and characters. Fielding's characters are though sometimes caricatures like Andrews or *Shamela* (1741) but they are 'not men but manners, not an individual but the species.' There is a wide variety of characters in his novels. His characters create humour and amuse the readers through their nature and events both. His characters do not attack any idea but their behaviour and its outcome is humorous. Sometimes their activities are humorous like that of Parson Adams. His range of characters is comparable to that of Chaucer and Jonson.

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Fielding's Works: Joseph Andrews (1742) is considered 'a comic epic in prose' by Fielding. It is his first published work. It is a satire about Joseph Andrews, the brother of Richardson's Pamela, and his adventures. In this novel, he targeted to satirize Richardson's exaggerated morality and sentimentalism portraying it in a man. It tells how Lady Booby aims at the virginity of Andrews and puts him under trial. She tries her best to separate him from Fanny, his beloved but after a lot of fun – the two are married at the end.

Jonathan Wild (1743) is a real story and a political satire aimed at Robert Walpole. It is considered a loose narrative inspired by his age. It is a great example of irony. Wild, born to a poor family, becomes a Thief-Taker General, who while working on the side of law became dishonest to fill up his own pocket. He is arrested, tried and executed. Tom Jones (1749) is divided into 18 books, making a huge novel that relates the history of a foundling. It is considered Fielding's masterpiece for which he has been placed amongst world's greatest novelists. Tom Jones, a ward of Squire Allworthy, falls in love with Sophia and he is a vigorous and lusty youth but honest and soft-hearted. Sophia is his neighbour and from a rich family and the elderly gentleman opposes their love but in the end they are united.

Tobias Smollett (1721–71): Smollett is considered a great novelist of the eighteenth century, after Richardson and Fielding, though his work is not considered as great as theirs. His novels are steeped in the picaresque style. His *Roderick Random* (1748), *Peregrine Pickle* (1751), and *Humphrey Clinker* (1771) are famous novels. As an artist, he was a realist gifted with a fine flow of narration and colourful events. He was a sharp observer of life and its rough sides. He put brutal and coarse facts of life into fiction. He is not as lively as others of his age but realistic in nature. His novels are full of new situations and events.

Lawrence Sterne (1713–68): Lawrence Sterne was also one of the four notable writers of the eighteenth-century English novel. *Tristram Shandy*, *The Gent* (1759–1767) is his masterpiece which is in nine volumes: a mixture of unconnected incidents; it comprises of fancies, knowledge of human life, humour, and pathos. His plot is scattered and his story develops late. Sterne is sentimental in his approach. He is still known by his streak of sentimentality. His art of characterization is wide and vivid.

The sentimental novel (1740–1780)

The sentimental novel is characterized as novel of character or psychological novel. Samuel Richardson is called the father of sentimental novel. His 'Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded' (1704) has been written in an epistolary manner which is regarded as the first English novel. Here Richardson has narrated the story of a meek and pious lady of low birth. He has depicted a rustic lady's emotions, who fights for her modesty in the presence of a dissolute master. She is, in the end, married to the same man who changes morally.

His other work was *Clarissa Harlowe* (1747–48) written in epistolary style in eight volumes. It is conveyed only through the exchange of letters. It is the story of a beautiful and virtuous young lady. She is a neo-rich tragic heroine, Clarissa, who is a beautiful and virtuous young lady. She is a neo-rich tragic heroine, Clarissa, who is a beautiful and virtuous young lady. She is a neo-rich tragic heroine, Clarissa, who is a beautiful and virtuous young lady.

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him because he had put her into a brothel. She escapes from there and commits suicide. She makes a will which irrespective of her hatred is passed over to Lovelace. He becomes ashamed to see how Clarissa responded to his villainy — with a good heart — and that pains him very much. Lovelace feels ashamed of himself as he comes to know its purport. He goes to Italy, fights a duel and becomes injured on purpose and dies. His last novel is *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754) in which the hero is a virtuous Christian gentleman who has been very careful and scrupulous in his love affair.

Richardson's Gifts: Samuel Richardson has dwelt keenly into the female psychology. He was a great reader of human behaviour. He was also adept in describing the emotional problems of human life. He made a great effort in liberating novel as a form from a conservative outlook. He is known for his psychological analysis and introspection and social realism. His stress on morality and sentimentality made him popular across Europe. But he is often considered a writer of lengthy novels; his morality is considered smug or prudish. His description of the emotional details of the protagonist's psychology is a quality which makes him an immortal writer.

Lawrence Sterne (1713–68): Sentimental novels depend on emotional response of both the characters and the readers. The plot in a sentimental novel advances in an emotional manner rather than in action. Lawrence Sterne is a notable writer of this genre. His novel *Sentimental Journey* (1768) is a famous sentimental novel. Sterne's journey through France and Italy is the subject here. It is travel writing: a discussion of personal taste and sentiments of men's manners and morals over classical learning. The narrator is Reverend Mr. Yorick whose adventures are recorded in this book. This is an amorous tale representing a series of self-contained episodes. In style, it is more elegant than his *Tristram Shandy*, *The Gent* which is the story of the eccentric Shandy family.

Other Important Novelists: Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker* (1771), Frances (Fanny) Burney's *Evelina* (1778) are good examples of this type. In *Evelina*, the heroine, intrinsically good and raised in a village, is educated and trained for proper living. Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews* are stories of emotional and sentimental people. But they are a subtle comment on excessive emotionalism and sentimentality. These novels focused on the weaker society such as orphans and convicted men. It aimed at softer punishment and not a harsh one. Goethe's *Werther* (1774) and Richardson's *Pamela* are the greatest examples of the sentimental novel. The sentimental novel gave birth to the following generation of Gothic novel.

Gothic novel or novel of terror and romance (1717–1850)

Age of transition: Between the changes of the strict classical and realistic depiction of society in novels of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century where new liberties were taken regarding this form of art, we have the Gothic novel. The Gothic novel recalls the medieval set-up of Italy and has elements of romance in it. It deals with cruelty and sins of the hero. It is also associated with the Gothic architectural revival of distant past.

It portrays the appreciation of the joys of extreme emotion, mysterious atmosphere, thrill, fearfulness and calmness. English Gothic writers associated with

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mediaeval gothic architecture and created an atmosphere where darkness dominated day and night. The pictures are full of terror having harsh laws of human nature enforced on certain characters by torture. It also embodied mysteries, fantasy, and superstition. Nature ruled such primitive buildings very harshly. The image of anti-hero prevailed in a mysterious, dark atmosphere in the gothic tales. The movement of classicism and realism prevailed into the eighteenth century English literature and in such a time, the gothic novel revived romanticism and the middle ages. Thus it was a reaction against the literature of the eighteenth century.

Horace Walpole (1717–97): Son of the Prime Minister Richard Walpole, Horace Walpole was a famous antiquary and originator of the gothic fiction and the harbinger of the great romantic age of English literature like his friend Thomas Grey. Rich and widely travelled, he and his friend Grey both looked beyond their age. The crass realism and mechanical depiction of the then literature forced these intellectuals to rebel against the set norms of poetry, drama and prose. His first novel, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered the first gothic novel. It was his reaction against the realism, sentimentalism and didacticism of the eighteenth century literature. For this he chose a set-up quite distant in the twelfth or thirteenth century Italy where mystery, romanticism and supernatural prevailed. It had the element of criminality in it. Walpole created a Gothic mansion at Strawberry Hill where Manfred, the lord of the castle, lived with his family. The beginning of the novel marked the wedding day of his sickly son called Conrad and Princess Isabella. After the wedding, Conrad is crushed to death by a huge, gigantic helmet which falls on him from above.

Manfred himself marries Isabella being afraid of his death as the ownership of this castle had to automatically pass on to its real owner and not to any member of the family. He divorced his wife Hippolita who could not become a mother. Isabella escapes to a church having been helped by Theodore, a peasant, to avoid Manfred's touch. Manfred ordered to murder Theodore taking the help of a Friar but Theodore is later recognized as the Friar's son by him at the point of his murder. There are people from other kingdoms who come to free Isabella. Manfred murders Mattilda in lieu of Isabella. At last, Theodore is revealed as a true Prince of Otranto and he marries Isabella. Manfred is murderous and he is repentant for his acts. It is a mixture of tragedy and comedy; mystery and romance; terror and crime. It has elements of supernatural and fantasy. In his presentation of horror, romance and mystery, Walpole is compared to Shakespeare. Though this type of novel is considered an escape from the real world — it had a trail of followers who tried their hands on the same line of plot.

Mrs. Ann Radcliffe (1764–1823): Mrs. Radcliffe began as an imitator of Horace Walpole but it was she who explored the wider range in the perspectives of the Gothic novel. She was more articulate and successful as a writer. Her famous novels *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1769) and *The Italian* (1797) are unique of this tradition of fictions. The *Mysteries of Udolpho* has the setting of Italy which is used for a formula or pattern to give the desired background to the story.

A beautiful youth is put into prison by a hard-hearted sadistic villain in a lonely castle. He is rescued by the hero who is not as heroic as traditionally heroes are. The heroes and heroines are almost the same in all of her works with a slight change in complexion and gait but not of heart. There are components in the story to evoke

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terror, like dungeons, secret vaults, hiding places and all these culminate to create the Gothic effect. She did not use supernatural as Walpole did. She explained what seemed supernatural but it was reckoned as something else at the end of the story when she revealed the truth. She also used the natural description to make her pictures more colourful. She dwelt on scenic beauty and its description more powerfully which Walpole did not. Walpole had widely travelled and had seen such constructed castles in reality and based his world of imagination on what he saw. But Mrs. Radcliffe had never seen about what she wrote.

So her picture of the gothic was her own creation based completely on her imagination and fancy. Both she and Walpole lacked the proper knowledge of history. The years referred to in her novels cannot be ascertained as real. She presents a mixture of the eighteenth century didacticism and sentimentalism with romance. In this sense, she differs from Walpole who constructed his world of gothic fiction with the essence of romanticism only.

Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775–1818): Lewis's *The Monk* (1797) has different elements from Mrs. Radcliff's novels. It is a tale of blood and terror. The story is about Ambrosio who is a pious, revered monk of Spain and it is the story of his decline and downfall. He goes mad after physical lust for his student, Matilda, a woman in disguise of a monk who allures and tempts him to it. But once he comes into the trap of this indulgence and sin, he enjoys his lust which is fulfilled by a pupil every now and again. He becomes addicted to this fulfillment and makes the innocent Antonia his prey forcefully. Matilda helps him to do so because she is secretly empowered by Satan in the female form. She helps him to rape and kill Antonia. She causes Ambrosio's downfall from the beginning. The novel has some other Gothic tales within the story like *Bleeding Nun*. Ambrosio faces Inquisition and prefers an escape like Faustus by selling his soul to Satan. There is a devil which prevents Ambrosio from the final repentance and he has a prolonged, torturous end. Later on, the devil reveals to him that the woman he raped and killed was his own sister.

Minor Writers of the Age

Miss Clara Reeve (1729–1827): Ms. Reeve's *Champion of Virtue*, later to be called *The Old English Baron*, was inspired by the Gothic tradition. In it, she deals with an historical event like Walpole without the clear picture of history. Charles Robert Maturin (1782–1824) also wrote novels in the Gothic tradition. *The Fatal Revenge* (1807) was inspired by Mrs. Radcliff. His masterpiece is *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) which is considered as the greatest terror novel. It has a strong plot and a vivid analysis of motifs.

Mary Shelley (1797–1851): Shelley's wife, Mary Shelley, wrote *Frankenstein* (1817) which is a tale of terror having the elements of science in it. It is about the devastation caused by a machine man which itself is destroyed at the end. The theme has time and again been used by movie-makers and proved to be a successful and entertaining story. She was the only novelist of this period who seems to have inspired the entire generation of science fiction writers of the modern age.

William Beckford (1760–1844): Beckford is considered a novelist of very fertile imagination. His *Vathek* (1786) has been set in Arabia and he seems to be inspired by

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oriental stories. The story belongs to Vathek, a Caliph and sort of Muslim Faustus who sells his soul to Eblis or the devil. It is his story of life till death and hell which is very much terror-evoking. The description of his death is a terrific and horrifying picture. The description of blood-shed and crime is woven into the very texture of the novel. The novel is in the tradition of gothic fiction.

The Historical Novel (1814–2010)

The historical novel is that which uses setting or background from the true history of a period and attempts to convey the spirit, manners, social, economic and political conditions of that age. The historical fact should be true to its existence and the past comes alive to the readers. It informs the readers about the period in which it is written. The recent award-winning novel *Wolf Hall* by Hillary Mantel is an example of a historical novel. It deals with the period of Cromwell and King Henry VIII. Thus the tradition of the historical novel has not died. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) was an attempt in the picaresque tradition and historical representation of the hero. The German author Benedikte Naubert (1756–1819) wrote around fifty historical novels. In technique, he focused his attention on the person of minor historical significance and explained the incidents and events which they experienced. The same trend was followed by Sir Walter Scott, the greatest of all English novelists of this genre. The historical novels began as a literary form of art in the nineteenth century England by Sir Walter Scott. Though Horace Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe tried to base their Gothic novels historically, but their knowledge of history failed to give a true historical charm to their stories.

Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) was a notable Scottish writer of 'the historical novel'. He had explored the works of Shakespeare, the Bible, Spenser, Dryden, Swift, and historical stories keenly. He was the first English writer who had an international career and had followers in Europe, Australia, North America, etc. He was also a poet and playwright at the same time. Scott had worked throughout his life to revive the history of Scotland. Not only did he revive his country's historical past, but also made it live and presentable to the readers. He had studied his culture deeply and had a lively imagination to support the true facts. In other words, he made history live and walk in his times: he took real men from history and the dates and transformed them into interesting tales. But he did not transcend his time like Walpole. He had explored a lot in history. He was a voracious reader. Since he picked up history as his setting and filled in his ideas to bring alive those men and women, his novels are called historical romance. He began by translating works from German and first published his three-volume set of collected ballads, 'The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border'. Since then he delved deep into the historical past of Scotland to revive it in the memory of his generation. His historical figures of Scotland were men and women who were not famous. They were minor historical figures. This might be the influence of his age as the entire age of romanticism sought its refuge in humanism and upliftment of the society. As a novelist he had a wide range and his novels are popularly termed as Waverley Novel. They are a long series of publications. He did not write his name on his first venture as a novelist called 'Waverley' (1814). Later too, he used this phrase to denote his identification, 'by the author of Waverley', instead of his name. 'Waverley' (1814) is a tale of the Jacobite rising of 1745 in the Kingdom of Great Britain. The

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hero is Edward Waverley who had been bought up in a Tory family and so; he was sympathetic to the Jacobite cause. His novels became very popular. The time when he began writing, he became a popular subject of conversation in England and was a famous name at the Royal family because George, Prince Regent invited and dined with him. He was anxious to see the author of Waverley.

Scott's central interest was a subject related to chronicling. He did not center the novel on a certain character but on a historical period or event. As a novelist, his range is surprising for he wrote incessantly. In 1819, he chose a subject that related to England and not specifically Scotland in his *Ivanhoe*. This novel is about a Jew called Rebecca who is a sympathetic character. The novel came at the time of struggle for the Emancipation of the Jews in England. His *The Bride of the Lammermoor* is based on a real story of two lovers in the backdrop of Lammermoor Hills. In this novel, Lucie Ashton and Edgar Ravenswood promise each other in love but it is later discovered by Lucie's mother that the man is the enemy of their family. She forces her daughter to marry Sir Arthur Bucklaw, a rich inheritor. But Lucie, on her wedding ceremony stabs her groom, becomes mad and dies. Scott was a very famous author throughout his life and career as a novelist. He was popularly read and liked throughout the world. He was granted the title of Baronet for his excessive popularity and was regarded highly everywhere. He became Sir Walter Scott in 1820.

In service to his country, he organized the visit of King George IV to Scotland. He was a man on whom the glory of the importance of Scottish literature rests. It was in 1827 that he announced himself as a writer of Waverley novel publications. The following may be considered among his famous novels: *Waverley* (1814), *Guy Mannering* (1815), *The Antiquary* (1816), *Tales of My Landlord* (1816–1818), *Rob Roy* (1818), *Ivanhoe* (1819), *The Abbot* (1820), *Kenilworth* (1821), *The Talisman* (1825), *Scottish Borders*, *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828), *Anne of Geierstein* (1829), *Count Robert of Paris* (1831), *Castle Dangerous* (1831). The name *Waverley* which in Surrey, England.

Through his novels Scott aimed at exploring the history of the middle ages. Scott had also established a printing press. He was equally famous in the US in his times. Mark Twain, a popular American novelist, ridiculed Scott in his *Huckleberry Finn* by calling a sinking boat as Walter Scott. There have been critics who have praised and regarded his works optimistically but there were those who wrote against his popularity. In his lifetime, Scott was one of the most famous novelists of the world. He always served his country and men. He often fought for public causes. He never bored the readers by repetition. He did not describe his characters psychologically. He did not portray the troubles inherent in our life. His characters are often accused of being important only in the context of history but he himself condemns them by calling Waverley a 'sneaking piece of imbecility.' He did not care much for plot.

The period after Scott: Scott laid down the foundation of historical fiction in England but it spread its luminous wings towards countries such as France and Germany due to his influence. In England, Mrs. Anna Eliza Bray came to be known as Scott's successor whose novel, *The Protestant* (1828) depicts the persecution of the Protestants in the reign of Queen Mary Tudor. GRP James was also a famous minor writer who wrote almost hundred historical novels in the period of 1825 to

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1850. William Harrison Ainsworth (1805–1882) was also a popular novelist for two decades whose first work was *Rockwood* (1834). Bulwar Lytton (1803–1873) wrote five historical novels among which *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) was the most popular. He stuck to moral instruction and historical truth in all his works. His historical novels therefore, are mere representation of facts and they are not as lively as Scott's. His novels are full of historical accuracy and details.

Some Victorian history novel writers used the theme of history for the sake of sectarian bias. Charles Kingsley's (1819–1875) *Hypatia* (1853) attacked the Roman Catholics. Newman's fiction called *Callista: A Sketch of the Third Century* represented the same genre. Thackeray's Henry Esmond (1852) is also a chronicle novel about the life of the eighteenth century England. Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Barnaby Rudge* are also the novels of this genre. George Eliot's *Romola* describes the life of Italy in the period of Renaissance. In the twentieth century, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch wrote *Italy in the period of Renaissance*. In the twentieth century, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (1863–1944) wrote *Hetty Wesley* (1903) and *The Splendid Spur* (1889); Jacob Wassermann (1873–1934) wrote *The Triumph of Youth*; Ford Madox Hueffer (1873–1939) wrote *The Fifth Queen* (1908); Ms Phoebe Gay wrote *Vivandiere* (1929).

There were many other minor writers of historical fiction also during the centuries after Scott. In the 21st century, Hilary Mantel (1952-), an Englishwoman, wrote *Wolf Hall* (2009) which is a historical novel. It won the Man Booker Prize for literature in 2009. This novel is set in the period from 1500 to 1535, a fictionalized biography which embodies the rapid rise of power of Thomas Cromwell, First Earl of Essex in the court of Henry VIII of England. It illustrates the old Latin saying 'Man is wolf to man'. The French writer Alexandre Dumas's (1802–1870) *The Three Musketeers* (1844) is a famous historical novel.

Romantic Novel (1775–1850)

In the history of England, Miss Austen has a great place as a novelist and critic of life whose accuracy about details is rare. Born in 1775 in Hampshire, England, Austen was taught by her father in her house. She lived in the country side for the most part of her life and hardly moved anywhere outside. Her books were taught in schools and made for popular reading but no one knew the name of the writer. Even her nephews did not know that they were reading their own aunt's novel in the school curriculum. She was rated below Maria Edgeworth or Fanny Burney in her age. But by the end of the Victorian age, she was immensely popular and the twentieth century established her fame as a novelist of the first rank in the world. She produced little but all her fictions work are keen and sensitively observed pictures of the society and human relationships. She wrote them charmingly and perfectly. It is very difficult to question her art as she is one of the most profound artists of the fiction world. Her pictures are carefully drawn from her own surroundings, based on the classical unities of time, place and action accurately. They depict human sentiments and actions based on reason. She points out human follies and mistakes embedded in behaviour. She is regarded as one of the best novelist of England even today. Her novels spoke of the manners of men and women.

What Congreve did in the field of drama, Austen has done in the art of novel writing. The word 'romantic' means that which is characterized or inclined towards sentimental and idealized love. Whatever is related to this saying in literature, art and

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music is called 'romantic'. So the fiction that depicts the theme related to love and union is called romantic fiction. Therefore romantic novels focus on the relationship of romantic love between two people which must end in an emotionally satisfying manner.

In such fiction, an optimistic end is always appreciated. In English literature, the trend of romantic novel was born in the beginning of the nineteenth-century. But Samuel Richardson is regarded as the progenitor of this trend through his '*Pamela*'. Love and courtship became centre of interest in almost all the novels of Jane Austen who was the pioneer novelist of this genre.

Almost all her works are good and make for pleasurable reading. As an artist she is perfect for she herself said: 'The little bit (two inches long) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a brush as produces little effect after much labour.'

Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855): Charlotte Brontë explored the depths of romanticism wrapped in passion and depth of emotionalism in love. As children, the Brontës were very sharp and disciplined kids nestled by a stern clergy father whose Irish sentiments never left him. Being the eldest surviving child, she played the role of a mother to her siblings and that careful depiction of a sensible young lady is overt in *Jane Eyre* (1847) her first novel. Ms. Austen's heroines thrive in a smug social circle but Charlotte Brontë's heroines are independent, earning and decision-makers for themselves. Jane Eyre is an orphan, left in the care of her maternal aunt, a very austere elite woman who tortures the child in the 'red-room' besides pampering her own ill-mannered children. She is put in a seminary which is equally bad and becomes a governess in future much like the author herself. She falls in love with the master of the family, a rich married man whose genetically mad wife is locked up in the same house and as she comes to know the secret, she leaves that place.

She wanders like a vagabond to be restored home by a clergy who is later discovered to be her own cousin. Meanwhile her paternal uncle leaves her a considerable estate. She escapes to her former lover discarding the proposal of the time. The story is full of passionate love, mystery, romance, chivalry, wooing, depicting love for spontaneity and independence in human nature. Her other important works are *Villette* (1853), *Shirley* (1849) and *Professor* (1857). Though Charlotte wrote very few novels they all cry for woman's emancipation, social-fetters, gender inequality, effect of Industrial Revolution, feminist appeal, frank portrayal and acceptance of a woman's love, etc. More so they seem to be dreams of an enthusiastic young woman full of burdens of life and responsibility who looks forward to a better future.

Emily Brontë (1818–1848): Emily Jane Brontë is one of the most unique women writers of her century. A thoroughly objective artist, Emily has just one novel to her name. In her novel, she chose the setting of Yorkshire where she lived and died. Her novel *Wuthering Heights* is set in the bleak Yorkshire moors where two prime mansions are the subject of the story: one is Wuthering Heights placed at the top of the moors where nature plays havoc and the house is furnished with only necessary comforts to survive; the second, Thrushcross Grange which is close to the territory of the village situated in the valley where all comforts are available. The former is occupied by the Earnshaws and the second by the Lintons. Their life is normal and steady until a

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small, dark waif is picked and brought home by old Mr. Earnshaw. He is called Heathcliff, whose mutual and passionate affection for Catherine Earnshaw brings disaster to both the families. Heathcliff is bullied by Catherine's brother after Mr. Earnshaw's death. Hindley Earnshaw reduces him to the status of a servant, separates Catherine from him, and asks Catherine to be prepared for a better future with Edgar Linton, the son of the Magistrate. Heathcliff cannot bear this separation and Catherine's devotion to Linton and he neglects himself. Catherine chooses Linton to shock Heathcliff whereupon he leaves home to return three years later as a rich and educated man. He first shocks Catherine by marrying Linton's sister. Then he makes Hindley an addict of drinking and gambling and he also dies. He forces Edgar into death by abducting and forcing marriage of his daughter to his sickly son Linton Heathcliff. He brings up Hindley's son as an extremely boorish, uncultivated and uneducated youth and possesses both the properties. At last, he dies without making his will. The story is about thunders of atmosphere, passion, pathos, cruelty, emotion, metaphysics, horror, supernatural and mysticism. Emily's picture of life is stark, brave, exposed to nature, full of cruel realities, embittered and broken relations, and eternal love.

Anne Brontë (1820–1849): The youngest amongst the Brontës, Anne was a soft, much cared for and frail child who grew up in a close family atmosphere and went out to earn her livelihood as her elder sister Charlotte. Anne wrote two novels *Agnes Grey*, and *Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Her *Agnes Grey* is the story much like her own about a young girl who goes to work in a family as governess and tacitly falls in love with a clergy man. But the man does not disclose his love for her. She has friends and rivals among those girls with whom she is working. Meanwhile her already sick father is dead and her brave mother opens a seminary at the sea-side where Agnes joins her. Accidentally she sees a clergyman while walking at the beach one day. He comes and introduces himself as a Rector — rich and affluent and in a mannered way asks the permission of her mother for her hand and marries her. *The Tenant* is a story full of tragic situations and pathos about an addiction-ridden hero whose nature resembled her own brother Patrick Branwell's. All the Brontë sisters pleaded for freedom of expression, informal representation of human nature, realism, poverty, broken family relations and stress on passionate love. Their novels are full of natural descriptions of beauty. Thomas Love Peacock (1785–1866) was also a famous author of this genre. His *Nightmare Abbey* (1818) and *Crotchet Castle* (1836) are notable romantic pieces of fiction.

Novel of purpose (1812–1950)

A social novel of purpose deals with a social problem and propagates a message. It is related closely with social criticism. When this style of writing began, it was meant for the middle class and the labour class people. The Industrial Revolution, the class difference, the ever-burdened dependent class came to be its subject. This genre of novel was used prominently by those who themselves had seen a hard, unendurable life. Social novel describes the foibles of the institutions of the society: like the effect of corrupt politics, the dominance of the elite or ruling class, plight of the downtrodden, etc. Such a novel depicts the experiences of real life with a little bit of melodrama or exaggeration in its texture to create reader's interest. It maintained the romantic style of freedom of subject and form. It is full of imagination and vivid characterization. Its dialogues are full of emotion, pathos and tragic descriptions.

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Novel of realism (1775–1925)

A realistic novel attempts to portray in fiction the effects of realism. They describe complex characters having more than one motive representing a certain social class who manage their society. They depict their interaction with the society, their faults, experience and everyday life. The tradition of the realistic novel came through Defoe and Fielding in the eighteenth century but developed in the hands of master novelists of the nineteenth century such as Jane Austen, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, William Dean Howells and Henry James in England; and Stendhal, George Sand, Balzac and Flaubert in France; and Turgenev and Tolstoy in Russia. In the novels of Jane Austen, Edith Wharton and John P. Marquand, there is focus on the customs, day to day interactions, manners and estimation of a particular social class. So they are called the novel of manners also.

In *Mansfield Park*, Fanny Price's problem to be adopted by some relative is the main issue. In the novel, we see the problem of financial insecurity and of adoption of a poor relative who is sent to different relatives for staying there and is treated as a burden everywhere. Her other novels are *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*. All of them are fine pictures of an upper-middle class society reflecting the modes and manners. They are objectively crafted, fine pieces of art, firmly delineated and formally perfect. George Eliot (1819–1880) combines two important traits of which the first is a strong intellectual tendency to analyse the problems of life, and the second is to give solutions for them by instruction. Her novels are deeply imbued in the social life of the countryside: a true picture of men and their behaviour with a strong moral undercurrent in them. She instructs that our duty is the most important part of our life. She attaches value to the individual as a part of universal moral forces and tries to establish that moral law is the basis for human society. As Dickens portrayed the streets of London and Thackeray, the upper class gentry, George Eliot revived the realism-based depiction of the country life.

For her pictures of realism with a fine portrayal, she holds the prime rank among the novelists of the world. She started writing fiction in the second phase of her life when she produced *Adam Bede*, *Mill on the Floss*, *Silas Marner*. In her last phase, she wrote *Romola* (1862–63), *Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871–72) and *Daniel Deronda* (1836).

Her novels of the first phase of writing depict the experiences related to the author herself, their stories and scenes are set in the rural England; their characters are the people of the Midlands whom she had seen and known. They are works of permanent value because of their picture of realism with spontaneity, naturalness and humour. The novels of the latter period reflect deep analysis of character not as vivid as the early country-life portrayals. They all reflect as she herself said—psychological realism. They present the inner struggle of a soul and open up motives, emotions and genetic influences which control human activities. She concentrates upon either the moral growth or decline or development of a soul and her characters show this particular trait essentially. The characters of Tito and Romola reflect such a growth from good to bad and bad to good. *Silas Marner* is considered artistically her most perfect work which embodies powerful, long-lasting effect of realism and it is the story of a poor weaver. Ms. Eliot is attributed to have given birth to the modern psychological novel.

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Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) composed novels as 'Entertainment for an Idle Hour', much like Thackeray. His works reflect social realism. He is a formalist in art portraying society with a wide range of characters full of humour and their daily activities with utmost finery and polish of delineation. His notable work is *Barchester Towers* (1857) depicting the life of a Cathedral town with pictures of bishops, clergies, their families and dependents. Following the same ideals, he wrote *The Warden* (1855) and *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867) and other novels of the same series portraying the social interaction of men and women true to the picture of real life. His novels display strong merit and powerful representation of an upper class social manners and characters.

Bulwer Lytton (1803–73) is regarded as the genius who portrayed the upper class social men and manners in his novels. Pelham (1828) is about a Byronic gentleman. He studies contemporary manners in the high society in his novels like Thackeray. *Ernest Maltravers* (1837), *The Caxtons* (1848–49), *My Novel* (1853) and *Kenelm Chillingly* (1873) explore deep social realism. Although he is most notably known for his romantic and historic fiction, he has contributed his best to the genre of realistic fiction.

Henry James (1843–1916) is considered one of the most celebrated writers of the twentieth century. He was a clever observer of the society and men and manners. He focused seriously on human thought and feelings. His novels are the picture of social contrasts and comparisons. He presents the study of people of many countries which were economically on the rise alike and juxtaposed them against each other in his work. His *Portrait of a Lady* (1880–81) is his masterpiece where the heroine makes a mistake by choosing an Italian husband owing to his formal refinement but the nature of the man is in reality different and disgusting. In his *The Wings of the Dove* (1902) and *The Ambassadors* (1903) again, James compares the 'unsophisticated vitality of America with the elegant decadence of Europe'. They present the picture of realism and human relationships. His technique of narration is known as 'point of view' which presents a character as a mirror who is 'the centre of consciousness reflecting upon the actions'. Strether in *The Ambassadors* and Isabel Archer in *Portrait of a Lady* are some examples. Arnold Bennett (1867–1931) portrays the daily life of society in *Anna of the Five Towns* (1902) and *The Old Wives Tale* (1908) as a master of realistic approach into fiction. He depicts the exact details of 'the nature of provincial life in the Potteries area of Staffordshire' where people, as in small places, make a big issue of even an inconsequential incident. He was often blamed for his materialistic outlook by Mrs. Woolf because his work focuses on the material realities of a certain social environment and the detailed happenings of the provincial life.

Novel of ideas (1811–1980)

In the novel of ideas, plot is subordinate to the philosophy of life. William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863) is an excellent observer of this mode of expression. He is considered the rival of Dickens. Thackeray is the second most popular novelist of the Victorian age. He belonged to a comfortable and rich family background. He finds the kind, good-humoured and respected what was pure and morally correct. He finds the society pretentious, deceptive and full of vanities, and pictured them in his novels. He dissects through the high society with realism and morality. Big lords and ladies are

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judged with cool observation by him and the reflection of their real life is mentioned in his fiction. He satirizes people who are morally impure and mercenary in their attitude and exposes their moral evil. Though he seemed to be influenced by Fielding and Swift but is devoid of their bitterness and coarseness of expression. His satire is mild and soft in tone. Both Dickens and Thackeray complete the picture of all the social classes of the Victorian England. *Vanity Fair* (1847–48) is considered his masterpiece which is a reading of the characters of his society. It depicts the famous journey of the Christian and Faithful to the Heavenly city. His *Vanity Fair* is the same that Bunyan used in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. In this fair there are many stalls which sell 'all sorts of vanities' and in our visit to different stalls, we come to know and meet different characters and items such as 'juggling, cheats, games, plays fools, apes, knaves, rogues, and that of every kind.' Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, unlike Bunyan's who made it a small stay in a long journey which we all have in order to grow or do better, is a longer stay where his characters spend a fair share of their lives.

The whole novel, without any specific hero, concentrates upon Amelia, a pure pious woman and Becky Sharp, 'a keen, unprincipled intriguer, who lets nothing stand in the way of her selfish desire to get the most out of the fools who largely constitute the society.' It is a powerful picture of social realism. *Pendennis* (1849–1850) is about a hero who is 'neither angel nor imp'. Here Thackeray presents a genuinely drawn young man of the society, taken exactly as he saw him—carrying a carelessness, humility and selfishness. He pursues life for his own interests. It is a profound moral study. *The Newcomes* (1855) and *The Virginians* (1859) are his other works in which the former is a sequel to *Pendennis* and the latter to *Henry Esmond*. *Henry Esmond* is his attempt at the historical novel. His novels describe human weaknesses and follies. He is a social critic with profound realism.

He declared: 'I have no brains above my eyes; I describe what I see'. He was a gentleman and found voice in mild satire which is objectively and formally perfect. His novels portray the beauty of virtue and the ugliness of vice. His chief weapon was irony and he used his novels to propagate ideas. But he wrote novels at his own leisure and its impact can be witnessed on the loose plot-structure that they have. His other famous work is *Book of Snobs*.

Aldous Huxley (1894–1963) was a modern satirist who propagated his message through his fiction. His *Crome Yellow* (1921), *Antic Hay* (1923), *Point Counter Point* (1928), *Brave New World* (1932), *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936), *Ape and Essence* (1948), *Island* (1962), etc are famous novels. In *Brave New World* he presented the picture of the future having test-tube babies called 'Soma Gas' and man overcome by his scientific inventions incapable to lead a natural life. He is intellectual and pedantic but rather disheartening to those who prize inventions as the way to growth. George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*, a very optimistic satire which reveals the effects of Communism. It is a lively picture of human life and is regarded as the best among his fiction.

Novel of nature (1840–1930)

The Victorian Age gave numerous profound and scholarly geniuses and trends of fiction writing to the English literature. One of those is the group of novelists who based their novels on nature and its guidance. The Victorian age was of questioning religion on the behalf of proliferating science. But amidst all these hubbubs of the city

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streets lay a few relatively prolific minds who chose to settle in the countryside and devote their power of expression to serve a specific purpose which contributed to the development of the area. They are often criticized for regionalism in literature. The novels of nature depict the portrayal of life around nature, in a country-setting, speaking of the naturally rustic but naïve folk. It also describes the lives of the cultivated people of the villages, their day to day life and manners and their society, their aims, desires, etc. In this genre of novel, the most prominent author who revived devotedly the lost territory of England called 'Wessex' was Thomas Hardy (1840–1928), setting his fourteen masterpieces in the same region. He was a classicist, realist, lover of perfect form and applied direct and simple approach to life in all his novels. He presented man as an atom in this large universe and claimed to have aimed at no 'harmonious philosophy.' Man and his relationship with the universe is the subject that he penetrates very deeply into. He studies minutely the scheme of things and his observation of human life magnifies the powerful role of destiny which is mostly sombre and brooding in behaviour and that which forms their actions and events. All his characters are in the peasant stalks and the gentry at the countryside 'Wessex' where he hailed from. His novels depict 'a general drama of pain' arriving from the simplest causes. The portrayal of tragedy for which he is compared with Shakespeare, evolves from simple reasons and permeates through the leaves of the trees of the surrounding and the dusty roads along which his characters move and breathe. In his novels, nature and universe have voice and character-like stability in their presence and they are not silent spectators like the background. Like his architectural monuments, his novels too were perfectly crafted bit by bit, portraying the eternal essence of humanism, simplicity and power of our inborn nature. His genius as a narrator lies in the fact that he explores the psychology of his characters very deeply without inserting himself anywhere in the prose and makes use of gentle humour and innocence. His artistic language bestows life into his art of narration which puts soul into even the inanimate objects of nature. He is a keen observer of human life and presents its insignificance in front of the gigantic nature around us which are so mysterious, so large, so full of magnitude and power of devastation. But Hardy is a compassionate observer of mankind and is full of human sympathy with a broad outlook towards life. His heroes go out to study and come back to educate the rustic folk in the village like Clym Yeobright of *The Return of the Native*. His novels are a mixture of comedy, tragedy and tragic-comedy. His notable comedies are—*Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), *Far from the Madding Crowd*, etc. His noteworthy tragedies are—*The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Woodlanders*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). Hardy's tragedies imitate Aristotle's principles of tragedy in his 'Poetics' in style. He is a classical and traditionalist writer. Nature is a strong force in his novels surpassing all human wishes and activities where men and women succumb to its greatness and become prey to its schemes at the end. In his tragedies, fate plays havoc in man's life, manipulates him and torments him to painful death. Everything goes out of man's power of handling, even his actions, and they are governed by relentless fate. His 'Tess', one of the greatest examples modern tragedy, is the story of an innocent's descent from an ancient and respected family to being wildly crushed and 'deflowered' by Alec, the villain and a socially powerful man. By the freak of fate, she falls into his hands at the end and kills herself in search for peace.

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reality'. The vision was influenced by the theories of Henry Bergson and Freud. Bergson changed the old concept of Time and Freud, of human consciousness. The new concept of Time was that of continuous flow while the conventional one was that of a series of separate incidents. This was the contribution of Bergson and William James's scientific analysis of human consciousness. They believed that a human mind is open – to the past, present and future alike. It is changing still 'continuous, multiple yet one'. According to the theories of Marcel Proust (1871–1922), human mind can be very flexible and is exposed to the present and the recapitulation of the past simultaneously. It is intuitive. So the old concept of chronological fall of events in order was laid aside now. The theories of Freud and Jung, the psychologists, explored that the objective science could describe a man better where human consciousness could carry not only his own but all the ancestral experiences, and stressed on its flexibility and multiplicity. This consciousness could travel back and stay in the present observing events at the same time. This theory affected the art of characterization in the modern novel where the conscious handled the nature of man. Its best examples can be cited in D.H. Lawrence's novels as observed by E.M Forster 'the greatest imaginative writers of the twentieth century.' Technically Lawrence did not go as deep into the exploration of the conscious as Mrs. Woolf or Joyce. His *Women in Love* is an expression of deep symbolism where the pattern is in harmony but *The White Peacock* displays the Jamesian 'point-of-view' technique where the main coherence is the consciousness of one of the characters. His *Sons and Lovers*, *The Trespasser* and *The Lost Girl* express the conventional flow of events and the conscious and symbolism. He dwelt on man's psychological demands and settled his descriptions there, especially the suppression of sexual urges due to the modern outlook and demands of life. His novels are free and frank expressions of human urge of the subconscious which a man suppresses in order to show control over his purpose of existence in a civilized society. But it is the consciousness with which he is created. His notable fiction works are *Aron's Rod* (1922), *Kangaroo* (1923), *The Rainbow* (1915), *The Plumed Serpent*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

More subtle explorer of the subconscious was Dorothy Richardson's (1873-1957) *Pilgrimage*, a series of twelve novels where the first one called *Pointed Roofs* (1915), was the one which initiated this technique. James Joyce (1882-1941) experimented with the stream of consciousness technique most vigorously. He was an experimentalist, unconventional, complex and precise in details, among the modernists. He was linked with the Aesthetic Movement of the nineties which apparently resulted in his *Dubliners* (1914) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* published in *The Egoist* (1916). His *Portrait* is a rebel literature against the conservative Irish life and Roman Catholicism but it reveals that both very strongly influence him. *A Portrait* depicts the early to youthful years of Stephen whose wish to pursue education clashes with the traditional background of his family and its present condition. The novel describes his family background, atmosphere and love life and sex at sixteen. It ends declaring him a rebel in all. The language and style of narration are highly stylistic and technical. Its prose has musical effect. *Ulysses* (1922) is a continuation of Stephen's life embodying motives of 'Art for Art's sake' where Stephen returns from Paris after his mother's death having completed his education and decides where to start his career. The theme of these novels explores the Greek story of

where to start his career. The theme of these novels is

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Telemachus. But Leopold Bloom having lost his son in infancy is the real hero here. Joyce was the inventor of the technique called 'epiphany.' He wove mythology and the present together, a method used by Eliot in his *The Wasteland* (1922). *Finnegan's Wake* (1939), written after 17 years of effort, is his last novel which depicts a Dublin Publican's life, his family and customers. It is through these that the author presents a complete picture of human life. The very title of the novel represents true Irish connotation of death, funeral and resurrection. It is a complex novel. Such books can be appreciated by the well-qualified, intellectual and learned class.

Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) was a very famous novelist who exploited the narrative technique stream of consciousness in each of her fiction works. Her novels represent the mind's experience. Her characters speak about their inner experiences. Mrs. Dalloway, the protagonist, recapitulates the time-scheme of one day in the life of an MP's wife. She is talking about a party that is to take place at night when an old friend whom she loved once has just arrived from India. The novel describes only what her conscious follows whether it is past or the present. The narrative looks incoherent and not so comprehensive though it is stylized particularly to display the stream of consciousness technique. In her latter novels, there is a message interwoven as in *To the Lighthouse*, a place on an island where the family of Mrs. Ramsay and a few close acquaintances arrive to celebrate holiday. This method of capturing the unconscious and conscious is quite improved here because it seems to relate itself to the plot in a harmonious manner. She has the gift of moral which Joyce lacked. His other prominent works are *Between the Acts*, *The Waves*, and *Orlando*. *The Waves* is called her most articulate exercise of all the artistic potentialities. Her novels show an experimentalist's way of expression with a new style and for this she is regarded amongst the most prominent and influential writers of the modern age.

3.3 CHARLES DICKENS: GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Charles Dickens was born to a clerk from the lower gentry of professional class. He received varied types of schooling—sometimes no schooling and at times home tutoring. He was sensitive about his humble origins as a member of middle-class society. The unhappy circumstances of his own childhood, which included his father's imprisonment for debt and his own much-hated job at the blacking factory as a young boy, were sore points with him. Nevertheless, he was humane and had a sentimentally humanitarian attitude towards common problems of people.

He began his career as a reporter in the ecclesiastical law court of 'Doctors Commons'. Later, he was member of *True Sun* and *Morning Chronicle*. Beginning as a little more than a comic journalist, he soon discovered his special gift for telling a story and decided to be a novelist. At twenty-five, he found himself to be the most popular English novelist. He began as a follower of the tradition of Smollett whom, as a child, he had read with great enthusiasm and who, despite immeasurable differences between them in spirit and tone, may be regarded as his master.

Dickens began with great sense of life and little sense of form. 'Sketches by Boz', written in 1836 is lively journalism merely but with *Pickwick Papers* (issued in

monthly parts) in 1836–37 we can see the growth in his writing. He began his career in the picaresque tradition. *Pickwick* began as burlesque but soon emerged as picaresque comedy. Each of the characters develops his moral, physical and emotional quality and the interest is kept up by showing how these qualities reveal themselves in new and unexpected situations.



Fig. 3.1 Charles Dickens

Dickens was the most instinctive of the great English novelists and sentimentality was often his only way of handling difficult moral problems as in *Nicholas Nickleby*. *Oliver Twist* is the first of Dickens' novels, which concentrates on specific social ills, but the force of the indictment falls most heavily on the individuals who administer the attacked institutions rather than on the institution. It was with *Martin Chuzzlewit* that Dickens first showed his real stature as a novelist. Here, he takes central moral situation as a focal point which links him to other Victorian novelists—Thackeray on the one hand and George Eliot on the other. *Dombey and Son* (1846–48) joins richness of character and incident to unity of moral purpose with new maturity. In *David Copperfield*, (1849–50) autobiography has been subdued into art with remarkable skill. *Bleak House* also shows the same kind of strengths.

In *Hard Times* (1854), Dickens dealt with the morality of the utilitarian industrialist and its effects on the possibilities of human happiness. In this novel, there is juxtaposition of apparent and real knowledge, of mechanical and imaginative and the moments of supreme irony. In *Little Dorrit*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens achieves that careless maturity that Shakespeare achieved in his last plays. Dickens spent the last years of his life reading his own works.

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Style

Regarded as 'the first great English novelist of the city,' Charles Dickens is an urban novelist. Not only are his themes predominantly city-oriented but more significantly he writes 'in an urban kind of way'. As Terry Eagleton points out, Dickens' 'prose style is alive with the swarming energies of his surroundings, full of hyperbole, extravagant gestures, unpredictable connections, rapid thumbnail sketches, melodramatic exclamations, abrupt shifts of tone and theatrical display...' His style is florid and vivacious and he is prone to give in to frequent flights of fantasy.

The most endearing quality of his work is the humour that informs all his works. He is a pure humorist, wielding a language which abounds in comic exuberance and invention. Dickensian characters are the most memorable in English literature. Often they are whimsical and idiosyncratic with their names often hinting at their most abiding trait, for instance in *David Copperfield* we have Mr. Murdstone which is a play at the words murder and stony suggesting that cruelty is what defines this character. Dickens often drew his characters on the basis of the real people he knew, for instance Harold Skimpole in *Bleak House* is based on Leigh Hunt, and *David Copperfield* is partially autobiographical. As Virginia Woolf observes that 'we remodel our psychological geography when we read Dickens' as he produces characters who exist not in detail, not accurately or exactly, but abundantly in a cluster of wild yet extraordinarily revealing remarks. George Santayana regards Dickens as a great mimic representing people as they really are. His characters are odd, incomprehensible, sometimes absurdly comic, terrifying. Scarcely ever they are ordinary.

Characters emerge from the narrative only to disappear again. Commenting on Dickens' art of characterization, Raymond Williams comments that 'Dickens perceives men and women— vividly but externally, caught in a single posture or defined by one or two idiosyncratic features...these figures are at once animated and enigmatic, expressive but hard to decipher.'

As Eagleton further comments, Dickens 'defines his characters by their noses, waistcoats, boots, knees, fob watches, tricks of speech or peculiar gait. When the characters of Fielding or Austen speak, they sound roughly similar, given some differences of class, gender and the like. Almost everyone in Dickens, by contrast, has his or her inimitable quick-fire delivery, churlish mumble, wheedling whine, verbose ramblings, pious cant or portentous rhetoric.'

Characters sometimes wear their souls on their sleeves, and sometimes demand as much laborious deciphering as an ancient manuscript. They are either flamboyantly self-dramatizing or disturbingly clandestine. People either improvise themselves on the spot, or persist mysteriously in their secret being like pieces of furniture.

His comic characters fall into two groups. When he accepts them without any intervention of moral scruples, rejoices in them for their own sake, the result is pure humour: Pickwick, the Wellers, Micawber, Boffin or, greatest of them all, Mrs. Gamp. When sympathy is withheld or he feels a strong moral disgust or contempt, the result is a character not so much of humour as of savage comedy. These characters are most evident when he is attacking social injustice, or flaws in the social code. Bumble, Heep and Gradgrind are typical examples of savage comedy.

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Critics have criticized Dickensian humour for lacking in subtlety, but while it lacks in subtleness, it is compensated by its depth and humaneness. Although his novels deal with some social malady they are remarkable for not being dark and dismal. The mood is buoyant and full of effervescent energy instead. Another very significant aspect of his work is that he is 'the first English novelist, indeed one of the first English writers of any kind, to place children at the centre of his fiction.'

In fact until the nineteenth century children were scarcely recognized as beings deserving attention. Surprisingly no novel in the eighteenth century gives even sparse attention to children. It is Dickens who brings children as victims of social oppression to the forefront, for instance *Oliver Twist* and *Paul Dombey*, *David Copperfield* and *Amy Dorrit*. Dicken's fiction is thronged with prematurely aged children and childish adults. 'The Artful Dodger, Smike, Little Nell, Paul Dombey, Little Dorrit and Jenny Wren are examples of the former, while Mr. Pickwick, the Cheeryble brothers, Mr. Dick, Mr. Micawber, Dora Copperfield, Harold Skimpole...' are instances of the latter.'

Reputation

According to F.R. Leavis, Dickens was a great genius and he places him among the immortal classics. Leavis sees in Dickens the qualities of a great entertainer. 'He is 'a great poet'; 'in range and ease [of command of word, phrase, rhythm, and image] there is surely no greater master of English except Shakespeare.'

Dickens has often been railed against for his art of characterization. Instead of complex characters which are rich in suggestiveness and 'round' to use E.M. Forster's terminology, Dickens characters are 'flat', easily described by an adjective. They are either hypocritical grotesque characters like Uriah Heep in *David Copperfield*, perverts, or amiable idiots. Yet this does not imply that they are defectively drawn. His novels are very rich on account of the multiplicity of characters, as Edward Albert points out, 'He creates for us a whole world of people.'

F.R. Leavis, while assessing the literary merit of Dickens dismissed him as a mere entertainer, but eventually revised it saying that he ranked as a serious novelist. 'What he failed to note was a third possibility: that Dickens is both a serious novelist and a great entertainer.'

To conclude in the words of Terry Eagleton, 'Dickens has none of the intellectual resources of George Eliot, and little of the psychological subtlety of Henry James... He was rather, a writer of prodigious imaginative power and superb rhetorical mastery, who unlike Eliot or James remains in touch with caricature, lampoon, melodrama, sentimental ballad, oral legend, popular theatre and everyday culture. No other classic English novelist has been so wildly popular, and hardly has been so uproariously funny. Dickens takes the popular arts of farce, caricature, sentiment and polemic and harnesses them to complex aesthetic ends. The vivid flatness of his figures may reflect the art of the streets; but... it also says a great deal about the streets, raising grotesque and broad brush portraiture to a new kind of artistic perception.'

Tolstoy regarded Dickens as the best of all English novelists, and considered *David Copperfield* to be his finest work. James Joyce has paid it reverence through parody in *Ulysses*, whereas Virginia Woolf who held a poor opinion of Dickens' works, confesses to the merit of *David Copperfield*.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Charles Dickens has appeared on the British £10 note.



Great Expectations: Summary

The story begins at the cemetery with Pip, a little boy orphaned at an early age, who is visiting the graves of his deceased parents and little brother. He gets a jolt when a man springs up from behind a tombstone and grabs him. The man is an escaped convict. He orders Pip to bring him some food and a file for the iron chains that bind his legs. Pip gets the required things from his sister's house. Pip has been living with his sister and her husband who have brought him up after the death of their parents. The convict, who manages to escape, gets caught again but does not give Pip away and takes responsibility for the things stolen from Pip's sister's house.

Pip's Uncle Pumblechook takes him one day to play at Satis House. This is the home of Miss Havisham, a wealthy dowager. Miss Havisham is quite eccentric. Her old wedding dress always adorns her wherever she goes and all the clocks in her house are stopped and showing the same time. During his visits to Miss Havisham's house, Pip meets Estella, a beautiful young girl. Pip falls in love with this girl even though she looks down upon him and treats him with disdain. Pip wants to find favour with her and impress her and harbours great dreams of becoming a wealthy gentleman so that she may notice him. He is even under the notion that Miss Havisham might make a gentleman of him and give Estella's hand in marriage to him.

His hopes are however short-lived as after regular visits to Satis House for months, Miss Havisham aids him in finding a job as a common labourer in his family business. Under Miss Havisham's supervision, Pip apprentices with his brother in law, Joe. Joe is the village blacksmith. Pip is not happy working in the forge but has no choice. Side by side he strives to further his education. Biddy, his plain, kind friend assists him in his endeavour. Orlick is Joe's malicious day labourer who always looks for ways to pick on Pip. One night, Orlick picks a fight with Pip, and in retaliation he attacks Mrs. Joe, Pip's older sister with whom Pip resides. The vicious attack leaves Mrs. Joe a mute invalid. She signals to Pip and Biddy that it was Orlick who had attacked her.

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One day Pip receives stunning news through a lawyer called Jagger. A secret benefactor has left him a large fortune. Pip is instructed to proceed to London immediately to pursue his education as a gentleman. Pip assumes that it is Miss Havisham who is the benefactor and that she plans for him to marry Estella.

Pip has a good time in London. His new friends are Herbert Pocket and Jagger's law clerk, Wemmick. Pip now looks down upon his past acquaintances and friends including Joe. For Estella, his feelings are as strong as ever and he continues to miss her and long for her. In London, Pip's tutor is Mathew Pocket, father of his friend Herbert. Herbert is instrumental in training Pip on how to behave like a gentleman. Pip decides that when he turns 21 and begins to receive an income from his fortune, he will secretly help Herbert set up the business he desires. Meanwhile, Pip and Herbert lead a wild life in London. They have the time of their lives and in the process run into debts. Orlick shows up in Pip's life once more. This time he is employed as Miss Havisham's porter. When Pip discloses Orlick's nasty past, he is immediately fired by Jagger. Mrs. Joe dies and Pip goes home for the funeral. His heart is filled with anguish and guilt.

Several years pass by. One night someone familiar rushes into Pip's room, unannounced. Pip is in for another great shock of his life. It is the convict, Magwitch, who discloses some disturbing news. In one of Dickens famous plot twist it turns out that he was the person responsible for Pip's fortune and not Miss Havisham. Pip's gesture as a small child had so moved him that he decided to repay that act of kindness by helping Pip become a gentleman and lead a life of dignity and refinement. He had made a fortune in Australia for this very purpose. Pip is troubled by this news. It now becomes his moral duty to help Magwitch flee London. Magwitch is wanted by both the police and Compeyson, his former partner in crime. Magwitch left all his money to Pip in gratitude for that kindness and also because in Pip he saw his own child, who he thinks, was killed by her mother over two decades earlier. Pip feels humiliated when the truth about his benefactor is revealed. He is ashamed of Magwitch's criminal past. He is also deeply saddened when he realizes that Miss Havisham merely allowed him to believe she was the source of his expectations and never intended for Pip to marry Estella.

However, Magwitch now expects to live in England with Pip for the rest of his life. Pip, very reluctantly, lets Magwitch stay with him. Pip is unhappy in his new found knowledge and the risk and uncertainty it brings. To avoid Magwitch and his expectations, Pip at one time contemplated running off and joining the military. The police are on the lookout for Magwitch in England and he will be hanged if he is caught in the country.

Pip becomes wary of being watched. He also cannot reveal Magwitch's identity therefore he tells his landlord and all other close acquaintances (save for Herbert) that Magwitch is an uncle named Provis. Over time, it becomes difficult for Magwitch to continue staying in England as chances of his arrest increase each day. Herbert and Pip draw up a plan for Magwitch to escape the country by boat. In the course of these events, Pip learns that Estella is the daughter of Mr. Jaggers' housemaid, Molly, whom he defended in a murder charge and who gave up her daughter to be adopted by another of his clients, Miss Havisham, in return for his service in allowing her to

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be acquitted of the charge. Later, Pip understands that Estella is Magwitch's daughter. When Pip confronts him with this fact, Mr. Jaggers does not clearly confess to anything, however gives Pip a hypothetical situation in which these events transpired. He also hints that Molly, Estella's mother was a jealous and wild woman and that in order to keep her waywardness in check he beat her regularly and severely. This is proved later through Molly and Mr. Jaggers' interactions. Molly is terrified of her master.

A short time prior to Magwitch and Pip's escape, Pip receives an unsigned note at his home telling him to appear at the marshes near his old home that night at 9pm. At first Pip is scared but the mention of a threat to his Uncle Provis alarms him. Pip does not want any harm to come to his benefactor so leaves for the village by carriage immediately. When Pip reaches there, he is accosted and struck on the head by a blunt object, leaving him unconscious for a period of time. When he gains consciousness, he finds himself bound in a small shack far away from any other residences. It turns out that both the author of the anonymous note and his attacker is Orlick, who admits that he was in fact the one who attacked Mrs. Joe. Orlick confesses that he intends to kill Pip as he was always jealous of young Pip when he worked with Joe. Also, he harbours resentment against Pip for intercepting his advances on Biddy.

Though Pip is terrified and sure that he is going to die, he refuses to cry out or beg for mercy. Fortunately for Pip, he is rescued just in the nick of time by Herbert, a village shop boy and their old friend Startop. Herbert reveals that he came upon the anonymous note which Pip had accidentally left at home and thus was able to track him. Unfortunately, Orlick manages to escape. Herbert and Pip decide not to inform the police as they are already at risk due to Magwitch.

Meanwhile, out of spite for Miss Havisham, Estella has married Bentley Drummle, a conceited rival of Pip's whom he dislikes thoroughly. Mr. Jaggers is apprehensive about the relationship and believes that Drummle will beat Estella into submission to prove his superiority in the marriage. Pip is furious and miserable although he finds it difficult to believe that Drummle would do such a thing.

Before Pip flees with Magwitch, he makes one final visit to Miss Havisham. Miss Havisham realizes that she created a monster out of Estella by encouraging her vanity and her coldness towards others but especially Pip. Miss Havisham claims that she adopted Estella for the sole purpose of saving someone else from the heartbreak and misfortune she herself suffered as a young woman. She instead taught Estella to be cruel, proud and vain. When she was young, Miss Havisham was convinced into buying her half brother out of his share of the brewery at Satis House by a young man who claimed to love her. The young man proposed to Miss Havisham and arrangements were made for their wedding. However, in a cruel twist of fate, on her wedding day, shortly before the ceremony, the young man never showed up—she had been jilted. This incident left Miss Havisham heartbroken after which she shut herself in her darkened house where she sits in her bridal gown amongst the rotting wedding cake for several years. Miss Havisham vowed never to be heartbroken again and used Estella as a tool with which to exact her revenge on all men by encouraging her vanity and her meanness and her constant misleading of men. Miss Havisham eventually realizes that what she did was very wrong and had caused great harm. Estella has grown to become a vain girl with a tarnished image and Pip, who loves her, nurses a

broken heart. Miss Havisham is sorry for her misdeeds and asks for forgiveness. Miss Havisham is held responsible for Estella's unhappy marriage resulting from her cold, calculating and unloving nature. She is confronted by Pip with the stark truth. After the confrontation, Pip comes back into the house once more to discover Miss Havisham standing too close to the fire. Her dress catches fire and in an effort to save her, he removes his overcoat and throws it around her. The fire is put off; however, he and Miss Havisham are both badly injured, Miss Havisham infinitely more so as she eventually succumbs to her injuries.

Pip, Herbert and another friend, Startop, make a courageous attempt to help Magwitch escape, but instead he is caught and sent to jail. Pip starts caring for Magwitch by now and sees in him a good and noble man and is ashamed that he had formerly looked down on Magwitch as his inferior. Pip tries to have Magwitch freed but Magwitch dies shortly before his execution. Pip's 'Great Expectations' are thwarted when, under English law, Magwitch's wealth forfeits to the Crown.

Things do not go too smoothly for Pip. He is sick for a long time during which he is nearly arrested for his numerous unpaid debts to several creditors; however, due to his condition, which includes fever, he is not arrested at that time. Joe looks after him and he eventually returns to good health. Joe leaves early one morning leaving Pip with only a note of good wishes, believing that as Pip had not visited him in years since, he would not visit him then and that he likely would never see Pip again. Pip is greatly saddened by this turn of events and realizes how thankless and ungrateful he had been over the years. His guilt is intensified by the discovery that he was not arrested for debt not to allow him time to recover, but because Joe had paid all of his debts in full. Pip returns home to ask Biddy and Joe for forgiveness and to thank Joe for his unconditional kindness and unfailing love for which Pip felt undeserving.

Arriving at the village, he finds that Biddy and Joe are going to get married that day. He congratulates the couple and tells them that he is only on a brief visit for he intended to pay Joe back every penny of the money he paid the creditors. Later, Pip goes into business abroad with Herbert. After eleven years spent abroad with a fair amount of success, Pip goes back to visit Joe and the rest of his family out in the marshes. Pip meets Estella in the streets. Drummle, her abusive husband has died. Estella and Pip exchange brief pleasantries and Pip states that while he could not have her in the end, he was at least glad to know she was a different person now, changed from the coldhearted girl Miss Havisham had reared her to be. The novel ends with Pip saying he could see that 'suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham's teachings and had given her a heart to understand what my heart used to be.' They meet again at the ruins of Satis House and sit and talk for a while. As they get up and go together hand in hand, Pip knows that now they will never part.

Great Expectations: Themes

Ambition and Self Improvement

The novel, *Great Expectations* has an underlying moral theme. It propounds the view that affection, loyalty and conscience are more important than social advancement, wealth and loss. The story shows Pip caught in this web, exploring the ideas of ambition and self-improvement. This is the central theme of the novel and the nexus around

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which the plot revolves. The psychological drive that is the moving force behind Pip's character is explored in this story. Pip is seen an idealist at heart; one who strives to achieve a level of perfection. Whenever he sees that something that is attainable is within his reach, he tries his best to attain that improvement. Seeing Satis House inspires in him a desire to be a gentleman. His own moral shortcomings lead to a longing to be good. Being uneducated sparks in him a desire to learn to read and write. Pip has 'Great Expectations' about his future and this becomes the basis of his wanting to improve and advance in life.

Ambition and self-improvement take three forms in *Great Expectations*—moral, social and educational; these motivate Pip's best and his worst behavior throughout the novel. Firstly Pip wishes for moral improvement. His feeling of guilt motivates him to act better in the future. While leaving for London, he feels a terrible feeling of guilt as he had behaved badly toward Joe and Biddy. Pip wishes to rise to a certain level in society. He wants to become worthy of Estella and for this he has to become a gentleman if he ever hopes to catch her attention. He is encouraged in this venture by Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook. Pip's attempt to work out his fantasy becomes the basic plot of this novel. The social set up is gently mocked by Dickens. The irony is that Pip's life as a gentleman is in no way better than one as a blacksmith's apprentice.

Thirdly, Pip wants to be an educated person. This longing is closely connected with his longing to gain entry into the upper rungs of society and to become worthy of Estella. To be a gentleman, it is imperative that he be educated. As long as he is considered a country bumpkin he has no hopes of furthering his social status. This fact is quite clear to Pip even as a little boy when he read at Mr. Wopsle's aunt's school and later when he took lessons from Mathew Pocket. In the end, however, valued according to his education or his social status. Conscience and affection are to be valued above scholarly knowledge and social standing.

Social Class

Dickens' *Great Expectations* is a study of class systems in Victorian England. It touches both ends of the social scale as well as the middle classes. On the one end we have the most wretched criminal, Magwitch, following the poor peasants of the marsh country—Joe and Biddy. The middle class is represented by Pumblechook and the very rich, the upper end of the social scale, has people like Miss Havisham. The theme of social class is central to the novel's plot and to the ultimate moral theme of the book—Pip's realization that wealth and class are less important than affection, loyalty, and inner worth. Pip achieves this realization when he is finally able to understand that, despite the esteem in which he holds Estella, one's social status is in no way connected to one's real character. Drummle, for instance, is an upper-class hooligan, while Magwitch, a persecuted convict, a man with a golden heart, has a deep inner worth.

One important fact worth noting is that though upper class has been represented in this novel, it does not talk about nobility or the hereditary aristocracy; it talks about those people who have gathered fortune through commerce in the era that coincides with post-Industrial Revolution in Victorian England. Miss Havisham's family fortunes

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came from the brewery that is still connected to her mansion. Thus social class, ambition and self-advancement are interconnected and through them Dickens finely reinforces the novel's overreaching theme of aspiration and self-improvement.

Crime, Guilt and Innocence

Another theme that has been looked into in depth in this novel is crime, guilt and innocence. This has been largely studied through the characters of the convicts and the criminal lawyer, Jaggers. The book points out, a number of times, to images relating to this theme, like the handcuffs which Joe mends at the smithy to gallows at the London prison. These images are important in conveying Pip's struggle to come to terms with his own inner conscience within the institutional system. Just as Pip had to overcome social barriers which class consciousness had imposed and had to look ahead in a bid to improve his way of living, the outward façade of the criminal justice system (police, courts, jail, etc.) became a phony standard of morality that Pip had to ignore in order to believe in his own inner conscious. For example, Pip is at first frightened by Magwitch as he is a convict; he is guilty of helping him and is scared of the police. Later, however, Pip is able to recognize Magwitch for who he really is, a noble human being with a large heart. Pip can now push aside the knowledge that Magwitch's status in society is that of a criminal and he is wanted by the police. Pip is now able to appreciate Magwitch's character and feels no qualms about helping him. Putting his trust in his conscience, Pip has replaced an external standard of value with an internal one.

Great Expectations: Major Characters

Pip

Great Expectations is the story of the life of a single character, Philip Pirrip, who is known as Pip. As a *bildungsroman*, it explores growth and the development of his character and personality. The focus throughout the novel is on Pip who is both the protagonist as well as the narrator. His actions make up the plot of the story. He is the most important character in the story. The reader gets to know the story through his thoughts and attitudes. To comprehend *Great Expectations*, it is important to study the character of Pip.

The story has been narrated many years after the events in the story occurred—so we may actually consider the presence of two Pips—the narrator and the character—the voice telling the story and the person acting it out. The two Pips have been carefully delineated by Dickens; Pip the narrator voices his opinions with maturity while Pip the character conveys his feelings about what is happening to him as it actually happens. This difference is skillfully implemented in the beginning of the book when Pip the character is a child; here, Pip the narrator gently pokes fun at his younger self, but also enables us to see and feel the story through his eyes.

Pip's character has two important traits; his immature, romantic idealism and his intrinsically good conscience. Pip has a deep yearning to improve himself and gain educational advancement in life. He also wishes to improve morally and rise socially. His idealistic desires make him crave for Estella as he knows that by marrying

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her he will be able to climb the ladder of society. The same ideals also apply to his wish to educate himself and his fear of punishment for bad behaviour. Once he understands ideas like poverty, ignorance, and immorality, Pip does not want to be poor, ignorant, or immoral.

Pip, the narrator, is a stern judge when it comes to judging his own past. He rarely acknowledges his good deeds but severely criticizes himself for bad ones. As a character, however, Pip's idealism often leads him to see the world rather narrowly, and his tendency to oversimplify situations based on surface values leads him to behave badly toward the people who care about him. After acquiring an education and becoming a gentleman, he starts behaving as he supposes a gentleman should and this leads to his superior and cold attitude towards Joe and Biddy.

In reality, Pip is a very generous and sympathetic young man. Throughout the book we come across several acts of his kindness like helping Magwitch, secretly buying Herbert's way into business, etc. and his fundamental love for all those who love him. We can infer from this novel that all along Pip, in the process of development, learnt to place his innate sense of kindness and conscience above his immature idealism. Meeting Miss Havisham and Estella had a profound effect on Pip and this created in him the need for social advancement. It is this desire that, to a great extent, takes precedence over his basic goodness. Pip's idealistic wishes are ratified, when after receiving his mysterious fortune, he indulges in a gentlemanly life of idleness. His ideal world collapses when he learns that it is Magwitch, the hated criminal, and not Miss Havisham who is his secret benefactor. In course of time, Pip comes to admire Magwitch and value him as a person and appreciate all his qualities. He does not mind losing Estella to the harsh nobleman Drummle.

He comes face to face with the reality that one's social standing is not the most important thing in life. He feels sorry for the fact that in his behaviour as a gentleman, he has knowingly or unknowingly hurt those people who care deeply about him. Once he has learned these lessons, Pip matures into the man who narrates the novel, completing the *bildungsroman*.

Estella

Estella has often been quoted as Dickens's first credible female character. She is a study in contrasts as we learn towards the end of the novel. She undermines all that romantic love stands for. She is bogged down in a certain class system that she represents in a negative way. Estella has been raised by Miss Havisham since the age of three. As she was no more than a babe, it was easy for Miss Havisham to mould her as she pleased. This was done with perfection and Estella grew into a cold hearted woman, raised to torture men and 'break their hearts'. Even though Estella practices deliberate cruelty, she wins Pip's love and affection.

Unlike the warm, loving and charming woman of traditional love, Estella is cold, contemptuous and conniving. She is the first representation of the ideal life among the upper class that Pip craves so much. Ironically, it turns out that she is actually more low born than Pip, it being discovered that she is the daughter of Magwitch, the coarse convict whom Pip had helped when he was just a little child.

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Paradoxically, Estella's life among the upper class does not spell deliverance for her. On the contrary, she is victimized twice by the society she has been raised in. Being raised by Miss Havisham is her undoing. Her ability to express emotion and interact normally with the world is destroyed. She would have been better off being raised by the noble Magwitch, who though of low class, had lofty ideals. And rather than marrying the kindhearted commoner Pip, Estella marries the cruel nobleman Drummle, who treats her harshly and makes her life miserable for many years. In this way, Dickens uses Estella's life to reinforce the idea that one's happiness and well-being are not deeply connected to one's social position: had Estella been poor, she might have been substantially better off. In spite of her distant attitude and the detrimental effect on her life, Estella is still a sympathetic character. She struggles with her inner self and attempts to discover and act on her own feelings rather than on the imposed motives of her upbringing. In this way, the reader gets a glimpse of her inner life which gives us some hint of what Pip must have liked about her. It seems to be beyond Estella's control not to hurt Pip. Even though she does so, she repeatedly tells him to let go of her because he would get hurt as she had 'no heart'. She urges him to leave her and find happiness elsewhere.

Finally, Estella's long, painful marriage to Drummle causes her to develop along the same lines as Pip—that is, she learns, through experience, to rely on and trust her inner voice. In the final scene of the novel, she has become her own woman for the first time in the book. As she says to Pip, 'Suffering has been stronger than all other teaching. . . . I have been bent and broken, but—I hope—into a better shape.'

Miss Havisham

Miss Havisham's character is truly a memorable one. She is not exactly a character that could actually exist outside a novel. As a wealthy dowager living in a rotting mansion, she cuts a pathetic figure with her eccentric ways. Her heart burns with revenge and revenge is the focus of her life. Her life is defined by one tragic event; her being jilted by Compeyson on what was to be their wedding day. Miss Havisham continues to wear her old wedding dress every day of her life.

The clocks in her house have been stopped at twenty minutes to nine as that was the time she discovered that her soon to be husband had fled. She wears only one shoe, because when she learnt of his betrayal, she had not yet put on the other shoe. Miss Havisham does not want her life to move beyond her heartbreak. She exacts her revenge on men in general as a compensation for the heartbreak she suffered and for this she very cruelly uses Estella.

Estella has been raised by her since the age of three and it was very easy for the embittered Miss Havisham to instill into her young subject, a hatred for men. She teaches Estella to be cold and calculating and to play havoc with the emotions of men. She makes Estella believe men are toys to be played around with and then thrown aside, just the way she was jilted by her fiancé. Obsessed with the desire for revenge, she works single mindedly towards fulfilling her goal. Both Miss Havisham and people around her suffer greatly due to her intense hatred and vengeance but she is oblivious to the harm she is wreaking. At the end of the novel her sins are atoned for when she realizes she has broken Pip's heart in much the same way as hers had been. She is

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remorseful about her behaviour and acknowledges the worthlessness of her attitude which caused Pip so much misery. She begs Pip for forgiveness, emphasizing the novel's theme that bad behavior can be redeemed by contrition and sympathy.

One way to see Pip's development, and the development of many of the other characters in *Great Expectations*, is as an attempt to learn to value other human beings: Pip must learn to value Joe and Magwitch, Estella must learn to value Pip, and so on. Throughout the novel, social class provides an arbitrary, external standard of value by which the characters (particularly Pip) judge one another. Because social class is rigid and preexisting, it is an attractive standard for every character who lacks a clear conscience with which to make judgments—Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook, for instance. And because high social class is associated with romantic qualities such as luxury and education, it is an immediately attractive standard of value for Pip. After he is elevated to the status of gentleman, though, Pip begins to see social class for what it is: an unjust, capricious standard that is largely incompatible with his own morals. There is simply no reason why Bentley Drummle should be valued above Joe, and Pip senses the truth of it. The most important lesson Pip learns in the novel—and perhaps the most important theme in *Great Expectations*—is that no external standard of value can replace the judgments of one's own conscience. Characters such as Joe and Biddy know this instinctively; for Pip, it is a long, hard lesson, the learning of which makes up much of the book.

At the beginning of the novel, Pip's feelings of conscience are determined largely by his fear of what others might think, a state of mind no doubt reinforced by Mrs. Joe's 'Tickler.' He has strong feelings of guilt but an inadequate system by which to judge right from wrong; unable to determine the value of his own actions, he feels guilty even when he does the right thing. He acts with compassion and sympathy when he helps the convict, but he nevertheless feels deeply guilty and imagines that the police are waiting to take him away. As the novel progresses, Pip comes closer to trusting his own feelings; when he helps Magwitch at the end of the novel, he feels no guilt, only love, and he remains with the convict even after the police arrive to take him away. Throughout the novel, symbols of justice, such as prisons and police, serve as reminders of the questions of conscience that plague Pip: just as social class provides an external standard of value irrespective of a person's inner worth, the law provides an external standard of moral behavior irrespective of a person's inner feelings. Pip's wholehearted commitment to helping Magwitch escape the law in the last section of the novel contrasts powerfully with his childhood fear of police and shows that, though he continues to be very hard on his own shortcomings, Pip has moved closer to a reliance on his own inner conscience—which is the only way, as Joe and Biddy show, that a character can truly be 'innocent.'

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What causes Pip's ideal world to collapse?
2. Why is Estella's social status lower than Pip's?
3. Miss Havisham's life is defined by a single tragic event. What is that event?

3.4 THOMAS HARDY: THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

Except for the period in London during young manhood, Thomas Hardy lived his whole life near Dorchester, close to where he was born in 1840 and died in 1928. His personal experience was bound up with people and customs, the monuments and the institutions of Dorset and contiguous counties of southwestern England, which he placed permanently on the literary map by the ancient name, Wessex. As a writer, Hardy was a living paradox. A natural poet, much of his poetry is nevertheless in prose. He had the poet's largeness, minuteness and intensity of vision—a threefold faculty displayed throughout his novel. The irony in Thomas Hardy's novels is not directed at human egotism but at the very conditions of human existence. He saw his characters as elemental figures whose passions were doomed to run the course that human conditions had set for them.

Hardy was neither a philosophical novelist nor a subtle psychologist. His view of man is neither wholly consistent nor in any degree profound. His prose has an air of being self-taught—it is often clumsy, sometimes pretentious and generally rough hewn and unequal. Hardy's vision of life was genuine and he wrestled it alone. The underlying rhythm of his novel is sound and what Henry James called the 'sense of felt life' is movingly present.

'Critics can never be made to understand that the failure may be greater than the success... To have the strength to roll a stone weighing a hundredweight to the top of a mountain is a success, and to have the strength to roll a stone of then hundredweight only halfway up that mount is a failure. But the latter is two or three times as strong a deed.' (Hardy in his diary, 1907)



Fig. 3.2 Thomas Hardy

Hardy was born to a master mason and building contractor in the village of Higher Bockhampton, on the edge of Puddletown Heath. His mother, who had literary tastes and read Latin poets and French romances, had a huge impact on him. Early training as an architect gave him intimate knowledge of local churches utilized to advantage

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in his writings. He married Emma Lavinia Gifford in 1874. At the age of 22, Hardy moved to London and started to write poems which idealized the rural life. Emma Lavinia Gifford encouraged him and he started to consider literature as his 'true vocation.'

Under the Greenwood Tree, written in 1872, is an idyllic tale of rustic life. *Far From the Madding Crowd*, 1874, use a wider canvas and takes a closer look at the nature and consequences of human emotions. Misfortune, coincidences and the intrusion into the pastoral life makes this love story tangled and violent. *The Return of the Native* 1878, is a more ambitious work. Egdon Heath, sunk in his tree, representing both the indifferent world of nature and the stage on which human drama have been enacted from time immemorial sets the tone for this somber story of trapped human passion. Fulfillment for one is frustration for the other. Maternal love and pride is a mysterious and paradoxical combination of selfishness and self sacrifice.

Characters are active or passive according to their natures but actions never have their expected consequences and the interweaving of passions produces strange patterns. The march of the events, though continually instigated and affected by human will, is in the long run at the mercy of impersonal logic of fact and coincidence. The dark violence of Eustacia Vye, the idealistic intelligence of Clym Yeobright, the will and affections of Mrs. Yeobright, the weakness of Will Deve, produced in their mutual interactions a tragic pattern in which seen against the background of death, seems to reduce all life in doom that is never final. Tragedies occur, hopes are crushed, expectations are cruelly disappointed, self-knowledge comes through sad or bitter experience but life has been before and will go on. The novel has a combination of earthiness and visionary truth.

In the novel the *Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), nature, civilization and human character work on each other continually. The novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* outraged the religious conscience of 1891 and his novel *Jude the Obscure* is fatally injured by his ruthlessness. In 1896, disturbed by the public uproar over the unconventional subjects of two of his greatest novels, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy announced that he would never write fiction again. In April, 1912, Hardy wrote: 'Then somebody discovered that Jude was a moral work— austere in its treatment of a difficult subject—as if the writer had not all the time said in the Preface that it was meant to be so. Thereupon many uncursed me, and the matter ended, the only effect of it on human conduct that I could discover being its effect on myself—the experience completely curing me of the further interest in novel-writing.'

During the remainder of his life, Hardy continued to publish several collections of poems. 'Hardy, in fact, was the ideal poet of a generation. He was the most passionate and the most learned of them all. He had the luck, singular in poets, of being able to achieve a competence other than by poetry and then devote the ending years of his life to his beloved verses.' (Ford Maddox Ford in *The March of Literature*, 1938) Also, their marriage did not result in any offspring. Hardy and Emma stuck to each other even though theirs was not a very happy union. Hardy had affairs with other women passing briefly through his life. Emma died in 1912 and a couple of years later he married Florence Emily Dugdale, his secretary, who was a woman in her 30s and approximately 30 years younger than him.

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ACTIVITY

Identify the novel of Thomas Hardy which gained him the most popularity and why. Write a synopsis of that novel.

The Return of the Native: Summary

At the beginning of the novel, Thomasin Yeobright is being taken over the heath by the reddleman Diggory Venn in the back of his wagon. She was to marry Damon Wildeve but this marriage is delayed due to an error in the marriage certificate. On hearing this news, Thomasin had collapsed. She then asked the reddleman to take her home. The reader soon learns that Wildeve had devised this error himself. Damon Wildeve is in love with Eustacia Vye, and he hopes to ignite her jealousy by using Thomasin. Venn comes to know of the romance between Eustacia and Damon and intervenes on behalf of Thomasin who he is in love with. Throughout the novel he tries his best to get the two together. Venn pleads with Eustacia to allow Wildeve to marry Thomasin but in vain. He also doesn't get any further with his own proposal to Thomasin.

There is confusion all around which is only aggravated with the presence of Clym Yeobright, Thomasin's cousin and the son of the strong-willed widow Mrs. Clym Yeobright, who also serves as a guardian to Thomasin. Eustacia is attracted to the Yeobright, who also serves as a guardian to Thomasin. Eustacia is attracted to the suave and sophisticated Clym and looks on him as a means to escape from the heath she hates. Even prior to meeting him, she is influenced into falling in love with Clym. She therefore breaks off with Wildeve who then marries Thomasin. Eustacia's scheming and the hand of fate work simultaneously to bring her together with Clym and the two have a romantic relationship which culminates in marriage much to the indignation of Mrs Yeobright. When Wildeve comes to know of Eustacia's marriage, he again wishes to make her his own in spite of the fact that he is now married to Thomasin. In marrying Eustacia, Clym gets distanced from his mother who was against this alliance. Problems creep up between the newlyweds too and their relationship stars to sour.

Eustacia dreams of moving to Paris but Clym wants to start a school in his native country. Meanwhile, Wildeve inherits a large fortune and he and Eustacia start meeting again. They are spotted at the local dance by Diggory Venn and again when Wildeve visits Eustacia at her home when Clym is asleep. It is at this time that Mrs Yeobright too decides to visit the couple in the hope of making amends. Eustacia gets anxious when she hears the knocking on the door and as she doesn't want Wildeve to be discovered in her house, she ignores Mrs Yeobright's knocking. Mrs Yeobright turns away, sad and dejected with this rejection by her son that she succumbs to heat and snakebite on the walk home, and dies. The shocked son then takes the blame of his mother's death upon himself. When he further learns from his wife how she was

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instrumental in his mother being turned back from his house and about her clandestine relationship with Wildeve, he separates from her. Eustacia now wants to leave the heath and Wildeve helps her escape. The story comes to a climax when on a stormy night, Eustacia drowns on her way to meet Wildeve and in trying to save her, Wildeve drowns as well. Only through heroic efforts does Diggory Venn save Clym from the same fate. The last part of the novel sees the growth of an affectionate relationship, and an eventual marriage, between Thomasin and Diggory. Clym, much reduced by his travails and by weak eyesight brought on by overly arduous studies, becomes a wandering preacher, taken only half-seriously by the locals.

The Return of the Native: Themes

This novel is typically modern. Unlike the classical tragedies, which show man's greatness, it only shows the triviality of man and his helplessness in the face of nature and circumstances. Man finds his life full of unhappy events. Times are not fair: 'Men have oftener suffered from the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings over sadly tinged'. For this reason perhaps, Hardy chooses Egdon Heath as the stage for the enactment of the tragedy of Eustacia, Clym and Mrs Yeobright. In the opening chapter of the novel, we are given a description of the gloomy stage.

To this somber and gloomy place, our heroine was confined. She was full of Promethean rebelliousness against circumstances and fate, but all her efforts, all her contrivances, and all her rebellion proved to be of no avail and in the end she fulfilled her own prophecy regarding her doom in relation to the heath—'Tis my cross, my shame, and will be my death.' Clym, on the other hand, did not hate the heath. Instead of rebelling against it, he was attracted towards it. He was fed up with life in Paris and came back to spend the rest of his life here. The heath received him as it received Eustacia. Just as Eustacia on the barrow was so much like an organic part of the entire motionless structure, so also Clym was permeated with its scenes, with its subject. The heath did not differentiate between human beings. It treated them alike. Clym's attitude towards the heath is opposite to that of Eustacia. 'Take all the varying hates felt by Eustacia Vye towards the heath and translate them into loves and you have the heart of Clym'.

But the only return that the heath could give to either of them was to submerge his individuality into its own. When Mrs Yeobright looks at Clym from a distance; she is unable to recognize him. Clym 'appeared of a russet hue, not more distinguishable from the scene around him than the green caterpillar, from the leaf it feeds on. He appeared as a mere parasite of the heath'. But according to their different attitudes towards the heath, towards nature and circumstances, Clym and Eustacia meet different fates. Eustacia used to think of the heath alone as an uncongenial spot to be in: she felt it now of the whole world'. And so, unable to escape from the heath in her life, she escaped from the whole world by committing suicide. Clym, on the other hand, loved his surroundings, and tried to accept whatever fate gave him.

As a result, Clym could find a partial fulfillment of his meager ambition. But the impression that we get on the whole is that life is full of difficulties, more sad than happy, and that nothing but tragedy lies in store for characters like Eustacia, Mrs Yeobright and even Clym. Hardy had to add the sixth book, the 'Aftercourses', only

to please the readers of the magazine in which his novel appeared serially. So we may consider the end of the fifth book as the real ending. And according to that, none of the main characters is left with any prospects of happiness. Mrs. Yeobright, Eustacia and Wildeve have all died unhappily, Clym is half blind and Thomasin has lost her husband. One may ask who is to blame for such tragic events.

We cannot agree fully with Eustacia that she may have done Heaven no harm, but she did do Thomasin harm when she tried to attract Wildeve back from her for a very selfish and trivial motive to show her 'power' and to get rid of her boredom. She says she tried to be a splendid woman, but Hardy proves that she was a splendid woman in many ways. We are struck by the precision and artistry of Hardy when he tells us in a single sentence how her specialty—her greatness was the cause of her doom and her fall. Even though she is a modern girl she reminds one of things and people of the grand past.

She was gloomy and lonely because she was conscious of her beauty and her extraordinariness. Moreover, she wanted to be different from the ordinary. She could not mix with the common lot and behave and feel as they did. Because of her hankering after uniqueness, she could not be satisfied with the common things that life offered. So she tried to achieve things for herself with the help of her 'power', but she could only influence Wildeve and Clym a little, she could not change her fate. She wanted 'what is called life and all the beating and pulsing' that one can find in a busy part of the world. But Clym could not give her these things. She might have got them somehow if she had not been a proud woman. So, instead of humiliating herself, she prefers to die. At this point, we are struck by the resemblance between Eustacia and Ibsen's heroine Hedda Gabler. Hedda too, when she learns that she must be at the mercy of Judge Brack—a slave to him, shoots herself. Both Hedda and Eustacia prefer death to a life of humiliation. They both have dignity and pride and they both want a life of glamour.

Eustacia also reminds us of Flaubert's heroine, Emma Bovary. Both of them are romantic by temperament but cabined and cribbed by environment and circumstances. We are told about Emma Bovary that 'true to her favourite theories, she longed for love'. About Eustacia we learn that to 'be loved to madness—such was her great desire'. Both of them are leading a dull and lonely life, while their temperament goads them to seek excitement and adventure indiscreetly.

But in spite of all these similarities there is a great difference in Hardy's depiction of Eustacia from Flaubert's of Emma. Emma's character is exposed to us with relentless realism, whereas Eustacia is romanticized and glorified as 'the raw material for divinity' and a being fit for Olympus.

Before meeting Eustacia, Clym was unhappy because of the unhappiness of the whole world and because of his eager desire to give happiness to others. After he fell in love with Eustacia, he could not be happy because his mother disapproved of her. The relationships between Mrs. Yeobright, Clym and Eustacia are faintly similar to the relationships depicted in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. Mrs Yeobright too expects Clym to succeed in life. After the death of her husband, she did not marry again and have another family; she devoted her life to Clym. Naturally, she expects her son to give her affection and obedience but when she finds that he is ready to sacrifice her

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wishes for the sake of Eustacia, we discern in her a jealousy similar to that of Mrs. Morel in *Sons and Lovers*, Mrs Yeobright's speech. 'You answer me; you think only of her. You stick to her in all things', is similar to the speech of Mrs Morel, '...you only want me to wait on you—the rest is for Miriam'. Clym also loves his mother very much. His following speech is similar to Paul's speeches towards the end of *Sons and Lovers*:

O, my mother, my mother! Would to God that I could live my life again, and endure for you what you endured for me.

These lines are surprisingly similar to the lines of the poem 'The End' that Lawrence wrote after the death of his mother:

And Oh, my love, as I rock for you tonight

And have not any longer any hope

To heal the suffering or to make requite

For all your life of asking and despair,

I own that some of me is dead tonight.

But this does not prove that Lawrence must necessarily have been influenced by Hardy's *The Return of the Native* in his writing of the above lines or of *Sons and Lovers* for there are great differences between the situations of the two novels. Mrs. Yeobright is not possessive. The Oedipus complex does not play any part in the lives of Mrs Yeobright and Clym. Mrs Yeobright is not opposed to Clym getting married but she is opposed to his marrying Eustacia because she feels that she is not a good woman. Thomasin is not selfish. She does not want Clym in place of her husband and she thinks only of his good. That is why when Clym learns of Eustacia's cruelty, he cries out—'May all the murderesses get the torment they deserve!'

One of the intentions of Hardy in this novel seems to have been to show the insignificance of man in this world. Life is a ruthless struggle and nature is indifferent to the individual. Life is not only difficult; it is incomprehensible with its 'inequality of lots' and 'perpetual dilemmas'. Science has so disillusioned man that he cannot find solace in a religious or spiritual vision of life.

The truth seems to be that a long line of disillusioning centuries has permanently displaced the Hellenic idea of life, or whatever it may be called. What the Greeks only suspected we know well; what their Aeschylus imagined our nursery children feel. That old-fashioned reveling in the general situation grows less and less possible as we uncover the defects of natural laws, and see the quandary that man is in by their operation.

Clym makes efforts to change the plight of the whole community, Eustacia tries to change just her own fate, but both of them fail because a human being is as insignificant as an insect in the world of *The Return of the Native*. Mrs Yeobright has to die 'on the heath like an animal kicked out' and looking at Clym from a distance she finds him like a caterpillar, he 'seemed to be of no more account in life than an insect. He appeared as a mere parasite of the heath, fretting its surface in his daily labour as a moth.... We are reminded of the evaluation of man in King Lear: 'Man's life is cheap as a beast's', a comrade with the wolf and owl',I such a fellow saw, which

made me think a man a worm...'. 'As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods.' Hardy convincingly shows us the insignificances and pettiness of human beings.

Such views about life and people and the dramatic structure of the novel tempt us to class *The Return of the Native* as a modern novel; but the cross-references to the ancient tragedies and the evocation of the world of antique grandeur compel us to regard it also as a work in line with the ancient tragedies.

The Return of the Native: Characters

Clym Yeobright: Clym Yeobright, the 'native' in the story, is the son of the widowed Mrs. Yeobright, and cousin of Thomasin Yeobright. He leaves his native land to work as a diamond merchant in Paris. However, he soon realizes that material wealth is not what he desires in life and he eventually returns home to the heath. Eustacia Vye pursues him and he marries her. She wants him to return to Paris but he has other plans. He wishes to stay on Egdon Heath and teach in a school. This is the cause of their conflict and the marriage turns sour. Clym is intelligent, cultured and deeply introspective. He is patient and generous, but also deeply determined, and fierce when angered. It is this determination which is the cause of his drift with his mother and later his separation from Eustacia. At the end of the novel, weakened by a degenerative eye condition and by the ordeal of losing his mother and Eustacia—for whose deaths he blames himself—he becomes a wandering preacher, sermonizing about simple moral topics.

Diggory Venn: Venn is a semi-nomadic 'reddleman' who travels throughout the region selling the dye that farmers use to mark their sheep. As a result of his exposure to the dye, his entire body and everything he owns are dyed red. Entirely red, camping out on the heath in his wagon, and emerging mysteriously from time to time, Venn functions as an image of the heath incarnated. Throughout the novel he keeps an eye on Thomasin Yeobright's interests but also preserves his own interests: he has long been in love with her, and at the end of the novel they marry. Venn is very clever and perceptive, and can be a conniving conspirator.

Eustacia Vye: Eustacia was born in the busy port town of Budmouth and loved city life. She was later moved to Egdon Heath to live with her grandfather. Eustacia hates the heath and is always looking for a way to escape. Nevertheless, in her deep brooding passion, she seems to be a vital component of its wild nature. Eustacia has a love affair with Damon Wildeve but gives him up for the more suave and sophisticated Clym Yeobright as she feels she will have a better and more interesting life with him. Unfortunately, this marriage does not work and she is once more drawn to Wildeve and enters into an illicit relationship with him which eventually spells doom for both of them.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

4. Why was the marriage between Thomasin Yeobright and Damon Wildeve delayed?
5. Why did Clym Yeobright return to Egdon Heath?
6. Why is Mrs. Yeobright against her son's marriage to Eustacia?

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3.5 SUMMARY

- *Great Expectations* is the story of Pip, an orphan boy adopted by a blacksmith's family, who has good luck and great expectations, and then loses both his luck and his expectations. Through this rise and fall, however, Pip learns how to find happiness. He learns the meaning of friendship and the meaning of love and, of course, becomes a better person for it. The novel, like much of Dickens's work, draws on his experiences of life and people. *Great Expectations* is a bildungsroman, a novel depicting growth and personal development, in this case, of Pip.
- Some of the major themes of *Great Expectations* are crime, social class, empire and ambition. From an early age, Pip feels guilt; he is also afraid that someone will find out about his crime and arrest him. The theme of crime comes in to even greater effect when Pip discovers that his benefactor is in fact a convict. Pip has an internal struggle with his conscience throughout the book. *Great Expectations* explores the different social classes of the Georgian era. Throughout the book, Pip becomes involved with a broad range of classes, from criminals like Magwitch to the extremely rich like Miss Havisham. Pip has great ambition, as demonstrated constantly in the book.
- Thomas Hardy's works reflect the impact of 19th century evolutionary thought and naturalistic doctrines. He saw man as an alien in an impersonal universe, at the mercy of environment, heredity, and blind chance. Most of his fiction poignantly presents tragic human situations, and thus Hardy earned a reputation for pessimism. The theme of this novel reflects Hardy's concept that human fate is shaped by accidents and natural forces over which there is no control. *The Return of the Native* revolves around five people and the Egdon Heath. Clym, the native who returns to Egdon, changes the life of Mrs. Yeobright, Eustacia, Thomasin, Mr. Wildeve and his own. Eustacia, the heroine and Clym are two contrasting characters beautifully sketched by the author. Mr. Venn, the reddleman's presence at the right places, at the right times is an important part of the novel. Hardy's use of a barren heath and his art of characterization are truly remarkable.

3.6 KEY TERMS

- **Burlesque:** It is a literary, dramatic or musical work intended to cause laughter by caricaturing the manner or spirit of serious works, or by ludicrous treatment of their subjects.
- **Bildungsroman:** Also known as coming-of-age story, it is a literary genre that focuses on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from youth to adulthood and in which character change is thus extremely important.
- **Reddleman:** A reddleman travels the country marking flocks of sheep with a red mineral called 'reddle', a dialect term for red ochre.

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3.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Pip's ideal world collapses when he learns that it is Magwitch, the hated criminal, and not Miss Havisham who is his secret benefactor.
2. Estella is the daughter of Magwitch, the coarse convict, and thus springs from the very lowest level of society.
3. The single tragic event in Miss Havisham's life is her being jilted by Compeyson on what was to have been their wedding day.
4. The marriage was delayed due to an error in the marriage certificate.
5. Clym returned to Egdon Heath as he was fed up with life in Paris.
6. Mrs. Yeobright is against her son's marriage to Eustacia as she feels she is not a good woman.

3.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Who are the two different 'Pips' in *Great Expectations*?
2. Trace the growth of Pip's character through his hardships.
3. Give a character sketch of Clym Yeobright.
4. What are the contradictions in Eustacia's character?
5. Write a short note on the novel of realism.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the title *Great Expectations*.
2. How does Miss Havisham use her ward, Estella, to exact her revenge on men? How does Estella make this training a part of her character?
3. How does Hardy depict the hopelessness of life through his characters? Give adequate examples from *The Return of the Native*.
4. Discuss the prose writing style in Hardy's novels.
5. What were the features of the sentimental novel? Who were the main proponents and what were their representative works?

3.9 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 FICTION: TWENTIETH CENTURY - I

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Rise of the Novel
- 4.3 Graham Greene: The Power and the Glory
- 4.4 D.H. Lawrence: Sons and Lovers
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 Key Terms
- 4.7 Answers to 'Check your Progress'
- 4.8 Questions and Exercises
- 4.9 Further Reading

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The English novel was essentially bourgeois in its origins and through the eighteenth and nineteenth century, it was solidly anchored in a social world. Fortune, status and marital position were all important for the Victorian as for the eighteenth century novel. The novelist's world was an assured one, however much he or she might criticize or wish to reform it. The loss of confidence and sense of the common world had an effect on both the themes and techniques of fiction. The construction of the plot pattern based on subtle and private interpretations of the significant in human affairs would necessarily take the novel out of the public arena of value into which it had hitherto moved.

New concepts of time representing the continuous flow of the 'already' into the 'not yet' of retrospect into anticipation and Henri Bergson's concepts of duree, of time as flow and duration rather than as a series of points moving chronologically forward also influenced the twentieth century novelist particularly the handling of plot structure. Further, new psychological ideas emphasized the multiplicity of consciousness, the simultaneous coexistence of several levels of consciousness and sub-consciousness in which past experience was retained and by whose retention the whole of personality was colored and determined.

New concept of time came together with the new concept of consciousness to develop a new view of character. The truth about the character is a sum of her whole emotional experience and that sum is always there pervading and indeed constituting her consciousness for, on this view, a woman is her history, nothing is lost, and her reaction to every new event is conditioned by the sum of her reactions to all earlier events. Thus, retrospect is the very stuff of present consciousness. Development depth wise rather than length wise becomes the logical technique.

The novel had been moving towards a greater increase in psychological subtlety. Henry James in particular had brought a new precision and complexity into the description of states of mind. The isolation of the individual consciousness became a

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most important fact in a world from which public value seemed to have departed and where every individual is seen to be a prisoner of her unique stream of consciousness.

If the characteristic theme of eighteenth and nineteenth century novel was the relationship between gentility and morality then that of the twentieth century is a relation between loneliness and love. As E.M. Forster put it, the 'great society' is always the enemy; only the 'little society' or the intimate group of real friends who have somehow managed to break down the wall of individuality that separate them is worth anything—or is really possible as true society. The great society becomes a contradiction in terms. To D. H. Lawrence, the mystical awareness of the core of the otherness in the other person is basis of a true sex relationship. In this unit, we will discuss the works of two novelists—Graham Greene and D.H. Lawrence.

4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the importance of the life and works of Graham Greene, with special emphasis on *The Power and the Glory*
- Discuss the importance of the life and works of D.H. Lawrence, with special emphasis on *Sons and Lovers*

4.2 RISE OF THE NOVEL

The foremost feature of modern writing, perhaps, could be that things not very often begin when and where they are expected or supposed to begin. Indeed the very concepts of beginning and ending become debatable, as Lawrence wrote 'In the beginning—there never was any beginning'.

There has perhaps never been so radical a change in any branch of literature, as that which came over the English novel in the first half of this century. Not only has it mirrored the change in the external world, like every art medium, but it has also developed internally. The traditional novelists took their stable society for granted. They never questioned its beliefs or values, and treated their characters in relation to the society. What is more important is the fact that these novelists were assured that their readers shared all their views, the basic assumption of the sanctity of social institutions, family, church etc. and necessity to conform to the rules of such institutions.

This opinion and approach to novel writing reached its peak in Victorian England. Yet towards the end of the nineteenth century, disillusion with bourgeois complacency and commercialism crept in, and this was a major external force in the rise of what you call 'the modern' novel. Ironically enough, it began with the Victorians themselves. George Eliot and Emily Bronte questioned the basics of an individual's links and society. Tennyson began to doubt the linear progress of his and his contemporaries' works. This generated interest in discovering new themes and new ways of expressing them and gradually the break with the past was achieved. Of course, there was now a startling jump from one type of novel to the other. The subject matter became increasingly critical of Victorian materialism, sex was no longer a taboo, but still the tradition was not completely done away with.

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One cannot deny the presence of Victorian elements in the early works of all the major modern writers. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* is in mainstream of typical Victorian fiction, despite his candid views on sexuality. This is particularly true of Forster and Huxley, who, one feels have never managed to make a complete break from traditional novelists. Affinities in both technique and theme have been studied between Lawrence and Hardy, Conrad and Dickens, Woolf and Sterne. Yet all these novelists—Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, Conrad and Joyce—were steadily making time and paving the way for the modern novel.

This breakdown was the result not only of social and economic cause as the Industrial Revolution, but also related to remarkable discovery made in psychology and other areas. One such discovery was Henry Bergson's concept of *Law duree*. Bergson asserts that clock time is artificial, and that 'mental' time is the only natural time. Time, he said, is a continuous, heterogeneous flow, which cannot be characterized by separate moments.

According to this theory then a novel of linear progress, which moved from situation to situation in a fixed chronological statement, was not a 'real' rendering of human experience. Therefore, a new kind of narrative developed to capture the reality, the essence of human experience—since it emphasized fluctuating time, which constantly moved backwards and forwards. In such a narrative structure there is no tension between the past, the present and the future, because a character can proceed from one to another as often as he wants to. One of the first novelists to use this technique was Marcel Proust. His work influenced every major twentieth century English novelist as is evident from such works as *Nostromo*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Ulysses*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and more.

Together with this new concept of time was the changing concept of human consciousness influenced by the work of Freud and other psychologists. The fact emphasized in this concept was the multiplicity of consciousnesses. That is to say, an individual's consciousness is the sum total of all that he has ever experienced and his cultural affinities with the members of his race. So, actually the past does not exist separately. What you term the 'past' exists along with the present determining every response of ours. So a novelist, who seeks to project the total view of his characters, has to effectively communicate the simultaneity of the characters' different levels of consciousness. Since the traditional novelist had not been faced with such a problem, the modern novelist had to evolve an appropriate technique. This resulted in the stream of consciousness technique.

These then are the three major forces that resulted in the growth of modern novel. They also influenced the major theme of modern literature—the theme of an 'individual's loneliness'. Since all beliefs in religion, family and other institutions were completely shattered; the modern writer was a completely isolated figure.

No longer could he depend on the stability of the conventions, he had to forge completely new relationships based on a different set of values. Since most modern novelists have undergone this experience personally, it forms the keynote of their major works. Thus, we have Lawrence and Joyce re-living their own experiences through the characters of their novels. In their works and in those of other major novelists, 'loneliness is seen as the necessary condition of man' (David Daiches).

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Yet their main preoccupation is not this isolation, but to find a way through which harmony can be achieved. A way through which a modern man cut adrift, can achieve satisfying relationships.

Each novelist views this problem in his own way. Lawrence believed that the solution lay in love which recognized the mystical core of otherness in the beloved. Therefore, we see towards the end of the century, the concept of what was significant in human experience changed under the influence of psychology and related fields of knowledge. No longer was a man's exterior personality or his behaviour in society considered important. Stress was now laid on his internal make up; the working of his mind, his responses to a world that was essentially hostile and his search for an identity in this world. The modern novel is the result of the novelists' effects to deal with such problems, to define them and to suggest a possible solution.

Important Writers of this Age

Some of the important writers of this age were as follows:

Henry James: Born in New York, Henry James was educated in America and Europe. He became a prolific writer with novels, short stories, travel sketches, literary criticism and autobiography. He was also a friend of the New England group of writers. A study of James is important for the analysis of the modern novel for the reason that he was the first to view it as an artistic form. To him novel was primarily an art form to be judged solely by artistic canons, concerned, not with moral purpose, but with the objective and impartial presentation of the reality of life.

The key to James's choice of subject is to be found in his own life. An American fascinated by the charm of an older civilization finds a great many of his themes in the impact of one type of society upon the product of another, in the study of the processes of adjustment and their effect upon the development of an individual character. An intellectual and a member of an intellectual family, James throughout his novels portrays life of the people such as himself. He is concerned with the man as a social being, not with the deeper relations of man with his God. There is not much of elemental passion in his novels because the chosen field is a sophisticated, intellectual society, except in so far as they are shown under the influence of mind. While identifying the good with the beautiful, he regards taste, artistic sensibility and individual integrity as the prime virtues. On the other hand he sees ugliness and meanness of spirit as the great evils.

James is often concerned in the development of a character as a part of the social group. He is absolutely not interested in the poor or in the unintelligent. His characters and figures are usually sensitive, refined, sophisticated, controlling impulse by reason and endowed with faculty for acute self-analysis. They are capable of viewing their own motives and reactions with a remarkable detachment and an equal degree of subtlety.

Joseph Conrad: He was a sailor and an adventurer and his works reflect this character of the author. He presents situations that cannot be really explained through the conventional and accepted notions. His method of writing a novel is best found in his preface to *The Nigger of Narcissus*: 'My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is before all, to make you see.' The characters of Conrad's novels did not convey just a single point of

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view but a variety of them. His technique of writing novels involved shifts of time as well as double narrator scheme. His novel *Heart of Darkness* is an excellent example of this.

Method used in the Modern Novel

As it has already been discussed, the modern novel emerged in altogether a different kind of environment with diverse changes in its themes and techniques, thereby defining the very concept of the novel.

Stream of consciousness

It is a psychological term that refers to a literary technique in the twentieth century and gained immense popularity within the genre of the modern novel. Leon Edel writes that 'between 1913 and 1915 was born the modern psychological novel—what we have come to call in English letters the stream of consciousness novel'. Robert Humphrey defines stream of consciousness fiction as the type, 'in which the basic emphasis is placed on the exploration of the free speech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily of revealing the 'psychic being of characters'. The use of this technique is coincidental with the turning inwards process of the English novel. It is a technique to document authentically the mental process or to capture 'the atmosphere of the mind'.

There are certain other techniques that are used in the presentation of stream of consciousness:

- **Interior monologue:** Robert Humphrey defines this technique as the method used in fiction for representing the psychic content and processes of character, partly or entirely just as these processes exist at various levels of the conscious control before they are formulated for deliberate speech.
- **Montage:** The second method of montage is that in which the time element is fixed and the spatial element changes. This is known as space montage. This technique is also known as multiple-view, for at a given time, the consciousness of several characters can be described—their individual responses to the same stimulus.

Aspects that Characterize the Modern Experimental Novel

Two main aspects that characterize the modern experiment novel are as follows:

- **Absence of the hero:** The experimental novel has discarded the concept of heroism and the reader would seldom find a truly likable character. In the earlier novels the hero and the villain were obvious but now no character is all good or all bad, rather they have shades of grey.
- **Complexity:** Seeking to portray not so much what people do or say as what they actually are, the experimental novelist finds none of the old ethical simplicity but discovers a vast and chaotic world within even the outwardly mundane character. Change and alteration produce within a personality a ceaseless fluidity that destroys the old rigidity of character and reveals disturbing contradictions and complexities.

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- **Irrationality:** Increasingly, the experimental novel in exploring the inner life, has found that man does not act from reason, as earlier novels assumed, but rather is motivated by deep unconscious sources of primordial origin. Modern novelists can be divided into those who continue within a broad tradition of realism and those who experiment far more with the form of the novel.

Writers like John Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett, Graham Greene, Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing, and Ernest Hemingway are essentially realists. They are less intrusive than nineteenth century realists, presenting a credible picture in which we are not particularly aware of the narrator's presence. They deal with social, personal and ethical problems and offer us an entertaining, but at the same time, an instructive look at how people cope with life in the twentieth century.

Major Works of Short Fiction

Lawrence's theory of novel takes unswervingly from his notion of man and his relationship to the universe. Lawrence keenly believed that man was not an isolated being rather he was well integrated within the cosmos.

It will be useful to learn what a great literary figure like T.S. Eliot has to say about Lawrence, 'he was an impatient and impulsive man. He was a man of fitful and profound insights, rather than of ratiocinative powers and therefore he was an impatient man. He expressed some of the insights in the form least likely to make them acceptable to most of his contemporaries, and sometimes in a form that almost willfully encouraged misunderstanding... wrong he often was (I think) from ignorance, prejudice, or, drawing the wrong conclusion in his conscious mind from the insights that came to him from below consciousness. It will take time to distance the superficial error from the fundamental truth. To me, also, he seems often to write badly; but to be writer who had to write often badly in order to write sometimes well.'

Lawrence did not believe in following the conventions of his time and his work was thus regarded as a revolt against the values and ideals of the nineteenth century.

During the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901), England was going through a difficult phase. As a result of industrialization, life had become very mechanical and the vibrancy and vivacity had given way to artificiality and uniformity. Moreover, the society was compartmentalized in classes and these class barriers limited the growth of relationships between people. Above all, the state religion, Christianity, was turning cold with its restraints and prohibitions. Individuals were feeling suffocated as simple passions were repressed and the natural course of things were always interfered and judged.

Lawrence was in opposition to all these things and tried to rebel against the standards dictated by social authorities, especially those dealing with personal lives of individuals. As a result, you find Lawrence's inclination towards the psyche of a person, which has control over the behaviour and to some extent on the character of an individual. But Lawrence did not concern himself with the regular feelings and chaos experienced by an individual. His aim was to open the doors to the restricted areas of the human psyche and sexual experience was one of those areas that were forbidden from being openly discussed. An essential feature of his fiction is that the central character is always proceeding from a partial or mechanical existence into

organic wholeness. Lawrence used the novel as a carrier of his own interpretation of life, very much concerned with the basic problems of human existence and relationships among human beings. Therefore, the relationship between man and woman and their sexual conflict became a major part of his study.

He was quite inclined towards the study of the development of one's individuality but this study was not based merely on the intellectual abilities of an individual but also on the impulses and senses that play a significant role in shaping the personality of a person. Apparently, Lawrence's themes are concerned about the passions and instincts of the heart rather than the working of the mind. As F.R. Leavis puts it, 'Life is fulfilled in the individual or nowhere; but without a true marital relation, which is creative in more than the sense of producing children, there can be no fulfillment; that is the burden of Lawrence's art'. He allotted a superior position to the impulses and believed that intellect is responsible for eradication of life's excitement and destroys the liveliness.

Lawrence ardently believed in the presence of 'dark mystery' of life and he saw all living forms instilled with it. Lawrence was, in fact, of the opinion that the 'dark mystery' could not be known through intellect. Moreover, natural and untamed ideas cannot be accessible through the intellect but may be known through the instincts and intuitions.

From a literary point of view also Lawrence can be looked upon as a radical in the sense that he did not constrict his writing to the pre-laid rules or models. He questioned the traditional methods of novel writing 'he felt that novel could become more personal and less objective if he saw the possibility that language could describe in detail the personal experiences of emotion and passion as it were from the inside'. Lawrence was to a great extent influenced by Thomas Hardy. Hardy's novels are usually set against natural background, which plays an important role in the development of action instead of being just a background for the story. In case of Lawrence also the imagery is significant to bring out the essence of the scene and enhance the emotions and sentiments of the characters. For Lawrence a novel was a religious art in which he could speak of and to the whole man.

4.3 GRAHAM GREENE: THE POWER AND THE GLORY

Graham Greene is among the younger novelists who have taken a leading place in the world of fiction since the Second World War when the surfeit of horror and violence prepared a host of readers to look upon such experiences with the combination of outraged fascination, stoical equanimity and soul probing.

He was born on 2nd October 1904 in England. Going by the written records he did not enjoy his childhood and ran away from home. At school, he was a lonely child and feared his classmates' bullying. He was given psycho-therapeutic treatment in London. It was precisely here that his love for literature and poetry developed. The famous Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein were his mentors. It was in 1925 that he graduated from Oxford University. He was constantly travelling at this point of time and was also a member of the communist party for a short while. He dabbled in

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editing in the Nottingham Journal and London Times. He wrote his first novel *The Man Within* in 1929. In 1990, he contracted a fatal blood disease and died on 3 April 1991 in Switzerland.



Fig. 4.1 Graham Greene

Sin, suffering, betrayal, death are the themes that play an important part in Graham Greene's novels. He plunges his characters into depths of degradation, for example, in *Brighton Rock* and *Heart of the Matter* from which the characters can be redeemed only through divine compassion and salvation.

Roman Catholicism also comes into Graham Greene's novels. Greene is a tough writer of sophisticated adventure stories which he calls entertainment. In his more serious novels, he explores the disparities between human decency and theological virtue, between moral intentions and irreligious acts so as to shatter the complacencies of those religious readers who had always thought that good intentions on the humanist level were somehow related to divinely approved human behavior. There is another kind of probing into human nature and possibilities of heroism, made explicit in *The Power and the Glory* (1940).

Implicitly in *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) and with deliberate provocativeness in the *Quiet American* (1955), the psychological setups in Greene's novels are explored with both vigour and subtlety. The irony which often seems to be at the expense of values which the novel seeks to promote arises not only from his profound sense of paradox in human affairs but also from his refusal to be content with easy and obvious answers. His Catholicism was of a very personal kind.

DID YOU KNOW?

Greene worked for the Foreign Office during World War II and was stationed for a while at Freetown, Sierra Leone, the scene of another of his best-known novels, *The Heart of the Matter* (1948; film 1953).

The Power and the Glory: Summary

When the story begins we see the priest awaiting a boat that will take him away from the city. He is fleeing the police because he is a priest, a man of God, and religion has

been declared illegal in his state. While he waits for the boat he, also converses with a man called Mr. Tench. Soon he is called to the house of a dying woman in his capacity as a priest and thus fails to take the boat.

Since he is on the run from the police he hides in a barn on the lands of a rich plantation owner and in the process becomes acquainted with the landlord's daughter. However, he cannot stay in one place for too long for fear of being discovered and has to leave. He reaches a village where he had in the past worked as a pastor. He comes into contact with a woman called Maria, with whom he had been intimate at one time. He also meets Brigida, his daughter, born out of wedlock. He stays in the village for the night and wakes before sunrise to say mass with the villagers. At the end of the prayers, the lieutenant arrives with the police to search for the priest and arrest him. The priest goes to the town square ready to face his fate.

The villagers, however, protect the priest and do not betray him. The lieutenant does not recognize the priest and instead of arresting him takes another villager into custody as hostage. He threatens to kill the hostage if he finds that the villagers have hidden his quarry. The priest leaves the village and directs his steps to the town of Carmen. On the way he meets a man called the mestizo who joins him on his journey. The priest soon realizes that the mestizo is not a man to be trusted and could be accompanying him with the purpose of betraying him and getting rewarded by the police. The priest reveals his true identity to the mestizo, who has, however, become ill with fever by the second day of their travels and thus has no strength to continue to follow the priest when he changes his road. The priest has realized that entering into the town would mean certain arrest for him and thus the mestizo enters the town alone. The priest decides to return to the capital from which he had initially fled. He has changed his appearance and is wearing a drill suit. He tries to obtain a bottle of wine so that he is able to say mass. He comes into contact with a beggar along the way who takes him to a hotel. There, he takes the priest to a man who tells the priest that he can help him get wine.

The man sells the priest a bottle of wine and another of brandy. The priest offers to share the wine with him and the man proceeds to finish the entire bottle of wine, thus upsetting the priest's plans. The priest leaves the hotel but is caught with the bottle of brandy by an official. The priest flees through the city streets chased by the official and even tries to hide in the house of Padre Jose but is ultimately captured and jailed. In jail he talks to the other prisoners and tells them that he is a priest. Another woman prisoner, who has also been jailed for possessing items of religious use, enters into an argument with him. On the following day the priest is told to clean the prison cells. In the process he meets the mestizo who, however, does not betray the priest. The priest again meets the lieutenant, who, for the second time fails to recognize him, and thus the priest is freed.

That night the priest stays at an abandoned estate of the Fellows and then travels to a deserted and abandoned village. He encounters an Indian woman whose son has been killed by the gringo, an American outlaw who is fleeing the police too. He goes with the woman to the burial land and leaves her there. He is now very tired and has almost lost the will to continue to run for his safety and his life. Yet he wanders on and ultimately meets a man called Mr. Lehr. Mr. Lehr tells him that he has crossed over into a state where religion has not been declared illegal and he is thus safe.

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The priest stays with Mr. Lehr for a few days to recover from his ordeal and then plans to leave for Las Casas. However, before he can leave, the mestizo comes and tells him that the gringo has been fatally wounded by the police and is asking for someone to confess to. The priest realizes that this could be a trap. Yet he agrees to go with the mestizo across the border into the state from where he has fled. He meets the gringo who refuses to repent and dies. As the priest has feared, the lieutenant comes and arrests him. The two men discuss at length about their respective beliefs and then the priest is taken to the capital city for his trial. On the eve of the execution, the lieutenant goes to Padre Jose to see if he would come to hear the confession of the priest in prison. The Padre refuses and the lieutenant returns to the prison with a bottle of brandy for the priest. That night the priest attempts to repent for his sins and finds that he is unable to do so. He wakes up the next day, fearing his execution.

Mr. Tench sees the execution from the window of the jefe's office. That same night the boy hears about how the priest was ensnared and taken to his death and realizes that he has become a martyr and a hero. He dreams about the priest that night and is awakened by the sound of knocking at the door. When he opens the door he sees a man asking for shelter. When the boy learns that he is a priest he immediately lets him in.

The Power and the Glory: Themes

The Power and the Glory, which is probably Greene's most elaborate and complex novel, has generated extensive critical discussions and comments. The novel has been defined as an allegory, a morality play, or a modern parable and identified with other related genres. These critical classifications suggest a tribute to the structural and artistic perfection of the work, but they also invite the inevitable criticism of excessive didacticism, contrived and improbable situations, manipulation of protagonists and 'flat' characters.

The allegorical and symbolic interpretations of the novel are undoubtedly valid and illuminating, but the exclusive emphasis of critics on these aspects does not do justice to the novel. *The Power and the Glory* ranks amongst the best novels of the century primarily because it is work of deep psychological and human relevance (rather than a philosophical or theological treatise), and because the whisky-priest is an authentic, complex human being.

His personality develops and changes before our very eyes, and he enlists our sympathy and admiration as an Everyman or another embodiment that a philosophical idea could never do. This is probably the secret of the extraordinary appeal that *The Power and the Glory* has had for many readers who do not necessarily subscribe to any of the theological or philosophical attitudes that have been regarded as 'the message' of the novel. The conflict of ideologies, the theological argument, the allegorical significance of characters and events are clearly all there, but these aspects of the novel cannot be taken as substitutes for the human factor which is the core of the novel.

This section deals with the development of the whisky-priest throughout the novel as it is delineated through his encounters with the other characters and the children in their world. This significance of children and childhood in Greene's novels,

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and particularly in *The Power and the Glory*, has been noted by various critics, but it seems that the relationship between the encounters with children and the development of the priest has largely been overlooked. The opening scene of *The Power and the Glory* is set in a dusty, hot and godforsaken Mexican town. The buzzards, a recurrent image of death, hover above the town. This is the setting of a wasteland, a spiritual desert, where man is left by himself. The whisky-priest is introduced as 'a small man in a shabby dark city suit' holding an attaché case and a cheap novel under his arm. He calls himself 'a quack' - a title that would probably suit the lieutenant's feelings about priests. There is no aura of martyrdom or sainthood about him. He looks 'disreputable' and 'weak', and his 'hollowness and neglect' give him an air of 'somebody of no account who had been batten up incidentally'. He seems to have been caught up in a situation of which he is an entirely passive victim.

The introduction of the priest as a pathetic victim of fate, a man of no substance or significance, has probably been the cause for the critical comments about his being 'pushed' or 'driven' by forces other than his own free will. It is true that at this stage, the priest is a mere victim of circumstances, but as the story of his pursuit unfolds, he develops and grows in stature until his death. However, this first introduction of the priest as a shabby, frightened little man, should also serve as a counter-weight to the opposite critical view which regards the priest as a Christ figure.

The author does not refer to the central character as 'the priest' until Part II, and compels the reader to resort to the circumstantial clues for identification whenever he enters the scene, each time as an apparently new character. How, then, does the protagonist eventually become worthy of his role? How does he become a priest, a father? The process of his development is marked by his encounters with the children in the novel. The first child who appears on the scene is an anonymous little boy, who has come to summon a doctor or a priest to the death-bed of his mother, and prevents the escape of the priest to freedom. The priest—or 'the stranger' as he is still called by the author—feels compelled to follow the child, but he does it with an 'unwilling hatred' of the boy and with a sense of desperate resignation.

In the next chapter of the novel, we are introduced to Luis, the little boy who represents the world of tomorrow. Luis' life is crossed by the priest and by the lieutenant, and it is his soul that is at stake in the struggle between them. At this point in the story, the lieutenant and his vision of the world defeat the priest and what he stands for. Luis is impatient with the pious story of the young martyr whose saintly unblemished figure is entirely incompatible with the reality he knows: Padre Jose, the renegade priest, and the frightened whisky-priest who had found shelter in their house. These two representatives of faith do not answer the boy's need for a model.

The lieutenant is paradoxically more of a priest-like figure. He is a man of integrity and dedication, his ambition is totally disinterested and he has 'the dignity of an idea'. He, too, seems to be chained to his people unwillingly. He is celibate, his room is 'as comfortless as a prison or a monastic cell', and he feels 'no sympathy with the weakness of the flesh'. The scales are clearly tipped against the pathetic little man, who smells of wine and giggles a great deal. Luis looks up to the lieutenant who stands for action, vigour and dedication.

Coral Fellows is another child whose soul is in abeyance, waiting to be moulded and given direction. 'She was very young - almost thirteen - and at that age you are

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not afraid of many things, age and death, all the things that may turn up ... Life hasn't got at her yet: she had a false air of impregnability'. Coral protects her parents in her precocious way. Her insistent common sense and practicality are infallible. In some ways, she is not unlike the lieutenant. 'She was as inflexible as the lieutenant: small and black and out of place among the banana groves. Her candour made allowances for nobody'. Captain Fellows is painfully aware that 'at any moment now a word, a gesture, the most trivial act, might be her sesame - to what?' He flinches away when he realizes that she is of an age when Mexican girls are ready for their first man. The affinity of sexual puberty and the loss of this uncompromising innocence—which, for Greene, is the equivalent of ignorance—is particularly significant when one bears in mind that the lieutenant is celibate, whereas the priest has been guilty of fornication. It seems that Greene reverses the orthodox Christian convention. Celibacy or virginity are equated with dangerous or destructive innocence-ignorance, whereas sexual experience—even if it is illicit—is related to a better insight and understanding of other human beings.

The next scene provides us with a foil which brings out clearly the significance and the depth of the commitment of the priest and his acceptance of his role. Padre Jose, the renegade priest who had married his housekeeper and became a government pensioner, has been introduced in the second chapter as a pathetic victim of fate, no better and no worse than the whisky-priest who had also sinned against his church. Both of them seem at first to be almost equally unworthy of their vocation, equally pitiable and helpless. In the third chapter, a vast difference is seen between the two priests. Padre Jose refuses to say a prayer for the soul of a dead child.

He withdraws into his contemptible shell of safety, leaving a world empty of hope for those who were once his people. 'Suddenly and unexpectedly there was agony in the cemetery. They had been used to losing children but they hadn't been used to what the rest of the world knows best of all - the hope which peters out'. But the encounter between Luis and the lieutenant ends with more than a hint of failure: 'the lieutenant put out his hand in a gesture of affection - a touch, he didn't know what to do with it. He pinched the boy's ear and saw him flinch away with the pain'. This gesture, intended as a gesture of love but inflicting pain and arousing fear in the boy, is highly symbolic.

Part II of the novel marks a transition in the development of the priest, as he is now called by the author for the first time. It is also the first time that the reader is let into the mind of the protagonist who has so far been described only from the outside. In part I of the novel, the reader could learn about the protagonist only by his gestures, his expressions and his words. These are the only indications of his character and state of mind.

The meeting of the priest with his daughter, Brigida, brings about the ultimate realization of his guilt and unworthiness. 'She has been sharpened by hunger into an appearance of devilry and malice beyond her age'. When she hears him cry out with grief at the news about the hostages who died for him, she laughs. Her laughter, shrill and malicious, is an echo of the laughter of the children behind the window of Padre Jose. It is the hostile, harsh mockery of those children who had been deprived of any hope or grace in the abyss of degradation and despair. Brigida who had been deprived of a spiritual and real father is, at that point, devilish and repulsive.

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The moment of trial comes when the police arrive, making an 'absurd show of force'. Here, again, it is the children who stand at the core of the struggle. Brigida, curious and unafraid, touches the leather boot of the lieutenant in a gesture which resembles the devoted gesture of Luis when he touched the lieutenant's pistol. Both children are attracted by these symbols of power. In this case, too, the lieutenant responds to the gesture of the child; he looks at her 'with dark affection', and makes her the object of his argument as he tries to persuade the villagers to give away the priest. As the argument fails, the lieutenant scrutinizes the villagers' faces one by one, hoping to recognize the priest amongst them. But the hollow, stubby face of the man who is standing before him does not resemble the plump complacent features of the priest in the picture. The transformation is complete. The priest has become a man of his people.

The last trial of the priest's new identity is Brigida's answer. When she identifies him as her father, the lieutenant lets him go, knowing that a priest cannot be a father. Ironically, it is precisely because he has fathered a child, that the priest can be a father to his people. He knows their suffering as one of them, he shares their vulnerability, and he is bound to them by a deep, humble commitment. The last meeting of the priest with his daughter takes place on the rubbish heap where he discards another relic of his past - his attaché case. Brigida appears in this episode as the real child that she might have been if she had been allowed to. It appears that critics who subscribe to the allegorical interpretation of the novel have tended to overlook this scene when they labeled Brigida as the 'bad daughter', who had been born out of sin. In this episode, one catches a glimpse of the child behind the precocious face of the girl.

The meeting of the priest with the half-caste marks a further stage in his development. He immediately recognizes the mestizo as his Judas, but - as R. W. B. Lewis observes - does not follow the analogy by regarding himself as a Christ figure. He is aware of the danger in this man, but reproaches himself for being 'proud, lustful, envious, cowardly and ungrateful'. He feels 'guilty at his own lack of trust'. He remembers and dreams of his old life in the parish, his ambition for power, his love of authority and his greed. The priest feels humble and unworthy even before the half-caste and his attempt to escape this Judas is easily thwarted by an appeal to his Christian faith. 'Christ had died for this man, too: how could he pretend with his pride and just to be any more worthy of that death than this half-caste? This man intended to betray him for money which he needed, and he had betrayed God not even for real lust'.

Coral, the priest's 'spiritual daughter', had summarized Hamlet's dilemma; the prince of Denmark has 'doubts about his father'. Coral was probably referring to Hamlet's own dead father, but Hamlet's problem is a metaphysical doubt about a metaphysical, spiritual Father. Part IV of the novel takes us into the spiritual desert that the priest had left behind him. The buzzards are everywhere. Captain Fellows feels that he and his wife 'had both been deserted'. He remembers his dead daughter, Coral, who seems to have been 'told things' by the priest. Mr. Tench also thinks of 'the little fellow' who 'had spoken English'. The adults whose lives have been tedious and empty, associate the priest with their children, who are not theirs any longer. The whisky-priest... however drunk, scared and insignificant - had been a representative of the Father in Heaven. Now that he is gone, they feel deserted, like orphans.

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Luis, the little boy, feels the loss most heavily. 'There were no more priests and no more heroism... Ordinary life pressed round him. He felt deceived. He felt cheated and disappointed because he had missed something'. But then he hears the knock on the door and the new priest comes in – an anonymous stranger with a small suit-case, who looks like a reincarnation of the dead whisky-priest. The stranger introduces himself: 'My name is father...', but the boy opens the door and kisses his hand before he can give himself a name. Luis welcomes the anonymous stranger who has committed himself to fatherhood. The priest has been resurrected.

The Power and the Glory: Characters

Priest

The priest is the protagonist of the story. He is simultaneously fighting two battles, one on the outside with the authorities whom he is fleeing and the other within himself as he tries to reconcile himself with his sins and his identity as a priest. The priest is not a perfect hero. He has his faults and he is very human. He can be cowardly, selfish and inclined to be a pleasure seeker, unlike what a priest should be. Ever since religion has been outlawed, he has had struggle and the hardships he has faced in his life on the run have turned him into a stronger, hardier individual. Yet within, he is a strong critic of himself and has feelings of guilt for his past life and carries a sense of being not worthy of being a priest.

The most amazing thing about Greene's characterization of the priest is that he reveals to us the man's human nature and the faults that we do not expect in a man of God, and then slowly but surely wins the reader over to sympathize with the priest and not only to sympathize but to admire him, as he depicts the priest conquering his weaknesses and becoming a true hero. The most important scene is towards the end of the novel when the priest agrees to go with the mestizo back to the state where he is a pursued man to hear the confession of a dying man. He does not completely understand the true impact of his actions, nor their real worth. He gets feedback from people who have been disappointed by him in some way, like Maria or Brigida, his daughter, or the pious woman. He does not understand the impact on people who have been changed or touched merely by coming into his life at some point, like Mr. Tench or the boy. Since he is not aware of the positive impact he has had on people he remains a humble man and does not have any idea of the essential value of his life. The priest also feels that he can never fully repent for his affair with Maria who subsequently bore Brigida, the daughter he loves very much.

The lieutenant

The lieutenant is a man who has a deep and abiding hatred of the Catholic Church. He will go to any length to arrest and execute the priest and thus eliminate the last remaining clergyman from the state. He is a man of discipline and is a just and upright man. He believes in political ideals that will help to create a tolerant state where all are treated equal. Yet in his zeal, he employs means to reach that goal that are the very antithesis of it. The most glaring example of this is when he decides to take hostages and kill them if the villagers do not tell him about the priest's hiding place. This is hardly likely to inspire trust and confidence in the people. Yet he is not an unkind person.

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After he has had the long discussion with the priest, he actually seeks out someone to hear his confession and even obtains a bottle of brandy for the priest.

His views of the priest are coloured by his affiliations to a political cause and yet when he speaks to the priest he is disturbed for he realizes that he is an intelligent, kind, humble man and not the stereotypical Catholic clergyman he had been expecting. At the end of the novel when his mission of capturing the priest is accomplished, he does not experience the sense of achievement he should have, rather there is a sense of loss and sadness. He is troubled by thoughts whether he has done what is right by capturing the priest and ultimately executing him.

The mestizo

The mestizo, who betrays the priest, has an important role. As per the Christian imagery he plays the role of Judas who betrayed Christ. Yet, while his aim is to get the priest arrested and killed, he offers the priest opportunity after opportunity to prove his worth as a man of heroic character. When they first meet, the priest cares for him and sends him to town on a mule. When the mestizo traps him and lures him back into the state to be captured he actually offers the priest a chance to irrevocably commit himself to the lofty ideals that as a priest he should aim for. The mestizo actually asks the priest to pray for him. The priest offers him advice out of his hard earned sagacity that forgiveness has to be earned and worked for within one's soul. He himself has attempted to do that and yet does not find a priest to confess to and that troubles him. The mestizo has the priest to confess to, yet he has not done the soul searching that true confession requires. In a way the mestizo is the antithesis of the priest. The priest can look at him and see in him what he once was and thus can also sympathize with him.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. At the beginning of the story, why is the priest fleeing the police?
2. Which incident brings about the ultimate realization of the priest's guilt and unworthiness?
3. As per the Christian imagery, who plays the role of Judas in this story?

4.4 D.H. LAWRENCE: SONS AND LOVERS

D.H. Lawrence was born on 11 September 1885 in Eastwood England. He was a son of a coal miner who lived in a small mining town. His mother inculcated in him and all his siblings love of books and faith in religious beliefs. They were taught to strive always for self improvement. His mother wanted her children to move out of this mining class of which she felt she was a victim.

Lawrence nursed a desire to be a teacher. In 1906 he took admission in Nottingham University college. He wrote poetry and started work on his first novel *White Peacock*. He was inclined towards socialist ideas in the college. He graduated in 1908 but did not enjoy his college life. Lawrence started working as a teacher and gradually became a part of London literary circles. He was in an intense relationship

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with a woman called Jessie Chambers who was hated by her mother. During the First World War, his marriage to a German lady becomes a matter of controversy. On 2 March 1930, he died in Venice after a prolonged suffering from tuberculosis.

Lawrence drew so intently on his autobiography, on the passions and convictions that the circumstances of his own life had developed in him, that sometimes personal feeling spills over and the story is spoiled by an excess of emotion by spluttering outburst of hate or a murky, wrought, highly throbbing symbolism that suggest hysteria rather than artistic control. This was the penalty he paid for his kind of insight, which was intimately bound to his own needs and activities.

D.H. Lawrence also created a new kind of novel, though very different from Joyce's and his legacy, too, proved less available than might have been expected. *Sons and Lovers* (1913) deals with ties connecting mother and son with an emotional precision and clarity of compelling detail that derive by part from the autobiographical nature of the novel; it is a striking achievement, though technically it shows nothing new. The theme involves exploration of family relationships of a sort in which Lawrence always retained a passionate interest. Ties of blood and call from the outside, the different ways in which maternal and filial love can operate and the stultifying or liberating effects of such love, the conflicting claims of protectiveness and self realization—these are characteristic Lawrentian preoccupations. In *Sons and Lovers*, the background conflict is that between the hero's working-class father and his refined middle class mother, the rift between the father with his coarse vitality and the mother who turns to her sons for emotional fulfillment denied from her husband. The resulting pressure on the hero is brilliantly shown in particular incidents and situations. The claim of sexual love then asserts itself and the tension mounts. The novel ends with the mother's death and a sort of liberation for the hero.



Fig. 4.2 D.H. Lawrence

In *Sons and Lovers* the mother is treated with great tenderness, in spite of Lawrence's clear acknowledgement of the effect of her love on her son's masculinity. But more and more the genteel culture for which the mother stood—as Lawrence mother did—came to represent death for Lawrence. In many of his latter works, especially in some

of his short stories, the deadening restrictiveness of middle class conventions are challenged by forces of liberations often represented by an outsider—a peasant, a gypsy, a working man, a primitive of some kind, someone freed by circumstance or personal effort from the distorting or mechanizing world that Lawrence saw in modern industrial society. Lawrence was not, however, a social reformer. His main interest was always human relationships, the problem of reconciling full self realization with true love of another.

The Rainbow (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920) show Lawrence extending the scope of the novel though not by means of any immediately obvious innovations in techniques. Lawrence takes three generations and probing both vertically and horizontally explores with great power and subtlety all the basic human relationships between man and his environment, the relationship between the generations, the relationship between men and women, the relationship between instinct and intellect and above all the proper basis of the marriage relationship as he conceived it. This sort of novel had nothing to do with chronicle novel then becoming popular throughout Europe. It was rather, as per F R Leavis', a dramatic poem in which a passionate imagination, working through a prose sometime incantatory in its poetic movement, selected and presented the smallest incidents for its suggestive and symbolic power. The high poetic symbolisms go side by side with an acute surface realism, a sharp sense of time and place, and brilliant topographical detail.

Aaron's Rod (1922), draws heavily on Lawrence's own experience in Italy and elsewhere and on his relationship with his German-born wife. In spite of brilliant individual passages, the novel fails to convince as a sustained work because of the basic motivational force which operates on the principal characters projected directly from Lawrence's own life without being made convincing or even intelligible to the reader in terms of the novel. Problems of moral and political leadership as well as the questions of which partner should dominate in marriage were now much on his mind. These are seen, too, in *Kangaroo*, 1923, set in Australia and containing moments of brilliant insight into Australian society and psychology together with passages transcribed straight out of his disputes with his wife.

With *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1928, Lawrence returned to the central theme of his earlier novels—the possibilities of adequate human relationships in modern civilization—but in a story whose symbolic action is so crude and whose basic structure is so mechanical that it is great pity that, because of its frankness about sex, it remains the only one of his novels that most people read.

Much of Lawrence's writing reveals his deep sense of English provincial life in which—in spite of all his wanderings abroad—his sensibility was really deeply rooted, much as George Eliot's was. This sense of intimacy with the English lifestyle is found in *Women in Love* and together with his deep understanding of provincial middle class and working class patterns of thought and feeling and the relationship between them, in many of the short stories. *Fanny and Annie*, *Daughters of the Vicar*, *The Horse Dealers Daughters*, *The Fox*, *The Christening* and *Tickets Please* are some of the stories that reveal the deep Englishness of Lawrence.

Lawrence is less likely to fall into passages of murk or hysteria in his short stories because he has less space in which to maneuver and therefore works with

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more concentration. But the short stories are no less disturbing than the novels: Lawrence's aim is to project character and incident in such a way as to force on the reader a radically new apprehension of the meaning of human personality and human relationships. And the assault is frontal, not through the slow and complex accumulation of moving moments whose total effect might in retrospect seem to be challenging.

The Age

It is impossible for any writer to remain untouched by the social, political, intellectual and cultural environment of the times. Every writer depicts the characteristics of his age as he generally records life. In order to understand well the writings of an author, knowledge of the times in which he lived is essential. Hence, you shall study the social and the literary background that influenced the works of D.H. Lawrence.

The two important factors that influenced the social life and literary sphere of this period were imperialism that led to the two world wars and the wave of social unrest as a result of decline in religious faith and social or moral values.

The rapid growth of industrialization in England in the Victorian age marked the shift of England from an agrarian country to an industrial one, bringing about a rapid change in the social life of the people. By the end of the nineteenth century there was a total change towards urbanization with a breakdown of the agrarian way of life. The simultaneous coming up of industrialization and urbanization brought with it many problems. The industrial towns grew in a haphazard and congested manner. Often, there was absence of basic amenities leading to reduction of the living standards of people to almost inhuman conditions. There was a marked rise in vice and crime and a gradual decline in the standards of spiritual and ethical values.

Acquisition of wealth became the ultimate objective of a gentleman's life. All human relationships came to be regarded in terms of money. The evil effects of industrialization are remarkably reflected in the works of the twentieth century novelists like Ruskin and Carlyle, who severely condemned the commercialization of this age. Certain spiritual values seemed to be vanishing with the gradual decline of the rural way of life and urban societies led to the establishment of material values in life. The new age, however, was not without its possible aspects. There came into being a welfare state—with the state taking on the responsibility for educating and ensuring the well being of the individual. However, writers continued to think that the agrarian way of living was the ideal form of life and their works mentioned agricultural life with nostalgia.

As a result of all these changes, there started a period of uncertainty and moral perplexity. The blind faith in social belief and tradition was given up with rational and scientific questioning. However, the Victorian writer in spite of this questioning was never critical of the very fundamentals of the social and moral order.

Among other changes, the most important change was the enhancement of the position of women. Women were no longer confined to the four walls of the house but had a significant role to play in the family and the society. The movement of women's liberation got a strong momentum with the spread of education and a tendency towards democratization. There was now a general allowance and encouragement for the women to go in for higher education and their right to vote was strongly advocated.

The tenets of Christianity were no longer accepted unquestioningly. Contemporary religious scholars and philosophers like Max Muller shattered the concept of supremacy of Christianity. The theory of evolution of Charles Darwin threatened the very basis of the Christian faith. Hence, the satisfaction of the Victorians was shed off and there was a gradual loss of faith in God and religion.

With weakening of religious faith under the influence of science and rationalism, public issues could no longer be moulded with religious controversies.

There arose a keen interest in the study of nature of man in philosophy and metaphysics. The assessment of human behaviour was greatly revolutionized with the psychological theories propounded by Freud followed by Jung and Bergson.

Freud declared man to be a biological phenomenon, a creature of instincts and impulses. He laid emphasis on the powers of the unconscious to affect the conduct of man. Now more emphasis began to be assigned to the study of the unconscious. The normal were also recognized to be anxious and abnormal to a certain extent. It was established by Freud and his followers that neurosis and other signs of abnormality are a result of repressed sex instincts. His theory of Oedipus complex was strongly propounded and thoroughly exploited by the twentieth century writers (like D.H. Lawrence). It became established that man's intellectual communications were actually the rationalizations of his emotional needs. Emphasis began to be placed on feeling and intuition rather than the intellect, which had all through been regarded as a means of true and real understanding.

The psychological theories of Freud and his followers were not only confined to the literary field, but also imparted a considerable influence on the private and family relationships. The theory of Oedipus complex led to the interpretation of various relationships in its terms. It is now believed that mothers could naturally be jealous of their daughters or daughters-in-law. Sons were supposed to have greater attachment for their mothers rather than their fathers. The daughters were bound to be more attached to their fathers. All such relationships were pervaded with sexual undertones. For instance, T.S. Eliot interpreted *Hamlet* in terms of Oedipus complex. All abnormal human conduct occurs from repressed sex instincts. It was believed that the behaviour of a man was the direct outcome of his early development as a child as the old authoritarian pattern of family relationships had broken up.

The questioning of authority and with dismantling of traditional patterns of human relationships, there was an environment of tensions and frustrations. The age became pervaded with the temper of anti-heroism. Various factors including unemployment and economic depression added to the hardship of life. The sense of security unlike the Victorian age was lost due to the shaking foundation of the social and political order and beside the forces of labour legislation, democratization and dissemination of scientific ideas added to the deteriorating situation. The evolution of strong durable convictions that form the basis of emotional stability was not allowed because of the rapid scientific advancement. Man lost faith in God and became rootless and this rootlessness brought its own problems and frustrations and thus, it led to severe anxiety that became the most important characteristic of this age. In the literary sphere there was a rapid decline in the literature that was produced because of the commercialization of the printing press. The cheap literature catered to the needs of

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the general public and they were abundant in vulgarity and brutality. The themes of popular literature were no longer touching upon human relationships but had taken over by violence, crime and mediocre love stories.

One could say that this age was noticeably an age of popularization and commercialization. Even the serious literature, in order to survive, had to adapt itself to this new world that lacked ethical values and principles.

Psychological theories of Freud and others made symbolism quite significant in presenting the literary work and also the stream of consciousness evolved as a very considerable literary technique. In addition, realism became a major part of literature instead of an inclination towards pastoralism and romanticism.

The works of D.H. Lawrence reflected the dehumanizing effects of modernity and industrialization.

Novels

Lawrence is perhaps best known for his novels *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Within these Lawrence explores the possibilities for life and living within an industrial setting. In particular, Lawrence is concerned with the nature of relationships that can be had within such settings. Though often classed as a realist, Lawrence's use of his characters can be better understood with reference to his philosophy. His depiction of sexual activity, though shocking at the time, has its roots in this highly personal way of thinking and being. It is worth noting that Lawrence was very interested in human touch behaviour and that his interest in physical intimacy has its roots in a desire to restore our emphasis on the body, and re-emphasis on the mind. In his later years Lawrence developed the potentialities of the short novel form in *St Mawr*, *The Virgin and the Gypsy* and *The Escaped Cock*.

Short Stories

Lawrence's best-known short stories include *The Captain's Doll*, *The Fox*, *The Ladybird*, *Odour of Chrysanthemums*, *The Princess*, *The Rocking-Horse Winner*, *St Mawr*, *The Virgin and the Gypsy* and *The Woman who Rode Away*.

Amongst his most prized collections is *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories*, published in 1914. His collection *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories*, published in 1928, develops his themes of leadership that he also explored in novels such as *Kangaroo*, *The Plumed Serpent* and *Fanny and Annie*.

Poetry

Although best known for his novels, D.H. Lawrence wrote almost 800 poems, most of them relatively short. His first poems were written in 1904 and two of his poems, *Dreams Old* and *Dreams Nascent*, were among his earliest published works in *The English Review*. His early works clearly place him in the school of Georgian poets, a group not only named after the reigning monarch but also to the romantic poets of the previous Georgian period whose work they were trying to emulate.

Just as World War I dramatically changed the works of many poets who saw service in the trenches, Lawrence's own work saw a dramatic change, during his

years in Cornwall. During this time, he wrote free verse influenced by Walt Whitman. He set forth his manifesto for much of his later verse in the introduction to *New Poems*.

Lawrence rewrote many of his novels several times to perfect them and similarly he returned to some of his early poems when they were collected in 1928. This was in part to fictionalize them, but also to remove some of the artifice of his first works. His best known poems are probably those dealing with nature such as those in *Birds*, *Beasts and Flowers* and *Tortoises*. *Snake*, one of his most frequently anthologized, displays some of his most frequent concerns.

Although Lawrence could be regarded as a writer of love poems, he usually dealt in the less romantic aspects of love such as sexual frustration or the sex act itself. Lawrence's works after his Georgian period were clear in the modernist tradition. They were often very different to many other modernist writers, such as Ezra Pound. Modernist works were often severe in which every word was carefully worked on and hard-fought for. Lawrence felt all poems had to be personal sentiments and that spontaneity was vital for any work. He called one collection of poems *Pansies* partly for the simple transient nature of the verse but also a pun on the French word *panser*, to dress or bandage a wound. *The Noble Englishman* and *Don't Look at Me* were removed from the official edition of *Pansies* on the grounds of obscenity, which he felt wounded by. Even though he lived most of the last ten years of his life abroad, his thoughts were often still on England. Published in 1930, just eleven days after his death, his last work *Nettles* was a series of bitter nettling but often wry attacks on the moral climate of England.

Two notebooks of Lawrence's unprinted verse were posthumously published as *Last Poems* and *More Pansies*. These contain two of Lawrence's most famous poems about death, *Bavarian Gentians* and *The Ship of Death*.

Sons and Lovers: Summary

The novel is written in two parts. The first part focuses on Mrs. Morel and her marriage to a miner. He drinks, she argues, they have fights- even physical ones and their marriage is not a happy one. Mrs. Morel turns towards her sons for comfort and succor, especially to the older, William, who is her favourite. She gets very upset when he gets a job and moves to London, away from her. When William falls sick and dies she is destroyed until Paul, her second son falls sick too and almost dies. She then turns her attention to Paul and they have a close relationship from then on.

Paul loves a woman called Miriam Leivers who lives on a farm close by. They have a close relationship for years but because Mrs. Morel does not approve of Miriam, Paul's feelings towards her are not clear. Perhaps this is also the reason they do not marry. Paul meets another woman called Clara through Miriam. Clara is separated from her husband. As they become close, Clara discusses his relationship with Miriam and suggests that he should bring his relationship to the next level and consummate it. Paul returns to Miriam to understand how she feels. They consummate their love but Paul is not happy and he leaves Miriam realizing his love for his mother is the strongest. Miriam is unhappy but agrees to the breakup.

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for Miriam's family and Clara's husband, Baxter, Lawrence makes no attempt to extend the novel further in depth or breadth.

Going beyond mere connections between the characters, Lawrence casts over each an idea, so that when Clara Dawes and Miriam, for example, come together with Paul in the center, they do so as the meeting of two ideas, as well as two people. Similarly, Paul's parents have extension value beyond their singularly unhappy situation. If we compare the Morels with another finely drawn pair of parents, the Gants in Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*, we immediately recognize the difference in Lawrence's intentions. The Gants are superb as characters; they live fully amidst their eccentricities and idiosyncrasies. In fact, these very qualities give them distinction and individuality, indeed make them live as particular people.

On the contrary, the Morels are always more typical than particular, more the semi-educated 'aristocratic' woman with the semi-articulate 'peasant' husband than people whose specific characteristics remain in our minds. What we do remember about Mrs. Morel is her moral tightness, a Puritanical strain that kills life; what we remember about Walter Morel is his easy-going sensuality, his physical being and black limbs. Our memory, then, is more of a stereotypical contrast than of distinctive qualities. The war between the parents is a war between, on one hand, culture and, on the other, half-culture, a war between mental consciousness and primitive animalism, a war between Spirit (intellect) and Soul (body), as Lawrence later defined these terms.

Likewise, the relationships between Mrs. Morel and Paul and between Paul and Miriam are also full of complex reactions. That is, Lawrence has removed the individual need, the individual reaction, the individual frustration and conflict to a more universal need and conflict. As yet, in *Sons and Lovers*, he is still concerned with certain particulars, perhaps because the novel is so clearly autobiographical; but Lawrence was ready to suggest only universal situations, and his characters are no longer within a realistic world. Cast over all is Lawrence's idea of life, his idea of reality. It is at this point that a novelist becomes a poet in its generic sense, a maker and creator, a seer and prophet. This tendency, not so apparent in *The White Peacock*, to Lawrence is centered in the age-old conflict between mother, son, and potential daughter-in-law.

It is fitting that Lawrence should have attempted to universalize his material around Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex, a condition universal in the history of mankind. Along these lines, in his Foreword to *Sons and Lovers*, cast in a Biblically pompous language, Lawrence, among other remarks, said:

'...but the man who is the go-between from Woman to Production of the lover of that woman. And if that Woman be his mother, then is he her lover in part only; he carries for her, but is never received into her for his confirmation and renewal, and so wastes himself away in the flesh. The old son-lover take a wife, then is she not his wife, she is only his bed. And his life will be torn in twain, and his wife in her despair shall hope for sons, that she may have her lover in her hour.'

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Here we have the entire import of the conflict in the novel. Paul is a son-lover unable to bring to his 'wife' wholeness, and she in turn will remain unfulfilled until she becomes a mother-lover, and so on. Lawrence, who violently opposed Freud and his 'scientism', for reasons noted below, found in the Oedipus complex a type of universal interpretation that provided both continuity with the past and a means to comment upon the present. In brief, Paul's union with his mother both fulfills and emasculates him, both completes him and leaves him unfinished.

Working outward from the Oedipus complex itself, Lawrence was able to give shape to several general themes: in Mrs. Morel, we find the intellectually superior, physically soulless female whose sexual responses become increasingly more frigid. Opposite her is the sensual miner, Morel, close to the earth in occupation and spirit, open in his responses to life, fond of singing, dancing and drinking; a man slowly crushed to a non-entity by his wife's spirituality and withdrawal from his kind of reality. A possible domestic hero, he slowly disappears from the novel as Mrs. Morel possesses her sons in turn.

Morel, early in the novel, is described as 'soft, non-intellectual, warm, a kind of gamboling' creature; later, as: '... there was a slight shrinking, a diminishing in his assurance. Physically even, he shrank, and his fine full presence waned. He never grew in the least stout, so that, as he sank from his erect, assertive bearing, his physique seemed to contract along with his pride and moral strength'. Yet, Mrs. Morel continues to strive with him. Too much of a Puritan—part of her inheritance—and too full of her high moral sense to leave Morel, she tries to remake him through continual opposition and ridicule. Driven to fierceness by her realization that she had once loved this man, she bullies him with Puritanical strictures. She drives him to drunkenness, lying, cowardice, and then castigates him for sinning. Discontented with what Morel is and anxious to have him change, she destroys him while trying to ennoble him. In making Morel into a complete outsider—a shadowy householder who emerges from the mines only to disappear into the bars—she of course scars her own feelings; but she, unlike him, retains her worth. As Lawrence writes: 'She also had the children'.

As to Morel himself—whom Lawrence reveals only from the outside or from Mrs. Morel's point of view—we see the man reacting in the sole way he can, becoming a bully, a freak, a spiritual stone, and by so doing only aggravating the sterile relationship. Too much of a 'man' to accede to his wife's demands, he resists until, finally, his manhood breaks to pieces. Left alone, he has nothing to turn to; inwardly, he is empty of values, and, outwardly, his physical part, the flesh, has been denied. Just as Paul, after his mother's death, is to become a 'Derelict' (as Lawrence titled the final chapter), so Morel is already adrift in Mrs. Morel's wake. 'Morel made the meal alone, brutally. He ate and drank more noisily than he had need. No one spoke to him. The family life withdrew, shrank away, and became hushed as he entered. But he cared no longer about his alienation'. His only answer is to meet Mrs. Morel's gentility with his exaggerated vulgarity. Lawrence's very prose in the above passage is cruel in its brief frankness, in its description of a man now more animal than human.

So Morel is effaced—one part of the Oedipus situation has been fulfilled. The husband no longer rules the household: Lawrence emphasizes that Morel dominates

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only the hearth, the sole part of the home still sanctified for the male, while the rest of the social activity proceeds smoothly without him. Frustrated by her marriage, Mrs. Morel turns to her sons and gains husband substitutes, though only one at a time, for her high moral sense dictates monogamy. Once she 'seizes' William, the split in the family is irremediable, merely to be intensified as Paul succeeds to William's place. For his part, William finds himself involved in a frantic attachment to Lily, whose slipshod manner strikingly recalls Morel's own; yet William, tied as he is to Mrs. Morel, is unable to avoid an obviously poor match based solely on sexual infatuation. Disrespecting Lily as much as Mrs. Morel does Morel, William mocks his fiancée before his mother, and by so doing vide only temporary sexual satisfaction.

Recognizing this, Mrs. Morel warns him against marrying the girl – 'Nothing', she says, 'is as bad as a marriage that's hopeless failure' – but William has already been destroyed by his mother's influence. Split into parts, he cannot leave Lily because of her physical appeal or Mrs. Morel because 'he was accustomed to having all his thoughts sifted through his mother's mind'. Thus William as a unified person is destroyed; divided into pieces, he drives himself into a life whose substance he can neither order nor even understand. Destroyed young by his mother, William, suitably, dies under her care.

Shortly after William's death, Paul falls ill with pneumonia, and when he recovers, Mrs. Morel has captured his spirit, making him the successor to his older brother in her affections. In turn, Paul's illness saves Mrs. Morel by taking her mind off William. With the consummation of the new marriage, Part One of *Sons and Lovers* ends, to begin, in Part Two, with Miriam, who also, as Paul sees her, has the motherly instincts to possess him. Love, Lawrence recognized, was a prime requisite of life, but love means attachment, while life, real life, can take place only in the individual. Therefore, the conflict, inherent in all meaningful activity, is between love and life.

Lawrence wrote that the 'central law of all organic life is that each organism is intrinsically isolate and single in itself'. Yet the individual, he tells us again, can be fulfilled only through contact, specifically between a man and woman who must preserve the 'intrinsic otherness of each participant'. The love of both Mrs. Morel and Miriam, as Lawrence presents them, denies this 'otherness', and therefore their love forfeits the elements of a true feeling which would build, while theirs destroys and debilitates. Love is necessary, but too much love can cause death or strangulation. Thus the necessity of polarization and of real balance.

When Paul comes to Miriam, he is, of course, off balance. As long as his mother dominates him, he is unable to come to terms with Miriam, or, in fact, with any woman, except for physical necessity, and therefore his unsatisfactory relationship with Clara Dawes. Lawrence repeatedly warned, as if answering his puritanical critics, that the flesh was only holy if the spirit (intellect) were holy. The one without the other – Paul had only flesh in Clara Dawes – is as futile as spirit alone. The two together will bring out the god-hero in man, will dignify him, will enable him to flower in himself.

When Paul is with Miriam, he lacks completely this sense of fulfillment that he expects from life. He suggests what life should mean to him when he describes one of

his sketches to Miriam; she had remarked that one sketch in particular seemed so true, and he answered: It's because – it's because there is scarcely any shadow in it; it's more shimmery, as if I'd painted the shimmery protoplasm in the leaves and everywhere, and not the stiffness of the shape. That seems dead to me. Only this shimmeriness is the real living. The shape is a dead crust. The shimmer is inside really.

This 'shimmer' Paul quests for in painting and life, and while he wins first prizes in the former, he finds little satisfaction in the other. Unable to flower in himself, Paul can find no salvation in a single person. He is himself a flower plucked, not cultivated in its natural surroundings, therefore, his rage at Miriam's attitude toward flowers, and Lawrence's insistence on Mrs. Morel's garden and love of flowers. Both love flowers, particularly Miriam, not for themselves but as possessions, as beauty which they can control. In an essay on 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside', in Phoenix, Lawrence wrote of this connection:

'Now the love of flowers is a very misleading thing. Most women love flowers as possessions and as trimmings. They can't look at a flower, and wonder a moment, and pass on. If they see a flower that arrests their attention, they must at once pick it, and pluck it. Possession! A possession! Something added on to me! And most of this so-called love of flowers today is merely this reaching out of possession and egoism: something I've got; something that embellishes me.'

Thus, Paul turns to Miriam as she crouches and kisses the flowers, and angrily asks why she always clutches things and pulls the heart out of them. 'You wheedle the soul out of things ... I would never wheedle – at any rate, I'd go straight'. In a later scene, as Paul becomes the center of a silent conflict between Miriam and Clara, he also pulls out flowers in bunches, and when the latter asks him what right he has to do so, he answers that there are plenty for him to pluck and that their beauty pleases him. Here, he does not wheedle he 'goes straight' – Miriam will be his sacrifice, will be deflowered because he needs part of her. Then he turns to Clara and almost for the first time notices her breasts swinging in her blouse, her graceful arching back, her proud neck, her overall desirable figure.

Here, in one brief scene, is Paul's situation, caught as he is between his sense and his senses, between the influence of his mother and the real pangs of his own desire. Later, near the end of the novel, when Paul returns to Miriam, he realizes that marriage with her is still impossible, although it is also the only solution for both of them. As they go out, supposedly to part forever, he gives her flowers, dripping out of the jar, and she takes them, as she would have taken Paul himself, snipped off from his past and now drifting away into the dark.

According to the original of Miriam, one Jessica Chambers, whom Lawrence knew in his youth, Lawrence was so tied to his mother that he could not be normal with another woman. In her book on Lawrence, E.T., as she signed herself, claimed that his mother was both a parent and a lover; so that he constantly split his interest in women into spiritual (Miriam) and physical (Clara) attachments. In Miriam, he saw his mother and was unable to find sexual satisfaction, while after he married another woman (Frieda von Richthoven) for sex, E.T. claimed, Lawrence wanted to continue seeing her for the intellectual interests they shared. Accordingly, E.T. feels that

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Lawrence completely falsifies Miriam; he could not give of himself, and in order to put his mother on a pedestal, he presented a caricature of their real relationship. She remarks that it was impossible to tell Lawrence this, so attached was he to his mother; and so he came to Miriam as to a mother, making any sexual relationship psychologically impossible for him. In the book, Clara Dawes provides a sexual outlet, unobtained by Lawrence in real life until his marriage to Frieda, already the mother of three children by a previous marriage. So far as Lawrence falsified, E.T. stresses that no one would recognize that Miriam wanted a physical and spiritual relationship while he tried to make it entirely spiritual.

For psychological reasons, Lawrence legitimately made several changes in his affair with E.T.; however, the real point is not whether he changed the original relationship, but what significance he attached to the changes. Lawrence found in the disintegration of Paul a peculiar symbol of modern man, of all men who are unable to achieve a balance between sex and purpose in life. Assert one at the expense of the other, he repeated, and you fall either into collapse or sterility. 'You have got to base your great purposive activity upon the intense sexual fulfillment of all your individuals. That was how Egypt endured. But you have got to keep your sexual fulfillment even then subordinate, just subordinate to the great passion of purpose: subordinate by a hair's breadth only: but still, by that hair's breadth, subordinate'. These words from *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922) underscore Lawrence's insistent belief in the individual Holy Ghost, the voice of the self in its wholeness, which makes balance and proportion possible. In terms of Paul, purpose in life is fulfilled – first prizes in painting contests and supervisory position in his factory – yet he remains sterile, a typical twentieth century man Lawrence later labeled him. His mother, by spiritualizing sex, has made it meaningful only as love, family, babies, not simply as a means of fulfillment in which man proves his maleness and woman her femaleness.

Sons and Lovers: Characters

Gertrude Morel - She is the main character in the first part of the novel. She is unhappy with her husband and dedicates all of her attention and time to her children.

Paul Morel - He is the son of Gertrude and the author focuses on him in the second part of the novel. After his brother William dies his mother considers him her favourite and he has to balance his affections between his mother and the women in his life which becomes a challenge for him throughout the novel thereon.

Walter Morel - He is Gertrude's husband and a coal miner.

William Morel - The first son of Gertrude and Walter and his mother's favourite until he becomes sick and dies.

Annie Morel - She is Paul Morel's older sister. She joins with her brother Paul in deciding to give their mother an overdose of morphine when she is on her deathbed at the end of the novel.

Arthur Morel - Another son of the Morel family and younger brother of Paul, he is a minor character.

Miriam Leivers - She is from Willey Farm and a friend of Paul. She later becomes his first love.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

4. What do the sons think about their father?
5. What does Paul give Miriam as they supposedly part forever? What is the significance?
6. What does the mother's death at the end of the novel signify?

ACTIVITY

What was the theme of Lawrence's novel, *Women in Love*, and how is the novel unique from his other books?

4.5 SUMMARY

- In this unit, we have critically analysed the work of two novelists-Graham Greene and D.H. Lawrence. All three are writers of the twentieth century.
- *The Power and the Glory*, which is probably Greene's most elaborate and complex novel, has generated extensive critical discussions and comments. The novel has been defined as an allegory, a morality play, or a modern parable and identified with other related genres.
- *The Power and the Glory* ranks amongst the best novels of the century primarily because it is a work of deep psychological and human relevance (rather than a philosophical or theological treatise), and because the whisky-priest is an authentic, complex, human being. His personality develops and changes before our very eyes, and he enlists our sympathy and admiration as an Everyman. This is probably the secret of the extraordinary appeal that *The Power and the Glory* has had for many readers who do not necessarily subscribe to any of the theological or philosophical attitudes that have been regarded as 'the message' of the novel. The conflict of ideologies, the theological argument, the allegorical significance of characters and events are clearly all there, but these aspects of the novel cannot be taken as substitutes for the human factor which is the core of the novel.
- *Sons and Lovers* uses the Oedipus complex as its base for exploring Paul's relationship with his mother. Paul is hopelessly devoted to his mother, and that love often borders on romantic desire. Completing the Oedipal equation, Paul murderously hates his father and often fantasizes about his death. Paul assuages his guilty, incestuous feelings by transferring them elsewhere, and the greatest receivers are Miriam and Clara. However, Paul cannot love either woman nearly as much as he does his mother. Lawrence adds a twist to the Oedipus complex: Mrs. Morel desires both William and Paul in near-romantic ways, and she despises all their girlfriends.

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4.6 KEY TERMS

- **Bourgeois:** related to or characteristic of the social middle class
- **Stream of consciousness:** is a narrative device used in literature to depict the various feelings and thoughts that pass through the mind. Was coined by William James

4.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. He is fleeing the police because he is a priest, a man of God, and religion has been declared illegal in his state.
2. The meeting of the priest with his daughter, Brigida, brings about the ultimate realization of his guilt and unworthiness.
3. The mestizo, who betrays the priest, has an important role. As per the Christian imagery he plays the role of Judas who betrayed Christ.
4. The sons hate their father and are jealous of him.
5. As they go out, supposedly to part forever, Paul gives Miriam flowers, dripping out of the jar, and she takes them, as she would have taken Paul himself, snipped off from his past and now drifting away into the dark.
6. The mother's death at the end of the novel signifies a sort of liberation for the hero.

4.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What was the role played by the mestizo in *The Power and the Glory*?
2. What was the role of Brigida in bringing out the priest's guilt?
3. Define the theme of *Sons and Lovers*.
4. Write a note on Paul's relationships with Miriam and Clara.
5. Describe the marital relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Morel.

Long-Answer Questions

1. The priest is not a perfect hero. Discuss.
2. Explain the power and the glory from the perspectives of various characters in Greene's novel.
3. Lawrence could be cruel to his characters in terms of the description of their weaknesses. Explain this statement with the help of examples from the novel.
4. Trace the rise of the novel in the twentieth century.

4.9 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 FICTION: TWENTIETH CENTURY - II

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Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Unit Objectives
- 5.2 Alice Walker: *The Color Purple*
- 5.3 E.M. Forster: *A Passage to India*
- 5.4 Summary
- 5.5 Key Terms
- 5.6 Answers to 'Check your Progress'
- 5.7 Questions and Exercises
- 5.8 Further Reading

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The Color Purple was Alice Walker's third novel. It was published in the year 1982. The novel was not just a financial success but also a critical one. It came to be considered a milestone in Walker's creative journey. In addition to praise, the novel invited a lot of criticism for dealing with controversial and unorthodox themes. Many critics were opposed to her manner of portraying black men, which was thought to be negative. The novel was made into a film in 1985 directed by Steven Spielberg. While the movie brought more fame, Walker was criticized for improper portrayal of men in her novel. On the other hand, she was appreciated for her real depiction of black women. The use of the epistolary technique was welcomed by critics.

Walker's ability to incorporate the language of the black folks also caught the attention of the critics. Walker's involvement during her early days in the civil rights activities that took place during the 1960s, finds resonance in the novel. In *The Color Purple*, as found in her other works, Walker focuses on the issue of dual repression faced by black women in the American context. Walker argues that black women are marginalized by the callousness of the white community, and also face discrimination from black males. The civil rights movement affected Walker's critical perception regarding racial problems at home, simultaneously drawing her attention towards the African continent. During the 1960s, an extraordinary interest in ethnic and racial tradition brought many African Americans to investigate their origins in Africa. The central theme of *The Color Purple* identifies Walker's desire to reflect a positive side of life, even when faced with harsh conditions.

Her central character emerges a winner by fighting adverse situations and characters. Even the other significant theme of the good overpowering evil is undoubtedly another reason for the book's great success.

A Passage to India was published in 1924, and had the unique distinction of being E. M. Forster's first novel in over a decade, as well as his final novel. The novel is multi-layered and makes abundant use of symbolism, thus becoming nuanced and rich in its content. Ostensibly, the main theme of the novel is the state of India at the

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time when it was colonized and the difficult relationships and undercurrents between Indian and British people. It also seems to explore the complex issue of founding friendships despite cultural differences. Besides this, the novel seems to be concerned with faith—which may be religious or faith regarding social traditions. To convey his own skepticism regarding inter-cultural friendships, Foster uses Dr. Aziz, who is eager to form friendships with British people but ends up in trouble, when he is accused of rape a young English lady.

5.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- State the importance of the works of Alice Walker, with special emphasis on *The Color Purple*
- State the importance of the works of E.M. Foster, with special emphasis on *A Passage to India*

5.2 ALICE WALKER: THE COLOR PURPLE

Alice Walker (born 1944) is a prominent American novelist, short story writer, essayist, biographer and poet who owns the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for her work, *The Color Purple* (1982). Walker hailed from a family of sharecroppers. She went to study at Spelman College and Sarah Lawrence College. Her first published work was a book of poems, *Once* (1968). This collection narrates her journey to Africa and her experiences of civil rights movements. Her next publication, *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* (1973), was also a collection of poems. It was Walker's mouthpiece for identifying the plight of those who struggle against racism and oppression.

Walker's first novel appeared in 1970, *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*. The narrative of this novel revolves from 1900 to 1960s. It tells the story of three successive generations of farmers belonging to the coloured community. In 1973 came her short story collection, *In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black women*. This collection recounts the legacy of black women and their sufferings. Even her next story collection, *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down* (1981) wanders along the similar territory as the previous collection.

Walker bagged the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *The Color Purple*. This novel is about the life a coloured woman, Celie who is overburdened with sufferings and find a means of expression when she starts writing her despairing situation to God through her letters addressed to Him. This novel revolves around Celie's letters to God and Nettie, her sister and also Nettie's communication with Celie through letters. Her work *Langston Hughes: American Poet* (1974) is a biography of the American poet workers of the 1960s. Walker published the two poetry collections *Good Night, Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning* and *Horses Make A Landscape Look More Beautiful* in 1979 and 1984 respectively. In 1983 came out her essay collection *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*.

Her works

Novels

- *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970)
- *In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black Women* (1973)
- *Meridian* (1976)
- *The Color Purple* (1982)
- *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down: Stories* (1982)
- *To Hell With Dying* (1988)
- *The Temple of My Familiar* (1989)
- *Finding the Green Stone* (1991)
- *Possessing the Secret of Joy* (1992)
- *The Complete Stories* (1994)
- *By The Light of My Father's Smile* (1998)
- *The Way Forward Is with a Broken Heart* (2000)
- *Now Is The Time to Open Your Heart* (2005)
- *Devil's My Enemy* (2008)
- *Everyday Use* (1973) Short stories, essays, interviews

Poetry

- *Once* (1968)
- *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* (1973)
- *Good Night, Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning* (1979)
- *Horses Make a Landscape Look More Beautiful* (1985)
- *Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems* (1991)
- *Absolute Trust in the Goodness of the Earth* (2003)
- *A Poem Traveled Down My Arm: Poems And Drawings* (2003)
- *Collected Poems* (2005)
- *Hard Times Require Furious Dancing: New Poems*

Honours and Recognition

- Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *The Color Purple* (1983) (first black woman writer)
- National Book Award (1983) (first black woman writer)
- O. Henry Award for "Kindred Spirits" (1985)
- Honorary Degree by the California Institute of the Arts (1995)
- 'Humanist of the Year' by American Humanist Association (1997)
- The Lillian Smith Award from the National Endowment for the Arts

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- The Rosenthal Award from the National Institute of Arts & Letters
- The Radcliffe Institute Fellowship, the Merrill Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship
- The Front Page Award for Best Magazine Criticism from the Newswoman's Club of New York
- Induction to the California Hall of Fame in The California Museum for History, Women, and the Arts (2006)

Characters in *The Color Purple*

1. **Celie** – The poor, illiterate black woman and also the protagonist and narrator of the novel
2. **Nettie** – Celie's younger sister who is prettier than her. She moves to Africa to preach and faithfully writes letters to Celie for decades.
3. **Alphonso** – He is Celie and Nettie's stepfather, who the sisters think is their real father. He remains an abuser till the end.
4. **Mr. Johnson/ Albert** – Celie's husband who abuses her for years but gets transformed at the end and seeks friendship.
5. **Shug Avery** – A beautiful blues singer who becomes Celie's friend and then her lover. She nurtures Celie physically, emotionally and spiritually.
6. **Eleanor Jane** – The mayor's daughter who develops a strong attachment to Sofia who works as a maid in their house.
7. **Germaine** – The younger man who manages to win Shug's heart.
8. **Harpo** – Celie's oldest stepson who owns the local juke joint.
9. **Miss Millie** – The mayor's racist wife
10. **Kate** – Mr. Johnson's sister who insists that Celie should stand up for herself.
11. **Olivia** – Celie's daughter
12. **Adam** – Celie's son
13. **Sofia** – Harpo's wife. She is headstrong and independent.
14. **Squeak** – The nickname of Mary Agnes, Harpo's bi-racial girlfriend.
15. **Tashi** – The girl from Olinka village who finally marries Adam, Celie's son.

DID YOU KNOW?

Alice Walker, an eight year old at the time, was injured when her brother accidentally shot her in the eye with a BB gun. She became blinded in one eye as a result. Her well-known biographer, Evelyn White suggests that this event had a large impact on Walker, especially when a white doctor in town swindled her parents out of \$250 they paid to repair her injury. Walker refers to this incident in her book *Warrior Marks*, a chronicle of female genital mutilation in Africa, and uses it to illustrate the sacrificial marks women bear that allow them to be 'warriors' against female suppression.

Critical Commentary

Letters 1-10

The letter-writing structure of *The Color Purple* gives the impression of a daily diary, since Celie tells her narrative through confidential messages drafted to God. Therefore, Celie narrates her life's experiences with honesty. As a financially backward African-American woman of the countryside of Georgia and being a sufferer of domestic violence, Celie is voiceless and left alone in society. However, Celie's messages empower her to shatter confidentially the voicelessness that is usually inflicted upon her.

Celie's confessional narrative reminds one of the African-American slave narratives which took shape during the nineteenth century. These former slave narratives, which took the form of a piece of music or a rhythmical motion, a form of storytelling or other artistic creations, ruptured the muteness inflicted on the black community. Though dissimilar from Celie's messages, these slave narratives were engaged in symbols, icons, comedy, and other techniques to obscure their accurate intent. Slaves took these steps to stop the masters from understanding the slaves' skills to convey, articulate, and consider their discontent, but Celie takes no such defensive measures. Celie's messages, though absolutely candid and confessional, are at times difficult to interpret because Celie's skills to narrate her life experiences are highly limited. When Celie's cursing mother requests who fathered Celie's baby, Celie recollecting Alphonso's order to remain silent, declares the baby is God's because she has no clue what other explanation could be given.

Similarly, Celie does not know what to narrate about her mother's death, or about her violent life, or her stolen babies. Celie understands how to state the issues plainly, but often she does not understand how to interpret them. Despite the mishandlings she endures, Celie has little knowledge of injustice and expresses little or no anger.

Walker's use of Celie's own voice, even though underdeveloped, allows Walker to narrate the past lives of black women in the countryside of South in a sensitive and practical way. Unlike a historian's consideration, which can be protective and overly analytical, Celie's messages offer a strong first-person narrative of the tales of racism and sexism. Celie's lucid narrative introduces us to her isolated world with expression that uncovers both painful and detached numbness: 'My momma dead. She die screaming and cussing. She scream at me. She cuss at me.'

Like her voice, Celie's trust is significant but underdeveloped. Celie relies thoroughly on God as her listener and source of empowerment, but she at times forgets the distinction between God's agency and that of Alphonso. She confides that God, and not Alphonso, murdered her baby, and she does not make any association with the injustice she is familiar with in her life, and the power of God to overturn or stop this injustice.

Letters 11-21

In this part, Walker starts to evolve the concept that a person can attain power by reinforcing his/her own voice. The Celie we have seen so far is absolutely devoid of

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power. She is vitally an object for others. She is very passive in her interactions, particularly those with men. However, Celie displays she understands that others perceive her as a powerless object when she confides to Sofia that she is envious of her aggressive, self-defensive personality. When Kate tells Mr. Johnson that Celie desires new apparel, Celie is shown that Mr. Johnson conceives of her as hardly anything more than dirt, saying that when he examines her, it's like he's looking at the soil, seeking to work out if it desires anything.

Initially, Celie's recommendation that Harpo should abuse Sofia appears to be unlike her, but we soon realize that it is an outcome of the cyclical environment of misuse and oppression she has been exposed to. When Harpo asks Celie for her recommendation, Celie is granted an uncommon exercise to take part in the command and misuse of a woman other than herself. In her flaw and agony, Celie seizes this opportunity, but she quickly recognizes that it is a 'sin against Sofia's spirit'. Celie explains her own behaviour with astonishing sophistication, revealing and confessing to Sofia that she gave those recommendations because she is envious of the way Sofia fights back when confronted with abuse.

Sofia's observation that Celie has close-knit connections with her five powerful sisters suggests that deep bonding among women can prove to be a mighty weapon to battle sexism and abuse. Celie first observes Sofia's assertiveness and autonomy when Sofia encounters Mr. Johnson and withstands his attempts to command her. Sofia refutes Mr. Johnson's allegation that she is in problem and thus will land up on the streets. Sofia denies despairing at her own pregnancy and rejects Mr. Johnson's acts to make her miserable. Likewise, Sofia's denial to stop communicating when Mr. Johnson or Harpo goes into the room illustrates that she does not consider her persona as a woman to be taken lightly just because of her dependence on men. Sofia's defiance of the culture of patriarchy astonishes Celie.

Walker contends that mastering one's own story and finding somebody to hear and reply to it are vital steps in the direction of self-empowerment and autonomy. Celie's need for voice becomes more evident in this part, as Nettie observes that viewing Celie with Mr. Johnson and his young children is like 'seeing [Celie] buried'. Nettie is the first woman who insists Celie to fight back. Celie's explanation to Kate that she does not want to fight because it is too dangerous appears laid-back and self-defeating, but Celie is right—there are important, probably even deadly dangers inherent in resistance. Walker discovers this tug and pull between security and hazard all through the novel.

Celie is also reluctant to oppose because she needs the instruments to fight back successfully—namely, an essence of self and a proficiency to conceive and articulate her own story. Nettie tries to assist and get involved in creating Celie's sense of self by saying to Celie Mr. Johnson's praises, which Celie admits boost her self-image. Soon after, Celie starts her first efforts at self-expression when she intends to express gratitude to Kate for buying her a new dress. She becomes discouraged and flushed, incapable to find the words. Celie's struggle to assert her own sentiments, and her admission that she feels she deserves more than she has, are significant first steps in Celie's path to empowerment. Yet simultaneously, Celie's inability to express her sentiments of thankfulness to Kate, illustrates the depth of Celie's need for self-awareness.

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Celie has problems characterizing, understanding and talking about herself because, as she confesses to God, she has fallen completely numb in the face of adversity. She confesses that to get over this disability, she imagines she is a tree. Rather than cope strongly with adversity, Celie has discovered it is simpler and less troublesome to become wooden—to stay stone-faced and unthinking instead of trying to contemplate, understand, or narrate.

Letters 22-33

Here, as in the earlier segment, Celie is not able to correspond what she feels with what she says. When Shug comes and wants to care for her, Celie feels ecstatic, but she expresses nothing because she is not aware of anything and because she feels she is not in a position to speak. Celie has been voiceless for so long that she has adapted herself to believe that she has no voice of her own. Her natural response is to say nothing.

However, Celie soon realizes that her awareness of herself varies from the way other people suppose her to be. Reacting on the way she is and on people like her, Celie expresses, 'I might as well be under the table, for all they care. I hate the way I look, I hate the way I'm dress.' These reflections of self-awareness represent the baby step that Celie takes as she progresses towards empowerment.

As her understanding of self resurfaces, Celie gradually understands the inherent gaps and shortcomings in the men who try to dominate her. She also learns to counter her oppressors in an assertive manner. Analysing Mr. Johnson, Celie critically points out that he has a frail chin and wears unwashed clothes. Losing her temper at Mr. Johnson's father for his heartless remarks about Shug, Celie retaliates secretly but assertively. She plans to spit in the aged man's drinking water and threatens to put Shug's urine in his cup whenever he pays them a visit next. Celie in addition, displays her confident self when Harpo requires her suggestions regarding Sofia. Surprisingly here, Celie finds exact remarks to verbalize her accurate emotions, and she advises Harpo that causing pain to Sofia is not the right way to approach things.

Walker's thought of the mixed, multilayered natural world of closeness between women arises through Celie and Shug's relationship. Alice Walker explains sexuality and sexual preference as a parameter of possibilities and not just an alternative to two contradictory choices. Thus, like competition, sexuality can be difficult to explain, and may turn out to be more multifaceted than a conservative understanding of just heterosexuality or homosexuality. Celie's emotions for Shug have sexual undertones, but they also have their foundation in fellowship, gratefulness, solidarity, and liking. Celie does feel sexually excited on seeing Shug unclothed. But it is as sacred as her emotions of maternal tenderness that she nurtured for Shug as Celie had confessed to God when explaining how she interns Shug to bring her back to health.

Letters 34-43

Continuing with the tendency glimpsed in her preceding notes, Celie starts to take more serious approach in understanding herself and the environment she is part of. When Celie informs Shug that Mr. Johnson abuses her for 'being me and not you' she illustrates that her self-analysis is progressively turning intense and critical.

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One motivation that can be a cause for Celie's critical self-assessment is the sexual awareness that she gathers as she gets familiar with Shug's education. Shug affirms Celie is still innocent and rechristens her as Miss Celie, providing Celie a new persona both metaphorically and literally. Shug's identification that Celie is a virgin and the new title Shug bestows on Celie are significant steps towards Celie's empowerment and in her process of narrating her story it gives a boost to her self-esteem. Shug's rechristening of Celie defies the traditional concept of the issue of virginity. Shug reconstructs the notion of virginity in her own way. According to her, virginity is not lost when a man and woman develops a physical relation rather it is lost when a woman decides to indulge in pleasure of sex and finds it emotionally and physically appealing.

By reconstructing the definition of virginity, Shug boosts Celie to glimpse life from a different perspective where she should be in command of events. The sudden change of perspective provided by Shug to a woman with two kids as virgin, points out to a certain desire to unravel the hidden aspects of Celie's life. Shug makes Celie understand that there are alternative ways to live a life than to surrender to the existing social norms. Identification with these thoughts plays a major role in Celie's movement towards liberation.

Yet Sofia's penalty underlines that rebelling against and questioning existing perspectives often demands a lot of sacrifice. Sofia, who is physically sound, has an adoring family and a comfortable life does not conform to the white society's stereotypical notion of the suppressed coloured woman. Sofia asserts her disinterest to fall prey to the expected stereotypical role by responding to Miss Millie's job prospects with a definite "Hell no". However, this refusal leads to Sofia having a cleft skull, broken ribs, a body marked with bruises, and twelve years of servitude. Similarly, when Squeak opposes the action taking place by attempting to free Sofia from jail, she is raped. It is clear from the narration that whereas Walker views challenging the irrational orthodox outlooks as vital, she does not unnecessarily desire to romanticize the pains and paint a rosy picture as if it is devoid of agony or consequences.

Fortunately, Sofia and Squeak are not defeated by misfortunes. For Walker, the most important aspect of triumph is the power to narrate one's own life, and both Sofia and Squeak retain their voice. Sofia continues with her opposition even when she is made to serve Miss Millie's maid. Similarly, when Harpo endeavours to inform others of the incident of Squeak's rape, Squeak cuts him off, nudging him to keep the knowledge to himself because she intends to tell her story in her way. Just as Celie's new name endows her with the power to reinterpret her surroundings, Squeak's renaming unleashes her talent that was long buried within her. She starts singing.

Letters 44-60

After hearing Celie's narration, Shug makes Celie express herself emotionally. When Celie eventually articulates the difficult times she has survived, she does not respond like 'wood' rather she sheds tears when she understands the unhappiness of her own history. Even though Celie's latest life is a miserable one, it is way better than her previous life because of her increasing sexual and emotional connection with Shug. Celie's self-esteem evolved as an outcome of her observation and discovery through

Shug. Shug represents everything that Celie is not. Through Shug's perspective, Celie sees the likeness of her own suffering. Gradually, Celie's and Shug's influence on each other soon turns reciprocal. They start imitating each other. Celie's nurturing qualities are adopted by Shug while Celie has become assertive on being influenced by Shug.

This connection between Celie and Shug is centralized around the concept of storytelling. Innumerable times Celie informs how much she and Shug converse with each other. Their strong connection is a significant step which is radically different from Celie's previous silence. Nettie's communications furthermore foreground a narrative that was buried by silence. In discovering the notes, Celie revives Nettie's interred voice and starts to feel liberated. However, only with Shug's assistance Celie could decipher the meaning and the disconnected aspects of her life that she was unable to understand so far. The news of Nettie being alive has a positive impact on Celie. She gets exposed to the oppression and suppression that exists outside her life, in the continent of Africa.

Nettie's notes furthermore inform Celie's of the larger world one is part of. As of now *The Color Purple* was limited to exploring the lives of a few people residing in a little village in country of Georgia. Nettie's notes not only brings Celie out of her closed world but also relates her personal grief with the general suppression and exploitation that one comes across in rest of African countries.

Another significant component of Nettie's exposure was her meeting with the liberated blacks who are economically well placed in the Harlem district of New York. The concept of economically prosperous and free blacks is mostly unheard of in Southern world especially for coloured women like Nettie and Celie, who are used only to living a doubly colonized life both with their white masters as well as their coloured male counterparts. We realise that Nettie's knowledge of liberated blacks has made her more confident. Even though initially Celie does not understand this but the Harlem empowerment news too has a positive impact on her individuality and her subconscious mind.

Letters 61-69

Every now and then in *The Color Purple*, Walker reminds the readers that storytelling and communicating are vital to the understanding of self. We have glimpsed difficulties in the novel due to improper/lack of communication arising between Celie and Alphonso; between Celie and Mr. Johnson; amidst Nettie, Samuel, and Corrine; and between Celie and Nettie. As the story progresses, we see some of these distances are mended as narrative of some kind or the other takes place. One comes across communication in various forms. Celie discovers Nettie's notes, Samuel informs about his young children to Nettie, and Celie exchanges this narrative with Alphonso, discovering in the process the reality of her own life and the history of her family. Apart from highlighting these unsuccessful communications which was central to the above mentioned relationships, Walker points out towards larger communication difficulties in the world which nearly remain unaddressed. She points to the more serious problems of unsuccessful association between men and women; between Americans of black and white origin, between coloured people in America and Africans, and between Africans and European colonizers.

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Celie seems to grow more independent with the revelation of her family history. She stops depending on God for emotional and moral support. In her last letter, she tells God 'You must be asleep'. Instead she starts addressing letters to Nettie. Nettie also has turned into a different being. She has become more articulate. She has developed a strong intellectual faculty which her life as missionary has bestowed on her. Nettie is assertive in her dissatisfaction over native Africans self-centeredness and sexist attitude. By addressing the plights of women in Olinka community Walker highlights a more serious problem. Though the people of Olinka community are suppressed by the white masters (the rubber industry), the community itself is segregated between the oppressor and the oppressed. The internal domination along with Olinka's cold attitude towards the culture of African-American slavery makes the whole notion of oppressor and oppressed very complicated.

Letters 70-82

In this part, Walker presents individual religious conviction as a significant constituent to develop a powerful self. Celie has until now visualized God as someone who is placed in a distance and is probably unconcerned towards her pleadings. For her, God transforms into a white man who is no different from the other men that she has come across and who does not bother to hear the 'poor coloured women.' This concept of God visualized by Celie—and, ironically, by Nettie, Corrine, and Samuel during their missionary philanthropy—is not an exact view. In imagining God as a white man who is not concerned about her, Celie indirectly acknowledges white and male suppression and presumes that her voice can never be heard.

A significant aspect of Celie's empowerment is her new acquired financial independence. Celie's apparel design is a mode of creativity which helps one to express herself. But it also translates into entrepreneurship and paves the way towards self-sufficiency. Celie has taken stitching conventionally a household chore, and transformed it into an equipment of independence. Walker suggests that such financial self-reliance is vital for women to liberate themselves from dominance.

When she gets her family's ancestral house, Celie's life comes full circle, her self-reliance evolving into a completely independent woman, with her own finance, enterprise, article, and group of friends.

Letters 83-90

Celie's final letter gives us a glimpse of the maturity and growth her character has undergone. By introducing the aspect of writing as a key component in the process of Celie's evolution, Alice Walker underscores the significance of literacy and makes an indirect allusion to African-American slaves who are not allowed to study, to read or compose. That way they were marginalized by keeping them away from knowledge. Celie and Nettie wield the power of literacy to battle oppression. They managed to survive over the years by writing to each other which was the only way to fight oppression. Even though Celie is comparatively inferior in terms of imagination to her sister, she too learns a lot from her act of writing. In this way, Walker propounds that knowledge and awareness is vital and redeeming for every individual and should not be seen as a barricade creating a hierarchy between the educated and the uneducated.

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Though Walker celebrates heterogeneity and individuality in *The Color Purple*, the work finishes with the acknowledgement that not all dissimilarities can be assimilated. Along with the novel's significant conciliation, for example between Celie and Mr. Johnson, there are some unanswered issues at the end of the novel. Problems and continue to remain between the Olinka community and the rubber company and between Nettie and the traditional Africans. Similarly, Sofia has her doubts that she and Eleanor Jane can truly accept each other. Even Eleanor Jane's gradual sympathy with Sofia's anger is not sufficient to change the cruel past that Sofia has endured.

Walker's wants to highlight that certain differences are really unbridgeable. Though at the outset Walker's outlook may appear rather pessimistic, yet it is significant to understand that *The Color Purple* is a narrative about successful changes. Though certain issues remain unanswered as the novel comes to an end, we came across the metamorphosis of a deprived, despised woman of colour into an economically successful entrepreneur who takes pleasure in her own sexuality and is surrounded by a supportive and like-minded community.

The Society and *The Color Purple*

Alice Walker, through her epistolary novel, *The Color Purple*, intends to educate readers on various aspects of the societal problems. This approach to creativity reminds one of the novelist, Ishmael Reed. Reed is a coloured American. Reed's works mostly satires that threw light on the existing racial problems and social issues. The *Color Purple* underlines the fact that men are not aware of the requirement and the realities of women. It also deals with the theme of women helping and supporting each other to overcome and survive the problems of life.

The kind of female bonding that one comes across in *The Color Purple* is also reflected in *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1970), the autobiography of Maya Angelou. In her work Angelou celebrates the mother-daughter relationship. Although no concrete dates/years are provided, we can still identify that the novel is set sometimes in the early part of the twentieth century, sometimes between 1910 and 1940. African Americans underwent a lot of economical constraints.

But with the emergence of twentieth century, many opportunities could be availed by them to reach the path of success. Many got education and a lot many migrated from the rural South to the developing industrial North. Those who migrated carried their cultural heritage along with them, especially their songs and their stories. By the 1920s the Jazz Age had started taking shape. In this emergent culture, African-American culture and tradition came together to constitute what we call 'The Harlem Renaissance'.

In *The Color Purple* such changes are subtly expressed. The entrepreneurial abilities of Harpo finds shape as he sets up his own juke joint. Moreover, here he employs the already famous blues singer Shug as a means to popularize his shop. Shug's achievement is reflection of the age in which Celie is composing her letters for we are told she hums Bessie Smith, and wants to wipe off anxiety about the bygone times or the impending years. As we reach towards the end of the novel, the movement of opportunity is unexpected; Celie starts her own business. Celie initiates her business from the same place where her father survived and earned. Thirty years prior to Celie

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starting up her business, her father's was brought to an abrupt halt by white rivals who were keen to keep him out of race. In this new era, Walker tells us there is no reason to be concerned about Celie's opportunities, and we as readers are sure that Celie will continue to be prosperous.

When Walker's novel came out in 1982, one of the most significant and talked about aspect of the book was the way language was used. Mel Watkins of *The New York Book Review* had written that the novel 'assumes a lyrical cadence of its own... The cumulative effect is a novel that is convincing because of the authenticity of its folk voice.' The language was seminal to Walker's novel. She once recounted that after she finished her novel she sent it to a prominent women's magazine concerned about black women but they rejected the novel explaining that 'black people don't talk like that' (Garrett & McCue, 1990, p. 229). The later success of the novel identifies such statement to be unfounded, because it is Celie's specific voice that identifies her difficult situation and echoes the lives of many African Americans of her time.

Women Bonding

Throughout *The Color Purple*, Walker depicts female bonding as an alternative way for women to build the courage to narrate stories to each other. As a result of this storytelling, the session becomes their weapon to resist suppression and dominance. Bonding between women translates into a form of shelter which is filled with nurturing and caring concerns and helps to recover from aggressive male dominance.

Female relationships are multilayered: sometimes they are motherly, sometimes sisterly. Sometimes they also represent in the form of teacher and pupil. Some of them have strong sexual undertones, and some reflect happy friendship. Sofia asserts that her ability to stand against the wrong doers comes from the support she gains from her sisters. Nettie's closeness with Celie helps her survive her years in the strange and unaccustomed culture of Africa. Samuel highlights the strong bonding that Olinka women share with each other that helps them survive through the polygamous world. Most importantly, Celie's bonding with Shug helps Celie emerge into a stronger being who is self-reliant and independent.

Tradition and Change

The Color Purple presents many characters who come out of the traditionally sanctioned gender defined roles. Sofia is full of strength, Shug never shies away from displaying her sexual desires, and Harpo almost throughout comes up as an insecure person. Under a traditional parameter a man is always expected to be secured, a woman is expected to be weak and less demonstrative of her sexual desires. But these characters bring out those aspects of their gender sanctioned roles which are not stereotypical. This display of gender deviant traits also at times throws light on other aspects of gender roles. For example, we see a strong sexual attraction developing between Celie and Shug despite the fact that they have had men in their lives and are opposite in nature.

Deviation from sanctioned gender roles sometimes creates unexpected situations. Harpo's insecurity regarding his masculine abilities has bearing on his marital life and leads him to make efforts to abuse his wife Sofia in a desperate

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attempt to prove his manliness. Similarly, Shug's uninhibited display of her sexual powers and her constant challenge to male social world earns her names like being called a tramp. In her novel, Alice Walker tries to underline the multifaceted meaning that is associated with gender and sexuality. They are neither mere words nor do they have a uni-linear approach to certain social functions. They are more complicated then they seem on the surface. Walker's novel calls for our attentions to understand the dynamics of male-female, female-female and male-male relation.

In *The Color Purple* sewing plays an important role. It is emblematic of the creative powers of women. If they are capable of channelizing their creative power effectively they can become powerful. Sewing is a traditional form of creativity which women indulge in within their domestic confines.

Sofia and Celie reach through a process of peace after their difference of opinion is expressed over Harpo episode, by preparing a quilt. The quilt symbolizes unity within diversity. A quilt is created by putting together various patterns and it is mostly a collaborative effort. It is a process which helps people to be bound together. Like the patchwork one finds in a quilt, as the novel progresses Celie finds herself being surrounded by people who are diverse in their approach and thoughts but are closely bound by their family and love for each other.

Another significant function of sewing is revealed in the novel when Celie starts her own pants-sewing enterprise. With the support from Shug, Celie challenges the perception that sewing is an unimportant aspect of women's labour. She turns this art into a promising, and powerful medium of gaining economic access.

Communication

Alice Walker uses the epistolary mode of narration to highlight her idea of importance of communication. Celie pours out her heart in the letters she addresses to God. Celie perceives God as her audience and supporter even though she is not sure who God is. Her impression of Him as a white man 'don't seem quite right' even to her, yet she continues with the image until Shug insists Celie to visualize God as a different entity—Not just as 'he' but as 'it' a neutral person. But soon her communication with God ceases as she emerges as an independent woman, one with a mind of her own.

Nettie describes her experiences through letters to Celie. For both the sisters, letters are symbolic of power and the act of letter writing empowered them. But their real redemption takes place only when their letters are reciprocated. Though speaking out (through the act of writing) provides a sense of power, it cannot achieve its full potential unless there is someone to share it or listen to it or there is an audience. When Celie fails to reply back to Nettie she feels caught up in the maze of life. Celie is the only person she could share her life with and if Celie does not answer then she is completely at a loss. Nettie is torn between the disinterested imperialist and the self-centered Olinka villagers. Nettie feels herself liberated only after she was able to narrate her experience to Celie.

Yet when Shug and Celie are told of the world outside, they feel odd. The information they got from Nettie sounded 'crazy' to them. Communication broadens their scope of knowledge and paves a way for imagining an oppression free future. But what is important here is that the story being set in a small closed community

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finds itself cut off from the world outside. There is no communication with the world beyond the enclosed confines of the small town. Once the people come across the larger world their ideas change and they are willing to take risks and chances for a better life. Walker universalizes the theme of need to exchange ideas by broadening the location of the events taking place and exposing her characters to the world which exists beyond their cocooned selves.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Which was Alice Walker's first published book?
2. What is the significance of the collection Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems (1973)?
3. Name the biography that Walker composed.
4. Which were the honours that Alice Walker was awarded, as the first black woman?
5. Which award did Walker receive for *Kindred Spirits*?
6. Who is Kate?
7. From which village does Tashi hail?
8. Who is also addressed as 'Pa'?
9. What kind of a singer is Shug Avery?
10. What does Celie's confessional narrative remind one of?
11. Why does Celie recommend Harpo to abuse Sophia?
12. What had Celie started to believe in the early part of the narrative?
13. Why is Shug's renaming of Celie important?
14. Whose notes inform Celie of the world outside?
15. With which community did Nettie interact?
16. Why is Celie's final letter important?
17. The Color Purple has its origin in which tradition?
18. What does Harpo's insecurity lead to?

5.3 E.M. FORSTER: A PASSAGE TO INDIA

Edward Morgan Forster was born on 1st January, 1879 to middle class parents in Dorset Square, London. He was the only child of Alice Clara 'Lily' (née Whichelo) and Edward Morgan Llewellyn Forster, an architect. Before he turned two, his father had died of tuberculosis. He attended Tonbridge School as a day scholar. His experiences there were not good; in fact he caricatured his experiences there which he termed 'public school behavior' in several of his novels. He attended King's College, Cambridge, from 1897 to 1901 and enjoyed himself thoroughly. While here he was a member of the Apostles, a discussion group. Many of its members later formed the

Bloomsbury Group, of which Forster was a peripheral member in the 1910s and 1920s. *The Longest Journey* (1907) is set in Cambridge and draws from his own experiences.

After leaving university, he travelled in continental Europe with his mother. Around this time he started writing short stories. *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), and *A Room with a View* (1908) are set in Italy where he lived for some time. He returned home to England in 1907 and wrote *The Longest Journey*. He also delivered a series of lectures at Working Men's College. He published *Howard's End* — his most mature work in 1910.

He travelled to Egypt, Germany and India with the classicist, and his mentor at King's College, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson. The First World War saw him serving as a volunteer for the International Red Cross in Alexandria, Egypt. After the war he worked as a journalist in London. He returned to India in 1921 and worked as the private secretary to Tukoji Rao III, the Maharajah of Dewas. *The Hill of Devi* (1953) is his non-fictional account, containing letters and reminiscences, of this period. Prior to his arrival in India he had started on a draft of *A Passage to India*. Dissatisfied with his work he set it aside. He returned to the novel when he was back home in London. He completed the novel in 1924. This was his most famous work. In fact he won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for fiction and the Femina Vie Heureuse in 1925 for this novel. It was in 1925 again that he gave the William George Clark lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge. These were later compiled and published as *Aspects of the Novel* in book form. In 1928, *The Eternal Moment*, a collection of short stories was published.

He worked as a broadcaster during the Second World War with BBC Radio. He was awarded a Benson Medal in 1937. Forster was a homosexual and lifelong bachelor. He was involved in a long term relationship with a married police officer, Bob Buckingham. He lived with his mother in West Hackhurst until her death in 1945. He later moved to his own residence in Chiswick. He was elected as an honorary fellow of King's College, Cambridge in 1946. He declined knighthood in 1949 and was made a Companion of Honour in 1953. In 1969 he was made a member of the Order of Merit. He died on 7 June 1970 at the age of 91 from a stroke while he lived in Coventry. He was a humanist and is known for his ironic and well-plotted novels examining class differences and hypocrisy in early 20th-century British society.

The British Raj in India

The British came as traders to India. They were not the first Europeans to land here and faced competition in establishing a trading empire from the Portuguese and the French. They quickly realized that one way to maintain monopoly over Indian resources was by gaining political supremacy in the country. To this end they soon started involving themselves with the internal affairs of the country. To this end they started making fortifications around major ports and trading centers under their control. By the time the British came on the scene Mughal Supremacy was already in decline and the various principalities were involved in a power struggle. They came to the Europeans for arms, ammunition and strategic support. This gave the Europeans, especially the British who followed this policy dedicatedly, a footing in Indian affairs. Soon the British were a monopolistic power in India, and the East India Company a

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power center. This was cemented when Warren Hastings became the first governor-general of India in 1774. The Revolt of 1857 exposed the festering dissatisfaction of the Rulers and the people of India to the policies perused by the Company. In response to this British government took over rule of India, with power in the hands of the British Parliament in 1858. The administration of India passed under the hands of the British State and Indian rulers were rewarded for their loyalty to the British crown. In 1877 Queen Victoria was declared Empress of India. The advent of the two World wars and the formation of the Congress and the Muslim League finally led to the freedom of the country in 1947 with the creation of Pakistan and India.

Summary of the novel

A Passage to India is divided into three parts. The first section 'Mosque' is a description of the city of Chandrapore. The division of the city into various sections inhabited by various people along religious and race lines is underscored by the separation of earth and sky. The author seems to suggest that just as the earth and the sky are together but there is an insurmountable difference between the two; similarly no matter how closely the Indians and the British may be there is an inherent separation between the two because of their different states of existence in the colonial experience. One is the ruler and the other is the ruled and this colors all their interactions whether they are aware of it or not.

Dr Aziz is a Muslim doctor who works in a government hospital under the supervision of Major Callendar. He is friends with Hamidullah, an Indian barrister who has lived in England and Mahmoud Ali, an influential landowner. They form the troika that is representative of the diverse Indian experiences and expectations in the colonial setup. They are unhappy with the indignities Indians suffer at the hands of the British officers and their wives. This is further exemplified by the fact that the opening chapters of the novel focus on a discussion they are having regarding the various officials who govern under the aegis of the British Empire. The Empire is represented by Mr. Turton, the Collector; Major Callendar, the English doctor; Mr. McBryde, the police magistrate; and Ronny Heaslop, the city magistrate and the latest official to assume duties in Chandrapore. Interestingly, just as the Indians are discussing them, so are they exploring the nature of the relationship the British have with the natives. Cyril Fielding, the English principal of the government school, Mrs. Moore Ronny's mother, Professor Godbole and the English missionaries, Mr. Graysford and Mr. Sorley form a group that lies beyond the simple framework of the ruler-ruled axis. Fielding because he owes allegiance to neither group; Mrs. Moore because she has just arrived to the country and looks at it with tinted glasses; Professor Godbole because he shares neither a religious nor a race affinity with either group; and the missionaries because they are not interested in the power that the Empire gives the White man- they are more interested in converting the 'misguided' Indian to the path of the Lord.

The novel begins with Aziz being summoned by Major Callendar. In typical fashion he is late and finds the Major gone. He was spending time with his friends and could not leave them; it would not have been polite. The Major however considers it a slight since Aziz did not come on time. Since he was late for his club he left without leaving any message. Since both the men are operating under different cultural mores neither is right or wrong. This incident serves to highlight the difficulty in

developing an understanding of someone who is different from you as well as the need to do so. Once such awareness develops it will prevent unnecessary bad blood from developing. On his way back home two English women co-opt his tonga for their use and he is forced to walk. It is at this time that he meets Mrs. Moore at the mosque. Impressed by her innate understanding of him and of Moslem custom; he calls her an Oriental. This however is problematic title; it seems to imply that her understanding however humane is nevertheless coloured by her own racial and gender identity. Meanwhile Adela Quested, Ronney's fiancée wishes to see the 'real India.' Mr. Turton agrees to indulge her when he suggest they organize a bridge game where she could meet the approved socially upper-class Indians. The idea is that it is only the Britishers who reside in close proximity of the Indians who see them for what they are and for everyone else they are novelty items. This further raises questions regarding the humanism of the reformists who do not understand why being an Indian in a colonial experience actually means. At the same time it also highlights the fact when Indians consider themselves to be 'friends' with the British that may not be the case. The novel forces us to look beyond labels. Later on when Mrs. Moore tells her son of her encounter with Aziz he is dismissive of him. This derision parallels the one that Aziz and his Indian friends express towards Ronney in the beginning. The point however is that both are prejudicial and not based on a true understanding of the individual. At the tea party that the Turtons give for Adela the two groups—Indian and British—do not interact. Only Cyril seems to bridge the divide. He invites Mrs. Moore and Adela for tea to his home. When they return home and discuss the party Mrs. Moore is again aghast at her son's insensitivity. She quotes the bible in an attempt to tell him the God is love and expects us to love all our neighbors. Ronney humors his mother telling her that she is old and thus her opinions are outmoded. When the two women go for tea to Fielding's house they meet Aziz and Godbole. Impressed by her kindness Aziz invites her to visit the Marabar Caves near the city. Meanwhile Ronney arrives to pick them up and is dismissive of the two Indians. Dismayed by it Adela tells him that she cannot marry him. They reconcile later when they go for a ride with Nawab Bahadur. Their automobile is involved in an accident and an animal dies.

Aziz too organizes a tea party for Mrs. Moore. After this party he purposely detains Fielding and shows him a picture of his dead wife. Showing the picture of one's wife is considered a big compliment for an Indian because it is something very personal and Indian men are especially protective about their women, who are, in fact kept behind a purdah usually. Aziz also mentions that once such a gesture is made, the other man can be called a 'brother'. The affection and trust between Fielding and Aziz continues to grow and results in a strong bond. They have some traits in common—sympathetic hearts and cultured minds—and each has the maturity to appreciate unfamiliar traditions and culture. To begin with, these attributes can be a foundation for a strong friendship and it is difficult to imagine how time, situations and culture differences will affect their bond.

The next section 'Caves' begins with a detailed description of the caves. They are hollow caverns that rise from an otherwise flat area outside the city of Chandrapore. Aziz invites the two women and Fielding and Godbole for the trip. The latter two miss the train and Aziz is left in charge. The final leg of the journey is completed by

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an elephant ride. This serves to further defamiliarize the journey and its end, the caves, for the two women. During the elephant ride, the women experience a spiritual silence which reinforces the air of elusiveness and illusoriness. While Aziz himself knows nothing about the caves, he frequently thinks of Professor Godbole, who is spiritual and likely to know much more about the mysteries hidden in the caves. There is an omen of the impending disaster when Aziz agrees to 'wait' and passes it off as a usual Indian tendency. While on the trip, Mrs. Moore experiences detachment from any kind of human activity. She gets the revelation that 'though people are important, the relations between them are not.'

When they reach the caves Mrs. Moore is perturbed by the crowds and terrified by an echo that she hears. She refuses to go further. Aziz and Adela proceed on the journey alone. At this time she asks him about how many wives he has. This upsets Aziz who rushes blindly into a cave to recover his composure. She does not realize that her question has brought a tussle between his westernized education and thinking and his native roots to the fore. As a westerner he ought to believe in monogamy, but as a practicing Muslim polygamy is a fact of life for him. This leaves Adela to wander the caves alone. In these unfamiliar surroundings she is supposedly assaulted by someone. As she rushes out of the caves hysterically, Nancy Derek, an English companion to a maharani, meets her. She escorts her to Chandrapore. Aziz has no idea that this has happened. When he returns to the station he is confronted by Mr. Haq, the police inspector, who arrests him for assaulting Adela. Fielding who is present at this time refuses the charge and sides with Aziz. He is seen as a traitor to his race and loses the support and sympathy of his compatriots. Adela's supposed assault subjects with Aziz as the 'example'. The animosity that simmers under the surface emerges and the two nationalities are at loggerheads with each other. Forster shows the strength of mob psychology when emotions that have been held in check have something to feed upon. Fielding is the only one who seems immune. This happens because he looks at people as individuals and not as types: he knows that Aziz is incapable of the crime of which he is accused, and has to be defended. He goes to Mr. Turton and pleads his case, but the collector loses his cool at, what he sees as, Fielding's betrayal of his race. McBryde isn't as emotional about the case. Nevertheless he has his own take for it. He believes that it is the climate of the country that makes Indians criminals. Since Aziz is an Indian it implies that he is guilty of the crime and needs to be punished. He is upset by Fielding's defense of Aziz primarily for official reasons: if Fielding refuses to come into the English camp, he will weaken English rule, and McBryde says they can afford no 'gaps.'

During the trial evidence to prove his guilt is brought against him. A letter that a friend in Kolkata sent to Aziz is discovered. The friend is rumored to be a brothel-owner. Fielding does raise an objection to using the letter as evidence but McBryde changes tack cleverly. However, something worse happens; the photo of Aziz's wife which he keeps hidden from everyone is confiscated. Ironically while the British build their case on facts the Indians are in the grip of fear. Their fear incapacitates not only them but also prevents Fielding from mounting a cohesive defense for his friend. The novelist uses this instance to point out the fact that British rule in India is predicated on fear. As long as the Indians will continue to be fearful of the former the Raj shall

endure. The conclusion of the novel becomes important in the light of this. Aziz who had moved from a feeling of fellowship towards the British to a feeling of revulsion and hatred to them after this experience undergoes a transformation. He loses his fear and realizes that there is a future for himself, his children and his countrymen which they can chart without any fear of the British. The very fact that he can posit such a possibility is the beginning of the end of this fear psychosis and the movement towards true freedom.

The English, however, believe Adela, support and sympathize with her and push for a quick conviction. Mrs. Moore is devastated by this turn of events. She refuses to believe that her friend could have done such a reprehensible deed. At the same time she refuses to stand by him publicly in the court of law. Her son arranges for her travel back home to England but she dies on the way. She wishes to withdraw from the situation much as Godbole has. Godbole realizes that good and bad are part of the same coin and refuses to be drawn into controversy. Mrs. Moore doesn't share this equanimity and her sense of the world has been shattered in the caves. She literally doesn't know what to do except leave for home. Her name however lives on as legend in Chandrapore simply because of the friendliness she showed towards Aziz. The question of the veracity of this friendliness is never answered. At the same time the fact that she dies implies an acknowledgement by the narrator that while we may feel empathy for others on an individual level the forces of imperialism by their very nature strip this feeling when one interacts with the other in the public realm. As the trail nears the atmosphere in the town becomes increasingly volatile. Turton wouldn't mind violence being inflicted on the natives, but he doesn't allow it since it would reflect badly on him as an administrator. Similarly the Indians become restive. During the month of Moharrum the Muslim women declare that they will not break their fast until Aziz is released. The British too see him as the embodiment of all that puts the virtue of English womanhood (represented by Adela) under threat. By this time the two are mere pawns in a larger game. Adela's inner conflicts become irrelevant. Surprisingly Adela recovers from her shock and sets the matter right at the trial. She states that Aziz did not accost her in the caves. The moment she does this she is rejected by her peers who see her as a traitor. She loses the most in the story, she does not belong in India, and after this incident neither does she belong with her compatriots. She knows the extent of their depravity and cannot condone it. Her statement leads to her ostracization by the British. Ronney breaks their engagement and she leaves for England. Fielding succeeds in convincing Aziz to drop the defamation suit he had filed against Adela. After Adela changes her stance the Reaction of the British is along expected lines. The English are furious because the outcome of the trial weakens their political superiority and their prestigious social position. It is the reaction of the Indians that is surprising. Although Aziz has been exonerated by her testimony he feels no admiration or appreciation for her efforts. He charge has tainted his honour and nothing can redeem it. Also it is difficult to feel gratitude for Adela because she is too cold and distant for the emotional and volatile Indians. While they could and did understand Mrs. Moore's subtle emotional trauma, her unfeeling desire to do right is beyond them. Fielding, who always knew that her claim was false, cannot feel sorry for her abandonment by the British. Another fallout of the trial is the increasing volatility of the crowd. Aziz's victory unleashes the crowd's resentment against their colonial masters. Both Hindus and Muslims join forces and a rebellion seems imminent.

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The only refuge left Adela is Fielding's cottage. Everyone else has abandoned her. Although he doesn't like her he cannot help but admire her relentless and honest efforts to recount what happened to her in the caves. This is indicative of another cultural difference between the two nationalities. While most Indians may prevaricate and refuse to see or acknowledge the truth in all its unvarnished details, the British do not. Either they have the strength to do so or are unimaginative enough not to look beyond the obvious to the ultimate truth. (This ultimate truth, which Godbole seems to have grasped, and Mrs. Moore has understood instinctively is that truth and falsehood are two facets of the same coin and ultimately do not matter.) Whatever may be the case it is this quality that helps them persevere and build the Empire that they have. Therefore if the Indians are to attain freedom they need to take a cold, hard look at their own faults and dreams and works accordingly.

Adela agrees with Fielding that they will never know exactly what happened that day, and that given the events as they have unfolded, it may not even be relevant any more. After the trial is over Aziz decides to sue Adela for defamation. The conversation between Fielding and Aziz here reveals that his time in prison has made Aziz bitter, hard and blunt. He has acquired a very Western approach to things: instead of letting things be and happen as they would, he wants to take charge of the situation and demand recompense. The fact that it is Adela's statement that has set him free is meaningless. When Fielding draws his attention to his divergent reaction to Mrs. Moore and Adela he denies any oscillation. He refuses to accept that his affection for the former when she has done nothing for him, and his hatred for the woman who helped him gain his freedom are irrational responses. Fielding is successful only when he reminds Aziz of his feelings for Mrs. Moore and the suggestion that she would want him to forgive her and get on with life. Later Hamidullah tells Aziz that there is a rumor going around that he is having an affair with Adela. He is angry at Fielding for not telling him about it. This rumor breaks the fragile trust between the two friends: Aziz thinks that Fielding wants to marry Adela and keep her money for himself. When he tells his suspicion to Fielding the latter calls him a 'dirty rotter.' They try to rebuild their friendship when they discuss poetry, but something essential has been lost.

Meanwhile Ronney gets to know that his mother has died. He feels guilty for her untimely demise but later rationalizes it by suggesting that she brought her fate on herself when she developed fellow-feeling for Aziz and other Indians. He decides to break off his engagement with Adela. His decision is based on the fact that he realizes that she will prove to be a liability in his career as a sahib in India: after her statements in court he can never actually rely on her to side with her own kind no matter what the case and what the facts may be. This dispassionate argument reveals that Ronney has become the prototype of the 'twenty-year official', who will chart a successful career in India. Incidentally, Fielding is also reinstated to the club by the lieutenant governor. He had lost his membership when he sided with Aziz and actively campaigned to

The third section is called 'Temple.' In this section the story moves to Mau. Two years have passed. After the trial Fielding had returned to England and married. He is now back in India on a tour to inspect the government schools in central India. His tour takes him to Mau. Godbole is minister of education here and Aziz the personal physician of the Rajah of Mau. When Aziz comes to know that he has married he assumes he has married Adela and cuts all connection with him. The section opens with a depiction of the celebration of Janmashtami, the birth of Krishna. The celebration of Janmashtami is marked by chaos and disorder. There is an underlying unity and harmony within this chaos. This is in marked contrast to Christianity where harmony is a marker of order. This contrast between the external chaos of Hinduism and the external harmony of Christianity is done to point out the fact that while Christians talk of peace and transcendence the Hindus and Indians see to have achieved it. 'Talkative' Christianity coined the phrase 'God is love'. Hinduism practices it. Love exists and dominates the scene. The celebration of Janmashtami is significant. Krishna's life celebrates the amorous and sexual aspects of existence as well. Also, Radha's love for Krishna transcends mere love for a man to include love for a god and all of creation. When Godbole goes into a trance during the festivities this point is hinted. True faith is one which includes the body and yet goes beyond it. When he remembers Mrs. Moore and her wasp in this trance it suggests that Godbole recognized her sympathy with the tenets of Hinduism intuitively. While Godbole is supervising the temple choir he finds himself in a trance-like state where he remembers Mrs. Moore and a wasp. This leads to a contemplation of God's Love. Her statement the 'God is Love' is repeated in the Hindu ceremony although through an error in its printing it becomes 'God si Love.' Aziz has remarried and lives in Mau with his wife and children. Aziz has found a measure of peace in Mau. He doesn't try to understand the Hindus and continues to write poetry where Islam is a strong presence.

Although he doesn't embrace Hinduism he looks at the celebration with a tolerant eye. He has become thoroughly disillusioned by the British Empire and finds a semblance of peace and contentment away from the sway of the Empire in Mau. On the flip side he has let his medical practice degenerate until he becomes a glorified medicine man. It is only when he meets Fielding that he realizes that the latter has married Mrs. Moore's daughter Stella and is in India with her son Ralph as well. Aziz and Ralph become friends. Fielding and Stella and Ralph and Aziz go on a boat ride during the festival. There is a storm and in the melee their boats capsize. They are rescued and the English return home to their guest house. Meanwhile Aziz tells Ralph the King has died; however, the information has not been made public otherwise it would stop the celebrations. The information will be decimated once the festival is over. The arrival of the floods point out to the important role nature plays in the novel. The floods also look back to the floods which marked the birth of Krishna and heralded the death of evil. Similarly the floods in Mau renew this promise of life and the celebrations continue. The fact that the king has died and the celebrations do not stop

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points out to the innate love of life that the Indians have. This also points out the fact that unlike the British, for the Indians religious matters take precedence over political ones. Whether this is good or bad seen in the light of the colonial experience is left to the reader to decide. This is just something else the two nationalities differ inherently in. The collision of the boats, one carrying Aziz and Ralph, the other Stella and Fielding, with the holy tray borne by the servitor, serves again to emphasize the 'muddle' of India; it is not a dignified climax to the ceremony, but the Hindus are not unduly disturbed by it, or by the downpour which follows. It also serves to ease the tension between Fielding and Aziz.

Stella and Ralph are deeply affected by the festival and Hinduism, but Fielding is unaffected. Later when the floods recede and Fielding inspects the school he finds that it has been converted to a granary. In his humanism he doesn't act on this. Before they finally leave Fielding and Aziz go on a horse ride. They start one of their conversations about the Anglo-Indian issues that they used to have earlier in Chandrapore. However, they are different men now. Aziz says that the only way for the Indians is to unite and drive the British out. Fielding is not a mere Principal any more, as an official he is the de facto representative of the Empire. The friends realize that their allegiances and beliefs have changed and they can no longer enjoy the friendship and camaraderie they had earlier and so must part ways. This is symbolized further when in the last scene of the novel the two friends come to a narrow path and their horses have to separate in order to pass. One conception that Foster propounds is that life comes full circle. When Aziz meets Ralph, for him it is a new beginning again after letting go of Fielding. Aziz also correctly predicts that the youth of India will drive the British out of India.

Themes in *A Passage to India***Nature**

Nature is a living presence in the novel. Forster uses the sky to connect the two groups—Indian and British. The overarching presence and power of the sky is contrasted with the discordant affairs of earthbound men. The sky's power is embodied in the changing seasons which in turn have the ability to govern men's actions on the ground. In his notes Forster had noted that the three sections of the book contrasted with the three seasons found in India. The first section refers to the cold season, the second to the hot and dry season while the third refers to the rainy season. One can see the changing passions and opinions of the characters as the novel progresses. In the first section they are subject to their prejudices and are blind to all else. In the second section an awareness of the other is initiated and in the third section there is a willingness to acknowledge, if not live with, this otherness.

Natural imagery is also used to suggest a universality of experience. If the British Empire rests on the fundamental belief that the white is superior to the brown and thus is fated to rule the latter, this argument is undercut by Mrs. Moore's reactions to the moon. She looks at it and wonders if the same moon doesn't shine in the British sky back home. The image of the moon seems to suggest an undeniable similarity of spirit among all creation animate and inanimate under the sky and the need to find and foster it since only this will lead to a growing sense of fellow feeling among men. This

idea is extremely important because time and again in the novel the novelist shows the reader the divisive and dehumanizing effects of colonialism and the need to end it.

Inter-racial relationships

The novel centers around the possibility of maintain viable inter-racial relationships in a colonial setup. The narrator is not blind to the faults of either party and depicts them unfailingly. While the Indians are shown to be an intelligent and a perceptive people who generally accept the treatment meted out by the British with a humorous cynicism, nevertheless their inability to put up a united front prevents them from formulating any viable strategy for resisting and undermining their rule. Similarly though the British believe in the idea of fair play and of treating their fellow men humanistically, the colonizing experience has stripped them of all fellow feeling. Ronney and other Englishmen in Chandrapore see all Indians as types: they are automatons who are lazy and will not work until forced to do so under the threat of reprisal. Such an attitude precludes the possibility of any meaningful relationship developing between the two parties. This is further highlighted by the fact that the moment Fielding becomes a representative of the crown during his tour to Mau he cannot indulge in the type of conversations he had with Aziz in Chandrapore. A consciousness of their races and their respective positions in this binary relationship precedes all interactions. Hamidullah says the same when he recounts that while in England he could indulge in some sort of equal relationships with his British friends such a thing is not possible in India because here the British are the Sahibs and the Indians the servants. SO much so that even the most accomplished of them is merely tolerated and not welcome amongst their midst. The fact that most of the Indians are well educated but are forced to serve under British officials who rarely make any effort to consider the Indian viewpoint about anything adds insult to injury.

Another fact that the novel highlights is the insidious nature of the colonial experience. Mrs. Moore's and Adela's experience and the condescension that the Turtons show is indicative of the fact that every newcomer to the colonial experience is devoid of any baggage and makes overtures of friendship. However, inevitably he or she is o-opted into the system and looses any desire to do so. The two women are at the beginning of this transformation and Ronney is the final product. Mrs. Moore's death stops this process and freezes her as a friend n the minds of the Indians. The novel lays the same question when Ralph and Stella are introduced to the scene. They are influenced by Janmashtami festival in Mau but whether they will take it to the next level is left unanswered. The parting of ways of the two friends Aziz and Fielding seems to suggest that such reconciliation is not possible as long as racial exploitation continues.

Religion

You will encounter the interplay among the three main religions—Islam, Christianity and Hinduism—prevalent in India. Islam is portrayed as having deteriorated in its faith and only relying on the splendor of its past. Muslim people are shown bickering about trivial issues during religious ceremonies when they should be sincerely paying homage to their faith. As a result, they have become more westernized and non-serious about the observing the rites and rituals. Even Aziz, who is the representative

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Muslim in the novel seems to be skeptical about Islam and writes poetry that only talk about the magnificence of Islam in the days gone by. He seems to be deeply sad about this deterioration. Even for Christianity, a character like Mrs. Moore seems to have become a skeptic enough to call it the 'little talkative Christianity.' He uses biblical allusions to ironically point out to the fact that the religion professes faith in that which it itself does not practice. This indictment is even more severe for Britishers in India for whom matters of religious importance are less important than matters of state and political power. Godbole is the main proponent of Hinduism in the text. During the Krishna festival the religious fervor of the Hindus reaches such a crescendo that the object of worship ceases to matter. All that is important is the worshipper and his act of worship. It is in this point of time that they transcend their material reality and approach the divine. In the ceremony there is elation, high spirits, and seriousness. A combination of these elements indicates that a religion should be indicative of the whole life and not just selective parts. The biblical passage 'God is love' has an error in spelling, but none in practice. The faces of the Hindus are composed and tranquil, because 'religion is a living force to the Hindus,' and among its views, one of the most important is the 'peace that passeth understanding.' However, Hinduism also has its own flaws; Forster describes the case of Mau, where although Muslims and Hindus live in peace, the Brahmins and non-Brahmins are unable to.

Key Characters

Mrs. Moore

She, along with Aziz, is an individual of spirit and determination. Since the conflict between the Western and the Oriental mind is at the core of the novel, Mrs. Moore's ability to cross the line is important. She is predisposed to understanding the 'other'. This may not have come to much use in her case: after the incident in the Caves she becomes morose and peevish. Nevertheless it is her name that helps clear Adele's mind and reveal the truth; again it is her idea that God is good that Godbole remembers during the Janmashthami festival in Mau. At the same time the novel makes it very clear that he simplistic Christian values, which in one sense are based on a very linear view of the world, are incapable of grasping the multiplicity that is India and of the dehumanizing politics behind the colonial enterprise. Though Forster highlights Mrs. Moore's receptivity to Hindu philosophy, he does not make her adopt Hinduism. Though she senses the universality of all creation, she does not consciously subscribe to it; though she feels at one with the heavenly bodies and, at the other end of the continuum, takes delight in the lowly wasp, she cannot conceive of a religion that is adequate to teach such a concept, and this disheartens and frightens her.

Ronny Heaslop

Ronny Heaslop is the typical public school product which Forster derided. He is someone who has internalized the accepted mores and codes of behavior. He does not challenge the status quo. He is representative of the average Englishman in the Civil Services in India: pictured as the 'rubber-stamp' product of an education system that rewards blind obedience. He has internalized the idea, represented by other colonials like Turton, Callendar and McBryde that he is superior to the natives simply by virtue of his skin color. This in turn makes him blind to the mistreatment of the natives. It is

because of this reason that he is dismissive of Aziz and cannot understand or appreciate what it is that Moore sees in him. It is his inability to understand that his behaviour is morally reprehensible that precludes any possibility of transformation. He is also a typical case study on the dehumanizing effects of colonialism on both the colonizer and the colonized. The narrator seems to be suggesting that a change in the tone of racial relationships should not be expected from parties who stand to gain from its continuation. Instead the change agents have to be located outside; the efficacy of such agents is left open to question as is delineated by the development of Mrs. Moore's and Fielding's characters.

Adela Quested

As her name suggests Adela is someone who is a 'Questioner.' She is on a quest in the novel: her aim is to find the 'real India.' It is interesting to note that while Ms. Moore arrives at an instinctive knowledge of India and its mysticism, Adela arrives at this knowledge through a more rational and conscious approach. They serve as foils to each other. Her role is important in two ways. Firstly, the novelist makes it clear (especially through Turton's reactions) that almost every new arrival to India looks at the country and its people as an exotic entity. In light of this, the colonial argument seems to be that once this tourist realizes that the country is not exotic but is 'really' peopled by citizens who are lazy and in fact is a land that is mysterious and wild and needs to be tamed, they will be so-opted into the colonial exercise and will support it wholeheartedly. The second role that she performs takes off from this: what happens when someone from the mother country refuses to buy the colonial propaganda, looks beyond the obvious and accepts the country and its people for what they are. When this happens the colonizers are revealed to be the exploiters that they are. Suddenly therefore the Empire instead of being a benign and civilizing influence becomes an exploitative and suppressive instrument. It is for this reason that Adela is cosseted and receives the support of her contemporaries when she believes that she has been molested in the caves. The British see this as an attempt to challenge the Empire which needs to be nipped in the bud. However when she retracts her claims not only does she put her erstwhile supporters in a bad light; but more importantly she reveals the fact that for all its vaunted ideals of fair play and justice, the British legal system and society firmly believe that these ideals do not apply to native Indians who they genuinely believe to be an inferior species. Thus the film of humanism is ripped apart to reveal the crass commercial greed that lies beneath.

Physically she is a plain woman and it is her innate honesty and courage that mark her as being different from the others. When she arrives she is betrothed to Ronney, but it soon becomes clear that the marriage will never happen: while Ronney is happy to follow orders if it results in social approval and prosperity, Adela can never approve of something unless she believes in its veracity and truthfulness completely. It is this aspect of her personality that is given a fillip by Mrs. Moore's instinctive humanism and gives her the courage to withdraw her complain. As a foil to Mrs. Moore it becomes clear that any understanding of the country that Adela arrives at will remain incomplete simply because you can never understand a nation and its people on a purely rational level, some kind of instinctive emotional bonding is necessary. Mrs. Moore succeeds in this and so is remembered by the natives even though she refuses to testify in Aziz's favor. Therefore even though she cannot

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countenance the snobbish ways of the British in India she finds herself incapable of apologizing to Aziz. Her lack of sensitivity is pointed up when Fielding has to suggest that perhaps she should apologize to Aziz. She is willing to make amends, but she does not have the compassion to do it without being told. Her remorse is of the head, not the heart; her primary feeling is one of guilt for having been the cause of so much trouble to everyone

The Missionaries

They perform two important roles. The missionary compound is outside the city. This seems to suggest that their work is divorced from the action of other British in India. This however is not the: within the politics of the novel and the colonial experience itself the erasure of identity of the native is extremely important. Religion is a marker of identity. When the missionaries Mr. Sorley and Mr. Graysford attempt to convert Indian to Christianity, they are in effect imbibing British mores and values into the natives. SO there activities can be seen as a corollary to colonization: the colonization of the mind and spirit is important to ensure that the Empire Is not challenged and continues to prosper. In light of this the Janmasthami festival becomes important. It is during this festival that the multiplicity of India is exposed in all its glory and the British masters are left with no other option but to realize that it can never be fully tamed and suppressed.

Another important function they perform is that they highlight the essential theological and ideological difference between the two cultures. On the face of it both assume that everyone and everything is equal in the eyes of the Creator. For the Indians this means that plants, animals, insects and inanimate objects are imbued with God's divine presence and therefore are subject to his grace and love. The missionaries find this belief hard to stomach. They find it difficult to bestow God's grace on the wasp while the Indians feel no such apprehension. This is indicative of the different world view that these societies profess. While for the Indians everything is a part of them and they are a part of everything, for the Western mind some things are indisputably external to their make-up and identity. This inclusive ability of the Indians makes it possible for them to recover from slights and to look beyond the apparent to the possible. Therefore Aziz can be friends with Fielding and Mrs. Moore. However for the British the idea of exclusion demands that they will instinctively reject anything that doesn't jell with their world view: for this reason Ronney is dismissive of all Indians and it is also the reason why Adela is rejected once she withdraws her claims.

Doctor Aziz

Aziz can be seen as Forster's spokesman in the novel. He is highly affectionate in nature and extends his friendship to Mrs. Moore quickly. He is a doctor and so in a sense is representative of the civilizing influence of the western world. At the same time he is deeply suspicious of it and its plans for the natives and their civilization. In other words, he is also a man who is conscious of his culture and is proud of it. In other words he is a representative of the newly educated Indians: who ponder which path to take, and accept the western mores uncritically to accept their past eliminating the new learning and ways completely. By the time the novel ends he has reached

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some sense of balance. He uses his skills as a doctor to cure Ralph from a wasp bite and in doing so acknowledges the Western influences in his life. At the same time he has married again and has children, also he talks of a time when a British will no longer have hegemony over India. This implies that he has reached a state of acceptance of his past and acknowledges that it will play a crucial role in whatever future he builds for himself. Through him the novelist seems to be saying that the colonial experience is an integral part of the native psyche and cannot be wished away. The need therefore is to construct a new identity that merges the pre-and post colonial identities so that the natives and the colonizers can forge a new future for themselves.

His name encompasses the beginning and end of all human emotions. This is evident in the story as well. While he loves his dead wife and remembers her often he is no morbid. In fact he visits brothels frequently. His religion is important to him only for patriotic reasons, in relation to the past glories of Islam. He is tormented and delighted in turn by his ability, or inability, to relate adequately to other people. He is lively, high-spirited, and cordial to a high degree. When he is found to have erred, he is extremely susceptible to criticism. He seems to be genuine person, however, and is unquestionably loyal to those he calls friends. A example of this is that he remains affectionate towards Mrs. Moore throughout and remembers her fondly after she dies.

Professor Godbole

He stands out as the enigmatic Hindu. An upright follower of his religion, who insists on even eating separately from the rest of the group.

Forster has picked Godbole to represent Hinduism among representative of all religions. Hinduism seems to stay in the background until the very end of the novel, however, a careful examination of the other two sections shows that it was always there as an undercurrent. Godbole's song seems to have a deep impact on both Adela and Mrs. Moore, just like Hinduism impacts the book. In Forster's words, 'Ever since Professor Godbole had sung his queer little song, they (Mrs. Moore and Adela) had lived more or less inside cocoons.' The cocoon here signifies the dormant nature of the women which will soon be awakened and blossom like a butterfly. However, ironically, both ladies awaken to disturbing, rather than beautiful, experiences. While Mrs. Moore is terrified into complete indifference, Adele experiences the darkness of the cave, and the subsequent trial.

Even if it seems that Forster is in awe of Hinduism and Godbole, the truth is that Forster never claims that Hinduism is the perfect religion. However, he certainly seems to admire many of its views and practices and one can never call Forster a 'preacher.' Forster redeems himself from being partial towards any religion or being a preacher by showing Godbole as a person who stays aloof from the mainstream and so cannot serve as a medium for promoting universal understanding. It is actually someone like Fielding who can be instrumental in breaking national and racial barriers. However, the world would be unbalanced if there were only people like Fielding. It is obvious that Forster respects human qualities on many levels and also he is not so simple a writer that he would suggest a black-and-white solution for the world's problems.

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There seems to be some significance attached to names in the novel, such as the name 'Godbole' which starts with the word 'God', and the character is very religion-oriented, or at least God-oriented.

Cyril Fielding

Cyril Fielding is a man of the world. He is different from other white men in the novel since he is the only one who judges on merit. He becomes friends with Aziz since he recognizes a kindred soul in him. In contrast Ronney derided the latter simply because he has not buttoned his shirt properly. He is the principal of the local school. In a sense he stands outside the colonial exercise: he is imparting native children an education similar to that the white children are receiving in England. For this reason he is unpopular with the other British: they fear he is giving them a glimpse of a better world. Paradoxically he too is serving the interests of the empire. It is in his role as an educator that he is aligning the minds of the young to uncritically accept British mores as desirable. This in turn means that as adults their allegiance will be with the British and their ethos which they will see as superior to their own native one. Thus instead of using education to question the veracity of racial discrimination and colonization; they will not only accept it as a fact but serve to propagate it. The fact that a large number of Indians served in the lower echelons of the Civil Services and administration in the British Empire serves to prove this point. The fact the Fielding is not as insidious as he appears in the beginning is proven by the fact that he re-appears in the third part of the novel as the inspector of schools in Mau. This implies that he has the approval of the establishment in his activities. Nevertheless through him the novelist does point to the possibility of forging new identities and futures through a critical approach to education. Aziz, during the course of the novel is an example of this. Although he marries a British girl and aligns himself to the establishment; the fact that his wife is Mrs. Moore's daughter implies that he is aware that the spiritualism of Hindus offers a way to assess life which though he may not completely comprehend, is not without merit. Forster leaves the reader to speculate about what might happen if Fielding should become interested in the spiritual side of life. Adela is said to get the worst of both worlds; Fielding, endowed as he is with natural graces, could very well find the best of both worlds. With a combination of human and spiritual understanding, Fielding would certainly be the man 'most likely to succeed' in promoting world understanding. Fielding is the key figure who develops with the novel. He not only crosses racial and national lines, but he responds as though they did not exist. He professes atheism, but by the end of the novel he has at least become personally aware of spiritual influences: puzzled by the pleasing change in his wife after the encounter with Hinduism, he is intrigued by whatever it is that the Hindus seem 'to have found.'

The Caves

Physically the caves are mysterious: they are old and their walls are highly polished. In contrast there are no shrines in the caves and entrance is rough-hewn and manmade. In other words the caves serve no purpose and there is no reason to visit them. Despite this a large number of people do so. There is something mysterious, almost sinister about the caves and visitors come away with uncertain impression. The narrator makes

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it clear that the caves contain 'nothing', they are nothing. Godbole refuses to analyse the caves. In the Hindu mystical thought they could be taken to mean the total negation of the self and the complete rejection of all material things. This could explain Mrs. Moore's disquiet with the echo. For all her humanism she is firmly placed in the Western milieu which places great importance on material success and the self. The echo, in light of this argument, can be seen as Hinduism's claim that western ideology is flawed. Mrs. Moore is discomfited by the caves because they remind her of her instinctive realization that her world view and, more importantly religious beliefs, may be insufficient to understand this new world she is encountering. The caves, which suggest infinity and menacing mystery when seen close-up, become 'finite and rather romantic' seen from a comfortable distance.

It should be noted that the caves do not affect everyone equally. Mrs. Moore reacts violently to her experience in the first cave; Adela does not react until she reaches the second one, and her reaction is different; and Aziz and Fielding seem unaffected.

Hamidullah

Hamidullah is a Cambridge-educated Indian who experienced real camaraderie and friendship with the British during his years as a student. When he first came back home he could not reconcile that friendliness with the oppressive and dismissive behavior of Englishmen in India. This difference arose because in India they were at a superior social position, the British are the rulers and can dictate the course of events. All his life he did not discount the possibility of amicable relations between the British and the Indians despite the unique position as the ruler and the ruled. Aziz's incarceration and the unjust accusations levelled against him destroy all faith in the British. This is highlighted when he renounces the name Bahadur and goes back to his given name Zulfiqar.

Themes

Racial division

The first and most obvious link is with the racial division that the novel partly deals with. Indian Chandrapore is separated from the Civil Station peopled by the Anglo-Indians. The Civil Station, appropriately, stands on a rise above the 'low but indestructible' Indian town geographically as in status. There is mention of the *maidan* on which Aziz and a subaltern will play polo in temporary oblivion of racial division. The Civil Station contrasts with the Indian town in its 'sensible' organization; instead of litter and rotting corpses, we have 'a red-brick club' and 'roads that intersect at right angles'. It is screened from Indian Chandrapore behind the exuberant vegetation, suggesting perhaps that the Anglo-Indian world may be cut off from the realities of the native culture. Such is also the implication of the idea that newcomers do not understand what Chandrapore is, and are rather impressed by it until driven down into it to 'acquire disillusionment' – and here, in a sardonic phrase, is part of the fate of the earnest Adela who desired to see the real India.

NOTES

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

19. How is Chandrapore depicted in the novel?
20. Explain the significance of Janmashtami in the novel.
21. Which novel written by Forster is set in Cambridge and draws from his own experiences?

ACTIVITY

Conduct a research on E.M. Forster's relationship with India and his visits to India.

5.4 SUMMARY

- *The Color Purple* is often seen as a 'woman's novel'. For Walker, women-oriented writings concentrate on African-American women living in twentieth century America. In such novels, more often than not we encounter women who fight all odds to justify their own and their families' survival. In their fragmented communities, these women tend to be motherly characters who wish to protect and secure their families for the sake of their posterity. Other prominent authors apart from Toni Morrison who have dealt in this tradition of writing include Zora Neale Hurston and Maya Angelou. Their female characters always tend to be couped up and subjugated for a long while before they manage to retaliate, fight and learn to survive.
- *The Color Purple*, like the slave narratives, emerges from the rich African oral traditions which include the methods of storytelling and song composing. The Africans transported to America nearly always as slaves were barred from communicating in their own mother tongues (just the way Celie's speech was suppressed), so they invented alternative means of conveying themselves, especially through acting and singing. Their narratives were lived in the plantation and narratives of their native Africa. These stories continued from generation to generation and soon turned out to form the core of most of African-American storytelling tradition. In her process of storytelling, Celie made sure that her life as a black woman living in early twentieth-century America is conveyed and documented for future generations.
- The British came as traders to India. They were not the first Europeans to land here and faced competition in establishing a trading empire from the Portuguese and the French. They quickly realized that one way to maintain monopoly over Indian resources was by gaining political supremacy in the country. To this end they soon started involving themselves with the internal affairs of the country. To this end they started making fortifications around major ports and trading centers under their control. By the time the British came on the scene Mughal

Supremacy was already in decline and the various principalities were involved in a power struggle.

- *A Passage to India* is divided into three parts. The first section 'Mosque' is a description of the city of Chandrapore. The division of the city into various sections inhabited by various people along religious and race lines is underscored by the separation of earth and sky. The novel begins with Aziz being summoned by Major Callendar. In typical fashion he is late and finds the Major gone. He was spending time with his friends and could not leave them; it would not have been polite. The Major however considers it a slight since Aziz did not come on time. Since he was late for his club he left without leaving any message. Since both the men are operating under different cultural mores neither is right or wrong.
- The next section 'Caves' begins with a detailed description of the caves. They are hollow caverns that rise from an otherwise flat area outside the city of Chandrapore. Aziz invites the two women and Fielding and Godbole for the trip.
- The third section is called 'Temple.' In this section the story moves to Mau. Two years have passed. After the trial Fielding had returned to England and married. He is now back in India on a tour to inspect the government schools in central India. His tour takes him to Mau. Godbole is minister of education here and Aziz the personal physician of the Rajah of Mau. When Aziz comes to know that he has married he assumes he has married Adela and cuts all connection with him.

5.5 KEY TERMS

- **Epistolary:** Literary works in the form of letters
- **Coloured:** A person who is wholly or partly of non-white descent
- **Protagonist:** The main character in a drama or other literary work
- **Narrator:** The process of telling the particulars of a story
- **Narration:** A spoken or written account of connected events
- **Slave narrative:** A literary form which grew out of the experience of enslaved Africans
- **Racism:** Discrimination or prejudice based on race
- **Sexism:** Prejudice or discrimination based on sex, especially against women
- **Metaphor:** One thing conceived as representing another
- **Stereotype:** Qualities of specific types of individuals
- **Satire:** Literary work where human vice or folly is attacked through irony, derision, or wit
- **Womanism:** A form of feminism focused on the conditions and concerns of black women

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- **Monopolistic power:** monopoly means exclusive possession or control. The British had slowly and gradually gained control of the entire Indian Territory as a colony in the early 20th century.
- **Janmashtami:** A celebration commemoration the birth of Krishna. It is held every year in India.
- **Colonialism:** It is the establishment, exploitation, maintenance, acquisition and expansion of colonies in one territory by people from another territory, as the British and India.

5.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Alice Walker's first published work was a book of poems, *Once* (1968).
2. *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* was Walker's mouthpiece for identifying the plight of those who struggle against racism and oppression.
3. *Langston Hughes: American Poet* (1974)
4. Walker was the first black woman to be awarded with Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Award.
5. Walker received O. Henry Award for 'Kindred Spirits'.
6. Kate is Mr. Johnson's sister. She insists Celie should stand up for herself.
7. Tashi is the girl from Olinka village.
8. Alphonso is also addressed as 'Pa'.
9. Shug Avery is a blues singer.
10. Celie's confessional narrative reminds one of the African-American slave narratives which took shape during the nineteenth century.
11. Celie's recommendation to Harpo to abuse Sophia is an outcome of the cyclical environment of misuse and oppression she has been exposed to.
12. Celie has been voiceless for so long that she has adapted herself to believe of having no voice of her own.
13. Shug's rechristening of Celie is important because it defies the traditional concept of the issue of virginity.
14. Nettie's notes inform Celie's of the larger world one is part of.
15. Nettie interacted with the Olinka community.
16. Celie's final letter gives us a glimpse of the maturity and growth her character has undergone.
17. *The Color Purple* emerges from the rich African oral traditions which include the methods of storytelling and song composing.
18. Harpo's insecurity regarding his masculine abilities has a bearing on his marital life and leads him to make efforts to abuse his wife Sofia in a desperate attempt to prove his manliness.
19. The division of the city of Chandrapore into various sections inhabited by various people along religious and race lines is underscored by the separation of earth

and sky. The author seems to suggest that just as the earth and the sky are together there is an insurmountable difference between the two; similarly no matter how closely the Indians and the British may be there is an inherent separation between the two because of their different states of existence in the colonial experience. One is the ruler and the other is the ruled and this colors all their interactions whether they are aware of it or not.

20. The celebration of Janmashtami is marked by chaos and disorder. There is an underlying unity and harmony within this chaos. This is in marked contrast to Christianity where harmony is a marker of order. This contrast between the external chaos of Hinduism and the external harmony of Christianity is done to point out the fact that while Christians talk of peace and transcendence the Hindus and Indians see to have achieved it. 'Talkative' Christianity coined the phrase 'God is love'. Hinduism practices it. Love exists and dominates the scene. The celebration of Janmashtami is significant. Krishna's life celebrates the amorous and sexual aspects of existence as well. Also, Radha's love for Krishna transcends mere love for a man to include love for a god and all of creation. When Godbole goes into a trance during the festivities this point is hinted.
21. *The Longest Journey* (1907) is set in Cambridge and draws from his own experiences.

5.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Sofia is unjustly imprisoned. Explain.
2. Write a short note on Mr. Johnson.
3. How does Celie succeed in overcoming her low self-esteem?
4. How does the death of Celie's mother change Celie's relationship with her family, with herself, and with God?
5. The main subplot revolves around Nettie in Africa. How does this relate to and impact the main plot of Celie?
6. Describe the role of caves in the novel, *A Passage to India*.
7. What is the significance of Mrs. Moore's death in the novel?
8. What is the significance of the name 'Adela Quested'?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Trace the development of Albert's character. How does he change and why?
2. Narrate some instances of racism in the novel.
3. Why is *The Color Purple* a feminist novel?
4. List, analyze, and evaluate the various gender crossings in the novel.
5. Write a note on the female bonding as it appears in the novel.
6. Write a note on the representation of society as it appears in *The Color Purple*.

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