U. P. Rajarshi Tandon
Open University, Prayagraj

# MAEN-104
# BRITISH NOVEL


| Sr. No. | CONTENTS | Pg. No. |
|---|---|---|
| **BLOCK-1** | **Henry Fielding and Jane Austen** | |
| Unit-1 | Henry Fielding: An Introduction | 7-19 |
| Unit-2 | Henry Fielding: Tom Jones | 21-59 |
| Unit-3 | Jane Austen: An Introduction | 60-67 |
| Unit-4 | Jane Austen: Emma | 68-80 |
| **BLOCK-2** | **Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy** | |
| Unit-5 | Charles Dickens: An Introduction | 83-94 |
| Unit-6 | Charles Dickens: Great Expectations | 95-104 |
| Unit-7 | Thomas Hardy: An Introduction | 105-118 |
| Unit-8 | Thomas Hardy: Tess of the D'Urbervilles | 119-143 |
| **BLOCK-3** | **Emily Bronte and D. H. Lawrence** | |
| Unit-9 | Emily Bronte: An Introduction | 147-158 |
| Unit-10 | Emily Bronte: Wuthering Heights | 159-169 |
| Unit-11 | D. H. Lawrence: An Introduction | 170-181 |
| Unit-12 | D. H. Lawrence: Sons and Lovers | 182-196 |
| **BLOCK-4** | **James Joyce and the Modern Novels** | |
| Unit-13 | Forms of the Novel | 199-210 |
| Unit-14 | Development of English Novel in the Twentieth Century | 211-225 |
| Unit-15 | James Joyce: An Introduction | 226-236 |
| Unit-16 | James Joyce: A Portrait of The Artist as a Young Man | 236-246 |

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# 1
# Block
## Henry Fielding and Jane Austen


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| **Unit-4** | **Jane Austen: *Emma*** | ***68-80*** |

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# BLOCK INTRODUCTION-1

Dear learners! As we know, British novels are an important part of English literature. This block mainly concerns novels written in English by novelists who were born or have spent a significant part of their lives in England, Scotland, Wales, or (or any part of Ireland before 1922). Historically, the English novel has generally been seen as beginning with Denial Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719). This block is intended to develop the power of exploration of unknown things through the novels by Henry Fielding and Jane Austen. This block is divided into four units. The first unit focuses on the introduction of Henry Fielding as a major English novelist of the 18th century. In this unit, we will learn about biography, narrative techniques, and the works of the novelist Henry Fielding. The second unit aimed to discuss Henry Fielding's novel, Tom Jones. In this unit, we will learn the story, types, purpose, and salient features of the novel *Tom Jones*. The third unit focuses on the Introduction of Jane Austen and her literary contribution. Here, we will learn about Jane Austen's life, works, and art of writing. The fourth and last unit of the block deals with the major novel by Jane Austen, *Emma*. In this unit, we will learn the story, types, purpose, and art of characterization of the novel *Emma.*

# UNIT-1 HENRY FIELDING : AN INTRODUCTION

## Structure


1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Henry Fielding: An Introduction

1.3 Major works of Henry Fielding

1.4 Realism in the works of Henry Fielding

1.5 Humour in the works of Fielding

1.6 Representation of the Contemporary issues in the works of Henry Fielding

1.7 Henry Fielding as a founding figure of English novel

1.8 The use of language in the works of Henry Fielding

1.9 Comic epic in prose

1.10 Picaresque novel

1.11 Let Us Sum Up

1.12 Questions

1.13 Further Reading


## 1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- To develop a comprehensive understanding of the historical, social, and literary context in which Fielding's "Tom Jones" was written, including the emergence of the novel as a literary genre during the 18th century.
- To analyse the narrative techniques employed by Fielding in "Tom Jones," focusing on elements such as the omniscient narrator, episodic structure, and the use of humour and satire.
- To examine the thematic concerns in "Tom Jones," including morality, social class, human nature, and gender dynamics, and to assess their relevance and implications in contemporary society.

- To explore “Tom Jones” as a picaresque novel and a bildungsroman, understanding how the protagonist’s journey and development reflect the values and conventions of these literary genres.’
- To investigate the role of setting in “Tom Jones,” examining how the novel’s depiction of rural England and London contributes to its themes, character development, and overall narrative.
- To study the realism in “Tom Jones,” assessing Fielding’s use of authentic characters, dialogue, and situations in order to critique and satirize 18th-century English society.
- To engage with the critical reception and scholarly discussions surrounding “Tom Jones,” evaluating various interpretations and debates about the novel’s literary significance, themes, and style.
- To develop skills in close reading, textual analysis, and critical thinking through the study of “Tom Jones,” applying these skills to other works of literature and fostering a deeper appreciation for the complexity and richness of the novel as an art form.
- To compare and contrast “Tom Jones” with other significant works of 18th-century literature, exploring how the novel both reflects and challenges the literary conventions and social attitudes of its time.

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the first unit of the first block in your course on the British Novel. In this unit, we will discuss about the writer Henry Fielding and his major works who is considered as the Father of English novel. He is among one of ‘the four wheels’ of novel. The other are Samuel Richardson, Tobias Smollett and Lawrence Sterne. This unit will also focus on the characteristics of Henry fielding’s novel. His novels have the elements of realism, humour and they represent the contemporary issues of the society of Eighteenth Century. Henry Fielding is considered as one of the founding figure of English novel. In his novels, his characters pass through a series of episodes. The characters get self-knowledge. His novels like Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones comes under picaresque genre. The language used in his novels play a significant role in establishing his unique literary style, characterized by wit, humour, and a keen understanding of human nature. Henry Fielding’s work are known as “Comic epic in prose” particularly his novel “Tom Jones.” The phrase is used to describe a specific type of novel that combines elements of comedy and the epic tradition within a prose narrative. So, the current unit aims to foster meaningful and knowledgeable conversations, enabling the enhancement of communication, argumentative abilities, and the sharing of ideas within the academic context of Henry Fielding as a novelist.

## 1.2 HENRY FIELDING: AN INTRODUCTION

Henry Fielding was born on April 22, 1707, in Somersetshire, England, to a well-connected and aristocratic family. His father, Edmund Fielding, was a

colonel in the army, and his mother, Sarah Gould Fielding, belonged to a prominent family in Dorset. As a member of the landed gentry, Fielding was raised in an environment of privilege and received a well-rounded education, which would later influence his literary career.

Fielding's early education took place at Eton College, where he studied classical literature and formed friendships that would last a lifetime. After completing his studies at Eton, Fielding went on to study law at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands, which further broadened his intellectual horizons. Upon his return to England, Fielding chose to pursue a career in literature and theatre rather than the legal profession.

In 1728, Fielding began his career as a playwright, producing several successful comedies and satires, such as "Love in Several Masques" and "The Temple Beau." His plays were known for their wit, humour, and sharp social criticism, often targeting political corruption and the hypocrisy of the upper classes. However, Fielding's satirical approach and unapologetic critiques of powerful figures eventually led to the passage of the Licensing Act in 1737. This legislation imposed strict censorship on theatrical productions, effectively ending Fielding's career as a playwright.

After the Licensing Act, Fielding shifted his focus to writing novels and resumed his legal studies, eventually becoming a practicing barrister in 1740. Fielding's first novel, "An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews," was published in 1741. It was a satirical response to Samuel Richardson's popular novel "Pamela" and showcased Fielding's talent for humour and social commentary.

Fielding's most famous work, "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," was published in 1749. The novel follows the life of the eponymous hero, Tom Jones, who is abandoned as a baby and raised by the kind-hearted Squire Allworthy. Tom's journey from childhood to adulthood is filled with adventure, love, and personal growth, as he encounters various characters from different social classes and backgrounds. "Tom Jones" was an immediate success and remains a classic of English literature, celebrated for its complex characters, narrative innovation, and biting satire.

In addition to "Tom Jones," Fielding authored several other novels, including "Joseph Andrews" (1742) and "Amelia" (1751). These works continued to showcase Fielding's skill in crafting engaging stories that shed light on the social issues and moral dilemmas of 18th-century England.

During this period, Fielding also became increasingly involved in the legal profession and public service. In 1748, he was appointed Justice of the Peace for Westminster, and in 1749, he became Chief Magistrate of London. Fielding's dedication to social justice and reform led him to establish the Bow Street Runners, considered the first professional police force in London. Fielding's experiences in law enforcement provided him with a unique perspective on crime, poverty, and social inequality, themes that would continue to inform his literary works.

Despite his professional successes, Fielding's personal life was marked by tragedy and loss. He married his first wife, Charlotte Cradock, in 1734, and they

had five children together. However, only one of their children survived to adulthood, and Charlotte passed away in 1744. Fielding later married Mary Daniel, Charlotte's former maid, with whom he had another five children.

As his health began to decline in the 1750s, Fielding sought relief in Portugal, where he hoped the warmer climate would improve his condition. Unfortunately, his health did not improve, and he passed away on October 8, 1754, in Lisbon. Fielding's literary legacy endures through his groundbreaking novels, which established him as a pioneer of the English novel and a master of satire. His keen insights into human nature, social issues, and moral complexities have ensured that his works remain relevant and engaging, inspiring generations of readers and writers who appreciate his wit, humour, and unflinching commentary on 18th-century society.

## 1.3 MAJOR WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING

Henry Fielding, an influential English novelist and playwright, is best known for his satirical and humorous works that offer social commentary on 18th-century England. His major works include plays, novels, and essays. Here, we will discuss some of his most significant works:

***Joseph Andrews* (1742):** Fielding's first full-length novel, *Joseph Andrews*, was originally intended as a parody of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*. *Joseph Andrews*, a novel written by Henry Fielding and published in 1742, is a satirical and comic work that parodies the sentimental novel, particularly Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*. Fielding's novel is considered a significant early example of the English comic novel, reflecting the author's belief in the importance of humour as a means of moral instruction.

The story follows Joseph Andrews, a handsome and virtuous young footman who is the brother of Pamela. Lady Booby, his employer, tries to seduce Joseph, but he remains steadfast in his virtue, resisting her advances. When Lady Booby dismisses Joseph from her service due to his refusal, he begins a journey back to his hometown, hoping to reunite with his beloved Fanny Goodwill.

During his travels, Joseph encounters various characters who exemplify the hypocrisy, vice, and moral failings of 18th-century English society. Fielding employs a picaresque structure, with the story unfolding through a series of loosely connected episodic adventures. The novel's satirical tone is directed at social, political, and literary conventions, including the artificiality of sentimental fiction.

One of the central characters in the novel is Parson Adams, a kind-hearted, yet naive clergyman who accompanies Joseph on his journey. Adams serves as a foil to Joseph, and their interactions reveal the contrast between genuine goodness and moral pretension. The novel ultimately champions the importance of compassion, sincerity, and moral integrity over social status and wealth.

*Joseph Andrews* is notable for its wit, humour, and sharp social commentary. Through engaging characters and amusing situations, Fielding critiques the moral corruption of society and exposes the flaws of human nature.

The novel's innovative blend of satire, character development, and episodic storytelling has made it an enduring and influential work in the history of English literature.

***Tom Jones* (1749):** Fielding's most famous novel, "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," tells the story of an abandoned child raised by the benevolent Squire Allworthy. As Tom Jones embarks on a series of adventures, the novel explores themes such as human nature, morality, social class, and love. Celebrated for its vivid characters, engaging plot, and innovative narrative technique, *Tom Jones* remains a classic of English literature.

***Amelia* (1751):** Fielding's final novel, *Amelia*, centres on the life of a virtuous woman and her husband, Captain William Booth, who faces various challenges, including poverty and imprisonment. "Amelia," a novel written by Henry Fielding and published in 1751, is a sentimental and moralistic work that explores themes of love, marriage, and social injustice in 18th-century England. Regarded as Fielding's last and darkest novel, "Amelia" diverges from the comic and satirical tone of his earlier works like "Tom Jones" and "Joseph Andrews."

The novel follows the story of the virtuous and loving Amelia Booth and her husband, Captain William Booth. The couple faces numerous challenges, including poverty, deceit, and moral temptation, as they navigate the complex and often corrupt social milieu of London. Fielding uses the characters' trials and tribulations to highlight the flaws of society, including the legal system, the military, and the treatment of women.

"Amelia" is a critique of the hypocritical moral values of the time, as Fielding delves into the darker aspects of human nature, including jealousy, betrayal, and cruelty. The novel also examines the struggle between personal morality and societal expectations, as the character's grapple with the consequences of their actions.

Fielding's portrayal of Amelia as a strong, virtuous, and loving woman is a notable departure from the passive and submissive female characters typically found in sentimental novels of the period. In this sense, "Amelia" can be seen as a precursor to later feminist literary works.

Despite its somber themes, "Amelia" maintains Fielding's trademark wit and humor, providing readers with a compelling exploration of human frailty and the importance of moral fortitude. The novel's richly drawn characters and poignant depiction of societal ills have contributed to its lasting influence in the development of the English novel.

***An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews* (1741):** This short satirical work is a parody of Richardson's "**Pamela**," mocking the sentimentality and moralizing tone of the original novel. In Fielding's version, Shamela is a manipulative and deceitful character who pretends to be virtuous in order to secure a wealthy husband.

**Plays:** Prior to his career as a novelist, Fielding was an accomplished playwright. Some of his notable plays include "Love in Several Masques" (1728), "The Temple

Beau" (1730), "The Author's Farce" (1730), and "The Modern Husband" (1732). Fielding's plays often targeted political corruption, social hypocrisy, and the excesses of the upper classes. The wit and satire present in his plays would later be evident in his novels.

These major works highlight Fielding's contributions to the development of the English novel and his mastery of satire and humor as tools for critiquing 18th-century society. His innovative narrative techniques, memorable characters, and keen insights into human nature have cemented his reputation as a significant figure in English literature.

## 1.4 REALISM IN THE WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING

Realism is an important element in the works of Henry Fielding, as he sought to depict the characters, situations, and settings in his novels with authenticity and accuracy. Fielding's brand of realism can be seen in various aspects of his work:

**Characters**: Fielding's characters are diverse and well-rounded, often drawn from different social classes and backgrounds. They embody the complexity and nuance of real-life individuals, with both virtues and flaws. By creating characters that resonate with readers, Fielding was able to make his novels more engaging and relatable.

**Dialogue**: Fielding paid close attention to the dialogue in his novels, striving to capture the language and speech patterns of his characters accurately. He was particularly skilled at rendering the regional dialects and colloquialisms of the time, adding an extra layer of authenticity to his work. This attention to linguistic detail contributes to the overall realism of his novels.

**Social Issues:** Fielding's works often address social issues and moral dilemmas that were relevant to 18th-century England. By exploring themes such as poverty, class conflict, gender roles, and morality, Fielding's novels provide a realistic portrayal of the challenges and concerns faced by individuals during that time.

**Satire and Humor**: Fielding's use of satire and humor serves to highlight the absurdity and hypocrisy present in 18th-century society. His wit and keen observations enable him to expose societal flaws and contradictions, offering a realistic and critical perspective on the world he inhabited.

**Settings**: Fielding's novels often feature vivid descriptions of both rural and urban settings, providing readers with a sense of the physical and social landscapes of the time. These detailed settings contribute to the overall atmosphere of the novels and ground the characters and events within a recognizable and realistic world.

In conclusion, *realism* plays a crucial role in the works of Henry Fielding, as he sought to create engaging and relatable stories that reflected the world around him. His attention to detail, complex characters, authentic dialogue, and exploration of social issues contribute to the lasting impact and relevance of his novels, which continue to be celebrated as important works of English literature.

## 1.5 HUMOUR IN THE WORKS OF FIELDING

Humour is a key element in Henry Fielding's works, as he masterfully employs it to engage readers, provide social commentary, and humanize his characters. Fielding's use of humour can be observed in various forms throughout his novels and plays:

**Satire**: Fielding's works are known for their satirical approach, which he uses to critique the follies, vices, and pretensions of 18th-century society. By employing humour to expose social hypocrisy, political corruption, and moral failings, Fielding effectively conveys his critical perspective in an entertaining manner.

**Comic Situations:** Fielding creates numerous comic situations in his novels, often involving misunderstandings, mistaken identities, and improbable coincidences. These comedic scenarios not only provide amusement but also reveal the absurdities and incongruities of human behaviour.

**Irony**: Fielding frequently uses irony to underscore the discrepancy between appearance and reality. This technique enables him to highlight the inconsistencies and contradictions in characters' actions, beliefs, and social norms, eliciting both laughter and reflection from readers.

**Character-based Humour:** Fielding's novels are populated with a diverse cast of characters, many of whom possess distinctive traits or flaws that serve as sources of humour. For example, Parson Adams in "Joseph Andrews" is a lovable but naive and bumbling figure, while Squire Western in "Tom Jones" is a blustering, boorish character. Fielding's skill in creating memorable, humorous characters makes his novels both entertaining and insightful.

**Witty Dialogue**: Fielding's works are marked by witty and engaging dialogue, often employing puns, wordplay, and clever repartee. This lively and humorous discourse enlivens the novels and adds to their overall appeal.

**Self-reflexive Humour:** Fielding often employs a self-reflexive style of humour in his works, particularly in "Tom Jones," where the narrator frequently comments on the process of storytelling and the conventions of the novel. This self-awareness adds a layer of meta-humour to Fielding's writing, encouraging readers to reflect on the nature of fiction and its relation to reality.

In conclusion, humour is an integral aspect of Henry Fielding's works, contributing to their enduring appeal and literary significance. By skilfully employing various forms of humour, Fielding was able to create engaging stories that offer both entertainment and insightful commentary on the human condition and the society of his time.

## 1.6 REPRESENTATION OF THE CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN THE WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING

Henry Fielding's works are known for their vivid representation of contemporary issues in 18th-century England. He used his novels and plays as vehicles for social

commentary, addressing various aspects of society, politics, and morality. Here are some key contemporary issues represented in Fielding's works:

**Social Class:** Fielding's novels explore the complexities of social class and the impact of class distinctions on individuals' lives. Characters from various social backgrounds interact, revealing the prejudices and injustices that arise from class divisions. For example, in "Tom Jones," the protagonist's ambiguous social status leads to numerous conflicts and misunderstandings throughout the story.

**Gender Roles:** Fielding's works often address the expectations and limitations placed on women in 18th-century society. For instance, "Amelia" focuses on the struggles of a virtuous woman navigating a male-dominated world, exposing the gender inequalities that existed at the time.

**Morality and Virtue:** Fielding's novels frequently explore the nature of morality and virtue, often questioning the sincerity of outward appearances and highlighting the hypocrisy of those who claim to be virtuous. In "Joseph Andrews," for example, Parson Adams embodies true virtue and goodness, despite his naivety and comic mishaps, while other seemingly "respectable" characters reveal their moral failings.

**Marriage and Relationships:** Fielding's works often delve into the intricacies of romantic relationships and marriage, examining themes such as love, infidelity, and social expectations. In "Tom Jones," the protagonist's romantic entanglements and eventual marriage to Sophia Western reflect the complexities of love and the societal norms governing relationships.

**Corruption and Abuse of Power:** Fielding's works frequently criticize political corruption and the abuse of power by those in authority. In his plays, he targeted specific politicians and their corrupt practices, while in his novels, he highlighted the broader issues of systemic corruption, such as the unjust treatment of the poor by the legal system.

**Poverty and Social Inequality:** Fielding's works often depict the harsh realities of poverty and social inequality in 18th-century England. Through his vivid portrayals of characters from different social strata, he sheds light on the challenges faced by the lower classes and the indifference of the upper classes towards their plight.

**Criminality and the Justice System**: As a practicing lawyer and magistrate, Fielding was well-acquainted with the workings of the justice system and the criminal underworld. His experiences informed his portrayal of crime and the law in his novels, exposing the inadequacies and injustices of the legal system at the time.

In summary, Henry Fielding's works provide a valuable insight into the contemporary issues of 18th-century England. His keen observations, wit, and humor enabled him to create engaging narratives that shed light on various aspects of society, politics, and morality, making his works both entertaining and thought-provoking for readers of his time and beyond.

## 1.7 HENRY FIELDING AS A FOUNDING FIGURE OF ENGLISH NOVEL

Henry Fielding is often considered one of the founding figures of the English novel, along with Daniel Defoe and Samuel Richardson. While Defoe and Richardson made significant contributions to the development of the novel as a literary form, Fielding's unique approach and innovative narrative techniques have earned him the title of "father of the English novel." Here are some reasons why Fielding is recognized as such:

**Development of Plot Structure:** Fielding introduced a more sophisticated and coherent plot structure to the English novel, moving away from the episodic nature of earlier works. His novels, especially "Tom Jones," are known for their intricate and well-constructed plots, which helped to establish the novel as a respected literary form.

**Characterization:** Fielding's novels feature a diverse range of complex and well-rounded characters, each with distinct personalities and motivations. His skill in creating memorable, multidimensional characters significantly influenced the development of character-driven storytelling in the novel form.

**Comic Realism:** Fielding is noted for his comic realism, which combined humor and satire with an authentic portrayal of human nature and society. This unique blend of comedy and realism helped to establish the novel as a versatile and engaging literary form that could explore a wide range of themes and issues.

**Narrative Technique:** Fielding's innovative narrative techniques, including the use of an omniscient narrator who frequently addresses the reader directly, contributed to the development of the English novel. This self-reflexive narrative style added depth and complexity to the form and allowed Fielding to provide commentary and insight into the characters and events of his novels.

**Social Commentary:** Fielding's novels often engage with contemporary social and political issues, providing a critical examination of 18th-century English society. His ability to weave social commentary into his stories helped to elevate the novel as a medium for intellectual and moral exploration.

**Influence on Later Writers:** Fielding's impact on the development of the English novel can also be seen in his influence on later writers, including Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and William Makepeace Thackeray. These authors, and many others, were inspired by Fielding's narrative techniques, wit, and social commentary, building on his legacy to further develop the novel as a literary form.

In conclusion, Henry Fielding's contributions to the development of the English novel were significant and far-reaching. His innovative techniques, engaging storytelling, and insightful commentary on human nature and society helped to establish the novel as a respected and versatile literary form, earning him recognition as the father of the English novel.

## 1.8 THE USE OF LANGUAGE IN THE WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING

Henry Fielding's use of language in his novels plays a significant role in establishing his unique literary style, characterized by wit, humour, and a keen understanding of human nature. Some of the key aspects of Fielding's use of language in his novels include:

**Realistic Dialogue:** Fielding was skilled at crafting realistic and engaging dialogue that captured the speech patterns, idioms, and accents of his characters. This attention to linguistic detail lends authenticity to his works and helps create a vivid picture of 18th-century English society.

**Wit and Humour:** Fielding's novels are known for their wit and humor, both in dialogue and narrative. He frequently employs puns, wordplay, and clever repartee to create lively and entertaining conversations between characters, showcasing his mastery of language and keen sense of humor.

**Satire**: Fielding's use of language is often satirical, employing irony and sarcasm to expose the follies, vices, and pretensions of his characters and society at large. This satirical approach allows Fielding to provide social commentary while keeping his readers entertained.

**Narrative Voice:** Fielding's use of an omniscient narrator who frequently addresses the reader directly is a distinctive feature of his novels. This narrative voice is often characterized by a conversational tone, employing humor, irony, and self-reflexivity to engage the reader and comment on the events and characters in the story.

**Description and Imagery:** Fielding's novels contain detailed descriptions of settings, characters, and events, providing readers with a vivid and immersive experience. His use of imagery and figurative language helps to create a rich, evocative world that brings his stories to life.

**Varied Vocabulary:** Fielding's novels display a wide-ranging vocabulary, reflecting his erudition and familiarity with the literary tradition. He was not averse to employing Latinate words and complex syntax when it suited his purposes, but he was also adept at utilizing simpler, more colloquial language to create a sense of realism and immediacy in his works.

**Social and Regional Dialects:** Fielding's novels feature characters from various social and regional backgrounds, and he was skilled at rendering their speech accurately and distinctively. This attention to dialect not only adds to the realism of his works but also highlights the diversity of 18th-century English society.

In summary, Henry Fielding's use of language in his novels is characterized by its realism, wit, humor, and attention to detail. His mastery of dialogue, narrative voice, and descriptive language contributes to the lasting appeal and literary significance of his works.

## 1.9 COMIC EPIC IN PROSE

"Comic epic in prose" is a term often associated with Henry Fielding's work, particularly his novel "Tom Jones." The phrase is used to describe a specific type of novel that combines elements of comedy and the epic tradition within a prose narrative. Here are some characteristics of a comic epic in prose:

**Length and Scope:** Like traditional epic poems, comic epics in prose tend to be long and expansive, encompassing a wide range of characters, events, and themes. The narrative often follows the protagonist's journey and development over an extended period.

**Heroic Elements:** While comic epics in prose do not typically feature traditional heroic figures or grand mythological themes, they often include elements of heroism and adventure. The protagonist may embark on a series of adventures, overcome obstacles, or engage in acts of bravery or self-sacrifice.

**Comedy and Satire:** A defining feature of the comic epic in prose is its humorous and satirical tone. These works often employ wit, irony, and sarcasm to create a light-hearted and entertaining reading experience, while also critiquing societal norms, human nature, and moral values.

**Realism:** Unlike traditional epics, which often involve supernatural elements and larger-than-life characters, comic epics in prose are grounded in realism. They present a detailed and authentic portrayal of contemporary society, exploring the complexities and contradictions of human behavior and relationships.

**Characterization:** A comic epic in prose often features a diverse cast of characters from various social backgrounds, providing a rich and multi-faceted view of society. These characters are typically well-developed and complex, with their motivations and actions reflecting the intricacies of human nature.

**Moral and Philosophical Themes:** Despite their humorous and entertaining tone, comic epics in prose often engage with moral and philosophical themes, inviting readers to reflect on the nature of virtue, morality, and human existence.

**Narrative Structure and Technique:** Comic epics in prose often experiment with narrative structure and technique, employing devices such as multiple plotlines, shifting perspectives, or self-reflexive narration to create a dynamic and engaging reading experience.

In conclusion, a comic epic in prose is a unique literary form that combines elements of comedy, the epic tradition, and realism within a prose narrative. This genre often provides a humorous and engaging exploration of human nature, society, and moral values, while also offering insights into the complexities and contradictions of the human condition. Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" is a prime example of a comic epic in prose, and its enduring popularity attests to the appeal and significance of this literary form.

## 1.10 PICARESQUE NOVELS

The picaresque novel is a genre of prose fiction that originated in Spain during the early 16th century. The term "picaresque" is derived from the Spanish word "picaro," which means "rogue" or "rascal." This genre is characterized by the adventures and misadventures of a resourceful, cunning, and often morally ambiguous protagonist.

Picaresque novels typically follow the life and experiences of a low-born but clever hero who relies on their wits to survive and advance in a corrupt society. The protagonist, or picaro, typically navigates through various social classes and settings, exposing the vices and hypocrisies of society along the way.

The picaresque novel emerged in response to the social and economic changes that were taking place in Spain during the Renaissance. The genre reflects the growing dissatisfaction with the existing social order and a growing interest in realism in literature. The first picaresque novel is often considered to be "Lazarillo de Tormes," published anonymously in 1554. It set the stage for other picaresque works that followed, both in Spain and across Europe.

**Elements of Picaresque Novels:**

Episodic structure: Picaresque novels are often composed of loosely connected episodes or adventures that the protagonist experiences as they move from one situation to another.

First-person narrative: These novels are usually narrated in the first person by the protagonist, providing a direct and personal account of their life and experiences.

Satire and social critique: Picaresque novels often contain elements of satire and expose the flaws and hypocrisies of various social classes and institutions.

Realism: The genre is marked by its focus on the gritty details of everyday life, often incorporating realistic dialogue and descriptions of various social settings.

The picaro: The protagonist is often a marginalized figure who uses their cunning and adaptability to navigate through society and overcome the challenges they face.

**Examples**:

"Lazarillo de Tormes" (1554) - This anonymous Spanish work is considered the first picaresque novel and follows the adventures of the young Lazarillo as he serves different masters and learns to survive in a corrupt society.

"Guzmán de Alfarache" (1599) by Mateo Alemán - This novel follows the life of Guzmán, a swindler who eventually repents for his actions and becomes a moral example.

"Don Quixote" (1605) by Miguel de Cervantes - Although not a pure picaresque novel, "Don Quixote" incorporates elements of the genre as it follows the adventures of the deluded knight and his loyal squire, Sancho Panza.

"Moll Flanders" (1722) by Daniel Defoe - This English novel tells the story of Moll Flanders, who uses her wit and charm to rise from her humble beginnings to prosperity and respectability.

***Tom Jones* as a picaresque novel**

The story of *Tom Jones* follows the pattern of picaresque novel. The novel deals with the adventures and vicissitudes as Tom Jones the Protagonist of the passes through various scenes, meets with various incidents, and comes in contact with a great variety of characters. The adventures of the hero enable the novelist to present realistically a complete picture of the life, of the times and to introduce a great variety of characters from different strata of society.

## 1.11 LET US SUM UP

In conclusion, Henry Fielding stands as a pivotal figure in the history of English literature, whose innovative narrative techniques and skilful use of satire and humour have left an indelible mark on the development of the novel. Fielding's major works, including "Tom Jones", "Joseph Andrews," and "Amelia," showcase his ability to create engaging stories that explore the complexities of human nature, morality, and society. His characters, both virtuous and flawed, resonate with readers, offering timeless insights into the human experience. Fielding's contributions extend beyond his novels, as his career as a playwright, journalist, and magistrate demonstrate his multifaceted talents and commitment to social reform. His keen understanding of the hypocrisies and vices of 18th-century England allowed him to craft works that remain relevant and entertaining today. By examining Fielding's life and works, we can appreciate his lasting influence on the literary world and the enduring legacy of his ground-breaking approach to storytelling.

## 1.12 QUESTIONS

1. Analyze the importance of comedy and satire in Fielding's novels, particularly "Tom Jones," "Joseph Andrews," and "Amelia." How does Fielding use humour and irony to engage readers and provide moral instruction? What specific aspects of 18th-century English society does he target for satire and why?
2. Discuss Henry Fielding's contribution to English novels.
3. Discuss the concept of "comic epic in prose."
4. Discuss the Social concerns in the works of Henry Fielding.

## 1.13 FURTHER READING


1. “Henry Fielding: A Life” by Martin C. Battestin
2. “The Achievement of Henry Fielding: An Essay on the Art of the Novel” by Wilbur L. Cross
3. “Fielding's Art of Fiction: Eleven Essays on ‘Shamela’, ‘Joseph Andrews’, ‘Tom Jones’, and ‘Amelia’” edited by Robert A. Day and George J. Worth
4. “The Political Career of Henry Fielding” by G. F. R. Barker
5. “Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast” by Ronald Paulson

# UNIT-2 HENRY FIELDING: TOM JONES

## Structure


2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 *Tom Jones*: An Introduction

2.3 Significance of the title *Tom Jones*

2.4 Major characters in *Tom Jones*

2.5 Book wise summary and analysis of Tom Jones

2.6 Plot of Tom Jones

2.7 Setting of Tom Jones

2.8 Art of characterisation

- 2.8.1 Tom Jones
- 2.8.2 Sophia
- 2.8.3 Blifil

2.9 Elements of novel in Tom Jones

2.10 Tom Jones as a picaresque novel

2.11 Narrative technique

2.12 Realism

2.13 Social criticism in Tom Jones

2.14 Humour in Tom Jones

2.15 Concept of Comic Epic in Prose in Tom Jones

2.16 Major themes

2.17 Let Us Sum Up

2.18 Questions

2.19 Further Reading

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit carefully, you will be able to:

- To develop a comprehensive understanding of the historical, social, and literary context in which Fielding's "Tom Jones" was written, including the emergence of the novel as a literary genre during the 18th century.
- To analyse the narrative techniques employed by Fielding in "Tom Jones," focusing on elements such as the omniscient narrator, episodic structure, and the use of humour and satire.
- To examine the thematic concerns in "Tom Jones," including morality, social class, human nature, and gender dynamics, and to assess their relevance and implications in contemporary society.
- To explore "Tom Jones" as a picaresque novel and a bildungsroman, understanding how the protagonist's journey and development reflect the values and conventions of these literary genres.
- To investigate the role of setting in "Tom Jones," examining how the novel's depiction of rural England and London contributes to its themes, character development, and overall narrative.
- To study the realism in "Tom Jones," assessing Fielding's use of authentic characters, dialogue, and situations in order to critique and satirize 18th-century English society.

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the second unit of the First Block in your course on the British novel. Tom Jones is also one of the first novels in English. It was published in 1749. "Tom Jones" is one of the significant works of 18th-century literature, which explores how the novel reflects and challenges the literary conventions and social attitudes of its time. In this unit, I shall acquaint you with the significance of the title Tom Jones. Then, before going to know about the novel we would first get the knowledge of many important characters such as Tom Jones, Sophia and others. After acquainted with the characters you would know the Book wise summary and analysis and plot, setting of the novel and major themes. Further we would discuss Tom Jones as a picaresque novel, Concept of comic epic in prose and various themes in the novel Tom Jones. While reading a novel, we would try to discuss the socio- cultural concerns in Tom Jones.

## 2.2 TOM JONES: AN INTRODUCTION

"Tom Jones," also known as "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," is a classic 18th-century English novel by Henry Fielding. First published in 1749, the novel is a prime example of a picaresque and comic narrative that captures the spirit of its time. Fielding's masterpiece is characterized by its episodic structure, vivid

characters, and engaging plot, which provides a panoramic view of the society, culture, and moral landscape of 18th-century England.

The story revolves around the life and adventures of the eponymous protagonist, Tom Jones, a foundling discovered on the estate of the kind-hearted Squire Allworthy. Raised alongside Allworthy's nephew Blifil, Tom's good nature and charisma often clash with Blifil's cunning and hypocrisy. Tom falls in love with the beautiful and virtuous Sophia Western, the daughter of a neighbouring landowner. However, misunderstandings and Tom's impulsive behaviour lead to his expulsion from Allworthy's estate, setting the stage for a series of adventures as he journeys to London.

Throughout the novel, Fielding explores various themes such as love, morality, social class, identity, and hypocrisy. Employing satire and humor, he critiques the societal norms, conventions, and institutions of the time, exposing the moral shortcomings of individuals from all walks of life. The novel's realism and psychological depth, combined with its rich and evocative settings, contribute to its enduring appeal and literary significance.

"Tom Jones" stands as a testament to Fielding's skill as a storyteller and his keen insights into human nature. The novel has been widely acclaimed for its artistry and complexity, earning a prominent place in the canon of English literature.

## 2.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE OF TOM JONES

***The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling***, often known simply as ***Tom Jones***, is a comic novel by English playwright and novelist Henry Fielding. It is a *Bildungsroman* and a picaresque novel. It was first published on 28 February 1749 in London and is among the earliest English works to be classified as a novel. The title of Henry Fielding's novel, "Tom Jones," holds significance in several ways. Firstly, the title emphasizes the protagonist's journey, as the novel revolves around the life and adventures of Tom Jones, a foundling raised by the benevolent Squire Allworthy. By naming the novel after Tom, Fielding highlights the importance of the central character and his personal development throughout the story. Secondly, the title also represents the themes of identity and social status. Tom's status as a foundling with an unknown parentage leaves him vulnerable to the prejudices of a rigid, class-based society. His struggle to find his place in the world and overcome these societal barriers is a key aspect of the novel. Lastly, the title's simplicity reflects Fielding's direct and unpretentious approach to storytelling. "Tom Jones" is a picaresque novel that explores human nature, moral dilemmas, and societal issues with humor and wit. By choosing a straightforward title, Fielding invites readers to focus on the protagonist's journey and the novel's exploration of 18th-century English society.

## 2.4 MAJOR CHARACTERS IN TOM JONES

Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" is filled with a diverse cast of characters who contribute to the novel's rich and engaging narrative. Here is a list of the major characters in the story:

**Tom Jones** - The protagonist, an orphan raised by Squire Allworthy, who embarks on a journey of self-discovery, personal growth, and redemption throughout the novel.

**Squire Allworthy** - A wealthy and benevolent landowner who finds and raises Tom as his own son.

**Sophia Western** - The virtuous and beautiful daughter of Squire Western, who serves as Tom's love interest and symbolizes moral integrity and independence.

**Squire Western** - Sophia's father, a boorish and domineering landowner who seeks to control his daughter's life and marriage prospects.

**Blifil** - Tom's half-brother and primary antagonist, who schemes against Tom out of jealousy and ambition.

**Mr. Thwackum** - A hypocritical and self-righteous clergyman who serves as Tom's tutor and seeks to impose his strict moral views on him.

**Mr. Square** - A pedantic and pretentious tutor who educates Tom and Blifil in philosophy and morality, but is revealed to be morally corrupt himself.

**Mrs. Waters/Jenny Jones** - A mysterious woman with whom Tom has a passionate affair, later revealed to be his mother.

**Lady Bellaston** - A wealthy and morally corrupt aristocrat who becomes infatuated with Tom and attempts to manipulate him for her own desires.

**Mr. Partridge** - A former schoolmaster who is falsely accused of being Tom's father, and later becomes his loyal friend and companion on his journey.

These characters represent various aspects of 18th-century English society and contribute to the novel's exploration of themes such as love, morality, personal growth, and the complexity of human nature.

## 2.5 BOOK WISE SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TOM JONES

"Tom Jones," also known as "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," is a comic novel written by English author Henry Fielding and first published in 1749. The book is divided into 18 books, each containing several chapters. Here is book wise summary and analysis of Tom Jones:

**Book I**

Book I open with the author's introduction and explanation of his intention to present a realistic portrayal of human nature in the novel. The story begins at the home of Squire Allworthy, a wealthy and benevolent landowner, who discovers a baby boy in his bed after returning from a trip to London. Allworthy, who is childless, decides to raise the child as his own and names him Tom Jones. He enlists his housekeeper, Mrs. Deborah Wilkins, to help care for the child.

Allworthy's sister, Bridget, comes to live with him, and the two siblings discuss Tom's possible parentage. Bridget later marries Captain Blifil, a cunning and hypocritical man, and they have a son named Master Blifil. The two boys, Tom and

Blifil, grow up together under Allworthy's care, and their contrasting personalities become evident. Tom is good-hearted and full of life, while Blifil is mean-spirited and self-serving.

**Analysis**:

Book I of "Tom Jones" serves to introduce the major characters and themes of the novel. The story begins with a focus on Squire Allworthy, who embodies the virtues of benevolence and compassion, and his decision to raise Tom Jones as his own son highlights the themes of generosity and human goodness.

The novel's comedic elements are evident in Fielding's satirical portrayal of society and its hypocrisies. Fielding uses humor and irony to expose the flaws and shortcomings of various characters, such as the vain and self-righteous Mrs. Deborah Wilkins or the manipulative and deceitful Captain Blifil.

Additionally, Book I set the stage for the conflict between Tom Jones and Master Blifil, which will be a central theme throughout the novel. Their contrasting personalities emphasize the novel's exploration of human nature, as Tom represents the inherent goodness in people despite his flaws and mistakes, while Blifil embodies the darker, more selfish aspects of humanity.

In conclusion, Book I of "Tom Jones" establishes the main characters, themes, and conflicts that will be developed throughout the novel. Fielding's use of humor, satire, and realism in his portrayal of human nature sets the stage for a compelling exploration of morality, social norms, and the complexities of the human experience.

**Book II**

Book II of "Tom Jones" continues the development of the characters and themes introduced in Book I. As Tom and Blifil grow older, their contrasting personalities become even more apparent. Tom is portrayed as a good-hearted, generous, and warm young man, whereas Blifil is cunning, hypocritical, and self-serving.

Squire Allworthy's health takes a turn for the worse, and the entire household believes that he is on his deathbed. Blifil and Thwackum, the boys' tutor, manipulate the situation for their own advantage. Blifil feigns concern for Allworthy, while secretly rejoicing at the prospect of inheriting his wealth. Thwackum, a hypocritical and self-righteous clergyman, attempts to gain Allworthy's favour in order to secure a better position for himself.

When Tom hears the news of Allworthy's imminent demise, he is genuinely heartbroken and prays for his recovery. Allworthy unexpectedly recovers, and the household returns to normal. Tom's heartfelt reaction to Allworthy's illness earns him the squire's favour, while Blifil's deceitful behaviour begins to be seen in a negative light.

Meanwhile, Captain Blifil dies, leaving Bridget a widow. Soon after, the arrival of Dr. Harrison, a virtuous and wise clergyman, leads to the dismissal of Thwackum as the boys' tutor. Dr. Harrison becomes an important figure in their lives, providing guidance and support for Tom.

**Analysis**:

Book II of "Tom Jones" further develops the novel's themes of human nature, morality, and the contrast between appearance and reality. The characters' reactions to Squire Allworthy's illness serve to emphasize the differences between Tom and Blifil, with Tom's genuine concern and love contrasting sharply with Blifil's hypocrisy and self-interest.

Fielding's satirical portrayal of Thwackum and other characters continues to expose the hypocrisies of society, particularly in relation to the clergy. Thwackum's self-righteousness and opportunism highlight the discrepancy between his outward piety and his true nature.

The introduction of Dr. Harrison marks a turning point in the story, as he becomes a positive influence on Tom and a counterbalance to the negative characters in the novel. His wisdom, morality, and genuine concern for the well-being of others make him a valuable mentor for Tom and a foil to the deceitful and manipulative characters like Blifil and Thwackum.

In conclusion, Book II of "Tom Jones" further explores the novel's themes of human nature, morality, and social hypocrisy while continuing to develop the main characters and the central conflict between Tom and Blifil. Fielding's use of satire and humor adds depth to the story, making it a compelling examination of the complexities of the human experience.

**Book III**

In Book III of "Tom Jones," Fielding continues to develop the characters and themes of the novel, with a focus on the romantic relationships that begin to unfold. Tom falls in love with Sophia Western, the beautiful and virtuous daughter of Squire Western, who is Allworthy's neighbour. Their love, however, faces numerous obstacles due to their social status and the disapproval of their families.

Sophia is pursued by several suitors, including the despicable Blifil, who wishes to marry her for her fortune. Squire Western and Squire Allworthy, unaware of Tom's feelings for Sophia, support Blifil's pursuit of her hand in marriage. Sophia, however, is not interested in Blifil and is secretly in love with Tom.

As the romantic tensions build, Tom gets into a fight with Blifil after discovering that he has been slandering him behind his back. Tom is also falsely accused of stealing from Allworthy, leading to his banishment from the house. Sophia is distraught to hear the news of Tom's departure, but she is determined to remain loyal to him.

**Analysis**:

Book III of "Tom Jones" expands on the themes of love, class, and societal expectations. The romance between Tom and Sophia serves as a central plot point, illustrating the challenges faced by lovers from different social backgrounds. Their love story is an example of genuine affection and devotion, in stark contrast to the superficial and self-serving relationships pursued by other characters, such as Blifil.

The obstacles faced by Tom and Sophia highlight the importance of social status and wealth in 18th-century English society. Their love is challenged not only by their families' disapproval but also by the machinations of characters like Blifil, who view marriage as a means to secure financial gain and social advancement.

Fielding continues to employ satire and humor in his portrayal of various characters, such as Squire Western, who is depicted as a boorish and unrefined country gentleman. His insistence on arranging a marriage between Sophia and Blifil underscores the role of parental authority in determining the lives of young people.

In conclusion, Book III of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into the themes of love, class, and societal expectations, with the romance between Tom and Sophia serving as a central focus. Fielding's satirical portrayal of the characters and their motivations provides a compelling exploration of human nature and the complexities of 18th-century English society.

**Book IV**

In Book IV of "Tom Jones," the story continues to unfold as Tom sets out on a journey after being banished from Squire Allworthy's estate. Along the way, he meets a variety of colourful characters and encounters several misadventures. His good nature and generosity often lead him into trouble, but they also earn him the admiration and assistance of those he meets.

Meanwhile, Sophia discovers that her father, Squire Western, intends to force her into marriage with Blifil. Desperate to avoid this fate, she decides to run away from home. Sophia's journey runs parallel to Tom's, and their paths cross occasionally, but they do not reunite.

Tom encounters a group of soldiers and joins their regiment, hoping to prove himself and improve his social standing. While with the regiment, Tom meets Mrs. Waters, who is mistaken for his long-lost mother. This leads to further complications and misunderstandings.

**Analysis**:

Book IV of "Tom Jones" explores themes of coincidence, chance, and the role of fate in shaping human lives. As Tom and Sophia embark on their separate journeys, their chance encounters and near-misses with one another serve to create dramatic tension and further the plot. These instances of coincidence also emphasize the importance of personal choices in determining one's destiny.

Fielding's use of picaresque storytelling becomes more apparent in this section of the novel, as Tom's adventures on the road allow the author to introduce a diverse array of characters and situations. This narrative structure provides a means for Fielding to satirize various aspects of 18th-century society, from the military to the legal system.

The characters that Tom meets on his journey serve to reinforce the novel's exploration of human nature and morality. Some characters, such as the helpful

innkeeper, display kindness and generosity, while others, like the deceptive Mrs. Waters, reveal the darker side of humanity.

In conclusion, Book IV of "Tom Jones" continues to develop the novel's themes and characters through the use of coincidence, chance encounters, and a picaresque narrative structure. Fielding's satirical lens provides a compelling examination of 18th-century society and human nature, adding depth to the story of Tom and Sophia's adventures.

**Book V**

Book V of "Tom Jones" begins with Tom and Sophia's journeys continuing separately, as they each face various challenges and meet new characters along the way. Tom's noble and selfless nature is further demonstrated through his interactions with others. In one incident, he rescues a man named Mr. Nightingale from a duel, and they become fast friends.

Meanwhile, Sophia's maid, Mrs. Honour, informs her about Tom's whereabouts. Sophia is also pursued by a man named Lord Fellamar, who is enamoured with her beauty and wishes to marry her. However, Sophia remains loyal to Tom and refuses his advances.

Back in the countryside, Squire Allworthy and Squire Western become aware of Tom and Sophia's absences and decide to go after them. Squire Western, still determined to force Sophia into marriage with Blifil, is enraged by her disobedience.

Sophia and Tom eventually arrive in London, though they remain unaware of each other's presence. While in the city, Tom saves a woman named Lady Bellaston from a highwayman, and she becomes infatuated with him. Tom's reputation for gallantry and heroism continues to grow, as does the list of people who are indebted to him for his kindness and bravery.

**Analysis**:

Book V of "Tom Jones" delves further into themes of love, loyalty, and societal expectations. The obstacles that Tom and Sophia face on their respective journeys serve to test their commitment to one another and their personal values. Sophia's unwavering loyalty to Tom, even in the face of Lord Fellamar's advances, demonstrates the depth of her love and the strength of her character.

Fielding's picaresque storytelling style continues in this book, with Tom's adventures in London providing a means to satirize various aspects of city life and high society. Tom's encounters with characters like Lady Bellaston reveal the superficiality and moral corruption present in the upper classes.

The theme of coincidence continues to play a significant role in the narrative, as Tom and Sophia narrowly miss one another in London. This element of chance adds a sense of tension and unpredictability to the story, underscoring the unpredictable nature of life.

In conclusion, Book V of "Tom Jones" further develops the novel's themes of love, loyalty, and societal expectations while continuing to explore the adventures of Tom and Sophia. Fielding's satirical portrayal of 18th-century society and his use of picaresque storytelling serve to create a rich and engaging narrative that delves into the complexities of human nature and the human experience.

**Book VI**

In Book VI of "Tom Jones," the narrative continues to follow the characters' adventures in London. Tom, despite his noble nature, becomes entangled in a series of scandalous relationships with women, including Lady Bellaston, who uses her wealth and influence to manipulate him. Tom remains unaware of Sophia's presence in the city, and Sophia learns of Tom's affairs, which causes her great distress.

Sophia, on the other hand, is relentlessly pursued by Lord Fellamar, who conspires with Lady Bellaston to abduct her and force her into marriage. However, the plan is foiled when Mrs. Western, Sophia's aunt, discovers the scheme and helps her escape.

Tom's friend, Mr. Nightingale, faces his own set of challenges when he discovers that his lover, Nancy, is pregnant. Tom encourages Nightingale to marry Nancy, despite the disapproval of Nightingale's family.

Meanwhile, Squire Allworthy and Squire Western arrive in London in search of Tom and Sophia. Squire Western continues to push for Sophia's marriage to Blifil, but Sophia remains steadfast in her refusal.

**Analysis**:

Book VI of "Tom Jones" explores the themes of temptation, moral ambiguity, and the consequences of one's actions. Tom's affairs with women such as Lady Bellaston demonstrate his susceptibility to temptation and reveal a less virtuous side of his character. Despite his noble and generous nature, Tom's indiscretions illustrate the complexity of human nature and the challenges individuals face when attempting to adhere to a moral code.

Sophia's unwavering loyalty to Tom is tested by the revelations of his affairs, adding emotional depth to the narrative and highlighting the importance of trust and honesty in relationships. Her continued refusal to marry Blifil or Lord Fellamar further emphasizes her commitment to her personal values and her love for Tom.

Fielding's satirical portrayal of London high society exposes the moral corruption and superficiality of the upper classes. Characters like Lady Bellaston and Lord Fellamar represent the darker aspects of human nature, using their wealth and influence to manipulate others for their own benefit.

In conclusion, Book VI of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into the themes of temptation, moral ambiguity, and the consequences of one's actions. Fielding's exploration of the complexities of human nature, coupled with his satirical portrayal of 18th-century society, continues to engage readers and provide a thought-provoking examination of the human experience.

**Book VII**

In Book VII of "Tom Jones," the various plotlines begin to converge as the characters' paths cross in London. Squire Allworthy and Squire Western continue their search for Tom and Sophia, with Squire Western still adamant about forcing Sophia to marry Blifil.

Tom, now aware of Sophia's presence in the city, becomes determined to find her and win back her affection. He writes a heartfelt letter to Sophia, expressing his regret for his past actions and his undying love for her. Meanwhile, Sophia remains heartbroken over Tom's affairs but is also conflicted by her enduring love for him.

Tom's involvement in a street brawl leads to his arrest and imprisonment. While in jail, Tom learns that the man he injured in the brawl is his half-brother, Blifil. This revelation complicates matters further, as Tom's actions now have the potential to cause even more damage to his relationship with both Sophia and Squire Allworthy.

In the meantime, Sophia's aunt, Mrs. Western, tries to convince her to marry Lord Fellamar, but Sophia remains steadfast in her refusal.

**Analysis**:

Book VII of "Tom Jones" serves as a turning point in the novel, as the various plotlines begin to converge and the characters are forced to confront the consequences of their actions. The theme of redemption is introduced, with Tom attempting to atone for his past indiscretions and win back Sophia's trust and affection.

Sophia's internal struggle between her love for Tom and her disappointment in his actions adds emotional depth to the narrative. This conflict serves to emphasize the importance of trust, forgiveness, and personal growth in relationships.

Fielding's satirical portrayal of London high society continues in this section of the novel, with characters like Lord Fellamar and Lady Bellaston representing the moral corruption and superficiality of the upper classes. The author also uses the various plot developments to explore themes of coincidence and fate, as the characters' paths cross in unexpected ways.

In conclusion, Book VII of "Tom Jones" marks a turning point in the story, as the characters' paths converge, and the consequences of their actions come to the forefront. Fielding's exploration of themes such as redemption, trust, and forgiveness, coupled with his satirical depiction of 18th-century society, provides a thought-provoking and engaging narrative that continues to captivate readers.

**Book VIII**

In Book VIII of "Tom Jones," the narrative continues to follow the characters as they navigate the complexities of their relationships and face the consequences of their actions. Tom remains imprisoned and awaits trial for the injuries he inflicted upon Blifil during the street brawl.

Sophia, still torn between her love for Tom and her disappointment in his actions, struggles to decide whether or not to forgive him. She eventually reads Tom's heartfelt letter and is moved by his sincerity, opening the door for a possible reconciliation.

While in jail, Tom meets a man named Partridge, who claims to be his long-lost father. Partridge has been falsely accused of stealing from Squire Allworthy and has spent several years in prison. He offers to help Tom prove his innocence and regain Squire Allworthy's favour.

Squire Western, ever persistent in his quest to force Sophia into marriage with Blifil, devises a plan to abduct her and bring her back to the countryside. However, his plan is thwarted when Mrs. Western learns of it and helps Sophia escape once more.

**Analysis**:

Book VIII of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into the themes of forgiveness, redemption, and the complexities of human relationships. As Tom faces the consequences of his actions, his sincere remorse and desire to make amends demonstrate the potential for personal growth and redemption. Sophia's internal struggle to forgive Tom adds emotional depth to the narrative and highlights the challenges faced by individuals when confronted with the flaws and imperfections of their loved ones.

The introduction of Partridge as Tom's purported father adds an element of intrigue to the plot, as well as underscores the theme of coincidence. Partridge's willingness to help Tom regain Squire Allworthy's favour speaks to the importance of family and loyalty in the narrative.

Fielding continues to employ satire and humor to critique various aspects of 18th-century society. The persistent efforts of Squire Western to force Sophia into an unwanted marriage illustrate the oppressive societal expectations placed upon women during that time. Additionally, Fielding uses Tom's imprisonment to highlight the injustices and corruption present in the legal system.

In conclusion, Book VIII of "Tom Jones" continues to explore themes such as forgiveness, redemption, and the complexities of human relationships, while also maintaining a satirical lens on 18th-century society. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that engages readers and offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature and societal expectations.

**Book IX**

Book IX of "Tom Jones" sees the characters continue to navigate their respective challenges and relationships. Tom, with the help of Partridge, manages to escape from prison and sets out to clear his name and win back Sophia's love.

Sophia, having evaded her father's plan to force her into marriage with Blifil, remains in hiding. She continues to grapple with her feelings for Tom and her disappointment in his actions.

Tom and Partridge's journey leads them to encounter various colorful characters, including the good-hearted and generous Mrs. Miller, who provides them with shelter and assistance. Tom, ever the gallant hero, saves a young woman named Harriet Fitzpatrick from an abusive husband, further showcasing his noble nature.

As the story progresses, Tom's reputation begins to recover, and he gains the support and admiration of those he encounters. However, his past actions still cast a shadow over his prospects, and his future with Sophia remains uncertain.

**Analysis**:

Book IX of "Tom Jones" further develops the themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's escape from prison and subsequent journey with Partridge serve as a metaphor for his quest for redemption and his efforts to make amends for his past indiscretions.

Fielding continues to employ a picaresque narrative style, using Tom and Partridge's travels as a means to introduce various characters and situations that offer social commentary on 18th-century society. Characters such as Mrs. Miller and Harriet Fitzpatrick highlight the goodness and generosity that can be found in unexpected places, while also revealing the darker aspects of society, such as domestic abuse.

Sophia's continued struggle with her feelings for Tom adds emotional depth to the narrative and underscores the importance of trust and forgiveness in relationships. Her resilience and determination to maintain her independence in the face of societal expectations demonstrate her strong character and serve as a critique of the restrictive gender roles of the time.

In conclusion, Book IX of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical portrayal of 18th-century society continue to engage readers, while the characters' ongoing struggles and growth offer a thought-provoking examination of human nature and societal norms.

**Book X**

In Book X of "Tom Jones," Tom and Partridge continue their journey in search of Sophia, encountering various challenges and colorful characters along the way. They eventually arrive at the town of Upton, where they are reunited with Sophia, who is also traveling incognito.

However, their reunion is short-lived, as a misunderstanding leads Sophia to believe that Tom is involved with the woman he had rescued earlier, Harriet Fitzpatrick. Hurt and disillusioned, Sophia leaves Upton without revealing her presence to Tom.

Meanwhile, Tom's past continues to haunt him, as the circumstances of his birth are revealed. It is discovered that Tom is not, in fact, the son of Partridge, but rather the illegitimate child of Squire Allworthy's sister, Bridget, and a local clergyman, Mr. Summer. This revelation complicates Tom's prospects for reconciliation with both Sophia and Squire Allworthy.

In the meantime, Blifil, having learned of Tom's escape from prison and his pursuit of Sophia, works to undermine Tom's reputation and sabotage his chances of winning Sophia's love.

**Analysis**:

Book X of "Tom Jones" further explores the themes of coincidence, fate, and the complexities of human relationships. The unexpected reunion of Tom and Sophia at Upton serves to heighten the dramatic tension in the narrative, as their love story is continually challenged by misunderstandings and external forces.

Sophia's ongoing struggle with her feelings for Tom adds emotional depth to the story, emphasizing the importance of trust, honesty, and communication in relationships. The revelation of Tom's true parentage adds an additional layer of complexity to the narrative and raises questions about the nature of identity, social status, and the influence of one's past on their future prospects.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style continues in this section of the novel, as Tom and Partridge's journey provides a backdrop for satirical commentary on various aspects of 18th-century society. Characters like Harriet Fitzpatrick and Blifil illustrate the darker aspects of human nature, while Tom's persistent efforts to redeem himself and win back Sophia's love demonstrate the potential for personal growth and redemption.

In conclusion, Book X of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of coincidence, fate, and the complexities of human relationships, while continuing to employ a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature and the challenges of navigating love, trust, and societal expectations.

**Book XI**

In Book XI of "Tom Jones," Tom and Partridge continue their journey in search of Sophia, encountering various challenges and characters along the way. As they travel, Tom learns of his true parentage and begins to understand the consequences this revelation may have on his future, particularly regarding his relationship with Sophia.

In the meantime, Sophia, still traveling incognito, is joined by her cousin, Harriet Fitzpatrick. The two women share their experiences and provide support for one another as they navigate the challenges they face.

Tom and Partridge arrive in London, where they are once again taken in by the kind-hearted Mrs. Miller. While in the city, Tom continues his attempts to locate Sophia and win her forgiveness. He also becomes acquainted with a high-ranking nobleman, Lord Fellamar, who, unbeknownst to Tom, is one of Sophia's unwanted suitors.

Blifil, still working to undermine Tom and sabotage his chances with Sophia, manages to convince Squire Allworthy of Tom's unworthiness. Allworthy, in turn, decides to disinherit Tom and make Blifil his sole heir.

**Analysis**:

Book XI of "Tom Jones" continues to explore themes of identity, redemption, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's discovery of his true parentage adds another layer of complexity to his character and forces him to confront the implications this revelation may have on his future, particularly in regard to his relationship with Sophia.

Sophia's bond with her cousin, Harriet Fitzpatrick, provides an opportunity for Fielding to examine the power of female friendship and solidarity in the face of societal expectations and challenges.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style persists in this section of the novel, as Tom and Partridge's journey offers a backdrop for satirical commentary on various aspects of 18th-century society, particularly in London. Characters like Lord Fellamar and Blifil continue to represent the darker aspects of human nature and the corrupting influence of wealth and power.

The decision of Squire Allworthy to disinherit Tom serves as a critical turning point in the narrative, heightening the dramatic tension and further complicating Tom's prospects for happiness and redemption.

In conclusion, Book XI of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of identity, redemption, and the complexities of human relationships, while maintaining a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

**Book XII**

In Book XII of "Tom Jones," the storylines continue to develop as the characters navigate the challenges of London society. Tom, still unaware of Squire Allworthy's decision to disinherit him, remains determined to find Sophia and win her forgiveness.

Sophia, meanwhile, struggles with her feelings for Tom and her desire to maintain her independence. While in London, she continues to evade her unwanted suitors, including Lord Fellamar, who is becoming increasingly aggressive in his pursuit.

Tom becomes involved in a series of misadventures, including a duel with a jealous husband and a scandalous encounter with Lady Bellaston, an older, wealthy, and influential woman who becomes infatuated with Tom. These events further damage Tom's reputation and complicate his chances of reconciling with Sophia.

Despite his missteps, Tom remains committed to redeeming himself and proving his worth to both Sophia and Squire Allworthy. With the help of Partridge and Mrs. Miller, Tom works to clear his name and restore his reputation.

**Analysis**:

Book XII of "Tom Jones" continues to explore the themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's ongoing efforts to redeem himself and win back Sophia's love highlight the importance of perseverance and self-improvement in the face of adversity.

Sophia's continued struggle with her feelings for Tom and her desire to maintain her independence serves as a critique of the restrictive societal expectations placed on women during the 18th century. Her resistance to unwanted suitors like Lord Fellamar underscores the importance of personal agency and the right to choose one's own path in life.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical commentary on London society persist in this section of the novel. Characters like Lady Bellaston represent the moral corruption and superficiality of the upper classes, while Tom's various misadventures serve to emphasize the pitfalls of vanity and the importance of personal integrity.

In conclusion, Book XII of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships while maintaining a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

**Book XIII**

In Book XIII of "Tom Jones," the story continues to unfold in London as the characters face new challenges and complications. Tom remains focused on finding Sophia and winning her forgiveness, but his determination is tested by the temptations and moral corruption of London society.

Sophia, still struggling with her feelings for Tom, faces increasing pressure from her father, Squire Western, to marry Blifil, as well as persistent advances from Lord Fellamar. Unbeknownst to her, Tom's situation grows increasingly dire due to his involvement in various scandals and his disinheritance by Squire Allworthy.

Tom's misadventures take a further toll on his reputation when his affair with Lady Bellaston is exposed. This scandal not only jeopardizes his chances of reconciling with Sophia but also leads to a confrontation with Nightingale, a young gentleman who is in love with Lady Bellaston's niece, Nancy.

Despite the setbacks, Tom remains steadfast in his quest for redemption and strives to prove his worth to Sophia, Squire Allworthy, and those who have supported him, such as Mrs. Miller and Partridge.

**Analysis**:

Book XIII of "Tom Jones" further explores themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's perseverance in the face of temptation and scandal serves to highlight the importance of personal integrity and the potential for change and growth, even in the most challenging circumstances.

Sophia's continued struggle with her feelings for Tom and her resistance to societal expectations demonstrate her strength of character and provide a critique of the restrictive gender roles of the 18th century. Additionally, her determination to forge her own path in life underscores the importance of personal agency and self-determination.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical commentary on London society continue in this section of the novel. Characters like Lady Bellaston and Lord Fellamar serve as examples of the moral corruption and superficiality of the upper classes, while Tom's various misadventures highlight the pitfalls of vanity and the consequences of poor decision-making.

In conclusion, Book XIII of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships while maintaining a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

**Book XIV**

Book XIV of "Tom Jones" continues to follow the characters as they navigate the complexities of London society. Tom remains committed to redeeming himself and winning back Sophia's love, but his past mistakes continue to haunt him.

Sophia, still struggling with her feelings for Tom, faces ongoing pressure from her father, Squire Western, to marry Blifil. Additionally, she must navigate the unwanted advances of other suitors, such as Lord Fellamar.

Tom's situation grows increasingly complicated as the truth about his affair with Lady Bellaston becomes widely known. Despite this scandal, Tom manages to help Nightingale reconcile with his family and secure their blessing for his marriage to Nancy, Lady Bellaston's niece.

In the meantime, Tom's fortunes take a surprising turn when he saves a man from drowning, who turns out to be none other than Mr. Fitzgerald, the man who challenged him to a duel. Grateful for Tom's help, Mr. Fitzgerald reveals a secret that could significantly impact Tom's future and his chances with Sophia.

**Analysis**:

Book XIV of "Tom Jones" continues to explore themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's determination to redeem himself, despite his past mistakes and the judgment of society, highlights the importance of personal integrity and the potential for change and growth.

Sophia's ongoing struggle with her feelings for Tom and her resistance to societal expectations serve as a critique of the restrictive gender roles of the 18th century. Her determination to choose her own path in life underscores the importance of personal agency and self-determination.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical commentary on London society persist in this section of the novel. Characters like Lady Bellaston and Lord Fellamar serve as examples of the moral corruption and superficiality of the upper

classes, while Tom's various misadventures emphasize the consequences of poor decision-making.

Tom's act of saving Mr. Fitzgerald serves as a pivotal moment in the narrative, demonstrating Tom's inherent goodness and setting the stage for future developments that could potentially improve his fortunes and chances with Sophia.

In conclusion, Book XIV of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships, while maintaining a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

**Book XV**

In Book XV of "Tom Jones," the characters continue to navigate the complexities and challenges of London society. Tom's fortunes take a turn for the better when he learns that Mr. Fitzgerald, the man he saved from drowning, is actually the son of a wealthy Irish landowner. Grateful for Tom's help, Mr. Fitzgerald befriends him and provides him with valuable information that could aid Tom in his quest to win back Sophia's love.

Meanwhile, Sophia continues to face pressure from her father, Squire Western, to marry Blifil, as well as unwanted advances from Lord Fellamar. Despite these obstacles, Sophia remains committed to following her own path and resisting societal expectations.

Tom's past mistakes continue to impact his reputation and his relationship with Squire Allworthy. However, with the help of Mr. Fitzgerald and other allies, Tom begins to uncover the truth about Blifil's deceit and machinations, which have contributed to his disinheritance and the loss of Sophia's trust.

As the truth about Blifil's actions comes to light, Tom's prospects for redemption and reconciliation with both Sophia and Squire Allworthy begin to improve.

**Analysis**:

Book XV of "Tom Jones" continues to explore themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's determination to redeem himself and win back Sophia's love, despite the numerous obstacles he faces, underscores the importance of perseverance and personal growth in the face of adversity.

Sophia's ongoing struggle with her feelings for Tom and her resistance to societal expectations provide a critique of the restrictive gender roles of the 18th century. Her determination to choose her own path in life emphasizes the importance of personal agency and self-determination.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical commentary on London society persist in this section of the novel. Characters such as Lord Fellamar serve as

examples of the moral corruption and superficiality of the upper classes, while Tom's various misadventures highlight the consequences of poor decision-making.

The revelation of Blifil's deceit and manipulation serves as a pivotal moment in the narrative, setting the stage for potential redemption and reconciliation between Tom, Sophia, and Squire Allworthy.

In conclusion, Book XV of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships, while maintaining a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

**Book XVI**

In Book XVI of "Tom Jones," the narrative moves towards its climax as truths are revealed and fortunes shift. Tom's reputation begins to improve as more information about Blifil's deceit and manipulations comes to light. With the help of Mr. Fitzgerald and other allies, Tom works to uncover Blifil's treachery and restore his own standing in the eyes of Squire Allworthy and Sophia.

Sophia remains firm in her resolve to follow her own path and resist the pressure from her father, Squire Western, to marry Blifil. Her steadfastness in the face of societal expectations demonstrates her strength of character and commitment to self-determination.

As Tom's fortunes improve, he is finally able to confront Blifil and expose his deceit to Squire Allworthy. The revelation of Blifil's actions leads Squire Allworthy to reevaluate his judgment of Tom and reconsider his decision to disinherit him.

With the truth about Blifil's machinations revealed, the stage is set for potential reconciliation and resolution between Tom, Sophia, and Squire Allworthy.

**Analysis**:

Book XVI of "Tom Jones" continues to explore themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's ongoing efforts to redeem himself and win back Sophia's love demonstrate the importance of perseverance and personal growth in the face of adversity.

Sophia's determination to choose her own path in life, despite societal pressure, provides a critique of the restrictive gender roles of the 18th century and emphasizes the importance of personal agency and self-determination.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical commentary on society persist in this section of the novel. The revelation of Blifil's deceit and the subsequent shift in fortunes for Tom, Blifil, and other characters serve to highlight the consequences of dishonesty and manipulation, as well as the importance of personal integrity.

The unfolding events in Book XVI set the stage for potential resolution and reconciliation between Tom, Sophia, and Squire Allworthy. With the truth about Blifil's actions exposed, the characters are forced to confront the consequences of their choices and evaluate their own values and priorities.

In conclusion, Book XVI of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships, while maintaining a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

**Book XVII**

In Book XVII of "Tom Jones," the narrative moves towards its resolution as characters confront the consequences of their actions and make crucial decisions. With the truth about Blifil's deceit and manipulation revealed, Squire Allworthy reevaluates his judgment of Tom and restores his inheritance. Tom's fortunes take a significant turn for the better, and his prospects for reconciliation with Sophia improve.

Sophia, still struggling with her feelings for Tom, finally decides to follow her heart and trust in his potential for growth and redemption. She resists the pressure from her father, Squire Western, to marry Blifil and chooses to be with Tom.

Meanwhile, Blifil faces the consequences of his treachery as his schemes are exposed, and he falls out of favour with Squire Allworthy. His reputation and prospects suffer a significant blow, reflecting the consequences of dishonesty and manipulation.

With the truth revealed and relationships mended, the stage is set for a resolution that brings together Tom, Sophia, and Squire Allworthy in a satisfying and just conclusion.

**Analysis**:

Book XVII of "Tom Jones" continues to explore themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's restoration of his inheritance and the mending of his relationships with Sophia and Squire Allworthy highlight the importance of perseverance, personal growth, and the potential for redemption.

Sophia's decision to follow her heart and trust in Tom's potential for growth underscores the importance of personal agency and self-determination, as well as the power of love and forgiveness in the face of adversity.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical commentary on society persist in this section of the novel. The resolution of the various plotlines serves to emphasize the importance of personal integrity, as well as the consequences of dishonesty and manipulation.

The unfolding events in Book XVII bring the narrative to a satisfying conclusion, with the characters forced to confront the consequences of their choices and evaluate their own values and priorities. The resolution reinforces the novel's

themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships.

In conclusion, Book XVII of "Tom Jones" delves deeper into themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships, while maintaining a picaresque narrative style and satirical social commentary. The characters' ongoing struggles and growth provide a compelling narrative that offers a thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

**Book XVIII**

Book XVIII of "Tom Jones" concludes the novel, tying up loose ends and providing a satisfying resolution for the main characters. With the truth about Blifil's deceit and manipulation revealed, Tom's relationships with Squire Allworthy and Sophia are mended, and his fortunes are restored. Squire Allworthy acknowledges his previous misjudgements and seeks to make amends by welcoming Tom back into the family.

Sophia and Tom, having overcome numerous obstacles and challenges, are finally united in love, and they marry with the blessings of Squire Western and Squire Allworthy. Their union serves as a testament to the power of love, forgiveness, and personal growth.

Blifil, facing the consequences of his actions, is stripped of his inheritance and falls from grace. However, in an act of mercy, Tom uses his newfound wealth to provide for Blifil and help him start anew, demonstrating Tom's growth and generosity of spirit.

Secondary characters also find resolution in their various storylines, with many of them experiencing personal growth and attaining happiness through love, friendship, and forgiveness.

**Analysis**:

Book XVIII of "Tom Jones" brings the narrative to a satisfying conclusion, emphasizing themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. Tom's restoration of his inheritance, the mending of his relationships, and his eventual marriage to Sophia underscore the importance of perseverance, personal growth, and the potential for redemption.

Sophia's unwavering determination to follow her heart and trust in Tom's potential for growth highlights the importance of personal agency, self-determination, and the transformative power of love and forgiveness.

Fielding's picaresque narrative style and satirical commentary on society persist in this final section of the novel. The resolution of various plotlines and character arcs emphasizes the importance of personal integrity, the consequences of dishonesty and manipulation, and the potential for growth and redemption.

In conclusion, Book XVIII of "Tom Jones" brings the narrative to a satisfying and just end, reinforcing themes of redemption, personal growth, and the complexities of human relationships. The characters' struggles and growth provide a compelling and thought-provoking examination of human nature, love, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations. The novel as a whole serve as a timeless

exploration of human experience and a testament to the enduring power of love, forgiveness, and personal growth.

**Major Themes in Tom Jones**

In "Tom Jones," Henry Fielding explores a variety of themes that contribute to the depth and richness of the novel. The themes discussed in this analysis include redemption and personal growth, the complexity of human nature, the nature of love and relationships, social class and hypocrisy, and the role of morality and virtue.

**Redemption and Personal Growth:** The theme of redemption and personal growth is central to the novel, as it follows the protagonist, Tom Jones, on his journey from a naive and impulsive young man to a more mature, self-aware, and morally responsible individual. Tom's various misadventures and mistakes provide the backdrop for his growth and development. Through his experiences, he learns the importance of personal integrity, self-discipline, and the consequences of his actions.

Fielding presents redemption as a universal human experience, emphasizing the potential for change and growth in every individual. Characters such as Tom, Sophia, and even secondary characters like Mr. Partridge, demonstrate the capacity for growth and self-improvement. This theme is a testament to the transformative power of personal growth and the possibility of redemption for those who strive to better themselves.

**The Complexity of Human Nature:** "Tom Jones" offers a nuanced and complex portrayal of human nature, exploring the contradictions and complexities of individual character. Fielding's characters are neither wholly good nor wholly bad; instead, they are multi-dimensional, with both admirable and flawed traits.

The novel acknowledges that humans are inherently flawed and prone to making mistakes, but it also highlights the potential for growth and redemption. Fielding's characters are not static; they evolve throughout the narrative, reflecting the ever-changing and multifaceted nature of human experience.

**The Nature of Love and Relationships:** Fielding delves into the intricacies of love and relationships, examining various forms of romantic and platonic love. The novel showcases the transformative power of love, as well as the potential for love to blind individuals to the flaws of their beloved.

The relationship between Tom and Sophia serves as the novel's central love story. Their love is tested by various obstacles and challenges, such as misunderstandings, societal pressure, and Tom's past indiscretions. Despite these challenges, their love endures and ultimately triumphs, demonstrating the power of true love to overcome adversity.

Fielding also explores the darker aspects of love and relationships, such as manipulation, deceit, and betrayal. Characters like Blifil, Lady Bellaston, and Lord Fellamar exemplify the destructive potential of self-serving and manipulative love.

**Social Class and Hypocrisy:** "Tom Jones" offers a satirical look at 18th-century English society, critiquing the social hierarchy and the hypocrisy of the upper

classes. Fielding exposes the superficiality, moral corruption, and self-serving attitudes of the aristocracy, using characters like Squire Allworthy and Squire Western to illustrate the flaws inherent in the class system.

Fielding also demonstrates the arbitrary nature of social distinctions, as seen in Tom's uncertain parentage and eventual elevation to a higher social status. The novel questions the validity of social hierarchies and the assumption that nobility and virtue are inherently linked to one's social standing.

**The Role of Morality and Virtue:** The novel explores the role of morality and virtue in individual lives and society as a whole. Fielding presents a world where moral values are often compromised or disregarded in the pursuit of personal gain or pleasure.

Characters like Tom Jones and Sophia embody the struggle between innate goodness and the temptations of vice. Through their experiences, Fielding emphasizes the importance of moral integrity and personal responsibility, as well as the consequences of succumbing to vice and deceit.

The novel also examines the concept of moral relativism, suggesting that moral values are not fixed but are instead influenced by individual.

## 2.6 PLOT OF TOM JONES

The plot of Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" is a complex and episodic narrative, chronicling the life and adventures of the protagonist, Tom Jones, a foundling raised by the benevolent Squire Allworthy. The novel is divided into 18 books, with each book containing several chapters that follow Tom's experiences and encounters. The main events of the plot can be summarized as follows:

**Introduction**: The novel opens with the discovery of the infant Tom Jones on Squire Allworthy's estate. Squire Allworthy decides to raise Tom as his own, despite the disapproval of others who suspect the child's low birth will inevitably lead to immoral behaviour.

**Childhood and adolescence**: Tom grows up alongside Allworthy's nephew, Blifil, who is portrayed as cunning and hypocritical. Tom, on the other hand, is good-hearted but impulsive and naive. During their youth, Tom falls in love with Sophia Western, the beautiful and virtuous daughter of the neighbouring landowner, Squire Western.

**Conflict and expulsion**: Tom's indiscretion with a local girl, Molly Seagrim, further strains his relationship with Squire Allworthy. After a series of misunderstandings and manipulations by Blifil, Allworthy banishes Tom from his estate.

**Journey and adventures**: Tom sets out for London, and on his journey, he encounters a variety of characters from different social backgrounds. These episodic adventures often involve Tom rescuing others from danger, displaying his inherent goodness despite his flaws.

**Romantic complications**: Sophia learns of Tom's past affair with Molly Seagrim and runs away from home to avoid an arranged marriage to Blifil. Both Tom and Sophia have separate adventures in London, where they become entangled in a web of romantic intrigue, including Tom's brief affair with the scheming Lady Bellaston.

**Reconciliation and revelation**: Tom and Sophia's paths eventually cross in London, and they reconcile their differences. Meanwhile, it is revealed that Blifil has been conspiring against Tom and has concealed crucial information regarding Tom's true parentage. Tom is, in fact, the son of Squire Allworthy's sister, making him of noble birth.

**Resolution and marriage**: Squire Allworthy, now aware of Blifil's deceit and Tom's true identity, forgives Tom and reinstates him as his heir. Tom and Sophia marry, and the novel concludes with a sense of harmony restored, as the various characters receive their just rewards or punishments.

The plot of "Tom Jones" is characterized by its episodic structure, which allows Fielding to explore a wide range of themes and satirize various aspects of 18th-century English society. Despite its complexity, the novel's engaging characters, humor, and moral core continue to resonate with readers more than two centuries after its publication.

## 2.7 SETTING OF TOM JONES

The setting of Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" plays a crucial role in the novel, as it provides the backdrop against which the characters and events unfold. The novel's setting is primarily divided into two main locations: the English countryside and the city of London. Both settings are depicted vividly, providing readers with a sense of the social, cultural, and political atmosphere of 18th-century England.

**The English Countryside**: The novel begins in the rural estate of Squire Allworthy, located in the fictional county of Somersetshire in southwestern England. Fielding's portrayal of the countryside is marked by lush and idyllic descriptions of nature, emphasizing the beauty and tranquillity of rural life. The rural setting allows Fielding to explore themes such as family, community, and the contrast between appearance and reality.

The country estates of Squire Allworthy and Squire Western, as well as the surrounding villages, provide a microcosm of 18th-century English society, with characters from different social classes interacting with one another. These interactions, as well as the social norms and expectations that govern them, serve as the foundation for many of the novel's conflicts and moral dilemmas.

**The City of London**: Later in the novel, the setting shifts to the bustling metropolis of London. Fielding uses the city as a backdrop to depict the vices, temptations, and corruption that pervade urban life, providing a stark contrast to the seemingly idyllic countryside. The city setting allows Fielding to explore themes such as social mobility, moral decay, and the complexities of urban society.

In London, Tom and Sophia encounter a diverse range of characters, from high-born nobles to criminals and prostitutes. The city's various social settings, such as theatres, taverns, and private homes, serve as stages for Tom and Sophia's adventures and misadventures, allowing Fielding to satirize and critique different aspects of 18th-century city life.

In conclusion, the settings of Fielding's "Tom Jones" – the English countryside and the city of London – provide a rich and evocative backdrop for the novel's events and characters. By exploring the contrasts and similarities between these two locations, Fielding delves into various themes and social issues that characterized 18th-century England, ultimately providing a panoramic view of the society and culture of the time.

## 2.8 ART OF CHARACTERISATION

In "Tom Jones," Henry Fielding employs the art of characterization masterfully to create a vivid and memorable cast of characters. This analysis will explore how Fielding uses characterization techniques such as physical description, dialogue, and narrative commentary to develop his characters, as well as the use of satire, the psychological depth of the characters, and the roles they play in the novel's themes and plot.

**Physical Description and Character Traits**: Fielding provides detailed physical descriptions of his characters, giving readers a clear image of their appearance. These descriptions often reflect the character's personality traits or social status. For example, Tom Jones is described as a handsome and robust young man, highlighting his youthful vitality and inherent goodness. Sophia Western is portrayed as beautiful and graceful, reflecting her purity and charm.

Physical descriptions also convey social standing, as seen in Squire Allworthy, a gentleman of wealth and influence, who is depicted as dignified and respectable. Conversely, characters like Blifil are described with less flattering physical features, hinting at their duplicitous nature.

**Dialogue**: Fielding uses dialogue to reveal characters' personalities, values, and motivations. The way characters speak and interact with one another often conveys their social standing, intelligence, and temperament. For instance, Tom's speech is marked by sincerity and warmth, while Blifil's speech is often insincere and self-serving.

Sophia's dialogue reveals her intelligence, wit, and strong moral compass, while Squire Western's coarse and uncultured speech is indicative of his boorish nature. Fielding's skilful use of dialogue allows readers to gain insight into the characters and their relationships with one another.

**Narrative Commentary:** Fielding's narrative voice plays a significant role in the characterization process. As an omniscient narrator, Fielding frequently offers direct commentary on the characters, providing insight into their motivations,

emotions, and inner conflicts. This narrative commentary helps readers understand the characters on a deeper level and adds depth to their personalities.

For example, Fielding's commentary on Tom's moral development and internal struggles provides a nuanced understanding of his character, allowing readers to sympathize with him despite his flaws. Similarly, the narrator's insights into Sophia's emotions and thought processes reveal her complexity and strength of character.

**Satire and Caricature:** Fielding employs satire and caricature to critique and comment on 18th-century English society. Many of the novel's characters are satirical representations of specific social types, designed to expose the hypocrisy, pretentiousness, and moral failings of the upper classes.

Characters like Squire Western, Lady Bellaston, and Mr. Thwackum are exaggerated caricatures that embody specific vices or social flaws. Through these satirical characters, Fielding exposes the moral corruption and superficiality that pervade society, inviting readers to reflect on their own values and behaviour.

**Psychological Depth:** One of Fielding's most notable achievements in "Tom Jones" is the psychological depth of his characters. The novel explores the complexities of human nature and the contradictory aspects of individual character, creating multi-dimensional, believable characters.

Tom Jones, for example, is a flawed hero who struggles with his impulses and moral compass. His journey toward self-improvement and redemption is marked by setbacks and triumphs, making him a relatable and compelling protagonist. Sophia, too, is a complex character, with her intelligence, virtue, and determination to chart her own path in life.

Even secondary characters, such as Mr. Partridge and Mrs. Waters, are given depth and complexity, contributing to the rich tapestry of the novel's characterizations.

Character Roles in Themes and Plot: Fielding's characters play crucial roles in the exploration of the novel's themes, such as redemption, personal growth, and professional bonding.

Thus, in "Tom Jones," Fielding masterfully crafts vivid, memorable characters through techniques like physical description, dialogue, and narrative commentary. The characters possess psychological depth, and many serve as satirical representations of social types, critiquing 18th-century society. Characterization plays a crucial role in exploring the novel's themes and driving the plot.

## 2.8.1 TOM JONES

In "Tom Jones," Henry Fielding creates a complex and memorable protagonist whose journey of self-discovery and personal growth serves as the central focus of the novel. Tom Jones is a multifaceted character whose actions, motivations, and

relationships provide a compelling examination of human nature, love, and morality.

**Background and Personality**: Tom Jones is an orphan, found abandoned as an infant by Squire Allworthy, a wealthy and benevolent landowner. Squire Allworthy raises Tom as his own, providing him with an education and upbringing befitting a gentleman. Tom is a charismatic and warm-hearted individual, known for his charm, good looks, and generosity. He possesses a strong sense of justice and is deeply loyal to his friends and loved ones. However, Tom is also impulsive and prone to indulging in his passions, which frequently leads him into trouble.

**Moral Development and Personal Growth**: One of the central themes of "Tom Jones" is the protagonist's moral development and personal growth. Throughout the novel, Tom's actions are driven by a mixture of innate goodness and youthful impulsivity. He is often torn between his moral compass and the temptations of vice, leading him to make mistakes that have serious consequences for his relationships and reputation.

Tom's journey of self-discovery and redemption is marked by a series of misadventures, misunderstandings, and setbacks. As the novel progresses, he learns from his experiences and begins to take responsibility for his actions. His growth is reflected in his efforts to resist temptation, his willingness to accept the consequences of his actions, and his dedication to repairing his relationships with those he has hurt.

**Relationships and Love**: Tom's relationships with other characters are central to his development as a protagonist. His most significant relationship is with Sophia Western, the beautiful and virtuous daughter of a neighbouring landowner. Their love for each other is tested by numerous obstacles, including Tom's past indiscretions, societal expectations, and the machinations of the deceitful Blifil.

Tom's relationship with Sophia serves as a catalyst for his personal growth and redemption. His love for her motivates him to become a better person and to prove himself worthy of her affection. This relationship highlights the transformative power of love and the importance of trust, forgiveness, and personal growth in romantic relationships.

Tom's relationships with other characters, such as his mentor and father figure, Squire Allworthy, and his loyal friend, Mr. Partridge, also contribute to his moral development. These relationships provide Tom with guidance, support, and opportunities for growth, allowing him to confront the consequences of his actions and learn from his mistakes.

**Challenges and Adversity**: Tom faces numerous challenges and adversities throughout the novel, including false accusations, misunderstandings, and the machinations of his enemies. These trials serve to test his character, resilience, and moral integrity, providing opportunities for growth and redemption.

Tom's capacity for personal growth and change is further tested by his encounters with a range of morally corrupt and manipulative characters, such as Lady Bellaston, Lord Fellamar, and Blifil. These characters expose Tom to the darker

aspects of human nature, forcing him to confront his own weaknesses and to make difficult moral choices.

**Heroism and Redemption**: Despite his flaws and the obstacles he faces, Tom ultimately emerges as a heroic figure, embodying the qualities of resilience, courage, and integrity. His journey toward redemption is a testament to the transformative power of personal growth and the possibility of change for those who strive to better themselves.

By the end of the novel, Tom has demonstrated his capacity for growth, redemption, and genuine goodness. He has learned from his experiences, embraced responsibility for his actions, and made amends with those he has hurt.

In conclusion, Tom Jones is a complex, multidimensional protagonist whose journey of self-discovery, personal growth, and redemption drives the narrative of Fielding's novel. Despite his flaws and impulsive nature, Tom's innate goodness, resilience, and capacity for change ultimately shine through. His relationships and experiences shape his moral development, allowing him to emerge as a heroic figure who embodies the transformative power of love, forgiveness, and personal growth. Tom Jones serves as a testament to the potential for redemption and the enduring nature of human goodness.

## 2.8.2 SOPHIA

In "Tom Jones," Henry Fielding presents Sophia Western as a well-rounded, admirable character whose virtues and intelligence make her an ideal romantic partner and a key figure in the novel's exploration of love, morality, and personal growth. This character sketch will delve into Sophia's background, personality, relationships, and role in the novel.

**Background and Personality**: Sophia Western is the daughter of Squire Western, a wealthy landowner and neighbour of Squire Allworthy. Raised in relative privilege, Sophia is educated, graceful, and possesses a keen intellect. Her beauty is matched by her inner qualities, including her strong moral compass, kindness, and sensitivity.

Sophia's character is defined by her independence and determination to follow her own path in life. Despite societal pressures to marry for status and wealth, she is resolved to marry for love and is unwilling to compromise her values or happiness for social convention.

**Relationships and Love**: Sophia's most significant relationship is with Tom Jones, the novel's protagonist. Their love is pure and genuine, founded on mutual respect, admiration, and shared values. However, their romance faces numerous obstacles, such as Tom's past indiscretions, their social standing, and the schemes of the deceitful Blifil.

Through their relationship, Fielding explores the complexities of love, trust, and forgiveness, as well as the transformative power of genuine affection. Sophia's unwavering love for Tom is a driving force in his personal growth and redemption, and their eventual union serves as a testament to the enduring nature of true love.

Sophia's relationship with her father, Squire Western, is another important aspect of her character development. Squire Western, a boorish and domineering figure, attempts to control Sophia's life and force her into an unwanted marriage with Blifil. In response, Sophia demonstrates courage, resilience, and resourcefulness by standing up to her father and ultimately escaping his control.

**Female Agency and Independence**: Sophia Western is an embodiment of female agency and independence in a society that often limits women's autonomy and choices. Her refusal to conform to societal expectations and her determination to marry for love rather than wealth or status exemplify her strength of character and her belief in the importance of personal happiness.

Sophia's independence is further demonstrated by her decision to leave her father's home and venture out on her own in search of Tom. Despite the risks and challenges she faces, Sophia's resourcefulness, courage, and determination allow her to navigate a male-dominated world and to assert her own desires and agency.

**Virtue and Morality**: Sophia serves as a moral compass in the novel, representing the values of virtue, integrity, and genuine goodness. Her unwavering commitment to her principles sets her apart from other characters who are more willing to compromise their values for personal gain or social advancement.

Sophia's moral integrity and kindness are evident in her interactions with other characters, such as her genuine concern for Tom's welfare and her willingness to forgive him for his past mistakes. Her moral compass also plays a crucial role in her romantic relationship with Tom, as her love for him is based on mutual respect and shared values, rather than superficial attraction or social ambition.

**Role in the Novel**: Sophia Western plays a central role in "Tom Jones," both as a love interest for the protagonist and as a symbol of virtue, independence, and moral integrity. Her character serves to highlight the importance of personal growth, self-discovery, and the transformative power of love.

Sophia's presence in the novel serves as a counterpoint to the moral corruption and superficiality that pervade 18th-century English society. Her unwavering commitment to her values and her strength of character make her a compelling and admirable figure, demonstrating that genuine goodness.

In conclusion, Sophia Western is a compelling and admirable character in "Tom Jones," embodying virtues such as integrity, kindness, and independence. Her strong moral compass and determination to follow her own path, despite societal pressures, make her an inspiring figure. Sophia's love for Tom Jones and her role in his personal growth and redemption highlight the transformative power of love and the importance of shared values in relationships. Overall, Sophia represents the novel's ideals of true goodness, personal agency, and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

## 2.8.3 BLIFIL

In "Tom Jones," Henry Fielding presents Blifil as the primary antagonist, a foil to Tom, and a representation of hypocrisy, deceit, and selfishness. As a complex

character with a significant impact on the narrative, Blifil's motivations, relationships, and role in the story warrant close examination.

**Background and Personality**: Blifil is the son of Squire Allworthy's sister, Bridget, and Captain Blifil. Raised alongside Tom by Squire Allworthy, Blifil receives the same education and opportunities as his half-brother. However, Blifil's character is marked by his cunning, deceitfulness, and self-serving nature. He is skilled at manipulating others and concealing his true intentions, often presenting himself as a paragon of virtue and morality while pursuing his selfish ambitions.

Blifil's hypocrisy and selfishness are evident in his interactions with other characters and his efforts to undermine Tom. He frequently feigns concern for Tom's welfare while secretly plotting against him and working to tarnish his reputation. Blifil is driven by jealousy, greed, and a desire for power, which ultimately lead him to betray those who trust him and to seek the downfall of his half-brother.

**Relationships and Manipulation**: Blifil's relationships with other characters in "Tom Jones" are characterized by his manipulative and deceitful nature. He uses his outward appearance of virtue and morality to gain the trust of others, including Squire Allworthy, while secretly pursuing his own self-interest.

One of Blifil's primary motivations is his desire to secure his position as Squire Allworthy's heir, which leads him to undermine Tom at every opportunity. He constantly schemes against Tom, spreading lies and false accusations to discredit him in the eyes of their guardian. Blifil's cunning and manipulative tactics not only damage Tom's reputation but also serve to further ingratiate himself with Squire Allworthy.

Blifil's relationship with Sophia Western is another example of his duplicity and selfishness. He is more interested in securing her wealth and status than in genuine affection, and he manipulates both her and her father to try to force her into marriage. Blifil's lack of genuine love or respect for Sophia stands in stark contrast to Tom's sincere and devoted affection for her.

**Role as Antagonist**: Blifil serves as the primary antagonist in "Tom Jones," representing the darker aspects of human nature and providing a foil for Tom's more genuine and earnest character. Through Blifil's actions and motivations, Fielding explores themes of hypocrisy, deceit, and the destructive power of selfish ambition.

Blifil's antagonism toward Tom serves to heighten the stakes of the narrative and provides a source of conflict and tension throughout the story. His schemes and machinations create numerous obstacles for Tom to overcome, driving the plot forward and contributing to Tom's personal growth and redemption.

**Downfall and Redemption**: Blifil's cunning and deceitful nature ultimately lead to his downfall. As the novel progresses, his treachery and hypocrisy are gradually exposed, and he loses the trust and support of those around him. Despite his efforts

to undermine Tom and secure his own position, Blifil is ultimately undone by his own greed and ambition.

In the novel's conclusion, Blifil is given a chance at redemption when Squire Allworthy forgives him and provides him with the means to start a new life. This act of mercy and compassion highlights the novel's themes of forgiveness and the potential for change, even in characters who have exhibited great moral failings.

**Social Critique and Satire**: Blifil's character serves as a vehicle for Fielding's critique of 18th-century English society.

In conclusion, Blifil's character in "Tom Jones" represents hypocrisy, deceit, and selfish ambition, providing a stark contrast to Tom's genuine and earnest nature. As the primary antagonist, Blifil drives much of the conflict and tension in the novel, revealing the darker aspects of human nature. His eventual downfall serves as a cautionary tale about the consequences of greed and duplicity. However, his chance for redemption, granted by Squire Allworthy, emphasizes the novel's themes of forgiveness and the potential for personal growth and transformation, even for those who have demonstrated significant moral failings.

## 2.9 ELEMENTS OF NOVEL IN TOM JONES

Henry Fielding's novel "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," published in 1749, is a seminal work in the development of the modern novel. It is a comic epic that explores themes of morality, human nature, and society. In discussing the elements of the novel, we can focus on aspects such as plot, characters, setting, themes, narrative structure, and style.

**Plot**: The story follows the life and adventures of Tom Jones, a foundling raised by the kind-hearted Squire Allworthy. The plot is episodic and marked by a series of events and adventures, including romance, conflicts, and misunderstandings. Tom Jones is ultimately revealed to be of noble birth, and the novel ends with his marriage to Sophia Western.

**Characters**: The novel features a diverse cast of characters, each with their own distinct personalities and motivations. Key characters include Tom Jones, Squire Allworthy, Sophia Western, Squire Western, Blifil, and Lady Bellaston. The characters are often used to satirize and criticize aspects of society and human nature.

**Setting**: The novel is set in 18th-century England, with the majority of the story taking place in the countryside and later in London. Fielding's vivid descriptions of the settings bring to life the social and cultural milieu of the time.

**Themes**: Fielding explores several themes throughout the novel, such as the nature of virtue, morality, and human folly. He also touches upon themes like social class, gender roles, and the pursuit of happiness. Through Tom Jones's experiences and encounters, Fielding examines how individuals navigate these issues within society.

**Narrative Structure**: The novel is divided into 18 books, with each book prefaced by an introductory chapter in which Fielding discusses various aspects of literature and his intentions as an author. This metafictional approach allows Fielding to engage with readers directly and comment on the art of writing.

**Style**: Fielding's writing style is characterized by wit, irony, and satire. He employs a strong authorial voice and frequently addresses the reader directly. His prose is rich and engaging, often using humor to convey his insights into human nature and society.

**Genre**: "Tom Jones" is a prime example of the picaresque novel, which follows the adventures of a likable but flawed hero as they journey through various episodes and encounters. It is also a Bildungsroman, as it traces the moral and psychological development of the protagonist, Tom Jones, throughout the story.

In conclusion, Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" exemplifies many of the essential elements of the novel, such as plot, characters, setting, themes, narrative structure, and style. Its engaging story, rich characterizations, and social commentary have made it a classic in the history of English literature.

## 2.10 TOM JONES AS A PICARESQUE NOVEL

A picaresque novel is a genre of prose fiction that follows the adventures of a roguish, low-born protagonist as they journey through a series of episodes, often satirizing social norms and institutions. Fielding's "Tom Jones" can be considered a picaresque novel due to the following elements:

**Rogue protagonist**: Tom Jones, the protagonist, is an attractive, resourceful, and kind-hearted young man, but he is also flawed and prone to errors in judgment. Although he is not inherently malicious, his impulsiveness and naivety often lead him into trouble, making him a roguish hero typical of the picaresque genre.

**Episodic structure**: The narrative of "Tom Jones" is marked by a series of loosely connected episodes, each presenting a new adventure or challenge for Tom. As he journeys from his rural home to London, he encounters various characters and situations that provide insight into 18th-century English society. This episodic structure is a hallmark of the picaresque novel.

**Satire and social critique**: Fielding uses the adventures of Tom Jones as a means to satirize and critique various aspects of society, such as social class, gender roles, and moral hypocrisy. Through Tom's encounters with people from all walks of life, Fielding exposes the vices and follies of human nature and the shortcomings of societal institutions.

**Realism**: Picaresque novels often strive for a sense of realism, presenting a detailed and authentic portrait of the society and culture they depict. In "Tom Jones," Fielding's vivid descriptions of the English countryside and London, as well as his portrayal of characters from diverse social backgrounds, contribute to the novel's realistic and immersive atmosphere.

**Moral ambiguity**: While picaresque novels often contain moral messages or lessons, they tend to explore the complexities of human nature rather than presenting a clear-cut moral framework. In "Tom Jones," Fielding examines the concepts of virtue and morality, acknowledging that human beings are inherently flawed and capable of both good and bad actions. This moral ambiguity is consistent with the picaresque tradition.

**Humor and wit**: Picaresque novels are known for their humor and wit, often employing irony, satire, and wordplay to entertain the reader and emphasize the absurdities of human nature. Fielding's writing in "Tom Jones" is marked by these qualities, with his authorial voice frequently engaging the reader directly and providing commentary on the events of the story.

In conclusion, Fielding's "Tom Jones" can be considered a picaresque novel due to its rogue protagonist, episodic structure, satirical elements, realism, moral ambiguity, and humor. Through these aspects, Fielding not only entertains readers but also provides a critical examination of 18th-century English society.

## 2.11 NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

Henry Fielding's narrative technique in "Tom Jones" is notable for its innovation, wit, and engagement with the reader. Some of the key aspects of his narrative approach include:

**Authorial presence**: Fielding makes his presence as an author felt throughout the novel, often directly addressing the reader and offering commentary on the events and characters in the story. This strong authorial voice lends a sense of intimacy and immediacy to the narrative, as Fielding shares his insights and opinions with the reader.

**Metafiction**: Fielding frequently discusses the process of writing and the art of storytelling within the novel, making "Tom Jones" an early example of metafiction. Each of the 18 books in the novel is prefaced by an introductory chapter, wherein Fielding muses on various aspects of literature, morality, and his intentions as an author. This self-awareness and exploration of the nature of fiction adds a layer of complexity to the narrative.

**Omniscient narrator**: Fielding employs an omniscient third-person narrator in "Tom Jones," allowing him to delve into the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of various characters. This narrative choice provides a comprehensive view of the characters' inner lives and enables Fielding to present a more nuanced exploration of human nature.

**Linear and retrospective storytelling**: While the main narrative of "Tom Jones" unfolds linearly, Fielding often uses flashbacks and retrospection to provide background information or context for the characters and their actions. This technique adds depth to the story and helps to build a more complete understanding of the characters and their motivations.

**Realism**: Fielding aims to create a sense of realism in "Tom Jones" by providing detailed descriptions of settings, characters, and events. This emphasis on accuracy

and authenticity contributes to the immersive quality of the novel, as the reader becomes fully engaged in the world of the story.

**Irony and satire**: Fielding's narrative technique is characterized by the use of irony and satire to both entertain and critique various aspects of 18th-century society. Through his witty and incisive commentary, Fielding highlights the absurdities, hypocrisies, and moral failings of the characters and the society they inhabit.

**Free indirect discourse**: Fielding occasionally employs free indirect discourse in "Tom Jones," a narrative technique that blends the voice of the narrator with the voice of a character. This method allows Fielding to present a character's thoughts or speech without directly quoting them, creating a more seamless and engaging narrative flow.

In summary, the narrative technique in Fielding's "Tom Jones" is marked by its strong authorial presence, metafictional elements, omniscient narration, linear and retrospective storytelling, realism, irony, satire, and occasional use of free indirect discourse. These elements work together to create a rich, immersive, and thought-provoking reading experience that continues to captivate audiences more than two centuries after its publication.

## 2.12 REALISM

Realism is an important aspect of Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones," as the novel seeks to depict the characters, settings, and events in a manner that is authentic and true to life. Fielding's approach to realism in the novel can be seen through several key elements:

**Social realism**: "Tom Jones" presents a broad range of characters from different social classes and backgrounds, creating a comprehensive portrayal of 18th-century English society. Fielding explores various social issues, such as class distinctions, gender roles, and the moral hypocrisy prevalent in the society of his time. This exploration of social issues adds depth and nuance to the novel, grounding it in the reality of the period.

**Psychological realism**: Fielding delves into the inner lives of his characters, exploring their motivations, emotions, and desires. Through the omniscient narrator, readers gain insight into the complex and often contradictory aspects of human nature, as characters are shown to be capable of both good and evil deeds. This psychological depth contributes to the novel's realism, as characters are portrayed as multifaceted, relatable human beings rather than mere caricatures.

**Detailed settings**: Fielding's descriptions of both rural and urban settings are rich and vivid, providing readers with a strong sense of place. His attention to detail in describing the landscapes, buildings, and interiors of both the English countryside and London adds a layer of authenticity to the novel. These settings serve as more than just backdrops for the story; they also play a crucial role in shaping the characters and events of the novel.

**Realistic dialogue**: The dialogue in "Tom Jones" is another aspect that contributes to its realism. Characters speak in a manner consistent with their social status, education, and personality, and the conversations often reflect the attitudes and

concerns of the time. Fielding's use of dialects, colloquial expressions, and idiomatic language adds to the sense of authenticity in the novel.

**Everyday experiences**: Fielding includes many scenes that depict the ordinary, everyday experiences of his characters, such as eating, traveling, or attending social events. These scenes not only serve to humanize the characters but also provide readers with a window into the customs and practices of 18th-century England.

**Realistic plot**: While "Tom Jones" does contain elements of adventure and romance, the overall plot remains grounded in reality. The characters' actions have consequences, and their decisions are often shaped by the social norms and expectations of the time. Fielding avoids relying on improbable coincidences or fantastical events to advance the story, instead presenting a narrative that is believable and true to life.

In conclusion, realism is a significant aspect of Fielding's "Tom Jones," manifested through its social and psychological exploration, detailed settings, authentic dialogue, everyday experiences, and a believable plot. Through these elements, Fielding creates an immersive and engaging reading experience that provides valuable insights into the society and culture of 18th-century England.

## 2.13 SOCIAL CRITICISM

In "Tom Jones," Henry Fielding uses social criticism to shed light on various aspects of 18th-century English society, exploring its flaws, vices, and moral hypocrisies. The novel's characters and their experiences serve as a vehicle for Fielding's critique, addressing several key issues:

**Class and social mobility**: Fielding scrutinizes the rigid class structure of 18th-century England and the challenges faced by those attempting to navigate or defy it. Tom Jones, a foundling of unknown parentage, struggles to find his place in a society that judges him based on his social status. The novel highlights the injustices and prejudices that arise from such a class-based society, questioning the inherent value of birth and social rank.

**Moral hypocrisy**: Throughout the novel, Fielding exposes the moral hypocrisy of characters who outwardly adhere to social and religious conventions while secretly engaging in immoral behaviour. For instance, Blifil, Tom's rival, is a prime example of moral hypocrisy, as he consistently manipulates and schemes to advance his interests despite his apparent piety and virtue. Fielding's portrayal of hypocritical characters serves as a critique of the superficial morality prevalent in society.

**Gender roles and expectations**: Fielding critiques the rigid gender roles and expectations placed on women during the 18th century. Female characters such as Sophia Western and Lady Bellaston face societal pressures to conform to certain standards of behaviour and propriety, often at the expense of their own desires and well-being. Through these characters, Fielding highlights the double standards and limitations faced by women in a patriarchal society.

**Marriage and relationships**: "Tom Jones" explores the complexities of marriage and relationships, critiquing the ways in which love and compatibility are often

secondary to financial and social considerations. Fielding satirizes arranged marriages and the mercenary motives that drive them, arguing for the importance of love and mutual respect in a successful union.

**Legal system and justice**: Fielding satirizes the legal system of his time, particularly the corruption and inefficiency that plagued it. Tom Jones encounters numerous instances of injustice and unfair treatment at the hands of the law, highlighting the need for reform and the importance of mercy and compassion in the pursuit of justice.

**Education and upbringing**: Fielding also critiques the education and upbringing of young people in 18th-century England, arguing that these factors play a crucial role in shaping their characters and values. The contrasting upbringings of Tom Jones and Blifil illustrate the impact of environment and education on one's moral compass, emphasizing the importance of proper guidance and nurturing in fostering virtuous behaviour.

In summary, social criticism is a significant aspect of Fielding's "Tom Jones," as the novel tackles a range of issues related to class, morality, gender roles, marriage, the legal system, and education. Through his vivid characters and engaging narrative, Fielding provides a compelling critique of 18th-century English society, exposing its flaws and urging readers to consider the need for change and reform.

## 2.14 HUMOUR IN TOM JONES

Humour is an essential component of Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones," serving various purposes throughout the novel. Fielding employs different forms of humor, such as wit, irony, satire, and farce, to entertain readers while also addressing important themes and critiquing aspects of 18th-century English society. Some notable instances of humor in the novel include:

**Satire**: Fielding satirizes various aspects of society, including social conventions, the class system, morality, and the legal system. By employing humor, he is able to effectively criticize societal norms and expectations in a manner that is engaging and entertaining for the reader.

**Irony**: Irony is used throughout "Tom Jones" to create humor and emphasize the contrast between appearance and reality. Fielding often highlights the discrepancy between a character's outward behaviour and their true nature or intentions, exposing hypocrisy and the absurdities of human behaviour.

**Character-based humor**: Many of the novel's characters provide comic relief through their distinct personalities and quirks. For example, Squire Western, Sophia's father, is a caricature of a boorish country squire, whose exaggerated mannerisms and absurd actions create humor. Similarly, Partridge, Tom's loyal but comically superstitious companion, adds a touch of light-heartedness to the story.

**Farce and slapstick**: Fielding occasionally employs farcical and slapstick elements in "Tom Jones," using exaggerated situations and physical comedy to create humor. Scenes such as the famous fight between Tom and the one-legged "Man of the Hill" and Tom's various misadventures during his journey to London contribute to the novel's overall comic tone.

**Wordplay and wit**: Fielding's prose is marked by its wit and wordplay, which adds to the humor of the novel. Clever turns of phrase, puns, and amusing metaphors can be found throughout "Tom Jones," contributing to the overall enjoyment of the narrative.

**Authorial voice**: Fielding's authorial voice is characterized by humor and wit, as he frequently addresses the reader directly and offers commentary on the story's events and characters. The author's presence adds a layer of intimacy and warmth to the narrative, engaging the reader and inviting them to share in the humor of the novel.

Overall, humor is a vital aspect of "Tom Jones," serving to entertain readers while also allowing Fielding to explore deeper themes and critique the society in which he lived. The novel's blend of wit, irony, satire, farce, and character-based humor creates a rich and engaging reading experience that has endured for centuries.

## 2.15 THE CONCEPT OF COMIC EPIC IN PROSE AND TOM JONES

Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" is often considered the quintessential comic epic in prose due to its unique combination of humor, adventure, and social commentary. The novel's structure, characters, and themes showcase the defining features of this literary genre. Here's a breakdown of how "Tom Jones" exemplifies a comic epic in prose:

**Length and Scope**: "Tom Jones" is a lengthy novel, spanning over 18 books and following the protagonist's life from infancy to adulthood. The narrative encompasses a wide range of events, characters, and themes, reflecting the expansive nature of traditional epics.

**Heroic Elements**: While Tom Jones is not a conventional hero, he embarks on a series of adventures and overcomes numerous obstacles throughout the novel. His journey from his humble origins to eventual reconciliation with his true love, Sophia Western, and discovery of his noble birth echoes elements of classical heroism.

**Comedy and Satire**: "Tom Jones" is infused with Fielding's trademark wit and humor, using irony, sarcasm, and comedic situations to entertain the reader. Fielding satirizes various aspects of 18th-century English society, including class distinctions, moral hypocrisy, and the pretensions of the so-called "virtuous" characters.

**Realism**: Fielding's portrayal of characters, their motivations, and interactions is grounded in realism. The novel presents a vivid and authentic picture of 18th-century English society, exploring the complexities of human nature, relationships, and social norms.

**Characterization**: "Tom Jones" features a diverse cast of characters from different social backgrounds, each with distinct personalities and motivations. Fielding's skilful characterization provides a multi-faceted view of society and the human

condition, with characters like Squire Allworthy, Blifil, Partridge, and Lady Bellaston showcasing various aspects of human nature.

**Moral and Philosophical Themes**: Despite its comedic tone, "Tom Jones" engages with moral and philosophical themes, inviting readers to reflect on the nature of virtue, morality, and human existence. Fielding's exploration of these themes adds depth and complexity to the novel, elevating it beyond mere entertainment.

**Narrative Structure and Technique**: Fielding employs innovative narrative techniques in "Tom Jones," such as the use of an omniscient narrator who frequently addresses the reader directly. This self-reflexive narrative style, combined with a carefully constructed plot, multiple subplots, and shifting perspectives, creates a dynamic and engaging reading experience.

In summary, "Tom Jones" is a prime example of a comic epic in prose, showcasing Fielding's mastery of this literary form. The novel's unique blend of humor, adventure, and social commentary, along with its vivid portrayal of 18th-century English society and insightful exploration of moral and philosophical themes, has cemented its status as a classic work of English literature.

## 2.16 MAJOR THEMES IN FIELDING'S TOM JONES

Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones," published in 1749, is a classic comic novel that explores a variety of themes relevant to 18th-century society. The novel is both an engaging story of the titular character's romantic and moral adventures and a satirical commentary on social, political, and literary issues of the time. Here, we will discuss the major themes present in the novel.

**The Nature of Virtue and Morality**: One of the central themes in "Tom Jones" is the exploration of virtue and morality. Fielding examines the differences between genuine goodness and moral pretension through the contrast of his characters' behaviours. Tom Jones, despite his many flaws and indiscretions, embodies true goodness and humanity, while other characters, such as Blifil, may appear morally upright but are in fact hypocritical and self-serving. The novel argues that true virtue lies in sincerity and compassion, rather than adherence to social conventions and appearances.

**The Importance of Love and Marriage**: "Tom Jones" is, at its core, a love story, and it delves into the themes of love, passion, and marriage. Throughout the novel, Fielding portrays the power of love to inspire, redeem, and transform individuals. Tom's love for Sophia Western serves as a driving force behind his personal growth and moral development. The novel also critiques the societal constraints on love and marriage, as relationships are often dictated by financial considerations and social status rather than genuine affection and compatibility.

**Social Class and Hypocrisy**: Fielding uses "Tom Jones" to critique the rigid social hierarchy of 18th-century England, highlighting the hypocrisy and corruption that often underlie the distinctions between the classes. The novel presents characters from various social backgrounds and shows that nobility of character is not

determined by birth or social standing. By exposing the flaws and inconsistencies of society, Fielding encourages readers to question the validity of social conventions and prejudices.

**The Journey Motif and Self-Discovery**: The picaresque structure of "Tom Jones" involves a journey motif, as Tom embarks on a series of adventures and misadventures that ultimately lead to self-discovery and personal growth. Throughout his journey, Tom encounters various characters who embody different aspects of human nature and society, providing him with valuable lessons and experiences that shape his moral development. The journey motif also allows Fielding to create a panoramic view of 18th-century English society, as Tom moves through different social settings and classes.

**Satire and Comic Realism**: "Tom Jones" is a prime example of the comic novel, utilizing satire and humor to both entertain and provide moral instruction. Fielding employs comic realism to depict the follies, vices, and absurdities of human nature and society, allowing readers to recognize their own shortcomings and foibles. The novel also serves as a satire of contemporary literature, particularly the sentimental novel, which Fielding viewed as overly idealistic and artificial.

**The Role of Providence and Chance**: Throughout "Tom Jones," Fielding explores the role of providence and chance in shaping human lives. The novel suggests that while individuals may be subject to the whims of fortune, they ultimately have the power to determine their own destinies through their actions and choices. This theme is exemplified by Tom's journey, as his personal growth and moral development ultimately lead to a resolution of the novel's conflicts and a sense of poetic justice.

In conclusion, Fielding's "Tom Jones" is a rich and multi-layered exploration of human nature, society, and morality. The novel's themes of virtue, love, social class, self-discovery, satire, and the role of providence and chance are intricately interwoven to create a compelling and enduring work of literature that continues to resonate with readers today.

## 2.17 LET US SUM UP

In conclusion, Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" is a masterpiece of English literature that expertly blends elements of comedy, satire, and moral instruction. The novel's complex narrative structure and engaging plot create a compelling reading experience, while its themes of virtue, morality, love, social class, and self-discovery offer readers a profound exploration of human nature and society. Fielding's use of irony, humor, and the picaresque journey motif allows him to critique the hypocrisies and vices of 18th-century England in a manner both entertaining and insightful. The enduring appeal of "Tom Jones" lies in its richly drawn characters, especially the flawed but ultimately redeemable hero Tom, whose journey to moral maturity provides a timeless and universal narrative. By studying "Tom Jones" and engaging with various critical perspectives on the novel, readers can gain a deeper appreciation of Fielding's literary genius and the lasting impact of his work on the development of the English novel.

## 2.18 QUESTIONS

1. Analyse the significance of the title *Tom Jones*.
2. Discuss *Tom Jones* as a comic epic in prose.
3. Write a critical appreciation of *Tom Jones*.
4. Comment the character sketch of Tom Jones.
5. What is the role of Sophia in the novel *Tom Jones*?
6. Discuss the main themes of *Tom Jones*.
7. Discuss the narrative technique in *Tom Jones*.
8. Write a note on the humour in *Tom Jones*.

## 2.19 FURTHER READING


1. "Henry Fielding and the Language of Irony" by Alan Dugald McKillop
2. "Fielding's Art of Fiction: Eleven Essays on 'Shamela,' 'Joseph Andrews,' 'Tom Jones,' and 'Amelia'" edited by R. P. C. Mutter
3. "A Sentimental Journey through Fielding's 'Tom Jones' "by John Allen Stevenson
4. "The Discourse of Classified Advertising: Exploring the Nature of Linguistic Simplicity" by Paul Bruthiaux
5. "Henry Fielding's Tom Jones: A Casebook" edited by Harold Bloom

# UNIT-3 JANE AUSTEN: AN INTRODUCTION

## Structure


3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Jane Austen: Life

3.3 Literary Works

3.4 Jane Austen as a Novelist

3.5 Let us sum up

3.6 Questions

3.7 Further Reading


## 3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to

- know the skill and art of Jane Austen as a novelist.
- understand the life and works of Jane Austen.
- make a comprehensive evaluation of the English novel.
- develop a capacity to read or to reread the novel.

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This important unit will introduce you to a well-known domestic novelist Jane Austen. She is famous for her six romantic and domestic novels and earned a unique place in English literature. Her art of writing with precision, realism, and wit of prose style expressed her skill and capacity.

## 3.2 JANE AUSTEN: LIFE

Jane Austen (1775-1817) was born on 16 Dec. 1775 in the Hampshire village of Steventon, where her father, the Reverend George Austen, was a clergyman. Her family was long and she was the second daughter and seventh child in a family. The seventh child of a rural clergyman was respected for his learning and literary taste. Two of her brothers followed their father to Oxford and into the Church, and two others rose to be admirals in the Navy. Except for brief schooling in Oxford, Southampton, and Reading, which ended at the age of nine, Austen was educated at home. She learned French, a smattering of Italian, some history, and, in addition to Shakespeare and Milton, gained a thorough acquaintance with the essayists, novelists, and poets of the eighteenth century.

Always somewhat shy but lively and witty, Jane Austen developed into a young lady of cultivated manners and pleasing appearance, who at balls and assemblies enjoyed her share of masculine attention. A brief but genuine romance with a young man whose identity is uncertain ended suddenly with his death. When she was nearly twenty-seven, she accepted, and the next day rejected, the proposal of Harris Bigg Wither, a friend whom she realized she did not love.

Aside from writing, Jane Austen devoted her life to domestic duties and household affections, and especially to being the companion and confidante of numerous nieces and nephews. Having spent the first twenty-five years of her life in the rectory at Steventon, she was removed in 1801, upon her father's retirement, with her parents and sister Cassandra to Bath. After her father died in 1805 and a sojourn of three years in Southampton, she settled with her mother and sister in a cottage belonging to her brother Edward at Chawton, Hampshire, where she resided until two months before her death. Here, working mainly in the general sitting room, she composed the final drafts of all her major works, hurriedly slipping the small sheets under the blotting paper if a visitor or servant appeared. In 1816, her health began to fail; and in May 1817, she and Cassandra moved to Winchester for adequate medical attention. Despite weakness and pain, she remained cheerful to the end. Dying peacefully on July 18, 1817, aged forty-one, she was buried in Winchester Cathedral.

## 3.3 JANE AUSTEN'S LITERARY WORKS

Jane Austen (1775-1817) was an English novelist known primarily for her six major novels. Her first novel was published when she was thirty-five. Her first completed novel was 'First Impression' known as 'Pride and Prejudice'. Her first published novel is Sense and Sensibility (1811). After the publication of this novel, she published other five novels one by one: Pride and Prejudice (1813), Mansfield Park (1814), and Emma (1816). She died in 1817 and her remaining two novels were published posthumously in 1818 entitled Northanger Abbey and Persuasion. She also left behind three volumes of juvenile writings in manuscript, a short Epistolary Novel Lady Susan, and another unfinished novel, The Watsons. Her six full-length novels have rarely been out of print, although they were published anonymously and brought her moderate success and little fame during her lifetime.

### (A) SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

It was Austen's first published novel in 1811. The novel was reasonably well-liked and successful. The story deals with two sisters Elinor and Marianne. In this novel, Elinor is represented as a character with great "sense" (although Marianne, too, is described as having sense), and Marianne as a girl having a great deal of "sensibility". The novel has been dealt with a philosophical depth through the sketch of these two characters.

The novel tells the story of the impoverished Dashwood sisters. In the opening scene, Marianne becomes infatuated with the attractive John Willoughby, who seems to be a romantic lover, but he is a fortune hunter. Her stepbrother Mr. John Dashwood inherited her father's estates and rejected her stepmother and sisters. They settled in Barton where Elinor and Marianne fell in love with Colonel Brandon and Edward Ferrars respectively. In the last scene, Edward marries Elinor

and Colonel Brandon marries Marianne. Mrs. Dashwood, the mother of Elinor became delighted at the good fortune of her children.

**(B) PRIDE AND PREJUDICE**

The novel, Pride and Prejudice was published in 1813 and set in rural England in the early 19th century. The novel is a story of the Bennet family: Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet include their five different daughters named Jane, Elizabeth, Catherine, Lydia, and Mary. Mrs. Bennet is anxious to see all her daughters married. To fulfil her desire Mrs. Bennet works hard mentally and physically. One day she hears news of some young boys' arrival in her neighbor's locality and she selects two young wealthy boys. She elects Darcy for Elizabeth and Mr. Bingley for Jane. At a ball, the wealthy and newly arrived Charles Bingley takes an immediate interest in the eldest Bennet's daughter Jane. The encounter between his friend Darcy and Elizabeth is less cordial. Although some misunderstanding intrigued by each other the couple (Darcy and Elizabeth) received each other heartily. The novel ends with the happy marriages of Jane and Mr. Bingley, and Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy. Mrs. Bennet is perhaps the happiest of all: she feels accomplished for having married off three of her daughters.

**(C) MANSFIELD PARK (1914)**

*Mansfield Park* thematically centers on the issue of morality in three different layers of society: the aristocratic Bertrams, the fashionable, city-dwelling Crawfords, and the down-and-out Prices. Although the protagonist, Fanny Price, is merely a poor, shy relation, more than willing to be marginalized by the effusive Bertrams and the sophisticated Crawfords, she surpasses them all through her innate sense of morality and familial duty. Although she loves Edmund Bertram, she keeps her feelings to herself because she realizes he loves Mary Crawford. She refuses to manipulate him into thinking otherwise, even though she realizes Mary is manipulative and disingenuous. Furthermore, although she has the opportunity to marry Henry Crawford, she forgoes the chance to be rich and socially elevated in hopes that she will find true love. In the end, Fanny emerges triumphant because she sees those around her for what they truly are. By remaining true to her values, she wins Edmund's love, as well as the respect and adoration of everyone at Mansfield Park. This novel, which is considered the author's most ambitious novel, was published anonymously in 1814. In its tone and discussion of religion and religious duty, Mansfield Park is the most serious of Austen's novels. The heroine, Fanny Price is a self-effacing and unregarded cousin cared for by the Bertram family in their country house. Fanny emerges as a true heroine whose moral strength eventually wins her complete acceptance in the Bertram family and marriage to Edmund Bertram himself, after that family's disastrous involvement with the meretricious and wayward-living Crawfords. In a short while, as might be expected, Henry leaves the disgraced Maria, who is forced to live with her aunt, Mrs. Norris. Julia and Yates are in time accepted by the family, and Edmund comes to look upon Fanny with the eyes of love. After marrying, they move to the parsonage, Susan replaces Fanny at Mansfield Park, and all live happily.

**(D) EMMA**

The novel, Emma was first published by John Murray in December 1815. It was the last of Austen's novels to be published before her death, and, like her earlier

works, was published anonymously. Of all Austen's novels, Emma is the most consistently comic in tone. It centers on Emma Woodhouse, a wealthy, pretty, self-satisfied young woman who indulges herself with meddlesome and unsuccessful attempts at matchmaking among her friends and neighbours. After a series of humiliating errors, a chastened Emma finds her destiny in marriage to the mature and protective George Knightly a neighbouring squire who had been her mentor and friend.

**(E) PERSUASION**

This is Jane Austen's last completed novel. She began work on it in the summer of 1815 and completed it by the summer of 1816. The work was published with Northanger Abbey posthumously in December of 1817, six months after Austen's death. Persuasion tells the story of a second chance, the reawakening of love between Anne Elliot and Captain Frederick Wentworth, whom seven years earlier she had been persuaded not to marry. Now Wentworth’s from the Napoleonic Wars with prize money and the social acceptability of naval rank. He is an eligible suitor acceptable to Anne's snobbish father and his circle, and Anne discovers the return continuing strength of her love for him. Austen was keenly aware of the human quality of persuasion: 'to persuade or to be persuaded, rightly or wrongly.

**(F) NORTHANGER ABBEY**

Northanger Abbey was published posthumously in 1818. The novel is largely set in the resort town of Bath, which Austen visited for a month-long vacation in 1797. Northanger Abbey combines a satire on conventional novels of polite society with one on Gothic tales of terror. Catherine Morland, the heroine of the novel, is an innocent abroad who gains worldly wisdom. Her lover and guide are the self-assured and gently ironic Henry Tilney, her husband-to-be. She begins to weave a fanciful story around the Tilney family. Though deeply attached to Eleanor and Henry, she has been puzzled by the General, whose politeness toward her has not always extended to his children. Catherine detects some mystery about the fate of his wife, who died when Eleanor was a child. Catherine feels humiliated but Henry helps her to regain her self-respect. News from Bath that Isabella has rejected James for Frederick Tilney reminds them of the world outside. The Tilneys' certainty that the General will disapprove of Isabella leads Catherine to wonder if he will approve of her, but on a visit to the parsonage which is to be Henry's future home, the General hints that Catherine is well-fitted to be its mistress. A letter from Isabella confirms that Frederick's attachment has been short-lived. Catherine resolves that such a fickle woman cannot be her friend. Catherine is told that General Tilney leaves the young people to visit London but suddenly is to leave Northanger Abbey immediately. Henry declares his love for Catherine and decides to marry her. With the help and compromise of Eleanor, Henry and Catherine get married and the novel ends.

## 3.4 JANE AUSTEN AS A NOVELIST

Jane Austen's novels were first published when she was thirty-five years old. Her first completed novel, First Impressions (the lost original of Pride and Prejudice), began in October 1796 and finished in August 1797, her father offered it to a

publisher without success. In November 1797, she started Sense and Sensibility and Northanger Abbey, a revised version of which entitled Susan. She sold it in 1803 for ten pounds to the publisher Crosby, who advertised but failed to publish it; finally retrieved it in 1816, and an amended text appeared posthumously in 1818. The Watsons (1871, 1927), a fragmentary progenitor of Emma, and Lady Susan (1871, 1925), a biting epistolary satire, probably the germ of Mansfield Park, have survived in manuscripts written on paper watermarked 1803 and 1805 respectively. She authored six unique literary novels. These novels are Sense and Sensibility (1811), Pride and Prejudice (1813), Mansfield Park (1814), Emma (1815) Northanger Abbey (1817), and Persuasion (1818). There are some chief characteristics of Jane Austen as a novelist given below:

## 3.4.1 HER PERFECTION OF ART

Jane Austen occupies a prominent place in the history of the art of fiction. Though she was a contemporary of Sir Walter Scott, she is more in line with her predecessors in this art than with him. She widened the scope of fiction in almost all its directions. No writer, it may be presumed, is so conscious of her limitations as Jane Austen but never does she feel the temptation of essaying beyond her range. The result is nothing short of perfection. This is evident by such epithets as "two inches of ivory" or "Ivory towered" employed by the critics to indicate the perfection attained by her in her small world of the country bourgeoisie.

## 3.4.2. PLOT-CONSTRUCTION

She writes about material events and interests with a singular freedom from uncertainty. She possesses one rich talent of the artist in abundance: her cocksureness over her material, and her novels have, in consequence, an exactness of structure and a symmetry of form which are found more often in French literature. There is usually a tangle of emotions of which her plots are made. The essentials of her art are often the same: a well-defined story growing naturally out of the influence of character and developed amid a society that is full of mild provincial humors. She manages all this so perfectly that no praise of her art of plot construction can ever be over much. These plots are dramatically as perfect as the five-act comedies of the Restoration period. Like the situations in the Comedy of Manners, the situations in her novels also are ironic as well as psychological. Placed in a particular situation, the character almost unconsciously starts revealing the inconsistencies of his behavior which are immediately exposed to the ridicule of the readers. Juxtaposed with her dramatic plots is the dramatic quality of her dialogues.

## 3.4.3 HER ART OF CHARACTERIZATION

As for her art of characterization, her suggestion through them of a wider perspective of life is not covered by the story. She learned much from her predecessors but more from her practice. She borrows the realism of Defoe, the psychological grasp of Richardson, and the comic aptitude of Fielding. Her characters grow out of her plot just as her plot is the result of the psychological conflict and involvement of her characters. Her characters are, therefore, complex

and round. She holds the psychology of her "dramatics personae". She is born of her habit of minute observation as well as her intuitive understanding of the traits of a character. Her significant contribution to the art of characterization in fiction lies in her suggestions and her perspective.

## 3.4.4 HER REALISM

Jane Austen therefore combined the Domestic and the novel of manners and brought them to perfection. Richardson had explored the minds and hearts of his characters while Fielding had parodied the heated atmosphere of Richardsonian fiction. By a sheer stroke of artistry, she combines the good points of Richardson and Fielding and sketches events, characters, and dialogues that are psychologically true and perfect. She possesses in a remarkable degree all those qualities that are needed to impart realism to her world: her sense of the comic, affinities with and conscious apprenticeship of the eighteenth-century masters, fairness and detachment, limited world where the comic spirit stalks with a rod in her hand correcting the follies of the people and her anti-romantic and anti-sentimental attitude coupled with those merits of style which any great writer of the eighteenth century in England and France would be jealous of cultivating are here displayed to their best advantage.

## 3.4.5 HER USE TRUE OF SATIRE

The most debatable point is the unique type of satire that she presents in her novels. Some people think that her satire is genial and light; as such it is only discover a ruthless and even cruel touch in her comic treatment. Satire, another form of irony; whereas others is springs forth moral and ethical bias which is consistently absent in Jane Austen. She never concerns herself with religious or moral issues of the day. Even an elopement is devoid of any breach of the ethical code. But the fact cannot be ignored that Jane Austen is too preoccupied with good breeding and fine culture. Whatever jeopardizes good sense is revolting to her and elicits from her a quick response. For Jane Austen, a slight breach of common-sense is no less in magnitude than an ethical rupture or moral turpitude. Because of this preoccupation, her treatment of the comic becomes satirical. But this fact does not expunge either the possibilities or the existence of pure humour also. Some of her scenes are not laughter-provoking but they leave a rippling sense of humour. She touches the humorous side of almost every scene.

## 3.4.6 HER SENSE OF IMPARTIALITY

She can capture the comic effect largely due to her sense of detachment. Comedy springs from intellect, a tragedy from our heart. The finer comic effect as distinct from the humorous will be achieved if we withdraw our sympathies from the object who is the victim of comedy. Jane Austen also never allows her sympathies to intrude especially when a character has some Comic Flaw (if such a term can be used as opposed to the 'tragic flaw') in him. Although she seems to project her point of view through and to take the side of, her leading female characters even these

are not spared by her. Her objectivity, fairness, and detachment help her a good deal in achieving the comic effect. The structure of her novels and the people who move in this world contribute no less to this effect. The situations in her novels are themselves ironic and these invariably display the comic side of her characters. These characters are more or less funny in proportion to their command of common sense. Women on the whole have more claims to it than men as Meredith also discovered later on. But it is not all women who possess it and only a few can be said to have perfect command over it. In Jane Austen, women are always superior to their husbands in wit and good sense.

### 3.4.7 POETIC JUSTICE

As for poetic justice, it may be well to remember that Jane Austen had no poetic pretensions. In her world, therefore there is all justice and nothing poetic. This poetic justice as such has not been forced upon the structure but if there is justice in her world, and of course it cannot be denied that the eighteenth-century society that she transcribed was not without respect for values and ideals, it grows naturally out of the resolve of the tangled issues. The rewards are not thrown in her world from above by some impartial benevolent observing deity, as we find it thrown on Mr. Micawber, for example in Dickens, who has all along his life been hoping for something to happen and at the end finds himself a magistrate in a new country. As such in the world of Jane Austen, there are neither thoroughly good nor thoroughly vicious individuals.

### 3.4.8 HER STYLE AND TECHNIQUE

Her prose is an aggregate of all those qualities which were highly prized by the classical age-the qualities of precision, exactness, and truth, the temper of the twentieth century which seeks a conscious revival of these classical graces has been unsparing in the praise of the prose-style of Jane Austen. Considerably because of her style, she is considered to be the fine flower of the Eighteenth Century. She describes the minute shades and psychological involvements primarily because of a forceful style and fulfils the idea of "what off was thought but ne'er so well expressed. In short, it is not insignificant to know that some of her works as her Juvenilia and others that were not published during her lifetime and which remained sullied in some obscure corners have been published only in our century. The existing century has discovered

## 3.5 LET US SUM UP

Jane Austen's novels form a distinct group in which a strong element of literary satire accompanies the comic depiction of character and society. Austen's plots often explore the dependence of women on marriage in the pursuit of favourable social standing and economic security. Her works critique the Sentimental Novel of the second half of the 18th century and are part of the transition to 19th-century literary realism. Her uses of biting irony, along with her realism, humour, and social commentary, have long earned her acclaim among critics, scholars, and popular audiences alike. Despite her short time behind the writing desk, Jane Austen remains one of the most well-known and admired writers in literary history.

## 3.6 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss a brief biography of Jane Austen.
2. Write a short note on her literary works.
3. Write a short note on Pride and Prejudice.
4. Discuss Jane Austen as a novelist.
5. Discuss the plot construction of Jane Austen.

## 3.7 FURTHER READING

The Oxford Companion to English Literature, ed. Margaret Drabble. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996),

The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen edited by Edward Copeland and Juliet

McMaster, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997

Sen, Dr S *Emma: A Critical Evaluation*. Unique Publishers. New Delhi

Sinha, Prof. B. P. Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice. Bhavika Prakasa, Ayodhya.

# UNIT-4 JANE AUSTEN: EMMA

## Structure


4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Her Novel: Emma

4.3 Major Characters of Emma

4.3.1 Emma Wood House

4.3.2 Jane Fairfax

4.3.3 Harriet Smith

4.4 Emma: A Domestic Comedy

4.5 Emma: Theme and Plot Construction

4.6 Let us sum up

4.7 Questions

4.8 Further Reading


## 4.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to

- know the skill and art of Jane Austen as a novelist.
- understand the life and works of Jane Austen.
- make a comprehensive evaluation of English novel based on domestic incidents.
- develop a capacity to read or to reread the novel.
- make capable to understand the role of character in development of plot.
- understand the weakness and strength of character in human life.

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This important unit will introduce you about a well-known domestic novelist Jane Austen. She is famous for her six romantic and domestic novels and earned a unique place in English literature. Her art of writing with precision, realism, and wit of

prose style expressed her skill and capacity. In this unit, we will critically discuss her one of the best novel Emma. The unit beautifully analyses the story and central thought of the novel. The novel reveals Jane Austen's remarkable skill in portraying the morals and manners of eighteen century gentry in England.

## 4.2 HER NOVEL: *EMMA* (1815)

A general summary: *Emma* has two interconnecting plots: The outward plot and inward plot. The 'outward plot' is concerned with the comings and goings, advances and reverses of a small circle of moderately well-born people in a provincial town, Highbury. The 'inward' plot is concerned with the mind of the novel's heroine, Emma Woodhouse. The outward plot tells the love stories of three couples, whose weddings are the culmination of the novel. These couples are Emma and Mr. Knightley, Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax, Harriet Smith and Robert Martin. The inward plot traces the development of Emma's mind from ill-founded self-satisfaction through several humiliations, to self-knowledge and good sense. The two plots are very closely linked, partly because almost all the action takes place around Emma, but principally because much of it is initiated by her. Her manipulation of the characters around her affects their stories, and also demonstrates her state of mind: her 'fancy', or imaginary perception of what a situation is or might be, leads her and them into many false positions.

The characters whom we first meet around Emma are her indulgent but demanding father; her former governess Mrs. Weston and her new husband and Mr. George Knightley, a neighboring landowner. We later meet her sister Isabella and her husband John, who is Mr. Knightley's brother and other neighbours, including Mrs. and Miss Bates. Emma determines to find a wife for Mr. Elton, the vicar. When she meets Harriet Smith who is pretty but not very intelligent and socially inferior to herself, she decides to befriend her. Despite Mr. Knightley's warnings, Emma brings them together a great deal at her house. Harriet refuses the proposal of marriage whom she does not think grand enough for her. Mr. Knightley who thinks the two ideally matched in rank and education, angrily criticizes Emma for interfering, and tells her that Mr. Elton will never marry Harriet, who has neither wealth nor rank. They quarrel.

Her suspicions about Mr. Dixon are increased when an unknown admirer sends Jane Fairfax a piano. Mrs. Weston, however, suspects that the sender is Mr. Knightley and he might marry Miss Fairfax. Frank Churchill criticizes Jane Fairfax to Emma, who tells him her suspicions about Mr. Dixon. The next day she feels that she has done wrong in gossiping to him. Frank Churchill, who often visits the Bateses, not only encourages Emma in her suspicions but hints about them to Miss Fairfax. He suggests that a ball be held in Highbury, and plans are made, but it is postponed when he has to leave because Mrs. Churchill is ill. Before he goes Emma thinks he is on the point of proposing marriage to her: she avoids what she thinks is to be the declaration, and reflects afterwards that he is very much in love with her, but that she is not much in love with him. She now conceives that he should marry Harriet. Mr. Elton returns with his bride, who is treated with all attendant upon a newly married woman. Mr. Knightley, on Emma's enquiry, makes it clear that he does not intend to marry Jane Fairfax, but he points She is extremely vulgar, out that Emma should have become her friend. She is high handed, snobbish and

likes to manage the lives of others but yet she appeals to the reader. For all her failings, she has many good traits too. She is a dutiful daughter and a good friend and lacks vanity as to her personal beauty. Besides, she has the redeeming feature of being able to admit her faults once she recognizes them and is eager to make amends. With all her faults, Emma is full of vitality and warmth, something which Fanny Price in all her goodness lacks. Important to note here is that Emma is likeable because though she commits follies there are no serious moral vices in her.

Emma' is a contrast to 'Mansfield Park' just as 'Mansfield Park' is a contrast to 'Pride and Prejudice' It is an ironical comedy and the heroine is as different as possible from Fanny Price. The atmosphere is pleasant and comfortable with much wit, irony and light laughter and with none of the self-justification or morality which is so evident in 'Mansfield Park.' The comic irony arises from having a heroine who is deluded. The work takes on something of the interest of the detective story - The reader is given the same clues as the heroine as to what is going on and his enjoyment increases as he sees that his own suspicions, and not Emma's fancy, were right.

## 4.3 MAJOR CHARACTERS OF *EMMA*

### 4.3.1 EMMA WOODHOUSE

Jane Austen in her precise compact and straight forward style plunges the reader directly into the novel and in the very first page we have a character-sketch-a summing up of Emma - the heroine who is also the focal point of the novel. The education of Emma as it were, from conceit and delusion to self-knowledge and awareness, is in fact the theme and substance of the novel and hence a study of her character is particularly important.

Through direct narration Jane Austen introduces us to the heroine "Emma Woodhouse, handsome clever and rich, with 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." By the fourth paragraph we have been told of the real evils of her situation. She is the second daughter of a very affectionate and indulgent father, and has been the sole mistress of the house since she is twelve years old as her mother had died and her elder sister Isabella was married and settled in London. Now having lost Miss Taylor - her governess and friend to matrimony, she is lonely and without the right companionship. Surrounded as she is by an overindulgent father, a governess who had been unable to impose any restraint and devoid of friends who are her social and intellectual equals, Emma has "the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself."

Emma is described as "the complete picture of grown-up health" with regular features, open countenance and a firm and upright figure by Mrs. Weston in her talk with Knightley in chapter five. Her prettiness is emphasized by Knightley, Frank Churchill and other characters too. And to the credit of Emma, she is not vain about her beauty. Jane Austen had said that she had taken is not the perfect heroine. At the very beginning we are warned a heroine whom no one but she could like. This is because Emma of her power of having things her own way

and her disposition "to think a little too well of herself." Her errors are many, most of which arise from her conceit, her self-confidence and her refusal to heed wiser counsels. This brings grief to her as well as to the others she has tried to manage.

Emma is both victim and perpetrator. Being an heiress and daughter of the principal of her errors and inhabitant of a small county town, she is accustomed to being looked up to and deferred to on all occasions. Her self-confidence and trust in her own understanding of humanity lead her into harbouring many illusions. In the very first chapter, we see Emma harbouring the illusion that she has brought about the matrimonial alliance between Miss. She patronizes Harriet Smith and without any real basis imagines her to be the daughter of a gentleman and encourages her to fall in love with Elton after refusing Robert Martin's proposal. Having decided to make a match between Harriet and Elton, she deludes herself about Elton's every action. Mr. Elton's attention to herself, his praise of the portrait Emma has sketched are all taken by Emma as evidence of his admiration for Harriet Smith. She ignores Knightley's view of Elton as a man who knew his own good. Emma is under the illusion that she is always in the can wantonly interfere in the lives of others imagining that she is promoting their happiness. She thinks matchmaking "is the greatest amusement in the world" and without considering Harriet's preferences decides to match her with Elton. Her matchmaking extends to herself too and she thinks of a match between Frank and herself. When she realizes that she does not love him, she readily shifts Frank to Harriet, without a thought for Frank's own preferences. Emma is guided by her whim and fancy in judging people rather than by their true natures. This is bome out throughout the novel. Emma lets her imagination run away with her and though she thinks she is in the right; she is in fact always embarrassingly wrong. Without any real evidence, Emma imagines a relationship between Jane Fairfax and Dixon. She does not judge Frank Churchill well. Even when Knightley warns her of a possible attachment between Jane and Frank, she dismisses it. So, convinced is she of her own judgement that she even commits the indiscretion of confiding in Frank her conjectures about Jane and Dixon. This land her in a horrifyingly embarrassing situation, when the secret engagement between Jane and Frank Churchill is revealed.

Emma a poor judge of character: Her lack of judgement is revealed in her reading of Elton's character. She thinks him to be a well-mannered gentleman who would be the right match for Harriet. Once again it is Knightley who is more accurate in judging Elton. He tells Emma, "Depend upon it, Elton will not do. Elton is a very good sort of man, and a very respectable vicar of Highbury, but not at all likely to make an imprudent match. He knows the value of a good income as well as anybody. Elton may talk sentimentally, but he will act rationally."

Her snobbery is evident in her attitude to Mr. Robert Martin. She thinks him socially beneath Harriet and therefore compels Harriet to refuse his proposal. Convers(e)ly she is offended by what she thinks is Elton's presumpt(u)ousness in aspiring for her (Emma's) hand in marriage. Emma's steps towards full awareness: Her of which she had repressing resolutions formed immediately after the Elton-Harriet debacle is soon forgotten and Emma continues in her interference and highhanded ways imagining relationships where none exist (Jane and Dixon, Frank and herself, Frank and Harriet) Not until the end of the morning at Box Hill, does Emma really begin her journey towards self-awareness. Emma is overwhelmed by

her realization of her intellectual and social pride when Knightley rebukes her for her unthoughtful rudeness to Miss. Bates: "Never had she felt so agitated, mortified, grieved at any circumstance in her life. She was most forcibly struck. How could she have been so brutal so cruel to Miss. Bates! How could she have exposed herself to such ill-opinion in anyone she valued!" Emma cries all the way home and these tears mark her true repentance and the beginning of Emma's self-awareness. It is clear then that Emma has not immediately the next morning. She is genuinely anguished and mortified at her own behaviour and takes pains to correct it immediately. In the same way, she tries to make amends for her neglect of Jane Fairfax by inviting her to Hartfield and by offering Arrowroot. Nor does she bear ill-will when Jane Fairfax refuses the offer and realizes that her former coolness deserves the present rebuff. She has however, yet to undergo the trials and pain of unrequited love. The revelation of Frank's secret engagement to Jane (the climax of the plot) makes her realize that contrary to her imagination that she was in control, she had all along been duped and manipulated by Frank Churchill. This humiliation is however nothing compared to the revelation Harriet makes. Harriet is not in love with Frank as Emma had imagined but with Mr. Knightley. This explodes her last misconception and she realizes that "Mr. Knightley must marry no one but herself." (Chapter 47). Finally, Emma is in a situation which Knightley had wished for, "Emma in love, and in some doubt of a return." This pain completes the education of Emma as she is now completely aware of the misery, she has brought on herself and others by manipulating them to suit her own whims and fancy, finally after much soul-searching and self-reproach, Emma finds happiness when Goerge Knightley proposes to her. In her new-found happiness and love she is ready to forgive Frank Churchill and goes more than halfway to effect reconciliation with Jane Fairfax. Harriet too finds her happiness with Robert Martin, away from the interference of Emma and Emma also admits her error in misjudging Martin.

As we have seen, Emma's character changes for the better. Jane Austen traces her development from a rich, snobbish, highhanded girl to a mature, humble and reflective young woman. Just as Mr. Knightley finally declares Emma as being faultless in spite of her faults, we are also won over by her genuine feelings of guilt and grief at her wrong-doings in spite of her stubbornness, her wil(l)ful imagination and blindness to reality and her unjustified confidence. The whole subject matter of Emma' revolves round the heroine's painful discovery of the truth about herself and the way in which she is gradually stripped free of illusions.

### 4.3.2 JANE Fairfax

Jane Fairfax is a kind of a foil to Emma and her character is to be studied bearing in mind the comparison and contrasts with Emma herself. Jane Austen is handicapped in her characterization of Jane Fairfax, by the necessity of maintaining the secret engagement as part of the intrigue in her plot structure. It is for this reason that Jane seems to be a rather colourless individual, compared with other women in the story. She appears cold and distant not only to Emma but to the reader too. This is because she does not take much direct part in the story and exists more as a character about whom other people talk and think. Jane Austen has here presented Jane Fairfax through the eyes of others, through a variety of points of view.

Much before she is actually introduced towards the end of the first volume, we hear of her from Miss. Bates. Jane is the niece of Miss. Bates and her letters are constant topics of conversation for Miss. Bates. This explains part of Emma's dislike when she tells Harriet that "I wish Jane Fairfax very well, but she tires me to death" And we are told about Jane's impending visit to Highbury, the Campbell's holiday at Ireland, Emma's conjecture about Dixon and Jane before we are finally introduced to her in chapter twenty with the usual character sketch. Jane is an orphan at three, her father Lieutenant Fairfax having died in action abroad and her mother succumbing to consumption and grief soon afterwards. Brought up initially by her grandmother and aunt (Mrs. and Miss. Bates) she would have been confined to this narrow upbringing had it not been for Colonel Campbell a friend of her father's. The Campbells had taken Jane under their wing and had provided her with the best of education developing her talent and her mind. Jane, thus has grown up to be an attractive and cultured young girl.

Emma is struck by her remarkable elegance and Jane pretty and accomplished: Jane is described as elegant in beauty. Emma feels that "her face-her features there was more beauty in them all together than she had remembered; it was not regular, but it was very pleasing" (Chapter 20) But more than her elegance of look and manner are her accomplishments. She is very talented, especially in playing the piano and even Emma, who is otherwise not favourably disposed to her, praises her fine skill at the piano. Apart from Emma, almost everyone has a good opinion about Jane Fairfax. Isabella thinks of her as "sweet, amiable" and a delightful companion for Emma Knightley too praises Jane's power of forbearance, patience, self-control and thinks she would be ideally suited as a companion to Emma. He feels too that Jane's sense and maturity would improve Frank Churchill, while the good Westons too have a good opinion of her.

Jane Fairfax's faults: Her major faults are her reserved nature and secretiveness. Emma cannot forgive Jane Fairfax her reserved and cold attitude. Emma feels: "She (Jane) was so cold, so cautious. There was no getting at her real opinion. Wrapt in a cloak of politeness she seemed determined to hazard nothing. She was disgustingly, was suspiciously reserved." Emma's enquiries about Frank Churchill or Dixon elicit very little information from Jane and she is evasive about her reason for collecting her letters personally from the post-office. Knightley too admits to a want of "open temper" in Jane, even though he has a high opinion about her attainments and disposition. Of course, her secretiveness is to be seen in the light of her engagement with Frank and then one cannot judge her too harshly. It weighs so heavily on her mind that it makes her uncommunicative and unhappy. When she refuses Emma's persistent attempts at friendship after the Box-Hill picnic, Jane seems capable of jealousy and resentment.

Jane might have been pliable enough to have been persuaded into a secret engagement but is resolute enough to break it off when she considers that Frank's behaviour merits such a step, and takes up the post of a governess, in spite of the difficulty and distress it causes her. While Emma imagines Jane's life with her aunt to be trying in the extreme, Jane herself does not betray any remark which might be construed as criticism of Miss Bates. On the contrary she appears to be a dutiful and affectionate niece. There are many points of similarity contrast between Jane Fairfax and Emma and this affects our view of her. While Emma appears warm,

lively and healthy, Jane is cold, pale and sickly inspite of her beauty. Emma is rich, has her own establishment and need not work while Jane is poor, has no great future prospects except to become a governess and will have to live. Jane is accomplished and talented. is superior to Emma in playing the piano and in singing and it highlights Emma's own lack of application and inability to put in any serious practice. In fact, George Knightley thinks that Emma's dislike for Jane stems from her unconscious jealousy of Jane for Jane is the accomplished girl. Many readers find the relationship between Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill unconvincing for if Jane is really the person, the author describes her to be, she could not have fallen in love with so frivolous a man as Frank Churchill or having fallen in love she could not have entered into a secret engagement with him. In this perhaps, we are unjust to Jane Fairfax. Given her circumstances, (she is an unprovided woman with no prospects other than becoming a governess and spending her holidays with Miss Bates) it is perfectly feasible that she consents to marry Frank Churchill. The alternative is so dull and horrifying that even though Jane Fairfax is as good as she is clever, and as clever as she is beautiful, she cannot but choose Frank Churchill.

Jane Fairfax the talented, cultured and elegant girl appears cold and reserved and as a mere show dowy figure, but this as we have seen is due to the exigencies of the plot. Jane Austen could not give an insight into Jane Fairfax's mind, for that would have shifted the focus of the novel away from Emma. This fault in characterization is why Jane seems a colourless individual. Secondly the secret engagement accounts for much of her frigidity and once that is revealed, we see a Jane Fairfax who is more relaxed and friendly. "Emma had never seen her look so well, so lovely, so engaging. There was consciousness, animation and warmth; there was everything which her countenance or manner could have ever wanted." She is aware that she had been cold and artificial as she had always a part to act and is apologetic to Emma about it and is warm and friendly with her after the engagement is in the open. We must admire with Frank Churchill that resolution of character which has carried her though her time of strain and we must agree that in marrying Jane, Frank is happier than he deserves to be.

### 4.3.3 HARRIET SMITH

Jane Austen uses Harriet Smith as It is through Emma's patronage of Harriet that we learn of Emma's highhandedness, her self-deception, her snobbery and her love for matchmaking. Harriet Smith is in every way a contrast to Emma and finally it is through Harriet that Emma realizes her own love for Knightley and is educated. Thus, Harriet Smith has an important role to play in the novel, especially in the first volume where the Harriet-Elton debacle takes a prominent place. Jane Austen introduces Harriet Smith in Chapter 3 through the direct means of a character sketch.

Harriet Smith was the natural daughter of somebody, that is, she is an illegitimate child who is a boarder at Mrs. Goddard's school. She is a very pretty girl, "short, plump and fair, with a fine bloom, blue eyes, light hair, regular features, and a look of great sweetness." Emma is impressed not merely by her beauty but by her docile nature and deference and decides to act as a guardian to her.

Harriet not clever: Harriet is like Jane from poor social position but unlike Jane Fairfax, Harriet has no remarkable talents or cleverness and in fact is quite

ignorant. Knightley feels therefore that she will be a poor companion to Emma who will only be flattered by such ignorance and Emma on the other hand will merely puff up Harriet so that she becomes conceited and a misfit among people of her own social circle. Her lack of cleverness and judgement are quite evident. She is unable to figure out the charade that Elton sends and is quite confused though Emma deciphers it within minutes. She cannot discern the vast superiority of Jane Fairfax in playing the piano in comparison to Emma's own playing. She finds Martin's sensible letter of proposal too short and requires Emma's help in drafting a letter of refusal. All this reveal her lack of education and her ignorance.

Harriet's docile nature: Not only is Harriet ignorant, she is also docile and submissive. She is grateful to Emma for her patronage and submits without any protests to Emma's interference in her life. In spite of her liking for Robert Martin, she allows herself to be by Emma to refuse his proposal on the grounds that much to independently take a decision regarding Robert Martin and he is socially her inferior. She values Emma's friendship far too is influenced by Emma to even break off all relations with the Martin family. It does cause some distress to Harriet but she is too much in awe of Emma to protest. It is because she is so biddable that Emma likes her. Emma wants to mould Harriet to suit her own whims and fancies and to this end she encourages poor Harriet to fall in love with Elton. Harriet seems very fickle-minded in the ease with which she shifts her love from Robert Martin to Elton and then to Mr. Knightley and finally back again to Mr. Robert Martin. One may take a charitable view that she had retained her liking for Mr. Robert Martin and once outside the interfering influence of Emma, she accepts Martin's proposal. Harriet has a tender heart and disposition. She does not blame Emma for having encouraged her to fall in love with Elton. Nor does she blame Mr. Elton as she feels she never could have deserved him. Sentimentally she has preserved some mementoes of him, a pencil stub and a used plaster. Knightley too praises Harriet for having simple, honest and generous feelings learn more about Harriet

Knightley’s assessment of Harriet: We through Knightley's opinions. In the beginning, he classifies Harriet as a girl with no claims of birth, nature or education and an unsuitable companion to Emma. He feels that Harriet must consider it her good fortune to be married to Robert Martin. But he later recognizes the good qualities of Harriet and is chivalrous in asking her to dance after Mr. Elton snubs her at the Crown Inn Ball. He sees her as a better person than Mrs. Elton and tells Emma: "Harriet Smith has some first-rate qualities which Mrs. Elton is totally without. An unpretending, single minded artless girl - infinitely to be preferred by any man of sense and taste to such a woman as Mrs. Elton. I found Harriet more conversable than I expected" Later he praises Harriet for being without art or affectation and finds her particularly suited for a domestic life. Harriet's feelings for the humiliating snub of Mr. Elton, Harriet is grateful to dance with her and save her public humiliation. Emma's own encouragement to Harriet regarding marriage to a social superior, lead Harriet into believing that she is in love with Mr. Knightley and that Knightley too returns this love. Harriet, we see has thus come a long way. From the girl who thought that Elton was too appears good for her, she now aspires for Knightley himself. If she presumptuous or conceited in aspiring for Knightley, we have only Emma to blame. As Knightley had pointed out, Emma's interference and patronage of Harriet has only led her to conceit and a false sense of her own

worth. But away from the domineering influence of Emma, Harriet finally finds her happiness with the sensible and hardworking Robert Martin.

Harriet Smith is a pretty, docile and sweet tempered girl who lacks intelligence and firmness of mind. She allows herself to be influenced by Emma but much must be excused considering her circumstances as an illegitimate daughter and her none too bright prospects. Jane Austen uses her as a foil to reveal Emma's character particularly her domineering ways. Emma's self-deception, her snobbery, her inability to judge people and situations correctly, her wilful imagination is all manifest in her manipulation of Harriet and in her attempts to make a match between Elton and Harriet. Harriet is particularly important in the education and self-awareness of Emma. It is only when Harriet expresses her love for Knightley that Emma realizes her own love for him and this marks the important beginning of her self-awareness. Thus, Harriet Smith has an role to play in the novel.

## 4.4 EMMA: A DOMESTIC COMEDY

Jane Austen presents a satirical portrayal of social life comic way. She does not merely satirize but create moral framework to operates all kind of domestic and social relationship in her works. It may be more apt to call her novels as a domestic comedy since Jane Austen's comic spirit is clearly manifested in the personal relationships of ordinary life. In *Emma*, too many instances of comedy arise in the personal interaction between Emma, her father and her brother-in-law. Emma's own self delusion the ironic contrast between what she imagines and what really is provides much comic interest.

"Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies" this is what Jane Austen satirizes in her heroine Emma as also in the characters of Miss Bates, Mr. Woodhouse and the Elton. The humor in the novel is to be found both in the situation and in the characters and proceeds chiefly from the use of irony." The comic interest arising from Emma's self-delusion: The whole of 'Emma' is conceived of as an irony arising out of what Emma imagines and what really is. This provides much of the comic interest in the novel. We are amused at Emma's assertion of her abilities as a matchmaker and her attempts at bringing about a marriage between Harriet and Mr. Elton. The ironic humor in this entire episode lies in the contrast between what Emma thinks she will achieve and what she does actually achieve. Emma goes to ridiculous lengths to provide opportunities for Mr. Elton and Harriet to meet and spend some time together even breaking her boot lace and falling back to tie it so that Elton would propose. But no proposal is forthcoming and in spite of Emma attributing the charade to Harriet, what follows is the comic and amusing reversal of events leading to Elton's proposal to Emma herself. The courtship and the "ready wit" were indeed meant for Emma and not for Harriet as she had imagined. Emma continues to commit blunders deluding herself about Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax, suspecting an attachment between Jane and Dixon, and even making a match between Frank Churchill and Harriet, only to learn later of the secret engagement between Jane and Frank and Harriet's and her own love for Mr. Knightley. Her supreme self-confidence and her delusion that she is in the right is extremely comical in the light of the events which follow proving her wrong in each one of her conjectures. Jane Austen with gentle irony mocks her heroine's whims. and fancies and her follies presenting it in a comic light.

Comedy through characterization: Jane Austen's portrayal of Miss Bates and Mr. Woodhouse is gently satiric and provides much humour. Miss Bates with her excessive garrulity is endearingly absurd. With one breath, she can talk of topics varying from the suitability of Augusta Hawkins to her own mother's liking for pork. She flits from topic to topic leaving sentences incomplete and committing various faux-apex by revealing what ought not to be revealed. For all her excessive talk which may appear tiresome and boring, Miss Bates is still likeable for her innate goodness and kind heartedness to one and all. Jane Austen portrays Miss Bates with sympathy thus making us laugh at her silliness and excessive garrulity but at the same time retaining our liking for her. Mr. Woodhouse is the other comic character and we are amused by his excessive concern about his own as well as other's health. Everyone is agreeable to him as long as the ladies dry their stockings after a rain and the young men do not insist upon opening the windows. Himself restricted to having thin smooth gruel, he is shocked that people are ready to have the cake at the Westons' egg prepared wedding. In all his talk about the wholesomeness just the right way by his cook Searle and his excessive concern about keeping out the draught of cold air and his insistence upon the merits of his physician Mr. Perry he appears absurdly comic. But Jane Austen not only presents him as a humorous character but also satirizes nothing him and hints at his selfishness which allows him to see beyond his own comfort and which makes him a good host only to those who comply with his wishes. The conversation between Mr. Woodhouse and his taciturn and curt son-in-law, John Knightley on the rival merits of their respective physicians is richly comic as also his eventually agreeing to the match between Emma and Knightley the poultry from thieves. It is in the character of Mrs. Elton that Jane satiric. Mrs. Elton with her vain, self-important talk is comic no doubt but she is also satirized most severely by Jane Austen and has no redeeming quality. Her airs, her constant name-dropping, her belief that the Suckling’s with their barouche-landau are the best kind of gentry and that Maple Grove is the best estate and Surrey is the garden of England are all laughable. Her talk with Mr. Weston is richly comical. Both are characters of limited outlook and fixed ideas and their conversation with, Mr. Weston totally concerned with his son Frank Churchill and Mrs. Elton with Maple Grove offers excellent moments of comedy. Both are caught up with their own pet subjects and it makes it impossible for them to listen to, let alone understand each other. Mrs. Elton's monologue when, in all her 'apparatus' of happiness she picks strawberries at Donell Abbey is also humorous. Comedy through wit: Jane Austen's major characters are often witty and it is from their perceptions and conversation that much humour arises. Emma has a quick mind and is not averse to making fun of other characters by mimicking them. For instance, she says of Mr. Elton, "He is an excellent young man, and will suit Harriet exactly, it will be an "Exactly so" as he says himself..." Similarly, her parody of Miss Bates' talk in case Knightley was married to Jane is extremely comic. She gives a perfect imitation of Miss Bates flitting from topic-to-topic thanking Mr. Knightley for his kindness in marrying Jane and in the same breath referring to her mother's old petticoat which was still very strong.

Conclusion: Jane Austen's vision of life is comic. Not for her the great tragedies of human suffering, she laughs gently at the follies and inconsistencies of human beings. Her method is that of irony but the moral it carries does not show any desire on her part to reform them. It only accepts and shows the ridiculous and the absurd

and it is from our recognition of these very human follies that the smile of acknowledgement of humour and comedy arise.

## 4.5 EMMA: THEME AND PLOT CONSTRUCTION

Jane Austen's ideas are able to identify several themes including prejudice, love power, marriage, wealth, reputation, class, self-knowledge. Emma deals the theme of love, marriage and class. Through these three-basic themes of human relationship the novel runs. It has been said that the novels of Jane Austen have only one plot. Somerset Maugham holds the view that "she wrote very much the same sort of a story in her books" a marriageable maiden in a village. An eligible bachelor arrives. They fall in love; their relations develop and they are ultimately wedded". Jane Austen is unsurpassed in plot construction. Emma is a brilliant example of structural exactness and symmetry, with every character and situation. It can be said Emma has an 'outer' and an 'Inner' plot. The outer plot deals with what actually happens. From this point of view, it may be argued that Emma is about marriage. It begins with one (the Weston's) ends with three more and considers several other marital possibilities along the way. The inner plot is 'What Emma thinks is happening' and traces her development to self-knowledge and awareness from willfulness and vanity. **T**he structure of the plot in Emma can be classified into two types: the external plot and internal plot. Emma is always the focus for us both statures. In outer plot, we may say coincides with the novel concerned with Emma's attempt to intervene in Harriet Smith's life and ends with the Harriet Smith. Jane Austen plunges the reader into the heart of her world and we are told that Emma Woodhouse is young, rich intelligent and beautiful and that "The real evils indeed of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and disposition to think a little too well of herself.' The supreme sell confidence and serene delusion are evident in the Harriet Smith Mr. Elton debacle.

Harriet's herself. Emma's first error is her assumption that she can bring about a match between Harriet and Mrs. Elton. Harriet Smith is a young girl of unknown parentage and no social position. But, with lofty disregard of logic, Emma assumes that prospects in life are brighter because of this connection with Emma guided by whim and fancy rather than judgement automatically assumes that Elton's excessive interest in the portrait -sketch of Harriet as a tribute to Harriet rather than flattery of herself. Accordingly, when Harriet receives an offer of marriage from Robert Martin, Emma persuades her to reject the proposal as she considers Martin socially beneath her brilliantly prepared for scene in which Elton offends Emma by proposing to her and is himself angered by her disclosure that she considers the outcome of this blunder is a Harriet a suitable match for him. Harriet Smith is a young girl of unknown parentage and no social position. But, with lofty disregard of logic, Emma assumes that Harriet's prospects in life are brighter because of this connection with herself. Emma guided by whim and fancy rather than judgments automatically assumes that Elton's excessive interest in the portrait. Harriet receives an offer of marriage from Robert Martin and Emma persuades her to reject the proposal as she considers Martin socially beneath her. The outcome of this blunder is brilliantly prepared for scene in which Elton offends Emma by proposing to her

The inward plot traces the development of Emma's mind from ill founded self-satisfaction, through several humiliations, to self-knowledge and good sense. The

two plots are closely linked because almost all the action takes place around Emma and what is more important is that much of it is initiated by her. Her manipulation of the characters around her and her imaginary perception of what is or might be leads her into committing many errors. With a plot where the heroine is led into errors and is constantly exposing her high-handedness, Jane Austen has the difficult task of making it appealing to the reader. She manages it with considerable skill and subtlety by presenting the story through Emma's eyes rather than through the outside. Fairfax's, Robert Martin's or Miss Bates' eyes Emma cannot but appear vain, snobbish, high-handed, lacking in tenderness and good will. It is therefore absolutely essential to use Emma's mind as a reflection of events.

The inside view: We are constantly given an inside view of Emma's thoughts. Jane Austen never lets us forget that Emma is not what she might appear to be. She may have her faults but she is quick to admit them and this is evident through the insight into her self-reproaches and reflections, after every misdeed. For every section devoted to her misdeeds there is a section devoted to her self-reproach. This structure based on the revelation of some truth followed by a period of anguished reflection on her part is one of the memorable features of the novel. It is assumed that "Mystery is essential to a plot and cannot be appreciated without intelligence" - This is what E.M. Forster has to say in 'Aspects of the Novel' and Jane Austen has so skilfully used this technique in Emma that it has often been called a 'detective novel'

## 4.6 LET US SUM UP

Jane Austen's novels form a distinct group in which a strong element of literary satire accompanies the comic depiction of character and society. Austen's plots often explore the dependence of women on marriage in the pursuit of favourable social standing and economic security. Her works critique the Sentimental Novel of the second half of the 18th century and are part of the transition to 19th-century literary realism. Her uses of biting irony, along with her realism, humour, and social commentary, have long earned her acclaim among critics, scholars, and popular audiences alike. Despite her short time behind the writing desk, Jane Austen remains one of the most well-known and admired writers in literary history.

## 4.7 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss a brief biography of Jane Austen.
2. Write a short note on her literary works.
3. Write a short note on Pride and Prejudice.
4. Write the critical summary of the novel Emma.
5. Discuss Emma as a Domestic comedy.
6. Write the Jane Austen’s art of characterization.

## 4.8 FURTHER READING

The Oxford Companion to English Literature, ed Margaret Drabble. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Irvine, Robert (2005). Jane Austen. London: Routledge.

Sen, Dr. S *Emma: A Critical Evaluation*. Unique Publishers. New Delhi

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Open University, Prayagraj

# MAEN-104
# BRITISH NOVEL

# 2
# Block
## Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Unit-5 | Charles Dickens: An Introduction | 83-94 |
| Unit-6 | Charles Dickens: Great Expectations | 95-104 |
| Unit-7 | Thomas Hardy: An Introduction | 105-118 |
| Unit-8 | Thomas Hardy: Tess of the D'Urbervilles | 119-143 |

# BLOCK INTRODUCTION-2

Dear learners! This block is aimed at making you aware two imminent Victorian novelists, Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy. Victorian literature is English literature during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837–1901). The 19th century is considered by some to be the Golden Age of English Literature, especially for British novels. It was in the Victorian era that the novel became the leading literary genre in English. English writing from this era reflects the major transformations in most aspects of English life, from scientific, economic, and technological advances to changes in class structures and the role of religion in society. This block is divided into four units from 5th to 8th. The fifth unit focuses on the introduction of Charles Dickens as a major English novelist of Victorian Era. In this unit, we will learn Charles Dickens's biography, technique and art of writing. The sixth unit aimed to discuss the Dickens's major novel Great Expectation. The unit deals the story, types, purpose, and salient features of the novel, Great Expectation. The seventh unit focuses on introduction of Thomas Hardy as a major English novelist of Victorian Era. It deals the biography, philosophy and art of writing. The eighth and last unit of the block focuses on the Hardy's most philosophical novel, Tess of the d'Urbervilles. Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman is a novel published in book form in three volumes in 1891 and as a single volume in 1892. After studying this block, you will be able to understand the philosophical and realist way of thinking about the life and develop the conceptual analytical power in to read and enjoy the soul of the novel.

# UNIT-5 CHARLES DICKENS:AN INTRODUCTION

## Structure

5.0 Objectives

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Charles Dickens: Biographical Sketch

5.2.1 Life

5.2.2 Literary Career of Charles Dickens

5.2.3 Works of Charles Dickens

5.3 Charles Dickens: A representative novelist of the Victorian Era

5.4 Charles Dickens: As a bildungsroman novelist

5.5 Humour and Pathos in Charles Dickens' works

5.6 Let us sum up

5.7 Questions

5.8 Further Reading

## 5.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to know about

- Charles Dickens: a biographical sketch
- the major and minor novels of Charles Dickens
- Charles Dickens as a representative novelist of the Victorian era
- Charles Dickens' childhood impact his future works
- Charles Dickens as a bildungsroman novelist.

## 5.1 NTRODUCUTION

Hello dear learners! Did you know that Charles Dickens is one of the most beloved novelists of all time? His stories are full of heart and emotion, and have captivated readers for generations. Not only was he a talented writer, but he was also a social critic and journalist, using his platform to shine a light on the

issues of his time. In this unit, we will be diving into the world of Charles Dickens and exploring his life and works. We will learn about his unique writing style and how he was able to create such memorable characters. We will also explore the different themes in his writing, from humor to pathos, and how he used his stories to comment on the Victorian era. Whether you are a long-time fan of Dickens or just discovering his works for the first time, this unit will give you a deeper understanding of his impact on literature and society. So, get ready to explore the world of Charles Dickens and see why the readers still love him and is one of the most read by many today!

## 5.2 CHARLES DICKENS: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

### 5.2.1 LIFE

Dear learners! Charles Dickens was a literary giant and one of the most influential novelists of the Victorian era, born on February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, Hampshire, England. His full name was Charles John Huffam Dickens. His father, John Dickens, was a clerk in the Navy Pay Office, and his mother's name was Elizabeth. When he was just an infant, his family moved to London due to his father's transfer. Two years later, they relocated to Chatham, where he spent five years (1817-1821) and had some of the happiest moments of his childhood. This place was the inspiration for many of his novels. Afterward, they moved to Camden Town, London, where they stayed until 1860. Finally, Dickens permanently moved to Gad's Hill. Unfortunately, due to his father's debts, Dickens' family was sent to debt prison, except for Charles.

As the eldest son, he started working in a factory while his father was in prison for debt. He later presented his experience in the factory in his writings. The little earning of this little boy helped his family. He used to visit his father on Sundays. After being released, his father took him out of the factory and placed him in school. His schooling got interrupted at age 15, and he joined as a clerk in a Solicitor's office. Later, he became a shorthand reporter in the law courts and, finally, a newspaper reporter. He enjoyed this profession.

One of the most frustrating events in Dickens' life was his rejection by Maria Beadnell. She did not like the way he and his family lived. However, this rejection indirectly helped him gain success. He loved her very passionately, and the character of Dora Spenlow in *David Copperfield* (1849) and Flora Flinching in *Little Dorrit* (1855) reflects some resemblance to Maria Beadnell. Later, he got attracted to Catherine Hogarth, and they married in 1836. They had ten children Charles, Mary, Kate, Walter, Francis, Alfred, Sydney, Henry, Dora, and Edward. This relationship also broke, and the couple separated in 1858. Finally, Dickens was involved in a relationship with Ellen Ternan, an actress. This relationship lasted the rest of his life.

In his later days, Dickens died from a stroke on June 9, 1870, at Gad's Hill, near Chatham Kent. He was buried in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey. On his tomb, the inscription reads: "He was a sympathizer to the poor, the suffering, and by his death, one of England's greatest writers is lost to the world."

### 5.2.2 LITERARY CAREER OF CHARLES DICKENS

Dear learners, did you know that Charles Dickens, started his career by writing short stories and essays called “Sketches”? Yes! and the most interesting thing is that he used the pen name “Boz” and published his “Sketches” in the *Monthly Magazine* and the *Morning Chronicle*. People loved his writing and his sketches were later compiled and published together in a book called *Sketches Illustrative of Everyday Life and Everyday People.* In the same year, he was offered a contract to write his first novel, which he called *The Pickwick Papers*. It was published in 20 monthly installments and became a huge success, making Dickens an international celebrity. His writing was funny and satirical, but he also had a keen eye for observing people and society.

Charles Dickens had a remarkable literary career, with several successful works that captured the imaginations of readers. His novel, *Oliver Twist*, was published in serial form between 1837 and 1839 before being released in book form in 1838. The story follows the journey of a young orphan boy named Oliver Twist. Other notable works include *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838-39) and *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840-41), which further cemented his popularity as a writer. However, it was *Dombey and Son* (1846-48) that showcased a more cohesive plot and characters, marking Dickens's evolution as a more mature writer. With *David Copperfield*, written in first-person narrative, Dickens demonstrated his mastery over plot.

In his works, Dickens was unafraid to experiment and to explore different themes, ideas, and issues prevalent in Victorian society. *Bleak House* (1852-53) and *Hard Times* (1854) are examples of his critiques of corrupt Victorian society. Little Dorrit (1855-57), considered a challenging novel, presents an accurate picture of society and focuses on the oppressive nature of class privilege and religion. *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) and *Great Expectations* (1860-61) deal with the French Revolution and corruption.

Dickens’ last completed novel was *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-65), concluding a prolific career that included 15 novels, five novellas, and hundreds of short stories and non-fiction articles. He also edited a weekly journal for 20 years, lectured, performed readings, and was an active social reformer. His contribution to English literature is undoubtedly significant, and his novels continue to have an outstanding place in its histor

## 5.2.3 WORKS OF CHARLES DICKENS

***Pickwick Papers* (1836):** *The Pickwick Papers* initially appeared in a series format and were later compiled into a novel. Serialized from March 1836 to November 1837, this literary work is centered around the character of Samuel Pickwick, who is also the founder of the Pickwick Club. Despite its comedic tone, the novel addresses the serious issue of the unfairness present in the legal system. With its lighthearted anecdotes, the Pickwick Papers offer a delightful read.

***Oliver Twist* (1838):** *Oliver Twist* is a novel that was first published in serial parts from 1837-39 and then in novel form in 1838. The book’s subtitle is “The Parish Boys”. Through this novel, Charles Dickens displays his concern about the impact of poverty and the shortcomings of the workhouse system. Additionally, one can

observe how Dickens was troubled by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 which is emphasized in the story. Overall, *Oliver Twist* is a significant work of literature that sheds light on the social and economic conditions of the time.

***Nicholas Nickleby* (1838):** The full title of this novel is *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nichkleby*. Dickens has shown his outrage at cruelty and social injustice through this novel. His intention behind writing this novel seems to expose the abuses of for-profit boarding schools in England. It was first published in serial form between 1838 and 1839. It follows the journey of Nicholas Nickleby, a young man who faces numerous trials and tribulations after his father's death leaves his family destitute. Nicholas encounters both kindness and cruelty as he navigates the social and economic landscapes of 19th-century England. The novel is renowned for its vivid characters, social commentary, and Dickens' signature blend of humor and pathos.

***The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840):** This Novel was also published in series between 1840 and 1841 in Mastery Humphrey's Clock. It is historical fiction and belongs to sentimental literature- a genre of the Victorian era. The protagonist of the novel is Little Nell Trent, a young girl who lives with her grandfather in his shop filled with curiosities. When her grandfather loses everything in a gambling addiction, they embark on a journey to escape the clutches of the villainous Quilp. Along the way, they encounter various colorful characters and face numerous trials. The novel is noted for its sentimental portrayal of innocence, its exploration of poverty and social issues, and its blend of tragedy and comedy.

***Burnaby Rudge* (1841):** *Barnaby Rudge* is a historical novel by Charles Dickens, published serially in 1841. The novel's full title is *Burnaby Rudge: A Tale of the Riots of Eighty*. Here, the riots are referred to as the Gordon riots of 1780. This novel is based on this riot. It is not that popular, but Peter Ackroyd- British Historian and Dicken biographer- has said this novel is "one of Dicken's most neglected, but rewarding, novels." the story revolves around Barnaby Rudge, a simple-minded young man, and his involvement in the riots. The plot also follows the mysterious murder of Reuben Haredale and its aftermath, including the quest for justice and the revelation of secrets. The novel explores themes of mob violence, social unrest, love, loyalty, and betrayal.

***Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843):** *Martin Chuzzlewit*, first published serially between 1842 and 1844. This novel was picaresque and considered classic fiction. It is a comic satire that mocks the 19$^{th}$-century American culture. It was less popular than Dickens' other works. Still, Dickens considered it "immeasurably the best of my stories". The novel revolves around the Chuzzlewit family, which is greedy, and the family members pursue wealth and status. It follows the life and adventures of the young Martin Chuzzlewit as he embarks on a journey to seek his fortune in America, accompanied by his sycophantic relative, Pecksniff. The novel satirizes various aspects of society, including greed, selfishness, and hypocrisy. Through its colorful cast of characters and intricate plot, *Martin Chuzzlewit* explores themes of familial relationships, ambition, and the pursuit of wealth. Despite its initial mixed reception, the novel is now recognized as one of Dickens' major works, celebrated for its wit, humor, and social commentary.

***Dombey and Son* (1846):** This work was published in a serial novel that began publishing from October 1846 until April 1848. The novel deals with a tale of a dysfunctional family, whose head is Mr Dombey. He is the businessman who dreams of having a son to take over the family business one day. In this process, he neglects his first child, a girl, Florence. Later on, his only son dies at the age of six. The novel explores themes of family, ambition, pride, and the consequences of neglecting human relationships for material success. Through a cast of memorable characters, including the neglected son Paul, the defiant daughter Florence, and the scheming manager Mr. Carker, Dickens offers a nuanced portrayal of Victorian society. *Dombey and Son* is praised for its intricate plot, rich character development, and incisive social commentary.

***David Copperfield* (1849):** *David Copperfield* is a semi-autobiographical novel by Charles Dickens, first published serially between 1849 and 1850. It is the best novel among the later novels of Dickens. The novel is a severe criticism of the system of teaching run by masters like Creakle and his companions. Dickens suggests many reforms in children's education in this novel. The novel follows the life of its titular character, David Copperfield, from his troubled childhood to adulthood, encompassing his struggles, triumphs, and personal growth along the way. David navigates various hardships, including the death of his mother, the cruelty of his stepfather, and his own trials as a young man entering the workforce. Throughout the narrative, Dickens explores themes of identity, resilience, love, friendship, and the societal injustices of Victorian England. *David Copperfield* is celebrated for its vivid characters, compelling storytelling, and emotional depth, making it a timeless classic in English literature.

***Bleak House* (1852):** First published serially between 1852 and 1853. It is renowned for its intricate plot, richly drawn characters, and scathing social commentary. This novel is also a satire on the abuses of the old court of Chancery, the delays, and the high procedural intricacies which brought miser and ruin to its suitors. The story revolves around the couple Richard Carstone and his cousin Ada Claire. *Bleak House* is celebrated for its innovative narrative structure, which alternates between first-person and third-person perspectives, and for its powerful indictment of societal ills, making it one of Dickens' most enduring and influential works.

***Hard Times* (1854):** *Hard Times* is a novel by Charles Dickens, first published in 1854. Set in the fictional industrial town of Coketown, it explores the harsh realities of the Victorian era, particularly the effects of industrialization, utilitarianism, and social injustice. The novel highlights the evils of industrialisation. Dickens attacked the factory owners and their way of treatments to the workers. He has shown how industrialisation intimidates humans into machines by spoiling their growth and development and curbing their emotions and feelings. The main characters are Gradgrid and Bounderby. The novel juxtaposes the utilitarian philosophy of Mr. Gradgrind, who values facts and practicality above all else, with the emotional and imaginative world represented by characters like Sissy Jupe and Stephen Blackpool. Through its characters and plot, *Hard Times* critiques the dehumanizing effects of a society driven solely by economic interests and the importance of compassion, empathy, and imagination in human life. Though initially not as well-

received as some of Dickens' other works, *Hard Times* is now recognized for its incisive social commentary and enduring relevance.

***Little Dorrit* (1855):** *Little Dorrit* is a novel by Charles Dickens, first published serially between 1855 and 1857. The novel exposes the delay in Government institutions, especially he. Dickens has given reference, particularly to the Circumlocution office and Marshalsea Prison. The protagonist of the novel is William Dorrit. This novel tells the experience of Dickens' father, who had spent many years in Marshalsea Prison. The story revolves around the titular character, Amy Dorrit, known as Little Dorrit, who grows up in Marshalsea debtors' prison with her father, William Dorrit. As the plot unfolds, the Dorrits are eventually released from prison, and Little Dorrit enters society as a seamstress. The novel explores themes of imprisonment, both physical and psychological, as well as the impact of wealth and social status on individuals and families. Dickens also delves into bureaucracy, corruption, and the complexities of human relationships.

***A Tale of Two Cities* (1859):** *A Tale of Two Cities* is a historical novel by Charles Dickens, first published in 1859. The novel presents the trembling events of the French Revolution. The two cities are London and Paris. Dr Mannet, Sydney Carlton, and Charles Darnay are some of the notable characters in the novel. It is a powerful story that revolves around self-sacrifice, resurrection, hope and death. Through their intertwined fates and relationships with the virtuous Lucie Manette, daughter of a wrongfully imprisoned French doctor, the novel explores themes of sacrifice, resurrection, and the struggle for justice and redemption. *A Tale of Two Cities* is renowned for its dramatic plot, memorable characters, and powerful depiction of the violence and upheaval of the French Revolution.

***Great Expectations* (1860):** Originally published in *All the Year Round*, a periodical founded by Dickens, the novel ran in serialised pieces from December 1860 to August 1861. The novel is one of Dickens' most popular works and is considered a classic of English literature. It is the story of a young boy Pip and his adventures, his introduction with love and maturity. Pip is one of the finest characters of Charles Dickens. The narrative follows Pip's journey from childhood to adulthood as he encounters various characters, including the eccentric Miss Havisham and her beautiful but cold-hearted ward, Estella. The novel explores themes such as social class, ambition, guilt, and redemption, and is known for its richly drawn characters and vivid depiction of Victorian society. *Great Expectations* has been adapted into numerous stage, film, and television productions and continues to be studied and enjoyed by readers around the world.

***Our Mutual Friend* (1864):** This novel was the last completed novel of Dickens. It was also published in serial form between 1864 and 1865. The novel coincides with many incidents in Dicken's life. It is the last novel completed by Dickens before his death. The story revolves around various characters whose lives become intertwined due to inheritance, wealth, and social class. At the center of the plot is the mysterious death of John Harmon, a young man who was supposed to inherit a substantial fortune from his father. The novel explores themes such as greed, love, social injustice, and the impact of wealth on individuals and society.

***The Mystery of Edwin* Drood (1871):** *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*was an incomplete novel. Unfortunately, Dickens passed away before completing the

story, leaving the ending unresolved. The story revolves around John Jasper. However, the novel's title is on Edwin Drood, his nephew. Drood later disappears under mysterious circumstances. The novel is set in the fictional cathedral city of Cloisterham and revolves around the disappearance of Edwin Drood, a young man engaged to Rosa Bud, his uncle's ward. The narrative is filled with a diverse cast of characters, including the opium-addicted choirmaster John Jasper, Edwin's fiancée Rosa Bud, and various townspeople. Dickens introduced several potential suspects and plot twists, but the novel's abrupt ending has led to much speculation and debate among readers and scholars over the years.

## 5.3 CHARLES DICKENS: A REPRESENTATIVE NOVELIST OF THE VICTORIAN ERA

The Victorian era was an age of rapid unrest and mysterious complexity. During this period, the novel made a phenomenal process because it is considered the best medium to portray society accurately. The Victorian age has witnessed rapid and sweeping changes; therefore, the generation of this age has seen so many complexities. A. C. Ward says, "It was an age of Faith and an age of Doubt; an age of Morality, Materialism, of Progress and Decline, of Splendour and Squalor". The two most significant features of the Victorian Age were (i) the development of science and (ii) the progress of democracy. The Industrial Revolution was another major incident of this age. Although it emerged as a boon for emerging England, it also gave rise to several social problems, which are the inevitable bane of industrialisation. So, the literature of this era was highly influenced by all these elements. The major novelists of the Victorian age were- Disraeli, Trollope, Dickens, Thackeray, Kingslake, Mrs Gaskell and Charles Reade. Almost all the writers of this age show a keen awareness of society in their creativity. Writers like Carlyle, Ruskin, and Dickens have discussed social reforms in their work. Nevertheless, Charles Dickens attacked some legal or social evils in almost all his novels. According to David Cecil, "Dickens is the most representative of the Victorian novelists…". Although we have noted the drawbacks in his novels, "…yet he surpasses them all in his basic humanity, a childlike naiveté and an amazing fecund imagination."

C.E. Eckersley well remarks: "It is doubtful whether any English writer has ever been so popular as Dickens was in his lifetime, popular not only with one class or one generation, but with all classes, rich and poor, young and old alike". Dickens was not of his country alone but of the entire world. He was a favourite writer, and he never suffered from the decline of his popularity.

He was a novelist by profession and is regarded as the greatest novelist of the Victoria era. Many novels by Dickens have been built around a particular social theme. He has effectively criticised his era's social, moral and economic abuses. He was very much concerned for the sufferings and misfortunes of others. His deep awareness of social consciousness merged with the traumatic experiences of childhood. So, in this way, he generated a kind of empathy for the victims of social injustices.

Dickens art believes in art with a purpose. He believed that literature has the potential that can help in social reform. Therefore, Dickens made his novels a

medium to highlight such issues so that he could contribute to eradicating social evils. These social commentaries grabbed the attention of common people. Images of orphaned children and prisons would permeate his stories and books throughout his writing career. The other images that can be found in his novels are images of the prison image of a lost child who is somehow oppressed and bewildered. Many of the social evils have been highlighted by Dickens. He focused on the various evils of the Industrial Revolution, especially the employment of child labour, and these have been highlighted in his many novels.

*The Pickwick Papers*, Charles Dickens's first novel, shows England before industrialisation and urbanisation. He created a utopian vision of England in the Pre-Victorian period. However, the novel is full of humour, but it is full of social commentaries as well. In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens presents the protest against the abuses of power, especially on the part of government institutions. In this novel, Dickens depicts an orphan child's life. The character Oliver Twist was born in a workhouse and brought up under cruel conditions; later on, he ran away from that place to London. There, he fell into the hands of a gang of thieves, and again, he fell into the hands of old villains. However, he has been saved twice by Mr Brownlow and Mrs Sikes. In this novel, Dickens portrays the life of a child who has run away and how he gets involved in the wrong company but is somehow saved by good people. The novel highlights not only how cruel the world is for an orphan child but also there are good people and that morality is still present. Many social themes are present in this novel. However, the dominant ones are- the abuses of the new Poor Law system, the physical and mental harassment of children and the tribulations of the criminal world.

Dickens' other novel *Nicholas Nickleby,* exposes the weaknesses of Yorkshire Schools and the horrible teaching. This novel discusses many themes, such as suffering during childhood and oppressive institutions like schools and hostels. Dickens was very much critical of the education system in the Victorian Age. His novels like *Hard Times* and *Our Mutual Friend* also deal with this issue. In *Old Curiosity Shop,* there is a deep pathos in the death of Nell.

*David Copperfield* is the best novel among the later novels of Dickens. It is the veiled autobiography of Dickens. The novel criticises the teaching system in schools run by teachers like Creakle and his companions. The incident of Gordon's anti-property riots in 1788 can be seen in Barnaby Rudge. The novel gives a vivid description of the riot that terrorised London for several days. The next issue is the employment of child labour, which Dickens highlights in this novel. There were no factory laws or trade unions, so the factory owners brutally exploited children for their benefit. The character David is the perfect example of this exploitation. Due to this exploitation, the poor boy suffers a lot. With his sufferings, Dickens has shown the suffering of many a poor and helpless Victorian child. Appalling prison conditions is the next social issue in Dickens's novels. *David Copperfield* presents a realistic picture of prisoners. Prisons were treated like dumb, wild beasts. The aim was not to reform but to inflict social vengeance on them. They suffered highly in the pathetic conditions of the jail. *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations* also present the conditions of jail prisoners, legal system abuse, and justice system delays. Dickens succeeded in focusing attention on many social issues through his novels.

*Bleak House*, again Charles Dickens' one of finest novels, exposes the maltreatment of Chancery and administrative ineptitude. He has shown that Chancery became synonymous with the flawed law system, court fee expenses, delays in judgements, etc., apart from this, alum housing, overcrowded graveyards, negligence of contagious diseases, corruption during the election, discrimination in education, class divisions, etc., in the novel. This novel portrays an accurate picture of Victorian England. Another novel *Hard Times* (1845), also focuses on social issues, like class division, education of people experiencing poverty, rights of common people, industrial relations, etc. The novel also deals with contemporary issues like reforming divorce laws. *Hard Times* is a polemical work dealing with controversial social issues. It focuses on the mid-Victorian society, which was influenced by industrialisation and dominated by the material outlook, ruthlessly hoarding the prevailing capitalists' economic tradition. However, the novel has been highly criticised as Dickens does not provide any remedy for the prevalent issues in England. F.R. Leavis has said, "possessed by a comprehensive vision, one in which the inhumanities of Victorian civilisation are seen as fostered and sanctioned by a hard philosophy, the aggressive formulation of an inhuman spirit."

In short, in his novels, Dickens involves social issues related to child development, his exploitation growth and the role of society in it. Apart from this, Charles Dickens' novels are a great social commentary and played an astonishing role in implementing social policies related to education, children, and poor people. He has not only highlighted most of the issues in his novels but also played the role of great social reformist and critic of the Victorian Period. Dickens aimed to awaken the conscience of his age.

## 5.4 CHARLES DICKENS AS A BILDUNGSROMAN NOVELIST

Charles Dickens is considered a Bildungsroman novelist. Bildungsroman is a specific form of the novel in which 'bildung' means education and 'roman' means novel in German. It was a popular form of the Nineteenth century and was widely used by writers to explore the journey of a man from childhood to maturity. The theme of childhood is central in Dickens' novels. He is also famous for the use of biographical elements in his novels.

After reading his novels, it can be seen how largely he drew on his own experiences of life. His child characters were highly influenced by his childhood. In the beginning, the main character experiences many difficulties and troubles, but in the end, he emerges as an older and wiser person. This can be seen in *Great Expectations*. The story starts with a boy named Phillip Pirrip for himself and society as Pip. He is the novel's protagonist and narrator, and the story revolves around his actions. In the beginning, he was a young boy with many expectations. By the novel's end, Pip becomes more mature and wiser and realises that there were several moments when he was mistaken in the past. He concludes that he was wrong in considering others as inferior to him. According to Prof. Baker, "Pip's character is Dicken's one serious study of the growth of personality, and, though he lets Pip tell the story, he manages with great skill to bring out the true significance and the humour of the strange situations, without showing his own hand…". So, the

character develops throughout the novel, which is a crucial step in understanding the novel.

*Like Great Expectations,* David Copperfield is another novel that focuses on the life of a young boy, David. Hugh Walker has said about this novel, "The pen which wrote *David Copperfield* was often dipped in his own blood." This novel contains a large amount of Dickens' autobiography. In this way, other novels of Dickens also present the bildungsroman effect. His early life can be seen in *Oliver Twist*. School life, his school days and his visit to Marshalsea, where his father was imprisoned, are presented in *Nicolas Nickleby*. Apart from *Bleak House*, *Little Dorrit* presents his life in a law office to treat illegal matters. Hence, these are only some instances, but many more examples could be given. These instances also present his view of looking society from his perspective. He was sympathetic towards poverty, which is why his characters are innocent sufferers of the crime of circumstances and social conditions. In short, his characters are the heart of English society, and somewhere, they somewhat represent his own life experiences.

## 5.5 HUMOUR AND PATHOS IN DICKENS NOVELS

Charles Dickens is one of the greatest humourists in English Literature after Shakespeare. It is the soul of Dickens' novels. Dickens' characters are inspired by actual human beings. That is why his characters do not remain untouched by human feelings like humour and pathos. Dickens's humour is illuminating and varied in nature. It is widely spread in many of his works. The kind of humour present in his novels develops with the development of the story. It arouses feelings and thoughts and is full of wisdom. Dickens created numerous characters and comic figures in his novels.

The source of Dickens' humour is social manner. However, he is considered a social reformer who advocates the reformation of poor people through his novels with the help of his. His characters show inexhaustible comic spirit, the author's unique talent.

*Oliver Twist* presents a variety of humour which is satirical, farcical and pleasant simultaneously. The workhouse officials exhibit satirical humour, whereas the farcical humour of Dickens shows his liveliness. Dickens is known for his warm humour. There is a perfect example of farcical humour in *Oliver Twist*. "Twenty and thirty other juvenile offenders against the poor laws rolled about the floor all day, without the inconvenience of too much food or too much clothing, under the parental superintendence of an elderly female." Many characters are humoristic, such as the character of Bumble, Fagin, and Artful Dodger. Among these, Bumble is the most humorous one. The best farcical scene is the trial of the Artful. Dickens is the maker of numerous humorous characters and comic figures.

The novel presents various types of humour and is rich in pathos. *Martin Chuzzlewit* is considered the most remarkable novel in English Literature in terms of humour. R.C. Churchill has said about Dickens' humour, "In the field of comedy I put Dickens above Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Fielding, and Smollet, though recognising, as he did himself, that he owed much to them." His comic spirit is inexhaustible and varied. It can be seen in the various characters like Mr Puppy, Mr

Pumblechook, Mr Sapses, Mr Gamps, Miss Nipper, etc. These characters are so astonishing and delightful that they hold readers tightly. The absurdity also creates humour. Dickens's humour can be categorised into parts- satirical and sympathetic. First, he satirises those characters that do unfair deeds. Characters like Mr Bumble and Mr Pecksniff are the symbolises hypocrites, which is why they have been satirised. He puts his language and ridicules his way through the mouth of characters. He has shown his mastery over it. His novels like *Oliver Twist*, *Pickwick Papers*, *Great Expectations*, *and David Copperfield* are not only full of humour but also have elements of pathos.

Pathos is the following characteristic of Dickens' novels. The word pathos means suffering in Greek, and humour means the comical side of everything. His humour is inseparable from pathos. His childhood experiences inspired him to give such instances of humour and pathos. Dickens's stories have such power that readers connect themselves with the characters as he brilliantly expresses the occurrences that affected the life of characters. His novels, like *Oliver Twist*, present many instances that show the pathetic life of the central character. The story is full of pathos and makes the reader empathise with the characters. He tries to enhance the pathos by adding external elements. However, it can be said that his pathos is not a tragedy. His stories perfectly blend humour and pathos, so they are very close to real life. Since life is neither tragedy nor full of happiness, it is a mixture of these feelings. The death of Paul, the heart-stirring death scene in *Dombay & Sons*, and the death of Nell in *Old Curiosity Shop* are some pathetic scenes. The pathos was highly admired by the contemporary writers of the Dickens age, but modern-age critics have criticised it by calling it overdone, cheap, sentimental, melodramatic and maudlin. Albert said, "His devices are often third rate, as when they depend upon such themes as the deaths of the little children, which he describes in detail. His genius has little tragic force. He could describe the horrible, as in the death of Bill Sykes…". So, this is a solemn obligation on Dickens.

Thus it can be seen that pathos and humour are the dominant part of Dickens' novels.

## 5.6 LET US SUM UP

So, learners! In this unit, we have explored the fascinating world of Charles Dickens, the famous English novelist who is known for his timeless works. We learned how Dickens' childhood experiences shaped his writing and made him a social critic of his time. His novels are a window into the social and economic issues of the Victorian era, and they provide a unique perspective on life in England during that time. Moreover, we discovered how Dickens' novels are full of humor and sentimentality, which make them a joy to read. His works are a perfect blend of comedy and tragedy, where he portrays the struggles of the working class in a witty and humorous manner and the emotional pain of his characters in a deeply moving and poignant way. Overall, Dickens' novels are a true testament to his genius and his contribution to English literature is immeasurable. I hope you enjoyed learning about Dickens and his works.

## 5.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

**1.** Discuss in brief about Charles Dickens life.

**2.** Write a short note on Charles Dickens works.

**3.** Charles Dickens is the representative novelist of Victorian era. Comment.

**4.** Write a short note on Charles Dickens as a Bildungsroman novelist with special reference to *Great Expectations*.

**5.** Charles Dickens novels are full of humour and pathos. Discuss with examples.

## 5.8 FURTHER READING


- Collins, Philip. "Charles Dickens". Encyclopaedia Britannica, 8 May. 2023, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Dickens-British-novelist. Accessed 16 May 2023.
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# UNIT-6 CHARLES DICKENS: GREAEXPECTATIONS

## Structure


6.0 Objectives

6.1 Introduction

6.2 ***Great Expectations*:** Introduction

6.2.1 Title of ***Great Expectations***

6.2.2 Structure of the novel

6.2.3 Theme

6.2.4 Setting of the Novel

6.3 Characters of the Nove

6.4 Summary

6.5 Let us sum up

6.6 Questions

6.7 Further Reading


## 6.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to know the:

- significance of the title and structure of the novel
- the theme of the novel
- characterisation
- summary of *Great Expectations*

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Hey there! In this unit, we are going to take a deep dive into the classic novel Great Expectations by Charles Dickens. We will explore themes, like class consciousness, childhood experience, crime, and suspense. Plus, wewill get to learn more about the author himself and his commentary on social and economic conditions in England during his time.

One of the most remarkable things about *Great Expectations* is how vividly and realistically Dickens portrays the different classes of people in the Victorian era. It is almost like we are transported back in time and able to experience it for ourselves! We will get to learn more about the complex social hierarchies and economic conditions of the time period, which will help us gain a deeper understanding of the era. Overall, *Great Expectations* is a timeless masterpiece that showcases the incredible imagination of Charles Dickens. It is the perfect read for anyone who loves a good story and wants to learn more about the fascinating society of the Victorian age. So, get ready to be transported back in time and experience this incredible novel for yourself!

## 6.2 GREAT EXPECTATIONS : INTRODUCTION

Great Expectations, Charles Dickens thirteenth novel, is a bildungsroman depicting the story of an orphan Pip. It is Dickens's second novel to be fully narrated in the first person. The novel was first published as a serial in Dickens's weekly periodical All the Year Round, from 1 December 1860 to August 1861followed by its publication in Chapman and Hall (October 1861) in three volumes.

Great Expectations is regarded as Dickens "grotesque tragicomic" conception. There are moments of touching tragedy and sadness, such as young Pip in a cemetery surrounded by his dead family, and Pip being mistreated by his only surviving relative, Mrs. Joe. At the same time, there is relaxed comedy, such as when Mr. Pumblechook and Mr. Wopsle reconstruct their tales of how the thief must have stolen the pork pie, when all the time, it was no thief but Pip. In spite of some light mood, the darker moods dominate the text, with mystery and danger always skulking. Miss Havisham presents a grotesque mystery, as does Jaggers‟ housekeeper Molly. Towards the end of the novel, grave events and serious complications completely surround the plot.

### 6.2.1 TITLE OF *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

The title of the novel *Great Expectations* dominantly refers to the expectations of its protagonist Pip. The expectations of Pip have many dimensions and are ever-evolving. At first, he wanted to become a gentleman and gain a good education and lifestyle. Further, he also expected to get the love of Estella. The Expectations of Pip can be divided into three stages. In the first stage, Pip wants to become a gentleman, but he has no money; in the second stage, when he has lots of money to fulfil his desire to become an educated gentleman and lastly, in the third stage, he wants to get Estella's love.

Miss Havisham expects to take revenge on the male sex, so she trains Estella and makes the tool for her revenge. Then comes Magwitch's expectation. Magwitch was an escaped prisoner, and Pip helped him. Magwitch does not disregard his kindness, and later he helps him to fulfil Pip's expectations. Magwitch donates his money to Pip to make him a gentleman in a complete sense. Hence, his expectation was great.

The title is also ironic. It is because Pip's great expectations, which were almost fulfilled, turn out to be the least important things. The expectations of wealth become why he loses his friend Joe, his true well-wisher, and Estella to Drummle. He also loses Magwitch and is unable to rescue Miss Havisham. So, Pip realises in the end that he has only one expectation: Magwitch's expectation that he has to live up to the convict's expectations of him as the true gentleman he might become given the necessary wealth and leisure. Pip must live the life that Magwitch could never attain for himself.

## 6.2.2 STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL

The novel is divided into 59 Chapters. The story revolves around Pip. Readers can find the three different stages of Pip's life in this novel. These might be called: Childhood, Youth and Maturity. The novel begins with the childhood of Pip; the story develops in his Youth and ends in his maturity. As Pip goes through these three stages, his character develops and changes. Every stage represents various aspects of the character and his life in general. Childhood of Pip symbolises innocence, people experiencing poverty, the working class and country life. Youth represents snobbery, upper-class London, whereas the third stage, maturity, represents self-realisation, comfort, and middle class. The structure of *Great Expectations* follows a traditional linear narrative arc, with several key structural elements:

Exposition: The novel begins with the introduction of the protagonist, Pip, and his background as an orphan living with his sister and her husband in rural Kent. This section establishes the setting, characters, and initial conflicts that will drive the plot forward.

Rising Action: As the story progresses, Pip encounters a series of significant events and characters that propel him towards his "great expectations." These include his encounters with the convict Magwitch in the marshes, his visits to the eccentric Miss Havisham and her ward Estella, and his departure for London to become a gentleman.

Conflict Development: The central conflict of the novel revolves around Pip's aspirations for social advancement and his moral development. As he rises in society, Pip becomes increasingly ashamed of his humble origins and alienates himself from his loved ones. He also grapples with his unrequited love for Estella and his conflicted feelings towards Miss Havisham.

Climax: The climax of the novel occurs when Pip discovers the true identity of his benefactor and realizes the consequences of his actions. This revelation forces Pip

to confront the moral implications of his pursuit of wealth and status, leading to a moment of reckoning and self-reflection.

Falling Action: Following the climax, the novel enters a phase of resolution where Pip begins to reconcile with his past and seek redemption for his mistakes. This section also sees the resolution of various subplots, including the fates of characters like Magwitch, Miss Havisham, and Estella.

Resolution: The novel concludes with Pip's return to his roots in Kent and his reunion with Joe and Biddy, symbolizing his acceptance of his true identity and the importance of love and friendship over

## 6.2.3 THEME

Charles Dickens discussed multiple themes in *Great Expectations*, and every theme is important in the context of Victorian society. Themes like class consciousness, ambition and self-improvement, loyalty, true fatherhood, guilt and crime, love, etc., have been discussed in this novel. Class **c**onsciousness is the dominant theme that has been dealt with. The characters of *Great Expectation*s are divided into upper class, middle class and lower class. The nineteenth century was when the industrial and agricultural revolutions took place, which became the reason for the emergence of various classes in society. Characters like Miss Havisham, Estella, and Drummle are the characters that represent upper-class society. All these characters are unhappy and unkind, showing Victorian society's upper-class people. In the middle class, Mr Wemmick, Mr Jaggers, and Mr Pump(b)lechook come. In the lower class, characters like Joe, Biddy, Magwitch, Herbert, and Orlick come. The novel's protagonist, Pip, has many ambitions, and he wants to get rid of poverty to become a gentleman. The story revolves around this theme. Apart from this, there are other themes which are also important.

## 6.2.4 SETTING OF THE NOVEL

Great Expectations can be divided into three stages in the life of Pip. The first stage presents Pip as an orphan being raised by an unkind sister who resents him, and her husband, who offers him kindness and love. Pip encounters a convict and helps him. His meeting with Estella and Miss Havisham gives a new direction to his life. He receives a fortune and moves to London.

The second stage of Pip‟s life takes place in London where he becomes friends with Herbert Pocket and Mr. Jaggers‟ clerk, Mr. Wemmick. He again meets Magwitch, his real benefactor. This knowledge begins the change in Pip from ungrateful snobbery to the humility associated with Joe and home.

The third stage in Pip‟s life solves all the remaining mysteries of the novel. Pip finds out that Magwitch is the biological father of Estella. Magwitch dies in prison, and Pip becomes a clerk in Cairo with Herbert. He returns 11 years later and finds Estella at the site of Satis House. The more popular ending indicated that they stayed together.

## 6.3 CHARACTERS OF THE NOVEL

Dickens selected the names of all the characters with extreme care as he wanted that the sound of the name of the characters should reflect their personality and that gives an immediate idea of what they are like. Some major characters are:

- **Pip:** His real name is Philip Pirrip. Pip is his short name. The meaning of the word Pip is a tiny seed that grows into something more substantial. He is the protagonist of the novel and also the narrator. He is a lonely, imaginative orphan boy living with his sister, Mrs Joe Gregory and brother-in-law. She treats him poorly because he is an orphan. She calls him "small and flabby and mean". Nevertheless, he was a poor boy but he possesses a noble heart. Miss Havisham's interaction in Pip's life changed him a lot. After visiting her house Satis House, Pip understood his aim, what are his expectations from life. He says, "That was a memorable day to me, for it made great changes in me. But it is the same with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it and think how different its course would have been."

  With the passage of time the young common labouring boy turns into a young man with many great expectations and starts behaving like a gentleman. Later on, he receives an unexpected education and wealth. He believed that it is Miss Havisham who is bringing him up as a gentleman and that is why he considered her as an angel. Later on, in the novel his belief gets shattered when he discovered that his benefactor is not Miss Havisham but Magwitch is a kind of self-deception for Pip.

  He is passionate, romantic and has many expectations for himself. After getting the wealth he wants to improve himself socially and morally. He has been portrayed in the novel as a true lover who loves Estella since childhood. His love for her beyond materialistic pleasure. He says, he loves her against reason, against promise, against peace, against hope, against happiness. He had firm belief in his love and he believed that his real love will change artificial Estella and a new Estella will come out of it. He was so much in love with her that even at the time of death he wants to remain with her. Hence, the story of Great Expectations is not only the story of Pip's expectations but also it is a love story of Pip which runs parallel.

  Pip has been sincere and honest in his whole life. He was gentle with everyone- his sister, Joe, Estella, Miss Havisham and Magwitch.

- **Joe Gargery:** Pip's brother-in-law. He is described as "mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going". He is one of the most representative characters of Dickens's novels. Joe is the symbol of common poor and honest people. Joe reminds us of the father figure Joseph in *the Bible. He is one of the pour soul of all the characters. He is very gentle and far away from selfishness and greed. He always performs his duty honestly and sweet tempered.* He loves and cares for Pip a lot, but later on, Pip gets embarrassed by Joe's standards and behaviour when he accompanies him in London. *Joe loves Pip and also takes delight in his childish pranks. He always inspires him to read. His behaviour towards him like a mother. Joe also is a good*

*husband who always appreciates his first wife by saying to Pip that "Your sister is a fine figure of a woman". In spite of her rude behaviour. But after her death he became more serious and calm. Later on, he marries to Biddy and Pip admires him by saying to Biddy that "Dear Biddy, you have the best husband in the world". Biddy, Joe's second wife calls "worthy, worthy man." He has been called a "Nature's gentleman"*

- **Miss Havisham:** The manic, wealthy mistress of Satis House, who was deserted years ago on her wedding day, and now she wants to take vengeance against all men. Therefore, in shock, she still wears that wedding gown and keeps a decaying feast on her table. She lives near Pip's House. She surrounds herself with clocks stopped at twenty minutes to nine and keeps a decaying feast on her table.

- **Estella:** The meaning of Estella is a star which glitters and attracts attention but is simultaneously cold and remote. She is Miss Havisham's adopted ward, beautiful but cold-hearted. Miss Havisham has raised Estella as a tool for her revenge. She trained her how to break men's hearts. She is the heroine of the novel and also the heroine of Pip's heart. When Pip first met Estella, he gives his observation on the question of Miss Havisham that "I think she is very proud…I think she is very pretty…I think she is very insulting." The line shows the true character sketch of Estella.

**Minor characters of *Great Expectations***

- **Mr Jaggers: The name sounds harsh and biting. He is a** lawyer and guardian of Pip. He is a successful lawyer of London. Miss Havisham and Magwitch, both use his service. He is a mysterious character; however, he was loyal to the duty that has been assigned to him from his client Magwitch. In the beginning when he brings letter to young Pip, it was like a fairy tale. It is not sure whether Pip likes him or not. In the whole novel, it can be observed that he has some strange habits which are repeated so often and it suggests that he is uneasy about the work he does.

- **Herbert Pocket:** A young man of Pip's age. He was a loyal friend of Pip in London. He helped Pip in all his difficulties; even he helped Pip to save his benefactor Magwitch. Although he and Pip shared approximately same age but Herbert is more experienced and mature than Pip.

- **Abel Magwitch: The name is made from the combination of 'magic' and 'witch'** he is the convict who ran away from prison. He met Pip in the graveyard. He terrorises Pip, but Pip's kindness significantly affects him, and later in the novel, we find that he devotes himself as a benefactor to Pip. He is very grateful to Pip. He wanted to return Pip's charity and compensation and that is why he wanted to make him a gentleman of London. He went to South Wales and changed his name from Magwitch to Provice. There he earned a lot of wealth. Whatever he earns, he transfers his fortune to Pip to improve his social class, and also, he funded for Pip's education through the lawyer Jaggers.

**Arthur Compeyson:** The lover of Miss Havisham who left her and never reached the wedding venue. He represents evil character. In the novel, he

commits all sorts of crime. Although he was very handsome in appearance but he is ill tempered character. He traps other people for the sake of his profit. His only intention is to earn money through illicit way.

- **Mrs. Joe:** Mrs Joe is Pip's sister and Joe Gargery's first wife. Her behaviour is not appropriate. She is rude and cruel. She beats her brother Pip. Pip serves her as a 'Connubial missile". For Pip, she is a common lady and not lovable as a sister should be. He says, "My sister had a trenchant way of cutting our bread-and – butter, "and that, "I knew Mrs. Joe's house-keeping to be of the strictest kind." She is a dictator in her home. She has a snappish way of talking. Even she is not humble and kind to her husband.
- **Biddy:** The second wife of Joe. She is very sincere in every walk of life. She is pure domestic girl. She is the portrayal of true Victorian womanhood. Pip is very close to her and confesses to her every secret of his life. She is wise and intelligent. Pip praises her by saying that "Dear Joe, you have the best wife in the world, and she will make you as happy as even you deserve to be, you dear, good, noble Joe!" Biddy's intelligence can be seen in this that she advises Pip to stay away from Estella because she is not worth gaining over her. she also taught Pip and Joe how to read and write.
- **Bentley Drummle**- A clumsy, ill-tempered snob. He dies in an accident with his horse. Estella married to Drummle because their match was made by her guardian, Miss Havisham. He represents the dreadful and exploitative nature of aristocracy. Although he had a small role in the novel but he has a great impact. Pip describes him "stupid brute" and "mean".

There are other minor characters whose name gives the idea about their personality and appearance. Characters like Pumblechook sound silly and ridiculous. The Pocket family resembles wealth, one of the themes throughout the novel. Dickens was famous for his characterisation that reflected the characters' personalities and was often termed a 'Dickensian' character.

## 6.4 SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

The story of the novel revolves around a boy whose name is Pip. He is a young orphan young boy. Pip is the narrator of the story. The time is an unspecified future. Pip grows up and lives with his sister, Mrs Joe, and her husband, Joe Gargery, the gentle and kind blacksmith of the village. One day Pip goes to visit the graves of his parents. There he meets an escaped prisoner, Magwitch. The next night Pip helps the prisoner by giving him food and wine. Here he sees another stranger engaged in a fierce fight with the first man. The second man eventually disappears into the fog. However, the convicted prisoner was recaptured and taken back to prison. He promises to reward Pip for helping him before going to jail. After this incident, Pip continues his life as a poor but honest boy.

One day a messenger comes with the message of a wealthy lady Miss Havisham that she wants to meet Pip. So, Pip is taken to meet Miss Havisham. She insists that Pip often come to play with her ward. She lives in a big mansion called Satis House. She is a maniac who has never left her home.

Moreover, she still wears her wedding gown and hates men because her fiancée never reached the venue. In Satis House, Pip meets Estella, the adopted daughter of Miss Havisham. Miss Havisham has raised her to break the hearts of men. She is the tool of revenge for Miss Havisham. When Pip meets her, she oppresses and mocks him for his poor background. Despite this, Pip's regular visits to Satis House make him fall in love with her. Now he wants to become a gentleman to become a good match for her. Pip starts working in the forge as Joe's apprentice with the money he receives from Miss Havisham, although Pip does not see himself as a blacksmith to educate and improve himself. Later Mrs Joe got severely attacked and became incapable of caring for her family anymore. A new girl moves into the family of Pip.

Several years later, one day, a lawyer named Mr Jaggers, a pompous London lawyer, visits Pip, who is now a young man. Jaggers informs Pip that he has come into a fortune; an anonymous benefactor has arranged for his education. Therefore, he must move to London to improve his living standards to the higher class and improve his education. Pip thinks that Miss Havisham has arranged all this for him and also makes an interpretation that Miss Havisham wants to marry Estella with him. So, Pip travels to London. Mr Jaggers is now his guardian. When he reached his room in London, he met with Herbert Pocket, who also came to live in the same room. He is a relative of Miss Havisham, and she has arranged for his education to make him a gentleman. He is the same boy who met with him in Miss Havisham's home courtyard. Now they are sharing their lodgings. Herbert teaches Pip to act like a gentleman, wearing nice clothes, having good manners and speaking more formally. Pip and Herbert become best friends, and later Pip shares his intense love for Estella with him. Pip also helps him with business by providing him with money. Pip is a quick learner and can now mix with the people of other upper-class societies like Bentley Drummle.

Estella visits London, and because of her beauty and aristocratic manner, a circle of suitors is ready to marry her, including Bentley Drummle. Pip continuously meets Estella and falls in love with her more deeply. Meanwhile, Pip starts feeling that he is being followed. On Pip’s twenty-first birthday, it was a dark stormy night when someone knocked on his door. He answers his door and finds a somewhat known face. He was Magwitch. Pip learns about the mysterious benefactor, not Miss Havisham but Magwitch. Magwitch tells him that he has spent many years in Australia. He was transported from England on pain of death should he return. Pip is horrified after knowing the truth because he feels that the money he is using is not good. After this revelation, Pip is horrified. However, Magwitch has made a great sum of money and has risked everything to come back to meet Pip, as he considers him his son. All he wants is for Pip to become a gentleman, something circumstances never allowed Magwitch to do. He is in England under the false name Provice. If the police ever find out, Magwitch’s life will get in

danger, and Pip's social standing will be threatened. Pip is in a dilemma, and at the same time, he is bitterly disillusioned that his benefactor is not Miss Havisham but Magwitch. Herbert Suggests Pip should leave England.

Before departing, Pip visits Satis house to make it confirm with Miss Havisham if she is his benefactor or not. There he professes his love for Estella, but she rejects him. He says-

"I loved her against reason, against promise, against peace, against hope, against happiness, against all discouragement that could be." Pip, Chapter 29, *Great Expectations.*

Pip warns her about Drummle as he pursues her, but she tells him that she has planned to marry Drummle. Miss Havisham also accepts that she raised Estella to be cold and heartless. After Estella's marriage, Pip again visits Satis House. Miss Havisham apologises for her faults, and unfortunately, somehow, Miss Havisham gets injured in the fire. Pip tries to rescue her, but he is too late, and in this process, he burns his hands, and Miss Havisham dies.

Many things are revealed later in the novel; one is that Magwitch is Estella's father, and her mother is Jagger's strange housekeeper. Compeyson was Miss Havisham's lover. Pip vows to help Magwitch and tries to get Magwitch out of the country with the help of Herbert Pocket, but he fails. In their journey, Compeyson catches up with them in the boat. Compeyson attacks Magwitch, and in this fight, Magwitch kills Compeyson, and he gets severely injured. Police arrested injured Magwitch for this offence again. Pip visits him, who is on his deathbed, and Pip reveals that Estella is his daughter and still alive. Eventually, Pip leaves England for Cairo and becomes a wealthy man.

What happens to Pip and Estella is given in the two different endings of the novel. The original ending and the second ending are quite different. Readers were not aware of the alternate ending till 1874. However, many critics and readers prefer the original ending of the novel as it suits the tone of the rest of the novel. The changes can be seen when Pip returns from England. George Bernard Shaw opposed the revised version of the novel *Great Expectations* in his revised version published in 1937, and stated that its ending would be enjoyed by only "sentimental readers". In the novel's original ending, when Pip returns to England from Cairo, he finds that Estella has remarried after the death of her first husband. She is a compassionate lady, but her relationship with Pip never grows, and Pip remains single.

Wilkie Collins advised Dickens to give a more conventional ending. So, in the revised ending of the novel, when after 11 years, Pip returns to England, he meets his friends and visits Satis House, finding Estella, now a widow. Her abusive husband is dead, and now she has learned compassion and become a soft-hearted

lady. Pip and Estella meet, and Estella asks for forgiveness, and Pip convinces her to leave the ruined Satis House. The couple leaves the ruins together, and in this way, the novel ends.

## 6.5 LET US SUM UP

Throughout this unit, we have delved into the intricacies of the novel, examining its themes, title, and characterisation. As we have explored the plot, we have discovered that although it is well-crafted, the title is ironically misleading. Pip's inheritance from Magwitch initially appears to be a great boon, but ultimately proves to be nothing more than ashes. Through its story, the novel offers a powerful commentary on the ways in which the past can be a deadening influence on the present. Within the novel, there are many symbols at play, such as Miss Havisham's mansion which represents the dead past, a concept that is purified by the flames of fire. Furthermore, the characters themselves serve as symbols of upper, middle, and lower-class society. In comparison to other novels by Dickens, the plot is more sombre and serious in tone.

## 6.6 QUESTIONS

1. Comment on the title of the novel *Great Expectations*.
2. Discuss the theme of *Great Expectations*.
3. What are the expectations present in *Great Expectations*? Explain.
4. Discuss the complex relationship between Pip and Estella.
5. Comment on the character development of Pip throughout the course of the narrative.

## 6.7 FURTHER READING


1. Chesterton, G.K. Appreciation & Criticism of the Works of Charles Dickens. Cornwall: Stratus, 2011.
2. Cotsell, Michael. Critical Essays on Charles Dickens's Great Expectations. Boston: Hall, 1990.
3. Course Hero. "Great Expectations infographic." <https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Great-Expectations/infographic/>.

# UNIT-7 THOMAS HARDY: AN INTRODUCTION

## Structure


7.0 Objectives

7.1 Introduction

7.2 About the author

7.2.1 Life

7.2.2 Works

7.3 Victorian Compromise

7.4 Thomas Hardy: Regional novelist

7.5 Thomas Hardy's Pessimism

7.6 Hardy's Fate and Chance

7.7 Let Us Sum Up

7.8 Glossary

7.9 Questions

7.10 Further Reading


## 7.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this unit is to make learners familiar with the life and works of Thomas Hardy and to comprehend the significant ideas underlying his novels. He is one of the greatest and universally acknowledged novelists of the Victorian era; therefore, learners will also be provided with a detailed background about Hardy and his way of writing so brilliantly. Thomas Hardy's fiction has had a remarkably strong appeal for general readers for decades. His works help to understand the complex texture of this world.

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit learners will be dealt with life and works of Thomas Hardy, one of the greatest and most controversial novelists of the Victorian era. Some critics have

even called him the Shakespeare of the English novels. This unit will explain the concept of Victorian compromise, Hardy as a regional novelist, his pessimism and role of fate and chance. After going through this unit carefully learners will also be able to feel the impressions on Hardy's life that he got in his early and later years. Hardy is the master of two genres whose career spanned major parts of two literary eras – one genre per era. He published nearly all of his fiction during the reign of Victoria, nearly all of his poetry during the twentieth century. His revolt against Victorian compromise, double standard of the society towards women and role of women in the Victorian society will also be the centre of interest. This unit will also describe how the master of the democratic and philosophical novels write so fascinatingly and in an extremely interesting way that makes his writings relevant still today.

## 7.2 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### 7.2.1 LIFE

Thomas Hardy is one of the major literary figures of the Victorian era. He has tried his hands at novels, poetry, short stories and drama. But he is primarily remembered for his highly pessimistic and soul stirring tragic novels. He was mourned as "the last of the great Victorian." The Victorian age, was the age of- "sick hurry and divided aims." This was the age when Arnold thought that he was born between – "two worlds – one dead and other powerless to be borne." It was the age "where ignorant armies clash by night." It was this time of great upheaval, disruption, when, illuminating star like Thomas Hardy was born to brighten the horizons of British/world literature.

Hardy was born on June 2, 1840, at "Higher Bock-Hampton, Dorset, a small hamlet in Dorsetshire near Dorchester. This was a small town largely inhabited by working men and agricultural people. His father was also named as Thomas Hardy, who was a master-mason and also a gifted violinist and musician. His mother, Jemima Hardy was a cook for local clergyman before marriage. She was also an accomplished musician. She was the main reason behind Hardy's early education. She made him to read Dryden's Virgil, Johnson's Ressalas, and a popular illustrated history of the Napoleonic wars. He had three younger siblings: Mary, Henry and Katherine. Hardy was a fragile child by birth. He was so puny at the time of birth that he was declared dead by the attending doctor. He survived only by the common sense of the family nurse, who slapped the child till he cried and was restored to life. If the nurse had not done so he might never have come to life to create immortal works. It is, therefore, metaphorically said that Hardy was born with a slap on his face, and he depicts this slap of destiny on the face of humanity in all his major novels.

His mother, Jemima, was well-read and she educated him until he went to his first school at Brockhampton at the age of eight. Later he was sent to an advance school, where he studied Arithmetic and Geography. At the age of twelve he read Shakespeare, Scott and Bunyan, which made the background for many of his later works. He studied for several years at Mr. Last's Academy for Young Gentlemen in Dorchester, where he learned Latin and demonstrated academic potential. Hardy's family was not able to pay for university education, so his formal education

ended at the age of sixteen. His father placed him under John Hicks, an architect, for training and experience to be a builder. Next sixteen years of Hardy's life was spent as an architect. However, during all these years he was reading literature and classics continuously. He also gained a little knowledge of French, German and Greek. He also studied the New Testament. Architectural training went a long way in shaping his literary skill and balancing the plots of his novels. He moved to London in 1862, and was enrolled as a student at King's College. In 1863, he was awarded prize for architecture, but denied a cash prize. Millgate believes that Hardy became engaged to Eliza Bright Nicholls, a lady's maid in London. He never felt at home in London, because he was acutely conscious of class divisions and his social inferiority. In 1867, he returned to Brockhampton because of his ill health and broke his engagement with Eliza Nicholls. In 1870, during a mission to restore the Parish Church of St. Juliot in Cornwall, Hardy met and fell in love with Emma Lavinia Gifford. He married her in 1874. Emma died on November 27, 1912. In 1914, he married Florence Emily Dugdale, who was 39 years his junior. He remained preoccupied with his first wife's death and tried to overcome his remorse by writing poetry. Hardy became ill with Pleurisy in December 1927, and died at Max Gate (former home of Thomas Hardy) on 11 Jan. 1928. His body was cremated and buried in Westminster Abbey( The Poet's Corner), but as he wished, his heart was removed and buried in his Parish Churchyard at Stinsford in the grave of his true love and wife Emma.

Hardy always recognized, and cherished, the profound importance of his having grown up within a rural community, participated in its seasonal occupations and festivals, and listened to the tale telling and music-making of parents, relatives and friends. With these memories lying buried deep in his soul this magnificent architect and rebellious writer crept silently towards his Paradise Lost.

## 7.2.2 WORKS OF THOMAS HARDY

Hardy was a prolific writer. He wrote a large number of Novels, Short stories, Poems and two volumes of drama. We can divide his works under following categories:

**NOVELS:**

- Desperate Remedies, 1871.
- Under the Green Wood Tree, or The Mell stock Quire, 1872.
- A Pair of Blue Eyes, 1873. Hardy's first novel published under his name.
- Far from the Madding Crowd, 1874.
- The Hand of Ethelberta, 1876.
- The Return of the Native, 1878.
- The Trumpet Major, 1880.
- A Laodicean, 1881.

- Two on a Tower, 1882.
- The Mayor of Casterbridge, 1886.
- The Woodlanders, 1887.
- Tess of the D'Urbervilles, 1891.
- The Well-Beloved, 1892, reissued in 1897.
- Jude the Obscure, 1895.

**Short Stories:**

- Wessex Tales 1888.
- A Group of Noble Dames 1891.
- Life's Little Ironies 1894.
- A Changed Man, The Waiting Supper and Other Tales 1913.

**His Poetry :**

- Wesssex Poems and Other Verses 1898.
- Poems of the Past and Present 1901.
- Time's Laughing Stocks 1909.
- Satires of Circumstances 1914.
- Moments of Vision and Miscellaneous Verses 1917.
- Late Lyrics and Earlier 1922.
- Human Shows, Far Fantasies, Songs and Trifles 1925.
- Winter Words 1928.
- Collected Poems 1932.

**Dramas**

- The Dynasts, an epic drama in three parts (Part I, 1903; II, 1906; III, 1908).
- The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall 1923.

## 7.3 VICTORIAN COMPROMISE

G.K. Chesterton coined the term "Victorian Compromise" in his book "The Victorian Age in literature." The term refers to the contradictions between the progress brought on by the industrial revolution, and the poverty, disease and suffering felt by the working classes as a result of this progress. While the middle

and the upper classes enjoyed advancement in wealth and quality of life, and reaped the benefits of an expanding empire, the working class suffered greatly. Forced to work into close, overcrowded rooms and poor living conditions workers were often at the mercy of their dangerous jobs in textile mills, mines or railways. Mortality rates were high, and child labour was a common killer, along with disease. It was the triumph of capitalism and the birth of Marxism; it was the age of Darwinian science but also the age of Dickensian romance.

The Victorian Age was a complex and contradictory era: it was the age of progress, stability, great social reforms but it was also characterized by poverty, injustice and social unrest. The Victorians promoted a code of values that reflect the world as they wanted it to be, not as it really was, based on personal duty, hard work, respectability and charity. Respectability was a mixture of morality and hypocrisy, severity and conformity to social standards. It implied the possession of good manners, the ownership of comfortable house with servants and a carriage, regular attendance at church, and charity activity. Philanthropy addressed itself to every kind of poverty, to 'stray children, fallen women and drunken men' and absorbed the energies of thousands of Victorians.

The concept of 'fallen woman' was a fate imposed upon thousands of women by the society with intense concern for female chastity. Sexuality was generally repressed in its public and private forms. In the late 19$^{th}$ century patriotism was influenced by ideas of racial superiority. Since the Victorians, under the strict reign of Queen Victoria, had to compromise many essential features of individuality and modes of expression, the term ‘Victorian Compromise’ came to be coined and applied to this particular age. As expected, this characteristic of the Victorian era also came to be reflected in the literature of that age. The term Victorian compromise, denotes the conflict between science and religion, poor and rich, revolution and reconciliation, war and peace, educated and non-educated etc. The conflict between science and religion is well-known among these. In the Victorian age, the people were highly conflicted between science and religion. Scientific development conflicted the people in the heart. Especially, Charles Darwin’s theory that tells man originated from monkeys. However, religion proclaims that man does not originate from monkeys. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, chief exponent of the Victorian age, says that science should be given a position in its place and religion should be given a position in its place. It means that both science and religion have their own place of importance within this world.

The moral purpose in literature, the Bilden Roman consisted in the doctrine of predestination. Authors like Charles Dickens were supporting the status quo and Oscar Wilde was against the Victorian standards. In the Victorian Age the economic growth of middle classes allowed the birth of this new philosophy, known as the Victorian Compromise. The aim was to save the morality in a material society who lacked of values. New words were: public virtues and private vices, which is the base of Victorian Compromise. The women were forced into unnatural marital roles and considered as a symbol of family values. Thus Victorian Age was a cacophonous clash of contradictions masquerading a compromise.

## 7.4 THOMAS HARDY: A REGIONAL NOVELIST

A regional novelist is one who portrays the specific characteristics, dialect, customs, topography, flora and fauna and certain other qualities found in a particular region. According to M.H. Abrams "regional novel emphasizes the setting, speech, and social structure and customs of a particular locality, not merely as local color, but as important conditions affecting the temperament of the characters and their ways of thinking, feeling, and interacting."

Thomas Hardy also is a regional novelist. He has created an imaginary country named "Wessex." He has described the region more accurately and minutely than any other English writer. Wessex stretches from the English Channel in the South, to Cornwall in the west, and Oxford to the north. It is a group of six counties named- Berkshire, Wilt shire, Hampshire, Somerset, Devon and Dorset. Hardy belongs to Dorchester, and he almost immortalize this particular south-western part of England through his creations. Hardy's childhood was mainly spent in the country and this pave the way of observing him the natural phenomena in an acute and sensitive manner. Through Wessex Hardy presents a beautiful paradox between city life and country life. Hardy got success in making an indelible impression upon our minds by creating a vivid picture of his Wessex. Villagers are far from the madding crowd and their life is away from the confused commerce of towns, and tumult and turmoil of the madding crowd. By creating such full-blooded people who dance and sing, eat and drink, work and make love; and on some occasions they do more desperate things, such as murder and adultery, and moral cheating, he has portrayed his characters with universal appeal.

Regional novel writing started in England in 19$^{th}$ century and this limited the scope of English fictions when compared to the works of Russia. Most of the novels of Hardy are set in Wessex and are confined to this specific region because he was all aware of this area. Though confined to a particular region, Hardy's novels have a universal appeal because for him what is happening in the Wessex is happening everywhere in the world. Problems faced by the people of this fictional region are the problems of whole mankind. Hardy says in the introduction to *A Pair of Blue Eyes* that "Castle Botrel" or "Boscastle" is among the furthest westward of all those convenient corners wherein I have ventured to erect my theatre for these imperfect dramas of country life and passions; and it lies near to, or no great way beyond, the vague border of the Wessex kingdom on that side." Through Wessex, Hardy has imparted a universal appeal to his novels. Hardy wrote of Wessex because life brought him Wessex. His interest is not the typical qualities of Wessex but universal values provided by Wessex. Each of the Hardy's novels deals with a different aspect of Wessex life. On the very first page of *Under the Greenwood Tree*, a lone man is placed in juxtaposition to the universe while at the same time the boundaries to his little world or planet are set. Dick Dewy, the main character of the novel, whose actions, along with the demise of the choir, is portrayed to be understood as representative of all mankind. From the very beginning of his career Hardy depended heavily upon the places amongst which he grew up, and upon the people who lived there, for the texture of his novels. He has presented the towns, villages, rivers, hills and valleys of his chosen region in a thinly veiled nomenclature, which any native attached to the place can easily identify. Thus his Casterbridge is Dorchester, his Budmouth is Weymouth, his King's Bere is Regis, his Wintoncester is Winchester, and so forth.

Hardy is extremely successful in portraying the natives of Wessex with all their tastes, habits, likes and dislikes, happiness and sorrows, beliefs and disbeliefs, success and failures. His greatest success as one of the greatest regional novelists lies in his picturization of immortal characters drawn from the common and lower-class men and women who are deeply rooted in soil and affected by the locality they live in. In this connection Goodman rightly observes 'He is not much interested in middle-class respectability, and not at ease with aristocracy. But his peasants are integral part of the landscape in which they live and move: the characters and the scenery form one organic whole, and they are inseparable without infinite damage to both.' In his first published novel *Desperate Remedies* (1870), he has imparted some imaginary names to original ones as- The seaside resort Creston in the novel is Weymouth, Froominster historically is the river Froom (now Frome) that runs beside Dorchester, the village Carriford is Hardy's own birth place- parish of Stinsford, Knap water house is Kingston Maurword House, and so on.

In his novels like *The Poor Man and the Lady, Desperate Remedies, Under the Greenwood Tree and A Pair of Blue Eyes,* he has presented the hills and mountains and rivers that are largely symbolical of Wessex, but it was for the first time that he has used the term "Wessex" in his novel *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874). He did so in just only one chapter: Greenhill was the Nijni Novgorod of Wessex…. The great mass of sheep in the fair consisted of South Downs and the old Wessex horned breeds…. The Hand of Ethelberta, though deals largely with urban gentry and their servants but Hardy always has Wessex in his mind. In this novel Wessex is presented as a single county closely equivalent of Dorset. Wessex life is presented in the novel a contrast to London manners and speech. *The Return of the Native*presents Hardy's imaginative return, passionately and deeply felt to the country which was just outside the backdoor of his birthplace. Egdon Heath has a powerful presence in the novel, but the narrative also provides illustrations of the growing sense Hardy had of the nature of Wessex. The Egdon Heath presented in the novel is the heath on which Hardy played as a child, across which he walked as an adolescent, over which he courted as a young man, is quintessential Wessex. He picturises Wessex farmer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* who often regards weather-God as a person hostile to him and bent upon destroying him. Hardy is totally alive to the historic facts of the region he has chosen as a background to his works. Every particle of his creations is completely attached to its historical perspective. Another example from *The Mayor of Casterbridge* clears the fact 'that even if we dig a few feet we are sure to find some skeleton of a Roman warrior, with its feet touching its abdomen and its vessels buried near him.' Such "Skellington's" are common sight for the Wessex farmers and urchins.

The rural setting is even more strikingly used in *The Woodlanders* (1887). The novel mainly portrays the rustic characters and their reactions to the fundamental emotions of life in their woodland background. As Simon Gatrell notes in Kramer's *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas hardy,* "It is somewhat surprising, in the light of this substantial contextualizing of Wessex, that Hardy chose imaginatively to return in *The Woodlanders* to an environment as enclosed and isolated as that of, *The Return of the Native* a world apart of forest and orchard." There are also direct and indirect evidences that Hardy's Wessex was not expanding still beyond the enclosed boundaries of Dorset. The natural market town for the

Melburys is Yeovil, but Yeovil is in Somerset, so Hardy makes his characters to go miles out of their way to Sherton (Sherborne), in order to make sure that they remain confine within the strict boundaries of Wessex.

In *"Tess of the D' Urbervilles",* Hardy concentrates on personal emotions and clearly expresses the man's position in the universe. The novel tells the story of a country girl Tess. She works as a dairymaid in a peaceful and rural setting. Hardy uses a vast canvas to portray village folk's profession, skills, and the hardships of their lives. The rural setting of the Tess and her working as a dairymaid, her hardships, her dignity of her soul and her struggle against heavy odds all are characteristics of a common man living in the lap of nature which finds its way in depicting Wessex.

In his last novel "*Jude the Obscure*", Hardy has presented Jude Fawley, born in Mell stock as an orphan. He is transported to a village whose traditions have been stripped by modernizing Victorianism, a village way outside the old confines of Wessex, though technically within the new bounds of New Wessex. It is the New Wessex in the sense that it picturizes newly created geographical boundaries like – Ingpen Beacon, Wylls-neck, Pilsdon Pen and homely Bulbarrow the use of railways by means of transportation because Hardy's novels like- *Under the Greenwood Tree, The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *The Woodlanders* are set in time before the railways came to Dorset. The railways are presented here as a symbol of the destruction of Old Wessex. The communities presented in the novel are village communities that readers of Hardy are familiar with, are based on trade – like the Christ minster stonemason fraternity, or the rootless fair-and-circus fellowship.

To conclude Hardy as a regional novelist his Wessex is not a mere scenic setting for his immortal creations. It is much more than that. Consciously or Unconsciously Wessex has become his personal identity. It is his own creation through which he can see and judge the whole world. His love for nature and the earth is solely a personal feeling. He has created the immortal border lines that incarnate itself in the form of a particular geographical boundary called Wessex, the heart and soul of his fictions and poetry. However, he never projects Wessex in a romantic realm. As Duffin observes 'Hardy nowhere expresses the extreme inference that every flower enjoys the air it breaths.' It is the nature, the immortal Wessex, its environment and the characters therein that has formed the background of Hardy's novels giving it the regional note. In the words of David Daiches, "Setting his character in that Southern corner of England he named Wessex, a large agricultural region steeped in history and slow to emerge from the older rhythm of rural life and labour into the modern industrial world…." A hundred years have passed since he finished writing his novels, but their charm and taste remain same. His works are indelible imprints of immortality in the face of time whose glory will never fade.

## 7.5 HARDY'S PESSIMISM

Pessimism is an attitude of hopelessness toward life and toward existence, coupled with a vague general opinion that pain and evil predominate in the world. It is derived from the Latin *Pessimus, meaning "Worst."* To describe, an attitude as pessimistic need not, however, mean that it involves no hope at all. It may locate

its objects of hope and of appraisal in a region beyond ordinary experience and existence. Pessimism is a negative mental attitude in which an undesirable outcome is anticipated from a given situation. Pessimists tend to focus on the negatives of life in general.

Hardy was profoundly influenced by his age and his environments. His period flourished through science and industrial revolution. Industrial revolution was destroying old agricultural England. The destruction of agricultural England was the process through which simple villagers were facing new challenges like – poverty, destabilization, disease and suffering caused by the use of new technologies in farming. Hardy's pessimism is an outcome of what he saw in his rural community. He closely and continuously observed Wessex folk facing the daily tragedies and their helplessness against the mighty forces. So he draws a gloomy picture of the universe, where man is mere puppet in the hand of malicious fate. Hardy believed that the whole life is an endless saga of suffering. Suffering is the cosmic law and happiness is but an occasional episode in the general drama of pain. The fact that he is often labelled as a pessimist and has no reason why he should not be thus described. Hardy was the painter of darker side of life as it was no wonder if people charged him of "pessimist." In fact, there are some factors that compel us to believe him as a pessimist. He was hypersensitive; his own life was tragic and gloomy. For a speculative soul, this world is a thorny field. The gloomy effect of his age plays an important role in his writings. Doubts, despair, disbelief, frustration, industrial revolution, disintegration of old social and economic structure, Darwin's theory of evolution were the chief characteristics of that age. All these factors probe deep into his writings and heighten its somber, melancholic and tragic vision. His poem entitled "*The Poet's Epitaph*," describes life as a "senseless school." Hardy really suffered regarding love and marriage. He was a frail child with a difficult childhood without money. As a result of it, there is a pessimistic dismal and fatalistic tone in his novels. In *Jude the Obscure*, Phillotson speaks, "Cruelty is the law pervading all nature and society" and Sue says, "All the ancient wrath of power above us has been vented upon us, his poor creatures and we must submit it." Hardy totally excludes from his writings the sense of splendor and beauty of human life. He loves his people but he hates life intensely. He sees it in the hands of cruel, blind and oppressive 'Unknown Will'. In his view the supreme power is blind, imbecile and malevolent who takes joy in killing and torturing his innocent creation,

> "*As flies to wanton boys: are we to the gods;*
>
> *They kill us for their sport."*

His universe is neither ruled by God, the father, nor by divine spirit. Men are part of great network of cause and effect which make them, almost always, a prey to the chance over which they have no control. The creator of this hostile universe is called the "Immanent Will", the spinner of Years, Fate, Doom and sometimes God. Hardy was the star son of Melancholy and by temperament he was pessimist throughout his life. He asserted that "tragedy always underlies comedy". Only a man with inherent pessimistic approach can lay such a forceful emphasis on the idea of tragedy by inserting 'always' in such a summary sentence. Hardy is of the view that man suffers from his birth till his death. Not only man suffers, but all nature suffers. Suffering is writ large on the face of nature. He always sees a ruthless brutal struggle

for existence everywhere in nature and “Life offers only to deny”. He rejected the Christian belief in a God that is omnipotent, benevolent and anthropomorphic. He rather thinks of Him as malevolent, as one who takes delight in the suffering of mortals. The lack of divine command was the primary cause of Hardy’s dissatisfaction or pessimism. In the novel *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, Tess lacks this harmonious order as well. *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* depicts a hostile universe devoid of a loving God, as does the whole universe. Human pain seems pointless in the absence of a benevolent God. Furthermore, the concept of vengeance becomes meaningless when God is gone. As a consequence, there is no reason to anticipate a favorable result. Born and bred in a rapidly changing scientific age, Hardy could not shut his eyes to the fact of suffering of men of his time. Therefore, the enthusiastic optimism of the Victorian poets like Browning about God, Who sang thus,

*God’s in His heaven – All’s right with the world!*

could not satisfy him. Rather a ruthless struggle for existence everywhere in nature made him to believe that:

God’s not in his heaven: All’s wrong with the world!

He could not satisfy himself also with the view of the romantic poets like Wordsworth who said that Nature had a “Holy Plan” And that there was joy everywhere in Nature. He could not see such joy in Nature when a number of children were born to shiftless parents like the Durbeyfield to bring misery to themselves and to others. Hardy questioned the established moral and religious principles of Victorian society. His pessimistic view of society is derived largely from the philosophy of determinism. Hardy was a determinist who was aware that man's life is controlled by some inexplicable external force, which he sometimes calls the Fate of Circumstances (in The Mayor of Casterbridge), the President of Immortals (in Tess of the d’Urbervilles) or the Immanent Will (in The Dynasts). Man is, according to him, determined by both heredity and environment.

The intellectual climate and the social and economic transformations in the nineteenth century created in Hardy a deep pessimism. Tragic coincidence and the irony of fate are deeply rooted in his vision of life. His pessimism was largely a reaction to Victorian optimism. Hardy’s pessimism was outcome of several sources like, popular Calvinism, Darwin's theory of natural selection, Schopenhauer’s philosophy, and traditional folk fatalism. In his fiction and poetry Hardy expressed the inability of man confronted with 'the blind forces of nature', and the loneliness of the individual in dehumanized society which had lost touch with timeless and organic order. Hardy expressed his deep pessimism when he wrote about the universal order. He held both a deterministic and tragic view of human existence, accepting the inevitability of suffering and evil. Human existence has little or no sense in absolute terms; its strength lies in individual relative virtue. Virtue is thus man's own reward in this world. In Hardy's view tragedy is created by the blind forces of nature which man opposes in vain. Hardy is a pessimist is true, but out of this dark, grimly dark and gloomy world of his own there is also a brighter side of philosophy. He does not hate mankind like Hobbes who portrays man as a beast, mean, abject, detestable and an odious creature. On close reading of his major fiction, it becomes apparent that Hardy's view of life is not wholly deterministic

and pessimistic. He offered, though not explicitly, some resolution of the tragic condition of man. Virginia R. Hyman points out that “by emphasizing the power of chance to affect men's lives, he was also emphasizing the correspondingly increased need for moral responsibility among men.” In Hardy’s world, which lacks the stability and confidence of Christian belief, man is both a perpetrator and a victim. Hardy was probably the first Victorian writer who gave vent to his existential preoccupations and showed persuasively and penetratingly the sense of loneliness of people living in an uncaring universe and the concomitant evolution of their painful self-consciousness.

Hardy called himself an evolutionary meliorist and realist and denied the charge of being a pessimist. For him being a pessimist is to close eyes to human ills. He was simply recording sincerely, faithfully and truly the impressions of life that he had received from the contemporary society. No doubt, that Hardy, in certain places, showed his optimism for a better human world and existence, but he could not get rid of the label of a pessimist. A critic says: -

"But he is a pessimist and it is as sure as there is a head on your shoulders, my dear reader! His so-called impressions are so numerous: and so, consistent that it is difficult to suppose that a considered philosophy was not at the bottom of them. Impressions are always vague but he is so sure, so definite that we should call his so-called impressions His Convictions".

## 7.6 HARDY’S PROJECTION OF FATE AND CHANCE

Fate and chance play an important role in the works of Thomas hardy. These are two catastrophic forces who work against the destinies of the characters of the Hardy’s novels. His characters are mere puppets in the hands of malignant Fate. His characters are in always direct conflict with their fate. Characters seem to work to one end while fate woks to their opposite end. Fate seems to have imposed on men and they are misleadingly guided by it from outside as well as within. David Cecil, a renowned critic comments on the importance of fate as: “A struggle between man, on the one hand, and, on the other, an omnipotent and indifferent Fate ─ that is Hardy’s interpretation of the human scene.”

Hardy’s characters never have individual life, rather they are governed by fate. It is always the guiding force which leads them to their doom. He is of the view that fate is an indifferent and blind force working against human happiness. It is hostile towards the hard labour and difficulties of men. It is the omnipotent cause of human sufferings. There is no clash between man and man or between man and society, but between man and this disastrous Fate. Those characters who are generally considered wicked and crooked are also the victims of Fate as well as those who are considered good and gentle. Thus, Henchard is full of hatred for Farfrae, Bathsheba thinks Troy as the main cause of her misfortunes. Fate works as a malignant Deity destroying all human efforts to make their lives happy. As in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Fate expresses itself as hostile weather which ruins Henchard. All the characters of Hardy’s novels either good or bad are victims of Fate. For example, Alec is as much in the hands of Fate as Tess; Henchard is as much a plaything of fate as Farfrae or Elizabeth-Jane. All are equally subject of

pity; none is to be blamed. All characters are bound to circumstances. They are mere helpless victims of blind, cruel, indifferent and all mighty fate.

Chance also plays a crucial role in the novels of Hardy. Chance makes mysterious things happen. These mysterious things are often undesirable and unexpected. Such chance events are heavy blow to the protagonists of Hardy's novels and it make them fall in a pathetic situation at a wrong moment. For example, in Hardy's *Tess of the D' Urbervilles,* we can see the role of chance presented if Angel returns back fast then he would be with Tess immediately but he fails to return fast. The other chance is if Tess learn from her previous experience with Alec and wait for Angel to return, then she would be with Angel as well. One can observe that Tess' innate flaw results in the wreckage of a chance that she has to be with Angel. The tragedy of Tess at the end of the novel is caused due to the two men including Alec and Angel who forces her to kill Alec. When Angel returns back to meet Tess, she feels betrayed and she stabs Alec to death resulting in an execution. One cannot blame Alec alone himself because if Angel accepted the past of Tess then it would have been different in the beginning itself. If Tess also learnt from her previous incident with Alec, she would have been with Angel happily instead in a situation of killing Alec and in the prison waiting to be executed.

Hardy acknowledges that the use of chance is justified in a work of art. Life is full of chances. "Strange conjunctions of circumstances, partially those of a trivial nature, are so frequent in an ordinary life that we grow used their accountableness." We are unable to know how this chance will work at certain moment, and what will happen to the characters because it is indifferent to man s' sorrow and happiness.Many of the critics are of the view that fate and chance is a dominant force in Hardy's novels and his characters are the victim of cruel fate and chance. In the novel*, The Return of the Native* Eustacia accidently meets Wildeve in a dance party. Mrs. Yeobright happens to choose an overwhelming hot day to meet C. Eustacia happens to escape from the heath on a stormy night and they meet their tragedy. Eustacia forces Clym to go back to Paris but he denies to do so and secedes to open a school in the heath. So we see that fate and chance is a dominant force in this novel. It is true that fate and chance plays a vital role in every man's life but it is limited while in Hardy's work overstatement and exaggeration is also seen.

In the works of Hardy, Fate presents itself in the form of Chance and Love. Of these two, Love plays an important part to ruin the characters of Hardy's novels. It makes them to judge things misleadingly and fall a victim of circumstances. Hardy is of the opinion that happiness can be revived in life through love. But on certain occasion even love leads to tragic consequences. Two persons of dissimilar nature are drawn together but soon they stand at different poles. If Eustacia had loved wild eve and Thomasin loved Clym, the tragedy of *The Return of The Native* would have been avoided. Eustacia's tragedy results from her exclusive love for the glittering city life. But the cruel destiny intrudes her life to spoil her promising career. It is just a chance that Clym is fast asleep and Eustacia does not open the door to Mrs. Yeobright thinking that her husband would do so. It is also by chance that Clym comes to know from the real fact about his mother's death.

All of Hardy's novels are little bit a love story. Love plays a dominant role in the lives of the characters of Hardy's novels. Love as stated by Hardy is a "Lord

of terrible aspect, a blind irresistible power seizing on human beings whether they will or not, and always bringing ruin on them." Tess loves Angel Clare passionately. But her love for him brings her off her feet and leaves her neglected and depressed. It is her deep love for Clare that she in spite of her adverse situation marries her. Out of her genuine love she discloses everything to her beloved about her past. The result is disastrous one. Angel Clare is the man with hard "logical deposit." He does not forgive her. He deserts her and Tess pays heavily for her genuine love. At last it is Love again that takes Tess toward her final doom. She, in a fit of desperation stabs Alec and finally was hanged for the act. "Justice" was done, and the President of the Immortals (in Aeschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess.

To conclude, the above discussion well brings out the fact that Fate is the dominating theme of all of Hardy's novels. Sometimes it takes the form of Chance and sometimes the form of love. Fate and Chance pursue all main characters as a hunting dog would pursue its prey. All the characters either good or bad are caught in the evil trap of Fate and chance. Hardy's cosmic vision works here. In God's scheme of things, things do not happen in tune with the general expectation. Fate and Chance are unstoppable forces who ruin every positive efforts of human being to make their lives better and comfortable. Hardy believes that there are indeed more things on Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of in man's philosophy.

## 7.7 LET US SUM UP

Thomas Hardy, being a prominent literary figure of the Victorian era has deeply felt the pervading impression of the Age – "sick hurry and divided aims." A small hamlet "Higher Bock-Hampton" with all its natural settings cast a deep impression on Hardy's life and works which latter on resulted in imaginary country "Wessex" in his novels. His architectural training provided him with a keen eye sight to look into the sufferings of man with global perspective. His characters of the novels for the most part are the agricultural people rooted deep in the soil. The calm and quiet surrounding of the rural life is the chief concern of his books. His "Wessex" is dealt with in so masterly a manner that it has become an immortal region. Hardy has fascinated several generations of readers, both men and women. He is a realist who listens, meditates and tells the stories; stories that are connected with the endless saga of human sufferings and helplessness against the mighty forces of fate and chance. In the context of modern literary world he remains a writer who entertains soul because a tragedy gives delight to the soul.

## 7.8 GLOSSARY

Acknowledged: Well recognized.

Classic: Having a high quality or standard against which other things are judged.

Cacophonous: unpleasant.

Reaped: Enjoyed.

Masquerade: Behaviour that is intended to hide truth.

Prolific: Plenty and abundant, producing a great number of something.

Prominent: Very noticeable, important or famous.

Pervading: Spreading throughout.

## 7.9 QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by the term Victorian Compromise?
2. Give a brief sketch about the life and impressions on Thomas Hardy.
3. Write a note on chief characteristics of Victorian Age.
4. Comment on Hardy as a regional novelist.
5. Discuss Hardy's pessimism.
6. Analyse the role of fate and chance in the novels of Thomas Hardy.

## 7.10 FURTHER READING


1. Dale Kramer ed., The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy, 2005.
2. James Eli Adams ed., Encyclopedia of the Victorian Era, 2004.
3. Peter Bailey, Leisure *and Class in Victorian England, 1970.*

# UNIT-8 THOMAS HARDY : TESS OF THE D' URBERVILLES

## Structure


8.0 Objectives

8.1 Introduction

8.2 Character list of the novel

8.3 Summary of the novel

8.4 Plot construction of the novel

8.5 Tess as a social chronicle

8.6 Hardy's art of characterization

8.7 Character sketch of the Major Characters

8.7.1 Tess

8.7.2 Angel Clare

8.7.3 Alec D'Urbervilles

8.8 Let Us Sum Up

8.9 Glossary

8.10 Questions

8.11 Further Reading


## 8.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to focus on the characters, summary and plot of the novel Tess of the D'Urbervilles.After reading this unit carefully learners will be able to assess the importance of the opening chapters, plot and theme of the novel.

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit bears detailed introduction to the novel, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." The major changes brought by the writings of Hardy into the field of literature of the late nineteenth century will be centre of focus.

Tess of the D'Urbervilles also subtitled as "A Pure Woman", is a nineteenth century classic belonging to a different culture, a different age. So, a new kind of thinking order is required to grasp it fully. Tess of the D'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure, have created such a storm of criticism that hardy gave up novel-writing in disgust.

**Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D' Urbervilles:***

## 8.2 CHARACTER LIST OF THE NOVEL

Tess Durbeyfield: Protagonist of the novel.

John Durbeyfield: Tess's father.

Joan Durbeyfield: Tess's mother.

Eliza Louisa ('Liza Lu) Durbeyfield: Tess's sister.

Abraham Durbeyfield: Tess's Brother.

Sorrow: Tess's illegitimate son, who died in infancy.

Alec D'Urberville: The son of Simon Stokes.

Simon Stokes: A wealthy merchant.

Mrs. D'Urberville: The blind widow of Simon Stokes.

Angel Clare: Youngest son of the Reverend Mr. Clare of Emminster.

The Reverend Mr. Clare of Emminster: Angel's father, a self-sacrificing clergyman.

Mrs. Clare: Angel's mother.

The Reverend Felix Clare: Brother to Angel Clare, a curate.

The Reverend Cuthbert Clare: Brother to Angel Clare, a classical scholar and dean of his college at Cambridge.

Mercy Chant: A neighbor of the Reverend Mr. Clare, tries to have Angel marry her, finally betrothed to Cuthbert.

Richard Crick: The master-dairyman of Talbothays.

Marian: Milkmaid at Talbothays, her love for Angel leads her to drinking, she manages for Tess a job at Flintcomb Ash.

Izz Huett: Milkmaid at Talbothays, Angel invites her to come with him to Brazil after he deserts Tess.

Retty Pridle: Milkmaid at Talbothays.

## 8.3 SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

The novel is divided into seven phases. The first phase is named – Maiden. It is the beautiful, but tragic story of Tess of the Durbeyfield. The story is set in Wessex. At the very beginning of the story we meet Jack Durbeyfield or John Durbeyfield. He is a poor haggler. He lives in a cottage almost outside the Village Marlott, in the beautiful vale of Black moor in Wessex. He is the head of the family called "Durbeyfield." He has to earn bread for eight family members who are: Joan (his wife), Tess (daughter), Eliza Lousia (daughter), Abraham (son), Hope and Modesty (daughters) and two younger sons. One evening Jack is returning from the town of Shaston after selling his eggs. He meets a Parson named Tringham, who calls Jack "Sir John." Tringham tells him that Durbeyfield is the corrupt form of the D'Urberville and he is the descendent of the D'Urbervilles, an ancient, noble and knightly family who had land holdings as far back as William the Conqueror in 1066. Upon this discovery, Jack thinks that the royal blood should not live a life of poor haggler. He throws his articles and goes to the Drop Inn, the wine shop. Next morning he is unable to take his cart of fodder to the city. Tess is now sixteen and being eldest child presents herself to take the cart of fodder to the city. It was dark when she started and on the way in an accident with a mail-cart their beloved horse Prince dies. It is not the death of a horse but the death of bread earner of the family. Her mother suggested Tess to go to very rich Mrs. D' Urbervilles and ask for help.

The second phase is named – Maiden No More. While visiting the d'Urbervilles at The Slopes, Tess meets Alec d'Urberville, who finds himself attracted to Tess. Alec arranges for Tess to become the caretaker for his blind mother's poultry, and Tess moves to The Slopes to take up the position. While in residence at the d'Urbervilles, Alec seduces and rapes Tess.Tess returns home, gives birth to a son, Sorrow, the product of the rape, and works as a field worker on nearby farms. Sorrow becomes ill and dies in infancy, leaving Tess devastated at her loss.

The third phase is named The Rally. Now Tess makes another journey away from home to nearby Talbothays Dairy to become a milkmaid to a good-natured dairyman, Mr. Crick. She has now completely embraced the work of a dairymaid and performs the routine work at dairy. This section introduces Angel Clare, the youngest son of the Vicar of Emminster, Reverend James Clare. It also reveals Angel's infatuation with a lady during his wanderings to seek a career at London. The lady being older than him proves to be a flirt. Anyhow he overcomes his infatuation and returns home. He then, concentrates on farming and joins Mr. Crick's dairy at Talbothays. Here he meets and falls in love with Tess.

The fourth phase is named – The Consequence. In this section Angel proposes Tess to marry. At first she rejects his offer being conscious of her past

experiences. She tries to resist Angel's pleas for her hand in marriage but eventually marries Angel. He does not know Tess' past, although she tries on several occasions to tell him. After the wedding, Tess and Angel confess their pasts to each other.

The fifth phase is named – The Woman Pays. After the confession to each other Tess forgives Angel for his past indiscretions, and expects forgiveness from him for her past. Angel comes to the conclusion that Tess is more sinned than sinning. He agrees that it does not happen on account of Tess. He also admits Tess's several attempts to disclose the matter before marriage. But he does not forgive Tess for having a child with another man. Angel suggests that the two should split up, with Angel going to Brazil for a year and Tess going back home. Tess agrees and returns to her parent's house. Tess eventually leaves home again for work in another town at Flintcomb-Ash farm, where the working conditions are very harsh. Here Tess is reunited with some of her friends from Talbothays, and they all settle in at Flintcomb to the hard work routine. Tess is determined to see Angel's family in nearby Emminster but loses her nerve at the last minute. On her return to Flintcomb, Tess by chance sees Alec again. He is now a practicing evangelical minister, preaching to the folks in the countryside.

The sixth phase is named – The Convert. When Alec sees Tess, he is struck dumb and leaves his position to pursue her. Alec follows Tess to Flintcomb, asking her to marry him. Tess refuses in the strongest terms, but Alec is persistent to marry her at any cost. He thinks that this marriage will console and redeem him of his sin. Tess returns home and finds her mother recovering from her illness, but her father, John, dies suddenly from an unknown ailment. Now the burden to feed hungry mouths falls on Tess' shoulders. Destitute now and homeless (they have been evicted from their cottage), the Durbeyfield's have nowhere to go. Tess realizes her economic condition and thinks that she cannot resist Alec's money and the comforts her family can use. Furthermore, Alec insists that Angel will never return and has abandoned her — an idea that Tess has already come to believe herself.

The seventh phase is named – fulfilment. In this section, Angel returns from Brazil to look for Tess and to begin his own farm in England. When Angel finds Tess' family, Joan informs him that Tess has gone to Sandbourne, a fashionable seaside resort in the south of England. Angel finds Tess there, living as an upper-class lady with Alec d'Urberville. In the meeting with Angel, Tess asks him to leave and not return for her. Angel does leave, resigned that he had judged Tess too harshly and returned too late.

After her meeting with Angel, Tess confronts Alec and accuses him of lying to her about Angel. In a fit of anger and fury, Tess stabs Alec through the heart with a carving knife, killing him. Tess finds Angel to tell him of the deed. Angel has trouble believing Tess' story but welcomes her back.

The two travel the countryside via back roads to avoid detection. Their plan is to make for a port and leave the country as soon as possible. They spend a week in a vacant house, reunited in bliss for a short time. They are discovered, however, and the trail ends at Stonehenge, the ancient pagan monument, when the police arrest Tess and take her away.

Before she is executed for her crime, Tess has Angel promise to marry her sister Liza Lu once she is gone. Angel agrees and he, along with Liza Lu, witnesses a black flag raised in the city of Wintoncester, signifying that Tess's death sentence has been carried out. The two, Angel and Liza Lu, leave together, and the tragic tale of Tess ends.

## 8.4 PLOT CONSTRUCTION OF THE NOVEL

A well-constructed plot is essential for a novel. A novel must have a "plot" and a "story" – the action should be governed by a single idea, a visible idea and one of which the essential story is the result. For the construction of his plots Hardy follows Henry Fielding. Hardy's novels have a structure, a design, a plan, a framework which is definite not loose. These plots are dramatic in quality; nothing superfluous is inserted in them. By training and profession Hardy was an architect, so he imparted an architectural design to his plots. He was a superb master in constructing his plots. He builds his plots as a mason or an architect builds a house. Among all the great writers of the English novel, Hardy alone has, in equal proportions, great gifts of imagination and extraordinary powers of invention.

Hardy's narratives moves at a slow pace at first and he takes great pain to make clear the spirit of the country, with its daily routine. When the work is done, the play hurriedly delves into passions and begins to move at a rapid pace. Then, the actors come into conflict, there is a strong attraction and repulsion, "spirits" are finely touched" then, there is a period of waiting, a breathing space, an ominous stillness and pause till, at the last, with increased force and motion, it goes forward to the "fine issues". The final grandeur is the logical climax of converging trivialities. In each separate incident there is an element which proves necessary in the completion of the whole.

*Tess of the D' Urbervilles* starts when Tess is about sixteen or seventeen and continues to the age of about twenty-one. Hardy uses epic form to describe Tess's life during this period. There is a continuity of events when we first meet her until she dies. In the long run of the story novel tells us Tess's actions and justification of those actions, her trials and tribulations, and her efforts to overcome the circumstantial will against enjoyment. Other characters, no doubt, also come into our notice, but what remains significant is the character of Tess. No subplot is added to the story which interweaves with the main story, only Tess's story is important.

The plot of the novel is one of the simplest that Hardy ever devised: the woman sins, the woman pays. This type of plot was used by number of Victorians, but in the hands of Hardy this pattern was formed into a work of art. Hardy denies and challenges two traditional themes (1) the stain of unchastity can never be erased and (2) the pious possibility of purifying atonement.

Hardy's plots primarily denote action, because he sees life as a series of action. Life reflects action and action propagates life. His plots are not meant for the plea sure of the readers. He employs the fantastic and surprising elements to his

plots that strikes the imagination of the reader. Chance and coincidence, play such a large part in his plot construction that at times they seem contrived.

Regarding Hardy's plots Neil in his book A Short History of English novel, has pointed out that "His plots are, for the most part, simple. The passions he depicted are the elemental, of love, greed, jealousy, ambition, the thirst for power and knowledge, and the springs of action that move his characters are psychological…." Hardy's favourite theme is love. He builds his plots around this theme solidly. One of his greatest novels *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is the only exception to the use of this theme. But in all other novels, the plot rises from the fact that two or more men love one woman, or two or more women love one man. The eternal triangle is always present in his novels. This triangle is very simple in Tess of the d'Urberville.

Tess is loved by both Alec and Angel. The plot of Tess is superbly simple without any complexity in action. It suggests Hardy's mastery and control on the various elements of plot. But in other novels, though the plot is simple, this triangle is comparatively complex. Cazamian observes, "His plots are not simple. They grow out of elementary passions; ambition, greed, love, jealousy and the thirst for knowledge; and the springs which move them are psychological. More and more as he progresses in his career Hardy tends to shift the construction of his novels to the inner world; he writes a moral drama, shows us a conflict of contradictory wills,guided themselves by feelings. But the development of these conflicts is crossed at every moment by accidents which interrupt them. Ironically, malevolent, fatal chance is, as it were, an invisible third party in all the relationships of human beings; now it seems to express an obscure cruelty lurking in the universe now, in a more philosophical guise, it is the experimental revelation of laws which probability demands that they should be some day crushed. In this latter sense, chance becomes the chastisement of the unavoidable selfishness of every life. Whether one aspect or the other is prominent, the repeated working of the inimical luck is largely responsible for the tragic atmosphere which Hardy's heroes succeed rarely in escaping."

Another minor defect in Hardy is that he is not very inventive. He does not invent many types of plots. Most of his plots are based on one situation and that is love.

"But these failures in the management of his plots matter less in Hardy than they would in any other novelist; they are botches, but they do not ruin the work, because though large enough when measured in terms of plot they are small when seen against the vastness and the strength of the design behind the plot. Plot in Hardy is his attempt to express the significance of the great design in purely human terms. Failure was almost inescapable for Hardy, as a man of his time and place, had no completely adequate myth through which his view of the nature of things could be bodied forth."

In spite of these weaknesses Hardy remains a superb master of plots. His greatness in this sphere is unquestionable. A.C. Ward observes, "Though the architectural structure of his plots may have been overemphasized, he certainly had the architect's ability to deal with massive structures. His best novels are built in

grandeur, and he was truly impressive in his power to communicate the brooding spirit of great places of Egdon, of Stonehenge, of the Vale of Blackmoor. His most memorable characters, also, are conceived on the grand scale. Though Tess is a broken peasant girl, she is immense in her power of endurance."

## 8.5 TESS AS A SOCIAL CHRONICLE

Hardy is a social commentator who comments critically on the pervading conditions and ills in Victorian England. He is a Victorian realist examining the social constraints on the lives of those living in Victorian England, and criticizes those beliefs, especially those relating to marriage, education and religion, that limited people's lives and caused unhappiness. Such unhappiness, and the suffering it brings, is seen by poet Philip Larkin as central theme in Hardy's works. Going through his novels and literary texts, we find that he was criticizing deliberately the absurd norms of Victorian society. He always expressed his dissatisfaction with the rigid moral code in the Victorian age. The rigid moral code refers to the set of strict moral and social standards that governed the behavior and expectation of individuals in society. It encompassed a range of values and beliefs that were deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of the time. In Literature, the rigid moral code was often depicted and critiqued. He spoke against sexual purity and suppression of sexual desires in his novels. The concept of conformity and non-conformity was described in the sense of moral prejudice in the Victorian era. It is a matter of debate that why Hardy is so much affected by the gender roles and biases at that age. Victorian society enforced rigid gender roles, with clear expectations for men and women. From a traditionalist point of view, men were expected to be strong rational, and assertive while women were depicted as daughters of nature submissive to husbands and devotees to domestic principles. Sexual topics were considered taboo and discussion or portrayal of these taboos was heavily censored. In Victorian Society, religion played a major role to design and shape to religious consciousness of humans. Society placed great importance on religious observance moral righteousness and the pursuit of spiritual salvation Literature often Portrayed Characters wrestling with religious faith, moral dilemmas and the conflict between personal desires and religious expectations. This Victorian moral code emphasized social hierarchy and class differentiation Right to vote for the upper class and landowner while the lower class was often seen as stigmatized, marginalized, and judged. Susie Steinbach wrote about this age and said that this was characterized by a class-based society a growing number of people able to vote a growing state and economy and Britain's status as the most powerful nation in the world. Thomas Hardy was a stern realist and many writers and critics of this age labeled him "Victorian Commentator" because Hardy examines and evaluates the social constants on the lives of those living in Victorian England. He criticized those beliefs, especially relating to marriage, education and religion that limited people's lives and caused unhappiness. Hardy was always against the rules of the story which bounded human freedom. He was always critical of the boundaries of class. Thomas Hardy reveals many significant acts of criticism of Victorian society in his three great " Wessex" novels including Far from the Madding Crowd, Tess of the d'Urberville, and Jude the Obscure. Despite scientific advances and industrial progress, Hardy must criticize Victorian England. In his novel "Far From Madding

Crowd", he wrote that by marriage woman becomes the husband's property, but if the woman wants to be married she has to accept it.

As in many of his other works, Thomas Hardy used Tess of the d'Urbervilles as a vessel for his criticisms of English Victorian society of the late 19th century. The novel's largest critique is aimed at the sexual double standard, with all the extremities and misfortunes of Tess's life highlighting the unfairness of her treatment. Society condemns her as an unclean woman because she was raped, while Angel's premarital affair is barely mentioned. Angel himself rejects Tess largely based on what his community and family would think if they discovered her past. Hardy saw many of the conventions of the Victorian age as oppressive to the individual, and to women in particular, and in Tess's case the arbitrary rules of society literally ruin her life.

Even the title of the novel challenges convention. Because it was traditional at the time to see Tess as an "impure woman," the title's addendum "A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented" immediately reveals the author as his protagonist's defender against condemnation. By delving so deeply into Tess's sympathetic interior life and the intricate history of her misfortunes, Hardy makes society's disapproval of her seem that much more unjust. There is also a satirical thread running through the novel's social commentary. The emphasis on ancient names is played to absurdity with John Durbeyfield's sudden pretensions upon learning of his ancestry, and the newly rich Stoke family adding "D'Urberville" to their name just to seem more magnificent.

Written toward the end of the Victorian era, Tess of the D'Urbervilles reflects the confusion of Thomas Hardy's changing society. The novel explores not only the hypocrisy of England's moral standards, but also the nature of that country's changing agricultural economy. As an inhabitant of a rural village himself, Hardy relates from firsthand experience a tale of the declining landed gentry and rural communities undergoing turbulent events.

Hardy's novel takes place in southwest England, a rural region in which he was born. In real life, farm wages remained low here partly because this region, in contrast to the middle and northern parts of England, had little industry. Without factories to compete for workers, the farm employer did not feel pressed to raise wages. Circumstances grew especially grim for farm workers toward the end of the 1800s. One result was that it grew harder for women to find work in the fields; another was that the income earned by women in rural industries (for example, dairying, glove making, or plaiting straw) became vital to family survival.

While there was little industry in southwest England, life there was nevertheless affected by inventions and developments in the nation. The early 1800s had witnessed the growth of mass transportation. With villages, more readily accessible to one another, trade within the nation boomed. Railways transported goods in a matter of hours instead of days. For many country dwellers, this meant an increase in commerce and trade. The dairy industry grew rapidly because fresh milk was now able to survive a quick daily journey to towns hundreds of miles away. In Hardy's novel, Tess finds plenty of work on a dairy farm although her

own village suffers an agricultural slump; this seeming contradiction is explained by the boom in transportation.

Other industrial developments affected rural life as well. There is an episode in the novel that involves Tess's employment at a steam threshing machine, which causes her suffering. The machine requires several workers to perform small repetitive tasks for hours at a time. Tess, placed on the platform with the machine and rick (cornsack), unties each sheaf given to her before it is seized by the man who feeds it to the machine. Introduced as early as 1803, the steam threshing machine was no longer new by Tess's day; in fact, Hardy was probably drawing on his memory of it to create the scene. It was once thought that such scenes reflected his sorrow at the passing of old rural ways (in this case, the flailing of corn by hand with a wooden tool to separate it from the stalk). But as one biographer suggests and the not-so-new threshing machine indicates, such a scene may instead be showing Hardy's nostalgia for and "normal attachment" to the environment of his youth. In any case, the scene exposes a few of the rural hardships of the era.

Some of these hardships were suffered by the rural industries. Though the invention of better methods of transport benefited a number of rural industries, it brought a decrease in productivity for others. Once goods could be more easily shipped in from distant areas, most village craftsmen, such as shoemakers and carpenters, lost their business to the cheaper, more efficient factory labour of the towns. This decline in job opportunity drove many young workers from the country into the city.

The departure of its youth upset not only the economic structure of the countryside, but the social one as well. Firstly, there was a change in the landowning class. In reaction to the agricultural decline of the period, the old gentry abandoned lands that had belonged to their families for several generations. Almost 6 million acres of agricultural property would change hands in the early 1900s. The majority of this land came from the breakups and sales of old family estates. In the process, as is the case with the D'Urbervilles, to whom Tess may be related, these once-powerful landowners lost not only their estates but also their economic and social influence.

Despite the ominous foreboding of this decline, English villages did not turn into ghost towns during this period. Newcomers arrived, but in localities that had once boasted only three surnames in an entire village (in other words, had been occupied by only three families), these new arrivals unleashed great commotion. Suddenly news of popular trends and current events from the big cities began to reach the previously isolated villagers. Most of newcomers hailed from England's middle class. They built new homes, brought urban tastes to the rural areas, and replaced the figure of the landed country squire with that of the wealthy modern businessman. Old pastimes, such as the folk dancing in which Tess participates at the opening of the novel, soon seemed outdated. More disciplined activities like English football (known in America as soccer) replaced these archaic recreational pursuits. Yet despite the losses it suffered, the English village also benefited from the influx. The rural standard of living improved, and communication with other regions increased. Furthermore, country living gained a new attractiveness. With

the population boom in the cities, the close-knit community and calm surroundings of the country village seemed a commodity worth having.

In the novel, the character Angel comes from a traditional middleclass family that, not surprisingly, expects the youngest son to marry a woman of similar socioeconomic status. When he announces that he has found "a woman who possessed every qualification to be the helpmate of an agriculturist, his mother's initial response is to ask, "Is she of a family such as you would care to marry into—a lady, in short?" As reflected by her question, marriage, in the eyes of the Victorian gentry, served as a union of more than mere love.

In the Victorian era most members of the upper classes obtained their earnings from their land. As the Victorian era progressed, land holding, grew more and more difficult to maintain as one parcel. In time, primarily because of the advent of foreign economic competition, there was a general collapse in British agriculture, as wool, grains, and other products could be obtained cheaply from foreign sources. Many of the gentry were forced to sell off their acreage and thus looked to marriage to provide them with the necessary means of survival.

The minimal relevance of love in marriage was further reinforced by Victorian ideas of sexuality. One medical textbook claimed that sexual indulgence "not only retards the development of the genital organs, but of the whole body, impairs the strength, injures the constitution and shortens life. As a topic, sexuality did not arise in the company of polite society. Even with the sanction of marriage, the experts warned that excess should be avoided, "and sensual feelings in the man gradually sobered down. Given such restrained ideas about sexuality, Angel's outrage toward Tess for her past sexual encounter in the novel seems more understandable. This is not to say, however, that Victorians had no sexual feelings or unapproved relations—only that they hid them from view. While health manuals of the age did warn against excess, they also warned that abstaining from sex altogether was as harmful to one's health as overindulging in it. And the prevalence of prostitutes indicated that Victorian men did not, in fact, abstain. In the novel Angel confesses his own "eight-and-forty hours' dissipation with a stranger." It seems that what Victorian men often deemed as improper at home they actively sought on the streets or, as the novel demonstrates, in the woods. Meanwhile, society expected women of the upper classes to be passionless creatures and ascribed sexual longings only to lower-class females.

The law, like other societal institutions of the era, also treated women unfairly. Although England legalized divorce in 1857, its limited scope enabled men to divorce their wives more easily than women could divorce their husbands. For instance, while a husband could file for separation on the ground of adultery alone, a woman needed to prove both adultery and cruelty or desertion by her husband. And if a woman sought redress by getting a divorce, she often found herself socially ostracized for her efforts. In any case, whether the man or woman filed for separation, grounds for divorce remained difficult to prove, and the termination of the marriage was often not granted. When in the novel Tess tells Angel that she had once been raped, she assumes that with this knowledge, he would be able to divorce her should he wish to do so. He replies, however, in a most definitive tone, "Indeed I cannot." The rape occurred before the marriage and

so did not constitute a violation of it. Although the qualifications for divorce expanded in 1868, the procedure nonetheless still proved to be arduous.

Women also suffered inequality in marriages of the time. There existed no common ground. Upon marriage, a woman surrendered all assets over to her husband; until the late 1880s, she held no legal claim to her own belongings. Women who did not marry were hardly better off: in Victorian society, an unmarried woman was regarded as a failure in some way. The commonplace belief was that a woman's place was in the home, and in any case, most women could not afford, in the financial sense, to leave it.

Hardy's novel comments on the difficult position of the Victorian woman. Although Tess attempts to make moral and wise decisions throughout the book, she remains bound, by virtue of her gender, to the role of the social deviant. Society shoulders her with blame for becoming the victim of sexual assault and calmly accepts her husband's desertion of her on the basis of this knowledge. The full title that Hardy gives the book, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented,* attests to the author's sympathy for the plight of his heroine.

From religion to economic and social details, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* brings alive changes of the late Victorian era. In religion, for example, a reactionary movement against laxness in the Church of England had sprung up in England during the 1700s. It was a back-to the-Bible movement, spearheaded by John Wesley, whose followers separated from the mainstream to form the Methodist Church. Its focus on hellfire and damnation made outsiders identify it as a grim, fanatical sect. Yet it persisted into the 1800s, in which the writings of various novelists, Hardy among them, showed strong disapproval for the sect. In Hardy's novel, the villainous Alec d'Urberville becomes a preacher for a Methodist group (the "Ranters"), an experience that fails in any way to redeem his base character.

Shifts in England's rural economy and social order likewise surface in the novel. While the early 1800s had seen great herds of sheep and cattle driven to market, the advent of the railroad made this kind of transport unnecessary. Rather than raising cattle, or corn, or sheep for various purposes, it became possible, in fact, to devote a farm entirely to dairy products, as Tess's workplace does. Tess explains this one day as she and Angel Clare drive some milk cans to a train, observing that Londoners would drink the milk at breakfast on the morrow, a formerly unheard-of feat. Railroads, in other words, made specializations such as dairy farming possible by quickly transporting perishable goods.

Tess's family, of course, belongs to the lowest group of rural laborers. When her mother was a child, such laborers had often stayed on the same farm all their lives, renewing their lease from one generation to the next. As the century passed, however, the rural focus shifted to large-scale farming, another consequence of new transportation and mechanization. One result was that instead of renewing leases, as had been the custom, landowners would now send cottagers packing when their leases expired, a calamity that befalls Tess's family. In the end, Tess herself "spends her brief life as an itinerant farm laborer, working here for a dairy farm, there cutting turnips—but always moving on when the season is over and the task

is done. We are made witness in the tale of her life to the story of an itinerant laborer whose own destruction is meant to mirror the disappearance of the traditional English countryside. Although the subtitle of Tess of the D'Urbervilles, "a pure woman," suggests that the novel relates to the fortunes of its heroine only, it actually covers a much larger theme than the destiny of an individual character. Through the individual tragedy of Tess, the novel's heroine, Hardy has depicted the larger theme of the destruction of English peasantry. More than any other novel in English between Fielding and Hardy, it is this novel which has the quality of a social document. It is, in fact, what is characterized as the thesis.

The thesis here is that the disintegration of the English peasantry, or the agrarian way of life, having had its beginning in the eighteen century, reached its final and tragic stage in Hardy's own time. The process began with the extension of capitalist farming much before Hardy's time. The capitalist farming is done by the landowners, not for their own sustenance, but for profit. In this system, the land-workers became wage-earners. The worst hit by this system were the old yeoman class of small-holders or peasants. They had been used, for centuries, to a settled life of continued family occupation of farming, having a culture of their own, living an independent life. With the arrival of capitalist farming, with big players to buy lands from small-holders and cultivate it for profit, making the occupation of farming a business and an industry, this peasant class of yeoman was bound to disappear. The new forces of industry and business were too strong for these poor people. It disrupted the age-old traditions, and gradually destroyed them. Since the way of life of the English peasantry has been deep-rooted, its destruction was highly painful and tragic. Tess is a powerful story and symbol of the destruction of this traditional way of life. Tess Durbeyfield is a peasant girl, who belongs to the stock that was under threat of disintegration at the time. Her parents belong to a class ranking just above the farm-laborer's. It is a class, as the novel explains, "including the carpenter, the smith, the shoemaker, the huckster, together with non-descript workers other than farm-laborer's; a set of people who owed a certain stability of aim and conduct to the fact of their being life-holders, like Tess' father, or copy-holders, or, occasionally, small freeholders." The theme of disintegration is indicated right at the beginning of the novel. We find that already the Durbeyfield's have fallen on bad days. Their plight is by no means solely due to the lack of stability in the characters of John and Joan. The family's condition is made worse by the accident in which their horse gets killed. This accident, as Kettle points out, is a "striking symbol of the struggles of the peasantry." The mail-cart "with its two noiseless wheels, speeding along these lines like an arrow" runs into Tess' slow, unlighted wagon. The peasants, driving their carts without light, were often found on the wrong side of the road.

The moral commentary running through the novel insists that Tess is not at fault in imposing mythological, biblical and folk imagery on a story of a young girl seduced and abandoned to create a "challenging contemporaneity". It was controversial and polarizing, setting these elements in a context of 19th-century English society, including disputes in the Church, the National School movement, the overall class structure of English society, and changing circumstances of rural labour. During the era of first-wave feminism, civil divorce was introduced and campaigns were waged against child prostitution, moving gender and sexuality

issues to the forefront of public discussion. Hardy's work was criticized as vulgar, but by the late 19th century other experimental fiction works were released such as Florence Dixie's depiction of feminist utopia, The Story of an African

Farm by Olive Schreiner, and Sarah Grand's work The Heavenly Twins. These raised awareness of syphilis and advocating sensitivity rather than condemnation for young women infected with it.

To conclude, the above discussion well brings out the fact that Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles provides social commentary on many issues prevalent in Victorian society. Hardy's purpose in the novel was to criticize the flaws of the Victorian Era through the life of an innocent young women. The Victorian Era was a rigid time where everything had strict rules. Tess's life was an ongoing battle of tragedy after tragedy to demonstrate the danger of the industrial revolution.

## 8.6 HARDY'S ART OF CHARACTERIZATION

An essential factor in the workshop of any good novelist is characterization. Without extensive knowledge and deep penetrating insight into human nature it is impossible for any novelist to have got any success in the portrayal of characters in his works. The novelist places before us certain typical or significant types of humanity and thus exhibits their nature under the stress of circumstances. Hardy's greatness in this direction is seldom questioned. He is the creator of a large number of unforgettable characters like, Jude Fawley, Gabriel Oak, Angel Clare, Michael Henchard, Henry Knight, Clym Yeobright, Giles Winterborne, Donald Far Frae, Tess, Bathsheba, Elizabeth Jane, Elfride, Eustacia, Ethelberta, etc. The variety of his character is immense: his command over human personality is extensive. It is all, "a gallery of everlasting delight."

Hardy chooses his characters from the lower strata of society because he believed that while the character and actions of people from high society are concealed by conventions, the rustics are free from any such control. Hence in their case character is fully revealed and can easily be portrayed. Thus Thomas Hardy excels in the portrayal of simple, elemental natures. His female characters are better and more forceful than his male characters because women are more elemental, nearer to nature, than men. Thus, his range of characterization is limited.His characters are universal and deal with universal passions of man. His characters are common human beings with common human weaknesses and virtues. They commit sin as common human beings would commit, but they are considered mean. Male characters in his novels especially in Tess of D'Urbervilles are not complex but are rational in thinking while women are portrayed as always passionate and they love their lovers passionately. Hardy's stories sometimes are love stories. They set a theme as D.H Lawrence used to believe that "if you step outside your circle you will die."

All his important characters belong to Wessex and to the lower strata of society. When he stays out of Wessex or attempts to portray complex characters drawn from the upper classes of society, he fails miserably. But this does not mean that his characters have only a topical or local interest. He deals with the universal

passions of man and so his characters are universal in their interest. They appeal to people of all ages and countries. One has to think only of Henchard, Clym, Tess, Eustacia, Giles, Marty South, etc., to realize the truth of his statement.

Hardy's characters are made of solid flesh and blood, as we see Clym and Eustacia, and we get the feeling that we have actually met the various persons whom Hardy portrays in his fiction. They are recognizable human beings and their conversation, actions, irritations, annoyances and quarrels perfectly convincing.

It has been said that Hardy's great success is with subtle characters. But the fact is that his men and women are the most vividly realized when they are simple, primal characters: rustics such as Grandfer and Christian Cantle, sturdy countrymen like Diggory Venn.; passionate wayward women such as Eustacia and plausible rogues such as Wildeve. Apart from that, the character of Mrs. Yeobright has been vividly portrayed. Her love for her son is her most outstanding quality. With it, she combines strength and firmness of mind, a shrewdness, and sagacity. She has a practical mind especially in her assessment of Eustacia. Her opposition to her son's educational plans shows her narrow-mindedness.

The portrayal of male characters by Hardy is admirable; he perhaps succeeds ever better in the treatment of men than women. This choice of his characters leads him away from intellectual complexities which delight most novelists. If his best characters are not subtle, the art that describes them is surely one; for he can record the minutest fluctuations of emotional experiences. The portrayal of Clym is much less complex. His aversion to materialistic and fashionable life of Paris, his great love for her mother, his decision to be a school teacher and educator and his acceptance of his misfortune all make him a convincing character. The delineation of his character has superbly been made by Hardy. Hardy produces a matchless character of Diggory Venn who represents the honest, steadfast, devoted, self-sacrificing and selfless lover safeguarding the interests of his former sweetheart. Hardy has drawn his villain in a commendable way in the novel. The conduct of Wildeve arouses disgust in our minds. He is depicted as casual, irresponsible, selfish, pleasure-loving and even callous. He plays with the hearts of girls, marries one of them and runs away. He has attractive manners and amiable nature. He partly redeems himself by sacrificing his life for Eustacia.

Hardy introduces each of his principal characters with a vivid description of his personal appearance. The Reddleman is described "as young and, if not exactly handsome, approaching very near to handsome." Wildeve is quite a young man. The grace of his movement is singular. It is "the pantomimic expression of a lady-killing career." Eustacia is "full-limbed and somewhat heavy and soft to the touch as a cloud. She has pagan eyes, full of nocturnal mysteries."

One of the important aspects of Hardy's characterization is the contrasting portraits of his characters. There are three female characters in the novel; Eustacia, Mrs. Yeobright, and Thomasin. Eustacia loves her passion more than people and her desire for dramatic life results in tragic consequences. She deceives her husband and tries to leave the Edgon Heath with Wildeve in order to fulfill her desires for living in Paris. Mrs. Yeobright loves her family very much but disagrees to her

son's plans to live in the Edgon Heath and ultimately meets a tragic death. In contrast to Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright, Hardy portrayed the character of Thomasin, an innocent Heath girl who never learns to think pragmatically. She is a noble lady deceived by her husband Wildeve but she remains loyal to him till his death. After the death of Wildeve, she marries Diggory who loved her a lot.

Clym, Diggory, and Wildeve are three major male characters in the novel Hardy portrayed in a narrow range. Clym is contrasted with both Diggory and Wildeve. Clym Yeobright is the protagonist of the novel and a successful merchant in Paris. However, his idea of improving Heath and marrying Eustacia proves disastrous for him. Wildeve, the villain of the novel, marries Thomasin but falls in love with his former beloved Eustacia and while eloping with her, meets a catastrophic end. In contrast to Clym and Wildeve, Hardy depicted the character of Diggory Venn, a Reddleman, who loves Thomasin Yeobright. In spite of her rejection, he remains loyal to her and helps her in her problems. At the end of the novel, he succeeds in marrying Thomasin. There are contrasting ends for each of these major characters as Clym loses his wife, Wildeve deceives his spouse and Diggory gets his love.

Another notable feature of Hardy's art of characterization is the dominance of heroines more than heroes and these heroines ultimately meet the terrible end. Eustacia is the most powerfully-drawn woman in Hardy's portrait-gallery. Her selfishness, her charms, and beauty, her uncontrolled passions do not blind us to her celestial imperiousness. Hardy suggests that she is a goddess in her power. She has a femme fatale in her power to arouse passions in others and Cleopatra in her pride, her passion and her scorn of consequences. She is Hardy's greatest creations whom no reader is likely to forget. She herself is responsible for the tragedy that befalls her. These are the factors which put her to tragedy: Her unsatisfied longing to be taken to Paris and her Hatred of Heath are the main factors governing her fate. She was attracted towards Clym simply by the hope that she would be taken to Paris. She was also aware of his deficiencies and she frankly confessed to Clym that she didn't have the makings of a good house-wife. But she also told him that she loved him and that she could sacrifice her dream of Paris for him, "To be your wife in Paris would be heaven to me, but I would rather live with you in a hermitage here than not to be yours at all." In spite of this, her desire of Paris never perished. Her reaction to Clym's furze-cutting, her renewed interest in Wildeve, her failure to open the door, and her final decision and death are all the factors which contribute to her tragedy. Eustacia's own weaknesses and lapses play a large part in bringing about the tragedy. Her love of gaiety and fashion, her worldliness and incapacity to appreciate her husband's lofty nature, and her inconsistency are the powerful factors.

Another powerful female character Tess is a sensitive, passionate and earthly figure. What is of enduring charm in Tess of the d'Urbervilles is, in the words of Irving Howe, "the figure of Tess herself." Tess as she is, a woman made real through the craft of art, and not Tess as she represents an idea. Marvelously high-spirited and resilient, Tess embodies a moral poise beyond the reach of most morality. Tess is that rated creature in literature: goodness made interesting". It is her love and loyalty before which all adverse criticism of her acts of omission and

commission seems pointless. She is often shown as a hunted animal or a “bird caught in a trap, but she is certainly not defenseless and helpless as that. She has “powers of survival and suffering”, the mental as well as physical energy to manage herself with faith and courage and remain unsubdued and unbroken in spite of her many injuries and defeats. She is Hardy’s greatest triumph of a simple, peasant girl not only going under in the face of continued onslaughts of misfortune but also warding them off with equanimity, till the very end. To quote Irving Howe again:

“A victim of civilization, she is also a gift of civilization. She comes to seem for us the potential of what life could be, just as what happens to her signifies what life too often becomes.....At least twice in the book Tess seems to Hardy and the surrounding characters larger than life, but in all such instances it is not to make her a goddess or a metaphor, it is to underscore her embattled womanliness.”

In delineating the various characters, Hardy makes use of the natural environment in which these characters live. Egdon Heath is not only the scene of the story but also dominates the plot and determines the characters. It can also be viewed as an antagonist in the story, working against the key characters to bring about their tragic fates. Mrs. Yeobright, exhausted by her long toil to Clym’s house, collapses in the darkness on her return and is bitten by a snake. Wildeve and Eustacia both drown as they plan to flee the heath forever. Clym becomes a preacher, extolling the virtues of a world beyond the heath.

Only Thomasin and Diggory, who are truly at ease with their surroundings, endure. The Heath is a place for lasting sentiment, not fiery passion or intellectual ideals. Those who are able to tune to its rhythms and pace remain. Those who feel they can live beyond their power are destroyed by it. Eustacia views it as an explicit antagonist and says "Tis my cross, my shame and will be my death". Most of all, the Heath is an expression of Hardy's tragic sense, which suggests that time and the world have little use for the squabbles of humans and will thereby negate their efforts time and again.

Hardy’s minor characters such as Captain Vye, Timothy Fairway, Humphrey, Sam, Susan Nonsuch, Johnny Nonsuch, Olly Dowden, Charley, and Christian Cantle are sons of the soil, real children of the earth. They are representatives of antiquity. They perform the function of the Greek Chorus in the novels of Hardy. They comment on the action and people and tell us of what has happened off the stage. They provide a norm by which to judge the main characters of his novels. Often they are the spokesmen of Hardy himself and express his views on life. They appear in groups and generally remain in the background. They, too, are unforgettable and unique in their own way and constitute much of the charm of his novels. When they are absent, as, from Tess, even the best of his novels lose something owing to their absence.

To conclude, Hardy's characters are all human beings, with common human folly and virtues. They are neither saints nor angels nor unredeemed villains. His characters may have some faults; they may have committed sin but they are never mean. We never hate them; we love them despite their faults. They are grand even in the faults they might commit. They have a conscience, and they are torn within themselves when they do some wrong deeds. On the whole, Hardy has been

regarded as one of the greatest creator of ever forgettable characters. He is ranked with great novelists like Scott and Dickens.

## 8.7 CHARACTER SKETCH OF THE MAJOR CHARACTERS

### 8.7.1 Tess

The novel's protagonist Tess is a perfect portrayal of ideal womanhood. She is beautiful, loyal young girl. She is the member of impoverished family called Durbeyfield, living in the village of Marlott. She belongs to the category of Shakespeare's tragic heroines like Desdemona and Cordelia. She is the child of Nature and daughter of Mother Earth. She is well aware of her responsibilities and commits herself in doing the best she can for her family. She is a round character, because she grows from a simple country living girl of sixteen into a complex woman in four or five years only. Intelligent, strikingly attractive, and distinguished by her deep moral sensitivity and passionate intensity, Tess is indisputably the central character of the novel that bears her name. She is an obedient daughter and wife. She is a loving sister and mother. She suffers and dies for her parents, brothers and sisters. She is always trying to solve the economic problems of her family. As such, she goes to Trantridge and loses her chastity. In order to save her family from starvation she has to surrender her body to Alec again. But she is also more than a distinctive individual: Hardy makes her into somewhat of a mythic heroine. Her name, formally Theresa, recalls St. Teresa of Avila, another martyr whose vision of a higher reality cost her life. Other characters often refer to Tess in mythical terms, as when Angel calls her a "Daughter of Nature", or refers to her by the Greek mythological names "Artemis" and "Demeter." The narrator himself sometimes describes Tess as more than an individual woman, but as something closer to a mythical incarnation of womanhood. He says that her eyes are "neither black nor blue nor grey nor violet; rather all these shades together," like "an almost standard woman. In part, Tess represents the changing role of the agricultural workers in England in the late nineteenth century. She has passed the Sixth Standard of the National Schools. She does not quite fit into the folk culture of her predecessors, but financial constraints keep her from rising to a higher station in life. She belongs in that higher world, however, as we discover on the first page of the novel with the news that the Durbeyfield's are the surviving members of the noble and ancient family of the D'Urbervilles. There is aristocracy in Tess's blood, visible in her graceful beauty, yet she is forced to work as a farmhand and milkmaid. Thus, Tess is a symbol of unclear and unstable notions of class in nineteenth-century Britain, where old family lines retained their earlier glamour, but where economic status is more important than inner nobility.

Beyond her social symbolism, Tess represents fallen humanity in a religious sense, as the frequent biblical allusions in the novel remind us. Just as Tess's clan was once glorious and powerful but is now sadly diminished, so too did the early glory of the first humans, Adam and Eve, fade with their expulsion from Eden, making humans sad shadows of what they once were. Tess thus represents what is known in Christian theology as *original sin,* the degraded state in which all humans live, even when—like Tess herself after killing Prince or succumbing to Alec—

they are not wholly or directly responsible for the sins for which they are punished. This torment represents the most universal side of Tess: she is the myth of the human who suffers for crimes that are not her own and lives a life more degraded than she deserves.

Tess is the archetypal anti-heroine. That is, she does not win major battles or influence political decisions; instead, she inhabits her own small world and tries to cope with the fate that life has provided her. By the end of the novel, she is a complete, whole character, but the scale of her influence in her own world, Wessex, is small indeed. Nonetheless, Tess has heroic qualities that make her worthy of our admiration. These qualities are most evident in the following scenes: when she baptizes her infant son, Sorrow; when she endures the tortures of Alec's violation and Angel's abandonment; and when she finally and irrevocably rids herself of Alec's influence. Thus, Tess is a heroine, but on an everyday, ordinary scale.

Tess is a simple country girl/woman who had a basic education growing up, but had little exposure to the wiles of the world outside Marlott. She has curiosity that goes beyond her basic education, as demonstrated when she debates religious and moral issues with both Angel and Alec. Her weakness is her innocence; she is unschooled "in the ways of the world" and therefore unable to protect herself. Tess chides her mother for not telling her full truth about a less-than-kind world: "Why didn't you tell me there was danger in men-folk?"

Throughout the novel, Hardy develops Tess as a character and describes her simple beauty. She is attractive to all men, and even her attempts to change her appearance are not enough to hide her natural beauty. Further in the story, Tess is depicted as a person of near divine qualities when she baptizes Sorrow before he dies. Hardy calls the effect on her siblings as a "transfiguring effect" and that she looked "with a touch of dignity which was almost regal." Tess' beauty is balanced by her earthy elegance, and this is especially evident when she is being courted by Angel at Talbothays:

Minute diamonds of moisture from the mist hung, too, upon Tess' eyelashes, and drops upon her hair, like seed pearls. When the day grew quite strong and commonplace these dried off her; moreover, Tess then lost her strange and ethereal beauty; her teeth, lips, and eyes scintillated in the sunbeams and she was again the dazzlingly fair dairymaid only, who had to hold her own against the other women of the world.

However, behind that beauty Hardy paints a picture of a tortured mind. Tess could not be described as an exuberant person; she seems to border between marginal happiness to deep depression. And her personality is hidden, like an enigma, even from those close to her. Joan, her mother, says in response to a question Angel asks, " . . . I have never really known her." Early in the novel, we see that this statement is foreshadowed when John remarks about Tess, "Tess is queer."

Fate plays a predominate role in what happens to Tess. The acknowledgement of the role of fate is summed up by the locals in the small town as "It was to be." Even Tess realizes that she and her family are in a tough spot

when Prince, the family horse, is killed and she must go to the Stoke-D'Urbervilles for financial recovery. Joan, Tess' mother, realizing that her daughter has suffered several devastating blows by Alec says, "Well, we must make the best of it, I suppose." Tess is resigned to accept Alec's proposal near the end of the novel when she tells Angel, "I don't care what he [Alec] did with' me!" Her own safety and happiness are of no consequence to her. Even when she must atone for murdering Alec, she accepts the inevitable as she is arrested for Alec's death — "It is as it should be." That is, she knows her attempt to avoid prosecution and ultimate death are futile, and she must accept her fate. She does so willingly.

Tess is able to bear great burdens placed upon her at a young age. She is between the ages of 16 and 23 when we read her tale. This ability to undergo so much at such a young age builds her character so that we see her as a powerful force in the novel. She accepts blame for Prince's death; the death of her infant son, Sorrow; the loss of Angel and the destruction of her marriage; as well as her killing Alec with her own hands and leaving home three times in her life to "test the waters of the world" outside her village.

She is unselfish in her actions towards others, as when she suggests to the other milkmaids at Talbothays and Angel, that Izz, Retty, and Marian are all more acceptable for marriage to Angel than she is. The other milkmaids at Talbothays cannot harbor any ill feelings toward Tess, as she is the one bound to marry Angel. Thus, she becomes a character with no discernable negative qualities.

Also, Tess is passionate in her love for Angel and her hatred of Alec. She strays from her marriage only when it appears that Angel may not return to her from South America and when there is no other way to help her destitute family. When she discovers Alec's duplicity, she makes her mind up that this will be his final deception of her.

The martyr-like passion of Tess engenders the readers' sympathy. She makes several attempts to rectify her "mistakes": the vow to Angel to end their marriage; her offer to kill herself to free Angel from their marriage; and, her refusal to ask Angel's parents for any additional money during Angel's sojourn to Brazil. She is determined to be self-sufficient and willing to sacrifice her well-being for the good of others. This makes her selfless and on a morally higher ground than other characters in the novel.

Tess' greatest weakness is for her family, particularly her brothers and sisters, and it is this weakness that Alec exploits to great effect. Her journeys to The Slopes, at the beginning of the novel, and her subsequent return to Alec near the novel’s end, are all predicated on her willingness to undergo great pains to make her family's life better. Alec promises financialaid to the Durbeyfield family several times, to which Tess cannot be objected.

To conclude, Hardy’s immortal character, Tess, comes before us like a goddess in the form of a woman who has to linger long in our memory. She strikes our memory several times like that of sweet Desdemona or gentle Cordelia. She has such magnificent qualities that we are unable to forget her at any step throughout the story. She is the most influential part of the novel. Without her, we cannot

imagine such a splendid story. Her struggle against the cruel social norms, her efforts to make her life better, her passionate love, her endurance, purity of her heart and soul, her beautiful and charming personality, her self-sacrificing nature, are some common traits that are closely associated with us in our day to day life. That is why we are so closely attached to this magnificent character. Undoubtedly, Hardy has painted an unbleached, blank canvas for us, with so many colours that is ever forgettable to us in any respect. Thus, Hardy paints a grand portrait of a well-rounded character in Teresa Durbeyfield.

### 8.7.2 Angel Clare

Angel Clare is the unheralded protagonist of the novel. He is an intelligent and idealistic son of the parson named James Clare. He adopts agriculture for study, and remains skeptical of religion. He is out of the ordinary course of human nature. He is a bundle of contrasting opposites or contradictions. Thomas Hardy has put himself to a great extent into the form of Angel Clare. Like Hardy he has no fixed aim for his material future. Tess, Izz, Retty, and Marian all fall in love with him at Talbothays, but he chooses Tess as his beloved. He loves an idealized, "child of nature" version of Tess, however, and is shocked to learn about her past sexual experiences (even if they were done to her rather than of her own volition). Angel cares more than he would like about the approval of his family and society, and he rejects Tess despite his own sexual indulgence in his past. He goes against what the family had intended for him, a career in the ministry, like his father and brothers. Instead, Angel pursues a career that seems opposite of what his family would like for him — farming. His education comes from his schooling and from his personal experiences. He seems more in tune to the true nature of religion, but in a more practical sense, unlike his university-educated brothers. Farming puts Angel on a level with the common folk who inhabit the rural English countryside. Angel arrives at Talbothays to educate himself in the workings of a farm and falls in love with a dairymaid, Tess. Angel enters the novel at the very beginning, as the nameless young man who dances with the girls of Marlott and then disappears, nameless to the girls and readers. He reappears at Talbothays, when he is 26 and Tess is 20. Angel is a good man. He begins his relationship with Tess by offering to tutor her in history or any subject of her choosing, to make up for her lack of higher education. She gently refuses, but he cannot help but fall in love with this gentle girl. His gentlemanly ways also come to the fore when he offers to carry all four dairymaids over a swollen creek when the girls are on their way to church. It is a perfect excuse for all of the girls — Izz, Retty, Marian, and Tess — to get closer to their desire, Angel Clare himself. He is sincere in his search for a good, hard working woman who will be a help to him on his own farm. His choice of Tess seems an obvious one to him. However, his family has chosen Mercy Chant, a fine lady and woman, to be his bride. He is disappointed in their choice because he has no need for a frilly lady on a farm; instead, he must have a wife willing to work the same jobs and hours as himself. Angel chooses Tess without ever having his family meet her.

He is an egoist, because he stands firmly on and gives supreme importance to his own opinions, thoughts and principles. Angel detests old families and makes his views known to others. Tess hears of his views and thinks that her future with

Angel may be cut short if he learns of her ancient lineage. When he does learn of her family history, he does not make a big issue of her heritage. He seems likely to have more of an issue with his own views of love and marriage. Angel adheres to Tess' wishes when she asks him to leave her. He observes her from a distance, not making any overtures that could be misleading. He waits several chapters to proclaim his love for Tess and waits for her response. He finally convinces her of his intentions to marry her, but his views of love and marriage seem to have very little flexibility: "Yet Clare's love was doubtless ethereal to a fault, imaginative to impracticability." His weakness is his impractical, idealistic love of Tess. He later regrets his rashness and quick decisions and strives to make up to Tess.

Like Tess, Angel has a past, when he was nearly led into a relationship with a woman in London. When Tess relates her own tale, he seems to have forgotten his own lurid tale and denies Tess the forgiveness that she so willingly grants him, thus indicating a flaw in Angel's character: his intractability. This flaw sets up the reason for Angel to reject Tess as a wife and begin his excursion to Brazil.

Angel's life is characterized by quick decisions that are not well thought out and organized. He seems reasonable but makes decisions based on impulse, not rational thinking: his quick proclamation of love for Tess, his intent to go to Brazil, and his asking Izz to accompany him to South America. He sees the errors of his ways and regrets his past declarations: "Viewing her [Tess] in these lights, a regret for his hasty judgment began to oppress him." He seems to have thought out the association with Tess, and the loss of a future life with Mercy Chant. He later asks Tess for forgiveness — "Tess! Can you forgive me for going away?" But he exhibits the kind of decisions that ordinary people make in everyday situations. He promises to take care of Tess after she kills Alec and to make Liza-Lu as his wife after Tess is gone, and he lives up to that promise. Thus, Angel is a character likeable to most readers. Angel is Hardy's voice of agnosticism and the views of religious "freethinkers," those who reject of "the tenets and traditions of formal religion as incompatible with reason." The movement looks to associate with religion but without its formal ties to a church *per se*. Angel could be identified as a deist; that is, he sees God as a creative, living force, but he rejects formal religion. We see this when Hardy writes, "Angel preferred sermons in stones to sermons in churches and chapels on fine summer days." He chose Tess for her ability to be a good wife for a farmer, not for her religious views. Says Hardy, "Angel never would have made orthodoxy a condition of his choice." When describing Tess to his parents, Angel makes a point to tell his parents that Tess is a good Christian woman. Angel has cleared the last obstacle with his parents and returns to Talbothays to convince Tess to marry him. Thus, Angel represents the practical, no-nonsense facet of religion that Hardy himself would have championed.

Angel is a secularist who yearns to work for the “honor and glory of man,” as he tells his father, rather than for the honor and glory of God in a more distant world. A typical young nineteenth-century progressive, Angel sees human society as a thing to be remolded and improved, and he fervently believes in the nobility of man. He rejects the values handed to him, and sets off in search of his own. His love for Tess, a mere milkmaid and his social inferior, is one expression of his disdain for tradition. This independent spirit contributes to his aura of charisma and

general attractiveness that makes him the love object of all the milkmaids with whom he works at Talbothays. As his name—in French, close to "Bright Angel"—suggests, Angel is not quite of this world, but floats above it in a transcendent sphere of his own. The narrator says that Angel shines rather than burns and that he is closer to the intellectually aloof poet Shelley than to the fleshly and passionate poet Byron. His love for Tess may be abstract, as we guess when he calls her "Daughter of Nature" or "Demeter." Tess may be more an archetype or ideal to him than a flesh and blood woman with a complicated life. Angel's ideals of human purity are too elevated to be applied to actual people: Mrs. Durbeyfield's easygoing moral beliefs are much more easily accommodated to real lives such as Tess's. Angel awakens to the actual complexities of real-world morality after his failure in Brazil, and only then he realizes he has been unfair to Tess. His moral system is readjusted as he is brought down to Earth. Ironically, it is not the angel who guides the human in this novel, but the human who instructs the angel, although at the cost of her own life.

To conclude, Hardy's character Angel changes several times throughout the novel, Tess of the D'Urbervilles. Hardy explores Angel's character by portraying him as being a nameless character. This character seems to be not affected by traditional society values in Victorian times. This character is one of the major characters that retreat into the cruelest conventional outlook. Through narrative viewpoint and dialogues, Hardy built more depth to Angel's character that seemed to have abandoned all his starting characteristics with only a glimpse of it towards the end. Hardy's realistic writing style shows that even the "hero" of the book has flaws that almost resemble the villain's and therefore the readers grasp the reversal of characteristics of Angel and Alec D'Urberville as their conflicting relationships go on with Tess throughout the novel.Further, we may add that one's living environment and experiences have a great influence on the development of an individual's character. Only as we experience all kinds of hardships, can we realize the most valuable thing which is always neglected when we have it while we regret when we lose it.

### 8.7.3 Alec D' Urbervilles

An insouciant, foolhardy twenty-four-year-old scoundrel, heir to a fortune, and bearer of a name that his father purchased, Alec is the nemesis and downfall of Tess's life. He sins and the wages of his sin is death. His first name, Alexander, suggests the conqueror—as in Alexander the Great—who seizes what he wants regardless of moral propriety. Yet he is more slippery than a grand conqueror. His full last name, Stoke-d'Urberville, symbolizes the split character of his family, whose origins are simpler than their pretensions to grandeur. After all, Stokes is a blunt and inelegant name. Indeed, the divided and duplicitous character of Alec is evident to the very end of the novel, when he quickly abandons his newfound Christian faith upon re-meeting Tess. It is hard to believe that Alec holds his religion, or anything else, sincerely. His supposed conversion may only be a new role he is playing. This duplicity of character is so intense in Alec, and its consequences for Tess so severe, that he becomes diabolical. The first part of his surname conjures associations with fiery energies, as in the stoking of a furnace or the flames of hell. His devilish associations are evident when he wields a pitchfork

while addressing Tess early in the novel, and when he seduces her as the serpent in Genesis seduced Eve. Additionally, like the famous depiction of Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost,* Alec does not try to hide his bad qualities. In fact, like Satan, he revels them frankly. He bluntly tells Tess, "I suppose I am a bad fellow—a damn bad fellow. I was born bad, and I have lived bad, and I shall die bad, in all probability." There is frank acceptance in this admission and no shame. Some readers feel Alec is too wicked to be believable, but, like Tess herself, he represents a larger moral principle rather than a real individual man. Like Satan, Alec symbolizes the base forces of life that drive a person away from moral perfection and greatness.

In reality, Alec is not a d'Urberville at all; instead, his family was named Stoke, then Stoke-D'Urberville, and later just D'Urberville. His father had made a fortune in north England and had settled in the southern region of the island. He adopted a local name to blend in with the historical association of place.Alec woos Tess with his suave talk and conspicuous wealth. Alec's motives are clear from the beginning: to seduce Tess for his own gain. It could be argued that even after seducing Tess, Alec does indeed fall in love with her and makes his plans to have her as his own a second time. Alec is friendly at first, using his charms to lure Tess back to The Slopes for a second visit. When she returns to become the keeper of Mrs. D'Urberville's poultry collection, Alec uses scare tactics to force Tess to plead to him for relief. The wild ride to Trantridge in the cart is indicative that he will use any means to convince her of his power.

The scene of Tess' first visit, with Alec, feeding Tess strawberries is very sensual and suggestive. A scene like this would have caused more than a few Victorian eyebrows to be raised. Hardy made a point to include such a scene early in the novel to pique the reader's response to the novel. Sex was not a usual subject for a book, and Hardy delivers in his first section lust, sex, and seduction.Tess is no match for Alec. Whereas she is naïve and inexperienced, he is worldly and sophisticated. While she is burdened with the responsibility of providing for her family, he feels an obligation to no one but himself. Alec wears the young girl down to take advantage of her, but she continues to rebuff his advances at every opportunity. It is not until he rescues her from a fight with other Trantridge workers that her fate is sealed. Sensing a chance to have Tess, Alec purposefully becomes lost in a journey through the woods. He rapes Tess while she sleeps awaiting his return.

Alec does not appear in several Chapters. Nevertheless, we cannot say that he doesn't impact the story during these chapters. First, his earlier actions (specifically the rape) impact everything that follows. But his impact is not simply confined to the readers' understanding of the part he has played in Tess' current situation. Hardy brings Alec back to the story through Reverend Clare, who shares with his son (who later shares with Tess) Alec's conversion and ministry. Alec returns physically to the book as a street minister.

Alec is a "sunshine convert," renouncing his newfound faith as soon as he sees Tess again. Using twisted logic, Alec accuses Tess of causing him to stray from his ministry, "But you have been the means — the innocent means — of my backsliding, as they call it." He soon cannot suppress his passion for Tess, calling

her a "temptress." Hardy notes that "The corpses of those old fitful passions which had lain inanimate amid the lines of his face ever since his reformation seemed to wake and come together as in a resurrection." Tess feels some guilt for Alec's plight, and he uses the situation to his advantage again, making her swear to leave him alone at a place called "Cross-in-Hand," the scene not of religious conversion, but of conversion to the ways of the dark side, with Satan.

Alec further lures the unsuspecting Tess by talking her out of remaining true to her marriage to Angel. He will not accept her rejection of him. He is relentless, and he is able to finally sway Tess by catering to her poor family. Alec takes full advantage of Tess at this point, and he convinces her to live with him as a D'Urberville. Thus, Alec has persuaded Tess to live a life of sin. This deception results in his death when Tess, enraged, stabs him.

In the novel, Alec is undoubtedly a bad man, a rapist and a con artist, but he does, in the end, pay to the uttermost farthing, as Tess kills him—thus setting herself up to pay high price as well, but Angel gets away with the damage he has done. Alec represents bad habits that may leave, but they always come back to haunt us. From a woman's perspective, there's no wonder why Tess kills him in the end because that is the only way to get him out of her life for good. Thomas Hardy's development of Alec D'Urberville begins with a misleading physical description that leads to an equally deceiving personality. The shady features of Alec's figure mirror his questionable character. His pretentious claim to the D'Urberville name reflects his equally hallow religious conversion. His adamant temperament and resentment merely lie hidden beneath a shallow coating of religion. Once he abandons this religious yoke, he throws all of his energy into capturing Tess, the tragic end of an empty soul.

## 8.8 LET US SUM UP

Thomas Hardy holds a unique position in the field of world literature. He is the master of the realist drama. Being a keen observer of nature and natural phenomena he creates characters grown in the lap of nature, common and simple people. The first quality of Hardy as a novelist is his wonderful gift of developing characters in his novels. No critic has ever doubted Hardy in this respect. The characters of Hardy are true to life. He has not painted the idealistic aspects of life through his characters. When we come to the realism in his novels, we are surprised to see that he has given a name to every loose stone of the road. He is unrivalled as an artist. He rightly remarks in the preface to *Tess* that a novelist should be an impressionist and not a pleader. A novel should be an impression not an argument. Every novelist is a story teller at bottom – and therefore the novel must remain a story and should not become a thesis.

## 8.9 GLOSSARY

Haggler: A person who argues or bargains over price of something.

Repulsion: strong dislike disapproval.

Atonement: sorry for something bad that you did.

Minimal: very small in amount.

Laxness: carelessness.

Equanimity: A calm mental state especially after a shock.

## 8.10 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss Tess as a social chronicle.
2. Write a note on Hardy's art of characterization.
3. Examine Hardy's plot construction with special reference to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles.*
4. Examine the character of Tess.

## 8.11 FURTHER READING


1. Brown, Jonathan. *Village Life in England, 1860-1940.* London: B. T. Batsford, 1985.
2. Hibbert, Christopher. *Daily Life in Victorian England.* New York: McGraw Hill, 1975.
3. .Kauvar, Gerald B. *The Victorian Mind.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1969.
4. McCord, Norman. *British History, 1815-1906.* London: Oxford University Press, 1991.
5. Millgate, Michael. *Thomas Hardy: A Biography.* New York: Random House, 1982.

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# MAEN-104
# BRITISH NOVEL

# 3
# Block
## Emily Bronte and D. H. Lawrence


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Unit-9 | Emily Bronte: An Introduction | 147-158 |
| Unit-10 | Emily Bronte: Wuthering Heights | 159-169 |
| Unit-11 | D. H. Lawrence: Introduction | 170-181 |
| Unit-12 | D. H. Lawrence: Sons and Lovers | 182-196 |

# BLOCK INTRODUCTION-3

Dear learners! This block is aimed at making you aware two imminent novelists Emily Bronte and D. H. Lawrence. This block is also divided into four units from 9th to 12th. Unit ninth focuses on the introduction of Emily Bronte as a major English novelist of Victorian Era. In this unit, we will learn Bronte's biography, technique and art of writing.

She is well known English novelist and poet who produced highly imaginative work of passion and hate in her literary works. The tenth unit aimed to discuss the Bronte's major novel Wuthering Heights. The unit deals the story, types, purpose, and salient features of the novel Wuthering Heights. It is published in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. It is an imagined novel distinguished from other novels of the period by its dramatic and poetic presentation. The 11th unit focuses on introduction of D. H. Lawrence as a major English novelist of Modern Era. As an English novelist, he is a short story writer, poet and essayist. His modernist works reflect on modernity, social alienation and industrialization, while championing sexuality, vitality and instinct. It deals the biography, philosophy and art of writing. The 12th and last unit of the block focuses on the Hardy's most sensual novel, Sons and the Lovers. It traces emotional conflicts through the protagonist, Paul Morel, and his suffocating relationships with a demanding mother and two very different lovers, which exert complex influences on the development of his manhood. In short, after studying this block, you will be able to understand the philosophical and realist way of thinking about the life and develop the conceptual analytical power to understand human relationship.

# UNIT-9 EMILY BRONTË: LIFE AND WORKS

## Structure


9.0 Objectives

9.1 Introduction

9.2 A Short Note on Victorian Novels

9.3 Emily Brontë: Her Age, Life, and Education

- 9.3.1 Her Age
- 9.3.2 Her Life
- 9.3.3 Her education

9.4 Emily Brontë's Literary Output and Her Achievements

- 9.4.1 Emily Brontë as a Novelist
- 9.4.2 Emily Brontë and Her Sisters
- 9.4.3 Emily Brontë and Charles Dickens
- 9.4.4 Elaine Showalter's Views on Emily Brontë
- 9.4.5 Critics' Views on Emily Brontë

9.5 Emily Brontë's Philosophy of Life

9.6 Influences on Emily Bronte

9.7 Let Us Sum Up

9.8 Questions

9.9 Further Reading


## 9.0 OBJECTIVES

Studying Emily Brontë's works in post-graduate courses allows students to delve deeper into her literary contributions and explore their significance within the broader context of English literature and culture. Some objectives of reading Emily Brontë in post-graduate courses might include: analysing literary style and techniques, understanding historical context, exploring themes and motifs, engaging in interdisciplinary study, Comparing and contrasting with other athors, examining critical reception and Exploring adaptations and influence.

## 9.1 INTRODUCTION

Emily Brontë, as a novelist, distinguishes herself from her contemporaries through her unique approach to storytelling, her exploration of dark and passionate themes, and her defiance of societal norms. While her novel *Wuthering Heights* shares certain characteristics with the works of other 19th-century writers, such as an interest in social issues and a focus on character development, Brontë's work stands apart in several key ways.

Emily Brontë's unique approach to storytelling, her exploration of dark and passionate themes, and her defiance of societal norms set her apart from her contemporaries. Despite having written only one novel, Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* continues to be celebrated as a classic of English literature, illustrating the profound impact of her distinct voice and vision on the literary world.

## 9.2 A SHORT NOTE ON VICTORIAN NOVELS

Victorian English novels refer to the literary works produced during the reign of Queen Victoria, which spanned from 1837 to 1901. This period was characterized by significant social, economic, and political changes in Britain, which were often reflected in the themes and styles of the novels written during this time. Some of the most prominent Victorian authors and their notable works include:

**Charles Dickens**: One of the most celebrated Victorian authors, Dickens is well-known for his vivid characters and social commentary. His most famous novels include *Oliver Twist* (1838), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1861), and *A Christmas Carol* (1843).

**Charlotte Brontë:** Brontë is best known for her novel *Jane Eyre* (1847), which tells the story of an orphaned girl who becomes a governess and falls in love with her employer, Mr. Rochester. The novel addresses themes of class, gender, and morality.

**Emily Brontë:** Emily's only novel, *Wuthering Heights* (1847), is a dark, Gothic tale of love, obsession, and revenge. The novel is set on the Yorkshire moors and explores the complex relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw.

**Thomas Hardy:** Hardy's novels often focused on rural life and the challenges faced by the working class. Some of his most famous works include *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), and *Jude the Obscure* (1895).

**George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans):** Eliot wrote under a male pen name to ensure her work would be taken seriously. She is best known for *Middlemarch* (1871), which is considered one of the greatest English novels. Other notable works include *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and *Silas Marner* (1861).

**Anthony Trollope:** Trollope was a prolific author who produced numerous novels and short stories. His most famous works are the Chronicles of Barsetshire series, which include *The Warden* (1855), *Barchester Towers* (1857), and *Framley Parsonage* (1861).

**Elizabeth Gaskell:** Gaskell's novels often addressed social issues, particularly the lives of women and the working class. Her most famous works include *Mary Barton* (1848), *Cranford* (1853), and *North and South* (1855).

These authors and their works continue to be celebrated and studied for their rich narratives, memorable characters, and insights into Victorian society.

## 9.3 EMILY BRONTË: HER AGE, LIFE, AND EDUCATION

Emily Brontë (1818-1848) was a renowned English novelist and poet, best remembered for her only novel, *Wuthering Heights.* Born on July 30, 1818, in Thornton, West Yorkshire, she was the fifth of six children of Patrick Brontë and Maria Branwell. Her siblings included two older sisters, Charlotte and Anne, who were also accomplished writers, and a brother, Branwell. Collectively, the Brontë sisters are considered among the most important literary figures of the 19th century.

Growing up in the remote village of Haworth, Emily and her siblings were home-schooled by their father, a clergyman, and spent much of their time creating imaginative worlds, writing stories, and composing poetry. Their early literary pursuits were mostly collaborative, including a series of stories and poems set in the imaginary world of Gondal, which Emily and Anne created together.

As an adult, Emily briefly attended a ladies' college but returned home due to her struggles with homesickness. She later worked as a teacher and a governess but found these occupations unsuitable. Ultimately, Emily focused her energies on writing and living a reclusive life at the Haworth Parsonage.

In 1846, Emily, Charlotte, and Anne published a collection of poetry under the pseudonyms Ellis, Currer, and Acton Bell, respectively, in order to conceal their gender. The book, *Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell*, received little attention but solidified the sisters' determination to continue writing.

Emily's masterpiece, *Wuthering Heights*, was published in 1847. The novel, which remains one of the most iconic works of English literature, is a dark and complex tale of love, revenge, and the human condition. It is set on the Yorkshire moors and tells the story of Heathcliff, an orphan adopted by the Earnshaw family, and his tumultuous relationship with his adoptive sister, Catherine. The novel's innovative narrative structure, vivid characters, and emotional intensity have contributed to its enduring appeal and influence on subsequent literature.

Sadly, Emily Brontë's life was cut short when she succumbed to tuberculosis on December 19, 1848, at the age of 30. Despite her brief career, her contributions to literature, particularly through *Wuthering Heights*, have left a lasting impact, and she is celebrated as one of the most distinctive and influential voices in English literature.

### 9.3.1 HER AGE

The period during which Emily Brontë lived and wrote was the early to mid-19th century, during the Victorian era. Queen Victoria's reign began in 1837 and

continued until her death in 1901. The Victorian era was marked by significant social, political, and economic changes, as well as the rapid expansion of the British Empire. It was a time of great innovation and progress in science, industry, and technology, as well as a time of great poverty and social unrest.

Literature played a significant role during this time, with novels becoming increasingly popular as a form of entertainment and social critique. Victorian literature was marked by a focus on realism, social issues, and moral dilemmas, as well as a fascination with the Gothic and the supernatural.

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* was published in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. It was initially met with mixed reviews, as its dark themes and unconventional narrative structure were challenging for some readers. However, over time, *Wuthering Heights* gained recognition as a ground-breaking work of literature that delved deeply into themes of love, revenge, social class, and the human condition.

## 9.3.2 HER LIFE

Emily Brontë (1818-1848) was a British author and poet, best known for her only novel, *Wuthering Heights*. Born in Thornton, West Yorkshire, she was the third of six children born to Patrick Brontë and Maria Branwell. Her siblings were Charlotte, Branwell, Anne, Maria, and Elizabeth.

In 1820, the Brontë family moved to Haworth, where Emily's father was appointed perpetual curate. Tragically, Emily's mother died of cancer in 1821, leaving the children in the care of their maternal aunt, Elizabeth Branwell. In 1824, Emily and her sisters Charlotte, Maria, and Elizabeth were sent to the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge, where the poor conditions and harsh treatment likely influenced the portrayal of Lowood School in Charlotte's novel, *Jane Eyre*. The two older sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, contracted tuberculosis at the school and subsequently died, which led to the removal of the remaining Brontë sisters from the school.

After this tragedy, Emily was educated at home in Haworth, where she developed a love for the Yorkshire moors that would later feature prominently in *Wuthering Heights*. The Brontë children spent much of their free time creating vivid imaginary worlds, which they documented in notebooks and miniature books. Emily and Anne created the world of Gondal, while Charlotte and Branwell focused on the world of Angria.

As an adult, Emily briefly worked as a teacher at Law Hill School in Halifax in 1838, but she left the position after just a few months, likely due to homesickness and her dislike of the restrictive school environment. Emily and her sisters then made several attempts to establish a school at their home, but they were ultimately unsuccessful.

Emily was a private and reclusive person, spending most of her time at home with her family. She is thought to have had few close friends outside her siblings. She began writing poetry in her late teens, and in 1846, she published a collection of poems with her sisters Charlotte and Anne, using the pen names Ellis,

Currer, and Acton Bell to conceal their genders. And, in 1847, Emily published *Wuthering Heights* under the pen name Ellis Bell.

Emily Brontë died of tuberculosis on December 19, 1848, at the age of 30, just a year after the publication of her novel. She is buried in the family vault at St. Michael and All Angels' Church in Haworth.

### 9.3.3 HER EDUCATION

Emily Brontë's education was primarily provided at home by her father, Patrick Brontë, a clergyman and poet. He encouraged all of his children to read widely and provided them with an extensive range of books. The Brontë siblings had access to literary works, religious texts, historical books, and periodicals, all of which contributed to their education and creative development.

In 1824, Emily, along with her sisters Charlotte, Maria, and Elizabeth, attended the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge in Lancashire. The school was known for its harsh conditions and strict disciplinary measures. Emily's stay at the school was short-lived, however, as her older sisters Maria and Elizabeth fell ill and tragically died from tuberculosis. Their father removed Emily and Charlotte from the school in 1825, and they returned home to Haworth Parsonage.

After this experience, the remaining Brontë siblings were educated at home, with their father continuing to provide guidance and support. The children developed their writing skills by creating stories and poems together, inventing imaginary worlds such as Angria and Gondal.

Although Emily's formal education was limited, her upbringing at home with access to a variety of literary works, combined with her imaginative and creative nature, led her to become one of the most influential authors of her time.

## 9.4 EMILY BRONTË'S LITERARY OUTPUT AND HER ACHIEVEMENTS

Emily Jane Brontë (1818-1848) stands as one of the most enigmatic and influential literary figures in the English canon, a masterful storyteller whose haunting prose and unforgettable characters continue to captivate readers over a century after her untimely death.

Growing up in the isolated Haworth Parsonage, nestled between the moors and the wild Yorkshire landscape, Emily and her siblings were profoundly influenced by their surroundings. This mystical, windswept terrain would later become a defining element in her only novel, the dark and brooding masterpiece, *Wuthering Heights* (1847). While her contemporaries may have been shocked by the raw emotion, Gothic elements, and unyielding portrayal of human nature found within its pages, Emily's novel has since been heralded as a ground-breaking work of fiction that defied the expectations of her time.

Despite her literary genius, Emily Brontë remains an enigmatic figure, shrouded in mystery due to her reclusive nature and preference for solitude. A fiercely private individual, she eschewed the limelight and social conventions,

focusing instead on her passion for writing and her love of the natural world. It is this very air of mystique that has only served to heighten interest in her life and work, as scholars and enthusiasts alike continue to delve into the elusive world of Emily Brontë, seeking a deeper understanding of the mind behind one of literature's most enduring masterpieces.

Emily Brontë, an iconic and enigmatic figure in the world of literature, stands as one of the most celebrated novelists of the 19th century. The Brontë family, an epitome of artistic genius, carved a lasting mark in the annals of literary history with their profound and emotionally resonant works.

Emily Brontë's ascension to literary stardom came with her only novel, *Wuthering Heights*, published in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. A tale of love, obsession, and vengeance set against the backdrop of the desolate Yorkshire moors, this ground-breaking novel has captivated generations of readers with its compelling portrayal of human passion and its dark, Gothic atmosphere.

In her tragically short life– Emily died of tuberculosis at the age of 30 – she managed to create a literary masterpiece that defied the conventions of her time. *Wuthering Heights* stands apart from the works of her contemporaries, embracing themes of social class, gender roles, and the struggle for power, all told through a narrative that is both captivating and disconcerting. Emily Brontë's haunting and powerful prose continues to resonate with readers, ensuring her enduring legacy as a novelist of immense talent and depth.

## 9.4.1 EMILY BRONTË AS A NOVELIST

Emily Brontë, as a novelist, distinguishes herself from her contemporaries through her unique approach to storytelling, her exploration of dark and passionate themes, and her defiance of societal norms. While her novel *Wuthering Heights* shares certain characteristics with the works of other 19th-century writers, such as an interest in social issues and a focus on character development, Brontë's work stands apart in several key ways.

1. Narrative structure: Unlike the more straightforward narratives employed by many of her contemporaries, Emily Brontë crafted a complex and layered narrative structure in *Wuthering Heights*. The story is told through multiple narrators – Mr. Lockwood and Nelly Dean – who relay the events from different perspectives and timeframes. This narrative technique adds depth and intrigue to the story, inviting readers to piece together the puzzle of the characters' lives.

2. Gothic atmosphere: While Gothic literature was popular during the 19th century, Emily Brontë's work delves even deeper into the dark and haunting aspects of the genre. The desolate and wild Yorkshire moors, the brooding and enigmatic character of Heathcliff, and the intense emotions that permeate the novel create a chilling atmosphere that sets *Wuthering Heights* apart from other contemporary novels.

3. Themes and characters: Emily Brontë's exploration of themes such as love, obsession, vengeance, and the destructive nature of social class was

groundbreaking for her time. Her characters are deeply flawed and driven by powerful emotions, making them relatable and intriguing to readers. In contrast, many contemporary novels focused on the moral improvement of characters and the triumph of virtue over vice.

4. Defiance of conventions: Brontë's work challenged the societal norms and expectations of the time, particularly with regard to gender roles and the depiction of female characters. While many contemporary novels featured submissive and demure female protagonists, Brontë's Catherine Earnshaw is a strong-willed and passionate character who defies expectations. This defiance of conventions made Emily Brontë's work both controversial and ground-breaking.

Emily Brontë's unique approach to storytelling, her exploration of dark and passionate themes, and her defiance of societal norms set her apart from her contemporaries. Despite having written only one novel, Brontë's work continues to be celebrated as a classic of English literature, illustrating the profound impact of her distinct voice and vision on the literary world.

## 9.4.2 EMILY BRONTË AND HER SISTERS

The Brontë sisters, Emily, Charlotte, and Anne, each carved their own distinctive paths in the literary world, making significant contributions to English literature with their unique talents and perspectives. While all three shared a profound understanding of human emotions and a gift for storytelling, their works differed in terms of style, themes, and focus, creating a rich and diverse Brontë legacy.

Emily Brontë, as previously mentioned, is best known for her singular novel, *Wuthering Heights*. Charlotte Brontë, the eldest of the sisters, is most famous for her novel *Jane Eyre*, published in 1847 under the pseudonym Currer Bell. This coming-of-age story follows the life of its titular character, Jane, as she navigates the complexities of love, morality, and social expectations. Unlike Emily's *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte's work is more grounded in realism, focusing on the protagonist's inner growth and resilience. *Jane Eyre* stands out for its exploration of themes such as gender roles, social class, and the significance of individuality.

Anne Brontë, the youngest of the three, is known for her novels *Agnes Grey* (1847) and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848), published under the pseudonym Acton Bell. Anne's works often dealt with the harsh realities faced by women, critiquing the societal norms and expectations that confined them. Her writing is characterized by a moral clarity and a call for social reform, diverging from the more introspective nature of Emily's work and the romantic elements of Charlotte's.

The Brontë sisters, despite their shared upbringing and literary influences, brought their unique voices and perspectives to their novels. Emily's dark and passionate *Wuthering Heights* contrasts with Charlotte's character-driven and introspective *Jane Eyre*, while Anne's socially critical works focus on the plight of women in a patriarchal society. Each sister's distinctive approach to storytelling and exploration of human emotions has left an indelible mark on the landscape of

English literature, ensuring their lasting legacy as three of the most celebrated novelists of the 19th century.

## 9.4.3 EMILY BRONTË AND CHARLES DICKENS

Emily Brontë and Charles Dickens, both luminaries of the 19th-century literary world, each left an indelible mark on literature. Although they emerged from the same era, their styles, themes, and literary contributions are distinctly different, showcasing the richness and diversity of Victorian literature.

Emily Brontë, best known for her singular novel, *Wuthering Heights*, delved into the depths of human passion, exploring themes of love, obsession, and revenge. Brontë's unique storytelling approach intertwines multiple narrators and nonlinear timelines, creating a haunting and complex tapestry of emotions and relationships.

In contrast, Charles Dickens, a prolific author with numerous novels and short stories to his name, is celebrated for his vivid characterizations and biting social commentary. Dickens painted a detailed portrait of Victorian England, highlighting the ills of the Industrial Revolution, class disparities, and social injustices. Works such as Oliver Twist, A Tale of Two Cities, and Great Expectations demonstrate his ability to weave intricate plots and create memorable characters, while also addressing pressing societal issues.

While Brontë's writing leans towards introspective exploration of the human psyche, Dickens' work is more outward-looking, focusing on the struggles and triumphs of everyday life in Victorian society. Brontë's prose, often imbued with a poetic quality, is more concerned with the emotional and psychological aspects of her characters. On the other hand, Dickens' writing is characterized by a sharp wit, rich description, and a strong sense of realism.

Emily Brontë and Charles Dickens, though contemporaries, offer contrasting literary styles and thematic concerns. Brontë's work is a deeply emotional and introspective examination of human relationships, while Dickens' novels provide incisive social commentary and memorable character studies. Both authors have left an enduring legacy, shaping the course of English literature and offering readers the opportunity to experience the vast spectrum of human experience.

## 9.4.4 ELAINE SHOWALTER'S VIEWS ON EMILY BRONTË

Elaine Showalter, a prominent American literary critic and feminist scholar, has made significant contributions to the study of women writers, including Emily Brontë. Showalter's ground-breaking book, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (1977), provides a comprehensive analysis of the development of women's writing in Britain from the Victorian period to the 20th century.

In her work, Showalter emphasizes the importance of understanding female literary tradition and the social context that influenced women's writing. She divides the evolution of women's writing into three phases: the Feminine Phase

(1840-1880), the Feminist Phase (1880-1920), and the Female Phase (1920 onwards). According to Showalter, Emily Brontë belongs to the Feminine phase, characterized by women writers imitating the dominant male literary tradition and internalizing the prevailing patriarchal values.

Showalter acknowledges Emily Brontë's unique position as a female writer in the 19th century, recognizing the challenges she faced as a woman in a male-dominated literary world. In *Wuthering Heights*, Brontë explores themes of gender, power, and social constraints, transcending the traditional expectations of female writers during her time. Showalter argues that Brontë's bold and innovative approach to storytelling, including the exploration of dark and violent emotions, sets her apart from her contemporaries.

Moreover, Showalter emphasizes that Emily Brontë's reclusive lifestyle and the fact that she wrote under a male pseudonym reveal the complexities faced by women writers in the Victorian era. The mystique surrounding Brontë's life and her singular work has fascinated critics like Showalter, who continue to analyse her contributions to the development of female literary tradition.

Elaine Showalter's views on Emily Brontë focus on understanding her within the context of female literary tradition, acknowledging the challenges she faced as a woman writer in the 19th century, and recognizing the innovative and ground-breaking qualities of her work in Wuthering Heights.

## 9.4.5 CRITICS' VIEWS ON EMILY BRONTË

Emily Brontë's work, particularly her novel *Wuthering Heights*, has attracted significant attention from literary critics since its publication in 1847. Critics have offered diverse perspectives on her writing style, themes, and her place in the literary canon. Here are some notable viewpoints from various critics:

1. Charlotte Brontë, Emily's elder sister and fellow novelist, wrote a preface to the second edition of *Wuthering Heights* in which she acknowledged the book's uniqueness and power, but also suggested that it might have been a more polished work had Emily lived longer.

2. Victorian critics, such as Sydney Dobell and James Lorimer, had mixed reactions to *Wuthering Heights*. Some found the novel's violence and intensity troubling, while others praised its originality and emotional depth.

3. In the 20th century, critics like David Cecil, F.R. Leavis, and Q.D. Leavis began to emphasize the novel's structural complexity and innovative narrative techniques, including its use of multiple narrators and non-linear timelines. They also explored the themes of social class, gender, and the influence of the natural world in Emily's work.

4. Marxist critics, such as Terry Eagleton, have analyzed *Wuthering Heights* in the context of class struggle and the tensions between rural and industrial societies in 19th-century England. Eagleton argued that the novel reflects the economic and social upheavals of the time.

5. Feminist critics, including Ellen Moers, Sandra M. Gilbert, and Susan Gubar, have focused on the novel's portrayal of female characters, gender roles, and power dynamics. They highlight the ways in which Emily Brontë challenged traditional expectations of women in Victorian society and her exploration of the limitations imposed on them.

6. Psychoanalytic critics, such as Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan, have interpreted Wuthering Heights as a study of human desire, obsession, and the unconscious. They explore the psychological motivations of the characters and the novel's exploration of emotional extremes.

7. More recent critics, like Camille Paglia and Patsy Stoneman, have continued to re-evaluate Emily Brontë's place in the literary canon, exploring her influence on modern and postmodern writers and examining the novel's enduring appeal to readers.

Emily Brontë's work, particularly *Wuthering Heights*, has attracted a wide range of critical perspectives. Over time, these views have evolved, and Emily's place in the literary canon has been solidified as one of the most significant and innovative novelists of the 19th century.

## 9.5 EMILY BRONTË'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Emily Brontë had a unique philosophy of life that was deeply influenced by her personal experiences, the natural world, and her imagination. While it is difficult to pinpoint a single, coherent philosophy in her work, several key themes can be identified in her writing and her life:

**The power of nature:** Emily Brontë was deeply influenced by the rugged beauty of the Yorkshire moors, where she spent most of her life. Nature served as a source of inspiration and solace for her, and she often used it as a backdrop in her writing. In her poetry and prose, the natural world is portrayed as a powerful, untamed force that can mirror human emotions and passions.

**The duality of existence:** Brontë's work often explores the dichotomy between good and evil, love and hate, and suffering and happiness. *Wuthering Heights*, for example, is a story of intense and destructive passions that coexist alongside deep love and devotion. Brontë suggests that these dualities are inherent in human nature and that we must learn to navigate them to find meaning and purpose in life.

**The importance of individualism:** Emily Brontë was a fiercely independent woman who valued her own thoughts and feelings above societal norms and expectations. In her work, she emphasizes the importance of embracing one's true self, even when it goes against societal conventions. This can be seen in characters like Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, who defy social norms in pursuit of their desires.

**The inevitability of suffering:** Brontë's life was marked by personal tragedy and loss, which is reflected in her writing. She believed that suffering was an inevitable part of the human experience and that it was necessary for growth and self-

discovery. Her characters often endure great hardships, but these trials ultimately serve to deepen their understanding of themselves and the world around them.

**The transcendence of love:** One of the central themes in Wuthering Heights is the power of love to transcend boundaries and overcome obstacles. The novel suggests that true love, while often accompanied by suffering, can create a powerful connection between individuals that transcends time, space, and even death.

Emily Brontë's philosophy of life is characterized by a deep appreciation for the natural world, an exploration of the dualities inherent in human nature, a celebration of individualism, an acceptance of suffering as a part of existence, and a belief in the transcendent power of love.

## 9.6 INFLUENCES ON EMILY BRONTE

Emily Bronte (1818-1848) was a British novelist and poet, best known for her classic novel, *Wuthering Heights*. Her work was influenced by several factors, including her family, her isolated upbringing, her love of nature, the Romantic literary movement, and the socio-political context of her time.

**Love of nature:** Emily was deeply connected to the natural world, and her love for the outdoors is evident in her poetry and prose. She often depicted the Yorkshire moors and their changing seasons, using nature as a metaphor for human emotions and experiences.

**Romantic literary movement:** The Romantic movement, characterized by a focus on emotion, individualism, and nature, was influential on Emily's writing. Her work is infused with Romantic themes, such as the power of love and the exploration of the human soul.

**Socio-political context:** Victorian England was marked by rigid social structures and a growing industrialization. Emily's work reflects the tensions and contradictions of her time, exploring themes of social class, gender roles, and the individual's struggle for freedom and self-expression.

**Literary influences:** Emily was an avid reader and was exposed to a wide range of literary works, including the Bible, Shakespeare, and the Romantic poets (such as Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and John Keats). The influence of these works can be seen in the themes, imagery, and style of her writing.

## 9.7 LET US SUM UP

Emily Bronte was an English novelist and poet, born in 1818. She is best known for her only novel, *Wuthering Heights*, which was published in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. The book is considered a classic of English literature and is famous for its portrayal of intense passion and the conflicts between love and revenge. Emily's writing style is characterized by its unique blend of gothic elements, imaginative landscapes, and complex psychological portraits of her characters. Despite her short life, Emily Bronte's work has had a lasting impact and continues to be widely read and studied today.

## 9.8 QUESTIONS

1. What was the Bronte family background and upbringing like?

2. Who were Emily's siblings and what were their literary contributions?

3. What was the main theme of *Wuthering Heights* and why is it considered a classic of English literature?

4. How did Emily's life experiences and background influence her writing?

5. What was the literary context of the Victorian era and how did it shape Emily's writing?

6. How did Emily's work and writing style differ from that of her contemporaries?

7. What is known about Emily's personal life, including her relationships and influences?

8. What was Emily's legacy and how has her work been received and interpreted over time?

9. How does Emily Bronte's life and work fit into the larger context of English literature and culture?

## 9.9 FURTHER READING

*Emily Bronte: A Biography* by Elizabeth Langland

*Wuthering Heights: A Reader's Guide* by John McTyre

*Emily Bronte: The Artist as a Free Woman* by Stevie Davies

*The Art of Emily Bronte* by Richard Woodhead

*A Companion to Wuthering Heights* edited by Richard J. Hand and Michael H. Bengal

*Emily Bronte and Wuthering Heights: A Collection of Critical Essays* edited by Richard J. Dunn.

# UNIT-10 WUTHERING HEIGHTS BY EMILY BRONTË

## Structure


10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 The Publication of *Wuthering Heights*

10.3 Brief Outline of *Wuthering Heights* story

10.4 Tools of scholarship

10.4.1 Plot Structure

10.4.2 Complexity of Characterisation

10.4.3 Narrative Technique

10.4.4 Themes and Motifs

10.5 Critical Reception

10.6 Let Us Sum Up

10.7 Questions

10.8 Further Reading


## 10.0 OBJECTIVES

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* explores the complexities of human emotions, social class, and the consequences of destructive love. The novel delves into the intense bond between Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw, revealing the dark and obsessive nature of their love. Set against the wild, rugged landscape of the Yorkshire moors, Brontë exposes the hypocrisy and rigidity of Victorian society through her vivid characters. Ultimately, *Wuthering Heights* aims to depict the cyclical nature of violence and suffering, the transformative power of love, and the possibility of redemption, while challenging conventional norms and expectations.

## 10.1 INTRODUCTION

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, first published in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell, is a classic work of English literature. Set in the moors of Yorkshire, the novel explores themes of love, revenge, and social class through the dark, atmospheric story of the Earnshaw and Linton families. The narrative spans

multiple generations and is told through the perspectives of multiple narrators, offering readers a complex and layered view of the characters and their relationships.

The story centres on the ill-fated love between the brooding Heathcliff and the spirited Catherine Earnshaw. Heathcliff, an orphan adopted by Catherine's father, develops a deep bond with Catherine but faces constant discrimination due to his social status and mysterious origins. As Catherine grows older, she becomes torn between her love for Heathcliff and her desire for social advancement, ultimately leading to a cycle of revenge and misery that affects both families.

*Wuthering Heights* is notable for its vivid and evocative depiction of the natural world, particularly the wild and desolate moors that serve as the backdrop for the novel. The harsh landscape mirrors the turbulent emotions of the characters and often serves as a metaphor for their struggles and passions. Additionally, the novel's exploration of the destructive nature of love and the consequences of social class distinctions remain relevant to this day.

The novel's structure, which relies on the use of multiple narrators and a non-linear timeline, adds to its complexity. This narrative technique allows Brontë to delve deeply into the psychological motivations of her characters while maintaining an air of mystery and ambiguity.

Though *Wuthering Heights* was met with mixed reviews when it was first published, it has since been recognized as a ground-breaking work of literature, and Emily Brontë has been celebrated as one of the great literary figures of the 19th century. Today, the novel is studied and enjoyed by readers worldwide for its poetic language, complex characterizations, and timeless exploration of human emotions.

## 10.2 THE PUBLICATION OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS

*Wuthering Heights* is a novel written by Emily Brontë, published under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. The novel was first published in 1847, and its publication history has seen multiple editions and adaptations.

**First edition (1847):** The novel was initially published in December 1847 by Thomas Cautley Newby as part of a three-volume set that also included Anne Brontë's *Agnes Grey*. Emily and Anne published their works together due to the financial constraints of self-publishing. This first edition had a limited print run and featured numerous errors and misprints.

**Second edition (1850):** After Emily Brontë's death in 1848, her sister Charlotte Brontë edited a new edition of *Wuthering Heights*. This edition, published in 1850 by Smith, Elder & Co., featured some corrections and revisions by Charlotte, who also provided a preface defending the novel and her sister's work. This edition was published as a standalone volume, separate from *Agnes Grey*.

Today, *Wuthering Heights* is widely available in different editions and formats, and it continues to be studied and celebrated as an important work of English literature.

## 10.3 THE BRIEF OUTLINE OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS

*Wuthering Heights* is a novel by Emily Brontë, published in 1847. The novel is set in the early 19th century in the moors of Yorkshire, England and follows the lives of two families, the Earnshaws and the Lintons. The novel is a complex tale of love, revenge, and the destructive power of obsession.

The novel begins with the introduction of Mr. Lockwood, a tenant at Thrushcross Grange who has rented Wuthering Heights, a nearby farmhouse, from the surly and inhospitable Heathcliff. Lockwood becomes fascinated by the story of Heathcliff and the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights and eventually learns the tragic history of the Earnshaws and the Lintons.

The story begins with the arrival of **Mr. Earnshaw's adopted son, Heathcliff**, at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff is a dark-skinned gypsy boy and is initially mistreated by Mr. Earnshaw's son, Hindley, but he becomes very close to Earnshaw's daughter, Catherine. Catherine and Heathcliff form a deep and intense bond, but their relationship is complicated by their different social statuses and Catherine's growing interest in Edgar Linton, a wealthy neighbour.

Catherine eventually marries Linton, which devastates Heathcliff and sets off a chain of events that drives the rest of the novel. Heathcliff becomes obsessed with revenge and begins to take it out on the Lintons and the Earnshaws. He becomes cruel and ruthless and eventually takes control of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange.

Throughout the novel, the themes of love, hate, revenge, and the destructive power of obsession are explored in depth. The novel also touches on issues of social class and the role of women in society. Brontë's use of language and imagery is powerful and poetic, and the characters are complex and well-drawn.

One of the most striking aspects of the novel is the character of Heathcliff. He is a dark and brooding figure, filled with anger and hatred, yet he is also deeply passionate and capable of great love. His obsession with Catherine and his desire for revenge drive the plot of the novel and make him one of the most memorable characters in literature.

Catherine, too, is a complex character. She is headstrong and passionate, but also selfish and manipulative. Her love for Heathcliff is intense and consuming, but her desire for social status ultimately drives her to marry Edgar Linton. Her decision sets off a chain of events that she is unable to control and that ultimately leads to tragedy.

The other characters in the novel are also well-drawn and memorable. Hindley, Mr. Earnshaw's son, is consumed with jealousy and resentment toward Heathcliff and ultimately becomes a drunken and abusive figure. Edgar Linton is wealthy and refined, but also weak and unable to control his wife or protect his family from Heathcliff's wrath. Isabella Linton, Edgar's sister, becomes infatuated

with Heathcliff and marries him, only to discover too late the dark and cruel nature of his obsession.

The novel is also notable for its setting on the Yorkshire moors. The landscape is harsh and unforgiving, and the characters are often at the mercy of the elements. The moors also serve as a metaphor for the wild and untamed emotions of the characters.

Ultimately, Wuthering Heights is a powerful and tragic novel that explores the depths of human emotion and the destructive power of obsession. Brontë's vivid language and imagery, along with her complex and memorable characters, make the novel a timeless masterpiece of English literature.

## 10.4 TOOLS OF SCHOLARSHIP

*Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë's classic novel, can be read through various lenses:

**Romanticism:** Explore passionate love and untamed nature, focusing on the tragic love story of Catherine and Heathcliff.

**Gothic fiction:** Delve into the dark, mysterious atmosphere, haunted settings, and supernatural elements.

**Psychoanalytic**: Analyse characters' unconscious desires, repressed emotions, and internal conflicts.

**Feminism:** Examine gender roles, societal expectations, and women's empowerment.

**Class struggle:** Investigate social mobility, power dynamics, and the impact of wealth on relationships.

**Intertextuality:** Recognize literary allusions and parallels to other works.

**Structuralism:** Observe narrative structure, frame narrative, and storytelling techniques.

### 10.4.1 PLOT STRUCTURE

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* is a classic example of Gothic fiction that has captivated readers for centuries. The novel's intricate and non-linear plot structure is one of the primary reasons for its enduring appeal.

**Framing Narrative and Unreliable Narrators**

*Wuthering Heights* is unique in its use of a frame narrative, where the story is relayed through the perspective of two unreliable narrators, Mr. Lockwood and Nelly Dean. This narrative technique adds depth and complexity to the story, as the reader is compelled to question the accuracy of the narrators' accounts and piece together the true nature of events. This element of unreliability generates a sense of mystery and intrigue, encouraging the reader to actively engage with the text.

**Dual Timeframe**

The novel is set in two distinct time periods, creating a sense of temporal depth and allowing for a rich exploration of generational conflicts and legacies. The narrative shifts between the late 18th century, focusing on the tumultuous relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw, and the early 19th century, which centres on the second generation of characters. This dual timeframe adds a layer of complexity to the novel and intensifies the impact of the characters' actions on future generations.

**Parallelism and Doubling**

*Wuthering Heights* employs the technique of parallelism and doubling, as the characters and events of the first generation are mirrored by those of the second. This creates a sense of symmetry and cyclical pattern, underlining the themes of revenge, social class, and the destructive power of love. The novel's intricate structure serves to reinforce these themes and emphasizes the consequences of the characters' choices on the lives of their descendants.

**Contrasting Settings**

The contrasting settings of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange play a crucial role in the novel's plot structure. These two estates represent opposing values and lifestyles, with Wuthering Heights symbolizing the wild, untamed moors, and Thrushcross Grange representing the gentler, more refined aspects of society. The characters' movement between these two locations serves as a reflection of their internal struggles and emotional states, furthering the novel's exploration of the human condition.

**Gothic Elements and Supernatural Intrusions**

The Gothic elements of *Wuthering Heights*, such as the haunted house, dark and brooding atmosphere, and supernatural occurrences, contribute to the novel's complex plot structure. These elements serve to heighten the sense of tragedy and inevitability that pervades the narrative, while also providing a fitting backdrop for the intense emotions and dramatic events that unfold.

The plot structure of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* is an intricate and masterful blend of narrative techniques, timeframes, and thematic parallels that serve to heighten the novel's emotional intensity and thematic depth. The novel's non-linear structure, unreliable narrators, and Gothic atmosphere create a sense of mystery and intrigue that has captivated readers for generations, solidifying *Wuthering Heights* as a cornerstone of English literature.

## 10.4.2 COMPLEXITY OF CHARACTERISATION

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* is an iconic work of English literature that has captivated readers since its publication in 1847. One of the novel's most compelling aspects is its intricate characterisation, which defies traditional classification and introduces a rich cast of characters that continue to haunt our collective imagination. In this section, we will explore the ways in which Brontë crafts her

characters, focusing on the novel's two most memorable figures: Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw.

**The Ambiguity of Characters**

Brontë's characters are complex and layered, often evoking both sympathy and repulsion. Heathcliff, for instance, is at once a victim of cruel circumstances and a perpetrator of violence and vengeance. This duality creates an enigmatic figure who cannot be easily categorised as either a hero or a villain. Similarly, Catherine is a strong-willed, passionate character who possesses a self-destructive nature. Her capriciousness and inability to reconcile her love for Heathcliff with her desire for social advancement leads to her own downfall. These multifaceted characters challenge the reader's expectations and invite deeper exploration.

**The Impact of Environment**

The harsh and unforgiving landscape of the Yorkshire moors shapes the characters of *Wuthering Heights*, and their behaviours are a reflection of their surroundings. The novel's titular setting, Wuthering Heights, is described as a dark and stormy place that breeds a sense of isolation and even hostility. This atmosphere is mirrored in the personalities of its inhabitants, particularly Heathcliff, who becomes increasingly cruel and vengeful as the story unfolds. In contrast, Thrushcross Grange represents a more refined and cultured environment, which contributes to the development of characters like Edgar Linton, who is more genteel and restrained.

**The Role of Social Class and Gender**

Brontë's portrayal of social class and gender dynamics is another crucial aspect of her characterisation. The novel explores the consequences of social hierarchy on the characters' lives, as well as the limitations imposed on them by their gender. Catherine's struggle to reconcile her love for Heathcliff with her ambition for a higher social status exemplifies the impact of social constraints. Similarly, Heathcliff's journey from a mistreated orphan to a wealthy landowner highlights the inherent injustices within the Victorian social order.

**Relationships As a Means of Character Development**

The relationships between the characters in *Wuthering Heights* play a significant role in their development. The tempestuous love between Heathcliff and Catherine drives much of the novel's conflict, and their destructive passion is a central theme of the story. Additionally, the relationships between the various members of the Earnshaw and Linton families provide insights into their individual character traits and motivations.

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* presents a masterful study in characterisation. Through her use of ambiguity, the influence of the environment, the exploration of social class and gender dynamics, and the power of relationships, Brontë crafts a cast of characters that are as complex and enduring as the novel itself.

## 10.4.3 NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

Emily Brontë's 1847 novel, *Wuthering Heights*, has long been regarded as a classic of English literature. The narrative technique employed by Brontë plays a significant role in shaping the novel's distinctive atmosphere, while also contributing to the story's complexity and depth. Here, we will examine the most salient aspects of Brontë's narrative technique in *Wuthering Heights*, including the use of a frame narrative, the choice of multiple narrators, and the novel's non-linear structure.

**Frame Narrative**

*Wuthering Heights* is structured as a frame narrative, with the outer frame being the story of Mr. Lockwood, a tenant at Thrushcross Grange, who becomes intrigued by his enigmatic landlord, Heathcliff, and the dark history of Wuthering Heights (place). The inner story is primarily told through the housekeeper, Nelly Dean, with occasional interjections from other characters. This narrative technique serves to create a sense of distance between the reader and the events of the story, as well as adding an air of mystery and suspense to the novel.

**Multiple Narrators**

Brontë's decision to use multiple narrators in *Wuthering Heights* enhances the story's complexity and richness. By providing different perspectives on the events and characters, the novel offers the reader an opportunity to form their own opinions and draw their own conclusions. Nelly Dean serves as the primary narrator, but her account is occasionally supplemented by other characters, such as Heathcliff, Isabella, and Catherine. This technique allows Brontë to explore the subjectivity of human experience and the limitations of individual perspectives.

**Non-linear Structure**

The narrative of *Wuthering Heights* is non-linear, with events unfolding in a disjointed manner, as Nelly's recollections and Lockwood's experiences intertwine. This structure enables Brontë to create a sense of tension and suspense, as readers must piece together the story from the fragments provided. Additionally, the non-linear structure reflects the novel's themes of cyclical violence and generational trauma, as the past continually resurfaces to shape the present.

**Unreliable Narration**

Brontë's choice to use first-person narration in *Wuthering Heights* means that the story is subject to the biases and limitations of the individual narrators. As a result, the novel features a degree of unreliable narration, particularly from Nelly Dean, who is intimately involved in the events she recounts. This device allows Brontë to explore the complexities of human emotion and the fallibility of memory, while also encouraging the reader to engage critically with the narrative and question the veracity of the accounts provided.

In conclusion, the narrative technique employed by Emily Brontë in *Wuthering Heights* is a key element of the novel's enduring appeal. The use of a frame narrative, multiple narrators, a non-linear structure, and unreliable narration all contribute to the novel's rich and complex atmosphere. By challenging conventional narrative structures and offering multiple perspectives on the story's events, Brontë encourages readers to question the nature of truth and the reliability of human memory, making *Wuthering Heights* a captivating and thought-provoking literary work. Emily Brontë's narrative technique in her novel *Wuthering Heights* is complex, yet it exhibits her skill, perfection, and novelty. Even fastidious critics have praised her narrative technique.

## 10.4.4 THEMES AND MOTIFS

*Wuthering Heights* is rich with themes and motifs, many of which are interconnected, creating a complex and layered narrative. Some of the most prominent themes and motifs in Wuthering Heights include:

**Love and obsession:** The novel explores the destructive and all-consuming nature of love, particularly through the tumultuous relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw. Their love is obsessive, passionate, and ultimately destructive, as it consumes their lives and the lives of those around them.

**Nature versus civilization:** *Wuthering Heights* contrasts the wild, untamed nature of the Yorkshire moors with the refined and civilized world of Thrushcross Grange. This motif is also mirrored in the characters, with Heathcliff representing the raw, untamed forces of nature and Edgar Linton symbolizing the genteel, civilized world.

**Social class and inheritance:** The novel scrutinizes the rigid class structure of 19th-century England and the role that inheritance plays in determining a person's worth and prospects. Heathcliff, an orphan with no social standing, rises to wealth and power through cunning and ruthlessness, ultimately disrupting the social order.

**Revenge and cycles of violence:** One of the most striking themes in the novel is the cycle of violence and revenge that plagues the characters. Heathcliff's quest for vengeance against those who have wronged him perpetuates a cycle of violence that affects everyone around him, and demonstrates the destructive nature of seeking revenge.

**The supernatural and the Gothic:** *Wuthering Heights* is often considered a Gothic novel due to its use of supernatural elements and dark, atmospheric setting. Ghosts, omens, and dreams all play a role in the narrative, contributing to the sense of mystery and foreboding that permeates the story.

**Doubling and contrasts:** The novel is filled with doubles and contrasts, both in its characters and settings. For instance, Heathcliff and Catherine are contrasted with Edgar and Isabella Linton, while Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange serve as opposing settings. These dualities serve to illuminate the various themes and motifs present in the novel.

**The power of the past:** The past is a powerful force in *Wuthering Heights*, influencing the present and shaping the future of the characters. The novel is

structured as a series of interconnected flashbacks, underscoring the importance of the past and the way it haunts the characters.

*Wuthering Heights* is a novel that delves into themes of love, obsession, nature, civilization, social class, revenge, the supernatural, doubling, and the power of the past. These themes and motifs intertwine and reinforce one another, creating a complex and layered narrative that continues to captivate readers nearly two centuries after its publication.

## 10.5 CRITICAL RECEPTION

*Wuthering Heights*, published in 1847, is the only novel by Emily Brontë. It has garnered a complex and varied critical reception over the years. Initially, the novel was met with mixed reviews, primarily due to its controversial themes and dark, Gothic tone. Many critics at the time were shocked by the violence, passion, and unconventional characters in the story, and some even questioned the morality of the novel.

Over time, however, Wuthering Heights has come to be regarded as a classic of English literature. As the Victorian era's strict moral codes began to loosen, later generations of critics started to appreciate the novel's depth, emotional intensity, and exploration of human nature. Critics began to recognize the innovative narrative structure and the vivid, complex characters, such as the iconic Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw.

Today, Wuthering Heights is celebrated as a seminal work in the Gothic genre and a profound exploration of love, obsession, and the destructive power of social class. Scholars and readers continue to analyse the novel's themes and its place in the literary canon. It is frequently studied in literature courses and continues to inspire adaptations, such as movies, TV series, and stage productions. While the novel remains polarizing, with some readers still finding the characters and themes challenging or unlikable, *Wuthering Heights* has undeniably left a lasting impact on the literary world and continues to be a beloved and influential work.

While the novel has been highly regarded by many as a classic of English literature, it has also faced its fair share of criticism. Here is an overview of some key perspectives:

**Initial reception:** Upon its release, *Wuthering Heights* received mixed reviews. Some critics found the story to be disturbing and morally ambiguous, while others were captivated by its originality and emotional intensity. The novel's dark themes, violence, and passionate characters were considered shocking to Victorian readers. Its unconventional narrative structure also drew both praise and criticism.

**Feminist criticism:** Many feminist critics view Wuthering Heights as an important work of female authorship that challenges traditional gender roles and expectations. They argue that Brontë created strong, independent female characters in Catherine Earnshaw and Catherine Linton, who defy societal norms and assert their own desires.

**Psychoanalytic criticism:** Psychoanalytic critics often analyse the novel's characters and relationships through the lens of psychological theories, such as

Freudian concepts of the id, ego, and superego. They explore the characters' motivations, desires, and conflicts, as well as themes of love, hate, and the subconscious

**Gothic and Romantic elements:** Critics have long recognized Wuthering Heights as a significant work within both the Gothic and Romantic literary traditions. They examine the novel's dark, atmospheric setting, supernatural elements, and exploration of emotional extremes, as well as its portrayal of passionate, often destructive love.

**Postcolonial and race criticism:** More recent critical perspectives have addressed the novel's treatment of race and colonialism, particularly through the character of Heathcliff, whose origins are ambiguous and who is often described as an outsider. Critics may explore the power dynamics between characters and the ways in which racial and class prejudices are depicted.

*Wuthering Heights* has been subject to a wide variety of critical interpretations, with some finding it a ground-breaking and influential work, while others are more critical of its dark themes and unconventional structure. Its continued popularity and status as a literary classic suggest that the novel's impact and significance will endure.

## 10.6 LET US SUM UP

*Wuthering Heights*, a Gothic novel by Emily Brontë, is set in the desolate Yorkshire moors, encapsulating the wild and brooding atmosphere essential to the story. The plot unfolds through a frame narrative, employing the perspectives of Mr. Lockwood and Nelly Dean to chronicle the tumultuous lives and relationships of the Earnshaw and Linton families, particularly the doomed love between Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw. The novel's non-linear structure and complex narrative techniques add depth, illustrating the characters' psychological turmoil and the generational consequences of their actions.

Upon its publication in 1847, Wuthering Heights received mixed reviews, with some critics praising its originality and poetic prose, while others condemned its dark themes and moral ambiguity. Over time, the novel gained prominence as a literary masterpiece, renowned for its vivid setting, intricate characterizations, and exploration of themes such as love, revenge, social class, and the duality of human nature. Its aesthetic values, including the use of symbolism, imagery, and dramatic irony, contribute to the novel's enduring appeal and influence on subsequent generations of writers and readers.

## 10.7 QUESTIONS

1.In *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë creates a complex and intricate portrayal of love, obsession, and revenge. Analyse the development of these themes throughout the novel, focusing on the relationships between the main characters, particularly Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar. How do these themes interact with one another, and what conclusions can be drawn from their interplay?

2.*Wuthering Heights* is known for its dark and atmospheric setting, which is not only a backdrop for the story but also a character in its own right. Explore the role of the moors and the two main estates, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, in shaping the novel's tone, mood, and themes. How do these settings contribute to the development of the characters and the overall narrative?

3.The novel's narrative structure is unique, as it is told through multiple layers of narration, primarily through Mr. Lockwood and Nelly Dean. Discuss the significance of this narrative structure in Wuthering Heights. How does it contribute to the overall storytelling, character development, and themes? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach, and how does it affect the reader's experience?

4.*Wuthering Heights* presents a world filled with characters who have difficulty fitting into the social norms and expectations of their time. Analyse the role of social class and gender in the novel, paying particular attention to how these factors influence the characters' relationships and decisions. How does Emily Brontë challenge or uphold the prevailing social norms of the Victorian era through her portrayal of these characters?

5.The concept of nature versus nurture is a prominent theme in *Wuthering Heights*, as the characters' personalities and actions are shaped by both their environment and their innate dispositions. Examine the extent to which the characters' fates are determined by their upbringing and surroundings, as opposed to their inherent qualities. How does this theme relate to the broader themes of love, revenge, and social class in the novel?

## 10.8 FURTHER READING

Emily Brontë: A Life in Letters by Juliet Barker - This biography provides insight into Emily Brontë's life through her personal letters, revealing her thoughts, personality, and relationships with her family.

Wuthering Heights: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism by Nicolas Tredell - This book compiles essential critical essays and interpretations of Wuthering Heights, providing various perspectives on the novel and its themes.

Critical Essays on Emily Brontë edited by Thomas John Winnifrith - This collection of critical essays provides a range of scholarly perspectives on Emily Brontë and her works.

The Oxford Companion to the Brontës by Christine Alexander and Margaret Smith - This reference book provides an extensive overview of the Brontë family and their literary works, including a wealth of information on Wuthering Heights.

Heathcliff: The Unquiet Grave by Romany Reagan - This book delves into the character of Heathcliff, exploring his origins, motivations, and impact on the story of Wuthering Heights.

Wuthering Heights and the Poetics of Obsession by Michael Newton - In this academic study, Newton examines the theme of obsession in Wuthering Heights, analyzing how it affects the novel's characters and narrative structure.

# UNIT-11 D. H. LAWRENCE :AN INTRODUCTION

## Structure


11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.2 A Short Note on Modern Novels

11.3 D. H. Lawrence: His Age, Life, and Education

- 11.3.1 His Age
- 11.3.2 His Life
- 11.3.3 His Education

11.4 D. H. Lawrence's Literary Output and His Achievements

- 11.4.1 As a Modern Novelist
- 11.4.2 Major Works
- 11.4.3 Controversies on His Novels
- 11.4.4 Critic' Views on His Novels

11.5 D. H. Lawrence's Philosophy of Life

11.6 Influences on D. H. Lawrence

11.7 Let Us Sum Up

11.8 Questions

11.9 Further Reading


## 11.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of reading D. H. Lawrence's work would be to gain insight into his exploration of human nature, sexuality, and emotional depth, and understand his unique narrative techniques. His literature provides a profound study of societal constraints and individual desires in the context of the 20th-century modernist movement. His vivid descriptions and intense emotional portrayals enrich reader's comprehension of the complexities of human relationships. Reading Lawrence's work also offers a chance to appreciate his innovative approach that challenged societal norms and conventions of his time, providing a wider perspective on literary and social history.

## 11.1 INTRODUCTION

D. H. Lawrence (David Herbert Lawrence) was a prominent English novelist, poet, playwright, essayist, and literary critic, born on September 11, 1885, in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, England, and died on March 2, 1930, in Vence, France. He is considered one of the most influential writers of the 20th century and is best known for his controversial novels, which often explored themes of human sexuality, relationships, and social class.

In addition to his novels, Lawrence also wrote numerous poems, plays, essays, and literary critiques. His poetry collections, such as *Love Poems and Others* (1913) and *Birds, Beasts, and Flowers* (1923), showcased his keen observations of nature, his fascination with the human body, and his exploration of human emotions.His experiences of travelling abroad shaped his perspectives on society and culture and influenced his writing. His travel writings, such as *Sea and Sardinia* (1921) and *Mornings in Mexico* (1927), offer vivid descriptions of the landscapes and cultures he encountered.

D. H. Lawrence's work has been praised for its boldness, emotional intensity, and provocative exploration of the human condition. However, it has also been criticized for its sometimes graphic depictions of sexuality and its occasionally controversial views on gender roles and social norms. Nevertheless, his contributions to 20th-century literature continue to be celebrated and studied today.

## 11.2 A SHORT NOTE ON MODERN NOVELS

The Modern English novel of the first half of the 20th century was marked by several significant authors, themes, and stylistic innovations. Here are some key points to consider when discussing this period:

**Notable authors:** Some of the most influential authors during this time include Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence, George Orwell, and Aldous Huxley. These writers produced works that have had a lasting impact on the development of the novel.

**Stream of consciousness**: One of the most significant innovations during this period was the use of the stream of consciousness technique, which attempted to capture the inner workings of a character's mind. This style can be seen in works such as Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

**Social issues**: The novels of this era often engaged with contemporary social issues, such as gender and class, providing commentary and criticism. D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, for example, explores the relationship between sexuality and class, while George Orwell's *1984* critiques totalitarianism and surveillance.

**Experimentation:** Many novels from this period pushed the boundaries of narrative structure and form, often experimenting with non-linear storytelling, fragmented narratives, and unconventional prose styles. *Finnegans Wake* by James Joyce is a prime example of this, with its unconventional language and dense, allusive style.

**Influence of war:** The two World Wars had a significant impact on literature during this period, as authors grappled with the consequences and aftermath of the conflicts. Works such as Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End* directly address the experiences of war and its effects on individuals and society.

**Satire and dystopia:** The early 20th-century novel often employed satire and dystopian elements to critique societal norms, politics, and ideologies. Examples include Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

The Modern English novel of the first half of the 20th century was marked by innovation, experimentation, and a focus on social issues. The works produced during this time continue to be influential and relevant, shaping the course of English literature and offering valuable insights into the era in which they were written.

In the first half of the 20th century, several significant Modern English novels emerged, pushing the boundaries of literature and exploring new themes and styles. Here is an introduction to five major novels from this era, along with brief summaries:

*Ulysses* (1922) by James Joyce

Set in Dublin, Ireland, on June 16, 1904, "Ulysses" follows the lives of Leopold Bloom, his wife Molly, and Stephen Dedalus over the course of a single day. The novel is famous for its stream-of-consciousness style and its exploration of various literary techniques. Each chapter is inspired by an episode in Homer's "Odyssey," adding a layer of mythological significance to the characters' everyday experiences.

"Mrs. Dalloway" (1925) by Virginia Woolf

Another novel employing stream-of-consciousness, "Mrs. Dalloway" revolves around Clarissa Dalloway, an upper-class Englishwoman, as she prepares for a party. Taking place over a single day in London, the novel weaves together the thoughts and experiences of various characters, including war veteran Septimus Warren Smith. Woolf delves deeply into her characters' inner lives and highlights the lasting effects of World War I on English society.

"The Great Gatsby" (1925) by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Set in the Roaring Twenties, "The Great Gatsby" explores the decadence and disillusionment of the American Dream. The story follows the mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby, who is desperately in love with the married Daisy Buchanan. The novel is narrated by Nick Carraway, a young man who moves to Long Island and becomes Gatsby's neighbour. "The Great Gatsby" critiques the superficiality and materialism of the era, while also exploring themes of love, betrayal, and the pursuit of wealth.

"To the Lighthouse" (1927) by Virginia Woolf

A landmark in modernist literature, "To the Lighthouse" employs a stream-of-consciousness narrative to explore the lives and thoughts of the Ramsay family and their guests over a ten-year period. Set on the Isle of Skye, the novel focuses on the Ramsay's' attempts to visit a nearby lighthouse, which serves as a symbol of human

connection and the passage of time. The novel delves into themes of gender, art, and the nature of perception.

"Brave New World" (1932) by Aldous Huxley

This dystopian novel is set in a futuristic World State, where society is organized around the principles of mass production, conformity, and consumerism. The population is conditioned from birth to accept their roles in society, with no room for individuality or emotional connection. The story follows several characters, including the "Savage" John, who is raised outside of the World State and ultimately confronts its dehumanizing nature. "Brave New World" serves as a cautionary tale about the potential dangers of technological progress and the suppression of individual freedom.

## 11.3 D. H. LAWRENCE: HIS AGE, LIFE, AND EDUCATION

D. H. Lawrence was an influential English writer, poet, playwright, essayist, and literary critic, best known for his novels, which often explored themes of human nature, sexuality, and emotional and psychological complexities. Born in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, Lawrence grew up in a working-class family, with a background that significantly shaped his perspective on society, class, and relationships.

Throughout his career, Lawrence travelled extensively and lived in various countries, including Italy, Germany, and Mexico. His experiences abroad greatly influenced his literary works, as seen in novels like "The Rainbow" (1915), "Women in Love" (1920), and "The Plumed Serpent" (1926). His writing style is characterized by vivid descriptions, intense emotions, and a unique exploration of human relationships, capturing the struggle between individual desires and societal constraints.

Despite his controversial reputation during his lifetime, Lawrence's works have been widely studied and appreciated for their psychological depth, insightful social commentary, and innovative narrative techniques. Today, D. H. Lawrence is regarded as a major figure in 20th-century literature, leaving a lasting impact on the modernist literary movement.

### 11.4.1 HIS AGE

The socio-political and historical period during which he lived and worked is characterized primarily by the late Victorian era, the Edwardian era, and the aftermath of World War I, which influenced the Modernist movement.

**Late Victorian Era (1885-1901):** Lawrence was born during the last years of Queen Victoria's reign. This period was marked by a strong focus on morality, propriety, and social class distinctions. The Industrial Revolution had changed the landscape of England, leading to a rise in the urban working class and social inequality. This context appears in Lawrence's work, as he often explored themes of class struggle and critiqued the strict morality of the time.

**Edwardian Era (1901-1910):** The Edwardian era, marked by the reign of King Edward VII, was a time of relative stability and wealth. During this period, a more relaxed social atmosphere emerged, and the British Empire reached its peak. However, social inequality and class distinctions remained significant issues. Lawrence's early works were published during this period, reflecting the societal shifts and questioning the established order.

**World War I (1914-1918) and the Interwar Period:** World War I drastically changed the political and social landscape of Europe. The war's devastation led to a disillusionment with traditional values, giving rise to the Modernist movement in literature and art. Lawrence's work during and after the war, including his famous novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, reflected this disillusionment and challenged the conventional norms of sexuality and relationships. Additionally, his work explored themes of industrialization, individualism, and the search for authenticity in a rapidly changing world.

D.H. Lawrence's work was shaped by the socio-political and historical context of the late Victorian era, Edwardian era, and the aftermath of World War I. His exploration of class struggle, sexuality, and the individual's place in society resonated with readers during these periods and continues to be influential today.

## 11.4.2 HIS LIFE

David Herbert Lawrence, more commonly known as D. H. Lawrence, was an English writer, poet, and playwright. He was born on September 11, 1885, in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, England, and died on March 2, 1930, in Vence, France. Lawrence was a prominent literary figure of the early 20th century, and his works were often controversial for their explicit portrayal of human sexuality and relationships.

Lawrence was born into a working-class family. His father, Arthur John Lawrence, was a coal miner, while his mother, Lydia Beardsall Lawrence, was a former schoolteacher. His parents' contrasting backgrounds and volatile relationship had a significant impact on Lawrence's life and later writings. He had three siblings: Ada, George, and Emily.

Lawrence attended Beauvale Board School and later, the Nottingham High School, where he won a scholarship. He went on to work as a student-teacher at the British School in Eastwood before attending University College, Nottingham. After completing his studies, he worked as a teacher in Croydon, South London.

In 1912, Lawrence eloped with Frieda Weekley (née von Richthofen), a married woman with three children. Frieda was the wife of his former university professor, Ernest Weekley. Their relationship was tumultuous, characterized by passionate love and intense quarrels. They married in 1914 after Frieda's divorce was finalized. Although they did not have children, their relationship was a significant source of inspiration for Lawrence's work.

Lawrence and Frieda led a nomadic life, traveling extensively throughout Europe, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. They sought to escape the stifling conformity

and restrictions of British society. This search for freedom and a more fulfilling way of life would become a recurring theme in Lawrence's work.

His travels included stays in Italy, Germany, Sri Lanka (then called Ceylon), Australia, New Mexico, and Mexico. During World War I, Lawrence and Frieda were accused of being German spies, leading to a brief period of surveillance by the British government. Lawrence's controversial writings, particularly his novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, which was banned in many countries for its explicit content, contributed to his sense of exile from British society.

Lawrence's health deteriorated in the late 1920s, and he was diagnosed with tuberculosis. He died on March 2, 1930, in Vence, France, at the age of 44. After his death, his reputation as a significant literary figure continued to grow, and his work has since become recognized as a vital part of the modernist literary movement.

### 11.4.3 HIS EDUCATION

Lawrence's educational background was as follows:

Beauvale Board School: Lawrence attended the Beauvale Board School in Eastwood, where he received his early education.

High Pavement Grammar School: In 1898, at the age of 13, Lawrence won a scholarship to attend the High Pavement Grammar School in Nottingham. During his time there, he was exposed to a more formal and rigorous education, which fostered his interest in literature and writing.

University College, Nottingham (now the University of Nottingham): After completing his secondary education, Lawrence earned a teaching certificate from University College, Nottingham, in 1908. While studying there, he continued to develop his literary skills, writing poetry and prose.

It is essential to note that Lawrence's education was not solely rooted in formal schooling. He was an avid reader and autodidact, learning from his experiences and the people he encountered throughout his life. His deep engagement with literature and philosophy, as well as his personal experiences, played a significant role in shaping his views and literary style.

## 11.4 D. H. LAWRENCE'S LITERARY OUTPUT AND HIS ACHIEVEMENTS

D. H. Lawrence was a prolific 20th-century English writer who produced novels, poems, plays, and essays. His major works include *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, renowned for their exploration of human nature, sexuality, and emotional complexities. His writing, characterized by vivid descriptions and innovative narrative techniques, challenged societal norms, leaving a lasting impact on the modernist literary movement. Despite initial controversy, especially surrounding *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence's work is now recognized for its psychological depth and insightful social commentary, solidifying his reputation as a significant figure in English literature.

## 11.4.1 AS A MODERN ENGLISH NOVELIST

D. H. Lawrence holds a significant place in the development of modern English novels, with his unique style and exploration of themes that were considered ground-breaking in the early 20th century. His works have had a lasting impact on the trajectory of English literature, and his influence can be seen in the works of many writers who followed him. Here are some key aspects of Lawrence's contribution to modern English novels:

**Exploration of human emotions and relationships**: Lawrence was a pioneer in delving deeply into the psychological aspects of human relationships, particularly those of love and sexuality. By examining the complexities and emotional intricacies of interpersonal relationships, he helped redefine the way novels approached these themes. This emphasis on emotional and psychological depth can be seen in the works of later writers like Virginia Woolf and Graham Greene.

**Focus on sexuality:** Lawrence's frank exploration of sexuality in his novels was revolutionary for his time. He challenged conventional norms and societal expectations by openly discussing sexual desire, fulfilment, and repression. Lady Chatterley's Lover, for example, became notorious for its explicit content and was even banned in several countries. Lawrence's openness about sexuality paved the way for other writers, such as Henry Miller and Anais Nin, to further explore the topic in their works.

**Rejection of industrialization and modern society:** Lawrence was a critic of the industrialization and urbanization that were rapidly transforming England during his time. His novels often depicted the negative impact of industrial society on individuals and communities, with characters seeking a return to a more natural and harmonious existence. This theme can be found in later works by authors such as George Orwell and Aldous Huxley, who also critiqued the dehumanizing aspects of modern society.

**The influence of psychoanalysis:** Lawrence was interested in the emerging field of psychoanalysis, and its influence can be seen in his exploration of the unconscious mind and its impact on human behaviour. His focus on the inner lives of his characters and their psychological motivations helped pave the way for later writers to further explore these themes, such as James Joyce and Samuel Beckett.

**Evocative use of language:** Lawrence's writing is known for its poetic and vivid descriptions of both the natural world and human emotions. He used language to create a unique atmosphere in his novels, often emphasizing the sensory and emotional aspects of experience. This stylistic innovation had a lasting impact on English literature, influencing the works of writers like William Golding and Iris Murdoch.

D. H. Lawrence's contributions to modern English novels are vast and varied. Through his exploration of themes like human emotions, relationships, and sexuality, as well as his innovative use of language and critique of modern society, Lawrence has left an indelible mark on the landscape of English literature.

## 11.4.2 MAJOR WORKS

D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930), a prominent British novelist, poet, and playwright, is known for his distinct writing style that often explored themes of nature, sexuality, and relationships. Many of his works contain autobiographical elements, reflecting his own life experiences and views. This introduction will discuss some of the key ways in which Lawrence's personal life influenced his novels, focusing on three major works: *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

***Sons and Lovers*** (1913): One of Lawrence's most famous novels, Sons and Lovers, is heavily inspired by his own life, particularly his upbringing and family dynamics. Set in a working-class mining community, the novel centres on the character Paul Morel, who, like Lawrence, is the son of a coal miner and a mother who yearns for a more refined life. The relationships between Paul, his parents, and his lovers parallel Lawrence's own experiences, as the author drew from his difficult relationship with his father, his strong bond with his mother, and his romantic involvements with various women.

***The Rainbow*** (1915): While *The Rainbow* is not as overtly autobiographical as *Sons and Lovers*, it still contains elements of Lawrence's life and beliefs. The novel follows three generations of the Brangwen family, and the rural setting of the story is similar to the Eastwood countryside where Lawrence grew up. Furthermore, the novel's exploration of the characters' relationships with nature and the importance of individuality aligns with Lawrence's own philosophies. Additionally, the novel's exploration of female sexuality and independence can be traced back to the influence of the women in his life, including his mother, Lydia Lawrence, and his wife, Frieda von Richthofen.

***Lady Chatterley's Lover*** (1928): Arguably one of Lawrence's most controversial works, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* explores themes of sexuality, class, and the search for personal fulfilment. The novel's protagonist, Lady Constance Chatterley, is a reflection of Lawrence's wife Frieda, who was known for her open attitudes towards sexuality and her dissatisfaction with societal norms. The novel also showcases Lawrence's personal beliefs about the importance of sexual fulfilment and emotional connection in relationships.

D. H. Lawrence's novels often contain autobiographical elements, as they are deeply influenced by his own life experiences, relationships, and beliefs. This connection between the author's life and his works provides readers with a unique insight into Lawrence's world, making his novels not only engaging stories but also windows into the mind of one of the 20th century's most influential writers.

## 11.4.3 CONTROVERSIES ON HIS NOVELS

D. H. Lawrence's novels have sparked numerous controversies throughout the years, primarily due to their frank depiction of sexuality, relationships, and critiques of societal norms. These controversies often led to censorship, bans, and public outrage during the early 20th century. Here are some of the most notable controversies surrounding Lawrence's novels:

***Sons and Lovers*** (1913): Although not as controversial as some of his later works, *Sons and Lovers* still faced criticism for its candid portrayal of relationships and sexuality. The novel explores the Oedipal complex between the protagonist, Paul Morel, and his mother, as well as his tumultuous relationships with various lovers. Some critics felt that Lawrence was promoting unhealthy relationships and immoral behaviour through his portrayal of these characters.

***The Rainbow*** (1915): *The Rainbow*'s depiction of female sexuality and independence, especially in the character of Ursula Brangwen, drew the ire of conservative critics. The novel was also criticized for its portrayal of same-sex relationships, which were considered taboo during the early 20th century. The book was banned in the United Kingdom shortly after its publication, with over a thousand copies seized and burned by the authorities.

***Women in Love*** (1920): As the sequel to *The Rainbow*, Women in Love continued to explore themes of sexuality, relationships, and individuality. The novel's explicit content, including scenes of homoeroticism, led to its initial publication being delayed. Critics accused Lawrence of promoting immorality and obscenity through his detailed portrayal of sexual relationships.

***Lady Chatterley's Lover*** (1928): Perhaps the most controversial of all Lawrence's novels, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* faced widespread censorship and bans due to its explicit sexual content and exploration of themes like infidelity and class divides. The book was initially published privately in Italy, but its distribution in other countries often faced legal challenges. In 1960, Penguin Books was taken to court in the United Kingdom under the Obscene Publications Act for publishing the novel. The highly publicized trial eventually resulted in a victory for Penguin, marking a significant shift in attitudes towards literary censorship in Britain.

The controversies surrounding D. H. Lawrence's novels primarily stem from their explicit exploration of sexuality and relationships, as well as their critiques of societal norms and conventions. Although these controversies initially led to censorship and bans, Lawrence's works have ultimately played a significant role in challenging and changing attitudes towards literature and the boundaries of artistic expression.

## 11.4.4 CRITICS'S VIEWS ON HIS NOVELS

D. H. Lawrence's novels have been the subject of extensive literary criticism since their publication, with both praise and condemnation from various critics. Some prominent critics who have analysed and commented on Lawrence's works include:

**F.R. Leavis:** A highly influential British literary critic, Leavis held Lawrence in high esteem, considering him to be one of the most important modern English novelists. In his book, *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (1955), Leavis argued that Lawrence's works, especially *Sons and Lovers*, showcased a unique blend of psychological insight, artistic sensibility, and moral seriousness.

**Kate Millett:** A leading feminist critic, Millett criticized Lawrence's portrayal of women and gender relations in her ground-breaking work, *Sexual Politics* (1970).

Millett argued that Lawrence's novels, particularly *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, perpetuated patriarchal ideologies and presented women as submissive to male authority.

**T.S. Eliot:** The renowned poet and critic T.S. Eliot admired Lawrence's literary talent but was critical of his moral and philosophical views. In his essay, 'D. H. Lawrence' (1931), Eliot criticized Lawrence's belief in the primacy of individualism and his emphasis on instinct over intellect.

**Harold Bloom:** A prolific American literary critic, Bloom included Lawrence in his book, *The Western Canon* (1994), which listed influential authors and their works. Although Bloom praised Lawrence's artistic abilities, he considered the author's philosophical outlook to be flawed, suggesting that his novels were ultimately hindered by their didacticism and excessive focus on sexual themes.

**Raymond Williams:** A prominent Marxist critic, Williams examined Lawrence's works from a socio-political perspective. In his essay, 'The Tension in the Novel' (1960), Williams discussed the complexities and contradictions in Lawrence's treatment of class, industrialization, and social change.

These critics represent just a few of the many voices that have engaged with D. H. Lawrence's novels over the years. Their analyses and perspectives showcase the diverse ways in which Lawrence's works have been interpreted, reflecting the complexity and richness of his literary contributions.

## 11.5 D. H. LAWRENCE'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930) was an English writer and poet who was known for his unique and controversial perspectives on life, love, and human relationships. While it is challenging to condense his entire philosophy into a few points, some key aspects include:

**Vitalism:** Lawrence believed in a life force that permeates all living things, which he called the 'blood-consciousness.' He argued that people should be in touch with this force and follow their instincts to live a full and authentic life.

**Human relationships and sexuality:** Lawrence was a strong advocate of deep emotional and sexual connections between people. He argued that the repression of these natural desires led to emotional and psychological problems. In his works, he often portrayed relationships as a means of personal growth and self-discovery.

**Individualism and self-realization:** Lawrence emphasized the importance of individualism and self-expression, encouraging people to break away from societal norms and expectations to discover their true selves. He believed that personal growth and fulfilment could only be achieved through honest self-exploration and self-expression.

**Critique of industrialization and modernity:** Lawrence was critical of the industrialization and mechanization of society, which he believed disconnected people from their natural environment and their true selves. He advocated for a

return to a more harmonious way of living, in touch with nature and the rhythms of life.

**Non-dualism:** Lawrence rejected the dualistic worldview that separates mind and body, spirit and matter, or good and evil. He believed that these dualities limited human potential and stifled personal growth. Instead, he sought to integrate these seemingly opposing forces, finding unity in their interplay.

**The role of art and literature:** For Lawrence, art and literature were not just about aesthetics or entertainment but were essential tools for self-discovery and personal growth. He saw the role of the artist as a truth-seeker, someone who could explore and reveal the deepest aspects of human nature.

While D.H. Lawrence's philosophy of life is complex and multifaceted, these key aspects provide a glimpse into his unique worldview. His works, which often challenged societal norms and pushed boundaries, continue to be influential and thought-provoking.

## 11.6 INFLUENCES ON D. H. LAWRENCE

Lawrence was influenced by a wide range of sources, including his personal experiences, literary movements, and other writers. Some of the key influences on D. H. Lawrence include:

**Personal experiences:** Born into a working-class family, Lawrence's upbringing in a mining town in Nottinghamshire, England, informed much of his writing. His complex relationship with his parents, especially his mother, influenced his portrayal of familial relationships in his works.

**Literary movements:** Lawrence's work was influenced by several literary movements, such as Romanticism, Modernism, and the Georgian poetry movement. His writing often displays an affinity for nature and a focus on individual emotions, which can be traced back to the Romantic tradition. As a modernist, he sought to break from traditional literary forms and experiment with new styles and themes.

**Philosophical and psychological ideas:** Lawrence's works frequently explore human sexuality, psychology, and spirituality. The ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, and Carl Jung, among others, had a profound impact on his thinking and writing.

**Other writers:** Lawrence was influenced by various writers, such as Thomas Hardy, Walt Whitman, and John Ruskin. Hardy's portrayal of rural life and tragic themes in his novels resonated with Lawrence, while Whitman's celebration of the individual and the sensual aspects of life inspired him. Ruskin's emphasis on the importance of nature and the arts also left a mark on Lawrence's work.

Travel and exposure to different cultures: Lawrence's extensive travels, particularly in Europe, the United States, Mexico, and Australia, exposed him to various cultures, landscapes, and ideas. His experiences in these different places found their way into his works, enriching his perspectives on life and society.

These influences, among others, helped shape D. H. Lawrence's unique literary voice, which continues to captivate and challenge readers today.

## 11.7 LET US SUM UP

D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) was an influential English writer and poet known for exploring human nature, sexuality, and psychological complexities. Born in a working-class family, his personal life and upbringing heavily influenced his literary work. Active during the modernist movement, Lawrence's writing often challenged societal norms and conventions of his time.

His novels, including *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, and the controversial *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, explored themes of love, relationships, and social constraints. His works were significantly influenced by his extensive travels and experiences living in various countries. Lawrence's unique narrative style, characterized by vivid descriptions and intense emotions, captured the struggle between individual desires and societal expectations.

A major figure in 20th-century literature, D. H. Lawrence left a lasting impact on the modernist literary movement, with his work widely studied and appreciated for its psychological depth, insightful social commentary, and innovative narrative techniques.

## 11.8 QUESTIONS

1. How did D. H. Lawrence's personal experiences and upbringing influence his literary works?

2. How did D. H. Lawrence's views on sexuality and gender roles shape his portrayal of characters and relationships in his novels?

3. In what ways did D. H. Lawrence challenge the literary conventions and social norms of his time?

4. How did D. H. Lawrence's travel experiences and exposure to different cultures impact his literary themes and worldview?

5. How do D. H. Lawrence's works fit within the broader context of Modernist literature, and what distinguishes his writing from that of his contemporaries?

## 11.9 FURTHER READING

D. H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage edited by R. P. Draper

D. H. Lawrence: A Study of the Short Fiction by Weldon Thornton

The Rainbow and Women in Love: A Casebook edited by Gary Adelman

The Art of D. H. Lawrence by Keith Sagar

D. H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider by John Worthen

# UNIT-12 D. H. LAWRENCE'S SONS AND LOVERS

## Structure


12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 The Summary of *Sons and Lovers*.

12.3 Tools of scholarship:

12.3.1 Plot Structure

12.3.2 Complexity of Characterisation

12.3.3 Narrative Technique

12.3.4 Themes and Motifs

12.4 Critical Reception

12.5 Let Us Sum Up

12.6 Questions

12.7 Further Reading


## 12.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of reading D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* is to explore the complexities of human relationships, emotions, and the struggle between individual desires and societal expectations. Through the novel, readers gain insights into the impact of social class, family dynamics, and the search for identity. The semi-autobiographical nature of the work provides a window into Lawrence's own experiences, revealing the intricate connection between personal life and artistic expression. By analysing the novel's vivid imagery, symbolism, and innovative narrative techniques, readers can appreciate Lawrence's contributions to 20th-century literature and the modernist movement.

## 12.1 INTRODUCTION

D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, published in 1913, stands as a seminal work of English literature and a significant entry in the canon of early 20th-century modernist fiction. It is both a reflection of the author's own life and an exploration of the human condition, delving into themes of love, family, class struggle, and the complex dynamics between parents and children.

Set in the backdrop of the industrial mining community of Nottinghamshire, England, the novel traces the life of Paul Morel, a young man torn between his love for two women, Miriam and Clara, and his loyalty to his domineering mother, Gertrude. Drawing from Lawrence's own experiences growing up in a working-class family, the narrative is a vivid portrayal of the social and economic realities of the time.

One of the major themes in *Sons and Lovers* is the Oedipus complex, as famously identified by Sigmund Freud. The novel examines the intense bond between Paul and his mother, a relationship that transcends conventional parent-child affection and often borders on the romantic. This dynamic ultimately hinders Paul's ability to form meaningful relationships with other women and leads to a constant struggle to reconcile his loyalty and desire.

The novel also delves into the power dynamics between men and women, showcasing the struggle between the characters' desires for personal fulfilment and the societal expectations placed upon them. The female characters, such as Gertrude, Miriam, and Clara, grapple with their own ambitions and emotions within the confines of a patriarchal society, while Paul wrestles with his role as a son, lover, and man in this world.

Furthermore, *Sons and Lovers* stands out for its rich and evocative language. Lawrence's prose is marked by its vivid, sensual descriptions, imbuing the novel with a sense of emotional intensity and a keen awareness of the natural world. This stylistic approach has led to Lawrence being hailed as a pioneer of literary modernism and a forerunner of stream-of-consciousness narration.

## 12.2 THE SUMMARY OF SONS AND LOVERS

In Chapter 1 titled "The Early Married Life of the Morels," the reader is introduced to the main characters and the setting of the story. The novel opens with a description of the Bottoms, a working-class mining community in Nottinghamshire, England.

The protagonist, Gertrude Morel, is a refined and well-educated woman who marries Walter Morel, a passionate but uneducated coal miner. Their marriage begins to deteriorate soon after they move to the Bottoms, where they are surrounded by poverty and a rough environment. At first, the couple is very much in love, and they have a child named William. However, Gertrude quickly becomes disillusioned with her husband's heavy drinking, lack of ambition, and violent temper. The couple frequently argues, and their disagreements escalate to physical altercations. Gertrude channels her frustrations and unfulfilled desires into her children, particularly her firstborn, William. She becomes overly attached to him, hoping that he will grow up to be successful and break free from the confines of their working-class life.

Chapter 1 sets the stage for the rest of the novel by establishing the complex dynamics between the Morel family members and their environment. The strained relationship between Gertrude and Walter, as well as Gertrude's intense bond with her son William, foreshadows the emotional struggles and conflicts that will unfold throughout the story.

In Chapter 2 titled “The Birth of Paul, and Another Battle,” the story picks up with the arrival of the Morels’ second child, Paul. Gertrude Morel’s relationship with her husband, Walter, continues to worsen as he remains unemployed, drinks excessively, and engages in bouts of violence. Walter’s irresponsibility and neglect create further tension and resentment between the couple. Gertrude, feeling trapped in her unhappy marriage, finds solace and purpose in her role as a mother. She continues to invest her hopes and dreams in her children, especially William, who is thriving at school and shows great promise. Despite their father’s shortcomings, the Morel children are well-loved and cared for by their mother. When Gertrude is pregnant with Paul, she harbours a secret hope that the child will not survive, as she is afraid of bringing another child into their difficult family situation. However, after giving birth to Paul, she instantly forms a strong bond with him, much like the connection she shares with William. One evening, Gertrude and Walter engage in a particularly violent argument, fuelled by Walter’s jealousy over the attention his wife gives to their children. Gertrude, fearing for her and her children’s safety, locks Walter out of the house. Walter, in a drunken rage, breaks down the door and threatens his family. Gertrude’s courage and determination to protect her children are clearly evident in this scene.

This Chapter further develops the strained relationship between Gertrude and Walter Morel, while also introducing Paul as a central character. The strong bond between Gertrude and her children, particularly Paul, foreshadows the themes of love, attachment, and emotional struggle that will continue to be explored throughout the novel.

In Chapter 3 titled “The Casting Off of Morel—The Taking on of William,” the passage of time is evident as the Morel children grow older. Gertrude Morel continues to invest her emotional energy into her children, particularly William, while her relationship with her husband, Walter, remains distant and strained. As William matures, he excels academically and wins a scholarship to attend Nottingham High School. His achievements bring pride and joy to Gertrude, who sees William’s success as a way for him to escape the limitations of their working-class life. She is determined to give William every opportunity to succeed, often sacrificing her own needs and well-being to support him. Meanwhile, Walter becomes increasingly isolated from the family, as Gertrude and the children distance themselves from him. They view him as a source of embarrassment and disappointment, and the emotional chasm between Walter and his family continues to widen. William’s achievements, coupled with his mother’s unwavering support, help him secure a job as a junior clerk at a law firm in Nottingham. This new position allows him to move away from home and experience a different life beyond the confines of the Bottoms. However, William’s departure also leaves a void in Gertrude’s life, as she has heavily relied on him for emotional support and validation.

Chapter 3 highlights the gradual disintegration of the Morel family, with Gertrude and the children pulling away from Walter. The focus on William’s success and the expectations placed upon him by his mother foreshadow the emotional complexities and struggles that will arise later in the story, especially regarding the relationship between Gertrude and her other son, Paul.

In Chapter 4 titled “The Young Life of Paul,” the narrative shifts its focus to Paul Morel, the second son of Gertrude and Walter Morel. As William pursues his life and career away from home, Gertrude’s attention and emotional investment shift towards Paul. Paul is a sensitive and artistic child who, like his brother William, demonstrates a strong bond with his mother. He grows up under her watchful eye and guidance, and her influence on him is unmistakable. Paul’s temperament and interests set him apart from his father and their working-class community, and he often finds solace in nature and art. The chapter also introduces Miriam Leviers, a girl who lives on a nearby farm with her family. Paul and Miriam develop a friendship that plays a significant role in his life as he grows older. She shares his love for nature, and they often spend time exploring the countryside together. Miriam, who is deeply religious, sees the beauty and spirituality in their surroundings, and this resonates with Paul.

Gertrude’s health begins to decline, and she grows more dependent on Paul for emotional support. As a result, their bond deepens further, and the attachment between them becomes more intense. Paul feels a sense of responsibility towards his mother, which impacts his relationships with others, particularly Miriam.

Chapter 4 of *Sons and Lovers* delves deeper into Paul’s character, exploring his interests, relationships, and the growing influence of his mother on his life. The introduction of Miriam leavers provides a foundation for the development of the love triangle that will become central to the story as Paul grapples with his feelings for both Miriam and his mother.

In Chapter 5 titled “Paul Launches into Life,” Paul Morel begins his journey into adulthood as he starts working at Jordan’s surgical appliance factory in Nottingham. This new job marks a significant transition in his life, providing him with a sense of independence and responsibility. Paul is determined to succeed and make his mother proud, much like William before him. He works diligently and quickly earns the respect of his colleagues and superiors. Despite his dedication to his job, Paul remains passionate about his artistic pursuits, spending his free time painting and drawing. The chapter also explores the evolving relationship between Paul and Miriam leviers. As their friendship deepens, they share their thoughts, dreams, and love for art and literature. Miriam’s feelings for Paul grow stronger, but Paul is hesitant to commit to a romantic relationship. His devotion to his mother and his sense of responsibility towards her create an emotional barrier that prevents him from fully embracing a romantic connection with Miriam. Meanwhile, William, who now lives in London and has a successful career, visits his family occasionally. He becomes engaged to a fashionable and lively young woman named Louisa Lily “Gypsy” Denys Western, or Gyp. Gertrude disapproves of the match, feeling that Gyp is superficial and unsuitable for William. Gertrude’s intense attachment to her son makes it difficult for her to accept his choice, further highlighting the complicated dynamics between mother and son.

Chapter 5 depicts Paul’s entry into the working world and the development of his relationship with Miriam. Additionally, it reveals the emotional struggles that both Paul and William face due to their strong attachment to their mother, which impacts their romantic relationships and personal lives.

In Chapter 6 titled “Death in the Family,” tragedy strikes the Morel family when William falls seriously ill. He contracts pneumonia, which quickly worsens, and despite medical attention, he dies. The entire family, especially Gertrude, is devastated by the loss of William. His death leaves a profound void in their lives, with Gertrude suffering the most as she had placed her hopes and dreams in him. The loss of her firstborn son deepens Gertrude’s attachment to her remaining son, Paul. She becomes even more emotionally invested in him, seeking solace and companionship in their relationship. This increased dependence on Paul further complicates his emotional life and affects his relationships with others, particularly Miriam. After William’s death, the Morel family receives a small inheritance from a distant relative, which brings some financial relief. However, this windfall cannot alleviate the emotional pain and loss they continue to endure. In the meantime, Paul’s relationship with Miriam continues to develop, albeit slowly and cautiously. He is drawn to her intellectual and spiritual nature but remains hesitant to fully commit to a romantic relationship. Paul’s emotional struggle is intensified by his mother’s expectations and his loyalty towards her.

Chapter 6 marks a turning point in the novel, as the death of William has significant consequences on the Morel family, particularly on Gertrude and Paul’s relationship. The chapter further emphasizes the complex dynamics of love, loss, and attachment that persist throughout the story.

In Chapter 7 titled “Lad-and-Girl Love,” the focus returns to Paul’s relationship with Miriam leavers. Paul and Miriam continue to spend time together, sharing their love for nature, art, and literature. Their connection grows stronger, and they begin to develop deeper feelings for one another. Despite their mutual affection, Paul remains hesitant to pursue a romantic relationship with Miriam. His deep attachment to his mother, Gertrude, continues to influence his emotional life and decision-making. Paul struggles with feelings of guilt, fearing that becoming romantically involved with Miriam would betray his mother and their close bond.

Gertrude, aware of the growing connection between Paul and Miriam, becomes increasingly critical of Miriam, whom she sees as a threat to her relationship with her son. She disapproves of Miriam’s introspective and spiritual nature, thinking that she is trying to dominate and control Paul. Gertrude’s feelings towards Miriam create additional tension in Paul’s relationships with both women. Meanwhile, Paul’s younger sister, Annie, becomes engaged to a local man named Leonard, further emphasizing the theme of love and relationships in the novel. Annie’s engagement causes Paul to reflect on his own romantic prospects and the expectations placed on him by his family.

Chapter 7 delves deeper into the emotional complexities and difficulties faced by Paul as he navigates his relationships with Miriam and his mother. The chapter highlights the ongoing struggle between love, loyalty, and attachment, as well as the impact of family dynamics on personal relationships.

In Chapter 8 titled “Strife in Love,” the emotional turmoil in Paul’s life continues as he remains torn between his feelings for Miriam and his attachment to his mother, Gertrude. His relationship with Miriam becomes increasingly complicated, as they experience both moments of deep connection and episodes of tension and conflict. Paul’s feelings for Miriam continue to grow, and the two share

intimate moments of affection. However, he is still reluctant to fully commit to a romantic relationship, as his loyalty to his mother weighs heavily on him. This hesitation frustrates Miriam, who longs for a deeper bond with Paul.

Miriam's family, the leviers, invite Paul to join them on a vacation to Lincoln, where Paul experiences a brief respite from the emotional struggles that define his daily life. During this trip, Paul and Miriam's relationship appears to grow stronger, but the underlying issues remain unresolved. Back home, the tension between Gertrude and Miriam becomes more apparent. Gertrude feels threatened by Miriam's influence on Paul and worries that she will pull him away from his family. This fear exacerbates Gertrude's own insecurities and heightens the emotional strain on Paul. Paul is also introduced to Clara Dawes, a young, attractive, and independent woman separated from her husband, Baxter Dawes. Clara's entrance into the narrative foreshadows future developments in the story, as she will become another significant figure in Paul's life.

Chapter 8 explores the ongoing struggles and complexities in Paul's relationships with Miriam and his mother. The chapter highlights Paul's internal conflict as he tries to navigate his feelings for Miriam while remaining loyal to Gertrude. The introduction of Clara Dawes adds another layer to the story, setting the stage for future events.

In Chapter 9 titled "Defeat of Miriam," Paul's emotional struggles continue as he finds it increasingly difficult to balance his feelings for Miriam with his loyalty to his mother, Gertrude. Paul's career as an artist also starts to take off, providing him with opportunities to showcase his work and gain recognition. Miriam becomes more desperate for a deeper connection with Paul and hopes that their relationship will progress beyond friendship. However, Paul remains resistant to committing to a romantic relationship, partly due to his mother's disapproval and his own feelings of guilt. Paul's relationship with Clara Dawes develops further as they become friends. Clara, a passionate and strong-willed woman, intrigues Paul, and he finds himself drawn to her. Although Clara is still legally married to Baxter Dawes, she and Paul begin to form a close bond. Gertrude's health continues to deteriorate, and Paul becomes increasingly concerned about her well-being. Her condition only reinforces his sense of loyalty and responsibility towards her, further complicating his feelings for Miriam. Eventually, Paul decides to end his relationship with Miriam. He feels that they are incompatible and that their relationship has no future. Despite his affection for her, Paul cannot commit to Miriam, partly due to his attachment to his mother and his emerging interest in Clara.

Chapter 9 marks a significant turning point in the novel, as Paul chooses to end his relationship with Miriam. The emotional turmoil experienced by the characters is heightened, and the introduction of Clara Dawes as a potential love interest for Paul adds another layer of complexity to the story.

In Chapter 10 titled "Clara," Paul's relationship with Clara Dawes takes centre stage as his friendship with Miriam comes to an end. Paul is captivated by Clara's beauty, intelligence, and strength, and he finds himself increasingly drawn to her. Clara, who is estranged from her husband Baxter Dawes, becomes involved with the local Women's Suffrage movement, fighting for women's rights and

equality. Paul admires her passion and determination, which contrast with Miriam's introspective and spiritual nature. As Paul and Clara spend more time together, their mutual attraction intensifies, and they embark on a passionate and tumultuous love affair. Despite the undeniable chemistry between them, their relationship is marked by uncertainty and conflict, as Clara remains legally married to Baxter. Paul's mother, Gertrude, approves of Clara more than she did of Miriam, seeing her as a strong and independent woman. This approval provides some relief for Paul, who has long struggled with balancing his romantic relationships with his loyalty to his mother. However, Gertrude's declining health continues to weigh on him, causing him considerable distress and worry. Meanwhile, Miriam is heartbroken by the end of her relationship with Paul, but she remains a peripheral figure in his life. Paul occasionally visits her family's farm, and they continue to share a deep connection, despite the pain of their romantic past.

Chapter 10 shifts focus from Paul's relationship with Miriam to his passionate affair with Clara Dawes. The complexities of love, loyalty, and emotional turmoil persist as the novel delves into the dynamics of Paul's new relationship while exploring the consequences of his past with Miriam.

In Chapter 11 titled "The Test on Miriam," Paul's relationships with both Clara and Miriam become further complicated. Despite his passionate affair with Clara, Paul is unable to sever his emotional ties to Miriam completely. During a conversation with his mother, Gertrude suggests that Paul should either fully commit to Miriam or leave her alone, as he is causing her pain by maintaining a connection with her while being romantically involved with Clara. Paul's feelings of guilt and responsibility prompt him to re-evaluate his relationship with Miriam. Paul decides to give his relationship with Miriam another chance, hoping that they can develop a deeper physical connection to complement their emotional bond. However, despite their attempts to be physically intimate, Paul and Miriam's relationship remains unfulfilled, and they both acknowledge that they are incompatible in this aspect of their lives.

This realization leads Paul to end his relationship with Miriam once again, confirming that they are better suited as friends rather than romantic partners. The emotional toll of this decision weighs heavily on both Paul and Miriam, as they struggle to come to terms with their feelings for one another. Meanwhile, Paul's relationship with Clara continues, fuelled by their physical passion and shared interests. However, the complexities of their situation, including Clara's unresolved marriage to Baxter Dawes, cast a shadow over their affair.

Chapter 11 explores the intricacies of Paul's relationships with Miriam and Clara, highlighting the emotional turmoil and difficult choices he faces. The chapter underscores the theme of love's complexities and the challenges that arise when balancing emotional, physical, and familial connections.

In Chapter 13 titled "Baxter Dawes," the tension between Paul and Clara's estranged husband, Baxter, comes to a head. Baxter, who has been aware of Paul and Clara's affair, becomes increasingly resentful and confrontational towards Paul. One day, Baxter attacks Paul at work, leading to a physical fight between the two men. Despite their animosity, Paul feels a strange connection to Baxter and later decides to visit him when Baxter falls ill. Surprisingly, Baxter and Paul begin

to develop a mutual understanding and even form a tentative friendship. Through their interactions, Paul gains a better understanding of Clara's past and the reasons for her failed marriage. Paul's mother, Gertrude, continues to struggle with her health, and her condition worsens. As a result, Paul becomes more emotionally entangled with his mother, feeling an increased sense of responsibility for her well-being. This deepening attachment to Gertrude further complicates Paul's relationships with Clara and Miriam. Clara, realizing that she cannot fully have Paul's heart, becomes increasingly dissatisfied with their relationship. She starts to question her own feelings and desires, and her longing for a more stable and committed relationship begins to grow. Clara ultimately decides to reconcile with Baxter, ending her affair with Paul. With Clara's departure, Paul is left to confront the emotional turmoil and uncertainty that have defined his relationships throughout the novel. He struggles to come to terms with his feelings for both Clara and Miriam, as well as the powerful bond he shares with his mother.

Chapter 13 highlights the complex relationships between the characters and explores the themes of love, loyalty, and self-discovery. As the novel approaches its conclusion, the characters face difficult choices and emotional reckonings that will shape their futures.

In Chapter 14 titled "The Release," the novel reaches a pivotal point as the Morel family confronts further trials and losses. Gertrude's health takes a turn for the worse, and her suffering becomes unbearable. Paul, heartbroken by his mother's decline, makes the excruciating decision to administer a lethal dose of morphine to end her agony. Gertrude's passing leaves Paul grief-stricken and emotionally untethered. With his mother's absence, Paul is compelled to address the emotional vacuum left in his life. He reconsiders his relationships with both Clara and Miriam, acknowledging that neither can fill the void his mother's death has created. Clara, having reconciled with Baxter Dawes, opts to return to her marriage, while the future of Paul's relationship with Miriam remains uncertain. Although his friendships with Clara and Miriam persist, the romantic dimensions of those relationships have concluded. His bond with Miriam remains powerful, yet they are unable to forge a functional relationship. Consequently, Paul faces his future in solitude, unsure of his trajectory and the person he will become without his mother's counsel and support.

The novel culminates with Paul venturing into the distance, representing his journey towards self-discovery and an unpredictable future. He must grapple with his own identity and desires while navigating a world forever transformed by the loss of his mother and the intricacies of his relationships. Chapter 14 delivers an evocative and compelling resolution to the novel, delving into themes of love, loss, and personal growth. The characters confront challenging decisions and emotional reckonings, ultimately shaping their destinies and leaving an indelible impact on their lives.

In Chapter 15, "Derelict," Paul is left to grapple with the loss of his mother and the subsequent emotional void that now dominates his life. He wanders aimlessly, struggling to find meaning and purpose in a world without his mother's guidance and support. His emotional turmoil is overwhelming, and he considers suicide as a means to escape his pain.

Paul's relationships with both Clara and Miriam have reached their conclusions. Clara has reconciled with her husband, Baxter Dawes, and returned to her marriage. Meanwhile, Paul's deep connection with Miriam remains strong, but they both understand that they cannot make a romantic relationship work. During this time, Paul begins to find solace in his art, focusing his energy on painting and drawing. He comes to realize that his future lies in embracing his creative passions and finding a new sense of self that exists independently of his relationships with Clara, Miriam, or his mother. In the end, Paul decides against taking his own life and chooses to embrace the uncertain future before him. He resolves to face his challenges head-on and to pursue his dreams. The novel concludes with Paul's newfound determination and hope, symbolizing his journey towards self-discovery, healing, and personal growth.

Chapter 15 provides a powerful conclusion to the novel, exploring themes of love, loss, and the resilience of the human spirit. The characters face difficult decisions and emotional reckonings, ultimately shaping their futures and leaving a lasting impact on their lives.

## 12.3 TOOLS OF SCHOLARSHIP

*Sons and Lovers* is a semi-autobiographical novel by English author D.H. Lawrence, published in 1913. It traces the lives of the Morel family, particularly the relationships between the protagonist, Paul Morel, his mother, Gertrude, and his two lovers, Miriam Leivers and Clara Dawes. Set in the backdrop of working-class mining communities in Nottinghamshire, the novel explores themes of love, passion, family dynamics, and the complexities of human relationships. As one of Lawrence's earliest novels, it is considered a pioneering work of modernist fiction.

### 12.3.1 PLOT STRUCTURE

D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* follows the lives of the Morel family, particularly the protagonist Paul Morel, as they navigate relationships, love, and personal growth in the backdrop of an industrial mining town in Nottinghamshire, England. The plot structure can be broken down into the following stages:

**Exposition**

The novel introduces the main characters: Walter and Gertrude Morel, and their children William, Paul, and Annie. The Morels live in a small mining village called Bestwood. Walter is a coal miner, and Gertrude is a strong-willed, educated woman. Their marriage is strained due to Walter's alcoholism and Gertrude's unfulfilled aspirations.

**Rising Action**

As the children grow up, Gertrude develops deep emotional bonds with them, particularly with her sons, William and Paul. The relationship between Gertrude and William is intense, but when William moves to London and becomes engaged, he dies of pneumonia. This deepens Gertrude's attachment to Paul, leading to an overbearing and possessive relationship.

**First climax**

Paul falls in love with Miriam Leivers, a girl from a neighbouring farm. Their relationship is intellectual and spiritual, but Paul struggles to fully commit to Miriam due to his emotional bond with his mother. Gertrude disapproves of Miriam, seeing her as a threat to her relationship with Paul.

**Second climax**

Paul starts working at Jordan's, a factory in Nottingham, where he meets Clara Dawes, a suffragette separated from her husband. Paul is attracted to Clara, and their relationship becomes passionate and physical. Paul ends his relationship with Miriam, but his connection with Clara is also complicated by his attachment to his mother.

**Falling Action**

Paul's relationship with Clara grows more tumultuous. Clara eventually decides to reconcile with her husband. Paul's bond with his mother remains the central focus of his life. As Gertrude's health deteriorates, she becomes increasingly dependent on Paul for emotional support.

**Resolution/Loss**

Gertrude dies, and Paul is devastated by her death. Left to find his own way in life, he struggles with feelings of loneliness and despair. The novel ends ambiguously, with Paul's future uncertain. The reader is left to ponder whether he will forge his own path, free from the constraints of his relationships, or succumb to his despair and loneliness.

## 12.3.2 COMPLEXITY OF CHARACTERISATION

D. H. Lawrence's novel Sons and Lovers (1913) is a semi-autobiographical work that examines the complex relationships between family members, particularly the intense bond between a mother and her sons, against the backdrop of a working-class environment in early 20th century England. The novel is known for its psychological depth and vivid characterizations. Key characters in the book include:

**Gertrude Morel:** Gertrude is a strong, intelligent, and passionate woman who feels trapped in her marriage to Walter Morel. She becomes emotionally distant from her husband and invests her hopes, dreams, and desires in her sons, particularly Paul. Gertrude's intensity and inability to let go of her sons lead to a destructive, suffocating relationship that affects her sons' lives and their ability to form healthy relationships with others.

**Walter Morel:** Walter is a coal miner and the patriarch of the Morel family. Though initially charming and passionate, he becomes increasingly irresponsible, abusive, and alcoholic as the story unfolds. His strained relationship with Gertrude and his inability to connect with his children contribute to the overall tension and conflict within the family.

**Paul Morel:** Paul is the novel's protagonist and the primary focus of Gertrude's emotional attachment. He is a sensitive and artistic young man who struggles to form relationships with women due to the overbearing influence of his mother. His relationships with Miriam Leivers and Clara Dawes reflect his internal conflict and inability to achieve a healthy balance between love, independence, and responsibility.

**William Morel:** William is the eldest son in the Morel family and Gertrude's first object of emotional attachment. He is ambitious and successful in his career but struggles in his personal life, particularly in his relationship with his fiancée, Lily. His early death deeply affects Gertrude and Paul and further intensifies the bond between them.

**Miriam Leivers:** Miriam is a deeply religious and introspective young woman who becomes involved with Paul. She is a kindred spirit, sharing his love for art and literature. Their relationship is characterized by emotional intensity and intellectual connection, but Paul's inability to commit and his mother's influence prevent it from flourishing.

**Clara Dawes:** Clara is a strong-willed, independent, and sensual woman who becomes romantically involved with Paul after separating from her husband. She challenges Paul's views on love and relationships, but their affair is ultimately doomed by Paul's emotional dependence on his mother.

These characters, among others, showcase the novel's exploration of themes such as family dynamics, emotional dependence, the struggle for individuality, and the impact of social and economic circumstances on personal relationships. Through their intricate characterizations, Lawrence delves into the complexities of human nature and the conflicts that arise from love, ambition, and desire.

## 12.3.3 NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

D. H. Lawrence's novel *Sons and Lovers* (1913) is an early 20th-century modernist work that uses a variety of narrative techniques to convey the story's themes, characters, and emotions. Some of the most notable narrative techniques used in the novel include:

**Psychological Realism:** Lawrence delves deep into the minds of his characters, exploring their thoughts, feelings, desires, and motivations. This focus on the psychological and emotional aspects of the characters helps to create a sense of intimacy and connection between the reader and the characters.

**Stream of Consciousness:** The novel employs a stream of consciousness technique, which allows the reader to follow the characters' thoughts and feelings in a continuous, flowing manner. This technique helps to create a sense of immediacy and authenticity, making it feel as though the reader is experiencing the characters' lives in real-time.

**Omniscient Narrator***:* Lawrence uses an omniscient third-person narrator, which means that the narrator has access to the thoughts and feelings of all the characters. This approach allows the reader to gain insights into multiple perspectives and understand the complex relationships and emotions that drive the characters.

**Symbolism:** Lawrence employs symbolism throughout the novel to express deeper meanings and emotions. For example, the recurring motif of darkness and light represents the struggle between the characters' desires and societal expectations. The novel is also rich in imagery related to nature, which often reflects the emotional states of the characters.

**Autobiographical Elements:** *Sons and Lovers* is known for its strong autobiographical elements, with many aspects of the story reflecting Lawrence's own life experiences. This infusion of the author's personal experiences adds depth and authenticity to the narrative.

**Conflict and Tension:** The novel is driven by various conflicts, including those between the characters, within the characters themselves, and between the characters and societal norms. These conflicts create tension and propel the narrative forward, capturing the reader's interest and engagement.

Overall, D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* uses a combination of narrative techniques to create a vivid, emotionally charged, and psychologically complex portrayal of the lives, relationships, and struggles of the characters.

## 12.3.4 THEMES AND MOTIFS

D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* is a semi-autobiographical novel published in 1913. The novel explores various themes and motifs that reflect the complexities of human relationships, individual development, and social norms in early 20th century England. Some of the key themes and motifs in the novel include:

**Oedipus Complex:** The novel explores the Oedipus complex, a concept introduced by Sigmund Freud that describes the unconscious sexual desire a child has for the opposite-sex parent. In *Sons and Lovers*, the protagonist, Paul Morel, has an intense emotional attachment to his mother, Gertrude, which negatively impacts his relationships with other women. This negative drive is known as *thenatos* or "death instinct."

**Class Struggle:** The novel delves into the social and economic disparities between the working class and the bourgeoisie. The Morel family's struggles as a working-class family are depicted in stark contrast to the relatively privileged lives of characters like Clara Dawes and Miriam Leivers.

**Industrialization:** Lawrence portrays the harsh realities of the industrialized world, depicting the working conditions in the mines and factories as dehumanizing and stifling. The negative impact of industrialization on the environment and human relationships is a recurring motif.

**Nature and Symbolism:** The novel frequently employs nature as a symbol of freedom, purity, and sensuality. Characters often seek solace and rejuvenation in nature, and Paul's artistic inclinations are closely tied to his love for the natural world.

**Love and Sexuality:** *Sons and Lovers* delves into the complexities of love and sexuality, exploring the blurred lines between maternal love, romantic love, and sexual desire. The novel also examines the impact of societal norms and

expectations on relationships and the characters' struggles to reconcile their emotional needs with societal expectations.

**Alienation and Isolation:** Characters in the novel often experience feelings of alienation and isolation, particularly Paul, who struggles to connect with others and find a sense of belonging. This theme also extends to the fractured relationships within the Morel family.

**Art and Creativity:** Art serves as a means of self-expression, escape, and a way to connect with others in the novel. Paul's artistic pursuits allow him to explore his inner self and offer a reprieve from the harsh realities of his life.

**Gender Roles:** The novel explores traditional gender roles and the impact they have on the characters' lives. Gertrude Morel is stifled by her role as a wife and mother, and her dissatisfaction leads to her emotionally depending on her sons, particularly Paul. The novel also explores the expectations placed on men, such as the pressure to provide for their families and adhere to social norms.

Overall, *Sons and Lovers* is a complex exploration of human relationships, societal expectations, and individual desires. It delves into the inner workings of its characters, offering insight into the human condition in the context of early 20th century England.

## 12.4 CRITICAL RECEPTION

D.H. Lawrence's novel, *Sons and Lovers*, has long been a subject of debate and discussion among literary critics. The novel was first published in 1913 and is often considered one of Lawrence's finest works. Here are some views of literary critics on the novel:

Autobiographical elements: Critics have often noted that the novel contains many autobiographical elements, drawing from Lawrence's own life, his relationships, and his upbringing in a working-class family in the English Midlands. This has led to a deeper appreciation of the novel as a reflection of the author's personal experiences.

**Treatment of sexuality and Oedipus complex:** Many critics have found Lawrence's treatment of sexuality in Sons and Lovers to be ground-breaking, as it explores the complex relationships between parents and children, particularly the Oedipus complex. Lawrence's portrayal of the protagonist, Paul Morel, and his relationships with his mother and his lovers, has generated much discussion on the role of the Oedipus complex in shaping human relationships.

**Feminist readings:** Some feminist critics have criticized *Sons and Lovers* for its portrayal of women, arguing that the female characters are often shown as subordinate and dependent on the male characters. Others have praised Lawrence's exploration of female sexuality, arguing that it was ground-breaking for its time.

**Language and style:** Lawrence's lyrical and poetic prose style has received both praise and criticism. While some have applauded the novel's vivid descriptions and

emotional intensity, others have found it to be overly descriptive and at times difficult to follow.

*Sons and Lovers* has received both praise and criticism from literary critics for its exploration of themes such as sexuality, social class, and relationships. The novel's treatment of these themes and its autobiographical elements have made it a subject of continued discussion and analysis among scholars and readers alike. Following are the views of some noted critics:

**F. R. Leavis:** Leavis was an influential British literary critic who praised *Sons and Lovers* as a seminal work of modern literature. He considered it an essential exploration of the relationships between parents and children, and he praised its psychological depth.

**Kate Millett:** Millett was an American feminist author and critic who critiqued *Sons and Lovers* in her influential book *Sexual Politics* (1970). She argued that the novel perpetuates sexist attitudes and presents women as inferior to men, particularly in the relationships between the protagonist, Paul Morel, and the women in his life.

**Harold Bloom:** A renowned American literary critic, Bloom recognized Sons and Lovers as an essential work of 20th-century literature, but he also noted that the novel's psychoanalytic and Oedipal themes may feel dated to contemporary readers.

Overall, the novel has been praised for its psychological depth, exploration of human relationships, and vivid portrayal of working-class life in early 20th-century England. However, it has also been critiqued for its portrayal of women and its sometimes-dated themes. Opinions on *Sons and Lovers* can vary greatly, but its status as a classic of English literature remains secure.

## 12.5 LET US SUM UP

*Sons and Lovers*, a semi-autobiographical novel by D. H. Lawrence, follows the story of Paul Morel, a young man from a working-class family in Nottinghamshire, as he navigates complex relationships, particularly with his overbearing mother, Gertrude, and romantic interests, Miriam and Clara. The novel delves into themes such as family dynamics, social class, sexuality, and the struggle between individual desires and societal expectations.

Lawrence employs an innovative narrative technique, using a blend of third-person limited and omniscient points of view, allowing readers to access the characters' inner thoughts and emotions. Vivid descriptions, symbolism, and strong character development contribute to the novel's psychological depth.

Critics have praised *Sons and Lovers* for its portrayal of human relationships, emotional intensity, and social commentary, marking it as a cornerstone of 20th-century literature and the modernist movement. However, some critics argue that the novel's focus on Oedipal complexes and sexual themes can be unsettling or controversial. Despite these differing perspectives, *Sons and Lovers* remains an

influential work, showcasing Lawrence's literary prowess and shaping future generations of writers.

## 12.6 QUESTIONS

1. What are the primary themes in *Sons and Lovers*, and how do they reflect D. H. Lawrence's own life experiences and views on human relationships?

2. How does the narrative technique used in *Sons and Lovers* contribute to the development of the story and its characters, and how does it align with the modernist literary movement?

3. Describe the main plot points in *Sons and Lovers*, and explain how they illustrate the novel's exploration of family dynamics, social class, and individual desires.

4. Discuss the use of symbolism and imagery in *Sons and Lovers*. How do these literary devices enhance the novel's exploration of its themes and characters' emotional states?

5. What are some key viewpoints of literary critics regarding *Sons and Lovers*? How have these perspectives shaped the novel's reception and its place in 20th-century literature?

## 12.7 FURTHER READING

D. H. Lawrence's 'Sons and Lovers': A Centennial Collection edited by Jane Feaver and John Worthen (2013)

D. H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage edited by R. P. Draper (1970)

A Companion to D. H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers by Paul Poplawski (1996)

The Composition of Sons and Lovers by Helen Baron (1964)

D. H. Lawrence: New Studies edited by Christopher Heywood (1987)

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# MAEN-104
# BRITISH NOVEL

# 4
# Block
## James Joyce and the Modern Novels


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Unit-13** | **Forms of the Novel** | **199-210** |
| **Unit-14** | **Development of English Novel in the Twentieth Century** | **211-225** |
| **Unit-15** | **James Joyce: An Introduction** | **226-236** |
| **Unit-16** | **James Joyce: A Portrait of The Artist as a Young Man** | **237-246** |

# BLOCK INTRODUCTION 4

Dear learners! This block is aimed at making you aware of modern drama and its major trends. This block is also divided into four units from 13th to 16th. The unit 13th focuses on the forms of Novel. Modern novel is to show its development in the work of writers such as Joseph Conrad, Marcel Proust, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Franz Kafka, and William Faulkner. It further explores the historical evolution of different novel forms from classic epistolary novel to modernists and post modernists experimental style. The 14th unit aimed to discuss the development of English novel. The 15th unit focuses on introduction of James Joyce as a major English novelist of Modern Era. His modernist works reflect on modernity, social alienation and industrialization, vitality and psycho-analytical instinct. It deals the biography, philosophy and art of writing. The 16th and last unit of the block focuses on the joyce's most psychological novel, A pA Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is the first novel of James Joyce, published in 1916. It is *a* Kunstlerroman written in a modernist style, it traces the religious and intellectual awakening of young Stephen Dedalus. In short, after studying this block, you will be able to understand the philosophical, psychological and realist way of thinking about the human life and relationship.

# UNIT-13 FORMS OF THE NOVEL

## Structure


13.0 Objectives

13.1 Introduction

13.2 Historical Novel

13.3 Romance Novel

13.4 Realist Novel

13.5 Bildungsroman

13.6 Satirical Novel

13.7 Science Fiction Novel

13.8 Psychological Novel

13.9 Epistolary Novel

13.10 Picaresque novels

13.11 Gothic Novel

13.12 Let Us Sum Up

13.13 Notes and References

13.14 Questions

13.15 Further Reading


## 13.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of the unit on Forms of the Novel is to introduce and familiarize learners with the various forms and structures employed in the novel genre, such as epistolary, stream-of-consciousness, and bildungsroman, enabling them to recognize and analyse these techniques in literary works. It further explores the historical evolution of different novel forms, from classic epistolary novels to modernist and postmodernist experimental styles, providing insights into how these forms reflect changing literary trends and societal influences. It also develops learners' critical thinking skills by comparing and contrasting different novel forms, evaluating their effectiveness in conveying themes, character development, and narrative techniques. It encourages learners to engage with seminal works from various novel forms, such as *Dracula* (epistolary), *Ulysses* (stream-of-

consciousness), and *Great Expectations* (Bildungsroman), fostering a deeper appreciation for the diversity and ingenuity of the novel genre. It aims to inspire learners to experiment with different novel forms in their own creative writing, empowering them to harness the power of various structures to express their unique literary voices and storytelling abilities.

## 13.1 INTRODUCTION

The novel is a versatile and expansive literary form that has evolved over the centuries. It encompasses a wide range of styles, structures, and genres, allowing authors to experiment and explore various themes and narratives. The novel is a literary genre that has undergone many changes and transformations throughout history of the ever-changing literary landscape and the societal context of different eras. While there are countless subgenres and variations of the novel, the following are some of the most notable forms of the novel:

## 13.2 HISTORICAL NOVEL

The historical novel is a captivating genre that intertwines the realms of fiction and history, transporting readers to past epochs and events through the eyes of fictional characters. This unique literary form allows authors to explore historical periods, personalities, and events, while also providing insight into the human condition and the universal truths that transcend time.

The roots of the historical novel can be traced back to the 18th century when Sir Walter Scott, a Scottish novelist, pioneered the genre with his work *Waverley* (1814). This novel, set during the Jacobite uprising of 1745, marked the beginning of a new literary trend that would captivate readers and inspire authors for generations to come. Scotts meticulously researched historical details and compelling storytelling set the standard for future historical novelists.

At its core, the historical novel seeks to blend historical accuracy with imaginative storytelling. Authors often introduce fictional characters who interact with historical figures, events, or settings, providing readers with a personalized and emotionally engaging lens through which they can experience the past. Historical research plays a crucial role in the creation of these novels. Authors must immerse themselves in the historical context, drawing from primary sources, documents, and archives to ensure the accuracy of the setting, language, and cultural nuances of the chosen time period. By combining this research with creative flair, historical novelists craft vivid worlds that transport readers to a bygone era.

Historical novels encompass a wide array of themes, making them a rich and diverse literary genre. Some novels delve into significant historical events, such as wars, revolutions, or political upheavals, shedding light on the impact these events had on ordinary individuals. Others explore social structures, cultural

practices, and the daily lives of people from various historical periods, providing a deeper understanding of human society's evolution. Additionally, historical novels often examine themes of identity, resilience, and the struggle for justice and freedom. By intertwining fictional characters with real historical figures, authors illuminate the human experience, demonstrating how the choices and actions of individuals can shape the course of history.

The historical novel has left an indelible mark on literature and society. By offering accessible and engaging portrayals of the past, historical novels have sparked readers' interest in history and encouraged further exploration of significant historical events. These novels also serve as a bridge between academic history and popular culture, making historical knowledge more relatable and engaging. Moreover, historical novels provide a lens through which contemporary issues can be examined. By drawing parallels between historical and modern events, authors shed light on enduring themes and challenges faced by humanity, fostering empathy and understanding among readers.

Notable historical novelists and works over the centuries have contributed to the richness of the historical novel genre. In addition to Sir Walter Scott, other notable historical novelists include Leo Tolstoy (*War and Peace*), Victor Hugo (*Les Misérables*), Hilary Mantel (*Wolf Hall*), Ken Follett (*The Pillars of the Earth*), and Philippa Gregory (*The Other Boleyn Girl*).

Thus, the historical novel is a captivating and enlightening genre that bridges the gap between the past and the present. Through its imaginative storytelling and historical accuracy, this genre offers readers a unique opportunity to explore bygone eras, gain insights into the human experience, and foster a deeper appreciation for the rich tapestry of history. As historical novelists continue to craft compelling narratives, the genre remains an enduring and cherished aspect of literature, continuing to captivate and enlighten audiences around the world.

## 13.3 ROMANCE NOVEL

The romance novel, a genre beloved by millions, weaves tales of love, passion, and emotional connections between characters, captivating readers with its compelling narratives and heart warming themes. As one of the most popular genres in literature, romance novels explore the complexities of human relationships and offer an escape into worlds of enchantment and emotional fulfillment.

The roots of the romance novel can be traced back to ancient times, with stories of love and courtship featured in mythology and folklore. However, the modern romance novel as we know it today began to emerge in the 18th and 19th centuries. During this time, authors like Jane Austen and the Brontë sisters crafted iconic works that continue to influence the genre. Throughout the 20th century, the romance novel evolved and diversified, reflecting changing societal norms and readers' preferences. From classic historical romances to contemporary love stories,

paranormal romances to LGBTQ+ romances, the genre has expanded to encompass a vast array of subgenres, catering to diverse readership.

Some of the important romance novels are as follows: *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen is a classic romance set in Regency England, exploring the passionate love story between Elizabeth Bennet and the enigmatic Mr. Darcy. *Outlander* by Diana Gabaldon is time-travelling adventure and historical romance, following Claire Randall's love affair with the dashing Scottish warrior, Jamie Fraser. At the heart of every romance novel lies the central theme of love and emotional connection between characters. The romantic relationship serves as the focal point of the plot, and the journey of the characters' love story is the driving force behind the narrative. Themes of trust, growth, and personal transformation are often intertwined with the romantic arc, highlighting the emotional depth of the characters' journey. Another characteristic of the romance novel is the guarantee of a "happy ending" or a "happily ever after" (HEA). Readers expect the main characters to overcome obstacles and challenges, ultimately finding their way to a satisfying and joyous resolution. This assurance of a positive outcome offers comfort and escapism, providing readers with a sense of hope and optimism.

## 13.4 REALIST NOVEL

Realist novels, a significant literary movement that emerged in the 19th century, sought to depict everyday life and human experiences with a heightened focus on truthfulness and accuracy. As a reaction against romanticism's idealized and fantastical portrayals, realist novels aimed to present a faithful representation of society and its complexities.

The roots of the realist movement can be traced back to the early 19th century, with the works of authors like Honoré de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, and Jane Austen. These writers sought to portray ordinary people and events, focusing on the mundane aspects of life and the intricacies of human relationships. One of the key characteristics of realist novels is their emphasis on objective observation and the detailed depiction of the external world. Authors meticulously described physical settings, social contexts, and the psychological states of characters, creating a rich and immersive narrative. Furthermore, realist novels often explored themes related to social issues, morality, and the impact of historical and cultural changes on individuals and society. These novels provided readers with insights into the complexities of human behaviour and the consequences of various choices and actions.

Many realist novels also served as platforms for social critique. By shedding light on social injustices, class disparities, and the hardships faced by marginalized individuals, realist authors aimed to raise awareness and encourage readers to reflect on the world around them. Charles Dickens, a prominent realist novelist, vividly depicted the plight of the working class in his novels such as *Oliver Twist* and *Hard Times*. Similarly, Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* explored the constraints

of societal norms and the consequences of infidelity in Russian high society. Many contemporary authors continue to draw inspiration from realist principles, using them as a framework to explore contemporary themes and issues. Writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, with her novel *The Namesake*, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, with *Americanah*, employ realist techniques to portray the experiences of immigrants and cultural clashes in the modern world.

Realist novels form an essential chapter in the evolution of literature, elevating the portrayal of everyday life to a profound and impactful art form. Through their unflinching honesty, detailed observations, and social commentary, realist novels continue to be revered for their contribution to literature and their ability to resonate with readers across time and cultures. As an enduring literary movement, realism remains a testament to the enduring power of truthfulness and human experiences in storytelling.

## 13.5 BILDUNGSROMAN

The Bildungsroman, a German term meaning "novel of formation" or "novel of education," is a compelling literary genre that centres on the personal and moral growth of the protagonist as they navigate the challenges and experiences of coming of age. This unique narrative structure traces the character's psychological and emotional development from childhood to adulthood, exploring their self-discovery, identity formation, and maturation.

The Bildungsroman genre has its origin in the 18th and 19th centuries, primarily in German literature. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795) is considered one of the earliest examples of the Bildungsroman, embodying the genre's key characteristics. Central to the Bildungsroman is the protagonist's transformative journey, both internally and externally. These novels often present the character's growth through a series of episodic events, encounters, and challenges that shape their outlook on life and their place in the world. Moreover, the Bildungsroman often explores the tension between individual development and societal expectations. The protagonist grapples with their own desires and ambitions, set against the norms and traditions imposed by family, society, and cultural conventions. This conflict between self-discovery and conformity adds depth to the character's journey and emphasizes the complexities of human nature.

Bildungsroman novels encompass a wide array of themes that resonate with readers across cultures and generations. The search for identity, the quest for meaning and purpose, and the pursuit of knowledge are recurring motifs in these narratives. The protagonist's evolving relationships with family, friends, mentors, and romantic interests often play a crucial role in shaping their character. The Bildungsroman also explores the significance of life lessons, experiences, and personal growth. Mistakes, failures, and challenges become opportunities for self-reflection and learning, as the character gains wisdom and insight through their journey.

Numerous classic and contemporary novels fall within the Bildungsroman genre, each offering a unique perspective on the journey of personal growth and development. Some notable examples include: *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens which provides the story of Pip, an orphan who rises from poverty to seek his identity and discover the true meaning of wealth and happiness. *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is narrated by Scout Finch. This novel follows her journey through childhood innocence and the moral awakening she experiences while witnessing her father's fight for justice. *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger reflects on the struggles and conflicts faced by adolescents as they grapple with the transition to adulthood.

The Bildungsroman genre stands as a timeless testament to the complexities and joys of growing up and discovering one's place in the world. Through the protagonist's transformative journey, Bildungsroman novels provide readers with profound insights into the human experience, offering stories of self-discovery, resilience, and the enduring pursuit of personal growth. As a genre deeply rooted in the human psyche, the Bildungsroman continues to captivate and inspire audiences, making it a cherished and influential part of the literary landscape.

## 13.6 SATIRICAL NOVEL

Satirical novels use humour, irony, and wit to criticize and ridicule human vices, social institutions, and prevailing norms. With a long history dating back to ancient times, satirical novels have remained a powerful vehicle for writers to comment on the foibles and follies of society, offering readers a humorous yet insightful perspective on the world.

Satire as a literary form originated in ancient Greece and Rome, with writers like Aristophanes and Juvenal employing humour and parody to criticize politicians, philosophers, and societal norms. In the medieval period, satirical elements were also found in the works of authors such as Geoffrey Chaucer, who satirized the corrupt religious practices of his time in *The Canterbury Tales.* Satirical novels typically feature exaggerated characters and situations, often portraying the flaws and absurdities of individuals, groups, or institutions. Through irony and sarcasm, the authors mock and deride the subject of their satire, exposing the follies and hypocrisies that exist in society.

Satirical novels cover a broad range of themes, aiming to provoke laughter and reflection in equal measure. Political satire, for example, uses humour to criticize government policies, leaders, and the political system at large. Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* serves as a classic example, where the protagonist encounters various absurd societies, enabling the author to critique political corruption and social injustices. Social satire, on the other hand, focuses on the idiosyncrasies and customs of society. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* offers a satirical examination of societal norms, class distinctions, and marriage conventions prevalent in Regency-era England. Religious satire challenges

religious dogma, rituals, and hypocrisy. Voltaire's *Candide* satirizes religious intolerance and optimism in the face of adversity.

Numerous renowned satirical novels have left an enduring impact on literature and society. Some notable examples include: *1984* by George Orwell. It is a dystopian novel that satirizes totalitarianism and explores the dangers of authoritarian control and propaganda. Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* is a darkly humorous and satirical critique of the bureaucracy and absurdities of war. George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is a satirical allegory that uses animals to represent political figures and regimes, exposing the corruption and abuse of power in political systems.

Satirical novels remain a powerful and entertaining form of literature that challenges readers to view the world from a fresh perspective. Through humour and satire, these novels serve as mirrors to society, reflecting its flaws, contradictions, and excesses. As authors use their literary wit to provoke thought and laughter, satirical novels continue to shape public discourse and inspire readers to critically examine the world around them.

## 13.7 SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL

A science fiction novel is a type of novel that explores imaginative and futuristic concepts, often involving advanced science and technology. These novels often speculate on the possibilities of the future, and may explore themes such as space travel, time travel, and alien life. Science fiction and fantasy novels transport readers to imagined worlds and explore speculative concepts, often involving futuristic technology or magical elements. From time travel to extraterrestrial life, from dystopian societies to artificial intelligence, science fiction allows authors to push the boundaries of what is possible and delve into the uncharted territories of human knowledge and imagination. These genres allow for creative world-building and often tackle philosophical and social issues. Science fiction novels transport readers to worlds beyond their own, exploring speculative ideas, futuristic technologies, and the human condition through the lens of science and technology. This genre, with its roots in early works like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, has evolved into a diverse and influential literary form.

Science Fiction and the Human Condition: Science fiction novels provide a unique lens through which to examine the human condition and explore what it means to be human. By confronting readers with imagined futures and alien worlds, these novels challenge preconceived notions and expand the boundaries of human understanding. The genre also serves as a cautionary tale, warning against the potential consequences of unchecked scientific advancement and the dangers of surrendering individual freedoms to authoritarian regimes or advanced technologies.

William Gibson's *Neuromancer* is a dystopian cyberpunk work. The "Neuromancer" follows Case, a washed-up computer hacker hired for a dangerous heist in cyberspace. With the help of allies like Molly, a cybernetically enhanced mercenary, Case navigates through virtual realities, corporate espionage, and the malevolent artificial intelligence, Wintermute. The novel explores themes of technology, identity, and the blurred lines between humans and machines. H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* is about an invention of a machine that allows him to travel forward in time. With the help of the machine, one of the characters ventures into the distant future, where he encounters two distinct races—the Eloi, a peaceful but naive people, and the Morlocks, a subterranean, predatory species. The novel explores the consequences of societal evolution and the potential dark fate of humanity. Science fiction novels are a testament to the boundless power of human creativity and curiosity. By blending scientific speculation with captivating storytelling, this genre continues to challenge and inspire readers, offering them a glimpse of what lies beyond the horizons of their own reality.

## 13.8 PSYCHOLOGICAL NOVEL

A psychological novel is a type of fiction that explores the inner workings of the human mind and psyche. These novels often focus on characters' thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, rather than external events or actions. The psychological novel is often associated with modernist and postmodernist literature and is a prominent feature of literary fiction. Psychological novels can be characterized by their attention to the complexities of the human psyche and the ways in which characters navigate their inner lives. These novels often feature introspective narrators who provide insight into their own thoughts and emotions, as well as those of other characters. They can also use techniques like stream of consciousness and unreliable narration to create a sense of psychological depth and complexity.

In the psychological novel, plot is subordinate to and dependent upon the probing delineation of character. Events may not be presented in chronological order but rather as they occur in the character's thought associations, memories, fantasies, reveries, contemplations, and dreams.The main focus of psychological fiction is the interior life of the characters, including their thoughts, feelings, and motivations.

The stream of consciousness is one of the distinguishing features of a Psychological Novel. It is an important aspect of a Psychological Novel. The term "stream of consciousness" was coined by the American philosopher and psychologist, William James. It was used for the first time in the review that the novelist/philosopher, May Sinclair, in 1915, about the first volume of Samuel Richardson's *Pilgrimage*. The stream of consciousness technique has been widely used by many famous 20th century English and American novelists. It is used by James Joyce in his novel *Ulysses*. It is employed in nearly all of Virginia Woolf's novels, namely; *To the lighthouse, Mrs. Dalloway, The Waves, Jacob's Room and Between the Acts*. It is also used in William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, *As*

*I Lay Dying* and *Absalom! Absalom*! Moreover, Samuel Beckett's trilogy: *Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* as well as D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love* are good examples of such a technique.

Some of the other famous psychological novels include *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky, which explores the guilt and psychological turmoil of a young man who commits murder, and *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, which follows the inner thoughts of a teenage boy struggling with alienation and identity. Other notable psychological novels include *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath, which chronicles a young woman's descent into mental illness, and *The Trial* by Franz Kafka, which explores the psychological effects of bureaucracy and power on an individual. Overall, the psychological novel offers a unique and often profound insight into the workings of the human mind and can be a powerful tool for exploring themes of identity, alienation, guilt, and mental illness.

## 13.9 EPISTOLARY NOVEL

The epistolary novel is a literary form that presents its narrative through a series of letters, diary entries, or other forms of written correspondence exchanged between characters. This storytelling technique offers readers an intimate and personal perspective, allowing them to delve deeply into the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of the characters.

Key characteristics of epistolary novels include the use of various written documents, such as letters, journal entries, newspaper articles, or even emails in contemporary works. These texts provide an immediate and direct connection to the characters' inner worlds, giving readers a sense of authenticity and immediacy. Epistolary novels often feature multiple narrators, as different characters take turns writing the letters or entries. This allows for diverse perspectives and a more comprehensive understanding of the story's events and relationships.

Epistolary novels explore a wide range of themes, including love, friendship, betrayal, social class, and the complexities of human relationships. The intimacy of the format enables authors to delve into the characters' psychology, revealing their innermost thoughts, fears, and desires. The epistolary form is particularly well-suited for portraying the development of emotions and relationships over time. As characters share their experiences and emotions in their correspondence, readers can witness the evolving dynamics between them. Epistolary novels can also offer social commentary, as the characters' letters may reflect the cultural norms, values, and constraints of the time in which the story is set. Epistolary novels originated with Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740), in which the story of a servant girl's victorious struggle against her master's attempts to seduce her, it was one of the earliest forms of novel to be developed and remained one of the most popular up to the 19th century.Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748) is another important example. Henry Fielding's *Shamela* (1741) is also a notable text.

## 13.10 PICARESQUE NOVELS

Picaresque novels are a genre of literature that originated in Spain during the 16th and 17th centuries. These novels follow the escapades of a roguish and often morally ambiguous protagonist, known as a "Picaro," as they navigate through various social classes and encounter a series of misadventures and humorous situations.

The term "Picaro" comes from the Spanish word "Picaro," meaning a rogue or a rascal. The genre's roots can be traced back to the anonymous Spanish work *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), often considered the first picaresque novel. It tells the story of Lazarillo, a poor boy who becomes a servant to various masters, exposing the corruption and hypocrisy of Spanish society. Picaresque novels are episodic in nature, comprising a series of loosely connected episodes and adventures in the Picaro's life. The protagonist often starts from a low social position, such as a beggar, servant, or thief, and moves from one master or situation to another. These novels are known for their satirical tone and social commentary. They critique the flaws and vices of the society they depict, offering a realistic portrayal of the human condition, especially among the lower classes. The Picaro's cleverness, wit, and ability to survive in challenging circumstances become central to the narrative.

Picaresque novels delve into themes such as social injustice, poverty, deception, and the struggle for survival. The Picaro often navigates a corrupt and unjust world, highlighting the disparity between the powerful and the marginalized. The genre also explores the idea of identity and self-discovery, as the Picaro often adopts various disguises and assumes different roles to survive and advance in society. While the Picaro's actions may be morally questionable, picaresque novels offer a critique of the social order rather than a glorification of criminal behaviour. The Picaro is a product of their environment, and their actions are a reflection of the harsh realities they face.

Picaresque novels have had a profound impact on literature and storytelling. They influenced the development of the novel as a literary form, particularly in the episodic structure and the use of first-person narration. Moreover, the Picaro character became a recurring archetype in literature, inspiring future works like Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders*and Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*. The influence of the picaresque can also be seen in the character of the "anti-hero" in modern literature. The first picaresque novel in England was Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller; or, The Life of Jacke Wilton* (1594). Many picaresque elements can be found in Henry Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1725), *Joseph Andrews* (1742), and *Tom Jones* (1749) and in Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748), *Peregrine Pickle* (1751), and *Ferdinand, Count Fathom* (1753).

Picaresque novels offer a compelling and satirical exploration of society through the eyes of a roguish and witty Picaro. These adventurous narratives, filled with humour and social commentary, continue to captivate readers, providing insights into the human condition and the complexities of life in different historical

and cultural contexts. The genre's enduring legacy lies in its ability to entertain, challenge, and shed light on the universal human experiences of survival, cunning, and resilience.

## 13.11 GOTHIC NOVEL

A Gothic novel is a type of novel that emphasizes the darker aspects of human nature, and often features supernatural or horror elements. These novels often feature haunted houses, mysterious castles, and other eerie settings, and explore themes such as madness, death, and the supernatural. The gothic novel originated in the 18th century and features elements of horror, romance, and suspense. These novels often include supernatural occurrences, eerie settings, and complex psychological themes. Gothic fiction, also known as Gothic horror, is a genre of literature that combines elements of horror and romance. The genre originated in the 18th century with the publication of Horace Walpole's novel *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), and became popular throughout the 19th century with the works of authors such as Mary Shelley, Edgar Allan Poe, and Bram Stoker. Walpole'smost respectable follower was Ann Radcliffe, whose *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *Italian* (1797) are among the best examples of the genre. Gothic fiction often features supernatural elements, such as ghosts, monsters, and magic, as well as dark, brooding atmospheres, and ominous settings such as castles, mansions, and graveyards. The genre is also characterized by complex, mysterious plots, with themes of death, decay, and the unknown. Many Gothic novels explore the psychology of their characters, particularly their fears and anxieties, and often focus on the struggle between good and evil. Common tropes include the persecuted heroine, the mysterious stranger, and the tyrannical villain. Famous gothic novels include *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and *Dracula* by Bram Stoker.

## 13.12 LET US SUM UP

The form of the novel is a dynamic and ever-evolving literary genre that has adapted to the changing tastes, beliefs, and social landscapes throughout history. From its humble beginnings as a means of entertainment and moral instruction to its present status as a profound art form, the novel has proven its enduring appeal and capacity to reflect the complexities of the human experience. The diverse forms of the novel, including historical, romance, realist, Bildungsroman, science fiction, and epistolary, showcase the genre's versatility and ability to explore a wide range of themes and emotions. Whether it is delving into the depths of human psychology, critiquing societal norms, envisioning possible futures, or offering a glimpse into the past, the novel remains a powerful medium for storytelling and self-expression. As readers continue to immerse themselves in the worlds created by novelists, they discover the profound impact of literature on shaping minds, provoking thought, and fostering empathy. The form of the novel stands as a testament to the human desire for narrative and the enduring power of storytelling as a means to understand ourselves, each other, and the world we inhabit.

## 13.13 NOTES AND REFERENCES

- Narrative: It refers to the storytelling process that conveys a series of events, experiences, or information, usually in a chronological manner, to create a cohesive and engaging account.
- Plot: It is the sequence of events that make up a story, encompassing the main conflicts, actions, and developments that drive the narrative and lead to its resolution.
- LGBTQ+: It stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and other sexual and gender identities, representing a diverse community of individuals.

## 13.14 QUESTIONS

- What distinguishes a historical novel from other forms of fiction, and how does it utilize the past to explore contemporary themes or issues?
- How does the Bildungsroman novel capture the journey of personal growth and maturation in its protagonist? Provide examples of Bildungsroman novels and analyze their central themes.
- In what ways does science fiction as a genre challenge our understanding of the present by exploring speculative ideas, technological advancements, and the human condition in futuristic settings?
- Discuss the impact of epistolary novels in conveying a story through letters, diaries, or other written forms of communication. How does this narrative style influence readers' engagement with characters and themes?

## 13.15 FURTHER READING

Geoffrey Galt Harpham and M. H. Abrams. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Cengale Learning, 2013.

Peter Childs. *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Routledge, 2006.

# UNIT-14 DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH NOVEL IN THE 20th CENTURY

## Structure


14.0 Objectives

14.1 Introduction

14.2 Development of Novels in the Twentieth Century: Four Generations

14.3 First Generation of 20th Century British Fiction

14.3.1 Joseph Conrad (1857–1924)

14.3.2 Dorothy Richardson (1873–1957)

14.4 The Second Generation of 20th Century British Fiction:

14.4.1 Virginia Woolf (1842-1941)

14.4.2 James Joyce (1882-1941)

14.4.3 D.H. Lawrence (1825-1930)

14.5 Third Generation of 20th Century British Fiction

14.5.1 Graham Greene (1904-1991)

14.5.2 George Orwell (1903-1950)

14.5.3 William Golding (1911-1993)

14.6 Fourth Generation of 20th Century British Fiction

14.6.1 Angela Carter (1940-1992)

14.6.2 Jeanette Winterson (1959 -)

14.6.3 Martin Amis (1949-2023)

14.6.4 Zadie Smith (1975 -)

14.7 Let Us Sum Up

14.8 Notes and References

14.9 Questions

14.10 Further Reading

## 14.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this unit is to introduce the development of novel in the 20th Century. The twentieth century abandoned the Victorian novel's purpose of narration and entertainment in favour of focusing on the character and unravelling the complicated web of ideas and feelings that ignite the individual. The 20th century novel replaced the order of art represented by the Victorian novel with the disorder of life. Victorian novels depend on the mastery of space and time in an unfolding narrative, while the 20th century novels undermine the idea that space and time which cannot be mastered by anyone, including the author. The 20th century novels resist the subject matter and the settings of the traditional patterns. It challenges the idealization, control and order, and expresses the turmoil and anxiety within each author's psyche. After reading this unit, the learner will understand about 20th century fiction, it's different phases of development, select important novelist and novels of the concerned phase, and modernism.

## 14.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of 20th-century British fiction was marked by various literary movements and prominent authors. It started with the Edwardian period, where writers like E.M. Forster and Virginia Woolf explored themes of social class and human relationships. The interwar period witnessed the emergence of the modernist movement, with T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and D.H. Lawrence pushing the boundaries of narrative techniques and exploring the complexities of human consciousness. Post-World War II, the 'Angry Young Men' movement gained traction, featuring authors like John Osborne and Kingsley Amis, who critiqued societal norms and portrayed disillusionment in the face of changing times. Later, the 1960s and '70s saw the rise of postmodernism, with writers like Salman Rushdie, Ian McEwan, and Julian Barnes playing with narrative structures and exploring cultural hybridity.

The 20th century novel does not follow the humanistic assumptions of Victorian fiction. It challenges the conventional style, structure and narrative technique, and derives the meaning through the form. The 20th century novel counters the idea that it is a creative gesture of the author and the result of historical context. Hence, understanding the process of imitating the external world does not give an insight into the artistry and meaning of the work. It challenges the humanistic notion that there is an original meaning, a center, which can be approached by, and often almost reached by, perceptive reading. Human consciousness is central to most works, and are the major concern of exploration in the novels. The 20th century novels are usually interested in how people behave –

what they fear, desire, doubt, need. Although modes of characterization differ, the psychology and morality of characters must be understood as if they were real people, for understanding others like ourselves helps us to understand ourselves.

## 14.2 DEVELOPMENT OF NOVELS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: FOUR GENERATIONS

The novels in the 20th century represents the retrospective fusion of these very diverse aesthetic experiments into the comprehensive style or social and psychological temper of a 'modern' age. 20th century novel is influenced by rapid industrial development, advanced technology, urbanization, secularization and mass forms of social life. Modernism stressed cultural and personal fragmentation and sought techniques to express this idea. The 20th century novels are often songs of oneself, and anxious, self-doubting ones at that. In varying degrees, Joseph Conrad, E M Forster, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Martin Amis, Ian McEwan, and others take their own imaginations as a major subject. In a sense their novels are about the process of transforming life into art. The author's struggle with his or her subject becomes a major determinant of novel form. In the 1898–1900 Marlow tales, *The Rainbow* (1915), *Ulysses* (1922), and *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), each author writes to define himself or herself.

The Development of English novels throughout the twentieth century is divided into four distinct generations. The first generation, prior to 1920, was dominated by Henry James and Joseph Conrad. The second generation is the period between the two world wars (1920-1940), which witnessed three influential novelists: Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, and James Joyce who also represent the high period of modernism in English fiction. The third generation is the post-World War II period saw the rise of writers like Graham Greene, George Orwell and William Golding, who delved into the complexities of moral judgment and crises of faith. The fourth generation is believed to begin after 1960s in the wake of postmodernism. Important novelists of this generation are Angela Carter, Jeanette Winterson, Martin Amis, Ian McEwan, etc.

## 14.3 FIRST GENERATION OF 20th CENTURY BRITISH FICTION

Henry James, an American novelist, focused on detailed character portraits, particularly the impact of European culture on wealthy Americans visiting Europe. He used subtle body language and facial expressions to convey emotions, in contrast to the later stream-of-consciousness technique. Joseph Conrad, on the other hand, explored individuals grappling with moral dilemmas in exotic settings, drawing on his experiences as a sea captain. The other notable writers from this period who did not reach the same level of success as James and Conrad are H.G. Wells, known for his science novels; Arnold Bennett, who wrote realistic stories about ordinary people, John Galsworthy, who depicted the manners of the wealthy,

and Somerset Maugham, whose work focused on themes of disillusionment and frustration.

## 14.3.1 JOSEPH CONRAD (1857–1924)

Conrad is a sharp critic of economic, political and social pretensions, in narratives of greed and rapacity (*Nostromo* [1904] and *Heart of Darkness* [1899]), political folly (*The Secret Agent* [1907] and *Under Western Eyes* [1911]) and codes of honour (‘*The Secret Sharer’* [1910] and *Lord Jim* [1900]). But, above all, his stories are about individuals at moments of crisis when they cross or falter at The Shadow-Line (1917), in the name of one short novel, between innocence and experience. Conrad’s most complex novel, *Nostromo*, deals with ‘mobility of viewpoint’, with regard to time, space, focalization and other aspects.

Time shifts, flashbacks and juxtapositions of events in Conrad’s complex mosaic narratives intensified the psychological emphases found in Henry James’s novels. Conrad introduced reappearing ‘tellers’ of his tales, most notably his partial alter ego Marlow in *Lord Jim, Heart of Darkness* and other stories. But Conrad’s moral tales are not those of social niceties and have more in common with the outlook of Hardy than James. Conrad is a sharp critic of economic, political and social pretensions, in narratives of greed and rapacity (*Nostromo* [1904] and *Heart of Darkness* [1899]), political folly (The Secret Agent [1907] and *Under Western Eyes* [1911]) and codes of honour (‘*The Secret Sharer’* [1910] and *Lord Jim* [1900]). But, above all, his stories are about individuals at moments of crisis when they cross or falter at *The Shadow-Line* (1917), in the name of one short novel, between innocence and experience. Yet, what Conrad’s stories are about is, generally speaking, less important than the way in which they are told; Cedric Watts characterizes Conrad’s most complex novel, *Nostromo*, in terms of an enormous ‘mobility of viewpoint’, with regard to time, space, focalization and other aspects. Watts argues that this mobility differentiates Nostromo from all previous novels; certainly, the handling of perspective and of time is an early and distinct example of modernist poetics: ‘There are unexpected juxtapositions of events from different times; and Conrad is fond of delaying our decoding of large and small effects: experiences are thrust at us before we are in a position to comprehend their significance’

## 14.3.2 DOROTHY RICHARDSON (1873–1957)

She is a stylistic innovator of great significance even though her works, pre-eminent among which is the sequence entitled Pilgrimage (thirteen volumes beginning with Painted Roofs, 1915–38), are less studied than those of Joyce and Woolf. She was a major developer of the interior-monologue technique and attempted to write a ‘feminine’ prose to counter the dominance of ‘masculine’ realism. Her emphasis on psychology and female ‘synthetic’ consciousness led to a prose style which required a collaboration between author and reader to render fully the life of her characters.

## 14.4 THE SECOND GENERATION OF 20th CENTURY BRITISH FICTION

Influential novelists in the interwar period which is between the two world wars (1920-1940) are: Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, and James Joyce. Woolf and Joyce were instrumental in revolutionizing novelistic technique through the development of stream-of-consciousness writing, which delves into the inner thoughts and emotions of characters. Lawrence brought a fresh vitality to the genre with his vibrant storytelling.

Woolf's innovative stream-of-consciousness technique and exploration of psychological complexities in novels like *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* challenged traditional narrative structures, paving the way for modernist fiction. Joyce's groundbreaking work, particularly his masterpiece *Ulysses*, pushed the boundaries of narrative experimentation, employing various styles and perspectives to depict ordinary life in extraordinary ways. His use of interior monologue and intricate wordplay marked a significant departure from conventional storytelling. Lawrence, known for works such as *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love*, delved into the human psyche and sexuality, tackling taboo subjects with frankness. His depiction of emotional intensity and complex relationships added depth to character-driven narratives. Together, these authors revolutionized British fiction by expanding its thematic scope, experimenting with narrative techniques, and challenging societal norms. Their influence on subsequent generations of writers continues to shape the landscape of modern literature.

### 14.4.1 VIRGINIA WOOLF (1842-1941)

Virginia Woolf wrote that “on or about December 10, 1910 human character Changed”. Old rules – about sex and race, about home life, art, and propriety – were giving way to new ones, in which freedom, self-realization, and creativity seemed more possible. This change was what Virginia Woolf had in mind when she said that “human character changed”: “All human relations have shifted – those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature.” The novel also changed because artists increasingly felt that the modern world required different kinds of art. The search for innovation in form and technique is inseparable from the search for values in a world where the British empire had lost its sense of invulnerability, the political leadership had suffered a crisis of confidence, and industrialization had created worker unrest.

> ‘[W]hat is reality? And who are the judges of reality?’, Virginia Woolf asked in an essay on ‘Character in Fiction’ published in the literary journal *Criterion* in 1924. 426). ‘Is life like this? Must novels be like this?’

Woolf’s first essay is entitled ‘Modern Fiction’ (1919). It decries the ‘materialists’ for writing about ‘unimportant things’, spending immense industry making the transitory appear enduring and important, the same accusation levelled at James by Wells but for entirely opposite reasons. Woolf admires the enormous number of details assembled by Bennett and Wells, but she says: ‘Life escapes: and perhaps without life nothing else is worthwhile’. In opposition to the mass of facts accumulated by the realists, Woolf says that the interest for modern(ist) authors ‘lies very likely in the dark places of psychology’. In the most well-known passage in the essay, Woolf describes what she means by ‘life’: ‘Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impression – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms.’

> Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible?’

She concludes that with the coming of the new novelists there will be revolutionary changes: ‘The literary convention of the time is so artificial . . . that, naturally, the feeble are tempted to outrage, and the strong are led to destroy the very foundations and rules of literary society. Signs of this are everywhere apparent. Grammar is violated; syntax disintegrated’. Such moments lead a different kind of novel writing which has no proper beginning, or information about the characters, time, place, etc. The reader would never understand why the beginning is in a particular way, and what relation it has with the successive narratives. For instance, the beginning of Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway:*

> Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.
>
> For Lucy had her work cut out for her.
>
> The doors would be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer’s men were coming.

Compare the above with the beginning of Jane Austen's *Emma* which provides complete information about the character's name, appearance, personality, economic status, age, etc. in the first sentence itself.

> 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.

## 14.4.2 JAMES JOYCE (1882-1941)

One great part of every human existence is passed in a state which cannot be rendered sensible by the use of wideawake language, cutanddry grammar and go-ahead prose', James Joyce declared while writing *Finnegans Wake.* James Joyce is unusual in being a major 'modernist' who did not write extensively on modernist aesthetics It was not until 1914 that Joyce managed to get his book of short stories, *Dubliners,* published. The stories are written with deceptive simplicity and deal successively with events of childhood, youth and adulthood. Some show the nullifying effect of the Dublin social and mental environment on characters whose dreams, hopes and ambitions are pathetically or tragically unfulfilled. The rhythm of aspiration and disappointment or resignation recurs at various levels of sophistication; and the element of stylization in the patterning of the material, together with the evident recourse to symbolism, foreshadows Joyce's later work.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man had been long a-writing when it came out in 1916. It reworked much material in *Stephen Hero.* Joyce at once hugs his hero close in sympathy and distances him in irony: the resultant blend of pathos and humour is piquant. Of course, Stephen's recollections of home, school, first love, and awakening cultural interests have an unmistakably authentic core; but the final artistic self-dedication is to 'silence, exile, and cunning', and silence and cunning imply abandonment of direct openness. The adoption of literary subterfuges—symbolism, labyrinthinism, and formality hidden inside naturalism—are as important in the total artistic vocation as the need by exile to escape Irish politics, religion and sentimentality. Joyce's presentation of Stephen's experience from within Stephen's own mind involves use of styles in tune with infant thought, childhood thought, adolescent thought and student thought successively. Sensitive adjustment of idiom to the thinker's moods and understanding, whether they are healthy or not, involves walking on a stylistic tightrope stretched precariously between involvement and detachment. The thematic use of images establishes continuing symbolic connections. Stephen Dedalus's own name brings together that of the first Christian martyr and that of the arch artificer of classical legend.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man tells a familiar story: that of a boy growing to young manhood and finding a vocation. But the way the book begins is a surprise:

> Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo.
>
> His father told him that story: his father looked at him through a glass: he had a hairy face.
> He was baby tuckoo. The moocow came down the road where Betty Byrne lived: she sold lemon platt.
> O, the wild rose blossoms
> On the little green place.
> He sang that song. That was his song.
> O, the green wothe botheth.
> When you wet the bed first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother put on the oil sheet. That had the queer smell.

The first words here are familiar enough. What could be more traditional than beginning, "once upon a time"? But what follows was (in1916) new and strange: the words seem to be said and heard directly from life itself, without planning or purpose; they let silly baby-talk cheapen the language of literature; they make a joke of storytelling customs, and they plunge us directly into an unfamiliar world, without the kind of preparation (scene-setting, introductory explanations) that might normally ease us in. Gone is any welcoming narrator, any clear or "objective" descriptions – any proper beginning.

## 14.4.3 D.H. LAWRENCE (1825-1930)

If we turn now to another of the foremost writers of 20th Century, D. H. Lawrence's main contributions outside of his novels and stories to the revolution of novel were essays written in the 1920s, though some were not published until his collected non-fictional prose was assembled under the title Phoenix in 1936. The most important are 'The Novel' (1925), 'Morality and the Novel' (1925), 'Why the Novel Matters' (mid-1920s, published 1936) and 'Surgery for the Novel – or a Bomb' (1923). In these essays, Lawrence, like Woolf, asserts his belief in 'life', though he defines it differently, as 'something that gleams, that has the fourth-dimensional quality' ('Morality and the Novel', 1971: 178). In 'Why the Novel Matters', he explains why the novelist is 'superior' to the philosopher or scientist, or even poet, who only deal with parts of 'life':

> Nothing is important but life. . .. For this reason, I am a novelist. . .. The novel is the one bright book of life. Books are not life. They are only tremulations on the ether. But the novel as a tremulation can make the whole man tremble. Which is more than poetry, philosophy, science, or any other book-tremulation can do.

In 'Morality and the Novel', in a sentence that partly explains the symbol in the title of one of his most important books, he adds: 'The novel is the perfect medium for revealing to us the changing rainbow of our living relationships'. It is the importance of relationships and relatedness to 'life' that Lawrence avers in this essay and which he puts forward as the reason why the novel, 'the highest example of subtle interrelatedness that man has discovered', is morally important. The essay begins: 'The business of art is to reveal the relation between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment', and goes on to say that 'life consists in this achievement of a pure relationship between ourselves and the living universe'.

## 14.5 THIRD GENERATION OF 20TH CENTURY BRITISH FICTION

The third generation of 20$^{th}$ century novelist depict the life and condition after the second world war. They bring out how the violence has affected not just the social and political sphere but also the literary landscape. Graham Greene, George Orwell, and William Golding significantly contributed to 20th-century British fiction. Greene's works explored moral dilemmas and the human condition in political and religious contexts, such as *Brighton Rock* and *The Power and the Glory*. Orwell's powerful social and political critiques, like *1984* and *Animal Farm*, highlighted totalitarianism and dystopian themes. Golding's masterpiece *Lord of the Flies* delved into the darker aspects of human nature. Together, their thought-provoking narratives and themes shaped the literary landscape, offering profound insights into the complexities of society, politics, and human nature during a transformative era of British literature.

### 14.5.1 GRAHAM GREENE (1904-1991)

Greene is undoubtedly a major novelist of this century, in style and content, "among the few, the very few, of our great living novelists". The contest of good and evil rages throughout his novels. In all his novels is the ceaseless striving for grace that frees men of the bondage of sin. His best novels are *The Ministry of Fear*, *The Heart of the Matter* and *Our Man in Havana*. *The Ministry of Fear* was written in Freetown, Sierra Leone, considered a backyard of the British Empire, where

Greene, recruited by his sister Elisabeth, was placed as an agent of the Secret Service from 1941 to 1943. He would decode telegrams and reply to them or write reports. It tells a story about a man called Rowe who once killed his wife out of pity because she was ill. The second murder in his life is only a made up as a means to make him afraid. He knows he did not commit the second murder but is afraid of being punished, so he tries to escape. Anna Hilfe, a sister of his pursuer and a German spy tries to help him and they fall in love. There is the aspect of responsibility of one towards the other, since, at the end, each of them wants to protect the other from such harmful knowledge that they both have. Greene's masterpiece, *The Heart of the Matter*, tells the story of a good man enmeshed in love, intrigue, and evil in a West African coastal town. Scobie is bound by strict integrity to his role as assistant police commissioner and by severe responsibility to his wife, Louise, for whom he cares with a fatal pity. Greene's next novel *Our Man in Havana* published in 1958 and classified by the author as an "entertainment." Set in Cuba before the communist revolution, it is a comical spy story about a British vacuum-cleaner salesman's misadventures in the British Secret Intelligence Service.

## 14.5.2 GEORGE ORWELL (1903-1950)

The social system is under judgement from a very different angle in the work of George Orwell (pseudonym of Eric Blair, 1903–50). From self-immersion among the social dregs emerged such books as *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933) and *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937). Orwell's most celebrated books came late in his short life. Disillusioned with Communism (after fighting in Spain), he wrote *Animal Farm* (1945), a satirical fable on revolution that has turned totalitarian. The animals oust tyrant Jones and take over the farm them-selves, but the pigs get on top, convinced of their own superiority. It is for the good of the community as a whole that, being the brains of the state, they should be well served by the others. The revolutionary slogan, 'All Animals are Equal', is amended to suit the new situation: 'But Some Animals are More Equal than Others'. *1984* (1949) looks prophetically into the future and foresees the triumph of totalitarianism so complete that individual thought is eradicated. A Ministry of Truth feeds the nation with lies and propaganda in the name of education, culture and news. A Ministry of Love operates the insidious Thought Police, while the Ministry of Plenty cuts the rations down and the Ministry of Peace runs the permanent war. An instrument of repression is 'New-speak', the approved language from which concepts dangerous to the prevailing non-thought, are eliminated. The reader follows gloomily the crushing of a rebel, Winston Smith, who deviates into the pursuit of privacy and love. Monochrome relentlessness gives the book a certain sourness.

## 14.5.3 WILLIAM GOLDING (1911-1993)

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is a story of a group of British boys stranded in an unknown deserted Island. The children are gathered on the Island because their rescuing plane is shot down. The boys come to know that they are on an Island, and there are no "adults" there, and they have no authority, so they democratically elect Ralph as their leader. Jack is unhappy with Ralph's election since he wants himself to be the leader, however, he is content with after being the chief of the hunters. The boys decide that they will keep a fire as a signal for their rescue, make shelters and arrange foods. Ralph emphasizes on keeping a fire going, while Jack and his hunters search for pigs on the island. They have sufficient materials on the Island to survive: water, fruits, wild pigs, etc. Unfortunately, with the passage of time, their rules break down, Jack declares himself the leader of his hunting tribe, Piggy is killed, atmosphere is full of violence and fear, and Ralph is left alone. All except Ralph have turned into savage threatening lives of each other. In the end, they are saved by army personnel. The actions of the children on the Island are microcosmic representation of the war-torn world.

Historically, there is no time-frame for the novel, but it set sometime around the 1950s, just after the World War II. There are many implied references to this War. England was terribly hit by the War and a fear of destruction was prevailing. Europe was in ruins. Children were direct witness to such brutality despite most of the parents tried to send their children out of the country for safety.

The novel is rooted in the historico-political and social circumstances of that time. However, it does not limit its meaning and interpretations. The novel can be considered a fable or a piece of adolescent literature, but the questions which it raises are relevant to across time and space. The questions are relevant for social, cultural, political, religious/theological, institutional, and psychological arena of human existence.

The novel is an exploration of the very "essence" or "being" of humankind. It makes one consider who is civilized? Who is savage? How long and under what circumstances can one maintain rationality and goodness? What is the nature of human beings? Are they essentially good? Do their sophistication and goodness depend on fear of legal and institutional actions along with social and moral codes? As Patrick Reilly points out that Piggy's questions about the nature of human beings, "What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages?" are important everywhere witnessing brutality, barbarism, and violence. Golding examines basic human nature and helps his readers gain "a renewed sense of the difficulty and complexity of the moral life and the opacity, perhaps even the evil, of people".

Human beings have largely a propensity towards evil, and this is the reason that Golding compares the children with animals: Ralph is "like a seal" and eats meat "like a wolf;" Jack is "dog-like" or "ape-like;" the Twins, Sam and Eric, "lay grinning and panting at Ralph like Dogs;" the "littluns" appear to running around like insects". Piggy at one point asks "We'll be like animals". Ralph calls Jack "a beast and swine and a bloody, bloody thief".

## 14.6 FOURTH GENERATION OF 20th CENTURY BRITISH FICTION

The fourth generation of 20th century British Fiction has taken shape since the 1960s with the advancement of postmodernism. The period also witnessed free-market globalism and thereby forcing a massive rearrangement of the cultural sector. The novelists focus on the social, political, economic, and ideological determinants that shaped the life and world of literature. Some of the important works in this regard are as follows:

### 14.6.1. ANGELA CARTER (1940-1992)

Angela Carter's *The Passion of New Eve* (1977) is an innovative and experimental exploration into the way in which gender is constructed in contemporary society. The novel involves the adventures of a character that begins the book as a man, but ends it, through an enforced sex change, as a woman. Evelyn thus becomes the new Eve of the title. On the way he/she encounters a number of grotesque characters that engage in either sexual or violent (or both) relationships with the main protagonist. These include Leilah, a black prostitute he meets in New York, Mother, the leader of an underground women's group, and zero, a mad misogynist poet who has a harem of subservient women. Eve/lyn eventually encounters Tristessa, an iconic screen goddess that, in an inversion of Eve/lyn's storyline, turns out to be a man. The novel attaches radical feminism to a series of other marginalized groups in American culture that were engaged in various forms of political resistance including Black, Hispanic and Gay Rights groups. Evelyn's transformation into a woman is presented as a fantastic event.

### 14.6.2 JEANETTE WINTERSON (1959 -)

Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* (1985) interrogating the articulation of sexual identities in British society through the experiences of a character recognizing her lesbian identity within a closed society that rejects same-sex relationships. These two novels are similar in their use of postmodern narrative techniques. The main character is called Jeanette. Jeanette's sexuality offers

another challenge to the traditional codes of masculinity and femininity. When Pastor Finch tries to account for the relationship Jeanette has with Melanie, he argues that it is due to Jeanette subverting the established roles between men and women. The novel, then, sets out to challenge the connection between religion and conventional discourses of gender and sexuality that, in the Protestant Christian church (both High Church and non- Conformist variations), traditionally upholds the heterosexual nuclear family as the ideal social unit. The direct target is the form of Old Testament, non-Conformist Evangelism that Jeanette's mother practices.

### 14.6.3 MARTIN AMIS (1949-2023)

Martin Amis's *London Fields* (1989) is a novel about writing novels and about playing around with fiction's relationship to reality. It is also about the way in which fiction, in its broadest sense, affects the formation of identity: how people create narratives in order to understand their place in the world. In doing so, it seeks to undermine some of the grand narratives by which we have come to understand and interpret the late-twentieth and early twenty-first-century world. The novel opens with a "true story" of a murder by the protagonist Samson Young, who is a fictitious novelist. The technique **metafiction** in *London Fields* provides us with a series of narrative levels that contribute to the questioning of who has narrative authority in the text

### 14.6.4 ZADIE SMITH (1975 -)

Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000) is Zadie Smith's first novel. The novel deals with a variety of ethnic cultures and backgrounds: the three interconnected families of the Joneses, the Iqbal and the Chalfens. This represents a variety of ethnicities that included English, Asian and Caribbean, and the introduction of Joyce and Marcus Chalfen in the second half of the novel extends this multiethnic framework to a middle-class family that combines a white English (Joyce) and East European Jewish (Marcus) background. The novel moves through three generations identifying these characters. *White Teeth* also has a broad historical canvas which in essence covers the whole of the twentieth century (with one episode going back to the Indian Mutiny of 1857). Smith explores the issues of multiculturalism through a negotiation of sameness and difference.

## 14.7 LET US SUM UP

From the modernist experimentation of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce to the post-war realism of George Orwell and Graham Greene, British fiction underwent significant transformations. The century also witnessed the rise of groundbreaking

writers like William Golding, Angela Carter, Ian McEwan and others, who captured the imagination of readers worldwide. Throughout the era, British fiction reflected the complexities and contradictions of society, grappling with issues such as class, gender, identity, and the human condition. The fusion of diverse cultural influences, the impact of two World Wars, and the evolution of technology all left indelible imprints on the literary landscape. As the 20th century drew to a close, British fiction continued to evolve, embracing new genres, themes, and narrative forms.

Overall, this unit explores the contributions of various novelists in each generation and how they shaped the development of English novels throughout the twentieth century. It highlights the different styles, themes, and techniques employed by these writers, ranging from the detailed character portraits of James and Conrad to the experimental stream-of-consciousness writing of Woolf and Joyce. Old plots and styles of description were insufficient in capturing the new experiences and landscapes of the era. The 20$^{th}$ century novel provided a means to expose hypocrisies, interpret technological developments, and challenge the very foundations of civilization. By delving into the complexities of the human mind and employing new styles and perspectives, the 20th century novel became a potent tool for illustrating and communicating the profound effects of modernity. The 20th century novel emerged as a vehicle to dramatize thought, to depict the fluid and elusive sequences of feelings, and to delve into the minds of characters who were either morally blind or exceptionally insightful. It developed new styles and tactics to do justice to the mind's intricate and multifaceted nature. In response to the demands of modernity, 20th century novel embraced new questions, subjects, and perceptions. It sought to remold itself to better reflect the reality of the changing world. By exploring the inner life of characters, fiction was able to expose the contradictions and complexities inherent in society. It provided a means to interpret the technological advancements that characterized modernity, allowing readers to understand their implications and significance.

## 14.8 NOTES AND REFERENCES

- Humanism: Humanism is a philosophical outlook emphasizing human values, reason, and ethics, valuing individual dignity, and promoting the betterment of society through human efforts and understanding.
- Modernism: Modernism is an artistic and cultural movement during the late 19th and 20th centuries, breaking from traditional forms and embracing innovation.
- Postmodernism: Postmodernism is a philosophical and cultural movement emerging after modernism, questioning objective truths, embracing

ambiguity, and celebrating diverse perspectives, often challenging established norms and structures.

- Stream-of-consciousness technique: Stream-of-consciousness is a narrative technique presenting a character's thoughts and feelings as a continuous, unfiltered flow of consciousness, mimicking the mind's inner workings.

## 14.9 QUESTIONS

- How did the 20th century witness significant changes and developments in the English novel?
- Who were some of the key literary figures and authors that contributed to the development of the English novel during this period?
- What were the major literary movements or styles that influenced the 20th-century English novel?
- How did societal and cultural changes impact the themes and subject matter explored in English novels of the 20th century?
- Can you provide examples of groundbreaking novels from the 20th century that exemplify the evolution and innovation in English literature during this era?

## 14.10 FURTHER READING

Brian Nicol. The Cambridge Introduction to Postmodern Fiction. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Jesse Matz. *The Modern Novel: A Short Introduction*, Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

Robert L. Caserio (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to the Twentieth-Century English Novel*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

# UNIT-15 JAMES JOYCE: AN INTRODUCTION

## Structure


15.0 Objectives

15.1 Introduction

15.2 Ireland and Parnell

15.3 James Joyce’s life and background

15.4 James Joyce’s literary output

- 15.4.1 Dubliners
- 15.4.2 A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
- 15.4.3 Ulysses
- 15.4.4 Finnegans Wake

15.5 James Joyce’s literary styles

- 15.5.1 Repetition
- 15.5.2 Stream of consciousness and epiphany
- 15.5.3 Symbolism

15.6 Let Us Sum Up

15.7 Notes and References

15.8 Questions

15.9 Further Reading


## 15.0 OBJECTIVES

In the unit, we will try to initiate a base for situating James Joyce and his body of writings in the modernistic trend for the learners doing this course through distance mode. It also provides a concise and informative introduction to the life, literary contributions, and enduring impact of the iconic Irish author. It aims to highlight key works, themes, and innovations in Joyce's writing, offering readers a glimpse into the complexities of his literary legacy. Understanding the background, the works and the techniques of Joyce would set the ground for understanding the modern fiction.

## 15.1 INTRODUCTION

James Joyce, an Irish literary titan of the 20th century, stands as one of the most influential and enigmatic figures in the world of literature. Joyce's groundbreaking works have left an indelible mark on the modernist movement, redefining the

possibilities of language and narrative in fiction. Joyce's exploration of the human psyche, the complexities of identity, and the interplay between the individual and society is unrivaled. His writing style, often characterized by stream-of-consciousness and inventive wordplay, challenged conventional storytelling norms, offering readers a glimpse into the inner workings of his characters' minds. His seminal work, *Ulysses*(1922), remains a pinnacle of literary innovation and a cornerstone of modernist literature. This sprawling masterpiece artfully weaves together various literary forms and allusions while encapsulating a single day in the life of Dublin's residents. It is celebrated for its depth, linguistic experimentation, and ability to capture the essence of the human condition. Prior to *Ulysses*, Joyce released *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), a semi-autobiographical Bildungsroman that chronicles the intellectual and emotional development of Stephen Dedalus. The novel offers an introspective examination of identity, religion, and artistic growth, embodying themes that Joyce would further explore in his later works. Beyond his prose, Joyce also composed the captivating novella *The Dead* (1914), a part of his collection *Dubliners*. This poignant tale delves into themes of mortality, love, and the haunting presence of the past, showcasing Joyce's ability to create a moving narrative within a concise framework. However, Joyce's immense literary achievements were not without controversy. His novel *Finnegans Wake* (1939) epitomizes his penchant for linguistic experimentation to such an extent that it has often been deemed one of the most challenging and cryptic works in the English language. Despite its complexity, it has garnered admiration for its daring approach to language and its attempt to mirror the subconscious mind's dreamlike logic. Throughout his life, Joyce's relationship with Ireland and its political climate remained intricate, and his works were often scrutinized and censored for their candid portrayal of Irish society and culture. Nevertheless, his legacy endures, and his influence reverberates through the works of countless authors who followed in his footsteps. In this introduction, we embark on a journey through the life and literary universe of James Joyce, exploring the themes, styles, and profound impact of a writer who forever altered the course of modern literature.

Lauded as the greatest innovators of the modern period James Joyce literary career flourished when he was “driven out of my country here as a misbeliever” but his body of works never failed to portray the immense faith he had for Ireland. The aspects of Joyce’s life in Ireland not only form the plot of his works but also the settings., his flair for languages; and his general unease with institutions of various kinds. Joyce’s spirited attempt to “try myself against the powers of the world” led to the overflow of daring style, wide-ranging experimentation and his constant preoccupation with language all of which have contributed to his stature as a novelist.

## 15.2 IRELAND AND PARNELL

Before delving into the background and the followed up turns in the life of James Joyce, it is important to devote some time in understanding how the history of Ireland in Joyce’s time was important for him to be(now) a singular modernist writer. Ireland was predominantly a Catholic country. Charles Steward Parnell was a Protestant and yet his indomitable personal charisma made him the leading spokesman for the Irish Nationalist cause in the British Parliament. But a moment

of crisis aroused when the narrowness and bigotry of the leaders of Catholic Church and the then English Prime Minister Gladstone made them dissociate themselves from Parnell. Parnell who had recently suffered the political decline in his career as a result of his romantic involvement with a married woman, Kitty O'Shea, a year later he died of exhaustion in a fervent attempt to build up a new independent party. Parnell's downfall and his subsequent death were important in Joyce's life not only because they made him aware of the disparity between Church and State in Ireland, but also because they created within the mind of a boy who had admired Parnell's heroism, a fear that Ireland would always destroy its own prophets.

Joyce didn't shy away from mentioning this betrayal of Parnell in the opening section and on the exchanges between students in the closing stages of the novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* where Stephen says to Davin with odd violence: Do you know what Ireland is?"...Ireland is the old saw that eats her farrow. (p.220). Thus, this incident can be rightly said to have formed was a part of the Irish psyche of those times. Joyce had a firm belief that political subjection had led the Irish people to have a slavish mentality. What Ireland needed was an expansion of consciousness. In this context, we can conclude that Joyce's attitude to nationalism and to the Irish Catholic hierarchy were both substantially affected by this awareness.

## 15.3 JAMES JOYCE'S LIFE AND BACKGROUND

James Augustine Aloysius Joyce (1882-1941) was novelist, born at Rathgar, Dublin. Son of a dutiful mother and a charming but improvident father, Joyce was the oldest of ten surviving children. The sense of the effect of spatial shifts in his novels is a reflection of the Joyce family's frequent changes of residence. Between 1888 and 1902 Joyce's education was first at Clongowes Wood College (early schooling), Belvedere College, Dublin (subsequent schooling) and University College, Dublin (from where he received his B.A. degree in 1902).

Dissatisfied with the narrowness and bigotry of Irish Catholicism, as he saw it, Joyce then went to Paris for a year in 1902, where he lived in poverty, wrote verse, and discovered Dujardin's novel *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (1888), which he was later to credit as the source of his own use of interior monologue. He returned to Dublin for his mother's death, stayed briefly in the Martello tower of Ulysses with Gogarty, then left Ireland with Nora Barnacle, the woman with whom he spent the rest of his life, and who bore him a son and a daughter. They lived at Trieste for some years, where Joyce taught English at the Berlitz school and made the acquaintance of Svevo, whose writing he encouraged; they moved in 1915 to Zurich, and settled finally after the war in Paris.

A good linguist from an early age he read and studied widely and in 1901 wrote a letter of profound admiration in Dano-Norwegian to Ibsen. His first published work was a volume of verse, *Chamber Music* (1907), followed by *Dubliners* (1914), a volume of short stories published after great delays and difficulties, culminating in his final visit to Ireland in 1912. When the stories at last appeared they were greeted with enthusiasm by Pound, in a review in the Egoist. Pound's friendship and support greatly encouraged Joyce's career and reputation. Another important ally gained at this period was Harriet Shaw Weaver, business

manager and then editor of the Egoist, and a lifelong benefactress of Joyce. Difficulties also attended the performance and publication of Joyce's play, *Exiles.* It was published in 1918 and was staged unsuccessfully the same year in Munich, then first performed in London by the Stage Society in 1926 after years of hesitation. It was later revived and directed by Pinter in 1970.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, a largely autobiographical work, was published serially in the Egoist, 1914-15 (part of a first draft, Stephen Hero, appeared in 1944). His famous novel *Ulysses* was first published in Paris on 2 Feb. 1922, and was received as a work of genius by writers as varied as T. S. Eliot, Hemingway, and Arnold Bennett. Another small volume of verse, *Pomes Penyeach*, appeared in 1927, and his second great work, *Finnegans Wake*, extracts of which had already appeared as 'Work in Progress', was published in its complete form in 1939. *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* revolutionized the form and structure of the novel, decisively influenced the development of the 'stream of consciousness' or 'interior monologue' and pushed language and linguistic experiment (particularly in the latter work) to the extreme limits of communication.

## 15.4 JAMES JOYCE'S LITERARY OUTPUT

James Joyce is one of the great innovators in twentieth century literature**.** Joyce's relationship to what is often loosely called the modernist movement**,** makes him experiment with different techniques in the use of language which follows inevitably from his purpose of trying to take all possible points of view simultaneously**.** Modernist artists at the beginning of the century were to a large degree moved to this unprecedented freedom and confidence in stylistic experiment by what they saw as radically new ideas, current in that period, concerning consciousness, time and the nature of knowledge. Joyce's contribution to modern English prose is to provide a more fluid medium for refraction sensations and impressions through the author's mind – to facilitate the transition from photographic realism to aesthetic impressionism.

### 15.4.1 DUBLINERS

Though in the later literary outputs Joyce would change the course of modern English literature, he at the very onset launched himself in the literary market impregnating his first published collection of stories with naturalism and urban realism. *Dubliners* is a collection of fifteen short stories which got published in 1914. The stories figuring in this collection follow a pattern of childhood, adolescence, maturity, and public life as seen in The Sisters, An Encounter, Araby, Eveline, After the Race, Two Gallants, The Boarding House, A Little Cloud, Counterparts, Clay, A Painful Case, Ivy Day in the Committee Room, A Mother, Grace and The Dead, which happens to be the longest and 'the finest short story in English'. All these tales carry a strain of Irish nationalism at their core essence as Joyce also intended to put these out as 'chapter of the moral history [of Ireland]'. Again, the intension behind setting these stories in Dublin was 'because that city seemed to [him] the center of paralysis', thus became his first attempt in the spiritual liberation of Ireland even in the period of his voluntary exile. The stories center on Joyce's idea of an epiphany: a moment when a character experiences a life-changing

self-understanding or illumination. Many of the characters in *Dubliners* later appear in minor roles in Joyce's novel *Ulysses*. Because of Joyce's frankness and his insistence on publishing without deletion or alteration, he found himself, in the first of what would be several battles with publishers who refused to print his work without excisions, as well as the focus of a brief campaign for freedom to publish.

## 15.4.2 A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, is an auto biographical novel by James Joyce, first published in the Egoist, 1914-15. It is one of the superior examples of a Kunstler roman (an artist's Bildungsroman) in English literature in which we come in terms with the development of an artist, Stephen Dedalus in his confusion and rebellion against the Catholic and Irish Conventions of his upbringing. Though not as innovative as the later work (its experimentation lies principally in its prose style changing as the novel progresses to mirror the growth and development of Stephen's mind), the novel started to experiment with interior monologue and free indirect discourse (in which the style shifts to match the 'center of consciousness' on that page, changing in complexity and reference as the character develops).

In the opening of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* Joyce manages what the other major modernists of the period also achieved: the complete recreative and parodic mastery of previous traditions. The elementary vocabulary, lack of punctuation, and simple, associative sentences of the very first section reflects the mode of apprehensions characteristic of a small but sensitive child: *"When you wet the bed first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother put on the oilsheet. That had the queer smell. His mother had a nicer smell than his father. She played on the piano the sailor's hornpipe for him to dance."*The first part is thus not baby talk, and it is far from a realistic stream of consciousness method. It is suggestive style and more impressionistic. It is designed to give us the notion of the way world appears to the infant consciousness, and all the while it is language as carefully planned and as synecdochical in function as poetry. In sharp contrast are the fragmented diary entries of the last pages. It ends with a different narrative perspective which throws the entire novel into a new relief. The diary entries range between the detached sardonic and the committed ecstatic and they project that stage of the young artist when he is about to take flight and leave behind him the 'nets' in which the world has tried and failed to hold his spirit. The stylistic innovation of the opening and closing pages launches Joyce into an original modernist experimentalism which is almost wholly unpredictable in terms of the earlier influences.

In describing and analysing Stephen's subjective world, Joyce uses several times in the course of the narrative, the technique what is known as the stream of consciousness or interior monologue.

For instance in Chapter II, Section iv, we come across what can be indicative of stream of consciousness: "Stephen walked on at his father's side, listening to stories he had heard before, hearing again the names of the scattered and dead revellers who had been the companions of his father's youth. And a faint sickness sighed in his heart. He recalled his own equivocal position in Belvedere, a

free boy, a leader afraid of his own authority, proud and sensitive and suspicious, battling against the squalor of his life and against the riot of his mind…."

Again, Stephen's agony on hearing father Arnall's sermon is described by a method close to interior monologue: "Every word of it was for him. Against his sin, foul and secret, the whole wrath of God was aimed. The preacher's knife had probed deeply into his disclosed conscience and he felt now that his soul was festering in sin…. The sordid details of his orgies stank under his very nostrils. The soot-coated packet of pictures which he had hidden in the flue of the fireplace and in the presence of whose shameless or bashful wantonness he lay for hours sinning in thought and deed…." [Chapter III, Section ii]

Much of Stephen's spiritual development, almost all its positive side which tends towards aesthetic fulfilment, is conveyed through epiphanies. The major epiphanies in the book occur as the symbolic climaxes of the larger dialectical movements covering each of the five chapters. Each chapter begins with a multitude of warring impressions; each develops towards an emotionally apprehended unity. Each succeeding chapter liquidates the previous synthesis and subjects its elements to a more adult scrutiny, developing towards its own synthesis and affirmation. Joyce's doctrine of the epiphany assumes that reality does have wholeness and harmony and that it will radiantly show forth its character and its meaning to the prepared and consciousness, for it is only in the body of reality that meaning can occur and only there that the artist can find it. The epiphany is usually the result of a gradual development of the emotional content of associations, as they accrete with others. Among Stephen's childish impressions is that of *"a woman standing at the half door of a cottage with a child in her arms."* This early impression enters into emotional context later with the story which Davin tells him about stopping at night at the cottage of a peasant women; and Stephen's image of the woman is for an epiphany of the soul of Ireland to which he refers *as "a batlike soul walking to the consciousness of itself in darkness and secrecy and loneliness."*Thus, Joyce has managed a distinctive reinvention of symbolist experience through the 'epiphanic' moments of *a portrait* and its aesthetic theory and he has revived and immeasurably extended the presentation of the 'stream of consciousness', which was previously found. James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is thus a text of modernism which charts the development of the subjectivity of the artist that we see in the character of Stephen when he finally decides to leave Ireland.

## 15.4.3 ULYSSES

*Ulysses*, a novel by James Joyce was serialized in the Little Review from 1918 the brunt of which was bore by the editors as they were found guilty of publishing obscenity. Following this massive outburst against his novel, it saw its publication in a non-English speaking country, published in Paris by Sylvia Beach in 1922. The novel deals with the events of one day in Dublin, 16 June 1904 (the anniversary of Joyce's first walk with Nora Barnacle, who became his wife), now known as 'Bloomsday'. The principal characters are Stephen Dedalus (the hero of Joyce's earlier, largely autobiographical, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*); Leopold Bloom, a Jewish advertisement canvasser; and his wife Molly. The plot follows the wanderings of Stephen and Bloom who are portrayed through techniques such as interior monologue, dialogue, and soliloquy, through Dublin, and their eventual

meeting. The last chapter is a monologue by Molly Bloom. The various chapters roughly correspond to the episodes of Homer's *Odyssey*, Stephen representing Telemachus, Bloom Odysseus, and Molly Penelope. In the course of the story a public bath, a funeral, a newspaper office, a library, public houses, a maternity hospital, and a brothel are also visited and a number of other Dublin scenes and characters are also introduced. A novel which ranges from extreme realism to fantasy, *Ulysses* can be read as a study of Dublin in 1904, exploring various aspects of the city's life, dwelling on its squalor and monotony. This combination of kaleidoscopic writing, reliance on a formal schema to structure the narrative, and an exquisite attention to detail represents one of the book's major contributions to the development of 20th-century modernist literature.

### 15.4.4 FINNEGANS WAKE

*Finnegans Wake*, a prose work by Joyce was published in 1939. It was written in a unique and extremely difficult style, making use of puns and portmanteau words (using at least 40 languages besides English), and a very wide range of allusion. The central theme of the work is a cyclical pattern of history, of fall and resurrection inspired by Vico's *Scienza nuova*. Giambattista Vico's cyclical view of history (in which civilization rises from chaos, passes through theocratic, aristocratic, and democratic phases, and then lapses back into chaos) structures the text's narrative, as evidenced by the opening and closing words of the book: *Finnegans Wake* opens with the words "riverrun, past Eve and Adam's, from swerve of shore to bend of bay, brings us by a commodius vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs" and ends "A way a lone a last a loved along the". In other words, the book ends with the beginning of a sentence and begins with the end of the same sentence, turning the narrative into one great cycle.

Along with the above-mentioned novels, Joyce has a play titled ***Exile*** which happens to portray a husband-and-wife relationship and three books of poetry to his credit. The first full-length collection was ***Chamber Music*** (1907), which consisted of 36 short lyrics. It led to his inclusion in the ***Imagist Anthology***, edited by Ezra Pound, a champion of Joyce's work. Other poetry Joyce published in his lifetime includes "Gas from a Burner" (1912), ***Pomes Penyeach*** (1927), and "Ecce Puer" (written in 1932 to mark the birth of his grandson and the recent death of his father). These were published by the Black Sun Press in *Collected Poems* (1936).

## 15.5 JAMES JOYCE'S LITERARY STYLES

James Joyce's literary styles are renowned for their innovation, complexity, and profound impact on modernist literature. Throughout his works, Joyce pushed the boundaries of conventional storytelling, employing a myriad of techniques to delve into the depths of the human psyche and explore the intricacies of identity, society, and language. One of Joyce's most notable stylistic devices is the use of stream-of-consciousness narration. By presenting characters' thoughts and perceptions in a continuous flow, he allowed readers to immerse themselves in the characters' inner worlds. This technique is prominently displayed in works like *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, enriching the reader's understanding of the characters' motivations and emotions. Joyce's linguistic virtuosity is evident in his

masterful wordplay and manipulation of language. He coined new words, fused languages, and experimented with puns, metaphors, and allusions. In *Finnegans Wake*, he took this experimentation to an unparalleled level, creating a dreamlike and multilayered narrative where words metamorphosed to evoke different meanings and sounds. His innovative narrative structures also set him apart. In *Ulysses,* each chapter is a distinct literary style, echoing various episodes from Homer's *Odyssey*. This unconventional approach challenges the reader, contributing to the novel's complexity and artistic brilliance. Joyce's portrayal of Dublin and Ireland is another hallmark of his literary style. With vivid descriptions and a keen eye for detail, he captured the city's essence, making Dublin a central character in many of his works. His unflinching portrayal of Irish society and the impact of colonialism sparked both admiration and controversy. James Joyce's literary styles continue to inspire and influence generations of writers. His daring experimentation, linguistic creativity, and deep exploration of human consciousness have cemented his place as a literary pioneer, leaving an enduring legacy in the annals of world literature. Thus, Joyce uses an infinite variety of subtle stylistic variations, kunstlerroman plot, stream of consciousness or interior monologue, epiphanies, paired repetitions, symbols, and unique language injecting a plethora of literary techniques in the literary field of his age.

## 15.5.1 REPETITIONS

Repetitions as a stylistic and structural devise offer an endless difference in sameness. Joyce uses Stephen's (*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) remembrances or recollections as synectic triggers for ellipted telling of the first event, just expressed differently. These remembrances are selective in details and often differ in the form in which they are remembered. There is a presence of paired repetitions in three parallel paragraphs where Stephen remembers Eileen's long white hands, which focuses on highlighting some specific theme:*"Eileen had long white hands. One evening while playing tig she had put her hands over his eyes: long and white and thin and cold and soft. That was ivory: a cold white thing. That was the meaning of Tower of Ivory."*

## 15.5.2 STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND EPIPHANY

Stream of consciousness is a narrative technique that attempts to stimulate how thoughts are experiences by the conscious mind- perceived in a continuous non-linear flow where one mental event leads to another through association. The quintessential modernist novel, *Ulysses*, is celebrated not just for its usage of stream of consciousness and interior monologue, but also for the richness of the literary puns and allusions employed, inscribing it as a highly referential work. For example, in the initial lines of Leopold's wife Molly's 45-page long, unpunctuated monologue: *"Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the City Arms hotel when he used to be pretending to be laid up with a sick voice doing his highness to make himself interesting for that old [...] Mrs Riordan that he thought he had a great leg of and she never left us a farthing…"*

In this example, Joyce chooses to make use of no punctuation at all — however, it is common to see this bending of grammar across a spectrum, such as by using ellipses, dashes and oddly-placed line breaks. The progression also happens associatively, where thoughts are prompted through links that often appear random and unclear, either with other thoughts or due to sensory impressions. Minimal or no authorial intervention being the foremost characteristics of stream of consciousness technique Joyceaimed at letting the character's thoughts appear naturally, unmediated by him.

A series of epiphanies is Joyce's main device for the furthering of his artistic purpose, of advancing his narrative. Joyce described the sudden 'revelation of the whatness of a thing', the moment in which 'the soul of the commonest object seems to us radiant' as a moment of epiphany. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* depicts the attempt of a gifted youngster growing into manhood to understand the world and place it in a perspective with which he can cope. His epiphanies provide him with rationalizations and frameworks within which he may relieve his sense of inferiority and deal with the pressures of his existence and the demands made on him by his church, family, country and friends.

### 15.5.3 SYMBOLISM

Joyce has managed a distinctive reinvention of symbolist experience through the 'epiphanic' moments in his works and its aesthetic theory and he has revived and immeasurably extended the presentation of the 'stream of consciousness', which previously existed. He has used a large number of symbols which lend richness and scope of imaginative interpretations in *APortrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. As the narrative moves; there are the mention of birds and thus the images of flight which suggests the freedom Stephen must have. When Joyce describes his encounter with the wading girl, all the imageries deal with birds and flight. Even the girl seems to have been changed by music into *"the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird."* When Stephen's friends called out his name, he has vaguely realized the prophetic quality of their banter and an 'ecstasy of flight' had made his eyes radiant. *"His soul was in flight. His soul was soaring in an air beyond the word....this was the call of life to his soul....an instant of wild flight had delivered him...."* And the book closes with a final reference to Daedalus: *"Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead."*Thus, through the use of symbolic imagery and the symbolic name, Joyce compares the flight of the ancient Daedalus and Icarus with the contemporary flight of Stephen from the suffocating environment of his life in Ireland.

## 15.6 LET US SUM UP

James Joyce was an Irishman who came to be among the most influential figures in Modernist literature written in English. His masterpieces show enormous quantities of stylistic daring like its eclecticism (mixture of the best, heterogeneity) lies in blending the best lesson of imagism, symbolism, impressionism, naturalism and realism. Along with this his works carry strong autobiographical elements has a strong presence in it. Joyce's writings did a lot to bring the treatment of city life into currency in modem literature. The city in his case is Dublin, brought to life

with all its contours, pleasant and unpleasant. Joyce emerges as a literary pioneer whose profound impact on modernist literature remains unparalleled. Through innovative styles, intricate narrative structures, and linguistic virtuosity, Joyce redefined the possibilities of storytelling and delved into the complexities of the human condition. His fiction as a whole offers an abundance of parody and pastiche, self-referentiality, open-ended narrative and multiple points of view and these are aspects of fiction-writing that all fiction writers after him have deployed in varying degrees. Joyce's literary legacy endures as a testament to his unwavering commitment to artistic innovation, his unyielding exploration of the human psyche, and his indelible impact on the evolution of literature. By challenging the norms of his time and embracing the complexities of human existence, he has left an enduring mark on the literary world, inspiring countless writers to push the boundaries of creativity and self-expression. Joyce's works continue to captivate and challenge readers, inviting them to embark on profound journeys of self-discovery and intellectual exploration.

## 15.7 NOTES AND REFERENCES

- Photographic realism: It is an artistic style that seeks to replicate the exact appearance of a photograph in paintings, capturing minute details and emphasizing accuracy and precision in a work of fiction.
- Aesthetic impressionism: It is an artistic approach that prioritizes evoking emotions and sensations over precise representation, using vivid colours, light, and brushstrokes to create subjective and atmospheric visual experiences.
- Parody: It is a form of humor or satire that imitates and exaggerates the style, elements, or characteristics of a particular work, person, or genre to create a humorous and often critical effect.
- Pastiche: It is an artistic work, such as literature, music, or visual art, that combines elements and styles from various sources or periods to create a new and often eclectic composition.

## 15.8 QUESTIONS

- Who was James Joyce, and what were some of his notable contributions to literature during the 20th century?
- How did James Joyce employ the stream-of-consciousness narrative technique in his writing? Provide an example from one of his works.
- What were some of the distinctive elements of Joyce's stylistic creativity in his works? Explain with examples.
- How did Joyce's portrayal of Dublin and Ireland contribute to the depth and significance of his works? Provide insights into his representation of Irish society and culture.

## 15.9 FURTHER READING

Edna O'Brien. James Joyce A Life. Penguin, 2011.

J.I.M. Stewart. James Joyce. House of Stratus, 2012.

James Joyce. Four Novels by James Joyce. eBookit.com, 2013

# UNIT- 16 A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

## Structure


16.0 Objectives

16.1 Introduction

16.1.1 Historical Context

16.1.2 Literary Context

16.2 Overview of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

16.3 Plot

16.4 Character Analysis of Stephen Dedalus

16.5 Major Themes

16.7 Literary Techniques

16.8 Let Us Sum Up

16.8 Notes and References

16.8 Questions

16.10 Further Reading


## 16.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this unit is to provide a comprehensive and insightful analysis of James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. It provides a deeper understanding of the novel's themes, literary techniques, historical context, and the protagonist's journey of self-discovery. Specifically, the unit aims to introduce the historical and literary context in which the novel was written, providing a foundation for understanding the work's significance. It provides a thorough plot summary to help readers navigate the protagonist's development, experiences, and challenges as he matures from childhood to adulthood. It conducts a detailed character analysis, focusing on the complexities of Stephen Dedalus, to explore their impact on his growth. Further, it deals with the central themes of the novel, such as identity, religion, art, nationalism, and sexuality, to encourage readers to critically engage with the text's deeper layers of meaning. It examines the literary techniques employed by James Joyce, including stream of consciousness, symbolism, and imagery, to enhance readers' appreciation of his innovative narrative style. The unit places the novel within its historical and social context, highlighting the political and cultural climate of Ireland during the time of the

narrative, and encourage personal reflection and discussions among readers about their interpretations and responses to the novel, fostering a deeper appreciation of its themes and relevance in contemporary society.

# 16.1 INTRODUCTION

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is a timeless and transformative work of literature penned by the influential Irish writer James Joyce, stands as a mesmerizing window into the psyche of a young protagonist navigating the complexities of self-discovery and artistic awakening. Published in 1916, this semi-autobiographical novel holds a prominent place in the realm of modernist literature, renowned for its innovative narrative style and profound exploration of themes such as identity, religion, art, and nationhood.

## 16.1.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The novel is set against the backdrop of late 19th and early 20th-century Ireland, a time marked by profound political, cultural, and religious changes. During this period, Ireland was under British rule, and there was a growing desire for Irish independence and national identity. The novel reflects the social and political tensions of the time, capturing the impact of Irish nationalism on the characters and their experiences. In the late 1800s, Ireland experienced a cultural revival known as the Irish Literary Revival or Celtic Revival. This movement sought to revive Irish language, literature, and folklore, celebrating Irish heritage and traditions. Figures like W.B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, and J.M. Synge played significant roles in this literary reawakening. Ireland was predominantly Catholic, and religion played a central role in the lives of its people. However, there was a growing secular and intellectual movement that challenged traditional religious beliefs, which is reflected in the protagonist's journey of spiritual exploration in the novel.

## 16.1.2 LITERARY CONTEXT

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is considered a groundbreaking work of modernist literature. The modernist movement emerged in the early 20th century as a response to the rapidly changing world, characterized by industrialization, urbanization, and technological advancements. Modernist writers sought to break away from traditional literary forms and experiment with new narrative techniques, reflecting the fractured and fragmented nature of modern life. James Joyce, the author of the novel, was a prominent figure in the modernist literary movement. He, along with other modernist writers like Virginia Woolf and T.S. Eliot, challenged conventional storytelling and delved into the complexities of human consciousness and perception. Joyce's use of stream of consciousness, which allows readers to experience the unfiltered flow of thoughts and emotions of the characters, is a hallmark of modernist literature. The novel was first serialized in *The Egoist* magazine between 1914 and 1915 and was published as a complete work in 1916. It received mixed reviews upon its release, with some critics praising its innovative style, while others found its themes and exploration of the protagonist's sexuality controversial. The novel not only reflects the historical and cultural context of early 20th-century Ireland but also stands as a significant contribution to the modernist

literary movement, solidifying James Joyce's reputation as one of the most influential and revolutionary writers of his time. The novel's exploration of identity, religion, and art, combined with its innovative narrative techniques, has secured its place as a classic in the realm of world literature.

## 16.2 OVERVIEW OF A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

The novel is a coming-of-age story that follows the life and psychological development of its protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, from his childhood to his early adulthood. It is widely regarded as one of the greatest works of modernist literature, showcasing Joyce's innovative narrative techniques and profound exploration of themes such as identity, religion, art, and nationhood. The novel is divided into five chapters, each representing a distinct period in Stephen Dedalus' life:

**Chapter 1: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Boy:** The novel opens with the earliest memories of Stephen Dedalus as a young child living in Dublin, Ireland. The narrative introduces Stephen's family, his devout Catholic mother, and his intelligent but sk(c)eptical father. The first chapter portrays the young Stephen's experiences and impressions, laying the groundwork for his later struggles with religion and his awakening artistic sensibility.

**Chapter 2: Aesthetic Development of Stephen Dedalus:** In this chapter, Stephen is now a student at Clongowes Wood College, a Jesuit boarding school. He experiences a mix of intellectual and physical growth, forming friendships and grappling with the strict religious environment. Stephen's exposure to classical literature and his burgeoning artistic inclinations lead to a fascination with beauty and aesthetics.

**Chapter 3: From Belief to Doubt**: As Stephen enters adolescence and moves to Belvedere College in Dublin, he becomes more immersed in the complexities of Irish nationalism and political ideologies. He becomes involved with a group of nationalist students, but his faith in the Church and traditional beliefs begins to wane. Stephen experiences a profound crisis of faith, leading to his decision to abandon religious doctrine and embrace a life of intellectual and artistic freedom.

**Chapter 4: Artistic Awakening**: In this chapter, Stephen attends the University College Dublin, where he encounters new ideas, literature, and art. He delves deeper into his identity as an artist and seeks to break free from societal and familial expectations. The chapter culminates in a powerful epiphany, where Stephen realizes his vocation as an artist and decides to leave Ireland for the continent to pursue his artistic ambitions.

**Chapter 5: Dedalus' Flight**: The final chapter finds Stephen in Paris, where he immerses himself in the bohemian artistic community. He faces various challenges, including poverty and a struggle to find his artistic voice. Despite these hardships, Stephen remains determined to follow his artistic calling and rejects the conventional norms of society. The novel concludes with Stephen embracing his identity as an artist and declaring his commitment to forge his path in the world of literature.

The novel provides a profound and introspective examination of the evolution of an artist's mind and soul, capturing the essence of human growth, struggles, and aspirations.

## 16.3 PLOT

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man follows the journey of its protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, from childhood to early adulthood. The novel's plot is a profound exploration of Stephen's psychological development, spiritual struggles, and artistic awakening, set against the backdrop of Ireland's religious and political tensions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The novel begins with Stephen's earliest memories as a young boy in Dublin, Ireland. Born into a devout Catholic family, Stephen is deeply influenced by the religious environment in which he is raised. The opening chapters provide a glimpse into Stephen's sensitive and imaginative nature as he experiences the world through the lens of a child's innocent perceptions.

As Stephen grows older, he attends Clongowes Wood College, a Jesuit boarding school. Here, he encounters the rigorous religious education imposed upon him by the Church. However, the school also fosters his intellectual curiosity and introduces him to the world of literature and language. Stephen forms close friendships with his classmates, particularly with the charismatic and rebellious Cranly, who encourages him to question the dogmas of the Church and authority figures. During his time at Clongowes, Stephen's thoughts begin to drift away from religious piety, and he experiences a newfound fascination with beauty and aesthetics. His growing artistic inclinations emerge as he becomes enamoured with language, poetry, and the artistic expressions of the human experience. This gradual shift in his perception marks the beginning of his journey toward artistic self-discovery.

As Stephen enters adolescence and moves to Belvedere College in Dublin, he becomes more aware of the political turmoil and the fervent nationalist movements in Ireland. He joins a group of nationalist students and engages in discussions about Irish identity and liberation. However, Stephen's belief in nationalist ideals is short-lived, and he starts to question all systems of belief, including politics and religion. In the midst of this intellectual and spiritual turmoil, Stephen is wracked with guilt over his perceived sins. He seeks solace in religious confession but remains unfulfilled, struggling to find spiritual peace. This conflict culminates in a night of religious fervour and guilt, which ultimately leads Stephen to reject the strictures of the Church and embrace a life of intellectual and artistic freedom.

For his artistic and aesthetic progress, Stephen attends the University College Dublin. Here, he delves deeper into literature, philosophy, and aesthetics, engaging with various ideas and exploring his artistic passions. His experiences with love and desire, particularly his infatuation with a girl named Emma, further shape his emotional and creative sensibilities. During this phase, Stephen experiences a profound epiphany while walking on the beach. He realizes that he must pursue his true vocation as an artist and be free from the constraints of society and convention. This moment of clarity marks a significant turning point in

Stephen's life, solidifying his commitment to becoming an artist and forging his own path in the world. In the final chapters, Stephen leaves Ireland and travels to Paris, the center of bohemian artistic culture. There, he immerses himself in the vibrant art scene, encounters diverse personalities, and faces financial hardships. Despite the challenges, Stephen remains steadfast in his dedication to art and literature.

Throughout the novel, Joyce employs a groundbreaking narrative technique known as "stream of consciousness," which allows readers to experience Stephen's innermost thoughts and emotions in a raw and unfiltered manner. This technique provides a deeply intimate understanding of the protagonist's psyche, making the novel a pioneering work of modernist literature. The novel delves into the profound complexities of human growth and self-discovery. Through Stephen Dedalus' journey, readers witness the evolution of an artist's mind and soul, as he navigates the conflicting influences of religion, society, and his own artistic desires. The novel's exploration of identity, spirituality, and artistic awakening remains relevant and impactful to this day, solidifying its place as a timeless classic in the literary canon.

## 16.4 CHARACTER ANALYSIS OF STEPHEN DEDALUS

Stephen Dedalus, the protagonist of James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, is a deeply complex and introspective character who embarks on a transformative journey of self-discovery and artistic awakening. The novel follows Stephen from his childhood to early adulthood, tracing his intellectual, spiritual, and emotional development as he grapples with various influences and experiences that shape his identity as an artist.

a. **Sensitivity and Imagination:** From the novel's outset, Stephen's character is portrayed as highly sensitive and imaginative. As a young boy, he perceives the world around him with a vivid and innocent lens, deeply affected by the beauty of nature and the power of language. Joyce portrays Stephen's imagination as an essential part of his artistic nature, foreshadowing his future as a writer and a poet.

b. **Struggles with Religion:** Stephen's Catholic upbringing plays a central role in the novel, as he navigates his faith and religious beliefs. He is initially devout and fears the consequences of sin, seeking solace in religious confession. However, as he matures, Stephen's faith becomes increasingly conflicted. He begins to question the rigid dogmas and strictures of the Church, leading to a crisis of faith that culminates in his rejection of religious doctrine. Stephen's struggle with religion reflects the broader theme of the individual's quest for personal autonomy and freedom.

c. **Artistic Inclinations:** Throughout the novel, Stephen's passion for art, literature, and language becomes increasingly prominent. He is profoundly moved by poetry and music, and his aesthetic sensibility guides his perceptions and experiences. As he matures, Stephen recognizes that his true vocation lies in artistic expression, and he becomes determined to

pursue a life dedicated to his craft. His artistic inclinations serve as a powerful symbol of individuality and the desire to create one's own identity.

**d.** **Intellectual Curiosity:** Stephen possesses a keen intellect and an insatiable thirst for knowledge. He is intellectually curious and engages deeply with various ideas, philosophies, and discussions. During his time at university, Stephen embraces a more scholarly approach to his artistic pursuits, exploring the works of prominent thinkers and writers. His intellectual growth is integral to his development as an artist, shaping his unique perspective on the world.

**e.** **Conflicted Relationships:** Throughout the novel, Stephen grapples with complex relationships with family, friends, and romantic interests. He feels a sense of detachment from his family's traditional beliefs and values, creating tension in his interactions with them. His friendships at school and university expose him to contrasting worldviews, which often challenge his own convictions. Additionally, Stephen's experiences with love and desire, particularly his infatuation with Emma, bring moments of emotional turbulence and self-exploration.

**f.** **Epiphanies and Self-Realization**: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is marked by moments of epiphany, which are pivotal in Stephen's journey of self-realization. These moments of clarity and revelation lead him to reject societal norms and embrace his true identity as an artist. The epiphanies highlight Stephen's willingness to confront his inner conflicts and shape his destiny on his terms.

Stephen Dedalus is a deeply introspective and multi-dimensional character in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Joyce masterfully portrays Stephen's psychological and emotional development as he navigates the complexities of religion, identity, art, and relationships. Through Stephen's struggles, epiphanies, and determination to embrace his artistic calling, readers witness the transformation of a young man into an artist, leaving a profound and lasting impact on the reader's understanding of self-discovery and the pursuit of individuality.

## 16.5 MAJOR THEMES

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Manby James Joyce explores a wide range of profound themes, reflecting the complexities of the human experience and the journey of self-discovery. These major themes are intricately woven throughout the novel, shaping the development of the protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, and the narrative as a whole. The following are some of the central themes in the novel:

a. **Identity and Self-Discovery:** The theme of identity is at the heart of the novel. Stephen Dedalus grapples with questions of who he is, what defines him, and where he belongs. He undergoes a transformative journey of self-discovery, navigating the conflicting influences of religion, family, society, and artistic aspirations. Stephen's quest for personal identity reflects the universal struggle to understand one's true self amidst the myriad expectations and pressures of the external world.

b. **Religion and Spirituality:** Religion plays a prominent role in the novel, as Stephen is brought up in a devout Catholic family and educated in religious institutions. His faith begins as a source of comfort and guidance, but as he matures, he becomes increasingly disillusioned with the dogmas and constraints imposed by the Church. The theme of religion intertwines with Stephen's intellectual and spiritual growth, leading to a crisis of faith and his ultimate rejection of religious orthodoxy.

c. **Art and Aesthetics:** Art and aestheticism form a central theme throughout the novel. Stephen's artistic inclinations and his fascination with beauty and language shape his perception of the world. Art becomes a means for Stephen to express his individuality and innermost thoughts, ultimately leading to his self-realization as an artist. Joyce uses art as a metaphor for freedom of expression and the pursuit of a unique identity.

d. **Nationalism and Politics:** Set against the backdrop of Ireland's struggle for independence from British rule, the theme of nationalism and politics is ever-present in the novel. Stephen is exposed to various nationalist ideologies during his time at university, and he briefly becomes involved with a group of nationalist students. However, he eventually disengages from the political sphere, choosing instead to focus on his personal artistic journey. The theme of nationalism highlights the tensions between the individual and societal expectations, and the broader socio-political climate of the time.

e. **Alienation and Isolation:** Throughout the novel, Stephen often feels isolated and alienated from those around him. His pursuit of artistic individuality sets him apart from his family, peers, and even the Church. His intellectual pursuits and rejection of conventional beliefs further contribute to his sense of isolation. The theme of alienation underscores the challenges faced by those who seek to break away from societal norms and carve their own path.

f. **Sexuality and Relationships:** Stephen's exploration of his sexuality and his relationships with women are recurrent themes in the novel. His feelings of guilt and desire, particularly in his relationship with a girl named Emma, exemplify the inner conflicts associated with coming to terms with one's sexuality and emotions. The theme of sexuality adds depth to Stephen's character and contributes to his overall growth and self-understanding.

g. **Epiphanies and Self-Realization:** Epiphanies, or moments of profound revelation, play a crucial role in the novel. Stephen experiences several epiphanies throughout his journey, which lead to significant shifts in his beliefs and perspectives. These moments of self-realization contribute to his artistic awakening and reaffirm his commitment to follow his true calling.

The novel masterfully weaves together these major themes, capturing the complexities of human growth, self-discovery, and the pursuit of artistic individuality. Joyce's exploration of identity, religion, art, nationalism, and other profound themes continues to resonate with readers, solidifying the novel's enduring relevance and status as a classic work of modernist literature.

## 16.6 LITERARY TECHNIQUES

James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is a groundbreaking work of modernist literature that employs a wide array of innovative literary techniques to explore the psychological and artistic development of its protagonist, Stephen Dedalus. Through the masterful use of these techniques, Joyce provides readers with an intimate and immersive experience into Stephen's consciousness and emotions, capturing the intricacies of his inner world. The key literary techniques employed in the novel and their profound impact on the overall narrative are as follows:

a. **Stream of Consciousness:** One of the most prominent literary techniques utilized by Joyce is stream of consciousness. This technique involves presenting the continuous flow of a character's thoughts, feelings, and sensations as they occur in their mind, without traditional sentence structures or chronological order. By employing stream of consciousness, Joyce allows readers to experience Stephen Dedalus' innermost thoughts in an unfiltered and spontaneous manner, offering an intimate understanding of his psychological development. This technique immerses readers into Stephen's stream of thoughts, creating a rich and dynamic narrative that mirrors the fluidity of human consciousness.

b. **Free Indirect Discourse:** Joyce adeptly employs free indirect discourse to blur the lines between the narrator's voice and Stephen's thoughts. Through this technique, the narrator adopts Stephen's language and thought patterns, allowing readers to access the character's perceptions and feelings directly, without explicitly signalling a shift in perspective. This narrative technique deepens the connection between the reader and Stephen, enhancing the sense of intimacy and psychological realism in the novel.

c. **Epiphanies:** Epiphanies play a crucial role in Stephen's journey of self-discovery. Throughout the novel, Stephen experiences moments of profound revelation and clarity that bring significant shifts in his beliefs and self-understanding. These epiphanies often emerge from seemingly mundane or commonplace occurrences, and they serve as pivotal moments in Stephen's artistic awakening. Joyce's use of epiphanies reinforces the theme of self-realization and underscores the transformative power of personal insights.

d. **Symbolism:** Symbolism pervades the novel, enriching its thematic depth and adding layers of meaning to the narrative. Joyce employs various symbols, such as birds, the color green, and the maze-like structure of the narrative itself, to represent different aspects of Stephen's inner life and his journey toward artistic freedom. These symbols contribute to the novel's complexity, inviting readers to interpret and engage with the text on multiple levels.

e. **Repetition:** Repetition is a powerful literary technique employed by Joyce to reinforce key motifs and themes. Certain phrases, images, and motifs recur throughout the novel, creating a sense of rhythm and thematic unity.

For example, Stephen's repeated use of the word "shazam" in his childhood is emblematic of his fascination with the mystical and the magical. Repetition serves to highlight the intensity of Stephen's emotions and the persistence of certain ideas in his mind.

f. **Shifts in Language and Style:** Joyce skillfully adapts the language and style of the narrative to reflect Stephen's evolving consciousness and intellectual growth. As Stephen matures, the prose becomes more complex and sophisticated, mirroring his increasing awareness and artistic development. Conversely, during Stephen's early childhood, the language is simpler and more straightforward, capturing the innocence and naivety of a young boy's perspective. These shifts in language and style contribute to the novel's dynamic structure and serve as a reflection of Stephen's changing sense of self.

The novel is a tour de force of modernist literature, characterized by its innovative use of literary techniques. From the immersive stream of consciousness to the subtle symbolism and transformative epiphanies, Joyce's literary craftsmanship serves to illuminate the complexities of Stephen Dedalus' inner world and his journey toward self-discovery and artistic expression. Through these techniques, Joyce creates a powerful and emotionally resonant narrative that continues to captivate and challenge readers, solidifying the novel's enduring legacy in the annals of world literature.

## 16.7 LET US SUM UP

The unit on A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man provides the learners with a comprehensive understanding of the novel's themes, characters, literary techniques, and historical context. It delves into the complexities of the protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, and witnessed his transformation from a sensitive young boy to a self-realized artist. It allows the learners to appreciate the brilliance of Joyce's modernist narrative style, characterized by the pioneering use of stream of consciousness and free indirect discourse. By immersing the readers in Stephen's thoughts and emotions, it provides a profound insight into the depths of Stephen’s psyche and the intricacies of his artistic journey. The unit also explores the themes of identity, religion, art, nationalism, and sexuality continues to hold universal relevance, inviting readers to reflect on their own struggles and aspirations. The historical and literary context illuminated the novel's significance within the broader cultural landscape of early 20th-century Ireland and the modernist literary movement. Understanding the socio-political tensions, religious influences, and cultural reawakening of the time deepened our appreciation for Joyce's exploration of Irish identity and individuality. The character analysis of Stephen Dedalus revealed a multi-dimensional and introspective protagonist, whose struggles and epiphanies continue to captivate readers with their authenticity and psychological depth. Stephen's journey towards artistic self-realization serves as an inspiring example of the pursuit of personal autonomy and creative expression. The enduring legacy of the novel is a testament to its profound impact on the literary world and its ongoing relevance in contemporary discussions.

## 16.8 NOTES AND REFERENCES

- Coming-of-age story: It is a narrative genre that follows the personal growth, challenges, and maturation of a young protagonist as they transition from childhood to adulthood, often gaining wisdom and self-awareness along the way.
- Epiphany: It is a sudden and profound realization or insight that brings clarity and understanding, often leading to a significant change in one's beliefs, perspectives, or actions.
- Irish identity: It is a complex fusion of Celtic heritage, historical struggles for independence, rich folklore, and a sense of community. It encompasses shared values, language, and cultural pride, shaping the nation's identity.
- Celtic Revival: It refers to a 19th and 20th-century cultural movement that revitalized and celebrated Celtic languages, arts, and traditions, often associated with Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and other Celtic regions.

## 16.9 QUESTIONS

- How does Stephen Dedalus' spiritual journey throughout the novel reflect the broader theme of the conflict between faith and reason in the early 20th-century Irish society?
- In what ways does Joyce use stream of consciousness as a literary technique to offer readers an intimate understanding of Stephen's thoughts and emotions?
- Analyze the significance of epiphanies in the novel and their role in shaping Stephen's personal growth and artistic awakening.
- How does Stephen's evolving relationship with religion and his rejection of traditional beliefs represent the struggle between societal expectations and the pursuit of personal autonomy and artistic freedom?

## 16.10 FURTHER READING

James Joyce. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man Text, Criticism, and Notes*.Penguin, 1977.

Richard Brown (Ed). *A Companion to James Joyce*. Willey-Blackwell, 2013.

# Notes

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