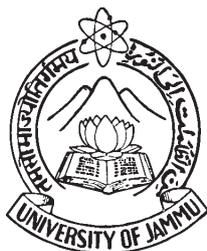


Directorate of Distance Education

UNIVERSITY OF JAMMU
JAMMU



M.A. ENGLISH

(SEMESTER - II)

Course Code : ENG 213

(Novel-II)

Unit – I - VI

Lesson Nos. – 1-28

Course Co-ordinator
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M. A. ENGLISH

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Welcome

Welcome to Semester II. This course is devoted to the study of 19th Century British Novel moving from the rise of romanticism and its continuation in Victorian Novels. Do read the texts in detail. Once again you are advised to consult the books in the library to prepare Internal Assessment Assignments and for term end exam. Kindly submit your IAAs before the last date.

Wish you Good Luck !

Prof. Anupama Vohra
PG English
Coordinator

M.A. ENGLISH

Course Code : ENG 213

Duration of Examination : 3 hrs.

Title of the Course : Novel-II

Total Marks : 100

Credits : 6

(a) Semester Examination : 80

(b) Sessional Assessment : 20

Detailed Syllabus for the examinations to be held in May 2019, 2020 & 2021

Objective : The purpose of the course will be to acquaint the students with the development of the novel from the late 18th to the early 20th century, keeping in view the Romantic, Historical and Sociological perspectives, as well as the influx of modernistic trends in the Art and Craft of fiction.

Texts Prescribed (For Detailed Study)

UNIT-I

Literary and Intellectual background of novel upto the Twentieth Century

UNIT-II

1. Walter Scott : *Ivanhoe*

UNIT-III

2. Charles Dickens : *Hard Times*

UNIT-IV

3. George Eliot : *Middlemarch*

UNIT-V

4. Thomas Hardy : *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

UNIT-VI

5. Virginia Woolf : *Mrs. Dalloway*

Mode of Examination

The paper will be divided into sections A, B and C.

Section A Multiple Choice Questions

M.M=80

Q.No. 1 will be an objective type question covering the entire syllabus. Ten objectives with four options each will be set and the candidate will be required to write the correct option and not specify by putting a tick mark (✓). Any eight out of ten are to be attempted. Each objective will be for one mark. (10×1=10)

Section B Short Answer Questions

Section B comprises short answer type questions covering the entire syllabus. Four questions will be set and the candidate will be required to attempt any two questions in about 80-100 words.

Each answer will be evaluated for 5 marks. (5×2=10)

Section C Long Answer Questions

Section C comprises long answer type questions covering the entire syllabus. Six questions, one from each unit, will be set and the candidate will be required to attempt any five questions in about 300-350 words. Each answer will be evaluated for 12 Marks. (5×12=60)

Suggested Reading

1. Arnold Kettle : *An Introduction to the English Novel-Volume Two: Henry James to the Present.*
2. Georg Lukacs : *The Historical Novel.*
3. Raymond Williams : *The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence.*
4. Raymond Williams : *Culture and Society : 1780-1950.*
5. Wayne C. Booth : *The Rhetoric of Fiction.*
6. G.K. Chesterton : *Charles Dickens : A Critical Study.*
7. Kathleen Tillotson : *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties.*
8. Morris-Shapira (ed) : *Henry James : Selected Literary Criticism.*
9. F. R. Leavis : *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad.*
10. Percy Lubbock : *The Craft of Fiction.*
11. Joseph Gold : *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralists.*

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***LITERARY AND INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND
OF NOVEL UP TO THE 20TH CENTURY***

STRUCTURE

- 1.1. Objectives
- 1.2. Introduction
- 1.3. The Early Period of Novel
- 1.4. Social and Political Background in 18th Century
- 1.5. Literary Development during 18th Century
- 1.6. Eighteenth Century Novel
- 1.7. Let Us Sum Up
- 1.8. Self-Assessment Questions
- 1.9. Examination Oriented Questions
- 1.10. Answer Key
- 1.11 Suggested Reading

1.1. Objectives

The lesson aims to make learners aware of how novel came to be a literary form, its beginning and its evolution. Our objective is to offer an overview of the age in which the novel first developed as a popular form of literature.

1.2. Introduction

The most important gift of the 18th century to English literature is the novel, which did not have a classical precedent. The novel was largely a product of the middle class, appealing to their ideals and sensibilities. The novel, representing the age, came to be the literary form to teach morality to common people but grew from thereon as it experimented with different forms.

1.3. The Early Period of Novel

As William J. Long puts it, “Probably the most significant remark made by the ordinary reader concerning a work of fiction takes the form of a question: Is it a good story?” The reader desires to be held on by the story element of the narrative before he begins to appreciate the style or the moral importance of the text. Thus, story element is primary ingredient to the novel.

Early forms of the novel are to be found in a number of places, including classical Rome, 10th–and 11th-century Japan, and Elizabethan England. Early works of extended fictional prose, or novels, include works in Latin like the *Satyricon* by Petronius Arbiter Petronius (c. 50 AD), and *The Golden Ass* by Apuleius (c. 150 AD), works in Sanskrit such as the 6th– or 7th-century *Dasakumaracarita* by Dandin, and in the 7th-century by Banabhatta, the 11th-century Japanese *The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki Shikibu, the 12th-century *Hayy ibn Yaqdhan* (or "Philosophus Autodidactus", the 17th-century Latin title) by Ibn Tufail, who wrote in Arabic, the 13th-century *Theologus Autodidactus* by Ibn al-Nafis, another Arabic novelist, and in Chinese in the 14th-century *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by Luo Guanzhong.

Murasaki Shikibu's *Tale of Genji* (1010) has been described as the world's first novel in Encyclopædia Britannica and shows essentially all the qualities for which Madame de La Fayette 's novel *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678) has been praised: individuality of perception, an interest in character development, and psychological observation. Urbanization and the spread of printed books in *Song Dynasty* (960-1279 AD) China led to the evolution

of oral storytelling into consciously fictional *Four Great Classical Novels* by the Ming dynasty. Parallel European developments did not occur for centuries, and awaited the time when the availability of paper allowed for similar opportunities. By contrast, Ibn Tufail's *Hayy ibn Yaqdhan* and Ibn al-Nafis' *Theologus Autodidactus* are works of didactic philosophy and theology. In this sense, *Hayy ibn Yaqdhan* would be considered an early example of a philosophical novel while *Theologus Autodidactus* would be considered an early theological novel. *Hayy ibn Yaqdhan*, with its story of a human outcast surviving on an island, is also likely to have influenced Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), because the work was available in an English edition in 1711.

Epic poetry exhibits some similarities with the novel, and the Western tradition of the novel reaches back into the field of verse epics, though again not in an unbroken tradition. The epics of Asia, such as the Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh* (1300–1000 BC), and Indian epic poetry or Indian epics such as the *Ramayana* (400 BCE and 200 CE), and *Mahabharata* (4th century BC) were as unknown in early modern Europe as was the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf* (c.750–1000 AD), which was rediscovered in the late 18th century and early 19th century. Other non-European works, such as *Torah*, *Koran*, and *Bible*, are full of stories, and thus have also had a significant influence on the development of prose narratives, and therefore the novel. Classical Greek epic like Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (9th or 8th century BC), and those of Ancient Rome, such as Virgil's *Aeneid* (29–19 BC), were re-discovered by Western scholars in the Middle Ages. Then at the beginning of the 18th century, French prose translations brought Homer's works to a wider public, who accepted them as forerunners of the novel.

Romance or chivalric romance is a type of narrative in prose or verse popular in the aristocratic circles of High Middle Ages, High Medieval and Early Modern Europe. They were marvel-filled adventures, often of a knight-errant with heroic qualities, who undertakes a quest, yet it is “the emphasis on heterosexual love and courtly manners distinguishes it from the *chanson*

de geste and other kinds of epic poetry which involve heroism.” In later romances, particularly those of French origin, there is a marked tendency to emphasize themes of courtly love.

Originally, romance literature was written in Old French, Anglo-Norman and Occitan, later, in English language, in Italian language and German language. During the early 13th century, romances were increasingly written as prose.

The shift from verse to prose dates from the early 13th century. Prose became increasingly attractive, because it enabled writers to associate popular stories with serious histories traditionally composed in prose, and could also be more easily translated. Popular literature also drew on themes of romance, but with Irony, Satire or Burlesque (literature) intent. Romances reworked legends, fairy tales, and history, but by about 1600 they were out of fashion, and Miguel de Cervantes famously burlesqued them in *Don Quixote* (1605). Still, Medievalism, the modern image of medieval, is more influenced by the romance than by any other medieval genre, and the word “medieval” evokes knights, distressed damsels, dragons, and such tropes. Around 1800, the connotations of “romance” was modified with the development.

Renaissance period (1500-1700): The modern distinction between history and fiction did not exist at this time and the grossest improbabilities pervade many historical accounts found in the early modern print market. William Caxton’s 1485 edition of Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur* (1471) was sold as a true history, though the story unfolded in a series of magical incidents and historical improbabilities. Sir John Mandeville’s *Voyages*, written in the 14th century, but circulated in printed editions throughout the 18th century, was filled with natural wonders, which were accepted as fact, like the one-footed Ethiopians who use their extremity as an umbrella against the desert sun. Both works eventually came to be viewed as works of fiction.

In the 16th and 17th centuries two factors led to the separation of history and fiction. The invention of printing immediately created a new market of comparatively cheap entertainment and knowledge in the form of chapbooks.

The more elegant production of this genre by 17th- and 18th-century authors were *belles lettres*; that is a market that would be neither low nor academic. The second major development was the first best-seller of modern fiction, the Spanish *Amadis de Gaula*, by García Montalvo. However, it was not accepted as an example of “belles lettres”. The *Amadis* eventually became the archetypical romance, in contrast with the modern novel which began to be developed in the 17th century.

A chapbook is an early type of popular literature printed in early modern Europe. Produced cheaply, chapbooks were commonly small, paper-covered booklets, usually printed on a single sheet folded into books of 8, 12, 16 and 24 pages. They were often illustrated with crude woodcuts, which sometimes bore no relation to the text. When illustrations were included in chapbooks, they were considered popular prints. The tradition arose in the 16th century, as soon as printing press and printed books became affordable, and rose to its height during the 17th and 18th centuries and many different kinds of ephemera and popular or folk literature were published as chapbooks, such as almanacs, children’s literature, folklore, folk tales, nursery rhymes, pamphlets, poetry, and political and religious tracts.

The term “chapbook” for this type of literature was coined in the 19th century. The principal historical subject matter of chapbooks was abridgements of ancient historians, popular medieval histories of knights, stories of comical heroes, religious legends, and collections of jests and fables. The new printed books reached the households of urban citizens and country merchants who visited the cities as traders. Cheap printed histories were, in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially popular among apprentices and younger urban readers of both sexes.

The early modern market, from the 1530s and 1540s, divided into low chapbooks and high market expensive, fashionable, elegant *belles lettres*. The division, between low and high literature, became especially visible with books that appeared on both the popular and *belles lettres* markets in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries: low chapbooks included abridgments

of books such as Miguel Cervantes' *Don Quixote*.

The term "chapbook" is also in use for present-day publications, commonly short, inexpensive booklets. Heroic Romance is a genre of imaginative literature, which flourished in the 17th century, but principally in France.

Satirical romances: Stories of witty cheats were an integral part of the European novella with its tradition of fabliaux. Significant examples include *Till Eulenspiegel* (1510), *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), and in England Richard Head's *The English Rogue* (1665). The tradition that developed with these titles focused on a hero and his life. The adventures led to satirical encounters with the real world with the hero either becoming the pitiable victim or the rogue who exploited the vices of those he met. A second tradition of satirical romances can be traced back to Heinrich Wittenwiler's *Ring* (c. 1410) and to François Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532–1564), which parodied and satirized heroic romances, and did this mostly by dragging them into the low realm of the burlesque. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1606/1615) modified the satire of romances: its hero lost contact with reality by reading too many romances.

Other important works of the tradition are Paul Scarron's *Roman Comique* (1651–57), the anonymous French "Rozelli" with its satire on Europe's religions, Alain-René Lesage's *Gil Blas* (1715–1735), Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742) and *The History of Tom Jones* (1749), and Denis Diderot's *Jacques the Fatalist* (1773, printed posthumously in 1796).

Histories: A market of literature in the modern sense of the word, that is a separate market for fiction and poetry, did not exist until the late seventeenth century. All books were sold under the rubric of "History and politicks" in the early 18th century, including pamphlets, memoirs, travel literature, political analysis, serious histories, romances, poetry, and novels.

That fictional histories shared the same space with academic histories and modern journalism had been criticized by historians since the end of the Middle Ages: fictions were "lies" and therefore hardly justifiable at all. The

climate, however, changed in the 1670s.

The romance format of the quasi–historical works of Madame d’Aulnoy, César Vichard de Saint-Réal, allowed the publication of histories that dared not risk an unambiguous assertion of their truth. The literary market place of the late 17th and early 18th century employed a simple pattern of options whereby fictions could reach out into the sphere of true histories. This permitted its authors to claim that they had published fiction, not truth, if they ever faced allegations of libel.

Prefaces and title pages of 17th– and early 18th-century fiction acknowledged this pattern: histories could claim to be romances, but threaten to relate true events. Other works could, conversely, claim to be factual histories, yet earn the suspicion that they were wholly invented. A further differentiation was made between private and public history: Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* was, within this pattern, neither a “romance” nor a “novel”. It smelled of romance, yet the preface stated that it should most certainly be read as a true private history.

Cervantes and the modern novel: The rise of the novel as an alternative to the romance began with the publication of Miguel de Cervantes’ *Novelas Exemplares* (1613). It continued with Paul Scarron’s *Roman Comique* (the first part of which appeared in 1651), whose heroes noted the rivalry between French romances and the new Spanish genre. Late 17th-century critics looked back on the history of prose fiction, proud of the generic shift that had taken place, leading towards the modern novel/novella.

Europe witnessed the generic shift in the titles of works in French published in Holland, which supplied the international market. English publishers exploited the novel/romance controversy in the 1670s and 1680s. Contemporary critics listed the advantages of the new genre: brevity, a lack of ambition to produce epic poetry in prose; the style was fresh and plain; the focus was on modern life, and on heroes who were neither good nor bad.

The novel’s potential to become the medium of urban gossip and scandal fuelled the rise of the novel/novella. Stories were offered as allegedly

true recent histories, not for the sake of scandal but strictly for the moral lessons they gave. To prove this, fictionalized names were used with the true names in a separate key. However, one of the earliest English novels, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), has elements of the romance, unlike these novels, because of its exotic setting and story of survival in isolation. *Robinson Crusoe* lacks almost all of the elements found in these new novels: wit, a fast narration evolving around a group of young fashionable urban heroes, along with their intrigues, a scandalous moral, gallant talk to be imitated, and a brief, concise plot. The new developments did, however, lead to Eliza Haywood's epic length novel, *Love in Excess* (1719/20) and to Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1741). Some literary historians date the beginning of the English novel with Richardson's *Pamela*, rather than *Robinson Crusoe*.

1.4. Social and Political Background in 18th Century

The period is one of increasing commercial prosperity and global trade for Britain. The monarchical restoration was accompanied by the re-opening of English theatres (closed during Cromwell's Puritan regime) and the restoration of the Church of England as the national church. Church and state continued to be closely intertwined. The Test Act of 1673 required all holders of civil and military offices to take the sacrament in the Anglican Church and deny transubstantiation; those who refused (e.g., Protestant Dissenters and Roman Catholics) were not allowed to attend university or hold public office. King Charles II, though he outwardly conformed to Anglicanism, had Catholic sympathies that placed him at odds with his strongly anti-Catholic Parliament. Charles had no legitimate heir. His brother James (a Catholic) was next in line to the throne. Parliament tried to force Charles to exclude his brother from the line of succession. Charles ended this "Exclusion Crisis" by dissolving Parliament.

The Exclusion Crisis in a sense created modern political parties: the Tories, who supported the king, and the Whigs, who opposed him. Once crowned, King James II quickly suspended the Test Act. In 1688, the birth of James son so alarmed the country with the prospect of a new succession of Catholic monarchs that secret negotiations began to bring a new Protestant

ruler from Europe to oust James.

In 1688, William of Orange and his wife Mary (James daughter) landed in England with a small army and seized power—an event known as the Glorious or Bloodless Revolution. James II fled to exile in France. For over 50 years his supporters (called Jacobites, from the Latin *Jacobus*, for James) mounted unsuccessful attempts to restore the Stuart line of Catholic kings to the British throne. Queen Anne, another of James II's daughters, was the next monarch (1702-1714). Anne's reign was a prosperous time for Britain, as the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713) created new trade opportunities. England, Scotland, and Wales were united as Great Britain by the 1707 Act of Union. As Anne, like Mary, had no heirs, the succession was settled upon the royal house of Hanover. A long line of King Georges (I-IV) ensued, which is why the 18th century is also known as the Georgian period. We now associate the term “Whig” with liberalism and “Tory” with conservatism, but the principles behind these two parties remained fluid and responsive to political circumstance throughout the period.

Robert Walpole, a Whig politician who served under both King George I and George II, held a parliamentary seat from 1701 until 1742. Walpole was the first man to be described as a “prime” minister.

During King George III's long rule (1760-1820) Britain became a major colonial power. At home and abroad, George III's subjects engaged with a new rhetoric of liberty and radical reform, as they witnessed and reacted to the revolutions in France and America.

The Context of Ideas: The court of King Charles II championed the right of England's social elite to pursue pleasure and libertinism. King Charles II authorized two new companies of actors. Women began to appear on stage in female roles. Dogmatism, or the acceptance of received religious beliefs, was widely regarded as dangerous. Charles II approved the Royal Society for London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge (1662). The Royal Society revolutionized scientific method and the dispersal of knowledge. The specialized modern “scientist” did not exist; Royal Society members

studied natural history (the collection and description of facts of nature), natural philosophy (study of the causes of what happens in nature), and natural religion (study of nature as a book written by God). The major idea of the period (founded on Francis Bacon's earlier work) was that of empiricism. Empiricism is the direct observation of experience, which infers that experience (including experimentation) is a reliable source of knowledge. John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume all pursued differing interpretations of empiricism, and the concept itself had a profound impact on society and literature. Writers (including women such as Mary Astell) began to advocate for improved education for women during this period. Around 1750, the word "sentiment" evolved to describe social behavior based in instinctual feeling. Sentiment, and the related notions of sensibility and sympathy, all contributed to a growing sense of the desirability of public philanthropy and social reforms (such as charities for orphans).

Increased importance was placed on the private, individual life, as is evident in literary forms such as diaries, letters, and the novel.

There was no single event in the political sphere in the 18th century which had the far-ranging impact of the two great upheavals of the 17th century, the Civil Wars and the Glorious Revolution. These events had become history; and more than just history, they formed the mythical underpinnings for the increasing democratization that characterized the period. Probably, the real forces that shaped the lives of English people in the eighteenth century were economic. It was in this century that the foundations of the modern British state were laid; the eighteenth century saw the establishment of modern party politics, the emergence of Britain from the isolationism to internationalism, the change in economic policy from mercantilism to *laissez-faire* capitalism, the growth of the British empire, and the start of the industrial revolution.

The mushrooming of the cities caused inevitable growing pains. Despite improvements in sanitation and the introduction of streetlights, city life was difficult and dangerous. Crime and disease were rife, and alcoholism was a

serious problem. The inhabitants were usually from somewhere else; they lacked the roots that traditionally supported village dwellers and the inherited sense of where they fit into the picture. But this rootlessness could be a blessing as well as a curse. The Cities permitted greater social mobility and offered much more diverse economic opportunities than were possible in a rural setting; many successful entrepreneurs—Watt, Wedgwood, Arkwright, and Peel, to name a few—rose from the lower middle classes. Rural life, though more stable, also underwent changes. An important development of this period, which was undoubtedly stimulated to some extent by the needs of the industrial society, was the growth of literacy.

The philosophical tendencies of the 18th century are not easy to generalize about. Many ideas, vaguely interrelated but often confusing and even contradictory, were in the air as thinkers attempted to grasp, explain, respond to, or criticize the social upheavals which marked the period. A number of these issues implicitly raised questions about the status of women, although this was often not the original intention of those who formulated the ideas. Especially in the latter part of the century, many ideas surfaced which profoundly affected the way women thought about themselves, and the way men thought about them. The economic developments which we have been discussing were clearly antithetic to this philosophy, since they tended by their very nature to break down the traditional hierarchical structure and substitute a more immediate economic one; a poor man need not—and if he is to be economically productive, should not—resign himself to a life of deprivation simply because he is born to poverty. By the middle of the century, “Whatever IS, is RIGHT” was an idea whose time had passed. But the philosophical tendencies which most directly and immediately influenced the way in which women perceived themselves were what are variously known as benevolism, philanthropy, sentimentalism, sensibility, or *sensibilité*.

1.5. Literary Development during 18th Century

According to the Norton Anthology of English Literature, the literary development during the 18th century can be traced as follows:

1.5.1. Conditions of Literary Production

- The Stage Licensing Act (1737) established a form of dramatic censorship in which the Lord Chamberlain pre-approved and licensed all plays for performance in London.
- Censorship of other print material changed radically with the 1710 Statute of Anne, the first British copyright law not tied to government approval of a book's contents.
- Copyrights were typically held by booksellers.
- The term "public sphere" refers to the material texts concerning matters of national interest and also to the public venues (including coffeehouses, clubs, taverns, parks, etc.) where readers circulated and discussed these texts.
- Thanks to greatly increased literacy rates (by 1800, 60-70 per cent of adult men could read, versus 25 percent in 1600), the eighteenth century was the first to sustain a large number of professional authors. Genteel writers could benefit from both patronage and the subscription system; "Grub Street" hacks at the lower end of the profession were employed on a piecework basis.
- Women published widely.
- Reading material, though it remained unaffordable to the laboring classes, was frequently shared. Circulating libraries began in the 1740s.
- Capital letters began to be used only at the beginnings of sentences and for proper names, and the use of italics was reduced.

1.5.2. Literary Principles

- Literature from 1660 to 1785 divides into three shorter periods of 40 years each, which can be characterized as shown below.
- 1660-1700 (death of John Dryden): emphasis on "decorum," or critical principles based on what is elegant, fit, and right.

- 1700-1745 (deaths of Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope in 1744): emphasis on satire and on a wider public readership.
- 1745-1784 (death of Samuel Johnson): emphasis on revolutionary ideas.
- England's Augustan age was modeled on that of Rome, when Augustus Caesar re-established stability after civil war following Julius Caesar's assassination. English writers, following the restoration of King Charles II, felt themselves to be in a similar situation, in which the arts (repressed under Cromwell) could now flourish.
- English writers endeavoured to formulate rules of good writing, modeled on classical works, but with a new appeal to the passions, in simple, often highly visual, language. This embrace of new (*neo*) aims and old models is called "neoclassicism."
- Horace's phrase, *ut picture poesis* (meaning "as in painting, so in poetry") was interpreted to mean that poetry ought to be a visual as well as a verbal art.
- Augustan poets began the century's focus on nature, by examining the enduring truths of human nature.
- The classical genres from which Augustan writers sought to learn included epic, tragedy, comedy, pastoral, satire, and ode. Ensuring a good fit between the genre and its style, language, and tone was crucial.
- Augustan writing celebrates wit, or inventiveness, quickness of thought, and aptness of descriptive images or metaphors.
- The heroic couplet (two lines of rhymed iambic pentameter) was the most important verse form of Pope's age, for it combined elegance and wit. Poets also continued to use blank verse (unrhymed iambic pentameter, not closed in couplets).

Not just aristocrats and classically educated scholars wrote verse: ordinary people also began to write poetry, often featuring broad humor and burlesque, thereby creating a distinction between high and low verse.

1.6. The 18th Century Novel

The chief literary developments of the 18th century were the so-called Classicism, the revival of romantic poetry, and the discovery of the modern novel. The last one of the three is the most significant. Novel is regarded as the most modern and most widely read and influential type of literature. While the essentially conservative ideas embodied in the Great Chain of Being became less influential, some more democratic ideas gained ground over the course of the century. The idea that man was endowed with certain inalienable, “natural” rights had held a place in the mainstream of English philosophical thought at least since Locke, but the controversies aroused by the American and French revolutions spurred a more practical application of these ideas.

Modern novel began to develop during the 18th century. It was in opposition to the term ‘romance’, referring to a chivalric story in verse. It was used to refer to a prose fiction which was new because it told stories about recent events. There were many causes which brought to the development of the *Novel*: expansion of the reading public, growth of a new middle class, different position of women, economic reasons. People, who were richer than before, could afford buying books and women had more time for reading because, after the industrial revolution, they had much free time at home: they could buy in shops the products which before were handmade in the houses. Publishing became a profitable business, thanks to the spread of literacy and of reading as a form of entertainment among the wealthy middle class. The professional writers began to appear. They did not have rich patrons but earned their living by writing essays and books. This new situation, together with the creation of the *circulating libraries* which borrowed books in return of a small subscription fee, increased the numbers of readers. Yet the number of those who could afford buying books was very small and there was still widespread illiteracy. The masses gained a low salary and books were still

very expensive to buy. There was no real public education system yet. Poor children had little opportunities to study since they were used as industrial labourers and a huge number of people could neither read nor write.

The 18th century novel was labelled as *realistic novel*: the characters were real people with ordinary names and surnames; they were described in their daily routines; the settings were real geographical places and the contents were taken from real stories. Unlike the early Augustans, the novelists liked to write about ordinary people acting in real-life situations. The novelists tried to meet their middle-class readers who wanted to read about ordinary people because they enjoyed seeing themselves as protagonists of the stories. They were the ones who bought the books and consequently the authors' point of view was the same as the readers'.

1.7. Let Us Sum Up

The novel as a literary form was quite different from most poetic and dramatic forms popular during the 18th century. It could afford the freedom of form and so introduced realism, democratic spirit, and psychological interest. It suited the genius and temper of the times.

1.8. Self-Assessment Questions

- a) *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* are examples of ____ form of literature.
- b) _____ is regarded as the most modern and most widely read and influential type of literature.
- c) Novel was a product of the _____ class and essentially appealed to their _____.
- d) The 18th century novel was labelled as _____.
- e) Copyrights in the 18th century were held by _____.

1.9. Examination Oriented Questions

1. Briefly state the reasons for the rise of novel in 18th century.

2. Trace the evolution of novel as a literary form before 18th century.
3. Discuss how the period of 18th century proved fertile for development of novel.

1.10. Answer Key

- **Blanks:** a) epic; b) Novel; c) middle, sensibilities; d) realistic novel; e) booksellers

Ans.1. The reasons for the rise of novel during the 18th century are as follows:

- i) The rise of the novel during the 18th century is greatly associated with the rise of individualism at that time.
- ii) Individualism stressed the fact that every individual was independent from other individuals, and as a direct result of industrial capitalism, it emphasized that the individual had to choose and decide his future. Modern industrial capitalism, also, taught people how to earn money, and how to increase it. Thus it brought emphasis on the individual and his money.
- iii) In the past, characters in the romances stood for certain qualities (e.g. Mr. Greedy, Mr. Angry...etc.) and not for themselves.
- iv) In the 18th century novel, individual characters are drawn as independent regardless of their social status or personal capacity. They are portrayed as complex characters, affected by social pressures.
- v) The 18th century novelists such as S. Richardson, H. Fielding, and D. Defoe studied the individual's attitudes, feelings, and motivations. Defoe emphasized individualism by writing a novel that has one central character with independent individual characteristics. Likewise, Richardson and Fielding concentrated on the individual and named their novels after their main characters.

- vi) The modern industrial capitalism made people pay great attention to money: how to gain it and how to keep it. In the earlier prose fiction, the main character had moral ideas, and thought only of virtues and good deeds. The 18th century writers became more realistic and dealt with the only interest of the individual at their time, i.e. money. All Defoe's characters pursue money, and they pursue it very methodically according to the loss and profit of book-keeping. Thus Robinson Crusoe leaves his father's house and the secure life of the middle class to seek more money. This materialistic point of view began to have a tremendous influence to the extent that idealistic moral values were no longer the core of stories, but the individual and his struggle to gain money.

1.11 Suggested Reading

1. Arnold Kettle : *An Introduction to the English Novel-Volume Two: Henry James to the Present.*
2. Georg Lukacs : *The Historical Novel.*
3. Raymond Williams : *The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence.*
4. Raymond Williams : *Culture and Society : 1780-1950.*
5. Wayne C. Booth : *The Rhetoric of Fiction.*
6. G.K. Chesterton : *Charles Dickens : A Critical Study.*
7. Kathleen Tillotson : *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties.*
8. Morris-Shapira (ed) : *Henry James : Selected Literary Criticism.*
9. F. R. Leavis : *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad.*
10. Percy Lubbock : *The Craft of Fiction.*
11. Joseph Gold : *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralists.*

COURSE CODE : ENG 213
NOVEL-II

LESSON No. 2
UNIT-I

***LITERARY AND INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND
OF NOVEL UP TO THE 20TH CENTURY***

STRUCTURE

- 2.1. Objectives
- 2.2. Introduction
- 2.3. Novelists of 18th Century
- 2.4. Women Writers of 18th Century
- 2.5. Early 19th Century or the Romantic Period
- 2.6. Let Us Sum Up
- 2.7. Self-Assessment Questions
- 2.8. Examination Oriented Questions
- 2.9. Answer Key
- 2.10 Suggested Reading

2.1. Objectives

The aim of the lesson is to introduce novelists of the 18th century and through them show how novel developed as a literary form. It also offers an overview of the Romantic Period of the 19th century.

2.2. Introduction

In the 18th century, the novel became established as a popular literary form all over Europe. Britain proved an especially fertile ground, with Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Richardson and Laurence

Sterne and Burney as early exponents of the novel form. Some of them devoted to writing because, as an effect of the *Test Act of 1673*, being Roman Catholics or Dissenters, they were forbidden to hold any important position in society and chose to become novelists or journalists.

2.3. Novelists of 18th Century

Daniel Defoe : He is considered the pioneer of the modern novel and the first novelist in the English literature as well as the first journalist (his *The Review* is considered the first newspaper). He interpreted the likes and interests of the emerging middle-class and depicted the 18th century world. Defoe's characters are common men and women with whom his middle-class readers could identify themselves. All characters of his novel narrate their individual struggles for survival in a difficult world, from Moll Flanders, a prostitute, thief and incestuous wife to Robinson Crusoe, Colonel Jack, Captain Singleton and Roxana. His novel *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner* is regarded as the first English novel. The novel is a true realistic novel: it is based on the real story of a Scotch sailor, Alexander Selkirk, who had lived alone for four years on the Isle of Juan Fernandez in the Pacific after a shipwreck. The story is told in the first person singular in the form of a diary.

Robinson Crusoe is the first narrative in which the character is not a hero, but an average man. Defoe went on with the puritan ideas that had survived even after the collapsing of the Puritan Republic of the Commonwealth. Robinson, a shipwrecked merchant who remained on a desert island for about 28 years, is considered the true puritan man: he showed industry, colonizing spirit, courage and initiative and was seen by the readers as the personification of their own qualities: practical-minded, resourceful, religious. He organized his life on the island and succeeded through hard labour in surviving in a difficult situation exploiting all that the place offered. Further, he not only made the native man Friday to accept him as master but also made him use his language and converted him to Christianity. Many critics charged this novel with being an imperialistic novel because it contained an affirmation

of capitalism and saw man as an economic animal. Robinson was considered by those critics as the first capitalist hero in English literature, because he looked at everything in economic terms: produced more than he needed, kept from the ship a lot of things, expanded his power on the whole island and eventually became rich. They pointed out that when Robinson managed to go on board the ship which had been carried within a reaching distance, he also kept some money which, of course, was of no use on a desert island.

Jonathan Swift: He was the greatest satirist of his age. Using irony and satire he tried to change his own society and attacked it at all levels. Together with Alexander Pope and others, he established the *Scriblerus Club*, an association of witty writers who satirized their contemporaries. People of his own time failed to see the irony and, sometime, they cried shame. An Anglican priest, he was appointed Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, where he was buried. A Latin epigraph he had composed himself was placed over his tomb: "The body of Jonathan Swift, Doctor of Sacred Theology, Dean of this Cathedral Church is buried here where fierce indignation can no more lacerate his heart...".

Swift is remembered for his *Gulliver's Travels*, a novel that, like *Robinson Crusoe*, is nowadays regarded as a book for children and as an anticipation of the modern fantasy novel. Actually the book was intended to be a bitter satire of his own country. Swift himself wrote to Pope that it "was intended to vex the world rather than divert it". The novel satirizes the follies and the vices of politicians and scholars and is a very serious comment on politics, on learning and on all Mankind. It shows Swift's bad opinion on people. He is very intolerant of people in general and once he wrote to Pope: "I heartily hate and detest that animal called man". He maintains that man is not a reasonable animal but an animal endowed with reason, which he is not always able to use in the right way. *Gulliver's Travels* tells the various imaginary voyages of Lemuel Gulliver, a surgeon on a ship, to various strange lands where he meets several man-like creatures. The philosophical basis of the whole novel is in the contrast between rationality and animality. In the first book he is shipwrecked near Lilliput where he meets a race of tiny

people, only six inches tall, and he is a giant among them. Rationality is represented by the Lilliputians with their organized society and their deep knowledge of mathematical science in contrast with Gulliver described as a big body. In book 2 the situation is reversed: he is in Brobdingnag, the land of giants and he is a dwarf among them. The giants embody animality while Gulliver rationality. In the third book he visits the flying island of Laputa inhabited by scientists concerned with abstract ideas. He visits the University of Lagado where he meets the “*projectors*”, who work on new scientific odd plans : take sunbeams out of cucumbers, melt ice into gunpowder and so on. They are presented in a decadent way: badly dressed, long hair and beard, very dirty, and even as beggars. Animality is seen in the scientists while rationality is seen in man. In the last book he is in the land of the Houyhnhnms, intelligent horses that can talk. They are perfectly rational and virtuous. They have man-like slaves, the Yahoos, who are bestial, irrational and vicious. Gulliver himself is seen by the Houyhnhnms as a Yahoo. In these various countries Gulliver explains to the inhabitants about life in Europe and in particular in England. What Gulliver says is how things should be, not how they are, and so his words become an ironical attack on what he is describing. In the first book he attacks the English Government and the hypocrisies of the party system. Catholic Religion is ironically attacked, too. Swift comments the dispute over whether an egg should be broken, to be eaten, at the big end or at the little end: “all true believers shall break their eggs at the most convenient end”. In the second book he attacks the judicial and the political system in Britain aiming at stressing the hypocrisy and corruption practised in the Institutions. In the third book there is an attack on science and on members of the Royal Society while in the fourth and last he attacks man. When he comes home after his rescue, he cannot accept the human race any longer. The human beings appear to him like the Yahoos and he goes to live in a stable with the company of horses.

Swift was not insensible to the sufferings of the Irish and he was indignant at their exploitation by the British Government. The Irish lived on bad condition. He wrote and published a work in defence of Ireland: *Modest*

Proposal from Preventing the Children of poor people from being a burden to their parents or the country. It was a new attack against the English. Using satire, he explained, that the misery of the starving Irish could be easily relieved by selling their children to the rich as food. There was also another benefit for the Irish: it should have solved the problem of overpopulation of Ireland, too. It was of course a provocation but at the times some foreign readers took it as an actual and serious one and there was quite a scandal

Samuel Richardson: He is considered the inventor of the *epistolary novel* and the father of the novel of sentimental analysis. He introduced psychological studies of the characters, especially women. He started his career as a novelist quite late in his life when some booksellers asked him to help the uneducated in their correspondence writing a sequence of letters dealing with everyday subjects. Among these letters were to be included some to instruct pretty servant-girl to protect their virtue. He liked this idea also because, when he was at school, he used to be the adviser of girls who wanted to correspond with their sweethearts. He decided to make a novel from the letters, and wrote *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*. He chose an actual case he had heard of, in which a virtuous 15-year-old maidservant, who worked in a rich household, had resisted her master's advances.

The story is told through a series of letters from Pamela Andrews to her parents and their answers to her. She asked for advice to defend herself from her master, Mr B, who wanted to seduce her. Published in November 1740, the novel had an instant success and it was followed by a second edition in February 1741, a third in March and even a fourth in May. As we can see, Pamela originated from the realistic moral problem for many young girls who worked as maids: how to resist the advances of their rich masters. Pamela celebrates the middle-class value of chastity before marriage in opposition to the lasciviousness of the aristocracy. The theme of the persecuted maiden attracted many readers. The readers divided into "Pamelists", who were for Pamela, and "Anti-Pamelists", who criticized her. Pamelists maintained that she was a poor and simple girl who tried to keep herself honest and

chaste. Anti-Pamelists, instead, maintained that her behaviour was not guided by purity but by utilitarianism: she was a cunning girl, who used her virtue to climb the social ladder and she provoked her master to make him marry her. In the 18th century many people thought that virginity was not a value for a poor girl to defend and that it was her duty as a servant to please her master. Not all women considered chastity and honesty virtues to be defended. For instance Moll Flanders, the heroine created by Defoe uses her beauty and her seductive charm to improve the conditions of her miserable life. *Pamela* is considered the first best-seller in English Literature. It had got a happy ending, she married Mr B., and it pleased the readers, women above all, helping its success. *Clarissa Harlowe*, his second epistolary novel, is considered Richardson's masterpiece. It deals with a woman who tries to escape from a combined marriage to a man she does not like. She finds refuge at a nobleman's who seduces and rapes her. Clarissa refuses to marry him and eventually lives as an outcast condemned by society.

Richardson's success in his own age is mostly due to the subject matter of his novels, and to the technique of narration he used. As far as the former, that is the theme of women who defend their virtues from the advances of a powerful man, it appealed to a vast audience, above all women who constituted the larger part of the reading public. The other element was the suspense created by the technique that Richardson used. He himself defined it as "writing to the moment". This technique is a bit similar to the one used in modern soap operas: each letter dealing with the present has got elements whose consequences will happen in the next letter thus letting the reader wait.

Henry Fielding: He was the first English novelist to introduce the burlesque element in the novel. He defined his novels as "*comic epic poem in prose*." The mock epic is a parody of the epic because it treats trivial things as if they had great importance. The protagonist is involved in a series of apparently dangerous adventures. Fielding was different from Defoe and Richardson. He belonged to the aristocracy and unlike them, he did not believe in sexual chastity above all other virtues. The aristocracy regarded

uninhibited sexuality with indulgence and considered other virtues as courage, generosity and loyalty above it. His first novel, *An Apology for the Life of Mrs Shamela Andrews* is to be considered as a reaction against the hypocrisy of the time as well as a reaction to Richardson's *Pamela*. Fielding wanted to ridicule the Puritan view of morality. The *Shamela* in the title is a pun on the words of "shame" and Pamela. In his second novel, *Joseph Andrews*, he wanted at first to parody Richardson's *Pamela* but he puts aside this idea and wrote a story based on the life and adventures of Joseph, Pamela's brother, and a friend of his. The situation is reversed and we have a young man who works at a lady's that wants to seduce him after her husband's death. Joseph, who is chaste and virtuous, refuses her advances.

Tom Jones, his best novel, is a picture of the life of the lower and upper classes of the 18th century society. Fielding depicts with humour and irony human weaknesses and stresses his tolerant attitude towards them. Tom is an unheroic character and has all the limits of the ordinary man. Fielding's novels are considered picaresque in style, written in imitation of Cervantes (Picaresque novels come from Spain and deal with the adventures of a rascal of low social class; they are usually humorous, full of action and excitement).

Laurence Sterne: In his own time, Sterne was considered an anti-novelist because he did not follow the canons of the realistic novel. He is the closest novelists to the modern ones of all 18th century novelists. His novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, A Gentleman* was written in instalments in nine volumes between 1759 and 1767. It does not respect the 18th century canons of the realistic novel. It is unconventional and very difficult to summarize. It recalls the stream of consciousness technique of Joyce and Woolf: it has no plot, no time scheme; it is full of the author's interventions, digressions, comments, asides, long quotations, and many unusual devices and eccentric typographical characteristics as black pages (to mourn a friend's death), marbled pages, white pages, asterisks, arabesques, a little hand with printed finger to direct the reader's attention to a point. When a digression takes place, the author shifts from the main theme of the novel

to other topics which are not related with what the character is going to do or say. The time of the story is interrupted to be resumed at the end of the digression. The temporal dimension is non-existent and clock time is abandoned for psychological time. The digressions allowed Sterne to tell events of the past or of the future in whatever order he pleased. The story is told in the first person singular by the main character, Tristram Shandy who remembers particular events of his past and present life. It starts with a flashback: we meet Tristram in the first volume as an adult but his birth happens in the third volume. We may suppose that Sterne was influenced by John Locke's theory of the Association of Ideas. Tristram himself defined Locke's Essays as "a history book....of what passes in a man's own mind". Sterne made a distinction between time of the clock, that is the chronological time, and time of the mind. Organizing his plot, the author goes backwards and forwards in time, thus disrupting the chronological order. He anticipated Bergson's theory of the time, "la Durée". Bergson thought that each individual lives moments and experiences that cannot be measured in fixed periods of time since the mind has its own time different from the conventional one of the external world.

2.4. Women Writers of 18th Century

Fanny Burney, 1752-1840 : Burney's novels were immensely popular during the late 18th century. However, Burney herself had to overcome family disapproval in order to make a name among English literary circles. Her father, Charles Burney, a renowned musicologist, discouraged his daughter's literary activity and provided her with no formal education. In spite of this, she read widely and began writing at a young age. But at the age of fifteen, in response to her father and perhaps her stepmother's objections to imaginative poetry, plays, and stories, she dramatically sacrificed all of her writings to a huge bonfire. Not completely deterred, she resumed writing and anonymously published her first novel, *Evelina* (1778), which became a great success. *Evelina* won Burney not only her father's approval, but also writer and critic Dr. Samuel Johnson's. She went on to secure a place in Queen Charlotte's court and in English literary society. She later left court to marry French

General Alexandre D'Arblay (1791) and lived until the age of eighty-seven. Her novels deal with women's roles in relation to the British aristocracy, marriage, wealth, and power. Her successful works influenced other women writers, including Jane Austen, whose name is among the list of subscribers to *Camilla*.

Elizabeth Carter, 1717-1806: Carter, known for her translations, poetry, essays, and letter writing, was fortunate enough to be educated by her father, the Perpetual Curate in Deal, England. Learning alongside her brothers, she received a well-rounded education, which included knowledge of several languages. She was skilled in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian, Spanish, and German. As an adult, she taught herself Portuguese and Arabic. According to tradition, Carter lost her health by studying long nights as a child, and did in fact suffer from severe headaches as an adult. Her father was a friend of *Gentleman's Magazine* editor, Edward Cave, who began to publish Carter in his periodical. She became active in England's literary circles and developed friendships with Samuel Johnson, Catherine Talbot, Elizabeth Montagu, Samuel Richardson, Edmund Burke, Horace Walpole, and Hannah More.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 1689-1762: Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, cousin of writer Henry Fielding, was born in London to parents of the aristocracy. Her father, Evelyn Pierrepont, later became the first Duke of Kingston. She eloped with Edward Wortley (1712) and the two became active in court. Through social activities, she made social contacts with several literary figures, including John Gay and Alexander Pope, although Pope later attacked her in print. From 1716 to 1718, her husband served as ambassador to Turkey, where Montagu wrote her *Embassy Letters*. At age 47, she shared an infatuation with Francesco Algarotti, a 24-year-old native Italian with literary promise. She moved to Italy to join Algarotti and, although their relationship cooled, remained on the Continent for the next twenty years. Montagu distributed her writings privately and was content not to publish avidly during her lifetime. With the exception of some anonymous articles and a pirated edition of her poetry, her letters, essays, and poems were

published posthumously. In her works, she advocated higher education for women and, in turn, more political interest and involvement.

Hannah More, 1745-1833: She was one of the most prolific and widely read writers of her time. Educated as a schoolmistress, she soon began publishing plays for the instruction of children and, later, religious writings, including several chapbooks for youths. She also became a part of Samuel Johnson's illustrious circle. Besides being a writer, she was a committed religious and social reformer, establishing Sunday schools for the poor. She encouraged other women to volunteer their time to help the poor and, as a result, increased women's influence in social work. However, although she advocated female education, she did so only in the context of an educated domesticity. In her only novel, *Coelebs in Search of a Wife*, she stresses the role of the subservient wife. Ironically, More, herself, never married or entered into a domestic situation. She "died friendless and alone, the victim of servants who mistreated her" (Horwitz).

Hester Lynch Thrale Piozzi, 1741-1821: She was born into the English aristocracy and well educated. In 1763, after her father's death, her mother forced her into an unloving marriage with Henry Thrale, a wealthy brewer, by whom she had twelve children—only four living to adulthood. In 1765, she met Samuel Johnson and helped him with a translation of Boethius. Through Johnson, she was introduced to several popular figures, including Fanny Burney, David Garrick, Oliver Goldsmith, and Sir Joshua Reynolds. After her husband's death, she chose to marry a man both Italian and Roman Catholic, Gabriel Piozzi. Her decision to marry both a foreigner and a Catholic was controversial, and ruined her relationship with Johnson, who adamantly opposed the union. Despite objections, their marriage was highly successful. During the time of their travels on the Continent and later settling in Wales, she became a prolific writer of histories, travel accounts, and poetry.

Sarah Scott, 1723-1795: Elder sister to writer Elizabeth Montagu, Scott grew up in a family that valued education. Scott was briefly, and apparently unhappily, married to a George Lewis Scott. After her family

“rescued” her from the marriage, she went to live with Lady Barbara Montagu (unrelated) and began an active life of charity work and writing. She tried to start a “utopian community” with her sister, Elizabeth, and friends. Her novel, *A Description of Millenium Hall*, idealizes her utopian ideals. Her novels were published anonymously and sold quite well. Although they lost popularity in the next century, her work has recently been reprinted.

Mary Wollstonecraft, 1759-1797: After surviving an unhappy childhood with an alcoholic and violent father, Mary Wollstonecraft spent time as a lady’s companion, a schoolmistress, and a governess. Later, her life took a dramatic turn. Beginning in 1794, she visited France and Scandinavia. She had a daughter out of wedlock with an American businessman and attempted suicide when their relationship failed. She then had an affair with British author William Godwin, and the two married after she became pregnant. Sadly, she died shortly after giving birth to a daughter, Mary, who would later be known as Mary Shelley, author of *Frankenstein*. Wollstonecraft’s diversified writings include subjects such as education, travel, history, politics, and women’s rights. She is best known for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).

2.5. Early 19th Century or the Romantic Period

The monarch on England’s throne during the beginning of the 19th century was King George III; however, in 1811, George III was deemed insane and unfit to rule, and was king in name only. Actual political power was handed over to his son, George IV (left), whose title was Prince Regent, giving the time period the name Regency. The period, unlike the peaceful Victorian Era which followed, was one of political turmoil.

The British Empire had lost the United States, but was not quite ready to accept this loss. The result was the War of 1812, a war which resulted in yet another British defeat and no significant gains for either side. Alongside the pressure of Napoleon rising to power, the monarchy felt the pressure of trying to keep the people under control. Any attempt at giving the citizens of England more freedom was generally viewed as treason.

The subject of Jane Austen's stance on politics revealed through her literature is hotly debated and is the topic of several books. The general consensus, however, is that Austen commented on society rather than the government. Her books probably provided an entertaining escape for the people of the era.

Regency era society was marked by extreme excess in the upper classes and a wide gap between rich and poor. Austen's works tend to ignore the lower classes and focus almost totally on the upper-middle to upper classes. Women had a difficult role in society; they were almost totally dependent on men. Women could not honorably work, except perhaps as governesses, tutors, and writers. As we see in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*, women could not inherit property either. For financial security, the only option was to marry, and to marry well. In fact, this expectation is addressed in the famous opening sentence of *Pride and Prejudice*: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of good fortune must be in want of a wife." Austen is speaking ironically, of course. What she is saying is that a woman must be in want of a single man with a good fortune. In the novel, Mrs. Bennet, a mother of five girls, has no business so important as to get all of her daughters married, and she worries and frets over this matter constantly. Austen feels that women *do* have a choice, however; her heroines often reject those suitors who could support them financially but for whom they have no love.

With little else to do, women delighted in gossip, fashion, social gatherings, and especially balls. Jane Austen herself loved to dance and socialize, and such occasions feature prominently in her books. The dances performed were lively and bouncy English country dances. Along with dancing came many social expectations. Men could ask women to dance, but women had only the power to refuse. If a woman did refuse, she was to make it seem as though she had no intention of dancing with anyone, so as not to offend the particular man who had asked her. If there were more women than men present at a ball, as we see in *Pride and Prejudice*, it was polite for the men to dance as much as possible with different women, so the

women would not have to sit out for very long. It was also acceptable, in such a situation, for women to dance together. Conversation was expected during dancing.

One of the most prominent features of the time period was the propriety expected between members of the opposite sex. This was the beginning of the social restrictions that were one of the defining characteristics of the Victorian period, which directly followed the Regency period. A young unmarried woman should not be alone with a man without a chaperone; likewise, women were never to travel unescorted. Extended correspondence between two members of the opposite sex was seen as a sure sign of engagement. This explains why many of the letters in Austen's works go unanswered. It would be improper for an unmarried man and woman to write many letters back and forth. A double standard was in place, however, when it came to purity and chastity; a woman who was discovered to have had an extramarital affair was shunned and considered unmarriageable. If the woman was already married, infidelity was grounds for divorce. However, in the men's case, an affair was overlooked and hardly even a blot on his reputation. Jane Austen's writings are quite proper for the time period; no explicit love scenes, not even a kiss, are included in her novels. However, a few incidents occur, such as elopement and affairs, but they are never more than hinted at, and the reader must be very alert to note that these events take place.

Jane's novels must be looked at through the lens of the times, or behavior of their characters may not make sense to the modern reader. It is not enough to read her stories as mere romances; to truly appreciate the satire and caricature, one must know what Jane is making light of from the era.

2.6. Let Us Sum Up

The first half of the 19th century records the triumph of Romanticism in literature and democracy in government. Romanticism primarily referred to extraordinary development of imaginative sensibility. Though it had more visible effect on poetry of the period, the novel with writers like Jane Austen

reached a new stage of development. She refined and simplified the novel to make it a reflection of English life.

2.7. Self-Assessment Questions

- a) _____, by Defoe, is the first narrative in which the character is not a hero, but an average man.
- b) Swift is remembered for his _____, a novel that is now regarded as part of children literature.
- c) _____ is considered the inventor of the epistolary novel.
- d) _____ is a novel made from letters.
- e) The first English novelist to introduce the burlesque element in the novel was _____.

2.8. Examination Oriented Questions

1. Trace the development of novel through authors of the 18th Century.
2. Discuss novelist Jane Austen as a representative of her times.
3. Account for the development of novel in context of the changing socio-political conditions of the 18th and early 19th centuries.
4. Write a note on the literary development in the Romantic Period.

2.9. Answer Key

Blanks : a) *Robinson Crusoe*, b) *Gulliver's Travels*, c) Samuel Richardson, d) *Pamela*, e) Henry Fielding.

Ans. 1. Literary development in the Romantic Period : The Romantic Period in English literature is taken to begin with the publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads* and end with the death of the novelist, Sir Walter Scott. The historical and literary contexts and effects covered a broader time span. No other period in English literature displays more variety in style, theme, and content than the Romantic Movement of the 18th and 19th centuries. Furthermore, no period has been the topic of

so much disagreement and confusion over its defining principles and aesthetics. Imagination, emotion, and freedom are certainly the focal points of Romanticism. Any list of particular characteristics of the literature of Romanticism includes subjectivity and an emphasis on individualism; spontaneity; freedom from rules; solitary life rather than life in society; the beliefs that imagination is superior to reason and devotion to beauty; love of and worship of nature. Instead of “improbable” notions and “false” sensibility, Romanticism came to stand for authenticity, integrity and spontaneity. It was seen as a positive artistic and intellectual assertion of the extremes in the human psyche, the areas of experience beyond logic and reason which could only be expressed in a direct and heartfelt way.

First and foremost, Romanticism is concerned with the individual more than with society. The individual consciousness and especially the individual imagination are especially fascinating for the Romantics. The technological changes included the use of new raw materials (iron, steel), new energy sources (coal, the steam engine), the invention of new machines (spinning jenny, power loom), new organization of work (factory system), important developments in transportation and communication (steam locomotive, steamship). The non-industrial changes included agricultural improvements, economic changes (wider distribution of wealth), political changes (new political innovations corresponding to the needs of an industrialized society), sweeping social changes (growth of cities, development of working-class movements, the emergence of new patterns of authority), cultural transformations of a broad range.

The preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), by English poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge was also of prime importance as a manifesto of literary romanticism. Here, the two poets affirmed the importance of feeling and imagination to poetic creation and disclaimed conventional literary forms and subjects. Thus, as romantic literature everywhere developed, imagination was praised over reason, emotions over logic, and intuition over science—making way for a vast body of literature of great sensibility and passion. This literature emphasized a new flexibility

of form adapted to varying content, encouraged the development of complex and fast-moving plots, and allowed mixed genres (tragicomedy and the mingling of the grotesque and the sublime) and freer style.

2.10 Suggested Reading

1. Arnold Kettle : *An Introduction to the English Novel-Volume Two: Henry James to the Present.*
2. Georg Lukacs : *The Historical Novel.*
3. Raymond Williams : *The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence.*
4. Raymond Williams : *Culture and Society : 1780-1950.*
5. Wayne C. Booth : *The Rhetoric of Fiction.*
6. G.K. Chesterton : *Charles Dickens : A Critical Study.*
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10. Percy Lubbock : *The Craft of Fiction.*
11. Joseph Gold : *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralists.*

***LITERARY & INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF
NOVEL UP TO THE 20TH CENTURY***

STRUCTURE

- 3.1. Objectives
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3.1. Objectives

The lesson aims to offer an overview of the Victorian period and how the literary scene, particularly the novel, developed. In the context of the changing political and social environment, the lesson traces the evolution of novel through a brief look at the novelists of this period.

3.2. Introduction

In the Victorian period, England had entered into a new free period, in

which every form of literature, from pure romance to gross realism, struggled for expression. The novel in this age fills the place which drama had during the Elizabethan period. The fiction of this period was marked with experimentation and revolt on one hand and perfection of style on the other.

3.3. Characteristics of the Victorian Age

If there is one transcending aspect to Victorian England life and society, that aspect is change – or, more accurately, upheaval. Everything that the previous centuries had held as sacred and indisputable truth came under assault during the middle and later parts of the nineteenth century.

The salient features of the age are mentioned here.

Democracy: Amid the multitude of social and political forces of this great age, four things stand out apparently. First, the long struggle of the Anglo-Saxons for personal liberty is definitely settled and democracy becomes the established order of the day. The king who appeared in an age of popular weakness and ignorance, and the peers who came with the Normans in triumph are both stripped of their power and left as figure-heads of a past civilization. The last vestige of personal government and the divine right of rulers disappears; the house of commons becomes the ruling power in England; and a series of new reform bills rapidly extend the people choose for themselves the men who shall represent them.

Social Unrest: Second because it is an age of democracy, it is an age of popular education, of religious tolerance, of growing brotherhood, and of profound social unrest. The slaves had been freed in 1833 but in the middle of the century multitudes of men, women, and little children in the mines and factories were victims of a more terrible industrial and social slavery. To free this competitive method, has been the growing purpose of the Victorian age until the present day.

The idea of “manners” essentially sums up the social climate of middle-class England in the nineteenth century. Rules of personal conduct were in fact so inflexible that the Victorians garnered a reputation for saying one thing while

doing another – an attack that the next generation of writers would take up with vigor. In the world at large, change was happening faster than many people could comprehend. A surging global economy was orchestrated by the might of the British Empire. The nobility, formerly at the top of the pyramid in society, found their status reduced as agriculture lost its preeminence in the now industrial economy. Mechanization and steam power led to ruthless efficiency, while more often than not the poor suffered under the weight of the capitalist middle class. Being impoverished in Victorian England was unpleasant to say the least, but there were efforts underway to improve the lot of the poor. The Reform Bills of the nineteenth century extended voting rights to men who were previously disenfranchised – but not, of course, to women. That would require years more of struggle. For all of the social inequalities which still persisted, the Victorians successfully undermined some of humanity's most time-honored institutions. Some writers greeted these changes with fear, and wanted desperately for society to check its relentless pace. Others embraced the new world that was coming into being, thrilled at the progress of science and society.

The ideal of Peace: Third, because it is an age of democracy and education, it is an age of comparative peace. England begins to think less of the pomp and false glitter of fighting and more of its moral evils, as the nation realizes that it is the common people who bear the burden and the sorrow and the poverty of war, while the privilege classes reap most of the financial and political rewards. Moreover, with the growth of trade and of friendly foreign relations, it becomes evident that the social equality for which England was contending at home belongs to the whole race of men that brotherhood is universal, not insular that a question of justice is never settled by fighting and that war is generally unmitigated horror and barbarism. Tennyson, who came of age when the great reform bill occupied attention, expresses the ideas of the liberals of his day who proposed to spread the gospel of peace.

Arts and sciences: The Victorian age is especially remarkable because of its rapid progress in all the arts and sciences and in mechanical inventions. A glance at any record of the industrial achievements of the nineteenth century

will show how vast they are and it is unnecessary to repeat here the list of the inventions, from spinning looms to steamboats, and from matches to electric lights. All these material things, as well as the growth of education have their influence upon the life of a people and it is inevitable that they should react upon its prose and poetry thought as yet we are too much absorbed in our sciences and machines to determine accurately their influence upon literature. When these new things shall by long use have become familiar as country roads or have been replaced by newer and better things, then they also will have their associations and memories and a poem on the rail roads may be as suggestive as Wordsworth's sonnet on Westminster bridge and the busy, practical working men who today throng our stress and factories may seem to a future and greater age as quaint and poetical as to us seem the slow toilers of the middle ages.

The few colonial wars that broke out during the Victorian approach did not seriously disturb the national life. There was one continental war that directly affected Britain the Crimean war and one that affected her indirectly though strongly the Franco German struggle yet neither of these caused any profound changes. In America the great civil struggle left scars that were soon to be obliterated by the wise statesmanship of her rulers. The whole age may be not unfairly described as one of peaceful activity. In the earlier stages the lessening surges of the French revolution were still felt but by the middle of the century they had almost completely died down, and other hopes and ideals largely specific were gradually taking their place.

This period is also known as the Age of Compromise. During the 18th century, religion formed the centre of life. The rules regarding religion and church were strictly followed. The church authority was very powerful. While during the Victorian period the science was developing. Gallilio had proved that it is earth that revolves round the sun, not the sun. On the one hand 50% of the English were the believer of the Christianity and the Bible and the other 50% of the English were under the influence of the advancement of Science. Science had challenged the old order of living the life and Christian way of life, values, the assurance regarding redemption and salvation were being challenge and

looked with the element of doubt. That is why this Age is called the Age of Compromise which was between the religion and the science.

Imperialism and Material Developments: During the 19th century, the British empire extensively expanded its colonial presence in many parts of Africa, in India, in the middle-east and in other parts of Asia. This process has had many long-term effects, including the increased use of the English language outside of Europe and increased trade between Europe and distant regions. It was also an age alive with new activity. There was a revolution in commercial enterprise, due to the great increase of available markets and as a result of this an immense advance in the use of mechanical devices. The new commercial energy was reflected in the great exhibition of 1851. Which was greeted as the inauguration of a new era of prosperity on the other side of this picture of commercial expansion we see the appalling social conditions of the new industrial cities, the squalid slums and the exploitation of cheap labor (often of children), the painful flight by the enlightened few to introduce social legislation and the slow extension of the franchise. The evils of the industrial revolution were vividly painted by such writers as Dickens and Mrs. Gaskell and they called forth the missionary efforts of men like Kingsley.

Intellectual developments: There can be little doubt that in many cases material wealth produced a hardness of temper and an impatience of projects and ideas that brought no return in hard case yet it is to the credit of this age that intellectual activities were so numerous. There was quite a revolution in scientific thought following upon the works of Darwin and his school, and an immense outburst of social and political theorizing which was represented in this country by the writings of men like Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill. In addition, popular education became a practical thing. This in its turn produced a new hunger for intellectual food and resulted in a great increase in the production of the press and of other more durable species of literature.

Nearly every institution of society was shaken by rapid and unpredictable

change. Improvements to steam engine technology led to increased factory production. More manufacturing required more coal to be mined from the ground. The economies of Europe expanded and accelerated, as the foundations of a completely global economy were laid. Huge amounts of wealth were created, and the spirit of the times discouraged the regulation of business practices. Today, this is called *laissez-faire* economics. This generation of wealth was to the sole benefit of the newly risen “middle class,” an urbane, entrepreneurial segment of society which saw itself as the natural successor to the noble’s former position of influence. At the same time, scientific advancements were undermining the position of the Church in daily life. Charles Darwin’s theories of evolution and natural selection brought humanity down to the level of the animal, and seemingly reduced the meaning of life to a bloody struggle for survival. Rather than a benign Creator, the world was dominated and steered by strength alone. In the general population, the ever-present gap between the haves and have-nots widened significantly during the Victorian period. The poorest of their poor found their lot in life to be worse than it had ever been, as the new market economy favored industry over agriculture. Large numbers of dispossessed farmers and peasants migrated from the countryside to the cities, seeking work in the factories. The effects of that demographic shift can still be observed. Conditions in the overwhelmed, sprawling cities degenerated as the infrastructure simply could not handle the influx of new workers. Slums and shantytowns became the norm, and depredation was a fact of life for the majority of the working class.

3.4. Literary Development in Victorian Age

The sixty years commonly included under the name of the Victorian age present many dissimilar features. Yet in several respects we can safely generalize. Nearly all observers of the Victorian age are struck by its extreme deference to the conventions. To a later age these seem ludicrous. It was thought indecorous for a man to smoke in public and for a lady to ride a bicycle. To a great extent the new morality was a natural revolt against the grossness of the earlier regency, and the influence of the Victorian court was

all in its favor. In literature it is amply reflected. But it is almost laughable to observe his anxiety to be 'moral'. This type of writing is quite blameless but it produced the king of public that denounced the innocuous Jane Eyre as wicked because it dealt with the harmless affection of a girl for a married man.

Many writers protest against the deadening effect of the conventions. Carlyle and Matthew Arnold in their different accents were loud in their denunciations. Thackerary never tired of satirizing the snobbishness of the age and bowing's cobbly mannerisms were an indirect challenge to the velvety diction and the smooth self-satisfaction of the Tennysonian School. As the age proceeded the reaction strengthened. In poetry the Pre-Raphaelites, by Swinburne and William Morris proclaimed no morality but that of the artist's regard for his art. By the vigour of his method Swinburne horrified the timorous and made himself rather ridiculous in the eyes of sensible people. It remained for Thomas Hardy to pull a side. The Victorian veils and shutters and with the large tolerances of the master to regards men's actions with open gaze.

The literary product was inevitably affected by the new ideas in science, religion and politics. On the *Origin of Species* (1859) of Darwin shook to its foundation scientific thought. We can perceive the influence of such a work in Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, in Matthew Arnold's meditative poetry and in the works of Carlyle. In religious and ethical thought the Oxford movement as it was called was the most noteworthy advance. This movement had its source among the young and eager thinkers of the old university and was headed by the great Newman who ultimately (1854) joined the church of Rome, as a religious portent it marked the widespread discontent with the existing belief of the church of England as a literary influence it affected many writers of note, including Newman himself, Rouse, Maurice Kingsley and Gladstone.

The new education acts, making a certain measure of education compulsory, rapidly produced an enormous reading public. The cheapening

of printing and paper increased the demand for books so that the production was multiplied. The most popular form of literature was the novel and the novelists responded with a will. Much of their work was of a high standard so much so that it has been asserted by competent critics that the middle years of the nineteenth century were the richest in the whole history of the novel.

The Victorian Novel: Victorian novels tend to be idealized portraits of difficult lives in which hardwork, perseverance, love and luck win out in the end; virtue would be rewarded and wrongdoers are suitably punished. They tended to be of an improving nature with a central moral lesson at heart. While this formula was the basis for much of earlier Victorian fiction, the situation became more complex as the century progressed.

Victorian fiction was very much product of its times, and one of the dominant characteristics of Victorian novelists was their sense of identification with their age. One curious aspect of the Victorian novel is the respective censorship exercised by the public opinion. An unofficial censorship exercised by the circulating libraries was able to force the literature to conform to middle-class standards.

The 19th century saw the novel become the leading form of literature in English. The works by pre-Victorian writers such as Jane Austen and Walter Scott had perfected both closely-observed social satire and adventure stories. Popular works opened a market for the novel amongst a reading public. The 19th century is often regarded as a high point in British literature as well as in other countries such as France, the United States and Russia. Books and novels in particular, became ubiquitous, and the “Victorian novelist” created legacy works with continuing appeal.

Significant Victorian novelists and poets include: Matthew Arnold, the Bronte sisters (Emily, Anne and Charlotte Bronte), Christina Rossetti, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Joseph Conrad, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, Benjamin Disraeli, George Eliot, George Meredith, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Gissing, Richard Jefferies, Thomas Hardy,

A. E. Housman, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, Bram Stoker, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Philip Meadows Taylor, Alfred Lord Tennyson, William Thackeray, Oscar Wilde, Lewis Carroll and H. G. Wells (although many people consider his writing to be more of the Edwardian age).

- Lose Plots (Fielding's tradition of writing novel)
- A mixture of strength and weakness
- Entertainment value
- Panoramic value
- Immense variety
- Imaginative rendering of reality
- Humor
- Characterization
- Lack of high artistic standard

Victorian novels tend to be idealized portraits of difficult lives in which hardwork, perseverance, love and luck win out in the end; virtue would be rewarded and wrongdoers are suitably punished. They tended to be of an improving nature with a central moral lesson at heart, mixed with a heavy dose of sentiment. While this formula was the basis for much of earlier Victorian fiction, the situation became more complex as the century progressed.

3.5. The Novelists Representative of Victorian Age

Charles Dickens (1812-70): Charles Dickens was extraordinarily popular in his day, with his characters taking on a life of their own beyond the page, and he remains one of the most popular authors of this era. His first real novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, written at only twenty-five, was an overnight success, and all his subsequent works sold extremely well. He worked diligently and prolifically to produce entertaining writing the public

wanted, but also to offer commentary on social challenges of the era. The comedy of his first novel has a satirical edge which pervades his writings. These deal with the plight of the poor and oppressed and end with a ghost story cut short by his death. The slow trend in his fiction towards darker themes is mirrored in much of the writing of the century, and literature after his death in 1870 is notably different from that at the start of the era. Dickens, very effectively revolts against such a new system in his literary style. In *Oliver Twist*, he presents the seamy (immoral or sordid/ dishonest) side of children being exploited by the underground world. The way Oliver demanded for more soup in the orphanage is perhaps the first protest against the exploitative practices of the age. With the background of industrial revolution and utilitarian philosophy in *Hard Times*, Dickens directly opposes Jeremy Bentham's and Adam Smith's theory of education and economy. His famous novels are *The Pickwick Papers* (1837), *Oliver Twist* (1838, was first published with the title *Oliver Twist* with a subtitle, *The Parish boy's Progress*), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839), *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841), *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Dombey and Son* (1844), *David Copperfield* (1850), *Bleak House* (1853), *Hard Times* (1854), *Little Dorrit* (1857), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1861), *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (unfinished, 1870). Apart from these he has also written many short stories, essays and travel books. Dickens has given his many literary contributions with the pen name 'Boz'. He always wished to please his readers and his works had a strong emotional appeal, good or bad characters would make the reader laugh or cry, while the plot would offer twists and mysteries. He successfully merged realism and fancy. It was his first novel that established him as a comic novelist in the 18th-century tradition, then his keener social awareness grew with *Oliver Twist* (1837-38) which was based on the living conditions of the poor - especially children - in the city, on the workhouses, on the underworld of London. With him, the 'condition of England novel' developed in England in the 1840s as a result of the growing middle-class awareness of the miserable life of the industrial working-class. His *Hard Times* (1854) ridicules utilitarianism and laissez-faire ideology, while *David Copperfield* (1849-50) describes the

society of Victorian England. *Great Expectations* (1860-61) offers more disappointed, more disillusioned view than before (it characterizes Dickens' later works), the first-person narration of the life of Philip Pirrip (Pip), telling how in his childhood he helped the starving convict, Magwitch, how he became devoted to the cold-hearted Estella, the ward of Miss Havisham, how he was given the opportunity to rise and become a gentleman with the allowance of a mysterious benefactor, and how he learns loyalty and humility from his bitter experiences.

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63): He was Dickens's great rival at the time. With a similar style but a slightly more detached, acerbic and barbed satirical view of his characters, he also tended to depict situations of a more middle class flavour than Dickens. He is best known for his novel *Vanity Fair*, which is also an example of a form popular in Victorian literature: the historical novel, in which very recent history is depicted. His realism is different, wherein he keeps a distance —no heroes, no villains – fools, snobbish, selfish, and vain characters. His *Vanity Fair: A Novel without a Hero* (1848) offers the Victorian materialistic view of life — opportunism (ambition, self-help: Becky Sharp) and snobbism; it shows that life is 'unheroic', none of the characters deserve admiration: the author wished "to indicate in cheerful terms that we are, for the most part, an abominably foolish and selfish people, desperately wicked and all eager after vanities". Even Dobbin is a fool for loving and eventually marrying the unworthy Amelia. It is far from Victorian optimism.

Emily Brontë (1818-48), Charlotte Brontë (1816-55), Anne Brontë (1820-49): The sisters spent their childhood in Yorkshire, Northern England amidst nature and the moors. **Emily Brontë's** *Wuthering Heights* (1847) is a romantic novel, a story of passionate love; multilayered narration: Lockwood (the ordinary outsider) and Nelly Dean (the more subjective 'insider') and many others within the main narrations; Gothic elements (revenge, gloomy settings, ghosts, the demonic Heathcliff); framed narrative with broken chronology. **Charlotte Brontë's** *Jane Eyre* (1847) is a 'bildungsroman' (a novel of development, tracing the protagonist's growth) where Jane Eyre is

an orphan girl growing into an independent, mature woman; though her actions observe the conventional codes, her behaviour still claims independence for women – her marriage in the end means spiritual and financial equality, intellectual companionship as well as sexual passion (much unlike the Victorian pattern); Gothic elements: the mystery of Bertha Mason (the lunatic wife of Rochester).

George Eliot [Mary Ann Evans] (1819-80): Another important writer of the period was George Eliot, the pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans, who wished to write novels which would be taken seriously rather than the romances which women of the time were supposed to write. She stands at the gateway between the old novel and the new, no unworthy heir to Thackeray and Dickens and no unworthy forerunner of Hardy and Henry James. Her most talked about novels are *Adam Bede* (1859), *Mill on the Floss* (1860, it is a spiritual autobiography), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Middlemarch* (1872), *Romola* (1863), etc. George Eliot is her pen name but her original name is Mary Ann Evans. She was much aware of the concerns of the age. Having studied theology, she could no longer believe in God (her translation of Strauss), and also lived to some extent as an outcast for living together with a married man, George Henry Lewes. She has a definite claim for realism in literature as well as in art, observes and analyses in depth and detail characters and circumstances, called herself a “belated historian” in *Middlemarch* (1871-72), also likened herself to a scientist; her realism is coupled with sympathy, she tries to understand the motives, the concerns of her characters. Her *Middlemarch* portrays English economic, social and religious life in the years 1829-32. Its heroine, Dorothea Brooke, is a woman in search of her “mission”: a meaningful active life difficult to find for a woman; while Casaubon fails writing his *Key to All Mythologies* for ignoring scientific results. Caleb Garth: the personification of High-Victorian earnestness: serious, determined, hard-working; yet helpful, benevolent and honest, while his wife is the true ‘angel in the house’.

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928): Thomas Hardy was born on 2 June 1840 in the village of Higher [Upper] Bockhampton in Stinsford parish near

the town of Dorchester in Dorset County, England, the first of four children born to Jemima *nee* Hand (1814-1904) and Thomas Hardy Sr. (1811-1892), builder and stonemason. His birthplace, built by his great grandfather, is now a museum owned by the National Trust. Young Thomas was given to quieter childhood pursuits, often spending time alone wandering the countryside, exploring the flora and fauna, gaining a profound connection with nature and the familiar sights and sounds of his rural home county. His mother had a great influence on his imagination, entertaining him with stories and songs, many of which would later inspire his Wessex tales.

His well-known novels are *The Desperate Remedies* (1871, first novel), *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872, first Wessex novel), *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of the Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895, last novel). Apart from these he has also written poems and short stories. His novels set in "Wessex", his characters are no longer masters of their fates, they are exposed to the indifferent forces that determine human destiny. Hardy's pessimism is quite apparent in his works. Unlike the high Victorians who were concerned with people in society, Hardy studies the elemental forces of human behaviour. For instance, *Tess of D'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman* (1891) is the story of Tess, an innocent young girl seduced by the vulgar Alec D'Urberville, later rejected by her love and suitor (husband) Angel Clare for her 'fallen' state, finally driven to murder and consequently being hanged.

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900): Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was an Irish playwright, novelist, essayist, and poet. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. He published two collections of children's stories, "The Happy Prince and Other Tales" (1888), and "The House of Pomegranates" (1892). His first and only novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, was published in an American magazine in 1890 to a storm of critical protest. He expanded the story and had it published in book form the following year. Its implied homoerotic theme was considered very immoral by the

Victorians and played a considerable part in his later legal trials.

Lord Henry in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) is a spokesman of 'new hedonism', which is a belief that pleasure is the most important thing in life, of aestheticism [art for art's sake], of the conscious disregard for high Victorian values, especially morals. Dorian, an innocent young man, has his portrait painted by his friend, Basil Hallward. Dorian wishes that the picture would grow old instead of himself, it comes true, and as the portrait becomes hideous (bearing the traits of Dorian's wicked, sinful life), Dorian preserves his youthful, innocent looks. Life and art change places; wishing to destroy the portrait Dorian stabs 'himself' and is found dead aged and ugly. The novel 'deconstructs' itself: it preaches 'new hedonism' but the outcome suggests that such a way of life would not pass without its due punishment.

By contrast, the novels of Anthony Trollope [1815-1882] are light of touch, pleasant, amusing, and thoroughly healthy. They make no attempt to sound the depths of character or either to propound or solve problems.

3.6. Let Us Sum Up

Literature of the age was disciplined by the demand for strong moral earnestness. A new temper which is described as "realistic" is the dominant note of this age. A Victorian novelist had to satisfy a multiplicity of tastes: he had to be a philosopher, psychologist, and an artist to mix slapstick and sentiment. Victorian novel was marked with a note on individuality and originality.

3.7. Self-Assessment Questions

1. He was a Victorian novelist who first started writing under the pseudonym "Boz". His novel "David Copperfield" is considered autobiographical.
 - a) Thomas Hardy
 - b) Charles Dickens

- c) George Eliot
 - d) Oscar Wilde
2. The book “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” by Lewis Carol abounds in fusions of the real and the fantastical. What is this genre called?
- a) Literary Nonsense
 - b) Realism
 - c) Fantasy
 - d) Tragedy
3. This Victorian novelist wrote many poems too. His collection of poems “Wessex Poems and Other Verses” was published in 1898.
- a) Charles Dickens
 - b) George Eliot
 - c) Oscar Wilde
 - d) Thomas Hardy
4. Many of Dickens’ characters have symbolic names. Name the benefactor of Pip, the protagonist in “Great Expectations”.
- a) Magwitch
 - b) Mr Jaggers
 - c) Mr Pumblechook
 - d) Wemmick
5. Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brönte were three sisters, each of whom published a novel in 1847. Which novel is not one of the three published that year?
- a) *Villette*

- b) *Agnes Grey*
 - c) *Jane Eyre*
 - d) *Wuthering Heights*
6. What is the name of the female protagonist in George Eliot's *Middlemarch* who marries Mr. Casaubon?
- a) Mary Garth
 - b) Dorothea Brooke
 - c) Rosamond Vincy
 - d) Celia Brooke
7. William Makepeace Thackeray wrote a novel which is a satire of the English society during the 19th century. The title of the novel was borrowed from the allegorical story *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Name the novel.
- a) *The Virginians*
 - b) *Catherine*
 - c) *The Luck of Bary Lyndon*
 - d) *Vanity Fair*
8. Oscar Wilde was a prolific writer in various genres - drama, prose, poetry. What is his only published novel?
- a) *Intentions*
 - b) *A Woman of No Importance*
 - c) *The Importance of Being Earnest*
 - d) *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

3.8. Examination Oriented Questions

1. Discuss the main novelist of the Victorian age and how they represented their times.
2. Discuss the social and political context of the Victorian period that formed the background for development of the novel.
3. Write a note on the art of Charles Dickens as a novelist.

3.9. Answer Key

Correct options: 1) b, 2) a, 3) d, 4) a, 5) a, 6) b, 7) d, 8) d

Ans. 3. Art of Charles Dickens as a Novelist: According to David Cecil, Dickens is “the most representative of Victorian novelists”. Some will contend that he is also the greatest. He shows his basic humanity, a childlike naivete, and an amazingly fecund imagination through his works. These qualities place him among the foremost of all English novelists. Dickens achieved in his lifetime wide popularity among all sections of readers.

Dickens’ art is art with a purpose. Dickens’ did not shut himself up in an ivory tower of such a kind as “aesthetic culture” or “Gothicism.” In his novels he strikes from first to last a loud and clear note of humanitarianism which is the most attractive note in the Dickensian orchestra. He can be called one of the greatest social reformers of his time. That he works in earnest is unquestionable-but he does not let himself fly into tantrums or slide into the quagmire of cynicism of which the work of such social reformers.

Many a novel of Dickens seems to have been built around a particular social theme. For instance, *Bleak House* attacks “the law’s delays”; *Nicholas Nickleby*, the abuses of charity schools and the sadism of school-masters; *Hard Times*, the pet concepts of the then current “political economy” which was also attacked by Ruskin and Carlyle; *Little Dornit*, the inhumanities to which poor debtors are often subjected; and so forth. But above all such social criticism is the basic lesson of humanness and charity which almost all Dickens’ novels teach implicitly or explicitly. Nowhere does Dickens say

that “all is right with the world,” but nowhere does he say either that “all is wrong with the world.” He is a realist no less than an optimist.

The fertility of Dickens’ creative imagination is simply amazing. His first novel, *Pickwick Papers*, had a swarming mass of finely delineated characters, and he kept up the pace of supply for all the subsequent novels. One very peculiar feature of Dickens’ work as a novelist is that his novels, when joined together, create a world of their own, somewhat different no doubt from our world and even the real world of his own day but none-the-less akin to both in many ways.

The world of Dickens’ novels has very recognizable contours and peculiarities and which is full of characters whom we know better than even our aunts and uncles. Take any character from Dickens. He seems every inch a denizen of Dickens’ world. We generally find it difficult to recall to which *novel* he belongs, but we do not find it difficult to say to which *world* he belongs. As a painter of the life of his day Dickens works on a very crowded canvas, and very often he uses colours which are too blazing to be compatible with reality. Dickens is more successful with characters drawn from the middle and lower classes of his society. As a child and young man he had seen and even experienced the life of these classes. It was in his blood even after he had become a high-hat with his thumping success in the field of fiction. He is much less successful with the bigwigs and aristocracy. There are some set types which make their appearance much too often in Dickens’ novels.

On the strictly structural side of his art, Dickens can boast only of modest success. Several of his novels mock the very ideal of structure, or even any other principle of pattern. It was only in his latest novels—*Bleak House*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Our Mutual Friend*—that he was able to offer somewhat coherent plots. For the rest, they all exhibit a gross neglect of all architectonic principles. For one thing, he is always more interested in individual episodes and individual characters than in the job of integrating them into a well-proportioned pattern.

But we readily excuse Dickens' architectonic deficiency the moment we take cognizance of his humour. Humour is the very soul of his work. It prevents his novels from becoming tiresome and itself is not tiresome. He is never a bore. Dickens' humour arises from a deep human sympathy and is ever fresh and refreshing. Sometimes his humour is corrective and satiric-but it always has the quality of geniality, charity, and tolerance. But in one way, at least, Dickens' humour rises above being a flashy, superficial affair, and that is its proximity to pathos.

A peculiar feature of Dickens' art as novelist is his tendency to be autobiographic. He constantly draws upon his own experience, and the sympathies and antipathies which we find so persistently manifested by him in his work very often have their origin in the years of his adolescence. Many of his novels are the records of his own life-though modified by subjection to the canons of art. Thus *David Copperfield* is, in essentials, Dickens' autobiography. *Oliver Twist* uses a lot of material supplied by his own experience of the low life of London in his tender years. In *Bleak House* he draws substantially upon his early knowledge of law courts and legal affairs. He recollects his school days in *Nicholas Nickleby*. And so forth.

In spite of the formidable number of flaws and limitations from which Dickens' art as a novelist suffers, he is a great novelist. His humour, basic human sympathy, and his rich, vitalising imagination are his basic assets, even though he is deficient in the architectural skill as well as other formal and "technical" qualifications as a novelist.

3.10 Suggested Reading

1. Arnold Kettle : *An Introduction to the English Novel-Volume Two: Henry James to the Present.*
2. Georg Lukacs : *The Historical Novel.*
3. Raymond Williams : *The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence.*

4. Raymond Williams : *Culture and Society : 1780-1950.*
5. Wayne C. Booth : *The Rhetoric of Fiction.*
6. G.K. Chesterton : *Charles Dickens : A Critical Study.*
7. Kathleen Tillotson : *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties.*
8. Morris-Shapira (ed) : *Henry James : Selected Literary Criticism.*
9. F. R. Leavis : *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad.*
10. Percy Lubbock : *The Craft of Fiction.*
11. Joseph Gold : *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralists.*

***LITERARY & INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF
NOVEL UP TO THE 20TH CENTURY***

STRUCTURE

- 4.1. Objectives
- 4.2. Introduction
- 4.3. Historical and Political Background in 20th Century
- 4.4. Literary Trends in 20th Century
- 4.5. Novel in 20th Century
- 4.6. Main Novelists of the 20th Century
- 4.7. Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8. Self-Assessment Questions
- 4.9. Examination Oriented Questions
- 4.10. Answer Key
- 4.11 Suggested Reading

4.1. Objectives

The aim of the lesson is to introduce learners to the social background of the 20th century that formed the context for the development of novel with its new added dimensions.

4.2. Introduction

The modern novel rejected the culture of the past but at the same time, it would be wrong to say that the 20th century novel as an art form

was dead. As the novel of this age broke free from the dominance of religion and moral codes, it experimented with techniques like stream of consciousness and genre like science fiction.

4.3. Historical and Political Background in the 20th Century

The long and progressive reign of Queen Victoria came to a climax in the Diamond Jubilee Year (1897), a time of peace and plenty when the British Empire seemed to be at the zenith of its power and security. When Queen Victoria died, England was one of the most powerful nations in the world, the British Empire was huge, the Navy and the Army were well trained and invincible, the manufacturing and trading middle class was prosperous. However, the 20th century saw the decline of Britain partly caused by the impressive growth of German industry and also by new emerging powers, the USA and Japan.

During the reign of Queen Victoria's eldest son, Edward VII, a policy of peace and good relationships with foreign countries. England lived in the wave of Victorian optimism: the illusion that the economic and social situation of the country was destined to prosper forever even if the gap between the rich and the poor still existed. Society was organized like a pyramid, at the top of the social ladder there was the aristocracy with its privileges, it was followed by the middle class divided into upper (professionals and managers) and lower (shopkeepers and clerks) at the bottom there was the working class divided into skilled and unskilled workers whose families were very large with high infant mortality rate, very bad housing conditions still subject to social injustices.

In this period the Liberal party won the general election and launched a program of social reforms to help the poor and the old, laying the foundations of the welfare state. It was the first time the British Government decided to spend money on the welfare of people; the most important reforms included School Meal Act for providing meals for children in need; Coal Mines Regulation Act for 8 hours' working day, Old Age Pension for people over 70; Parliament Act to weaken the power of the House of Lords and National Insurance Act:

to ensure workers against sickness.

In this period (1903) the movement of Suffragettes was born asking for universal suffrage for all women, it came in 1918 (for women aged 30) and in 1928 (for women aged 21) after they chained themselves to railings, broke windows and cried their rights. It was the first form of battle for emancipation. When George V went to the throne in 1910 he had to face the event which changed the face of the world: World War I. The main cause was the ambition of the German Emperor William II who abandoned the policy of peace of Bismark and wanted his country to become more powerful than England and France. He wanted to conquer the Balkan State to cut off Russia from the Mediterranean and England from its control over Egypt and India.

The occasion was the murder of the heir to the Austrian throne, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand by a Serbian student. So Austria attacked Serbia and Germany attacked the neutral territory of Belgium. On the other side Russia supported Serbia, while England and France declared war to Germany.

It was Britain's first European war since Napoleonic times apart from the Crimean war. George V decided to abandon his name "Hannover" and changed it into Windsor. The war lasted four years, Russia collapsed in 1917 because of the Bolshevik revolution, Italy, which was neutral at the beginning and had sided with England, France and Russia in 1915, was defeated by Austria at Caporetto, while the USA joined the war in 1917 as a "crusade for democracy" and accelerated the German defeat. The armistice was signed in 1918 and the Peace treaty was signed at Versailles in 1919.

The war caused the ruin of the four great European Empires and made possible a communist revolution in Russia. The American President Wilson devised a plan to keep peace so the League of Nations was born, but the American Senate voted against involvement in European matters, so the USA never joined the league. During the years of the first post-war period enthusiasm was replaced by discomfort and disillusion. The consequences

of the war were:

- even if unemployment disappeared thanks to a rise in demand for war production, there was a rise in prices which led to inflation and rise in taxation;
- the process of emancipation of women started because women proved to be competent in every field during the absence of men who were at war (suffragettes); a step towards equality of the sexes;
- labourers became conscious of their rights so trade unions grew in power and importance; there were many social reforms and even living habits changed: cigarette smoking, cinema, gambling, use of contraceptives;

The growth in industries in Asia and Japan caused a deterioration of European economy, great depression, which was made worse by the wall street crash in 1929 followed by the new deal policy established by the American President Roosevelt. It was an age of reforms according to which people were set to work on jobs which were useful to the community as building new roads, schools, hospitals. It was only towards the end of the 30s that the situation improved. Industries were reorganized and new sectors were created such as electricity, artificial fibres, plastic, motor-vehicles. Mass production led to the creation of chain stores, advertising became very important, the growth of the population slowed down because of birth-control practices, families became smaller and women with more leisure time became more independent.

As regards England, the two main events were the situation in India and the Irish question. As for India the situation worsened because many Indians had fought for Britain in the First world war and asked for more freedom but the English Parliament refused so Gandhi started a campaign of non-violent civil disobedience and non-cooperation until the British government declared to leave India in 1947. Thus India was divided into two parts : a Hindi one and a Muslim one later called Pakistan and Gandhi was killed by

a fanatic in 1948. Even other dominions of the former British Empire acquired their independence as Africa, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Commonwealth was created.

As regards politics, in 1918 the Liberal Party was replaced by the Labour Party even if power was always in the hands of the Conservatives, who faced the Second World War. When in 1936 George V died, his son Edward VIII went to the throne but his reign only lasted 10 months because he abdicated in favour of his brother George VI to marry a twice-divorced American lady. George had to face the II world conflict. It started in 1939 when Hitler invaded Poland and in 1940 Denmark and Norway and then Holland, Belgium and France. England and France formed a coalition to stop Germany, the USA decided not to join the war at first, Roosevelt only obtained consent from the Congress to send war material to England.

In 1940 Italy declared war to France and England, France was defeated and in England there was the Battle of Britain won by the pilots of the Royal Airforce. In 1941 Germany attacked Russia and Japan bombed the American naval base of Pearl Harbour forcing the USA to enter the war. Because of the cold Russian winter Germany and Italy were defeated, Italy was invaded by the Americans in 1943 and in 1944 the allies invaded Normandy and freed France. The USA, using atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima destroyed Japan so the war was over. In 1945 after Hitler's suicide Germany surrendered.

The English Prime Minister Winston Churchill drew up the Atlantic Charter aiming at the respect of human rights because this war cost more civilians than soldiers for bombing of towns, atomic bomb and racism against the Jews. After the war the Labour Party won the elections and followed the ideas of the Beveridge Report which promoted a series of measures to be taken in order to protect and promote the welfare of British people. The welfare state was born, it was a series of schemes and services assumed by the Government and local authorities to deal with all types of social problems such as housing, education and health.

4.4. Literary Trends in 20th Century

Adapting the theories of linguists and philosophers such as Ferdinand Saussure and Ludwig Wittgenstein, twentieth-century writers began to treat language as a “game,” creating fragmented word combinations, ambiguous meanings, and experimental forms. Dadaism and Surrealism were among the most influential early twentieth-century literary movements. The goal of the Dadaists was to abolish the restraints of authority by breaking the conventions of literature and art; the goal of the Surrealists was to express the unconscious mind through dream writing, automatic writing, and fantasy. Although the term “modernism” generally refers to the collective literary trend in the early twentieth century, it more precisely applies to a group of British and American writers—such as James Joyce, Ezra Pound, and T. S. Eliot—who crafted carefully worded images in colloquial language. In the broader sense of “modernism,” early-twentieth-century writers broke up the traditional plot structure of narratives, experimented with language, fragmented ideas, played with shifting perspectives, and drew self-conscious attention to the very nature of language itself.

Despite the experiments with style and content, early modernists continued to hope that through art they could rediscover the meaning and unity lost in modern society. By mid-century, a growing number of writers, often referred to as postmodernists, abandoned that hope and began instead to create literature that celebrates rather than laments the inability of language and literature to bring conclusion and meaning to the modern experience. Postmodern writers playfully create allusions, contradictions, meta-narratives, and linguistic games in order to disrupt reader expectations of fixed, objective references. At the end of the 20th century, as geopolitical boundaries blurred and shifted, an increased recognition of the diversity of cultural identities in ethnic, gender, and sexual issues led to a correspondent pluralism in writing that depicts the full range of human diversity. Included in these new perspectives is attention to the efforts of postcolonial cultures to develop a consciousness apart from that of their colonizers.

4.5. Novel in 20th Century

The 20th century has been called the “age of interrogation”, with the spirit of inquiry testing the age-old beliefs. With the encouragement of inquisitiveness came emancipation, but it was not without vengeance. Values began to crumble. So, the nature and function of the novel also changed. It was felt that a novel could be about anything, and none of the tacit obligations, which had been ruling till this time, were regarded important anymore. Even intelligible language could be compromised. Experimentation became the norm of the times. The novel could be realistic or unrealistic, it could either conform to a storyline or even dispense away with a rigid plot and instead presents a range of scenes.

The modern novel had a different conception of what is significant in human life. Earlier, the novelists were primarily concerned with the economic and social context and how these conditions influenced the life of the characters. But the modern novel, instead of tracing the graph of individuals on the lines of social and economic conditions, considered these as less significant. Moreover, modern psychology had an impact on the novelists and the genre.

The conception of time also changed. It was no longer treated as a movement of moments, each of which passes away irretrievably. Rather, it was considered as a continuous flow having no divisible parts. All moments were always present.

4.6. Main Novelists of the 20th Century

H.G. Wells: Herbert George Wells was born on 21 September 1866 in Bromley, Kent County, England, son of Sarah Neal, maid to the upper classes, and Joseph Wells, shopkeeper and professional cricket player. The Wells were quite poor and it was not the happiest of marriages; they would soon live apart though neither re-married. At an early age Herbert was an avid reader but it would be some years before his talents as a writer were realised. He attended Thomas Morley’s Academy for a few years before financial hardship forced him to leave and seek practical employment.

H.G. Wells is regarded as the father of the science fiction. His *Two Men in the Moon*, *The War of the Worlds*, and *The Wonderful Visit* are imaginative and hold the attention of the reader. In his novels like *Kipps* and *The History of Mr Polly*, he offers a sympathetic but an unsentimental picture of the lower middle class English life.

Wells' masterpiece spawned more invasion literature and inspired numerous movie adaptations and print sequels. Part prophet, part pessimist, Wells was a prolific author not just of science fiction but also fiction and non-utopian and dystopian short stories, travel sketches, histories, and socio-political commentary. While his most popular works tend to show a bleak future for humanity, he was not without his sardonic wit and wry humour.

John Galsworthy: He was the eldest son of solicitor John Galsworthy (1817–1904) and Blanche Bailey (1837–1915). He was born at Parkfield, Kingston Hill, Surrey on 14 August 1867. After attending Harrow School (1881–1886) he went on to study law at New College, Oxford, from which he would be elected as an honorary fellow in 1926. He was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1890. Over the course of his lifetime he earned honorary degrees from the Universities St Andrews (1922), Manchester (1927), Dublin (1929), Cambridge (1930), Sheffield (1930), Oxford (1931), and Princeton (1931). Whilst travelling with the aim of studying marine law, he met Joseph Conrad on a South Seas voyage near Adelaide, Australia. They soon became life-long friends.

Writing merely for his own amusement around the age of twenty-eight, Galsworthy first published a collection of his short stories, *From the Four Winds* (1897) and the novel *Jocelyn* (1898) at his own expense and under the pseudonym John Sinjohn. After realising that the practice of law was not for him, he published his first novel *The Island Pharisees* (1904) under his own name, and which in his opinion remained his most important work. English novelist and playwright won the 1932 Nobel Prize in Literature "for his distinguished art of narration which takes its highest form in *The Forsyte Saga*" published between 1906 and 1921 and as a collection in

1922. The second series of novels in the Forsyte *roman fleuve* would be *The White Monkey* (1924), *The Silver Spoon* (1926), and *Swan Song* (1928). *Maid in Waiting* (1931), *Flowering Wilderness* (1932), and *Over the River* (1933) comprised the third.

The Man of Property (1906) would be the first of the *The Forsyte Saga*. Chronicling three generations of the Victorian upper-class Forsyte family, it was followed by *Indian Summer of a Forsyte*, *In Chancery*, and *Awakening* in 1920 and *To Let* in 1921. The Forsyte obsession with wealth, status, and acquisition is apparent. Galsworthy satirically though not unsympathetically criticises the hollow insularity of everything from matters of property and marriage to the ideologies of the very class he was born into.

D.H. Lawrence: David Herbert Lawrence was born on September 11, 1885, in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, central England. He was the fourth child of a struggling coal miner who was a heavy drinker. His mother was a former schoolteacher, greatly superior in education to her husband. Lawrence's childhood was dominated by poverty and friction between his parents. He was educated at Nottingham High School, to which he had won a scholarship. He worked as a clerk in a surgical appliance factory and then for four years as a pupil-teacher. After studies at Nottingham University, Lawrence matriculated at 22 and briefly pursued a teaching career. Lawrence's mother died in 1910; he helped her die by giving her an overdose of sleeping medicine. The appearance of his first novel, *The White Peacock* (1911), launched Lawrence into a writing career. In 1912 he met Frieda von Richthofen, the professor Ernest Weekly's wife and fell in love with her. Frieda left her husband and three children, and they eloped to Bavaria. Lawrence's novel *Sons and Lovers* appeared in 1913 and was based on his childhood. In 1914 Lawrence married Frieda von Richthofen, and traveled with her in several countries. Lawrence's fourth novel, *The Rainbow* (1915), was about two sisters growing up in the north of England. Lawrence started to write *The Lost Girl* in Italy. He dropped the novel for some years and rewrote the story in an old Sicilian farmhouse near Taormina in 1920. Lawrence's best-known work is *Lady*

Chatterley's Lover, first published privately in Florence in 1928. It tells of the love affair between a wealthy, married woman, and a man who works on her husband's estate. The book was banned for a time in both UK and the US as pornographic. Lawrence's other novels from the 1920s include *Women In Love* (1920), a sequel to *The Rainbow*.

Aaron's Rod (1922) shows the influence of Nietzsche, and in *Kangaroo* (1923) Lawrence expressed his own idea of a 'superman'. *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) was a vivid evocation of Mexico and its ancient Aztec religion. *The Man Who Died* (1929), is a bold story of Christ's Resurrection. Lawrence's non-fiction works include *Movements In European History*(1921), *Psychoanalysis And The Unconscious* (1922) and *Studies In Classic American Literature* (1923). D.H. Lawrence died in Venice, France on March 2, 1930. He also gained posthumous renown for his expressionistic paintings completed in the 1920s.

James Joyce: James Joyce was born in Dublin, on February 2, 1882. He was the son of John Stanislaus Joyce, an underprivileged gentleman, who had failed in a distillery business and had tried different kinds of professions, including politics and tax collecting. Joyce's mother, Mary Jane Murray, was an accomplished pianist, whose life was dominated by the Roman Catholic Church. In spite of their poverty, the family struggled to keep up a middle-class facade. Joyce, an Irish novelist, is noted for his experimental use of language in works like *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegans Wake* (1939). Joyce's technical innovations in the art of the novel include an extensive use of interior monologue. In fact, he used a complex network of symbolic parallels drawn from the mythology, history, and literature, and created a unique language of invented words, puns, and allusions. In 1914, his *Dubliners* was published, then came *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in 1916, and *Ulysses* in 1922. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* relied heavily on Joyce's autobiographical experience was written with complexity and objectivity. This novel did very poorly, financially; however, many avant-garde writers admired this book.

Virginia Woolf: Born as Adeline Virginia Stephen on January 25, 1882, in London, England, she came to be an essayist, novelist, publisher, critic, especially famous for her novels and feminist writings. A fine stylist, she experimented with several forms of biographical writing, composed painterly short fictions, and sent to her friends and family a lifetime of brilliant letters. Her most notable works are the novels *Mrs Dalloway*, *Orlando*, *To the Lighthouse*, *The Waves* and the feminist essay *A Room of One's Own*. Woolf was an active figure in the London literary society during the interwar period. Virginia Woolf was part of the Bloomsbury Group, an intellectual circle of artists and writers. The group became known in 1910 with Dreadnought Hoax, a hoax in which Woolf had participated with a masculine pen name. In the Bloomsbury group she met Leonard Woolf, they married in 1912 despite his poverty. The couple is known to have led a happy married life and also to have collaborated professionally, most notably with the founding of the Hogarth Press. *Mrs Dalloway*, the story of Clarissa Dalloway, a society woman preparing a party that she would host. The story is set in England, just after World War I. The narrative travels back and forth in time as well as in and out of each character's minds, constructing a unique perspective on post-war English society as well as Clarissa's life. The novel also works with themes of mental illness, in the figure of a shell-shocked war survivor who suffers as doctors dismiss his condition, and who ultimately commits suicide. The book examines feminist issues with Dalloway as a personification of the female stereotype, sexually and economically repressed, as well as in the figure of Sally Seton, who appears as her opposite; an independent and carefree woman. It is also with Seton that Dalloway shares an unforgettable kiss which Dalloway defines as the happiest moment of her life.

In 1927 Woolf published *To the Lighthouse*, a novel set over the course of two days, with a gap of ten years. The novel is the drama of the Ramsay family in its reflections on a visit to the lighthouse. One of the central themes within this novel is the creative process of a painter named Lily Briscoe. The work also explores the everyday life of people during

times of war, as well as the unbalanced relationship between men and women.

In 1928 Virginia Woolf published *Orlando*, partly as a portrait of Vita Sackville-West, her lover. The book is a parodic biography of an eternally young nobleman that lives for three centuries without becoming older than thirty, and who suddenly turns into a woman. In *Orlando*, Woolf satirically assumes the role of a historical biographer. The work also satirizes Vita herself, even if it was meant as consolation for the loss of Vita's ancestral home.

Virginia Woolf died on the 28th of March 1941 in East Sussex, England, at the age of 59.

Joseph Conrad: His real name was Jozef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski. He was born on December 3, 1857 at Berdichev in Ukraine. This writer of Polish descent is known for novels including *Lord Jim* (1900), *Nostramo* (1904), and *The Secret Agent* (1907). During his lifetime Conrad was admired for the richness of his prose and his renderings of dangerous life at sea and in exotic places. But his initial reputation as a masterful teller of colourful adventures of the sea masked his fascination with the individual when faced with nature's invariable unconcern, man's frequent malevolence, and his inner battles with good and evil. To Conrad, the sea meant above all the tragedy of loneliness. A writer of complex skill and striking insight, but above all of an intensely personal vision, he has been increasingly regarded as one of the greatest English novelists.

He died on August 3, 1924, at Canterbury, in Kent, England.

4.7. Let Us Sum Up

Despite its diversity, the 20th century novels typically focus on themes like the individual in society and the temporality of human existence. Modernist novels tend to fall into three obvious periods: 1900-1920s (a time of experimentation, allusiveness, and complexity); 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s (a time when novelists returned to social realism); and post-1960s (a period when important writers emerged from post-colonial contexts). In its early

stages, the Modernist novel turned inward to contemplate the workings of the individual mind (of characters and authors themselves). This marked a reaction to the Victorian concern for exploring vast social landscapes in the novel. Later Modernist novelists were no less experimental, necessarily, though they often returned the issues of politics and class to fiction that early Modernists had not examined so closely. Contemporary English fiction, if it is possible to distill any common tendencies from its diversity, often looks backwards, uneasily, to England's earlier days. Much contemporary fiction thus looks to provide a sense of perspective, as though the culture itself is now working through what its own history has meant, for good and for ill.

4.8. Self-Assessment Questions

1. Which of these novels is not part of the *Forsyte Saga*, written by English novelist John Galsworthy?
 - a) *Money*
 - b) *In Chancery*
 - c) *The Man of Property*
 - d) *To Let*
2. This massive novel, consisting of eighteen chapters, chronicles the events of one single day in the life of the protagonist Leopold Bloom.
 - a) *Ulysses*
 - b) *Dubliners*
 - c) *Finnegans Wake*
 - d) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
3. Which of these influential 20th century authors was not Irish-born?
 - a) George Bernard Shaw
 - b) William Butler Yeats

- c) James Joyce
 - d) William Golding
4. In 1989, the author of this book and all those involved in its publication were sentenced to death by the Supreme Leader of Iran.
- a) *Lady Chatterley's Lover*
 - b) *The Gate at the End of the World*
 - c) *Songs of Enchantment*
 - d) *The Satanic Verses*
5. Which of these English authors was a member of the Bloomsbury group, a literary circle that rejected the Victorian taboos on religious, artistic, social, and sexual matters?
- a) Virginia Woolf
 - b) George Orwell
 - c) D.H. Lawrence
 - d) John Fowles
6. Which allegorical novel by William Golding features a group of boys stranded on a desert island?
- a) *Lord of the Flies*
 - b) *Rites of Passage*
 - c) *Darkness Visible*
 - d) *Fire Down Below*
7. This novel focuses on Winston Smith and his attempt to rebel against the totalitarian state in which he lives.
- a) *The War of the Worlds*
 - b) *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

c) *Animal farm*

d) *The Invisible Man*

4.9. Examination Oriented Questions

1. Write a note on the social and cultural background in the 20th century.
2. Trace the development of the modern novel/20th century novel through the novelists of the time.

4.10. Answer Key

Correct Options: 1) a, 2) a, 3) d, 4) d, 5) a, 6) a, 7) b

Ans. 1. Social and cultural background in the 20th century: The twentieth century introduces a cultural period in which individuals not only reject the past but also question the very basis of knowledge and consider the possibility that knowledge and concepts once thought to be fixed and objective are instead constantly shifting and subjective. Philosophers and thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud challenged nineteenth-century science and the positivist confidence in its ability to explain both the physical and social worlds in completely rational terms. World War First had a powerful impact in its aftermath, causing Europeans to reconsider their very belief systems and leading to widespread dissatisfaction with the authorities who, many believed, were motivated by greed, class exploitation, and hunger for power. A growing interest in psychology influenced by the theories of Sigmund Freud contributed to a new emphasis on the internal reality of individuals, the importance of the self, and the alienation of the self in modern society. New studies in the relationship between reality and appearance led to the philosophies of phenomenology and existentialism as represented in the philosophical writings of Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre. After the Second World War, the rise of Communism, the gradual disintegration of colonialism, and the exponential development of technology, existentialism flourished in the 1940s and 1950s as individuals struggled to find meaning in an increasingly fragmented and

confusing world. A growing awareness of a variety of other cultures that have differing worldviews than traditional European or American ones undercut the assumptions of “cultural parochialism” and led to pluralistic and postcolonial perspectives.

4.11 Suggested Reading

1. Arnold Kettle : *An Introduction to the English Novel-Volume Two: Henry James to the Present.*
2. Georg Lukacs : *The Historical Novel.*
3. Raymond Williams : *The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence.*
4. Raymond Williams : *Culture and Society : 1780-1950.*
5. Wayne C. Booth : *The Rhetoric of Fiction.*
6. G.K. Chesterton : *Charles Dickens : A Critical Study.*
7. Kathleen Tillotson : *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties.*
8. Morris-Shapira (ed) : *Henry James : Selected Literary Criticism.*
9. F. R. Leavis : *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad.*
10. Percy Lubbock : *The Craft of Fiction.*
11. Joseph Gold : *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralists.*
12. Millgate, Jane.
Walter Scott : *The Making of a Novelist. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.*

WALTER SCOTT-*IVANHOE*

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love."
(from "The Lay of the Last Minstrel", 1805)

THE AUTHOR AND HIS TIMES

Background

The Romantic Era (1785-1830)

STRUCTURE

- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 Historical Background
- 5.4 The Literary Scene
- 5.5 Where Did it All Begin?
- 5.6 Second Phase
- 5.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.8 Glossary
- 5.9 Self-Assessment Questions
- 5.10 Examination Oriented Questions
- 5.11 Suggested Reading
- 5.12 References
- 5.13 About the Author : Sir Walter Scott

- 5.14 His Early Life
- 5.15 Literary Career
- 5.16 Scott's Popularity
- 5.17 Influence as a Novelist
- 5.18 Scott's Death
- 5.19 Selected Works
- 5.20 Conclusion
- 5.21 Self-Assessment Questions
- 5.22 Examination Oriented Questions
- 5.23 Suggested Reading
- 5.24 Answer Key

5.1 Objectives

- That the learner should be aware of the historical background of the period in which Sir Walter Scott wrote his novels.
- That the learner should be familiar with the literary scene in which Sir Walter Scott lived and worked.
- That the learner should be able to identify and explain major literary and social issues related to the Romantic age.
- That the learner should be able to demonstrate familiarity with the bibliographic tools and resources appropriate to the study of the Romantic age and apply these tools and resources to literary research.
- That the learner should be acquainted with the life and works of the Scottish writer Sir Walter Scott.

5.2 Introduction

This lesson in two sections has been written with an aim to provide learners the knowledge of certain aspects of the age in which the novelist, Sir Walter Scott, lived and worked besides, his own life and works. The learners of

English Literature rejoice in knowing about the author and his age because there is a lot of intellectual, historical, political and social significance attached to the author and his age. An attempt has been made to identify the characteristics of the age and study how it differed from the previous age.

Sir Walter Scott wrote many novels, short stories, and poems during his lifetime, and is credited with inventing the modern historical novel. This lesson discusses the life of Sir Walter Scott.

5.3 Historical Background

Romanticism is the term applied to the literary and artistic movement that took place between (1785 – 1830) in Western Europe. Occurring in the context of the Industrial Revolution, the French Revolution, the American Revolution and the social, political, and economic changes that occurred following the Enlightenment, Romanticism moved away from an emphasis on the importance of an empirical, material worldview and looked to the imagination and nature as sources of insight. Writers expressed a great reverence for nature and emphasized passion rather than reason, and imagination and intuition rather than logic. Romanticism favors full expression of the emotions, and free, spontaneous action rather than restraint and order. Artists and writers throughout history have shown romantic tendencies. However, the term Romantic Movement usually refers to the period from the late 1700's to the mid-1800's.

The birth and rise of the middle classes in England in the 1700s brought about great advances in literacy, as increasingly servants, merchants, tradesmen, and their families learned to read and write. The expanding market of readers made publishing books big business. Before the 18th century, literacy was generally restricted to the upper classes and the clergy, but by the turn of the 19th century, the majority of both suppliers and consumers of the published written word were "common" people.

5.4 The Literary Scene

During the Romantic Movement, most writers were discontented with their world. It seemed commercial, inhuman, and standardized. To escape from

modern life, the romantics turned their interest to remote and far away places, the medieval past, folklore, legends and fairy tales, and nature and the common people. The romantics were also drawn to the supernatural. Horror stories called Gothic novels became popular during the late 1700's and early 1800's. Many romantic characteristics were united in the Gothic novel. This was a type of horror story, filled with violence and supernatural effects, and set against a background of gloomy medieval Gothic castles. Horace Walpole wrote the first Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). The Gothic novel influenced the American writers Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe. The novels of Sir Walter Scott of Scotland and James Fenimore Cooper of America reveal the typically romantic interest in the past. Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, collected by Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, are famous examples of the romantic interest in legends and folklore.

Many typically romantic characteristics appear in the poetry of William Wordsworth of England. Wordsworth preferred a reflective "vacant and pensive mood" to a restless search for scientific knowledge. He believed more is learnt by communing with nature or talking to country people than by reading books. He also believed that harmony with nature is the source of all goodness and truth.

5.5 Where Did it All Begin ?

Many scholars say that the Romantic period began with the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* by William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge in 1798. The volume contained some of the best-known works from these two poets including Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and Wordsworth's "Lines Written a Few Miles from Tintern Abbey." Other literary scholars place the start for the Romantic period much earlier (around 1785), since Robert Burns' *Poems* (1786), William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* (1789), Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, and other works already demonstrate that a change had taken place--in political thought and literary expression. The two greatest novelists of the first generation romantic period were Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott. Austen wrote about middle-

class life in small towns and the women in her novels such as *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Emma* (1816) are known for their independence and wit. Scott wrote novels set in the Scottish Highlands or Edinburgh. His series of books called the Waverley novels are the first truly historical novels in English literature.

5.6 Second Phase

The second phase of Romanticism, comprising the period from about 1805 to the 1830s, was marked by a quickening of cultural nationalism and a new attention to national origins, as attested by the collection and imitation of native folklore, folk ballads and poetry, folk dance and music, and even previously ignored medieval and Renaissance works. At about this same time, English Romantic poetry reached its zenith in the works of the second-generation romantics John Keats, Lord Byron, and Percy Bysshe Shelley. Mary Shelley still famous for *Frankenstein* (1818) was also a member of this "second generation" of Romantics.

While there is some disagreement about when the period began, the general consensus is that the Romantic period ended with the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1837, and the beginning of the Victorian Period.

5.7 Let Us Sum Up

Romanticism was “a literary movement, and profound shift in sensibility”, which took place in Britain and throughout Europe roughly between 1785 and 1832. “Intellectually, it marked a violent reaction to the Enlightenment. Politically, it was inspired by the revolutions in America and France...Emotionally, it expressed an extreme assertion of the self and the value of individual experience...together with the sense of the infinite and the transcendental. Socially, it championed progressive causes...The stylistic keynote of Romanticism is intensity, and its watchword is ‘Imagination’” (Drabble 842-843).

5.8 Glossary

Empirical Verifiable or provable by means of observation or experiment

Enlightenment	A philosophical movement of the 18th century that emphasized the use of reason to scrutinize previously accepted doctrines, traditions, and that brought about many humanitarian reforms
Clergy	The ministers, priests etc. of the Christian religion
Champion	To fight for, defend
Coronation	The act or ceremony of crowning a king or queen
Medieval	Of, or belonging to, the Middle Ages

5.9 Self-Assessment Questions

- a. When did the Romantic Movement begin ?
- b. Which political revolutions influenced the Romantic writers ?
- c. What was important for the romantic writers ?
- d. Who wrote “The Lyrical Ballads” and in which year ?
- e. Who were the first generation romantics ?
- f. Name two writers of the second-generation romantics.
- g. Who wrote the first historical novels ?
- h. What was the watchword of Romanticism ?
- i. When did the Romantic age end ?
- j. Which age followed the Romantic Age ?

5.10 Examination Oriented Questions

- a. Write a note on Romanticism.
- b. What did the Romantic writers lay emphasis on?

5.11 Suggested Reading

Furst, Lilian R. *Romanticism*. 2nd ed. Methuen, 1976.
Honour, Hugh. *Romanticism*. Harper, 1979.

Thacker, Christopher. *The Wildness Pleases: The Origins of Romanticism*. St. Martin's, 1983.

Abrams, M.H. and Stephen Greenblatt, eds. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Seventh Edition, Volume 2. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000.

5.12 References

Drabble, Margaret, Ed. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. 5th rev. ed. New York : Oxford University Press, 1995.

5.13 About the Author : Sir Walter Scott

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.

(from "The Lady of the Lake", 1810)

5.14 His Early Life

Sir Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on August 15, 1771. He was the son of a solicitor Walter Scott and Anne, a daughter of professor of medicine. Six of his eleven brothers and sisters died in infancy. An early childhood illness left Scott lame in his right leg. To help cure what is thought to have been infantile paralysis, Scott and his family moved into the country. In the picturesque countryside of his forefathers, Scott learned Scottish legends, ballads, and stories from his paternal grandfather. These glimpses of the past would be a tool for Scott's fiction later in life. An avid reader, Scott loved Pope, Dryden, Swift, Johnson, Spenser, and Cervantes. He was infected by stories of knights and castles, even venturing to explore the ruins of ancient castles himself. He was educated at Edinburgh High School and studied law at Edinburgh University.

5.15 Literary Career

Young Walter apprenticed to his father in 1786, and became a solicitor in 1792. After an unsuccessful love affair with Williamina Belsches of Fettercairn – she married Sir William Forbes – Scott married Margaret Charlotte Charpentier (or Carpenter), daughter of Jean Charpentier of Lyon in France in 1797. They had five children.

Walter Scott was fascinated by the culture and traditions of the Scottish Borders and in 1802 he published his first literary work, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders*. It was his second work, which made his name, however; “*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*” (1805) was an immensely successful poem. Scott followed this with further romantic poems, such as “Marmion” (1808) and “The Lady in the Lake” (1810). In 1806 Scott launched a publishing business with his friend James Ballantyne. The business proved unsuccessful, and Scott spent the rest of his life paying off the debts incurred by Ballantyne. In the decade between 1810 and 1820, Walter Scott published a succession of hugely popular historical novels, beginning with *Waverley* (1810), *Guy Mannering* (1815), and *Ivanhoe* (1819). These books, and others that followed in the 1820s, were published anonymously or under the pseudonyms Jedediah Cleisbotham, Crystal Croftangry, Malachi Malagrowther, Lawrence Templeton, and Captain Clutterbuck or Author of *Waverley*. In the 1820s, appeared *Kenilworth* (1821), *The Fortunes Of Nigel* (1822), *Pevekil Of The Peak* (1823), *Quentin Durward* (1823), *The Talisman* (1825), *Woodstock* (1826), *The Surgeon's Daughter* (1827), and *Anne Of Geierstein* (1829). After the financial crash of 1825-26, the author's anonymity was destroyed, and he was exposed to the public as Sir Walter Scott. Scott took on a wide variety of themes in his writing; works on Scottish history, such as *Rob Roy* and *A legend of Montrose*, stories of the medieval period, such as *Ivanhoe*, and *Talisman*, and biography, such as his *Life of Napoleon*. *Rob Roy* (1817) was a portrait of one of Scotland's greatest heroes and the novel sold out its edition of 10,000 copies in two weeks.

5.16 Scott's Popularity

Scott's wildly successful *Waverley* novels secured for Scott not only a place in literary history, but also in the hearts of his countrymen. Scott was created a baronet in 1820. A few years later, he founded the Bannatyne Club, which published old Scottish documents. Scott visited France in 1826 to collect material for his *Life of Napoleon*, which was published in nine volumes in 1827.

5.17 Influence as a Novelist

Known as "the father of the historical novel," Scott's contemporaries and those who followed acknowledge his influence over the scope of fiction. Writer and poet, a born storyteller and master of dialogue, one of the greatest historical novelists, whose favorite subject was his native Scotland, Scott wrote twenty-seven historical novels. Scott's influence as a novelist was profound. He established the form of the historical novel and his work inspired such writers as Bulwer-Lytton, G. Eliot, and the Brontës. His influence is also seen among others in the works of James Fenimore Cooper, Alexandre Dumas and Aleksander Pushkin. In addition to Scott's distinction and innovation in the novel form, he also experimented and excelled in other genres.

5.18 Scott's Death

A true "man of letters," Scott was a poet, critic, historian, biographer, and editor. Incredibly prolific, Scott wrote well into his old age in an effort to help pay off the debts of his bankrupt publishing house. His wife, Lady Scott, died in 1826, and the author himself had a stroke in 1830. Next year Scott sailed to Italy. In Malta, he wrote one novel and a short story, and in Naples, he collected old songs and ballads. After his return to England in 1832, he died on September 21. Popular and well-loved, Scott's death was widely mourned. Scott was buried beside his ancestors in Dryburgh Abbey. From the profits of his writings all his debts were ultimately paid.

5.19 Selected Works

* *The Eve of St. John*, 1800

- * *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, 1802-03
- * *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, 1805
- * *Ballads and Lyrical Pieces*, 1806
- * *Marion*, 1808
- * *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810
- * *The Waverley Novels: Guy Mannering*, 1815; *The Antiquary*, 1816;
The Black Dwarf, 1816
- * *Border Antiquates Of England and Scotland*, 1814
- * *Guy Mannering, Or the Astrologer*, 1815
- * *Old Mortality*, 1816
- * *The Antiquary*, 1816
- * *The Black Dwarf*, 1816
- * *Tales of My Landlord*, 1816
- * *Rob Roy*, 1817
- * *The Abbot*, 1820
- * *The Monastery*, 1820
- * *The Pirate*, 1821
- * *St. Ronan's Well*, 1823
- * *Redgauntlet*, 1824
- * *Lives of the Novelists*, 1825
- * *Woodstock, Or the Cavalier*, 1826
- * *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1827 (nine Vols.)
- * *Miscellaneous Prose*, 1827
- * *The Highland Widow*, 1827
- * *The Tales of a Grandfather*, 1827-30

- * *Tales of a Grandfather*, 1828-31
- * *The History of Scotland*, 1829-30
- * *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, 1830
- * *Essays on Ballad Poetry*, 1830

5.20 Conclusion

The Scottish novelist and poet Sir Walter Scott was a prolific writer and is recognized as the master of the historical novel. He was one of the most influential authors who had a profound influence on many great writers.

5.21 Self-Assessment Questions

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Sir Walter Scott was born in the year

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| a. 1831 | b. 1771 |
| c. 1731 | d. 1741 |

2. Walter Scott was born in

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| a. England | b. Ireland |
| c. Britain | d. Scotland |

3. Scott wrote this novel

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| a. <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> | b. <i>Emma</i> |
| c. <i>Wuthering Heights</i> | d. <i>Ivanhoe</i> |

4. Scott wrote the first

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| a. romantic novel | b. historical novel |
| c. picaresque novel | d. psychological novel |

5. Scott died in the year

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| a. 1832 | b. 1837 |
|---------|---------|

**HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF
THE NOVEL *IVANHOE***

STRUCTURE

- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 The Rise of the Novel
 - 6.3.1 The Novel Form
- 6.4 Origins of the Novel
 - 6.4.1 Ancient Greek and Roman Narratives
 - 6.4.2 Medieval Narratives
- 6.5 Early Novels
- 6.6 The Rise of the English Novel
 - 6.6.1 The First English Novelist
 - 6.6.2 The Novel of Manners
 - 6.6.3 Gothic Novels
 - 6.6.4 The Historical Novel
- 6.7 The Historical Novel
 - 6.7.1 Ivanhoe as a Historical Novel
 - 6.7.2 Historical Accuracies
 - 6.7.3 Historical Inaccuracies
- 6.8 Conclusion
- 6.9 Self-Assessment Questions-I

- 6.10 Self-Assessment Questions-II
- 6.11 Examination Oriented Questions
- 6.12 Suggested Reading

6.1. Objectives

- That the learner should be familiar with the history of the development of the novel.
- That the learner should be able to identify and explain major literary and social issues relevant to the development of the novel till the time of Sir Walter Scott.
- That the learner should be able to recognize, identify, and use accurately literary terms and concepts applicable to a study of the novel and to understand and apply appropriate literary conventions.
- That the learner should be able to identify the genre of the novel *Ivanhoe*.
- That the learner should be acquainted with the novel, *Ivanhoe*, by Sir Walter Scott, as an example of historical fiction, as it contains the classic elements required to be considered a part of this genre.
- That the learner should be able to express insights which relate his reading of the novel *Ivanhoe* as a historical novel and Sir Walter Scott's contribution to this form of the novel.
- That the learner should be acquainted with the historical accuracies and inaccuracies in the novel *Ivanhoe*.
- That the learner should be able to demonstrate familiarity with the bibliographic tools and resources appropriate to the study of the novel form and in particular the novel *Ivanhoe* by Walter Scott and to apply these tools and resources to literary research.

6.2. Introduction

This lesson focuses on the historical development of the novel in general and the English novel in particular until the time of Sir Walter Scott. It then

goes on to discuss the historical novel with special reference to Sir Walter Scott, who is considered the father of the historical novel. The lesson concludes by focusing on *Ivanhoe* as a historical novel and discussing the historical accuracies and inaccuracies in the novel.

6.3 The Rise of the Novel

6.3.1 The Novel Form

A Novel is a long fictional story written in prose. It is one of the most popular forms of literature. The subject matter of novels covers the whole range of human experience and imagination. Some novels portray true-to-life characters and events. Writers of such realistic novels try to represent life as it is. In contrast to realistic novels, romantic novels portray idealized versions of life. Some novels explore purely imaginary worlds. For example, science-fiction novels may describe events that take place in the future or on other planets. Other popular kinds of novels include detective novels and mysteries, whose suspenseful plots fascinate countless readers.

As a literary form, the novel has four basic features that together distinguish it from other kinds of literature. First, a novel is a narrative--that is, a story presented by a teller. It thus differs from a drama, which presents a story through the speech and actions of characters on a stage. Second, novels are longer than short stories, fairy tales, and most other types of narratives. Novels vary greatly in length, but most exceed 60,000 words. Because of their length, novels can cover a longer period and include more characters than can most other kinds of narratives. Third, a novel is written in prose rather than verse. This feature distinguishes novels from long narrative poems. Fourth, novels are works of fiction. They differ from histories, biographies, and other long prose narratives that tell about real events and people. Novelists sometimes base their stories on actual events or the lives of real people. But these authors also make up incidents and characters. Therefore, all novels are partly, if not entirely, imaginary.

The basic features of the novel make it a uniquely flexible form of literature. Novelists can arrange incidents, describe places, and represent

characters in an almost limitless variety of ways. They also may narrate their stories from different points of view. In some novels, for example, one of the characters may tell the story. In others, the events may be described from the viewpoint of a person outside of the story. Some novelists change the point of view from one section of a story to another. Novelists also vary their treatment of time. They may devote hundreds of pages to the description of the events of a single day, or they may cover many years within a few paragraphs.

6.4 Origins of the Novel

The history of the novel is marked by an almost continual development of variations on old narrative forms. No matter how up-to-date or localized novels may seem, their stories still employ many themes and issues from narrative forms dating back to the ancient Greeks and Romans.

6.4.1 Ancient Greek and Roman narratives

In ancient times, most long narratives were composed in verse. Histories were among the few kinds of long narratives written in prose. The earliest known histories were written by two Greek authors, Herodotus and Thucydides, during the 400 B.C. The finest fictional narratives of ancient Greece were long poems called epics, *which told about the deeds of legendary heroes and mythical gods*. *The Iliad and the Odyssey*, the two most famous epics, were probably composed by Homer between 800 and 700 B.C. The Greeks also wrote long fictional adventure stories. These tales described fantastic adventures in foreign countries or related the plights of young lovers. Some writers composed pastoral tales, which told of love between shepherds and maidens. One of the best-known Greek pastorals is *Daphnis and Chloe* (A.D. 100's or 200's) by Longus. The most important Roman narratives in prose included *Satyricon* (about 60 A.D.) by Petronius and *Metamorphoses*, or *The Golden Ass* (mid-100's A.D.), by Lucius Apuleius. These earthy stories contrast sharply with the love stories of the Greeks. *Satyricon* vividly portrays the adventures of three Roman scamps. *Metamorphoses* tells of a man who is changed into a donkey and travels through various countries observing the weaknesses and failings of humans.

6.4.2 Medieval narratives

The word “novel” originally referred to prose stories that were topical. The word for novel in French and other languages deriving from classical Latin is *roman*. The word reflects the fictions called romances in which it had its roots. Love and adventure stories called romances of chivalry became widely popular during the late Middle Ages. Many of the romances dealt with the legendary British King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

6.5 Early Novels

During the 1500's and 1600's, many English romances were written in an extremely decorative style. After John Lyly of England wrote *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578), this highly artificial style was called euphuistic and was widely imitated. In France, many romances and romance histories were written by important women writers. Madeleine de Scudery wrote historical narratives, such as *Artamene*, or *The Great Cyrus* (1649-1653). Marie-Madeleine de La Fayette wrote the most psychologically powerful of these novels, *The Princess of Cleves* (1678). In Spain, several narratives that were more realistic appeared during the 1500's. One of the most influential was *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), by an unknown Spanish author. Some critics consider it the first picaresque novel. These novels describe the adventures of a young picaro (rogue) who makes his way in the world through cunning and treachery. Picaresque novels are episodic like romances about knights, but in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the rogue replaces the knight as the hero.

The first classic novel, according to some critics, was the Spanish masterpiece *Don Quixote* (part I 1605, part II 1615) by Miguel de Cervantes. Cervantes' story combines the chivalric romance and the picaresque adventure. The central character in *Don Quixote* is a middle-aged country landowner who imagines himself to be a knight in armor, battling injustice. He differs significantly from the unbelievably heroic or clever characters in romances and picaresque narratives. Cervantes' characters resemble real people and often make foolish and costly mistakes.

6.6 The Rise of the English Novel

The novel form tends to emphasize realistic social themes. Sophisticated novels of this kind first appeared in England in the early 1700's. At that time, the urge to record the details of ordinary life began to replace the older narrative focus on wondrous, supernatural, remote, and heroic material.

6.6.1 The First English Novelist

The development of the novel is one of the great achievements of English literature. The roots of the novel can be found in the books of Daniel Defoe. Defoe wrote realistic stories consisting of loosely connected incidents that were presented as actual happenings. His *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Moll Flanders* (1722) resemble novels, but they lack the unified plot typical of that literary form. Many scholars consider Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) to be the first true novel in English. Samuel Richardson wrote novels with well-developed plots rather than a sequence of episodes. His *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* tells of a virtuous female servant who resists her master's attempts to seduce her. The story is told in the form of letters, most of which are written by Pamela, the heroine, to her family. Through the letters, the reader follows Pamela's thoughts and feelings. Richardson thus reveals key psychological aspects of the central character. The book is highly moralistic and somewhat rambling. Henry Fielding wrote *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749), which is especially noted for its elaborate, unified plot. This novel tells of the comical adventures of a young orphan, first as he grows up in rural England, and then as he travels towards London, meeting a variety of characters in English life. Fielding ridiculed *Pamela* in *Shamela* (1741). Tobias Smollett wrote amusing, loosely constructed novels about eccentric characters. *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771) is a novel in letter form about a variety of English travelers and personality types. Laurence Sterne was one of the greatest experimenters in the history of the novel. His masterpiece is *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1760-1767). *Tristram Shandy* is an unconventional novel about an unconventional family. The story humorously portrays character types, philosophical ideas, and social customs. The book inspired many experimental novelists of the 1900's.

6.6.2 The Novel of Manners

The novel of manners appeared in England during the late 1700's. Fanny Burney was one of the first writers in the tradition with *Evelina* (1778), a novel about a young woman's introduction to London life. Jane Austen perfected the novel of manners in the early 1800's. Her masterpiece, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), centers on the social conventions surrounding courtship and marriage.

6.6.3 Gothic novels

Gothic novels became widely popular in England during the late 1700's through the 1800's. These horror stories tell of mysterious events that take place in gloomy, isolated castles. They have suspenseful, action-packed plots. The best-known Gothic novels include *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) by Ann Radcliffe and *The Monk* (1796) by Matthew Monk Lewis. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), about a scientist who creates a monster from parts of dead bodies, and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), about a nobleman who is secretly a vampire, became the most enduring examples of the type.

During the 1800's, English writers elaborated on the techniques of the early novelists and produced many great works. The English novel flourished during the 1800's, expanding to explore society's classes and institutions. Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) added both Gothic and romance elements to the novel of manners. Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) merged Gothic romance and fictional biography. Authors in France, the United States, and Russia also wrote novels of major literary importance.

The Romantic Movement, which stressed the need for full expression of human emotions and imagination, dominated the literature of the early 1800's. It was followed by the realistic movement, which demanded that literature accurately represent life as it is.

6.6.4 The Historical Novel

In Britain, Sir Walter Scott, a Scottish romantic writer, created and popularized historical novels. Such novels re-create the atmosphere of a past period and include actual characters and events from history. Scott wrote a

long series of historical novels, including *Waverley* (1814), about a Scottish rebellion against England. After the publication of his first novel, *Waverley* Scott devoted himself primarily to fiction. Scott's progress to historical novels was natural. His talents as a storyteller and as a creator of character, as well as his gift for realistic Scottish dialect, could be better realized in novels than in poetry. Scott wrote frequently about the conflicts between different cultures. *Ivanhoe* (1819) deals with the struggle between Normans and Saxons, and *The Talisman* (1825) describes the conflict between Christians and Muslims. The novels dealing with Scottish history are probably Scott's best. They deal with clashes between the new commercial English culture and an older Scottish culture. Many critics rank *Old Mortality* (1816), *The Heart of Midlothian* (1819), and *St. Ronan's Well* (1824) as Scott's best novels. Other works in the Waverley series include *Rob Roy* (1817), *A Legend of Montrose* (1819), and *Quentin Durward* (1823).

Scott's art shows the influence of the Enlightenment of the 1700's. He believed every human was basically decent, regardless of class, religion, politics, or ancestry. Tolerance for different ways of life is a major theme in his historical works. The Waverley novels express his belief in the need for social progress that does not reject the traditions of the past. He was the first novelist to portray peasant characters sympathetically and realistically, and he agreed with the poet William Wordsworth's glorification of common people. He was equally just to people in business, soldiers, and even kings.

Scott's influence can be seen in the works of Victor Hugo and Honore de Balzac of France, James Fenimore Cooper of the United States, and Leo Tolstoy of Russia. However, despite his influence, Scott's reputation declined from the late 1800's to the mid-1900's. His reputation has begun to rise again. But it probably will never reach the heights it achieved during Scott's lifetime. Some literary historians regard his death in 1832 as marking the close of the romantic age in English literature.

6.7 The Historical Novel

Ivanhoe (1819) is the *fifth* in Scotts' *Waverley novels*, the others

being :

Waverley (1814),

Guy Mannering (1815),

The Antiquary (1816),

Rob Roy (1818),

Kenilworth (1821),

The Pirate (1822),

The Fortunes of Nigel (1822),

Pevekil of the Peak (1822),

Quentin Durward (1823),

St. Ronan's Well (1824),

Redgauntlet (1824),

Tales of the Crusaders: The Betrothed and The Talisman (1825),

Woodstock (1826),

Chronicles of the Canongate: The Fair Maid of Perth (1828), and
Anne of Geierstein (1829).

6.7.1 *Ivanhoe* as a Historical Novel

Ivanhoe was the first novel in which Scott adopted a purely English subject, portraying the enmity of Saxons and Normans during the reign of Richard I (1189-99). Scott began work on *Ivanhoe* just as he was emerging from the severe gallstones-related illness that had plagued him while writing *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *A Legend of Montrose*. One of the major conflicts of the novel is referred to in the Dedicatory Epistle. The Dedicatory Epistle begins by making a surprising claim, that *Ivanhoe* is “a work designed to illustrate the domestic antiquities of England and particularly of our Saxon forefathers”, which implies that it is a historical work and more specifically a

work of social history. The novel is about minute details of medieval life, which Scott culled from the best authorities available to him; a mass of information about food, clothing, physical appearance, social classes, money, religious beliefs, and superstitions. However, following this statement we have the remark that “the more grave antiquary will perhaps class [it] with the idle novels and romances of the day”, also, the title page bears a subtitle, *Ivanhoe: A Romance*, so should the novel be read as a history or as a romance? Although the two terms “history” and “romance” seem incompatible yet they are very helpful in understanding the novel. Scott defined romance as “fictitious narrative in prose or verse; the interest of which turns upon the marvellous and uncommon incidents” and in *Ivanhoe* there is no dearth of surprising and uncommon happenings and adventures. However, Scott is closer to Gothic romance rather than medieval because he avoids violence by relegating it to unfulfilled threats. Scott in his essay “On Romance” clarifies how early romances were called romantic histories or historical romances, but he does not call his novel a historical romance. Graham Tulloch comments that it proves to be more illuminating “not to examine it at first as an example of a single blended genre but as both history and a romance, or more particularly as a history moving towards romance and a romance moving towards history”.

6.7.2 Historical Accuracies

The novel does contain some accurate details of political history; Prince John was plotting with the French against Richard’s interests in Richard’s absence and there was a rebellion by some of John’s supporters against Richard on his return. But while Scott uses this piece of history, he departs completely from it by depicting Richard’s return from captivity from Germany in absolutely fictional form. In the novel, Richard returns disguised and unknown, wanders about the country playing the role of a knight-errant until his supporters have gathered, and is then ready to reveal himself.

6.7.3 Historical Inaccuracies

In reality, he arrived openly at Sandwich and proceeded in public view to London. Thus, Richard’s wanderings in disguise in *Ivanhoe* move away

from history to romance. Scott also departs from history when he presents Richard as an English speaker, this becomes more significant in the light of the fact that a major theme of the novel is the presentation of the linguistic divide between Saxons and Normans and an important part of Scott's attempt to present the historical realities of twelfth century England. However, Scott chose to go against history to depict Richard and his subjects living in social harmony.

Within the novel itself claims are made that the novel is not history, but that it is certainly an accurate picture of the manners of the times, though, as he says, he may have confused the manners of two or three centuries. However, his purpose in doing this was to avoid the "repulsive dryness of mere antiquity" and to concentrate on "extensive neutral ground, the large proportion, that is, of manners and sentiments which are common to us and to our ancestors, having been handed down unaltered from them to us, or which, arising out of the principles of our common nature, must have existed alike in either state of society. And connect the past and the present". At other times, Scott stresses the differences from the past rather than the similarities; he contrasts medieval superstition to modern rationalism, dismissing as ridiculous the evidence given for Rebecca being a witch. Thus, Walter Scott uses historical fiction as a vehicle for critiquing the past as well as the present.

6.8 Conclusion

We may now define the Historical Novel as a genre in which the plot is set amidst historical events, or more generally, in which the author uses real events but adds one or more fictional characters or events, or changes the sequence of historical events. Thus, Scott's novel uses facts taken from history but romanticizes them or presents them anachronistically.

6.9 Self-Assessment Questions-I

Fill in the blanks

- a. A is a long fictional story written in prose.
- b. novels try to represent life as it is.

- c. A novel is written in rather than verse.
- d. Samuel Richardson's is considered to be the first true novel in English.
- e. wrote *Pride and Prejudice*.
- f. Sir Walter Scott wrote the first novel.
- g. *Ivanhoe* deals with the struggle between Normans and
- h. *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is a Gothic novel written by.....
- i. *Ivanhoe* is the in Scotts' Waverley novels.
- j. *Jane Eyre* merged Gothic romance and fictional biography.

6.10 Self-Assessment Questions-II

- a. What are the basic features of the novel form that distinguish it from other literary forms ?
- b. Which event in *Ivanhoe* is taken from history ?
- c. What are the special characteristics of the Gothic novel ?
- d. Who perfected the novel of manners in the 1800's ?

6.11 Examination Oriented Questions

- a. Write an essay on the development of the English novel.
- b. Write a note on the historical novel.
- c. Give reasons for considering *Ivanhoe* a historical novel.

6.12 Suggested Reading

Hart, Francis R. *The Scottish Novel: From Smollett to Spark*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Hart, Francis R. *Scott's Novels: The Plotting of Historical Survival*. (1966).

Lukács, George. *The Historical Novel*. (1962).

Modern Romance and Transformation of the Novel : Ian Duncan.
(1992)

'Writing Nationalist History' : Micheal Ragussis, in *English Literary
History* 60:1, Spring (1993)

Answers to Self-Assessment Questions-I

a. novel b. realistic c. prose d. *Pamela*

e. Jane Austen f. historical g. Saxons

h. Ann Radcliff i. fifth j. Charlotte Bronte

THE NOVEL *IVANHOE* – SYNOPSIS

STRUCTURE

- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Introduction
- 7.3 Synopsis
- 7.4 Setting
- 7.5 The Story
- 7.6 How the Novel Ends
- 7.7 Major Events Listed Chapter-wise
- 7.8 Glossary
- 7.9 Self-Assessment Questions-I
- 7.10 Self-Assessment Questions-II
- 7.11 Examination Oriented Questions
- 7.12 Suggested Reading

7.1 Objectives

- That the learner should have an in-depth knowledge of the text of *Ivanhoe*.
- That the learner should be able to answer questions related to the text of the novel.
- That the learner should be able to demonstrate capacity to do a critical analysis of the novel, *Ivanhoe* in the context of established critical approaches.

7.2 Introduction

The Multiple Choice Questions in this lesson plan will test a student's recall of the text. The questions focus on specific chapters within the book. The Short Answer Questions listed in this lesson require a one to two sentence answer. They ask students to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the text by describing what they've read, rather than just recalling it. The short answer questions evaluate not only whether students have read the material, but also how well they understand and can apply it. They require more thought than a multiple choice question, but are shorter than the essay questions. Essay type questions responses are typically expected to be one (or more) page(s) and consist of multiple paragraphs, although it is possible to write answers more briefly. These essays are designed to challenge a student's understanding of the broad points in the novel, interactions among the characters, and main points and themes of the text. But, they also cover many of the other issues specific to the work and to the world today.

7.3 Synopsis

Ivanhoe by Sir Walter Scott is a classic novel that combines history with fiction to create a truly engaging tale of chivalry and oppression. The contention between the Normans and the Saxons creates a spellbinding story that ultimately ends in the acceptance of the Norman King Richard in lieu of a Saxon ruler. Simultaneously, *Ivanhoe* deals with regaining his father's acceptance after his disinheritance. *Ivanhoe* is a tale that is memorialized as one of the greatest novels ever written.

7.4 Setting

Ivanhoe occurs in twelfth century England during the reign of King Richard, the Lion-Hearted, approximately hundred years after the decisive battle of Hastings, at which Harold, the Saxon claimant to the English throne, was killed by William, Duke of Normandy. Since the Normans have confiscated Saxon lands, the Saxons who had owned and cultivated their lands since the early years of the first century, are now subjected to the rule of the foreign French Normans. The French language has replaced the old Anglo-Saxon, while French rituals and courtly manners mock the simple and homely Saxon way of life. The few Saxon nobles left alive are resentful when their lands are either threatened or seized by the Norman lords. The common people are terrified

of the cruel and unjust methods used to subdue them. The gap between the two races has widened because neither William of Normandy nor his successors cared to blend with the people, or to even learn their language or their ways. Thus, because of this conflict, the country exists in a state of perpetual unrest.

When Richard I comes to the throne, he spends almost all of his reign fighting the Saracens (Moslems) in the Holy Land. When King Richard is captured and held for ransom in Europe, Prince John, his brother, usurps power, hoping that his brother is not released so that he may rule as king. Although both King Richard and Prince John are Norman rulers, King Richard is fair, whereas John attempts to desecrate and demean the Saxons, resulting in the Saxons' dislike of Prince John and King Richard's popularity. Richard's subjects worry about seeing their fair ruler again and lash out at Prince John's greedy methods of stealing Saxon land. The country is, in fact, in a chaotic state.

7.5 The Story

It is against this background that Sir Walter Scott sets his narrative. Wilfred of Ivanhoe has been disinherited by his father, Cedric the Saxon. Cedric disinherits his son because of Ivanhoe's loyalty to the Norman King Richard. In addition, Cedric is angered by the fact that Ivanhoe falls in love with Lady Rowena, Cedric's ward and a direct descendant of Alfred the Great. Cedric intends to marry Rowena to Athelstane, who also has royal Saxon blood and such an alliance would produce a powerful Saxon claim to the English throne.

Ivanhoe appears at his father's manor in disguise as a Palmer who befriends Isaac, the Jew. Ivanhoe attends the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche, fighting as the Disinherited Knight. He vanquishes all of the other knights on the first day of the tournament and presents the honor of the day to Lady Rowena. On the second day, De Bracy, Brian De Bois-Guilbert, and Athelstane simultaneously attack Ivanhoe, but the disguised Black Knight appears to assist the honorable knight; Ivanhoe wins the second day of the tournament, revealing his identity to Cedric and Lady Rowena before fainting from his battle wounds. Isaac's daughter, Rebecca, nurses the injured knight.

Cedric and Athelstane attend Prince John's banquet at Ashby Castle that night where several Norman knights insult them. After the banquet, they journey through the forest towards York where they encounter Isaac's party, including Ivanhoe, though Cedric is unaware of his injured son's presence. Because De Bracy loves Lady Rowena and wishes to marry her, he organizes several Norman knights, including Brian De Bois-Guilbert, to assist him in kidnapping her party. The Normans, in disguise, kidnap the Saxons and Jews and transport them to Torquilstone Castle, rightfully Ivanhoe's property which Prince John has given to Front-de-Boeuf. The only member of the Saxon party to escape is Cedric's servant and jester, Wamba, who joins forces with Robin of Locksley and a group of outlaws, accompanied by the Black Knight and Friar Tuck, to save the Saxons. He decides to rescue his master by disguising himself as a priest come to give absolution to the Saxon prisoners who have been condemned to death.

At Torquilstone Castle, Brian De Bois-Guilbert courts Rebecca as De Bracy courts Lady Rowena, though neither woman yields to the knights' advances. Meanwhile, Robin of Locksley's men send an ultimatum to the knights, causing them to plan to kill their prisoners. Wamba, disguised as a priest to offer absolution to the Saxons, enters the castle and exchanges clothes with Cedric, who escapes and joins the invaders. The battle rages when Ulrica, an old woman held prisoner by Front-de-Boeuf and his father before him, signals the outlaws. Ulrica sets fire to the castle, killing herself simultaneously. Brian De Bois-Guilbert escapes with Rebecca, knocking Athelstane unconscious when the Saxon tries to stop him. De Bracy is taken prisoner, but the Black Knight releases him.

7.6 How the Novel Ends

De Bracy informs Prince John that King Richard, disguised as the Black Knight, has returned to England, and Prince John sends a group to attack his brother. The outlaws come to the aid of the Black Knight, who reveals his identity to Robin of Locksley. King Richard travels to Cedric's home where he reconciles Ivanhoe with his father, and Athelstane, only knocked unconscious, pledges allegiance to the rightful king of England. Meanwhile, Brian De Bois-Guilbert arrives in Templestowe with Rebecca, who is accused of being a witch and sentenced to death. Ivanhoe arrives to act as her champion against De Bois-Guilbert, who champions the Templar Knights. De Bois-Guilbert is killed, and Rebecca is proven innocent. Ivanhoe

marries Lady Rowena, King Richard reassumes the throne and restores order, and Isaac and Rebecca move to Spain. Cedric realizes that the Saxons may never reclaim the throne, but decides it is possible to tolerate and even admire some Norman rulers; he pledges his loyalty to Richard. Rebecca and her father leave England.

7.7 Major Events Listed Chapter-Wise

7.7.1 Introduction, Dedicatory Epistle and chapters 1 to 2

- *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott combines history with fiction to create a tale of chivalry and oppression.
- In England, the Norman royalty controls the Saxon population.
- On his way back from the Crusades in the Holy Land, King Richard the Lion-Hearted is captured and held for ransom.
- Prince John usurps King Richard's power. Richard was a fair ruler, whereas John demeans the Saxons and steals their land.

7.7.2 Chapters 3 to 6

- Gurth and Wamba discuss the battle brewing between the Normans and the Saxons.
- Wamba worries about the pending visit of a Norman nobleman, Reginald Front-de-Boeuf to his master, Cedric the Saxon.
- Two horsemen ask Gurth and Wamba directions to Cedric the Saxon's home. Wamba gives the men false directions and they end up at the Sunken Cross.
- The horsemen encounter a stranger, a palmer who shows them the way to Cedric, the Saxon's house.
- The palmer is actually Cedric's son, Ivanhoe in disguise, who recently returned from the Holy Land.

7.7.3 Section III, Chapters 7 to 9

- At Rotherwood, the gatekeeper's horn announces the arrival of Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx and Brian de Bois-Guilbert.

- Cedric despises the Normans, but offers them his hospitality by allowing them to stay at his home.
- Cedric forbids Rowena from appearing before the Normans as he does not trust Bois-Guilbert to not interfere with his plans for Rowena to marry a proper gentleman.
- Rowena wants to hear news from the Holy Land and especially about Ivanhoe with whom she is in love.
- Bois-Guilbert is struck by Rowena's beauty.
- A stranger, Isaac of Kent, is announced at Cedric's gates and is given permission to lodge for the night.
- The Normans complain that Isaac, a Jew, was welcomed into Rotherwood.

7.7.4 Chapters 10 to 12

- When the Normans claim superiority of the Knight Templar, the palmer tells a story of a tournament in which six English knights defeated the Knight Templar, one of the English knights being Ivanhoe.
- The palmer is invited to join Cedric's servants in the kitchen for drinks and fraternization.
- Lady Rowena sends the palmer a note demanding his presence so she can hear news of Ivanhoe.
- The palmer warns Isaac, the Jew that Bois-Guilbert has ordered his Muslim slaves to rob and imprison him.
- Isaac suspects the palmer is a knight in disguise.
- Isaac writes to a rich relative to ask him to loan the palmer a horse and armor so that he can take part in the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche.

7.7.5 Chapters 13 to 15

- The Ashby-de-la-Zouche tournament is held in Leicestershire with Prince John in attendance.

- Quarrels arise as spectators are seated according to rank.
- Isaac, the Jew and his daughter Rebecca try to acquire good seats, but Isaac is abused for his intentions.
- Isaac knows that Prince John is trying to get a loan from the Jews of Kent.
- Prince John admires Rebecca and gets better seats for her and her father by taking them from Saxons, namely, Cedric and Athelstan of Coningsburg.
- The champion knight will choose a lady to be named Sovereign of Love and Beauty and preside over the next day's tournament.
- The Norman knights gain early victories.

7.7.6 Chapters 16 to 20

- A trumpet announces a new champion riding a black horse and a shield, which reads "disinherited" in Spanish.
- The new mysterious knight challenges Bois-Guilbert to mortal combat and he unhorses Bois-Guilbert then goes on to defeat Font-de-Boeuf, Malvoisin and several other knights.
- The mysterious knight is awarded the day's award.
- Prince John worries that the mysterious knight is King Richard.
- The mysterious knight chooses Lady Rowena as the Sovereign of Love and Beauty, but it irritates Prince John that his counselor Fitzurse's daughter, Alicia was not named the Sovereign.
- Cedric refuses to allow Rowena to attend the night's banquet.

7.7.8 Chapters 21 to 23

- The knights that the Disinherited Knight defeated offer him armor, weapons, and their horses. However, the Disinherited Knight refuses these and takes one hundred zecchins instead, keeping half and distributing the rest among the squires and officials.

- The Disinherited Knight challenges Bois-Guilbert to combat the following day.
- The Disinherited Knight sends his messenger, Gurth, with money to Isaac to repay his debt and Rebecca secretly returns the money.
- Four men attack Gurth and steal the money he is carrying.

7.7.9 Chapters 24 to 26

- The robbers return the money to Gurth as the knights the Disinherited Knight defeated were their enemies.
- Athelstane, Front-de-Boeuf and Bois-Guilbert attack the Disinherited Knight. Another disguised knight, the Black Knight, helps the Disinherited Knight.
- The Black Knight mysteriously disappears, and the Disinherited Knight goes on to be the victor of the day's tournament.
- Lady Rowena crowns the Disinherited Knight and he reveals himself to be Ivanhoe.
- Ivanhoe faints from his injuries.

7.7.10 Chapters 27 to 28

- Prince John is concerned that Ivanhoe is the Disinherited Knight because it is known that Ivanhoe will claim the honors that King Richard bestowed on him, but which Prince John illegally gave to Front-de-Boeuf.
- Prince John promises to obtain Lady Rowena for De Bracy's wife.
- Prince John is distraught when he finds out that King Richard has been freed and he cancels the day's tournament and holds the archery contest immediately.
- Robin of Locksley, a yeoman that Prince John dislikes, wins the archery contest and then disappears into the crowd.

7.7.11 Chapters 29 to 31

- Prince John sends his chamberlain to Isaac to demand two thousand crowns.

- Prince John throws a banquet at the Castle of Asby-de-la-Zouche.
- Cedric refuses to join in the toast to Ivanhoe because his son joined King Richard's court against his wishes.
- Prince John asks Cedric to toast a worthy Norman and Cedric toasts King Richard.
- Fitzurse rouses Prince John's supporters, planning to crown him as king.
- Fitzurse runs into De Bracy, dresses as a yeoman and he intends to kidnap Lady Rowena in disguise, then rescue her in his normal clothes and marry her.

7.7.12 Chapters 32 to 34

- The Black Knight leaves Ashby-de-la-Zouche after the tournament and attempts to find lodging in a small chapel.
- The monk at the chapel is Friar Tuck.
- Friar Tuck offers the knight shelter, dried pease and water.
- The knight suspects that the monk hunts for deer illegally.
- The Black Knight and Friar Tuck play music and sing together.
- Cedric transports Ivanhoe to Ashby-de-la-Zouche after the tournament, though he still does not forgive Ivanhoe.
- Cedric captures Gurth and punishes him for deserting him for Ivanhoe.

7.7.13 Chapters 35 to 37

- Cedric considers his hopes of marrying Rowena to Athelstan - his preference for Rowena to marry Athelstane over his son is the real reason for Ivanhoe's disinheritance.
- In the forest on their way home, Cedric's party encounters Isaac, Rebecca, and a sick man who has been abandoned by their guards.
- Gurth escapes with Wamba's help.

- Bois-Guilbert and his men attack Cedric's party, while Wamba is the only one to escape.
- Wamba and Gurth meet Robin of Locksley who plans to rally his troops in order to free the Saxons.
- Robin of Locksley visits the chapel where the Black Knight and Friar Tuck are singing.
- Locksley explains to the Black Knight that the Saxons have been captured and that they plan to free them from Front-de-Boeuf's castle.

7.7.14 Chapters 38 to 40

- The kidnappers take the Saxons and Isaac's parties to Front-de-Boeuf's castle, Torquilstone.
- De Bracy says he intends to keep Rebecca as his prize.
- Lady Rowena is imprisoned in a chamber away from Cedric and Athelstane.
- Isaac is thrown into the dungeon and Front-de-Boeuf visits him and demands one thousand silver pounds.
- Isaac says he does not have the money and Front-de-Boeuf threatens to put him on an iron grate above a burning fire.

7.7.15 Chapters 41 to 42

- Isaac insists that Rebecca be sent to Kent to collect the money for Front-de-Boeuf, but he is told that Rebecca has already been given to De Bracy as a handmaid.
- Front-de-Boeuf has a moment of sympathy for Isaac as he begs for his daughter's virtue to be saved.
- Front-de-Boeuf orders Isaac be stripped and chained to the iron bars.
- De Bracy visits Lady Rowena in her chambers to attempt to convince her to marry him.

- De Bracy threatens to hold Rowena prisoner forever or kill her, but she does not yield to his wishes.
- Dr Bracy reveals that Ivanhoe is also a prisoner at the castle and he plans to kill Ivanhoe.
- De Bracy promises not to harm Ivanhoe nor Cedric if Rowena will marry him, but she begins to weep.
- A bugle sounds from outside that castle interrupting De Bracy and Front-de-Boeuf's conversations.

7.7.16 Chapters 43 to 44

- Rebecca encounters Urfried, an older woman who has been imprisoned by Front-de-Boeuf's family for many years.
- Bois-Guilbert approaches Rebecca and explains that he wants to marry her. He suggests that she convert to Christianity, which terrifies Rebecca and she threatens to jump out of the window.
- Bois-Guilbert aspires to be the Grand Master of the Templar Knights, but is more interested in power than the chivalrous and spiritual ideals of the Knighthood.
- Bois-Guilbert tells Rebecca that he will share his power with her, and that it would be beneficial for her standing in society.
- A letter arrives from Wamba and Girth for De Bracy, Bois-Guilbert, and Front-de-Boeuf, warning that if they do not surrender their prisoners within the hour, there will be dire consequences. The Black Knight and Robin of Locksley have signed the letter.
- The Norman knights decide that they will be able to defend the castle against the Saxon force and they send a letter back to the Saxons asking them to send a priest to prepare the prisoners for death.
- Wamba is sent, disguised as a priest.
- Wamba offers to trade clothes with Cedric to allow him to escape.

- While Cedric is escaping, he runs into Rebecca who has been tending to a wounded prisoner. She asks Cedric to help the man (who is Ivanhoe), but he refuses in order to hasten his escape.
- Urfried tells Cedric her history - her father was Torquil Wolfgang, a friend of Cedric's father.
- Urfried's real name is Ulrica.
- After being forced to become the lover of her father's murderer, Ulrica sets about creating a rift between the Front-de-Boeuf's father and son, eventually causing the son to murder his father.
- Ulrica tells Cedric that the invaders should attack when they see a red flag waving from the turret as the Normans will be distracted at that time.
- Front-de-Boeuf gives Cedric a scroll to deliver to the castle of Philip de Malvoisin.
- Cedric escapes and Front-de-Boeuf learns of Wamba's deception.
- Athelstane offers to ransom all of the prisoners, but Front-de-Boeuf refuses to release Isaac, Rebecca, Lady Rowena and Wamba.
- The monk Abrose arrives and announces that the Prior of Jorvaulx has been captured by outlaws in the forest.
- A flashback reveals that Ivanhoe is the injured prisoner.
- Rebecca persuades her father to help Ivanhoe, as he will be needed when Prince John launches his rebellion against King Richard.
- Rebecca realizes she is becoming attached to Ivanhoe.
- Rebecca recounts the action of the battle to Ivanhoe from the window.
- Front-de-Boeuf's men drag him back into the castle after the Black Knight defeats him.
- The invaders gain control of one of the outer buildings of the castle.
- De Bracy wants to release the prisoners, but Bois-Guilbert refuses.

- Front-de-Boeuf is dying from his wounds and Ulrica visits him to remind him of his past sins and torment him with the idea of the Saxons overrunning his castle.
- Ulrica sets Front-de-Boeuf's room on fire.
- Cedric mourns for Athelstane and frees Gurth from his slavery.
- De Bracy asks for Rowena's forgiveness.
- The Black Knight informs Cedric that he will later ask for a favor and Cedric agrees to the favor in advance.
- Robin of Locksley gives the Black Knight a bugle with which he can sound for help if ever he encounters trouble in the forest.
- The spoils of the battle are distributed to the church, the families of the dead and the outlaws.
- Friar Tuck proclaims that Isaac has converted to Christianity, causing an argument.
- Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx is given to Locksley as a prisoner.
- Locksley asks Isaac to set the amount the Prior will be ransomed for, and asks the Prior the amount he wants from Isaac to act as an intermediary with Bois-Guilbert to get Isaac's daughter back.
- At the castle in York, Prince John plots to usurp his brother's throne.
- De Bracy travels to York and informs Prince John that King Richard is back in England, but he refers to the Black Knight.
- Prince John suggests that they kidnap King Richard before he is able to gather his forces, but Fitzurse plans the event.
- Prince John names De Bracy as High Marshall, but no longer trusts him and has him followed by spies.
- Isaac travels to Templestowe Castle, where the Templar Knight's head-quarters is on the way Isaac stays with a friend, Nathan, who advises him not to go to the castle since the Grand Master of the Templars, a Jew hating man named

Lucas de Beaumanoir is there.

- Isaac arrives at Templestowe and gives a letter to the Grand Master, an allusion to Rebecca being a witch is in the letter and Beaumanoir decides to put her on trial.
- Several witnesses testify to Bois-Guilbert's attachment to Rebecca.
- A peasant testifies that Rebecca cured his palsy with a balm and two healers examine the balm and claim it is magical.
- Malvoisin convinces two soldiers to falsify evidence against Rebecca.
- Rebecca summons Bois-Guilbert to refute the charges brought against her, but she then reads the message given to her when she arrived at the trial, which instructs her to demand a champion to fight for her innocence in combat.
- De Beaumanoir selects Bois-Guilbert to be the champion of the Knights Templar in the fight to determine Rebecca's innocence.
- Rebecca is given three days to find a champion and tells her father to contact Ivanhoe as he will be likely to find someone to defend her.
- Bois-Guilbert tells Rebecca that he had planned to act as her champion in disguise, but she does not believe him.
- Bois-Guilbert offers to save Rebecca if they can run away to Palestine together.
- The Black Knight sees Ivanhoe and promises to return after attending Athelstane's funeral.
- The Black Knight and Wamba are attacked by robbers lead by Waldemar Fitzurse while traveling through the forest.
- The Black Knight sounds his bugle and Robin of Locksley and his men come to the Knight's aid.
- The Black Knight reveals himself to be King Richard; Robin of Locksley reveals himself to be Robin Hood.

- Ivanhoe and Gurth join the feast of the Black Knight and Robin Hood's men in the forest.
- King Richard is waiting for reinforcements to be ready before he reveals that he is back in England.
- Robin Hood worries that the Black Knight is lingering too long in the forest. He creates a ruse to make it seem like the Normans are approaching to break up the party.
- King Richard, Ivanhoe, Wamba and Gurth travel onward toward Athenstane's castle where everyone is in mourning.
- Richard and Ivanhoe are shown to a room at Athelstane's castle where Saxon gentlemen, including Cedric, are gathered.
- The men are shown to a room where women, including Rowena, are gathered singing a dirge for Athelstane.
- King Richard reveals his identity to Cedric and requests that Cedric forgive his son Ivanhoe.
- Athelstane suddenly appears dressed in funeral garb. He says he was stunned, not killed in the attack at Torquilstone. After the attack when he awoke in a coffin, he was drugged by two monks including Friar Tuck.
- Cedric encourages to claim his right to the English throne, but Athelstane pledges his allegiance to King Richard.
- Athelstane renounces his rights to Rowena so Ivanhoe can have her.
- A crowd gathers to watch Rebecca's trial and no champion has appeared for her, but she is granted more time by the Grand Master.
- Ivanhoe arrives to be Rebecca's champion and he challenges anyone who accuses Rebecca of witchcraft to fight. Bois-Guilbert steps forward.
- In battle, Ivanhoe and Bois-Guilbert both fall from their horses, but Ivanhoe gains the upper hand and demands Bois-Guilbert surrender, but the man is already dead.

- Rebecca is saved and released.
- King Richard shows up intending to act as Rebecca's champion.
- King Richard orders Malvoisin to be arrested for treason and replaces the castle's Templar flag with the English flag.
- Ivanhoe learns that Richard has sent Prince John to live with their mother.
- Ivanhoe and Rowena marry.
- Rebecca visits Rowena and informs her that she and her father will move to Spain.
- Ivanhoe and Rowena live happily for the rest of their lives.

7.8 Glossary

Crusades	-	This is a war fought by the Knights Templar against the Saracens in Palestine.
England	-	This is where the Normans and Saxons live.
Sherwood Forest	-	This place is where many outlaws live.
Sheffield	-	This place is a city in the north of England.
Doncaster	-	This place is a borough in the north of England.
Conquest of 1066	-	This is the time when the Normans assumed rule over England.
Saxon Language	-	This is considered barbaric by the Normans.
Norman Language	-	This is considered the epitome of chivalry and intelligence.
Anglo-Saxon Language	-	This is something which signifies a lower social status.
Brass Ring	-	This is worn by servants.
St. Botoph	-	This is the location where Ivanhoe is taken when injured.

- Templestowe** - This is the meeting place of the Templars.
- Rotherwood** - This place is Cedric's home.
- Asby-de-la-Zouche** - This place is where a tournament is held.
- Palestine** - This place is located in the Middle East.
- York** - This place is a county near the sea.
- Toquilstone** - This place is where Rebecca is held prisoner.
- Castle of York** - This is where Prince John and his minions plot Richard's demise.
- Order of the Templar** - This is a group who fights for Jerusalem.
- Crown of England** - This rightfully belongs to King Richard.
- Ivanhoe's Marriage** - This celebration takes place after Athelstane renounces his claim.

7.9 Self-Assessment Questions–I

Multiple Choice Questions

Introduction, Dedicatory Epistle and chapters 1 and 2

1. Who is the author of *Ivanhoe* ?

- a) Sir Walter Scott.
- b) Arthur Conan Doyle.
- c) D.H. Lawrence.
- d) Daniel Defoe.

2. What is King Richard known as ?

- a) The Bloodthirsty.
- b) The Ambitious.
- c) The Lion-Hearted.
- d) The Black King.

3. Which place is King Richard returning from in Chapter 1 ?

- a) Normandy
- b) The Spanish Coast.
- c) The Holy Land
- d) Scotland.

4. What language becomes the official language of England as a result of Norman royalty ?

- a) German.
- b) Gaelic.
- c) English.
- d) French.

5. What does Prince John do when King Richard is captured in Europe ?

- a) Usurps the throne.
- b) Searches for someone to take over the throne.
- c) Sends a rescue party.
- d) Declares war.

6. What type of work does Gurth do ?

- a) Swineherder
- b) Tanner.
- c) Falconer.
- d) Almoner.

7. Whose visit does Gurth worry about in Chapter 1 ?

- a) Bois-Guilbert's visit.
- b) Fitzurse's visit.
- c) Front-de-Boeuf's visit.
- d) Malvoisin's visit.

8. What location do the horsemen in Chapter 2 ask for directions to ?

- a) Doncaster.
- b) Sherwood Forest.
- c) Cedric the Saxon's house.
- d) A chapel.

9. Where do the horsemen follow Wamba's directions to ?

- a) Rotherwood.
- b) A broken bridge.
- c) Toquilstone castle.
- d) The Sunken Cross.

10. Who directs the horsemen to the location where they want to go in Chapter 2 ?

- a) A palmer.
- b) A peddler.
- c) A monk.
- d) A minstrel.

11. What is Cedric's son named ?

- a) Isaac.
- b) Ulric.
- c) Gurth.
- d) Ivanhoe.

12. What is the name of Cedric's ward ?

- a) Lady Rebecca.
- b) Lady Rose.
- c) Lady Arabella.
- d) Lady Rowena.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 3 to 6

1. What is the name of Cedric's estate ?

- a) Rotherwood.
- b) Goodramgate.
- c) Hexham.
- d) Knavesmire.

2. How does Rowena displease Cedric in Chapter 3 ?

- a) By speaking to a stranger.
- b) By not hiding her face with a veil.
- c) By wearing an old dress.
- d) By being late for dinner.

3. What activity are Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx and Brian de Bois-Guilbert traveling to ?

- a) A conference.
- b) A battle.
- c) A tournament.
- d) A trial.

4. Who is Rowena in love with ?

- a) Athelstane.
- b) Cedric.
- c) Bois-Guilbert.
- d) Ivanhoe.

5. What do Cedric's Norman guests complain about ?

- a) That Cedric does not present them with gifts.
- b) The Saxon decor.
- c) That the castle is cold and damp.
- d) That Cedric allows Isaac of York in.

6. What does Cedric insist when Isaac of York comes in ?

- a) That he pay for the privilege of staying at the castle.
- b) That he be given extra bread.
- c) That he sit at a separate table.
- d) That he not speak to the Normans.

7. Where is the Palmer invited to go ?

- a) To see the castle's healer.
- b) To the kitchen for drinks.
- c) To visit the chapel.
- d) To travel with the Normans.

8. Who does the Palmer say Bois-Guilbert has ordered to rob Isaac the Jew ?

- a) Front-de-Boeuf.
- b) His guardsmen.
- c) His Muslim slaves.
- d) De Bracy.

9. Where does the Palmer take Isaac the Jew ?

- a) Sheffield.
- b) York.
- c) Sussex.
- d) Sherwood.

10. What is the name of Isaac's cousin ?

- a) Yosef.
- b) Fendrel.
- c) Zareth.
- d) Asher.

11. Where does Isaac's cousin live ?

- a) Chester.
- b) Ipswich.
- c) Norwich.
- d) Leicester.

12. What does Isaac ask his cousin for ?

- a) To pay the palmer for his kindness.
- b) To treat the palmer for his illness.
- c) To loan the palmer a horse and armor.
- d) To take the palmer to St. Botoph.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 7 to 9

1. Who is Rebecca ?

- a) The nurse who cares for Ivanhoe.
- b) Prince John's fiancée.
- c) Athelstane's daughter.
- d) Isaac the Jew's daughter.

2. Who is trying to secure a loan from the Jews of York ?

- a) Prince John.
- b) Front-de-Boeuf.
- c) Athelstane.
- d) Cedric.

3. Who is De Bracy ?

- a) Prince John's archer.
- b) Prince John's knight.
- c) Prince John's nephew.
- d) Prince John's councillor.

4. What does Prince John take from Cedric ?

- a) His seat.
- b) His ward.
- c) His land.
- d) His hat.

- 5. Who chooses which woman will be named Sovereign of Love and Beauty ?**
- a) Prince John.
 - b) The previous tournament's Sovereign of Love and Beauty.
 - c) The champion knight.
 - d) The loser of the tournament.
- 6. What color horse does the mysterious knight ride ?**
- a) Black.
 - b) White.
 - c) Silver.
 - d) Chestnut.
- 7. What does the shield of the mysterious knight say ?**
- a) Disinherited.
 - b) Courageous.
 - c) Justice.
 - d) For God.
- 8. What language is the word on the mysterious knight's shield written in ?**
- a) Spanish.
 - b) English.
 - c) Gaelic.
 - d) French.
- 9. Who does the mysterious knight challenge to mortal combat ?**
- a) Malvoisin.
 - b) Prince John.
 - c) Front-de-Boeuf.
 - d) Brian de Bois-Guilbert.
- 10. What does the mysterious knight refuse to do until he is given his prize ?**
- a) Dismount his horse.
 - b) Battle again.
 - c) Bow to the prince.
 - d) Raise his visor.
- 11. Who does Prince John worry the mysterious knight is ?**
- a) King Richard.
 - b) Ivanhoe
 - c) Robin Hood.
 - d) Waldemar Fitzurse.

12. Which woman is chosen to preside over the next day's tournament ?

- a) Lady Rowena.
- b) Lady Ulrica.
- c) Lady Millicent.
- d) Lady Rebecca.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 10 to 12

1. What do the defeated knights NOT offer the Disinherited Knight after the tournament ?

- a) Land.
- b) Weapons.
- c) Armor.
- d) Horses.

2. What does the Disinherited Knight accept as a reward after the tournament ?

- a) Eight zecchins.
- b) Twenty zecchins.
- c) One hundred zecchins.
- d) One thousand zecchins.

3. Who does the Disinherited Knight refuse to accept a reward from ?

- a) Bois-Guilbert.
- b) De Bracy.
- c) Malvoisin.
- d) Front-de-Boeuf.

4. Who is the Disinherited Knight's messenger ?

- a) Oswald.
- b) Wamba.
- c) Gurth.
- d) Higg.

5. Who does the Disinherited Knight send money to ?

- a) Zareth.
- b) Prince John.
- c) Cedric.
- d) Isaac.

6. What does Rebecca do in secret after the tournament ?

- a) Returns the Disinherited Knight's money.
- b) Makes a deal with Bois-Guilbert.

- c) Visits a Christian church.
- d) Follows Cedric the Saxon.

7. How many men attack the Disinherited Knight's messenger ?

- a) Six.
- b) Two.
- c) Four.
- d) Five.

8. What do the robbers intend to do with the money they steal ?

- a) Buy alcohol.
- b) Give it to the poor.
- c) Use it to pay a ransom.
- d) Give it to Prince John.

9. Why do the robbers return the money to the Disinherited Knight's messenger ?

- a) Because the Disinherited Knight defeated the robbers' enemies.
- b) Because the robbers discover the Disinherited Knight is their leader.
- c) Because the messenger earnestly begs for it.
- d) Because the Disinherited Knight appears to challenge the robbers.

10. Who assists the Disinherited Knight when he is ambushed on the second day of the tournament ?

- a) The Black Knight.
- b) Lady Rowena.
- c) Bois-Guilbert.
- d) Robin Hood.

11. Who is victorious at the second day of the tournament ?

- a) The Black Knight.
- b) The Disinherited Knight.
- c) Robin Hood.
- d) Bois-Guilbert.

12. What happens after Ivanhoe reveals his identity ?

- a) Lady Rowena faints.
- b) Prince John has Ivanhoe arrested.

- c) The Black Knight attacks Ivanhoe.
- d) Ivanhoe faints.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 13 to 15

1. Who did Prince John bestow the honors owed to Ivanhoe on ?

- a) Malvoisin.
- b) De Bracy.
- c) Front-de-Boeuf.
- d) Beaumanoir.

2. Who does Prince John promise Lady Rowena to ?

- a) Bois-Guilbert.
- b) Malvoisin.
- c) Beaumanoir.
- d) De Bracy.

3. Why does Prince John cancel the third day of the tournament ?

- a) Prince John learns King Richard is free.
- b) Prince John fears a Saxon will win again.
- c) Prince John falls ill.
- d) Prince John finds the tournament boring.

4. What is held immediately after the tournament is cancelled ?

- a) A wrestling contest.
- b) A foot race.
- c) An archery contest.
- d) A sheep herding contest.

5. Who wins the archery contest ?

- a) Robin of Locksley.
- b) Front-de-Boeuf.
- c) The Black Knight.
- d) Ivanhoe.

6. What job does Prince John offer the archery contest winner ?

- a) Chamberlain.
- b) Reeve.
- c) Bodyguard.
- d) Constable.

- 7. How much money does Prince John want to collect from Isaac ?**
- a) Five thousand crowns. b) Five hundred crowns.
c) Two thousand crowns. d) One thousand crowns.
- 8. What causes tension between the Saxons and Normans at Prince John's banquet ?**
- a) Prince John's boasting about the superior Normans.
b) A language barrier.
c) Differing manner of dress.
d) Table etiquette.
- 9. Why is Cedric displeased with Ivanhoe ?**
- a) Ivanhoe renounced his Saxon heritage.
b) Ivanhoe joined King Richard's court against Cedric's wishes.
c) Ivanhoe stole some of Cedric's money.
d) Ivanhoe refused to marry Rowena.
- 10. Who does Prince John ask to toast a worthy Norman ?**
- a) Cedric. b) De Bracy.
c) Lady Rowena. d) The Palmer.
- 11. What is De Bracy dressed as when Fitzurse runs into him in Chapter 15 ?**
- a) A woman. b) A yeoman.
c) A monk. d) A minstrel.
- 12. What does Fitzurse learn that De Bracy is planning to do in Chapter 15 ?**
- a) Go looking for King Richard. b) Set the castle on fire.
c) Kidnap Lady Rowena. d) Investigate the Black Knight.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 16 to 20

- 1. Where does the Black Knight attempt to find lodging ?**
 - a) At a chapel.
 - b) At a monastery.
 - c) At the Templar Knight's headquarters.
 - d) In York.
- 2. What does Friar Tuck say about his food ?**
 - a) It is nutritious.
 - b) It is provided by the townspeople.
 - c) It is blessed by the saints.
 - d) It is tasteless.
- 3. What item left behind by the keeper of the forest does Friar Tuck offer the Black Knight ?**
 - a) A bottle of ale.
 - b) A pastry.
 - c) An apple.
 - d) A piece of venison.
- 4. What illegal activity does the Black Knight suspect the monk of participating in ?**
 - a) Deer hunting.
 - b) Gambling.
 - c) Tax evasion.
 - d) Helping outlaws.
- 5. What instrument does the Black Knight play ?**
 - a) The cornet.
 - b) The pipe.
 - c) The harp.
 - d) The lute.
- 6. What song does Friar Tuck sing ?**
 - a) I, A Wandering Scholar Lad.

- b) We In Our Wandering.
- c) Some Are Gaming.
- d) The Barefooted Friar.

7. Why is Gurth upset with Cedric ?

- a) Cedric locked Gurth up for two months.
- b) Cedric did not approve of Gurth's marriage.
- c) Cedric disinherited Ivanhoe.
- d) Cedric injured Gurth's dog.

8. Who does Cedric hope to marry Rowena to ?

- a) Lucas Beaumanoir.
- b) Waldemar Fitzurse.
- c) Robin of Locksley.
- d) Athelstane.

9. Who has Isaac been deserted by in Chapter 19 ?

- a) His bodyguards.
- b) His scullions.
- c) His business partners.
- d) His daughter.

10. Who attacks Cedric's party in the woods ?

- a) De Bracy.
- b) Malvoisin.
- c) Bois-Guilbert.
- d) Front-de-Boeuf.

11. Who manages to escape from the attack on the Saxons in the forest ?

- a) Cedric.
- b) Ivanhoe.
- c) Wamba.
- d) Rebecca.

12. Who is the keeper of the forest that Friar Tuck referred to ?

- a) Ivanhoe.
- b) Robin of Locksley.
- c) Front-de-Boeuf.
- d) Prince John.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 21 to 23

- 1. What is the name of Front-de-Boeuf's castle ?**
 - a) Rotherwood.
 - b) Lindisfarne.
 - c) Templestow.
 - d) Torquilstone.

- 2. What does Bois-Guilbert intend to keep as his prize from the attack on the Saxons ?**
 - a) Rebecca.
 - b) A money chest.
 - c) Some armor.
 - d) A carriage.

- 3. What does Athelstane worry about while being held prisoner ?**
 - a) What will become of Rowena.
 - b) Whether his property will be stolen.
 - c) What he will be fed.
 - d) Whether he will have a comfortable place to sleep.

- 4. Where is Isaac imprisoned at the castle ?**
 - a) In the chapel.
 - b) In the tower.
 - c) In the dungeon.
 - d) In an apartment.

- 5. Who accompanies Front-de-Boeuf to talk to Isaac in Chapter 22 ?**
 - a) DeBracy.
 - b) Prince John.
 - c) Front-de-Boeuf's slaves.
 - d) Rebecca.

- 6. What does Front-de-Boeuf demand from Isaac ?**
 - a) That Isaac kill Cedric.
 - b) Isaac's land.
 - c) One thousand silver pounds.
 - d) Rebecca's hand in marriage.

7. What does Isaac ask for in return for meeting Front-de-Boeuf's demands ?

- a) That the Saxons be freed.
- b) That King Richard's life is spared.
- c) That Front-de-Boeuf provide Rebecca with medicine.
- d) That he be allowed to leave England.

8. How does Front-de-Boeuf threaten to torture Isaac ?

- a) By piercing his skin with needles.
- b) By placing him on iron bars over a fire.
- c) By hanging him out the tower window.
- d) By burying him alive.

9. Who does Front-de-Boeuf claim to have believed Rebecca was ?

- a) Isaac's concubine.
- b) Isaac's sister.
- c) Isaac's niece.
- d) Isaac's servant.

10. What does Isaac beg of Front-de-Boeuf in distress ?

- a) To kill him.
- b) To marry Rebecca.
- c) Ransom.
- d) To save him.

11. What does De Bracy promise Rowena should she marry him ?

- a) That Rebecca will not die.
- b) That the Saxons will no longer face prejudice.
- c) That he will become a powerful man.
- d) That he will not harm Ivanhoe.

12. What sound interrupts De Bracy's conversation with Rowena ?

- a) A dog barking.
- b) An explosion.
- c) Yelling outside.
- d) A bugle call.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 24 to 26

1. Who does Rebecca encounter in her cell ?

- a) Rowena.
- b) Wamba.
- c) A beggar woman.
- d) Urfried.

2. How many brothers did the person Rebecca encountered in her cell have ?

- a) Seven.
- b) Three.
- c) Six.
- d) Ten.

3. What proposal does Bois-Guilbert make to Rebecca ?

- a) That she runs away to Spain.
- b) That she converts to Christianity.
- c) That she disguise herself to escape.
- d) That she marry De Bracy.

4. What does Rebecca threaten to do while speaking to Bois-Guilbert ?

- a) Slap Bois-Guilbert.
- b) Jump out of the window.
- c) Yell for help.
- d) Marry Ivanhoe.

5. What does Bois-Guilbert aspire to become ?

- a) King of England.
- b) Grand Master of the Templar Knights.
- c) Sherrif.

- d) A laird.
- 6. Who sends a letter of warning to De Bracy, Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Boeuf ?**
- a) Wamba and Gurth. b) Prince John.
c) Friar Tuck. d) Malvoisin.
- 7. How many men are said to be backing the opposition to De Bracy, Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Boeuf ?**
- a) Three hundred. b) Two hundred.
c) One hundred and fifty. d) Ninety
- 8. What time does Bois-Guilbert say the prisoners will be killed by ?**
- a) By midnight. b) By noon.
c) By dawn. d) By dusk.
- 9. What do De Bracy, Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Boeuf request in their letter to their opposition ?**
- a) A signal of surrender. b) A priest.
c) A flagon of ale. d) A quick battle.
- 10. Who goes to Torquilstone posing as a priest ?**
- a) Ivanhoe. b) Robin of Locksley.
c) Gurth. d) Wamba.
- 11. What does the priest suggest to help Cedric escape ?**
- a) That Cedric pretend to have a heart attack.
b) That Cedric and the priest trade clothing.
c) That they make a rope from bed linens.
d) That they use poison to knock out their captors.

12. Who does Cedric encounter while he is making his escape ?

- a) The palmer.
- b) Rebecca.
- c) Rowena.
- d) Malvoisin.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 27 and 28

1. Who was Urfried's father ?

- a) Steafan Wolfgang.
- b) Cuithbrig Wolfgang.
- c) Ailbeart Wolfgang.
- d) Torquil Wolfgang.

2. What is Urfried's real name ?

- a) Ulrica.
- b) Otthild.
- c) Odila.
- d) Alyth.

3. What did Urfried set about doing after being imprisoned by the Front-de-Boeufs ?

- a) Stealing from the Front-de-Boeufs.
- b) Marrying one of the Front-de-Boeufs.
- c) Making the Front-de-Boeufs each other.
- d) Poisoning the Front-de-Boeufs.

4. What disgusts Cedric about Urfried ?

- a) That she finds pleasure in misery.
- b) That she now hates the Saxons.
- c) That she is insane.
- d) That she did not commit suicide.

5. Why is Urfried content to be alive ?

- a) She can still watch the sunrise.

- b) She can pursue revenge.
 - c) She can aid the people in her household.
 - d) She can hope for freedom.
- 6. What sign does Urfried say the invaders should look for before attacking ?**
- a) A white flag.
 - b) A black flag.
 - c) A red flag.
 - d) A gold flag.
- 7. What does Front-de-Boeuf give to Cedric before he leaves ?**
- a) A scroll.
 - b) An envelope.
 - c) A brooch.
 - d) A sword.
- 8. Who does Front-de-Boeuf tell Cedric to deliver something to ?**
- a) De Bracy.
 - b) Beaumanoir.
 - c) Malvoisin.
 - d) Prince John.
- 9. What does Athelstane offer to do in Chapter 27 ?**
- a) Tell the Normans of King Richard's whereabouts.
 - b) Trade his life for Cedric's.
 - c) Ransom the prisoners.
 - d) Marry Rowena.
- 10. Who is Ambrose ?**
- a) A knight.
 - b) A yeoman.
 - c) A forest outlaw.
 - d) A monk.
- 11. Who is said to be captured by the forest outlaws in Chapter 27 ?**
- a) The Prior of Jorvaulx.
 - b) Prince John.
 - c) Beaumanoir.
 - d) The Black Knight.

12. What is the money Isaac has provided to Prince John to be used for ?

- a) To bribe the King of Spain.
- b) To build a new fortress.
- c) A rebellion against King Richard.
- d) To ransom one of Prince John's knights.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 29 to 31

1. What does Rebecca realize as she is nursing Ivanhoe ?

- a) That she dislikes him.
- b) That she is becoming attached to him.
- c) That he is dying.
- d) That he is the heroic knight she has heard stories about.

2. How does the battle between the Normans and Saxons commence ?

- a) With arrows being shot.
- b) With fires being set.
- c) With the cavalry advancing.
- d) With boulders being catapulted.

3. Who does the Black Knight first defeat ?

- a) De Bracy.
- b) Malvoisin.
- c) Front-de-Boeuf.
- d) Prince John.

4. As expressed in Chapter 29, what does Rebecca see no value in ?

- a) Chivalry.
- b) Romance.
- c) Revenge.
- d) Pride.

5. In what way does Rebecca realize she is being insensible in Chapter 29 ?

- a) She is putting her life at risk to help a dying man.
- b) She is worrying more over Ivanhoe than her own father.
- c) She is refusing to accept a wealthy man as her husband.
- d) She is risking her health to save material possessions.

6. In Chapter 30, who wants to release the prisoners ?

- a) De Bracy.
- b) Front-de-Boeuf.
- c) Bois-Guilbert.
- d) Prince John.

7. What does Ulrica do after visiting Front-de-Boeuf ?

- a) Ulrica kisses Front-de-Boeuf good-bye.
- b) Ulrica stabs Front-de-Boeuf.
- c) Ulrica prepares a balm.
- d) Ulrica sets Front-de-Boeuf's room on fire.

8. What do the invaders build during the battle ?

- a) A battering ram.
- b) A raft.
- c) A catapult.
- d) A ladder.

9. Who kidnaps Rebecca in the middle of the battle ?

- a) De Bracy.
- b) Fitzurse.
- c) Malvoisin.
- d) Bois-Guilbert.

10. Who saves Ivanhoe from the castle ?

- a) The Black Knight.
- b) Robin Hood.
- c) Athelstane.
- d) Rowena.

11. Who is knocked unconscious in the castle in Chapter 31 ?

- a) Athelstane.
- b) Ivanhoe.

d) That he has converted to Christianity.

6. Who is given Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx as a prisoner ?

- a) Robin of Locksley. b) Cedric.
c) Ivanhoe. d) The Black Knight.

7. How much does Isaac set the Prior's ransom for ?

- a) Eighty crowns. b) One thousand crowns.
c) Five hundred crowns. d) Six hundred crowns.

8. Where does Prince John plot to usurp his brothers throne in Chapter 34 ?

- a) Torquillstone Castle. b) The Castle at York.
c) Templestowe Castle. d) Arundal Castle.

9. Who does De Bracy think is the Black Knight ?

- a) Ivanhoe. b) King Richard.
c) Beaumanoir. d) Prince John.

10. Where does De Bracy decide to relocate to in Chapter 34 ?

- a) Flanders. b) Aquitaine.
c) Normandy. d) Gaul.

11. Realizing that his men are deserting him, what does Prince John suggest ?

- a) Kidnapping Robin Hood.
b) Kidnapping Bois-Guilbert.
c) Kidnapping Ivanhoe.
d) Kidnapping King Richard.

12. What title does Prince John give De Bracy in Chapter 34 ?

- a) High Marshall. b) Champlain.

7. Who Is Conrad Mont-Fitchet ?

- a) The castle's marshall.
- b) A chaplain.
- c) The Grand Master's assistant.
- d) A powerful lord.

8. Who is Higg ?

- a) A healer.
- b) A knight.
- c) A peasant.
- d) A clergyman.

9. What does Higg claim in Chapter 37 ?

- a) That Rebecca had been seen fraternizing with men.
- b) That Rebecca cured him of palsy.
- c) That Rebecca had murdered Athelstane.
- d) That Rebecca taught him to make poison.

10. What do two Christian healers examine in Chapter 37 ?

- a) Rebecca's tonsils.
- b) A birthmark on Rebecca's arm.
- c) A balm.
- d) The food that Prince John is about to eat.

11. Who falsifies evidence against Rebecca in Chapter 37 ?

- a) Malvoisin.
- b) Two soldiers.
- c) A monk.
- d) Bois-Guilbert.

12. What does the message Rebecca was given in Chapter 37 instruct her to do ?

- a) Demand a champion.

- b) Pretend to be crazy.
- c) Claim to know King Richard.
- d) Accuse Malvoisin of treason.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 38 to 40

- 1. Who is assigned to be champion of the Templars in Chapter 38 ?**
 - a) Bois-Guilbert.
 - b) Mont-Fitchet.
 - c) Malvoisin.
 - d) De Bracy.
- 2. How many days is Rebecca given to find a champion ?**
 - a) Seven days.
 - b) Eight days.
 - c) Three days.
 - d) One day.
- 3. Who delivers a message to Isaac in Chapter 38 ?**
 - a) Higg.
 - b) Wamba.
 - c) Ivanhoe.
 - d) Gurth.
- 4. How far away is Isaac from Templestowe Castle in Chapter 38 ?**
 - a) Five miles.
 - b) Three miles.
 - c) Two miles.
 - d) Less than a mile.
- 5. Who reads Rebecca's letter to Isaac ?**
 - a) Wamba.
 - b) Samuel.
 - c) The Black Knight.
 - d) Nathan.
- 6. What does Bois-Guilbert claim he planned to do to save Rebecca ?**
 - a) Kidnap her and run away together.
 - b) Have King Richard intervene on her behalf.
 - c) Fight as her champion in disguise.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 41 and 42

1. What does Ivanhoe tell King Richard is threatening his kingdom in Chapter 41 ?

- a) Plague.
- b) The Spanish.
- c) Civil war.
- d) Poverty.

2. What do the men eat in the forest in Chapter 41 ?

- a) Berries.
- b) Venison.
- c) Bread.
- d) Rabbit.

3. What does Robin of Locksley fake in Chapter 41 ?

- a) A kidnapping.
- b) An illness.
- c) Poisoning.
- d) A Norman attack.

4. Who is Robin Hood's lieutenant ?

- a) Will Scarlet.
- b) Friar Tuck.
- c) Little John.
- d) Scathlock.

5. Where do King Richard and his men depart for in Chapter 41 ?

- a) York.
- b) Nottingham.
- c) Doncaster.
- d) Coningsburgh.

6. What symbol appears on a banner above the gate at Athelstane's castle ?

- a) A lion.
- b) A horse.
- c) A serpent.
- d) A crown.

7. What is the name of Athelstane's mother ?

- a) Edith.
- b) Ailith.
- c) Elfreda.
- d) Alma.

Multiple Choice Questions - Chapters 43 and 44

1. Who is included in the large crowd which gathers for Rebecca's trial?

- a) The Black Knight.
- b) Robin Hood's outlaws.
- c) Rowena.
- d) Templar Knights.

2. Who stands as Rebecca's champion in Chapter 43 ?

- a) Robin of Locksley.
- b) Ivanhoe.
- c) Wamba.
- d) The Black Knight.

3. What happens during the battle in Chapter 43 ?

- a) The fighters fall from their horses.
- b) Rebecca's champion is thrown from his horse.
- c) Bois-Guilbert pierces Rebecca's champion with his sword.
- d) Rebecca's champion pierces Bois-Guilbert with his sword.

4. Who dies in Chapter 43 ?

- a) Robin of Locksley.
- b) Ivanhoe.
- c) The Black Knight.
- d) Bois-Guilbert.

5. Who does King Richard order arrested ?

- a) Robin Hood.
- b) Mont-Fitchet.
- c) Malvoisin.
- d) Beaumanoir.

6. On what grounds does King Richard order a man to be arrested in Chapter 44 ?

- a) For murder.
- b) For treason.
- c) For conspiracy.
- d) For theft.

7. What flag does King Richard have flown above Templestowe ?

- a) The Saxon flag.
- b) The English flag.

- c) The flag of the Templar Knights. d) The French flag.

8. Who does De Beaumanoir threatened to appeal to ?

- a) Prince John. b) The King of France.
c) The High Marshall. d) The Pope.

9. Who informs Ivanhoe of where Prince John is ?

- a) The Earl of Devon. b) The Earl of Essex.
c) The Earl of Cornwall. d) The Earl of Pembroke.

10. Where has King Richard sent Prince John ?

- a) To Scotland. b) To Normandy.
c) Back to London. d) To live with their mother.

11. What does Rebecca give to Rowena after her wedding ?

- a) A necklace. b) A ring.
c) A brooch. d) A bracelet.

12. Where do Rebecca and Isaac move to ?

- a) Germany. b) Flanders.
c) Spain. d) Wales.

7.10 Self-Assessment Questions–II

1. Who is the author of *Ivanhoe* ?
2. What is King Richard known as ?
3. What happens to King Richard as he is traveling through Europe? How does this affect the leadership of England?
4. What language becomes the official language of England as a result of Norman royalty ?
5. What does Prince John do when King Richard is captured in Europe ?

6. Who are Gurth and Wamba, and what do they discuss when introduced to the story ?
7. Why do the people of England prefer King Richard over Prince John ?
8. Why do the robbers return the money to the Disinherited Knight's messenger ?
9. What symbol appears on a banner above the gate at Athelstane's castle ?
10. Who do the horsemen encounter at the Sunken Cross ?
11. What do the defeated knights not offer the Disinherited Knight after the tournament ?
12. What does Ulrica do after visiting Front-de-Boeuf ?
13. Whom does Prince John ask to toast a worthy Norman ?
14. Where does Bois-Guilbert want to flee with Rebecca in Chapter 39 ?
15. What does Robin of Locksley give the Black Knight in Chapter 32 ?

7.11 Examination Oriented Questions

1. Compare and contrast the characters Prince John and King Richard.
2. Discuss the character Locksley. What is his role in the novel ?
3. Analyze and interpret the protagonist of the novel, Ivanhoe. What are his defining character traits? What are his motives and how does he go about achieving his goals? Why is he fighting with his father? Why might Scott have chosen to have the protagonist of the novel be injured throughout much of the novel ?

7.12 Suggested Reading

Barker, Juliet R.V. *The Tournament in England 1100-1400*. Boydell, 1986

Cohen, Mark. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton University Press, 1994.

Coss, P.R. *The Knight in Medieval England, 1100-1400*. Sutton, 1993.

Key to Multiple Choice Questions

Introduction, Dedicatory Epistle and chapters 1 and 2

1. a. 2. c. 3. c. 4. d. 5. a. 6. a. 7. c. 8. c. 9. d. 10. a. 11. d. 12. d.

Chapters 3 to 6

1. a. 2. d. 3. c. 4. d. 5. d. 6. c. 7. b. 8. c. 9. a. 10. c. 11. d. 12. c.

Chapters 7 to 9

1. d. 2. a. 3. b. 4. a. 5. c. 6. a. 7. a. 8. a. 9. d. 10. d. 11. a. 12. a.

Chapters 10 to 12

1. a. 2. c. 3. a. 4. c. 5. d. 6. a. 7. c. 8. b. 9. a. 10. a. 11. b. 12. d.

Chapters 13 to 15

1. c. 2. d. 3. a. 4. c. 5. a. 6. c. 7. c. 8. d. 9. b. 10. a. 11. b. 12. c.

Chapters 16 to 20

1. a. 2. c. 3. b. 4. a. 5. c. 6. d. 7. d. 8. d. 9. a. 10. c. 11. c. 12. b.

Chapters 21 to 23

1. d. 2. a. 3. c. 4. c. 5. c. 6. c. 7. a. 8. b. 9. a. 10. a. 11. d. 12. d.

Chapters 24 to 26

1. d. 2. a. 3. b. 4. b. 5. b. 6. a. 7. b. 8. b. 9. b. 10. d. 11. b. 12. b.

Chapters 27 to 28

1. d. 2. a. 3. c. 4. d. 5. b. 6. c. 7. a. 8. c. 9. c. 10. d. 11. a. 12. c.

Chapters 29 to 31

1. b. 2. a. 3. c. 4. a. 5. b. 6. a. 7. d. 8. b. 9. d. 10. a. 11. a. 12. a.

Chapters 32 to 34

1. c. 2. a. 3. c. 4. b. 5. d. 6. a. 7. d. 8. b. 9. b. 10. a. 11. d. 12. a.

Chapters 35 to 37

1. d. 2. d. 3. a. 4. c. 5. b. 6. a. 7. c. 8. c. 9. b. 10. c. 11. b. 12. a.

Chapters 38 to 40

1. a. 2. c. 3. a. 4. d. 5. b. 6. c. 7. c. 8. d. 9. a. 10. b. 11. c. 12. a.

Chapters 41 to 42

1. c. 2. b. 3. d. 4. c. 5. d. 6. b. 7. a. 8. b. 9. d. 10. c. 11. c. 12. a.

Chapters 43 to 44

1. b. 2. b. 3. a. 4. d. 5. c. 6. b. 7. b. 8. d. 9. b. 10. d. 11. a. 12. c.

**DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR AND MINOR
CHARACTERS IN *IVANHOE***

STRUCTURE

- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Introduction
- 8.3 Major Characters
- 8.4 Minor Characters
- 8.5 Self-Assessment Questions-I
- 8.6 Self-Assessment Questions-II
- 8.7 Examination Oriented Questions
- 8.8 Suggested Reading

8.1 Objectives

- That the learner should be able to identify the major characters.
- That the learner should be able to identify the minor characters.
- That the learner should be able to identify the role of the major and minor characters in the development of the story.
- That the learner should identify how the various characters contribute to the theme of the novel.

8.2 Introduction

A major theme of *Ivanhoe* is the conflict between the Normans and the Saxons. Most of the characters of the novel are either Norman or Saxon, and

the conflicts amongst these characters propel the plot significantly. This lesson discusses the Saxons and the Normans.

8.3 Major Characters

8.3.1 Wilfred of Ivanhoe

Wilfred of Ivanhoe, although named Wilfred, is called Ivanhoe because he has been given a great manor called Ivanhoe. He is the son of Cedric, the Saxon. Ivanhoe is a Crusader and a loyal follower of the Norman King Richard I. Cedric disinherits his son for his loyalty to the Norman King Richard and his love for Lady Rowena, Cedric's ward who he intends to marry to Athelstane. Ivanhoe first appears at his father's home, dressed as a Palmer, in order to reassure his love that Ivanhoe is still alive. There he befriends Isaac, the Jew which later proves useful. Appearing as the Disinherited Knight, Ivanhoe battles at the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche where he wins the first day and crowns Lady Rowena as the Queen of Beauty and Love. The second day, he is attacked by Front-de-Boeuf, De Bois-Guilbert, and Athelstane simultaneously; however, with the help of the mysterious Black Knight, Ivanhoe manages to emerge victorious once again. Ivanhoe reveals his identity to Lady Rowena and Cedric before fainting from his wounds.

Ivanhoe receives care from Rebecca Isaac the Jew's daughter. When Isaac's party joins with Cedric's party in the forest, they are all attacked and imprisoned by the Norman knights. In the castle at Torquilstone, Rebecca continues to nurse Ivanhoe. When the Black Knight, Robin of Locksley and his men arrive to battle the dishonorable Norman knights, Ivanhoe wishes that he could join the fray as he debates the concept of chivalry with Rebecca. After being rescued, Ivanhoe is reunited with his father and married to Lady Rowena. Ivanhoe embodies the idea of the perfect knight.

(The Palmer - A religious pilgrim who wears a palm emblem to indicate that he has made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In reality, the Palmer is Ivanhoe in his first disguise.

The Disinherited Knight - The name under which Ivanhoe fights in the

great tournament at Ashby, using a disguise because he still has not revealed his presence in England).

8.3.2 King Richard Plantagenet

The rightful King of England called the Lion-Hearted is a brave and honest Norman who rules over England. He fights in the Crusades in the Holy Land and is kidnapped and imprisoned in Europe when he tries to return home to England on his way back from the Crusades. In his absence, his brother, Prince John, has usurped his power and throne. Although King Richard is a Norman, even the Saxons tend to respect and like him. King Richard appears at the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche, disguised as the Black Knight who assists Ivanhoe when the dishonourable knights gang up against the hero of the story.

King Richard befriends Friar Tuck and joins Robin of Locksley's men in their rescue of the Saxons who are imprisoned by the dishonourable Norman knights. After the victory at Torquilstone, King Richard releases De Bracy from his imprisonment and wins Isaac as a prisoner from Friar Tuck in order to release him as well. When King Richard is attacked by Fitzurse, he banishes the traitor rather than have him executed, demonstrating his mercy. King Richard facilitates a reconciliation between Ivanhoe and Cedric. King Richard goes to Templestowe to act as Rebecca's champion, though Ivanhoe has already freed the Jewess. King Richard proves himself to be a just and caring monarch, eventually earning the respect even of Cedric.

(The Black Knight - The disguise King Richard uses during most of the novel, when he is still hiding his presence in England. As the mysterious Black Knight, Richard is involved in a spate of adventures: He fights with Ivanhoe (also in disguise) at the tournament, rescues the Saxon prisoners from Torquilstone, and meets Robin Hood and his merry men.)

8.3.3 Brian De Bois-Guilbert

Brian De Bois-Guilbert is a knight of the Order of the Knights Templar and one of Prince John's followers. Like Ivanhoe, he is recently returned from

the Crusades in Jerusalem. He is arrogant and demanding despite his vows to chastity and poverty. De Bois-Guilbert is defeated by Ivanhoe at the tournament. He later assists in De Bracy's scheme to kidnap Lady Rowena and her family, claiming the Jewess, Rebecca, as his own prize. Despite his threats, De Bois-Guilbert is unable to persuade Rebecca to accept him. After being defeated at Torquilstone, he again kidnaps Rebecca, carrying her to Templestowe. At Templestowe, Rebecca is accused of witchcraft and De Bois-Guilbert is chosen to defend the Knights Templar in their accusation. He is killed by Ivanhoe in this battle.

8.3.4 Lady Rowena

Lady Rowena is Cedric's ward and is of noble birth. Her descent can be traced to Alfred, the Great. She is beautiful and well bred, and Ivanhoe is in love with her and although she is in love with Ivanhoe, Cedric intends to marry her to Athelstane, even disinheriting his son because of Rowena and Ivanhoe's love. Rowena is chaste, brave, and honourable. At the tournament of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, Ivanhoe as the Disinherited Knight bestows the title of Queen of Beauty and Love upon Rowena. After Rowena is kidnapped by De Bracy, she refuses his advances, later forgiving him after regaining her freedom. Eventually, Rowena is happily married to Ivanhoe.

8.3.5 Cedric

Cedric, the Saxon nobleman, is Ivanhoe's father who disinherits him for loving Rowena and following King Richard. Cedric is Rowena's ward and intends to marry her to Athelstane. The Saxon hates Normans and wishes to restore the Saxon monarchy. Cedric is kidnapped by the Norman knights and held prisoner in Torquilstone Castle until his servant, Wamba, bravely saves him. Eventually, Cedric is persuaded to reconcile with his son, allow Ivanhoe's marriage to Rowena, and acknowledge King Richard as the rightful king.

8.3.6 Prince John Plantagenet

Prince John is King Richard's brother who usurps power while the king is fighting the Crusades. He is dishonourable and plots to rule England

permanently. Prince John treats the Saxons poorly and Isaac, the Jew even worse. He greatly fears King Richard's return, but luckily, his brother acts mercifully, only sending him to live with at home with their mother after learning of his betrayal.

8.3.7 Isaac of York

Isaac of York is a Jewish moneylender with a beautiful daughter, Rebecca. He is rich but miserly and much disliked by both Saxons and Normans. Everyone acts disrespectfully toward Isaac because of his religion, with the exception of Ivanhoe. Isaac is kidnapped by the Norman knights, then captured by Friar Tuck whom King Richard defeats in order to release Isaac. Isaac works hard to free Rebecca from her continued imprisonment at the hands of De Bois-Guilbert.

8.3.8 Athelstane

Athelstane, Lord of Coningsburgh, is a weak and inert character, descended from Saxon nobility and the next Saxon descendant to the throne. He is Cedric's last great hope for Saxon restoration to the throne. However, he is lazy and does not wish to rule. Cedric tries in vain to press the issue, even offering Lady Rowena as Athelstane's bride. Eventually, Athelstane renounces his claim to Rowena so that Ivanhoe can marry her. He also pledges allegiance to King Richard.

8.3.9 Maurice De Bracy

Maurice De Bracy is a knight attached to Prince John's dubious court. Although he is brave and does not violate Lady Rowena, he kidnaps her in order to try to force her to marry him, threatening her when she refuses. De Bracy is defeated by the Saxons at Torquilstone but released by King Richard. He then reports to Prince John that King Richard has returned, causing Prince John to name De Bracy High Marshall. De Bracy refuses to act dishonourably by King Richard and flees to France.

8.3.10 Rebecca

Rebecca is a beautiful young Jewess, daughter of Isaac of York. Unlike her father, she is generous and kind-hearted. She is also a healer. She nurses Ivanhoe after he is wounded in the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche. Brian De Bois-Guilbert yearns for Rebecca and claims her as his prize when he joins De Bracy's scheme to kidnap Lady Rowena. Rebecca refuses to yield to De Bois-Guilbert's advances at Torquilstone because of her high morality. De Bois-Guilbert flees from Torquilstone after the Saxons emerge victorious in their battle, taking Rebecca with him to Templestowe where she is accused of witchcraft. Ivanhoe acts as Rebecca's champion, clearing her name. Rebecca returns to Ivanhoe's home the day after his marriage to Lady Rowena in order to express her gratitude.

8.3.11 Reginald Front-de-Boeuf

Reginald Front-de-Boeuf is the Norman owner of Torquilstone Castle, a companion of de Bois-Guilbert and one of Prince John's knights. His father imprisoned Ulrica after killing her father and brothers; later Front-de-Boeuf kills his father. Prince John bestows the castle at Torquilstone upon Front-de-Boeuf though it rightfully belongs to Ivanhoe as ordained by King Richard. Front-de-Boeuf is mortally wounded by King Richard but dies when Ulrica sets fire to his room.

8.3.12 Waldemar Fitzurse

Waldemar Fitzurse, John's advisor, is a wily man who thinks of nothing but his own rise to power if John succeeds in supplanting Richard. He attacks King Richard in the forest. Demonstrating his immense mercy, King Richard banishes Fitzurse rather than execute the traitor.

8.4 Minor Characters

8.4.1 Robin of Locksley

Robin of Locksley is an outlaw who lives in the forest after losing his lands and earldom to the Normans. In reality, he is Robin Hood of famous

legend. He is honorable and leads the attack against Torquilstone to free the Saxons. Robin of Locksley admits to being the famous Robin Hood.

8.4.2 Friar Tuck

A merry monk who befriends King Richard in Robin Hood's forest. He is soon revealed to be none other than the legendary Friar Tuck, a skilled fighter and a member of Robin Hood's band of merry men.

8.4.3 Gurth

Gurth is a Saxon slave and swineherd belonging to Cedric. He assists Ivanhoe at the tournament and later serves as Ivanhoe's squire.

8.4.4 Wamba

Wamba is one of Cedric's jester and servant. He rescues Cedric from Torquilstone castle, earning his freedom.

8.4.5 Urfried or Ulrica

Urfried is a hag that lives in Front-de-Boeuf's castle in Torquilstone. She is the daughter of Cedric's father's friend but witnessed her father and brothers' murders at the hands of the elder Front-de-Boeuf. She was then imprisoned by the monster. Urfried's real name is Ulrica, and she spends her life wreaking havoc on her captors, causing the younger Front-de-Boeuf to kill his father and eventually setting fire to the castle, killing Front-de-Boeuf.

8.4.6 Richard de Malvoisin, Ralph de Vipont and Hugh de Grantmesnil

Noble Norman Knights who take part in the Ashby tournament.

8.4.7 Lucas Beaumanoir

The stern, moralistic The Grand Master of the Knights Templar.

8.4.8 Edith

The mother of Athelstane.

8.4.9 Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx Abbey

A rich, lazy, and worldly Cisterian monk.

8.5 Self-Assessment Questions–I

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is King Richard known as ?

- a) The Bloodthirsty. b) The Ambitious.
- c) The Lion-Hearted. d) The Black King.

2. What type of work does Gurth do ?

- a) Swineherder b) Tanner.
- c) Falconer. d) Almoner.

3. What is Cedric's son named ?

- a) Isaac. b) Ulric.
- c) Gurth. d) Ivanhoe.

4. What is the name of Cedric's ward ?

- a) Lady Rebecca. b) Lady Rose.
- c) Lady Arabella. d) Lady Rowena.

5. What activity are Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx and Brian de Bois-Guilbert traveling to ?

- a) A conference. b) A battle.
- c) A tournament. d) A trial.

6. Who is Rowena in love with ?

- a) Athelstane. b) Cedric.
- c) Bois-Guilbert. d) Ivanhoe.

7. Who is Rebecca ?

- a) The nurse who cares for Ivanhoe.
- b) Prince John's fiancée.

- c) Athelstane's daughter.
- d) Isaac, the Jew's daughter.

8. Who is De Bracy ?

- a) Prince John's archer. b) Prince John's knight.
- c) Prince John's nephew. d) Prince John's councillor.

9. What color horse does the mysterious knight ride ?

- a) Black. b) White.
- c) Silver. d) Chestnut.

10. What does the shield of the mysterious knight say ?

- a) Disinherited. b) Courageous.
- c) Justice. d) For God.

11. What language is the word on the mysterious knight's shield written in ?

- a) Spanish. b) English.
- c) Gaelic. d) French.

12. Who does the mysterious knight challenge to mortal combat ?

- a) Malvoisin. b) Prince John.
- c) Front-de-Boeuf. d) Brian de Bois-Guilbert.

13. Who is the Disinherited Knight's messenger ?

- a) Oswald. b) Wamba.
- c) Gurth. d) Higg.

14. What happens after Ivanhoe reveals his identity ?

- a) Lady Rowena faints.
- b) Prince John has Ivanhoe arrested.

- c) The Black Knight attacks Ivanhoe.
- d) Ivanhoe faints.

Section 5

15. Who did Prince John bestow the honors owed to Ivanhoe on ?

- a) Malvoisin.
- b) De Bracy.
- c) Front-de-Boeuf.
- d) Beaumanoir.

16. Who does Prince John promise Lady Rowena to ?

- a) Bois-Guilbert.
- b) Malvoisin.
- c) Beaumanoir.
- d) De Bracy.

17. What is De Bracy dressed as when Fitzurse runs into him in Chapter 15?

- a) A woman.
- b) A yeoman.
- c) A monk.
- d) A minstrel.

18. Who attacks Cedric's party in the woods ?

- a) De Bracy.
- b) Malvoisin.
- c) Bois-Guilbert.
- d) Front-de-Boeuf.

19. Who manages to escape from the attack on the Saxons in the forest ?

- a) Cedric.
- b) Ivanhoe.
- c) Wamba.
- d) Rebecca.

20. Who is the keeper of the forest that Friar Tuck referred to ?

- a) Ivanhoe.
- b) Robin of Locksley.
- c) Front-de-Boeuf.
- d) Prince John.

21. What is the name of Front-de-Boeuf's castle ?

- a) Rotherwood.
- b) Lindisfarne.

- 35. Who is given Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx as a prisoner ?**
- a) Robin of Locksley. b) Cedric.
c) Ivanhoe. d) The Black Knight.
- 36. Where does Prince John plot to usurp his brothers' throne in Chapter 34 ?**
- a) Torquilstone Castle. b) The Castle at York.
c) Templestowe Castle. d) Arundal Castle.
- 37. Where is the headquarters of the Templar Knights ?**
- a) Raglan Castle. b) Bamburgh Castle.
c) Arundal Castle. d) Templestowe Castle.
- 38. Who is the Grand Master of the Templar Knights ?**
- a) Beaumanoir. b) Front-de-Boeuf.
c) Malvoisin. d) Fitzurse.
- 39. Who is Higg ?**
- a) A healer. b) A knight.
c) A peasant. d) A clergyman.
- 40. Who is assigned to be champion of the Templars in Chapter 38 ?**
- a) Bois-Guilbert. b) Mont-Fitchet.
c) Malvoisin. d) De Bracy.
- 41. How many days is Rebecca given to find a champion ?**
- a) Seven days. b) Eight days.
c) Three days. d) One day.
- 42. Who reads Rebecca's letter to Isaac ?**
- a) Wamba. b) Samuel.
c) The Black Knight. d) Nathan.

Section 14

43. Who is Robin Hood's lieutenant ?

- a) Will Scarlet.
- b) Friar Tuck.
- c) Little John.
- d) Scathlock.

44 What is the name of Athelstane's mother ?

- a) Edith.
- b) Ailith.
- c) Elfreda.
- d) Alma.

45. Who is included in the large crowd which gathers for Rebecca's trial ?

- a) The Black Knight.
- b) Robin Hood's outlaws.
- c) Rowena.
- d) Templar Knights.

46. Who stands as Rebecca's champion in Chapter 43 ?

- a) Robin of Locksley.
- b) Ivanhoe.
- c) Wamba.
- d) The Black Knight.

47. Who dies in Chapter 43 ?

- a) Robin of Locksley.
- b) Ivanhoe.
- c) The Black Knight.
- d) Bois-Guilbert.

48. Who does King Richard order arrested ?

- a) Robin Hood.
- b) Mont-Fitchet.
- c) Malvoisin.
- d) Beaumanoir.

8.6 Self-Assessment Questions–II

- a. Who are Gurth and Wamba, and what do they discuss when introduced to the story ?
- b. Why do the people of England prefer King Richard over Prince John?
- c. Why does Rebecca return money to Gurth in Chapter 10?

- d. Who does Cedric want to marry Rowena and why?
- e. Who is sent to Torquilstone posing as a priest, and what does he do to help Cedric escape?
- f. What role does the Black Knight play in the Battle at Torquilstone?
- g. What happens to Rebecca towards the end of the battle? Who tries to save Rebecca?
- h. What evidence is brought against Rebecca in her witchcraft trial?
- i. In her trial, what does Rebecca do when she is given time to argue her defense?
- j. What does Rebecca give to Rowena after her wedding?
- k. Where do Rebecca and her father go at the end of the story?

8.7 Examination Oriented Questions

- a. Write a short paragraph for each of the following characters describing how Scott concluded their stories:
 - i. King Richard and Prince John.
 - ii. Rebecca and her father, Isaac.
 - iii. Cedric and Ivanhoe.
 - iv. Ivanhoe and Lady Rowena.
 - v. Brian de Bois-Guilbert.
- b. Who is your favorite character in *Ivanhoe* and why? Give reasons for your answer.
- c. Write a character sketch of the protagonist Ivanhoe.

8.8 Suggested Reading

The Waverley Novels by J.T. Hillhouse (1968);

Walter Scott: Modern Judgements, ed. by D.D. Devlin (1968);

Critical Heritage, ed. by J.O. Hayden (1970);

Sir Walter Scott: the Great Unknown by Edgar Johnson (1970, 2 vols.);

The Author of Waverley by D.D. Devlin (1971);

Walter Scott by T. Crawford (1982); *Scott and His Influence* by J.H. Alexander and D. Hewitt (1983);

Walter Scott: The Making of the Novelist by Jane Millgate (1984);

Secret Leaves: The Novels of Walter Scott by Judith Wilt (1985);

Critical Essays on Sir Walter Scott, ed. by Harry E. Shaw (1996)

Key to Multiple Choice Questions

1. c. 2. a. 3. d. 4. d. 5. c. 6. d. 7. d. 8. b. 9. a. 10. a. 11. a. 12. d. 13. c.
14. d. 15. c. 16. d. 17. b. 18. c. 19. c. 20. b. 21. d. 22. c. 23. d. 24. d. 25.
b. 26. a. 27. d. 28. b. 29. d. 30. a. 31. c. 32. d. 33. d. 34. a. 35. a. 36. b.
37. d. 38. a. 39. c. 40. a. 41. c. 42. b. 43. c. 44. a. 45. b. 46. b. 47. d. 48.
c.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL *IVANHOE*

STRUCTURE

- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Introduction
- 9.3 Themes
 - 9.3.1 Conquest and Displacement
 - 9.3.2 Civil Unrest and Politics
 - 9.3.3 Bravery and Chivalry
- 9.4 Techniques
 - 9.4.1 Characterization
- 9.5 Style
 - 9.5.1 Point of View
- 9.6 Language and Meaning
- 9.7 Structure
- 9.8 Glossary
- 9.9 Self-Assessment Questions-I
- 9.10 Self-Assessment Questions-II
- 9.11 Examination Oriented Questions
- 9.12 Suggested Reading

9.1 Objectives

- That the learner should be able to analyze a novel from the point of view of the plot .
- That the learner should be able to analyze a novel from the point of view of the theme.
- That the learner should be able to analyze a novel from the point of view of the structure.
- That the learner should be able to analyze a novel from the point of view of the characterization.
- That the learner should be able to analyze a novel from the point of view of style.
- That the learner should be able to critically analyze all the aspects of the novel.

9.2 Introduction

The writing style of *Ivanhoe* can be described as old-fashioned, entertaining, and with particular emphasis on the excitement-level of the plot rather than historical accuracies. This lesson discusses the writing style of *Ivanhoe*.

The novel *Ivanhoe* is set in later 12th century England following the Third Crusade. The action is set primarily in South Yorkshire and North Nottinghamshire. This lesson discusses the characterization and setting of the novel, *Ivanhoe*.

A recurring motif of *Ivanhoe* is anti-semitism. The character Isaac is depicted with stereotypical Jewish traits, such as his love of money. Both the Normans and the Saxons often show their disdain for the Jewish people. This lesson discusses the motif of anti-semitism in the novel *Ivanhoe*.

The point of view is the perspective from which a story, or narrative, is told. The point of view of the novel *Ivanhoe* is third person omniscient. The

story is not told from any one character's perspective, but rather the narrator (and the reader) is privy to the actions of all of the characters of the novel. This lesson discusses point of view in *Ivanhoe*.

9.3 Themes

9.3.1 Conquest and Displacement

All characters in this novel are affected by the themes of conquest and displacement. The Normans conquer the Saxons and steal Saxon lands. The Saxons are subjected to oppression at the hands of their Norman rulers. The Saxons' language is even displaced by the Normans' language. With King Richard fighting the Crusades in the Holy Land, Prince John usurps the throne and rules cruelly, stealing money, land and power from the English subjects. Prince John even allows his knights to break their vows of chastity and poverty by living licentious and luxurious lives. Prince John displaces his brother by stealing his crown. King Richard is displaced because he is imprisoned in Europe after the Crusades.

Ivanhoe is displaced by his disinheritance due to his love for Lady Rowena and loyalty to King Richard. Robin of Locksley loses his earldom and lands as a result of the Norman oppression. As a Jew, Isaac is perpetually displaced and persecuted. De Bracy attempts to conquer Lady Rowena in vain due to the fact that she conquers his heart, making him a better man than he truly is. Simultaneously, Brian De Bois-Guilbert's attempts to conquer Rebecca prove ineffective due to the Jewess' high morality. Ulrica's life is a prime example of conquest and displacement as her father's murderer imprisoned her for her entire life; however, she gains revenge by contributing greatly to the death of Front-de-Boeuf, her captor's son. When Rebecca is accused of witchcraft, Ivanhoe conquers De Bois-Guilbert to save Rebecca's life. The dishonorable, Norman knights imprison the Saxons, conquering and displacing them. Ultimately, the Black Knight, Robin of Locksley and his men conquer the dishonorable knights.

9.3.2 Civil Unrest and Politics

The background upon which this narrative is placed is one of civil unrest. The politics of the region is in a great upheaval. *Ivanhoe* occurs barely

one hundred years after the Normans obtain rule of previously Saxon England during the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The Saxons disapprove of their Norman king, wanting to see a Saxon on the throne of England. This is primarily due to the oppression to which the Normans subject the Saxons, stealing their land and mocking them mercilessly. The Normans act cruelly and unjustly toward the Saxons, creating political chaos and enmity between the two races. Even their languages create a chasm of discord. King Richard's imprisonment further creates chaos.

The forests are filled with Saxons who are now considered outlaws because the Normans have stolen their affluence through their oppression of commoners. Throughout the novel, the Saxons represent decency and morality, yet the Norman King Richard symbolizes leadership which none of the Saxons appear capable of performing. At the end of the novel, Scott makes it clear that national unity must result from harmony between the Saxons and the Normans, rather than the re-establishment of Saxon rule. Unfortunately, there is no hope offered to the Jews, Isaac and Rebecca, who must flee to Moslem Spain in order to gain greater tolerance of their religious beliefs.

9.3.3 Bravery and Chivalry

The concepts of bravery and chivalry arise continually throughout *Ivanhoe*. Scott speaks disdainfully of the concept of chivalry in several places in the book. Chivalry is presented as a principle of knighthood, yet many of the Norman knights exhibit themselves as extremely dishonorable. As knights, Front-de-Boeuf, De Bracy and De Bois-Guilbert should present the emolument of chivalry, yet prove themselves corrupt time and time again. These knights steal the Saxons' lands. Ironically, the Saxon men that are considered outlaws prove themselves to be more honorable, becoming heroes throughout the novel. While the knights steal from the less fortunate, the outlaws steal from the rich and give to the poor. The outlaws are led by Robin of Locksley, who late in the story identifies himself as the legendary Robin Hood.

Ivanhoe and King Richard emerge as the only chivalrous characters in the novel. Ivanhoe debates with Rebecca about the importance of chivalry,

since Rebecca only sees the false examples of the Norman knights. As the Disinherited Knight, Ivanhoe chivalrously refuses to accept the spoils of his victory. When De Bois-Guilbert, Front-de-Boeuf, and Athelstane team up against the Disinherited Knight, the Black Knight assists Ivanhoe in defeating the dishonorable knights. Ivanhoe further shows bravery through his desire to join the battle at Torquilstone despite his injuries. He later acts as Rebecca's champion when she is accused of witchcraft.

Cedric is disappointed by Athelstane's refusal to fight against the Normans in the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche. Later, Athelstane shows courage in attacking De Bois-Guilbert who tries to escape with Rebecca, though Athelstane believes the damsel to be Lady Rowena. Finally, Athelstane yields the throne of England to King Richard and Lady Rowena to Ivanhoe. Wamba shows bravery in escaping from De Bracy as well as by rescuing Cedric. De Bracy acts as a coward by kidnapping Lady Rowena and her family rather than trying to court her in a more traditional manner; however, he slightly redeems himself by his refusal to participate in Prince John's plan to capture King Richard by surprise. Prince John continually acts in opposition with the concepts of bravery and chivalry in his underhanded methods of procuring power and wealth. Possibly two of the bravest characters in the novel are Lady Rowena and Rebecca who, though imprisoned and threatened, refuse to yield their honor to De Bracy and De Bois-Guilbert, respectively.

9.4 Techniques

9.4.1 Characterization

Since characterization holds such an important place in this book, it might be well to note the three standard methods of characterization as they apply to *Ivanhoe*: what the author says about the person, what others say about him or her (and other modes of reaction), and what the person says and does. The first of the modes of bringing a character to life is the one upon which Scott is criticized most often and most severely—he is accused of not getting into the "heart" of the character, not analyzing the inner workings of the person's mind and emotions. While *Ivanhoe* does not possess the psychological

depth of some of his other works (including *The Heart of Midlothian* and *The Bride of Lammermoor*), Sir Walter does offer characters whose natures are represented clearly (it should be noted that people in that time and place and historical situation had little time or inclination for introspection or philosophical and psychological concentration). For example, early in the plot, the reasons for Isaac's fears and suspicions of Christians are mentioned briefly but directly: "His doubts [of the honesty of his guide through the forest in Chapter VII] might have been indeed pardoned; for except, perhaps the flying-fish, there was no race existing on the earth, in the air, or the waters, who were the object of such an unremitting, general and relentless persecution as the Jews of this period." The passage, which also demonstrates Scott's occasional stylistic fancies, explains the depredations and humiliations that the Jews suffered in England in feudal times. The explanation goes on for a full page and closes with Scott's summation: "On these terms they lived; and their character, influenced accordingly, was watchful, suspicious and timid—yet obstinate, noncompliant, and skilful in evading the danger to which they were exposed." It would be difficult to find a more insightful and helpful summary of the bases for Isaac's (and, to some degree, Rebecca's) behaviour throughout the story. Thus, it may be seen that Scott was aware of the need for at least some detailed commentary on the personalities and reasons for actions of his characters. As to the reactions of other characters to a given person, the foregoing speech by Ivanhoe to King Richard, combining as it does respect and complaint, may serve as a good example of Scott's attention to the usefulness of this method of rounding a character (and one needs very much to perceive both the positive and the negative sides of Richard's nature and activity), as well as revealing aspects of the speaker's personality.

Again, Isaac emerges as a fine example of characterization, and his speech to his captors, in which he pleads for the freedom of his fellow captives (Cedric and his company), indicates sharply the more benevolent aspects of the Jew's personality: "Grant me, at least with my own liberty, that of the companions with whom I travel. They scorned me as a Jew, yet they pitied my desolation, and because they tarried to aid me by the way, a share of my evil

hath come upon them...." Here, one sees Isaac's sense of justice and responsibility, as well as his courage in making such an earnest request of Front-de-Boeuf. This speech is soon followed by a violent expression of Isaac's outrage that his daughter has been taken by De Bois-Guilbert: "Robber and villain! I will pay thee nothing...." The furious old man goes on for some time berating his captor in this brave fashion. Thus, Scott advances the plot of the story and also exposes the nature of a pivotal character. The mode of Isaac's language indicates another point of Scott's technique: style. Of course, in this novel, he had to abandon the Scottish dialect for which he had become so famous. The challenge was to create dialogue that rang true to the historical setting of the plot. Although some readers find the language (especially the speeches) a bit stilted—so many "thees" and "haths," for instance—one must realize that Scott was forced to suggest what the almost ancient tongues of the real people of that early day would sound like in "modern" translation.

For example, French, the basic tongue of the Normans, has a form of the "familiar" pronouns, used for close friends, menials, and children, which is represented by the English equivalents "thee" or "thou." So Sir Walter was simply attempting to suggest the speech of the characters, and the rest of the text, in his own words, is couched in an expressive standard English, the literary language of Scott's day.

9.5 Style

9.5.1 Point of View

The point of view of *Ivanhoe* is told through a third person perspective. The novel is written as a summarized narrative and is highly dramatic. There is a fairly equal distribution of exposition and dialogue throughout the novel. A lot of background information is provided concerning the social atmosphere which the action of the novel takes place in. The point of view is very important to the novel because it allows the narrator to shift between scenes that occur in different places with different people. This gives the reader chances to see all of the characters as well as the environment in which they are participating.

Large portions of the novel are expository and followed by large portions of action and dialogue. The tournaments and battles that occur throughout the novel display the exciting and dangerous mood of the Middle Ages, the time at which this story is happening. The author manages to create believable tension between the Normans and the Saxons by diverging into the lives of each group individually as well as during their interactions with one another. The novel is very unpredictable and enjoyable.

9.6 Language and Meaning

The narrator uses nineteenth century English in the novel though the story is placed in twelfth century England. In order to convince his readers of the authenticity of his work, he uses many Middle Age colloquialisms as well as provides many details about the customs of the Middle Ages that he describes throughout the novel, such as the tournament, armor, and codes of honor. The language of the novel is very vivid, imaginative and strong, creating an atmosphere that the reader can visualize quite easily. Comprehension can be hindered by abnormally lengthy sentences as well as the use of archaic terms. At times, the language can be somewhat old-fashioned but is overall easy to understand as soon as the reader adjusts to the style of writing which remains clear despite the use of unfamiliar terms and ideas.

9.7 Structure

Ivanhoe is separated into forty-four, untitled chapters which range from five to seventeen pages each. Most of the chapters are fairly concise but are very descriptive and eventful. The pace of the novel is fairly quick paced due to the tournaments and battles; however, some sections of dialogue tend to drag slowly, especially in places where the narrator intervenes into the story with opinions about concepts of politics and chivalry. The story is much easier to understand than anticipated, due to Scott providing extensive background information that enables the reader to place themselves in the characters' environment more accurately.

Ivanhoe utilizes a classical plot structure which consists of an

introduction, rising action, climax, falling action and denouement. In the introduction of *Ivanhoe*, Wamba and Gurth discuss the characters and the political events that are occurring in England at the time which provides the reader with background information that enables him to understand what is going on more clearly. The rising action is presented by the confrontation between the Normans and the Saxons, and it is furthered by the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche. The climax occurs in the form of the imprisonment and subsequent victory of Cedric's party at Torquilstone Castle. The falling action consists of King Richard revealing his identity and being restored to his throne, as well as Cedric's reconciliation with his son. In the conclusion, the traitors are punished justly, Ivanhoe marries Rowena, and Rebecca and Isaac move to Spain.

The plot of the story is very engrossing and the story line moves forward fairly directly. Scott creates his novel by combining a historical figure with fictional characters of his own creation. He sets the plots up so that the historical facts and the fictional plots align perfectly, coinciding so as to appear perfectly believable. Scott also has a tendency of following the path of certain characters to a specific stopping point before diverting his story to another group whose actions are also described to that certain point. At this point, Scott will resume his story from a more general perspective, enabling the reader to focus on the individual characters' plights as well as the overall action that is occurring. This method makes for very interesting story-telling. It also makes it easy for the reader to follow Scott's plot. For example, in a forthright way, Scott opens Chapter 28 by saying, "Our history must needs retrograde for the span of a few pages, to inform the reader of certain passages material to his understanding the rest of this important narrative [of events in the castle of Torquilstone]." Sir Walter then goes back in time to explain what happened to Ivanhoe after the journey at Ashby. Also, the author employs the now popular device of having two sets of events proceeding at the same time (what today is often termed the "meanwhile back at the ranch" phenomenon), as when Chapter 24 opens with this sentence: "While the scenes we have described were passing in other parts of the castle, the Jewess Rebecca awaited her fate in a distant and sequestered

turret." The rest of the chapter deals with Rebecca's travails while Cedric, Rowena, and, especially, De Bracy are arguing in the preceding chapter. This strategy on Scott's part helps to speed up the movement of the story, and to reveal the contemporaneous nature of incidents in different places.

The novel ends as a typical romance or comedy with everyone happy. The protagonists achieve their desires and the antagonists are punished fairly instead of being dealt harshly with. Scott employs the use of flashbacks periodically to show what different characters are doing at the same time before bringing everyone back to the same time to resume the story. Although this may appear disjointing in theory, in actuality, Scott maintains a unified and cohesive plot which is highly entertaining.

9.8 Glossary

Semitic	Jewish
Anti-Semitism	hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group
Protagonist	the principal character in a literary work
Conquest	something conquered; especially : territory appropriated in war
Displacement	the act of displacing i.e to move or shift from the usual place or position, especially to force to leave a homeland
Chastity	purity in conduct and intention
Chivalry	a. the system, spirit, or customs of medieval knighthood b. the qualities of the ideal knight : chivalrous conduct
Witchcraft	Magic; sorcery

9.9 Self-Assessment Questions-I

Write True or False

- a. The Saxons are subjected to oppression at the hands of their Norman rulers.

- b. The background upon which this narrative is placed is one of civil unrest.
- c. Scott is accused of not getting into the "heart" of the character.
- d. The point of view of *Ivanhoe* is told through a third person perspective.
- e. The narrator uses nineteenth century English in the novel though the story is placed in twelfth century England.
- f. The novel ends as a typical romance or comedy with everyone happy.
- g. *Ivanhoe* is not a historical novel.

Answers to True and False Questions

- a. true b. true c. true d. false e. true f. true g. false

9.10 Self-Assessment Questions-II

- a. What is Ivanhoe's opinion of chivalry?
- b. What are other characters' opinions of chivalry?
- c. What are the ideals of chivalry?
- d. Give some examples of anti-Semitism in the novel?
- e. Who wears a disguise in the novel and why?
- f. Who chooses not to disguise himself and how does it affect his life?
- g. How does Scott depict the revealing of these characters?
- h. What genre is this novel?
- i. What are the elements of this genre?
- j. Why is *Ivanhoe* an example of this genre?
- k. What happens at the end of the novel?
- l. Is it a happy ending? Why or why not?

9.11 Examination Oriented Questions

- a. It is said of *Ivanhoe* that its style is "both romantic and contemporary." Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

- b. Compare and contrast *Ivanhoe* with Bois-Guilbert.
- c. Many of the important characters in *Ivanhoe* spend time in various disguises, including Ivanhoe, Richard, Wamba, and Cedric. What role does the motif of disguise play in the novel as a whole? Why do characters take such pains to hide their identities?
- d. How does Cedric change during the course of the novel?
- e. Comment on the plot of *Ivanhoe* and show how Scott ties up all the loose ends of the conflicts.
- f. Compare and contrast Rowena and Rebecca. Which of these two characters do you prefer, and why?
- g. Choosing two scenes from the novel, analyze them to show the dramatic progress of the novel.
- h. Analyze and interpret the protagonist of the novel, *Ivanhoe*.
- i. Discuss the theme of chivalry in the novel *Ivanhoe*.
- j. What is an "Historical Novel"? Analyze and interpret the historical inaccuracies in the novel *Ivanhoe*. Were these inaccuracies deliberate? If so, why might Scott have chosen to depict the story in a way that is not historically accurate?
- k. Discuss the motif of anti-semitism in *Ivanhoe*.
- l. Describe the love triangles in the story.
- m. Discuss the tone of *Ivanhoe*.
- n. Discuss the narrative style and structure of *Ivanhoe*.

9.12 Suggested Reading

Atkinson, W. A. "The Scenes of *Ivanhoe*." *The National Review* 79, No. 470 (April 1922): 278-89.

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CHARLES DICKENS-*HARD TIMES*

STRUCTURE

- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Introduction
- 10.3 Dickens' Early Life
- 10.4 Social Background of Victorian Society
- 10.5 Reaction against Victorian Materialism
- 10.6 Suggested Reading

10.1 Objectives

- to acquaint the learners with the social background of the society in which Dickens wrote his novels.
- to introduce the learners to the life and works of Charles Dickens.

10.2 Introduction

This lesson has been written with an aim to provide learners the knowledge of certain aspects of the age in which the novelist, Charles Dickens lived and worked.

Charles Dickens was an English writer and social critic. He created some of the world's best-known fictional characters and is regarded by many as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. Works enjoyed unprecedented popularity during his lifetime, and by the 20th century critics and scholars had recognised him as a literary genius. His novels and short stories are still widely read today.

10.3 Dickens' Early Life

Charles Dickens was born at Landport, in Portsea, on February 7, 1812. His father was a clerk in the Navy Pay-Office, and was temporarily on duty in the neighbourhood. Very soon after the birth of Charles Dickens, the family moved for a short period to Norfolk street, Bloomsbury, and then for a long period to Chatham, which became the real home, and for all serious purposes, the native place of Dickens. Dickens family had two servants, one of whom, named Mary Weller used to tell Dickens' terror tales that gave him nightmares. Charles Dickens' father, John Dickens' seemed, most probably, a hearty and kind character who was an irresponsible father and a selfish man.

Charles Dickens was ambitious as a child. He longed to go to school and college to be a thorough gentleman and share the tradition of great English men of letters. Charles thought his home and family a very good platform to work for the fulfilment of his dreams. And almost as he was about to start himself, the whole structure broke under him and all his dreams were shattered with a sudden blow of circumstances. His father became bankrupt and was imprisoned in Marshalsea prison. He was forced to pawn the household goods including his books as a means of sustenance. As a result, Charles Dickens, at the age of twelve, found himself in the Warren's Blacking Factory, pasting labels on the bottles from morning till night. The experience of working in the Blacking Factory for six months left an indelibly humiliating impression on the sensitive and dreaming mind of Dickens that it haunted him for rest of his life. To a sensitive child, the whole affair in the factory— the work, the rooms, the boys, the language— was a terrible nightmare. He left school at the age of fifteen and worked as an assistant in a solicitor's office. Meanwhile he learnt short-hand and became an accomplished short-hand writer at a court of law, and became acquainted with intricate legal system. After leaving the court of law he took up the job of a reporter of the proceedings of the Parliament and formed a very low opinion of it. In 1836, he published his first book, *Sketches by Boz* which is a collection of character sketches, humorously drawn of the people that Dickens knew personally. Dickens another work, *Pickwick Papers*, appeared in monthly instalments. In 1836, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth

and his marriage proved a failure. In the year 1839, he published *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. *David Copperfield*, an autobiographical novel appeared in 1850 and *Hard Times* in 1853. He died on 9th June 1870, leaving *Edwin Drood* incomplete. Charles Dickens was buried in Westminster Abbey.

10.4 Social Background of Victorian Society

The few colonial wars that broke out during the Victorian epoch did not seriously disturb the national life in Britain. There was one Continental War that directly affected Britain—Crimean War - and one that affected her indirectly though strongly—the French-German struggle; yet neither of these caused any profound changes. In the early 19th century, the after effects of French Revolution were still felt, but by the middle of century they had almost completely died down. It was an age alive with new activities. There was a revolution in commercial enterprise due to the great increase of available markets, and as a result an immense advance in the use of mechanical devices. The new commercial energy was reflected in the Great Exhibition of 1851, which was greeted as the inauguration of a new era of prosperity. On the other side of this picture of commercial expansion, one could see the appalling social conditions of the new industrial cities, the congested slums, and the exploitation of the cheap labour (often of children), the painful fight by the enlightened few to introduce social legislation and the slow extension of the franchise. The evils of the Industrial Revolution were vividly painted by such writers as Charles Dickens and Mrs. Gaskell, and they called forth the missionary efforts of men like Kingsley.

In the middle of 19th century, there was a revolution in scientific thought following upon the works of Darwin and an immense outburst of social and political theorising which was represented by the writings of men like Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill. In addition, popular education became a practical thing. This in its turn produced a new hunger for intellectual food and resulted in a great increase in the productions of the press and of other more durable species of literature. Amid the multitude of social and political forces of this great age four things stand out clearly. First, the

long struggle of the Anglo-Saxons for personal liberty was settled and democracy became the established order of the day. The king, who appeared in an age of popular weakness and ignorance, and the peers, who came with the Normans in triumph both settled of their power and left as figureheads of a past civilization. The last vestige of personal government and of the divine right of rulers disappeared; the House of Commons became the ruling power in England.

Next, because it was an age of democracy, it was also an age of popular education of religious tolerance, of growing brotherhood, and of profound social unrest. The slaves had been liberated in 1833, but in the middle of the century, England awoke to the fact that slaves were not necessarily negroes, stolen in Africa to be sold like cattle in the market place, but that multitude of men, women and little children in the mines and factories were victims of more terrible industrial and social slavery. To free these slaves, the unwilling victims of our unnatural competitive methods, had been the growing purpose of the Victorian Age.

The concern with specific social problems is the most noticeable feature of Victorian Literature. The First Reform Bill (1832) of Parliament recognised the economic dominance of the middle class by placing direct political power in its hands. The vote was thus extended to all the members of middle class. At this time the old concepts of “Whig” and “Tory” made way for “Liberal” and “Conservative”. In 1829, the Catholic Emancipation Act was passed and in 1833 slavery was abolished, and thereafter free trade became a national policy with the repeal of Corn Laws in 1845, Jews were made eligible for public office; and in 1872, the institution of voting by ballot was inaugurated. The Conservatives were as responsible as the Liberals for the passage of these Acts. For a long time, there was little difference between the two parties. Both were committed to the teaching of Utilitarianism, as promulgated by Jeremy Bentham, that it was necessary to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number.

This philosophy of unrestricted individualism in economics vastly

increased the holdings of the middle class as well as its material comforts. The British Colonial Empire expanded in Asia and Africa by conquest and colonisation. But there was a less attractive side to the picture which industrialists chose to overlook. The philosophy of non-interference by the government meant unrestricted hardship to the legions of workers who were dependent for their very existence on their employers. Labour was cheap, the birth-rate high, and slum conditions became increasingly worse. The earliest attempts by working men to combine for better living conditions met with ferocious opposition in parliament. A law of 1825, fixed punishment at hard labour as the penalty for attempting any act inconsistent with the freedom of employers to make contracts. The Victorian age, from a working class point of view, is the record of long struggle of wage-earners to win recognition from the government. A Peoples's Charter was drawn up in 1838, and began the so-called Chartist Movement which demanded universal manhood suffrage, the secret ballot and abolition of property qualifications for the members of the Parliament. Universal manhood suffrage was perhaps inevitably the foundation of any further progress. Actually, it was not until 1917 that the point was won in the Manhood Suffrage Bill. Before that Act was passed, the decades were punctured by a series of strikes and riots in urban centres. Though the Chartist Movement was for a long time unsuccessful, it served the function of making the general public aware of the problems involved. By unceasing protest, small gains were realised. In 1847, a ten-hour working day was established. In 1842 women and children were forbidden employment in the mines. In 1867 and 1873, women and children were excluded from heavier agricultural work. By 1875, a series of public health Acts had become law.

Meanwhile, Liberals and Conservatives alike had no intention of impeding the solid profits of British Industry. As long ago as 1798, Matthus (in his answer to Godwin) had given them the theory which justified governmental indifference. Malthus' *Essay on Population* had

insisted that poverty, disease and war are necessary to prevent the greater catastrophe of over-population. One of the few authors, who looked to the future instead of the past was Robert Owen (1771-1858), who originated the idea of co-operative. He was convinced that machine must be controlled for the benefit of the people who run it. His socialistic self-supporting communities made their experiments in Ireland, Scotland and in New World. Some succeeded at first; all eventually failed. But Owen's teachings have had important bearing on the history of trade unions, and various species of socialistic theory.

Science took on undreamt importance in the Victorian Age. The whole world was brought together, first by building of railroads, then by the telegraph, the telephone, the auto-mobile, and the beginnings of travel by air. Everywhere machinery was revolutionised by the use of steam and electricity.

10.5 Reaction Against Victorian Materialism

The growth of the material well-being of the middle class and the development of scientific invention provoked violent reactions on the part of some writers. There were men who felt that all this progress was suicidal to the soul. Carlyle was sick at the sight of the sordid lives led by men and women in the factories and he sought refuge from the tenacles of the machine by preaching the doctrine that human labour alone was sacred. An enemy of industrialisation, he looked back to the Middle Ages to prove that consecration to humble labour had made great souls. John Ruskin was to a certain degree his disciple. He denounced utilitarianism as an apology for the evils of industrial society. He, too, found in the Middle Ages a noble spiritual ideal which the modern world had lost.

In the Victorian Age, this escape to the Middle Ages became a favourite resource for many who could not bear the ugliness of contemporary life. The Pre-Raphaelites Brotherhood, (Rossetti and Morris) frankly imitated medieval painters and poets in their own work. In the field of religion, John Henry Newman, Leader of the Oxford Movement, found in the ritual

of the medieval Church a beauty nourishing to the soul. He sought to annihilate the traditions of Puritanism which he felt had impoverished the English Church. His own spiritual struggles mark the beginnings of re-birth of Roman Catholicism and the conversion to that faith of thousands in England.

Perhaps the most cataclysmic of all new ideas were in the field of natural science. The Theory of Evolution propounded by Darwin questioned the authority of the Bible. Many felt that the whole groundwork of ethics and morals was crumbling. The doubts and despair occasioned by the Darwinian theories can be read in a number of Victorian writers, notably in the poetry of Matthew Arnold.

10.6 Suggested Reading

1. Dickens, Charles (1854). *Hard Times*. Wordsworth. Printing Press ISBN 1-85326-232-3
2. Ackroyd, Peter (1991), *Dickens : A Biography*. Harpercollins. ISBN 0-06-06602-9.
3. Thorold, Dinny (1995). *Introduction to Hard Times*. Wordsworth : Printing Press.

CHARLES DICKENS-*HARD TIMES*

STRUCTURE

- 11.1 Objective
- 11.2 Introduction
- 11.3 Dickens as a Novelist
 - 11.3.1 Dickens' Early Novels
 - 11.3.2 Dickens' Later Novels
- 11.4 Suggested Reading

11.1 Objective

- To introduce the learners to early and later novels of Dickens.

11.2 Introduction

Charles Dickens was English novelist generally considered the greatest of the victorian era : Dickens enjoyed a wider popularity during his life time.

11.3 Dickens as a Novelist

11.3.1 Dickens' Early Novels

An interesting picture emerges from the study of the conditions which led to Dickens' first three novels. *Pickwick Papers* was written, at the suggestion of an editor, for serial publication. Each chapter was to be accompanied by a cartoon by Seymour (a comic artist of the day), and the object was to amuse the public and to sell the papers. The result was a series of characters, scenes and incidents which for vigour and boundless

fun have never been equalled in English language. *Pickwick Papers*, containing some sixty distinct situations and more than three hundred and fifty characters has a large canvas. Though these characters are mostly the humours of comedy, they are not merely such. Sam Weller is the embodiment of all that is delightful in London cockney. Dickens wrote about the customs and manners of the men and women of his time, which his imagination, seizing hold of, lifted into the world of the grotesque.

While *Pickwick Papers* was still running, Dickens became editor of *Bentley's Miscellany* for which he began *Oliver Twist* in a serial form. In this novel, he added to the humour of *Pickwick*, two other features which became characteristics of his work : the pathos of innocent childhood, and protest against the abuses of power, especially on the part of governmental institutions. Moreover, in *Oliver Twist*, Dickens used more powerfully than Scott, the power of the mob. His object was to tell the truth in this novel; to show how crime is bred, and that vice systematically pushed does not yield the delights gaily asserted by the romances.

His next novel *Barnaby Rudge* is a comparative failure. It fails as a historical novel. It also shows that Dickens is never clever at painting the gentleman but Martin Chuzzleunit is a glorious example of a masterpiece made out of the thinnest plots. Here, again the minor characters add real zest to the tone of the book : "This novel is a huge medley of all his own brands of comedy, from farce to purest humour, interspersed with melodrama that reaches the level of tragedy; a melody in which the American chapters form such a contrast to those dealing Martin's life in England that there is no comparing them, in the lack of common standards of measurement. Some of Dickens' most daring creations appear in the English chapters, and some that are astonishing though not of the same order in the American scenes; but Mark Tapley is the only one of note who plays part in both countries for that the hero is of minor interest as a character goes without saying in a novel by Dickens." This novel has clumsy construction. It is a monument of haphazard composition to the flight of Mr. Moddle at the end.

Dombey and Sons is the last of the early novels of Dickens. In this novel selfishness is replaced by pride which is incarnated in Mr. Dombey. The benevolent humour is furnished by Susan Nipper and Captain Cuttle, and pathos by Florence and Paul Dombey. In his other novels, there is clumsiness and carelessness in weaving his plots. But he exerted himself to give shape and coherence to this novel. He took pains to give his leading characters the manners and bearing of superior class. Mr. Dombey, the wealthy London merchant, is of the same high standing as the elder Osborne, in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*.

11.3.2 Dickens' Later Novels

Dickens' later series begins with *David Copperfield* which was published in 1849-50. "Of all my books", wrote Dickens, "I like this the best." It is Dickens's veiled autobiography. "It reproduces the battle against poverty and misery which Dickens himself had worn. Cruelty is represented by Mr. Murdstone, benevolence by Betsey Trotwood, and sneaking humility by Uriah Heep.

There is a plot in *David Copperfield*, and some of the largest episodes are as theatrical as any he ever devised... It is a tale of ups and downs, joys and sorrows; but the prevailing tone is one of cheerfulness and confidence in the essential goodness of life Dickens had some inkling of the great truth that virtue is its own reward and ought to be a sufficient reward, else he would not have been so simple and yet so moving in the speech of Betsey Trotwood: 'Never', said my aunt, 'be mean in anything; never be false, never be cruel. Avoid those three vices, Trot, and I can always be hopeful of you'.

Dickens' next novel, *Bleak House*, was published in 1853. It depicts social abuses. It is Dickens' most elaborate and telling attack upon one of his chief detestations, the delays and iniquities of the law. Having worked as a young boy in a lawyer's office, he knew his brief from the inside as well as from the point of view of the unfortunate public. He attacked bitterly, the court of Chancery. This novel is a masterpiece by itself. It is

so full and so varied that Galsworthy said it was “utterly readable”.

His novel, *Hard Times* was published in 1854. It gives the picture of the industrial system in Coketown. Dickens champions the unfortunate people bleeding under the wheels of modern industrialism. In fact, novel presents the squalor and misery of a textile town. It is necessary to understand the story of this novel in order to appreciate it critically. Thomas Gradgrind, a citizen of Coketown, an industrial centre, is an ‘eminently practical man’, who believes in facts and statistics, and nothing else, and brings up his children Louisa and Young Tom, accordingly, ruthlessly repressing the imaginative and spiritual sides of their nature. He marries Louisa to Josiah Bounderby, a manufacturer, and a humbug, thirty years older than herself. Louisa consents partly from the indifference and cynicism engendered by her father’s treatment, partly from a desire to help her brother, who is employed by Bounderby and who is the only person she loves. James Harthouse, a young politician, without heart or principles comes to Coketown, in close contact with her, and taking advantage of her unhappy life with Bounderby, attempts to seduce her. The better side of her nature is awakened by this experience, and at the moment of crisis, she flees for protection to her father, who in turn is awakened to the folly of the system. He shelters her from Bounderby and the couple is permanently separated. But further trouble is in store for Gradgrind. His son, young Tom, has robbed the bank of his employer, and contrives for a time to throw the suspicion on a blameless artisan. Stephen Blackpool, is finally detected and hustled out of the country. Among the notable minor characters are Sleary, the proprietor of a circus; Jupe, a performer in his troupe; and Classy the latter’s daughter.

Little Dorrit, published in 1857, portrays the picture of two governmental institutions, the Circumlocution office and the Malshalsea Prison. Dickens had a public object when there was loud outcry at the delays and the inefficiencies of the great Government offices and the sheltered affluence of the drones who lurked there. His next novel, *A Tale of Two Cities* was published in 1859. It is set against the background of French

Revolution. “It is the only one of his novels that he called a tale. Dickens had read Carlyle’s French Revolution and been carried away by it; his ambition was to tell such a story as would convey the effect that tremendous book had upon himself. It is a powerful story and the culminating scene, when Sydney Carton atones for a mis-spent life by his act of self-immolation, is nobly conceived and has made many a heart beat. The subordinate figures, the young aristocrat who owes his life to Carton’s devotion, the heroine, the bloodthirsty revolutionaries, Madame Defarge and the rest of the women of the terror, are creatures of the melodrama which he did his best to authenticate from such books as he had time to read and from other sources.

After *A Tale of Two Cities*, Dickens wrote another great novel *Great Expectations*. It is a novel of adventure, the sort of adventure, that might well happen to a person who got himself mixed up with questionable characters, in such a spot as this, close to the convict-ships or in what really were in those days, the wilds of London. Pip has a narrow escape, and goes through many raking experiences. It is a masterpiece of art, whether in narrative and description or in the dialogue.

11.4 Suggested Reading

1. *A Simon Callow, Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World, P1.*
2. *Dickens Charles (1854). Hard Times. Wordsworth : Printing Press ISBN-1-8532L232-3.*

CHARLES DICKENS-*HARD TIMES*

STRUCTURE

- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Introduction
- 12.3 Salient Features of Novels of Charles Dickens
 - 12.3.1 Dickens' interest in social reforms
 - 12.3.2 Children in his novels
 - 12.3.3 Dickens' Humour
 - 12.3.4 Dickens' Pathos
 - 12.3.5 Dickens' Imagination
- 12.4 Dicken's Art of Characterisation
- 12.5 Limitations of Dicken's Characterisation
- 12.6 Plots of Dickens' Novels
- 12.7 Autobiographical Elements in his novels
- 12.8 Dickens' as a Humanitarian Novelist
- 12.9 Suggested Reading

12.1 Objectives

- To acquaint the learners with the salient features of Dickens' novels.
- To make the learners aware of Dickens' art of characterization.

12.2 Introduction

Hard Times, by Charles Dickens, was first published in serial form in the weekly magazine *Household words*, from April to August of 1854.

The *Hard Times* surveys English society and satirises the social and economic conditions of the era.

12.3 Salient Features of the Novels of Charles Dickens

12.3.1 Dickens' Interest in Social Reforms

If Dickens was not insular, he was essentially English and Victorian. His age was an age of transition - the industrial revolution was rapidly gaining momentum and England was changing from a country that was mainly agricultural to a country that was mainly industrial. But Dickens knew only imperfectly the industrial classes of the Midland and the North. Machinery was coming into all the mills, life was getting harder and more dreary for working people. Vast wealth went side by side with grinding poverty, wretchedness, and misery. But this is not England that Dickens depicts. Though the steam engine appeared in 1830 (when Dickens was 18), his England was mainly an England of the stage-coach. This was England that he loved— the plain, homely, old-fashioned England of country inns, of queer old shops and little houses in the vastness of the city.

He could portray the poor of England to the wealthy because he had known the hardships of poverty; he could make the wealthy and the powerful listen to his championing of the poor because (though he became a wealthy land-owner himself) he could never forget — or ever desired to forget — an unhappy childhood in London. In the words of Wyatt and Clay: “We find Dickens taking himself more and more seriously as social reformer. It was not sufficient for him to show to his contemporaries the humour and pathos of the life around them; he felt he must also instruct them. Hence, we get such things as the attack on the administration of the Poor Law in *Oliver Twist*, the satire on the chancery procedure in *Bleak House*. He had himself experienced the evils of imprisonment for debt in

his childhood and gave the world the benefit of that experience in *Pickwick Papers* and *David Copperfield*, most of all in *Little Dorrit*”

12.3.2 Children in his Novels

In the crowd of human beings that throng these books there are many boys and girls. Indeed, a novel is the story of a boy or a girl growing into manhood or womanhood; and no other novelist had written so much in depth about the experiences of childhood. We follow the adventures of David Copperfield or of Pip, who meets the escaped convict on the marshes and later form those *Great Expectations* which give the title to his story, or, we wander with little Nell about the English countryside and meet many odd travellers along the country roads. *Oliver Twist* and *Paul Dombey* and *Tiny Tim* are children whom you will never forget when once you have made their acquaintance. The children reveal the same qualities of genius in their creator as do his adults, wonderful invention, an overflowing humour and a human sympathy that has quickened the hearts of millions of readers. *Hard Times* is also a novel mainly concerned with the effect of a particular system of education adopted by Mr. Gradgrind and Josiah Bounderby on children like Louisa, Tom, Bitzer and Sissy.

12.3.3 Dickens' Humour

Humour was the supreme quality of Dickens' genius. It was as a humorist that Dickens made his name. Humour is the soul of his work. Even as a writer of true farce, Dickens has never been surpassed. In his fight to rouse sympathy on behalf of sufferers of all classes, Dickens possessed the weapon of humour. He could make the people laugh; and “if once the crowd has laughed with you, it will not object to cry a little, nay, it will make good resolves and sometimes carry them out”. For the humour of Dickens is not the dry bitter humour that comes from the lips only; it comes from the heart. Nor is it merely the broad humour of comic situation (though Dickens had that form of humour too); it is deep-rooted in character; it throws light on human nature and over it all shines the light of true charity. According to J.B. Priestly: “Fashions come and fashions

go, ... but the supremacy of Dickens as a humorist remains unchallenged. We have only one name to put beside his, as a creator of humorous character, and that of course is Shakespeare. There is no comic figure in Dickens as great as Falstaff, who has in himself the genius of humour. On the other hand, Shakespeare has not the same comic fecundity...”

The humour of Dickens is essentially a humour of character. It is his comic figures we remember first, before we remember the books that contain them. Dickens lives chiefly now in his comic characters, but these are so numerous, so astonishing, so altogether delightful, that a writer could hardly wish for a better hold upon posterity. It can be easily noted that Dickens’ humour is not very subtle. But it goes deep and in expression it is free and vivacious. His satire is apt to develop into mere burlesque as it does when he deals with Mr. Stiggins and Bumble. In spite of this, Dickens is a great humourist and no one would be bold to deny the title to the creator of the immortal Micawber.

12.3.4 Dickens’ Pathos

Inseparable from the gift of humour is that of pathos in Dickens. In other words, humour and pathos go side by side in his novels. Sometimes, his emphasis on sentimental scenes leads to the charge against him of mawkishness in the description of the death of Paul Dombey, or of Jo. The earliest instance of true pathos is the death of the Chancery prisoner in *Pickwick Papers*. He is at his best in bringing out the pathos of a child life. We see how closely the truly pathetic and the humorous are allied in Dickens. Little Dorrit is strong both in pathos and humour. In *Hard Times*, the portrait of Louisa and Stephen Blackpool becomes the epitome of Charles Dickens’ unsurpassed pathos. Stephen becomes the victim of an infathomable industrial and capitalist system around him which makes his life “all a muddle”. He dies in a ditch which symbolises the industrial system. His inability to get rid of his drunken wife and his desire to marry Rachel, his fellow worker are pathetic situations.

Dickens’ memories of the childhood goaded him to write about the

squalid prison-world, and life there was no less fertile in pathos than humour. Pathos of a graver and subtler kind is the distinguishing note of *Great Expectations*. Perhaps, his best pathos is seen in the 'Christmas Books'. In spirit, he continues the work of two writers whom he always holds dear, Goldsmith and Sterne. Goldsmith's sweetness and compassion and Sterne's sensitive humanity together form his mental make-up.

Dickens is truly and profoundly national; the very incarnation of humour, he cannot think of his country without a sunny smile. To quote Crompton Rickett : "Humour, said Carlyle, 'is a sympathy with the seamy side of things'. Whatever may be said of this as a comprehensive definition of that elusive quality, humour, it fastens with unerring insight upon the essentials of Dickens' humour. A sympathy, with what is odd, out-of-the-way, bizarre, lies at the bottom of all uproarious fun. His humour and pathos are not to be sharply differentiated, laughter and tears lie closely together in his writings and frequently invade one another's territory. In no other writer of our time do we realise more fully the truth of John Bunyan's quaint comment, "Some things are of that nature as to make one's fancy chuckle while his heart doth ache".

12.3.5 Dickens' Imagination

No English novelist excels Dickens in the multiplicity of his characters and situations. *Pickwick Papers* teems with characters, some of them finely portrayed. He creates for us a whole world of people. Dickens enjoys to portray persons of the lower and middle ranks of life.

12.4 Dickens' Art of Characterisation

(a) Dickens' creative power:

Dickens is like Shakespeare in marvellous creative power of his mind, the creation of men and women on paper who are in many ways more real to us than real people who surround us: characters who are as usual and eccentric as Squeers, Micawber, Stephen etc, yet as universal as human nature. It has been said about Dickens that he does not create

characters but ‘caricatures’ that his people are not real individuals, but creatures observed only from the outside with a single, constantly repeated mannerism. Thus, Mr. Micawber is always waiting for something to turn up; Uriah Heep has cold, damp hands and is ‘humble’; Mr. Bounderby always calls him a self-made man and talks boastfully of his humble origin; Sam Weller makes humorous comparisons; Mrs. Squeers is always giving the boys brimstone; Mrs. Gumirudge is always weeping. But the undoubted fact is that they all live; that is his supreme achievement. And they live by the power of imagination with which Dickens almost overwhelms.

(b) Different Types of Characters :

We find, in most of Dickens’ novels three or four types of characters : first, the innocent little child, like Oliver, Joe, Sissy Jupe, and Little Nell, appealing powerfully to the child love, in every human heart; second, the horrible or grotesque foil, like Squeer, Fagin, Tom etc., third the grandiloquent or broadly humorous fellow, the fun maker, like Micawber and Sam Weller; and fourth, a tenderly or powerfully drawn figure like Lady Deadlock of *Bleak House* and Sydney Carton of *A Tale of Two Cities*, who attain to the dignity of noble characters. We note also that most of Dickens novels belong decidedly to the class of purpose of problem novels. Thus, *Hard Times* attacks the evils of Industrialism, law and the excesses of the philosophy of Utilitarianism; *Bleak House* attacks the ‘laws delays’ *Little Dorrit* the injustice which persecutes poor Twist, and the unnecessary degradation and suffering of the poor in the English work-houses. Dickens’ serious purpose was to make the novel the instrument of morality and justice, and whatever we may think of the exaggeration of his characters, it is certain that his stories did more to correct the general selfishness and injustice of society towards the poor than all the works of other literary men of his age combined.

(c) Character belonging to Middle-Class Society of London :

Dickens was not well conversant with the characters belonging to high society of London. Once or twice in later days--notably in the case

of Sydney Carton - he was successful, but his gentlemen were usually theatrical figures and colourless extractions. The experience of his youth afforded him no foundation where on to build, and without such foundation he was helpless. It is well known that his characters (at any rate successful ones) are all portraits, or it may be, mosaics pieced together from observation.

12.5 Limitations of Dickens' Characterisation :

Dickens' power of characterisation was limited. Apart from the obviously stagy and dramatic figures, he is apt to carry the reader away by sheer quantitative achievements. On closer analysis many of his immortal creatures turn out to be not real persons but brilliantly sketched personifications of vices and virtues, reminiscent of the 'humours' of Ben Jonson. His serious characters, with a few brilliant exceptions like David Copperfield, are the conventional, virtuous and vicious dummies of melodrama. He cannot draw complex characters.

Moreover, it has often been pointed out that his characters are created 'not in the round', but 'in the flat'. Each represents one mood, one turn of phrase. Uriah Heep is 'unable', Barkis is willing. In this fashion, his characters become associated with catch phrases, like the personages in inferior drama.

12.6 Plots of Dickens' Novels

His plots are not well-constructed organic wholes. Most of his novels were published as a serial in newspapers. Thus, his novels lack unity. They are critically appreciated because of unique characterisation. Lord David Cecil believes that Dickens cannot construct. His books lack organic unity and are full of detachable episodes; the characters in his novels serve no purpose in furthering the plot. Nor are these the least interesting characters; Mr. Micawber, Mrs. Gamp, Flora Finching etc., to name a few. Dickens' most brilliant figures, are almost irrelevant to the action of the books in which they appear. It is not because there is not much story, but because Dickens, like Tchekoy, has eschewed the conventional plot in order to

give free play to his imagination.

Plot is the one element of Dickens' novels which fails to display the dramatic quality. In their structure they carry on the tradition of the picaresque romance, following a titular hero, with many digressions and side-plots. Indeed, Smollet's novels and *Gil Blas* were Dickens's favourite readings as a boy, and his earliest models. It is true that after his first success with the amorous chronicle of *Pickwick Papers*, he tried to graft a plot upon his picaresque structure, e.g. in *Oliver Twist* and *Martin Chuzzlewit*; but the practice of extempore publication in parts interfered with this technique. As Dickens watched the periodical reception of his work by the public, he was tempted to emphasize the features which gained circulation, or to introduce new ones when the original devices failed to draw. The method was, of course, fatal to the structure of the novel. For example, finding Martin Chuzzlewit falling behind in public favour, he suddenly sends the hero to the United States to revive his own fortunes and those of his creator. But Dickens found the combination of the protest against imprisonment for debt, satire upon governmental inefficiency and the appeal of the childhood more to the taste of the reader. Only in his latest novels, *Bleak House*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Hard Times* and *Our Mutual Friend* did he develop something like coherent plots, and in *Bleak House* the arbitrary shifting of the narrative back and forth between the author and one of the characters, with no change in style, constitutes a defect which was overlooked by the original readers of the serial.

12.7 Autobiographical Elements in his Novels

Those who have read Dickens will see how largely he drew upon his own experience and observation. His early knowledge of the low life of London supplied material for *Oliver Twist*, his school days for *Nicholas Nickleby*, his visits to Marshalsea prison, where his father was imprisoned, for *Little Dorrit*, his life in a law office in *Bleak House* and other novels. Dickens constantly walked and rode about London, and nothing escaped his observation. As important as these reproduction of actual

scenes from his past is his attitude towards various classes of society, which was determined by what he had felt and seen. He had a profound sympathy for poor and wretched people and his moving portrayal of innocent suffering and of the crime stirred the heart of England. *Hard Times* depicts the travails of a child.

12.8 Dickens as a Humanitarian Novelist

In addition to high love for children and compassion for their tribulations we notice in Dickens' novels a profound humanity, an interest in man as man, apart from accidents of rank and condition. He enjoys picturing the most obscure or eccentric character as also exalted or distinguished lives. This sympathy he communicates to the reader. He succeeded in wonderfully impressing his views on his age and nation, so that his writings, gradually, wrought vast and important changes in public sentiments, and brought about a far clearer realisation of social needs. As has been already pointed out, his pictures of life are, undoubtedly, at times exaggerated and satirical, for doubtless, he felt that a tame description would have little effect in impressing his vision of social injustice on the minds of his reader. Although we may, sometimes, feel impatient with an overdrawn character or incident, we realise that Dickens was always bent on showing the truth of things out of a generous interest in his fellow men.

12.9 Suggested Reading

1. *Charles Dickens : A Critical Introduction* : K. J. Fielding.
2. *Adkroyd, Peter (1991). Dickens : A Biography.* Harpenollins. 15BNO-06-016602-9.

CHARLES DICKENS-*HARD TIMES*

STRUCTURE

- 13.1 Objective
- 13.2 Introduction
- 13.3 Summary of the Novel *Hard Times*
- 13.4 Suggested Reading

13.1 Objective

- To acquaint the learners with the story of the novel *Hard Times*.

13.2 Introduction

Hard Times, by Charles Dickens, was first published in serial form in the weekly magazine *Household Words*, from April to August of 1854. Set in fictional Coketown in the industrial north of England, the novel follows the fortunes of a variety of characters, including Thomas Gradgrind Grodgrined, who believes only in the Utilitarian, “hard facts.”

13.3 Summary of the Novel *Hard Times*

The Novel *Hard Times* is divided into three Books. The First Book: “Sowing” comprises fifteen chapters, The Second Book: “Reaping”, twelve chapters and The Third Book : “Garnering” has nine chapters.

BOOK THE FIRST : “SOWING”

‘Facts’ alone are important in life. This is what Thomas Gradgrind wants the schoolmaster to teach to the students. He looks upon boys and girls in the class-room as “pitchers” that need to be filled with

facts. He tells girl number twenty in the class to change her name from Sissy Jupe to Cecilia. He, then, asks this girl to define horse which she fails to do. He then tells Bitzer, another boy, to give the definition of a horse. Bitzer defines horse as an animal having four legs, which eats grass, has forty teeth including twenty grinders, sheds its coat in the spring, has hard hooves, and whose age is judged by certain marks in its mouth. Bitzer's definition is acceptable to the school inspector also. The inspector opposes anything like 'fancy' and asserts that facts have the supreme importance. The school master, Mr. M'C Choakum Child proceeds to teach the class in accordance to the principles of education enunciated by Mr. Gradgrind and the school inspector.

Mr. Grandgrind has a house, Stone Lodge, at Coketown where he lives with his wife and five children, whom he thinks he is providing the best education. He considers himself an "eminently practical father". On his way home, he gets a shock when he finds his two children, Louisa and Thomas, peeping through the tents of a circus watching horse-ridings. The circus is owned by Mr. Sleary.

Mr. Bounderby is a self-made man, and is an accomplished businessman and a close friend of Mr. Grandgrind. He always boasts of his low birth. Mr Gradgrind and Mr. Bounderby decide to expel Sissy Jupe from the school because she is the daughter of Mr Signer Jupe, the circus man. They think Sissy's contact with Louisa is responsible for latter's curiosity for imaginative things like circus. In fact, Grandgrind wants the education to be based on reason and facts, and not on fancy and imagination. One day Mr. Bounderby plants kiss on Louisa's cheek which is not liked by her. When Mr. Bounderby and Mr. Grandgrind reach Sissy's father's apartment called Pegasus' Arms in connection with Sissy's expulsion, they discover that he, Signer Jupe, has abandoned his daughter and disappeared. In view of the circumstances, Mr Gradgrind tells Mr. Sleary, owner of the circus that he would take the charge of Sissy's education and upbringing, only if they promise him the termination of Sissy's all relations with the circus to which Mr. Sleary and Sissy agree. Mr. Bounderby tells Mr.

Grandgrind to reconsider his decision of taking charge of Sissy. Meanwhile Sissy stays at Mr. Bounderby's house. Mr Bounderby always speaks highly of his housekeeper, Mrs. Sparsit, an elderly lady, and of her social background. He also reveals to her, his intention of employing Tom, Mr Grandgrind's son, in his bank. Mr. Grandgrind, finally, decides to take Sissy home on the condition that she would not mention of the things like fairies. Mr. Grandgrind teaches his children not to wonder at all. He says, "By means of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, settle everything somehow, and never wonder". Tom, the elder son of Mr Grandgrind expresses his discomfiture on the type of life he is leading and resolves to take revenge when he goes to live with Mr. Bounderby.

Stephen Blackpool who is an efficient weaver in the town of Coketown, is a middle-aged man of 40 years. He has a friend called Rachael. He has estranged relations with his wife who is a drunkard. Stephen mentions his case to his employer, Mr Bounderby, and wants a legal divorce, which according to Bounderby will prove very costly for him. Stephen, after coming out of Mr. Bounderby's house meets an old woman who tells him that he comes there every year just to have a look at Mr. Bounderby. Stephen leaves her and goes home thinking about his own misery. At home, he finds Rachael tending Stephen's wife and resolves to stay for night in her care. At midnight, Stephen awakes suddenly to find his wife attempting to drink poison mistaking it for liquor.

Mr. Gradgrind becomes the member of the Parliament, a dream which he has cherished for long. Mr. Grandgrind tells Louisa that Mr. Bounderby wants to marry her, which Louisa doesn't oppose. Sissy feels sorry for Louisa. It is decided by Mr. Bounderby that after his marriage, Mrs. Sparsit would live at an apartment in the Bank and would continue receiving "annual compliment" as already.

BOOK THE SECOND : "REAPING"

Mrs. Sparsit receives a stranger with a letter of introduction by Mr. Gradgrind from London to meet Mr. Bounderby. The stranger whose name

is Mr. James Harthouse meets Bounderby and Louisa. He is a practical man whose motto is “What will be, will be”. Mr. Harthouse discovers that Louisa is impassive, throughout, except in the presence of her brother Tom. Mr. Harthouse takes Tom along to the hotel he is staying and offers him tobacco and liquor. Under the influence of liquor, Tom tells him that Louisa doesn’t love Bounderby and that her marriage was not based on love.

The factory workers, who are called “hands”, form a union under the leadership of Slackbridge to which Stephen Blackpool doesn’t join, as a result of which he is excommunicated from the labour union. He cannot even see Rachel. Mr. Bounderby wants Stephen to act as his informer about the activities of the members of the Labour Union, which Stephen refuses. He urges Mr. Bounderby to treat the workers as human beings not as inanimate objects and machines. On hearing this, Mr. Bounderby is annoyed and dismisses Stephen from the job. At Mr. Bounderby’s house, Stephen finds Rachel in the company of the old woman whom Stephen has already met, and who comes there on her yearly visit to have a look at Mr. Bounderby. All the three go to Stephen’s house where Louisa, who is now Mrs. Bounderby comes to see Stephen, accompanied by her brother Tom. Louisa gives some money to Stephen as help which Stephen accepts as a loan only. At the time of departure, Tom advises Stephen to hang around the bank in the following evenings to receive some good message by Bitzer.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Harthouse becomes intimate with Louisa and succeeds to win her love for him. The next day a robbery takes place at Bounderby’s bank and he holds Stephen Blackpool under suspicion because he was found loitering around the bank during the evening. Louisa suspects Tom for the robbery and, therefore, probes him but all in vain. Louisa receives a message about Mrs. Gradgrind’s serious illness. She, at once, departs to see her mother and finds Sissy Jupe tending to her mother with care, following which Mrs. Gradgrind dies. At Mr. Bounderby’s house, Mrs. Sparsit keeps an eye on Louisa’s and Mr. Harthouse’s behaviour. She, in her imagination, visualises Louisa descending down into the pit of shame. But, on the other hand, she thinks that Mr. Bounderby well deserves

this for having married Louisa. She, also, is a witness to a love scene between Harthouse and Louisa. Mrs. Sparsit pursues Louisa out of her house, thinking she would elope with Mr. Harthouse but, instead, Louisa arrives at her father Mr. Grandgrind's place. She tells her father that his teachings have proved harmful for her. She tells him that she married a man whom she hated only to please her father. She tells him that she has fallen in love with another man who expects her to elope with him; and presently, she is in a miserable state of affair. After saying this she faints and falls unconscious on the floor.

BOOK THE THIRD : "GARNERING"

Mr. Gradgrind realises the errors of his principles of education. He feels sorry for Louisa. Louisa now asks Sissy's pardon for having treated her badly ever since her marriage to Mr. Bounderby. On the other side, Mr. Harthouse is waiting for Louisa or her message. One day, he receives a visitor who is none else than Sissy Jupe. She persuades Mr. Harthouse to leave the town forever. Mrs. Sparsit goes to London where Mr. Bounderby is presently staying to tell him that Louisa has eloped with Harthouse. Mr. Bounderby rushes to Mr. Gradgrind, and finds Louisa there. He warns Mr. Gradgrind that he would have nothing to do with Louisa if she doesn't go to Mr. Bounderby's the next day. When Louisa doesn't appear at Mr. Bounderby's house, till the next day, Mr. Bounderby begins to lead the life of a bachelor.

Mr. Bounderby announces a reward of twenty pounds for Stephen's arrest which really hurts Rachael. Rachael goes to Mr. Bounderby to tell him about Louisa's visit to Stephen's house along with Tom, and about her financial help that she gave to Stephen. She claims Stephen to be innocent. She tells Bounderby that Stephen would come back within the next two days. Weeks pass, but there is no sign of Stephen Blackpool. Rachael is apprehensive about him. In the meanwhile, the true identity of the old woman is discovered. She is none else than Bounderby's mother who used to come every year to have glimpse of his son, Mr. Bounderby. During a

walk towards the countryside, Sissy and Rachael discover Stephen lying in a deep chasm. Dying Stephen asserts his innocence and asks Gradgrind to interrogate Tom about the real story behind the bank robbery. The discovery of the fact that Tom has committed the bank robbery is a source of great distress for Mr. Gradgrind. Mr. Gradgrind, in a desire to save Tom, plans to send him abroad. He, along with Sissy and Louisa goes to Mr. Sleary's circus to see Tom, where he is hiding, having been sent by Sissy. Meanwhile Bitzer appears and catches hold of Tom to take him to Coketown, to hand him over to Mr. Bounderby. Mr. Sleary, with the help of his trained circus-horse and circus-dog manages Tom's escape, for which Gradgrind offers any amount of money which Mr. Sleary declines to take. Mr. Bounderby dies, just after dismissing Mrs. Sparsit. Mr. Gradgrind also realises his mistake for holding the principle that education must be based on facts. Now he feels that charity, hope and faith are more important values than bare facts. Tom dies in exile repentant, whereas Sissy gets married and leads a happy life.

Characters

Mr. Gradgrind :- Mr. Gradgrind is one of the main characters of the novel whose complete name is Mr. Thomas Gradgrind. He owns a school where he wants the students to be provided education based on the "facts". He is, totally, contemptuous of fanciful ideas. He asserts "In this life, we want nothing but facts, sir; nothing but facts." He has a wide, thin, and hard-set mouth. He considers his children, especially, Louisa and Tom as model children. But at the end, he realises his fault for holding such principles of education and realises that love, charity, and faith are more important things than bare facts.

Mr. Bounderby :- Mr. Bounderby is an accomplished banker, merchant and manufacturer. He calls himself, a self-made man. He is a bully of humility, a person who always talks loudly of his humble birth. He also talks highly of Mrs. Sparsit's high family background. He

is a shrewd businessman. He marries Louisa, who is almost half his age, and proves a failure in his marriage. At the end he dies and leaves a will, according to which he divides his property among twenty-five humbug people, all above, fifty-five years of age.

Sissy Jupe :- She is a leading female character, who is the daughter of a circus-man. Her father abandons her. Mr. Gradgrind takes charge of her education and upbringing. She returns Mr. Gradgrind's affection with great love and care for his family. She tends Louisa in her illness and saves Tom from being caught. At the end, she receives the news of his father's death.

Louisa :- Louisa is the daughter of Mr. Gradgrind who doesn't like the way she is being brought up and educated. She marries Mr. Bounderby, who is double her age, to please his father and to secure the future of her brother Tom. She loves nobody except her brother Tom whom she provides with a lot of money, knowing that he loses all the money in gambling. She falls in love with Mr. Harthouse but doesn't elope with him on his continuous insistence. She leaves Bounderby and lives with her father Gradgrind.

Tom :- Tom is the son of Mr. Gradgrind and brother of Louisa. He, like Louisa, is also not satisfied with his life. He exploits her sister's love for him and loses all the money in gambling which she gives him stealthily. He commits robbery at Mr. Bounderby's bank and manages to shift the blame on Stephen Blackpool. With the help of his father, he manages to escape abroad where he dies in exile, repentant.

Stephen Blackpool :- Stephen Blackpool is a successful weaver at Mr. Bounderby's factory. He has a drunken wife who is a source of continuous trouble for him. He loves a fellow worker, Rachael and wants to marry her by seeking divorce from his wife. For him life is a "muddle". He is suspected for the bank robbery which is actually committed by Tom. He is found lying in a chasm after which

he dies, declaring his innocence.

Mrs. Sparsit :- Mrs. Sparsit is the housekeeper of Mr. Bounderby. She is an elderly lady with a good family background. Her great aunt Lady Scadgers is a rich woman of means and connections. Mr. Bounderby always talks highly of Mrs. Sparsit's social background. Though Mrs. Sparsit works for Mr. Bounderby, but, in fact, she hates him and calls him 'a noodle' when she stands before his portrait. She also acts as a spy on Mrs. Bounderby i.e., Louisa, but cuts a sorry figure at the end.

13.4 Suggested Reading

1. "Hard Times" Novels for Students Encyclopedia, Com. 1 Sept 2018.
2. Philip Collins, *Introduction to Hard Times*.
3. Philip Collins, *Introduction to Hard Times*, Everymans Library, 1992.

CHARLES DICKENS–*HARD TIMES*

STRUCTURE

- 14.1 Objective
- 14.2 Introduction
- 14.3 *Hard Times* as a Social Novel
- 14.4 Examination Oriented Questions
- 14.5 Suggested Reading

14.1 Objective

- To acquaint the learners with the sociological aspect of the novel *Hard Times*.

14.2 Introduction

The novels of Dickens belong entirely to the humanitarian movement of the Victorian age, of which they are indeed, the sphere of fiction, by far the most important product and expression. He used his novels to bring the attention of social ills and abuses of Victorian England in such a way that the general public could relate and react to.

14.3 *Hard Times* as a Social Novel

OR

Dickens as a Social Reformer

Hard Times presents a microcosm of early Victorian society. It presents two themes. One deals with the divorce law. Through the agency of Stephen Blackpool, whose wife is a drunkard and uncivilized. Dickens

voices his indignation at the high expenses involved in getting divorce, which remains a privilege of the rich. Stephen consults Mr. Bounderby regarding his predicament because of his wife and asks him if there is any legal procedure of getting rid of his wife. Bounderby says that though there is a way but it is too costly for him to follow.

The second social problem of *Hard Times* is concerned with a radical criticism of the very structure of society, based on the oppression of the poor by the rich. Dickens, in *Hard Times* attacks the dominant philosophy of **Utilitarianism**, propounded by Jeremy Bentham, according to whom society should aim at the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Dickens attacks Utilitarianism by taking to task the system of education based on the principles of this philosophy, that results in a damaging impoverishment of the moral and emotional life of the individual. Mr. Gradgrind is the exponent of the system of education based on the principles of Utilitarianism. He wants children to be taught nothing but “facts”. His own children Louisa and Tom study in the school owned by Gradgrind where another student namely Sissy Jupe studies. He is strictly against anything pertaining to “fancy” or imagination symbolised by Mr. Sleary’s Circus. Mr. Gradgrind asks certain questions in the class. He gives Sissy Jupe a new name “Girl number twenty” and asks her to define a horse. When she fails to answer, Mr. Gradgrind directs the same question to Bitzer, whom he considers the model student of his school. Bitzer defines a horse as:

“Quadruped, Graminivorous, Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth”.

Bitzer gives the definition in small bits as his name implies. Mr. Gradgrind’s reproof to the circus-girl caps this ludicrous episode, which introduces one of the major themes of the novel— the contrast between factual-knowledge and the knowledge of the senses and the

heart. Mr. Gradgrind, at the end, realises the error of the principles he held earlier. He finds his daughter Louisa unhappily married with Bounderby; he finds his son Tom as 'a fugitive in some foreign country; he finds Sissy Jupe as the most affectionate friend of his family and finally, he finds Bitzer a complete ungrateful student. He admits that love, hope and faith are more important than mere "facts".

Dickens is also seriously concerned with the social and economic injustice because individuals conditioned by such a system are incapable of dealing with the human problems created by it. Stephen Blackpool is the victim of the system of industrialism. Having failed to understand and endure the slings of the system around him, he calls his life a "muddle". He fails to seek divorce from his wife because it is only a privilege of rich. He dies in a chasm which is a symbol of industrialism.

In *Hard Times*, there is no mistaking Dickens' violent hostility to industrial capitalism and its entire scheme of life. It is a morality drama, stark, formalized, allegorical, dominated by the mood of piercing through to the underlying meaning of the industrial scene rather than describing it in minute detail. In short, *Hard Times* becomes a critique that shows the crushing of humanity embodied by Sissy Jupe, Louisa, Tom, Stephen etc. by the Industrial capitalism and 19th century utilitarianism embodied by Mr. Bounderby, and Mr. Gradgrind respectively. Mr. Bounderby is the embodiment of the principle of laissez faire who is treated ironically and satirically. He is an accomplished banker and industrialist who calls his workers "hands". He is a man completely devoid of human feelings. He leaves his mother Mrs. Peglar on mean pension and always boasts of his humble birth. Though Mr. Gradgrind shows some signs of humanity but Mr. Bounderby dies as an imposter.

Charles Dickens, in the novel *Hard Times*, is not critical of the philosophies like utilitarianism and laissez faire but dislikes the excessive use of them. He doesn't attack institutions but people who make the wrong use of these institutions. According to him, Industrialisation is not

bad but what is bad is its excessive and wrong use in the hands of the people.

Ordinarily, Dickens' criticism of the world he lives in is casual and incidental – a matter of including among the ingredients of a book some indignant treatment of a particular abuse. But in *Hard Times*, he is for once possessed with the comprehensive vision, one in which the inhumanities of Victorian Civilization are seen as fostered and sanctioned by a hard philosophy, the aggressive formulation of an inhumane spirit. This philosophy as already mentioned is called utilitarianism which is imbibed into the minds of the students through education.

D.H. Lawrence, himself, protesting against harmful tendencies in education, never made the point more tellingly. Sissy Jupe has been brought up among horses, and among people whose livelihood depends upon understanding horses. According to Gradgrind, such knowledge is not real knowledge. The definition given by Bitzer suits Gradgrind's ear. This kind of ironic method might seem to commit the author to very limited kinds of effect. In *Hard Times*, however, it associates quite congruously, such is the flexibility of Dickens' art, with very different methods; it co-operates in a truly dramatic and profoundly poetic whole. Sissy Jupe, who might be taken here for a merely conventional persona, has already, as a matter of fact, been established in a potently symbolic role : she is part of the poetically-creative operation of Dickens' genius in *Hard Times*.

Dickens' main intention in *Hard Times* as F. R. Leavis says, was 'to comment on certain key characteristics of Victorian civilization'. He was concerned about the difference (as he expresses it in the first chapter of the novel) between Fact and Fancy. The purpose of the novel was to emphasize with all his power and skill, that this was not just a rhetorical antithesis : that mere fact, or logic, that leaves half of our lives out of account — any method of ruling conduct or affair that lacks sympathy, love and understanding between human beings — is in the end, not merely

sterile, but bitterly destructive of all the moral virtues, beauty and everything that is best; that a sound life cannot exist without happiness; and that the proper education of children must take into account their moral development which it should foster through their fancy and love of life. The government of a country, he maintained, cannot safely be left to be administered from self-interest, nor trusted to a single class certain to look after itself first and last. He held that the relations between capital and labour, or (as he preferred to call them) between Masters and Men, can never be properly managed or understood if it is assumed that they must be in a perpetual state of conflict, or that the men must inevitably be subject to the paternal rule of the masters. Above all, he believed that the relations between men and women; between father and children, mother and child, or brother and sister, between friends, or any persons in almost any permanent association, must originate and be rooted in liking, affection, love.

The novel was, thus, a protest not merely against certain characteristics of Victorian society, but against certain tendencies to be found in any industrial civilization. It was a protest against all repression of human spirit by the repressive atmosphere of the classroom, the constitution, the law, and the so-called principles of political economy. Dickens' purpose was not just to strike at everyday, run-of-the-mill, mid-nineteenth-century 'utilitarianism' – and, especially, not at anything so abstract as the 'Utilitarian Philosophy' alone as expounded by Bentham and Mill. It was aimed at all kinds of social abuses which he thought ran counter to human life and happiness because they were framed according to supposed 'facts' while they ignored obvious human needs. That is why even the sawdust ring of the circus was preferable to the cinders of Coketown or the dust and ashes of the political arena. The novel as such a broad purpose even though it included references to some of Dickens' living contemporaries which most of them were unable to recognise, and satire of specific abuses which was too pointed to be understood by the general reader; and it is only by understanding this broader purpose that one can see

how it unifies Dickens' remarks on Stephen Blackpool's marriage, the aesthetic theories of the 'third gentleman' in the second chapter, the problems of Trade Unionism, Louisa's marriage to Mr. Bounderby, and her brother's theft from the bank.

Dickens once said that the ideas in the book took him 'by the throat' and forced him to write. A careful reading shows that he succeeded in giving them a unified purpose, and that *Hard Times* has coherence and power which deserve great respect even though it is not as entertaining as many of his other novels. Unfortunately, its purpose has often been misunderstood. Because it was partly about the differences between a mill-owner and his men, it has been thought that Dickens wrote it in order to take sides; and because both Mr. Bounderby, the mill-owner, and Slackbridge, the trade union agitator, are described as utterly worthless, he has been claimed as a kind of socialist. In fact, Dickens was not so simple-minded. He was very like many people today. He thought it just that there should be the right to strike. He disliked extremists on both sides. He hated employers like Bounderby and he distrusted trade union organizers such as Slackbridge. He was in favour of all attempts to encourage better industrial relations and for conciliation on both sides; and he considered that the government should take action by setting up an independent body to arbitrate between them. Addressing an audience of working men in industrial Birmingham at the reading of the **Christmas Carol**, a month before he started *Hard Times*, he had referred perfectly happily to the value of education 'in the bringing together of employers and employed; in the creating of a better understanding of those whose interests are identical.'

Charles Dickens was neither an apologist for industrial capitalism, nor a critic. Although, George Bernard Shaw wrote, in an important introduction to the novel, that 'Dickens' occasional indignation' had 'spread and depended into a passionate revolt against the whole industrial order of the modern world.' This is certainly wrong if we take it to mean that Dickens protested against the arrival of the machine and somehow foresaw

where it would lead. For there are other unperceived topicalities which show that Dickens meant to satirise certain recent and most enlightened attempts to improve industrial design in his own worst manner. Of course Dickens was attacking society, not to arouse revolution, but in the hope that all who were part of it would act with greater Christian humility and charity.

A major critic, Humphrey House writes that one of the reasons why, in the fifties, Dickens' novels begin to show a greater complication of plot than before, is that he was intending to use them as a vehicle of more concentrated sociological argument. In the character of Gradgrind, Dickens' satire is directed against a kind of thought. Gradgrind is, in fact, the only major Dickensonian character who is meant to be an 'intellectual'. Dickens was caught with the idea of a man living by a certain philosophy, as in the past he had been caught with the idea of a man living by a vice such as hypocrisy or pride. To sum up, it can be said that *Hard Times* is not a convincing book as a novel because it is not better than other Dickensonian novels but it combines in itself almost all the concerns of the author as a social critic as also his, belief in man-to-man relation, criticism of the excesses of Industrialism, love of imagination and respect for a moral code.

14.4 Examination Oriented Questions

1. Discuss salient characteristics of Dickens' novels.
2. Draw a character sketch of Mr. Gradgrind.
3. Draw a character sketch of Louisa.
4. How has Charles Dickens indicted the Utilitarian philosophy in *Hard Times*?
5. Discuss Charles Dickens as a Social Reformer.
6. How is *Hard Times* an indictment of the Victorian society as a whole?

14.5 Suggested Reading

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. <i>A Reader's Guide to Charles Dickens</i> | Philip Hobsbaum |
| 2. <i>Charles Dickens : A Critical Introduction</i> | K. J. Fielding |
| 3. <i>The Dickens' World</i> | Humphrey House |
| 4. <i>Dickens and Education</i> | Philip Collins |
| 5. <i>From Dickens to Hardy</i> | (Ed). Boris Ford |

GEORGE ELIOT—*MIDDLEMARCH*

STRUCTURE

- 15.1. Objective
- 15.2. Introduction
- 15.3. Biographical Sketch of the Author
- 15.4. George Eliot's Works
- 15.5. The Times of the Author
- 15.6. The Context of *Middlemarch*
- 15.7. Let Us Sum Up
- 15.8. Fill in the Blanks
- 15.9. Suggested Reading
- 15.10. Answer Key

15.1. Objective

The lesson aims to introduce learners to the writer, George Eliot, and offer a glimpse into her life, times and works.

15.2. Introduction

George Eliot was one of the leading women writers of the nineteenth centuries. Her novels, most famously *Middlemarch*, are celebrated for their realism and psychological insights. She was both as an individual and a writer unconventional.

15.3. Biographical Sketch of the Author

Mary Ann Evans (22 November 1819 – 22 December 1880) is more popularly known by her pen name George Eliot. She was an English novelist, journalist, translator and one of the leading writers of the Victorian period.

She was born at South Farm, Arbury Hall in Warwickshire and was the youngest of five children. The young Evans was certainly an intelligent child and a voracious reader. Because she was not considered physically beautiful, and thus not thought to have much chance of marriage, and because of her intelligence, her father invested in her education not often provided to women. So Mary Anne was afforded the privileges of a private education. She enjoyed books and learning from a young age; she was reflective, self-absorbing and quiet, and thus was a bit of an anomaly among young women of the time. Unfortunately, Mary Anne was forced to leave school at the age of 16, when her mother died in early 1836. However, her father continued to indulge her love of learning and would purchase books for her to help her to learn German and Italian besides general reading. In 1841, Mary Anne's father moved the family to the larger town of Foleshill, where Mary Anne met Charles and Cara Bray, who later became good friends of hers.

Evans, who had been struggling with religious doubts for some time, became intimate friends with the progressive, free-thinking Brays, whose "Rosehill" home was a haven for people who held and debated radical views. The people whom the young woman met at the Brays' house included Robert Owen, Herbert Spencer, Harriet Martineau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Through this society Evans was introduced to more liberal theologies and to writers such as David Strauss and Ludwig Feuerbach, who cast doubt on the literal truth of Biblical stories.

Mary Anne soon, however, became very self-conscious about her unconventionality among this group of friends. She also began to renounce her faith in Christianity, which caused distance between Mary Anne and her father, with his father threatening to throw her out of the house. They reconciled for the most part, and Mary Anne cared for her father closely when he became ill

in 1847 until his death in 1849.

Through the Brays, she met John Chapman, a publisher and bookseller from London. Chapman and Mary Anne became good friends, and he asked Mary Anne to become the behind-the-scenes editor for the *Westminster Review*. Mary Anne worked at the *Review* for two years, despite the fact that she received no credit for her work. In 1851, Mary Anne met George Henry Lewes, and the pair became romantically involved. Though Lewes was already married, he and his wife had been separated for some years and his wife was living with another man, with whom she had three children.

It was all but impossible for Lewes to divorce his wife because he had condoned her adultery, so his and Mary Anne's options were limited. They decided to try living together abroad first, so in 1854 they traveled to Germany together. They were as vague with their friends and relatives as possible, but after some months abroad they started to receive word that even their most liberal-minded friends disapproved of their lifestyle. They returned to England in 1855, and Mary Anne remained separate from Lewes until his wife declared that she had no intention of ever reuniting with him. After this, Mary Anne moved in with Lewes in London, and insisted on being called Mrs. Lewes, which caused great scandal and her general isolation from society. Mary Anne's decision meant a break with the Brays, who disapproved of her decision. She and George were very happy, despite the stir that their relationship caused.

She used a male pen name, she said, to ensure her works would be taken seriously. Female authors were published under their own names during Eliot's life, but she wanted to escape the stereotype of women only writing lighthearted romances. She also wished to have her fiction judged separately from her already extensive and widely known work as an editor and critic.

In 1863 the Leweses bought the Priory, 21, North Bank, Regent's Park, where their Sunday afternoons became a brilliant feature of Victorian life. There on Nov. 30, 1878, Lewes died. For nearly 25 years he had fostered her genius and managed all the practical details of life, which now fell upon her. Most of all she missed the encouragement that alone made it possible for

her to write. For months she saw no one but his son Charles Lee Lewes; she devoted herself to completing the last volume of his *Problems of Life and Mind* (1873–79) and founded the George Henry Lewes Studentship in Physiology at Cambridge. For some years her investments had been in the hands of John Walter Cross (1840–1924), a banker introduced to the Leweses by Herbert Spencer. Cross' mother had died a week after Lewes. Drawn by sympathy and the need for advice, George Eliot soon began to lean on him for affection too. On May 6, 1880, they were married in St. George's, Hanover Square. Cross was 40; she was in her 61st year. After a wedding trip in Italy they returned to her country house at Witley before moving to 4, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, where she died in December. She was buried at Highgate Cemetery.

15.4. George Eliot's Works

At Weimar and Berlin, she wrote some of her best essays for *The Westminster* and translated Spinoza's *Ethics* (still unpublished), while Lewes worked on his groundbreaking life of Goethe. She turned to early memories and, encouraged by Lewes, wrote a story about a childhood episode in Chilvers Coton parish. Published in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1857) as *The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton*, it was an instant success. Two more tales, *Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story* and *Janet's Repentance*, also based on local events, appeared serially in the same year, and Blackwood republished all three as *Scenes of Clerical Life*, 2 vol. (1858), under the pseudonym George Eliot.

Adam Bede, 3 vol. (1859), her first long novel, she described as “a country story—full of the breath of cows and the scent of hay.” Its masterly realism—“the faithful representing of commonplace things”—brought to English fiction the same truthful observation of minute detail that Ruskin was commending in the Pre-Raphaelites. The book is rich in humour. The germ of the plot was an anecdote her Methodist aunt told of visiting a girl condemned for child murder. The dialect of the Bedes she had heard in the conversations of her Derbyshire uncles with her father, some of whose early experiences she assigned to Adam. But what was new in English fiction was the combination

of deep human sympathy and rigorous moral judgment. *Adam Bede* went through eight printings within a year, and Blackwood doubled the £800 paid for it and returned the copyright.

In *The Mill on the Floss*, 3 vol. (1860), she returned again to the scenes of her early life. The first half of the book, with its remarkable portrayal of childhood, is irresistibly appealing, and throughout there are scenes that reach a new level of psychological subtlety.

At this time historical novels were in vogue, and during their visit to Florence in 1860 Lewes suggested Savonarola as a good subject, George Eliot grasped it enthusiastically and began to plan *Romola* (1862–63). First, however, she wrote *Silas Marner* (1861), which had thrust itself between her and the Italian material. Its brevity and perfection of form made this story of the weaver whose lost gold is replaced by a strayed child the best known of her books, though it has suffered unfairly from being forced on generations of schoolchildren. *Romola* was planned as a serial for *Blackwood's*, until an offer of £10,000 from *The Cornhill Magazine* induced George Eliot to desert her old publisher; but rather than divide the book into the 16 installments the editor wanted, she accepted £3,000 less, an evidence of artistic integrity few writers would have shown. Details of Florentine history, setting, costume, and dialogue were scrupulously studied at the British Museum and during a second trip to Italy in 1861, it was published in 14 parts between July 1862 and August 1863. Though the book lacks the spontaneity of the English stories, it has been unduly disparaged.

George Eliot's next two novels are laid in England at the time of agitation for passage of the Reform Bill. In *Felix Holt, the Radical*, 3 vol. (1866), she drew the election riot from recollection of one she saw at Nuneaton in December 1832. The initial impulse of the book was not the political theme but the tragic character of Mrs. Transome, who was one of her greatest triumphs. The intricate plot popular taste then demanded now tells against the novel. *Middlemarch* (8 parts, 1871–72) is by general consent George Eliot's masterpiece. Under her hand the novel had developed from a mere entertainment into a highly intellectual

form of art. Every class of Middlemarch society is depicted from the landed gentry and clergy to the manufacturers and professional men, the shopkeepers, publicans, farmers, and labourers. Several strands of plot are interwoven to reinforce each other by contrast and parallel. Yet, the story depends not on close-knit intrigue but on showing the incalculably diffusive effect of the unhistoric acts of those who “lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs”.

Daniel Deronda (8 parts, 1876), in which George Eliot comes nearest the contemporary scene, is built on the contrast between Mirah Cohen, a poor Jewish girl, and the upper class Gwendolen Harleth, who marries for money and regrets it. The less convincingly realized hero, Daniel, after discovering that he is Jewish, marries Mirah and departs for Palestine to establish a home for his nation. The picture of the Cohen family evoked grateful praise from Jewish readers. But the best part of *Daniel Deronda* is the keen analysis of Gwendolen’s character, which seems to many critics the peak of George Eliot’s achievement.

15.5. The Times of the Author

George Eliot belonged to the Victorian period. By the beginning of the Victorian age, the Industrial Revolution, as this shift was called, had created profound economic and social changes, including a mass migration of workers to industrial towns, where they lived in new urban slums. But the changes arising out of the Industrial Revolution were just one subset of the radical changes taking place in mid- and late-nineteenth-century Britain — among others were the democratization resulting from extension of the franchise; challenges to religious faith, in part based on the advances of scientific knowledge, particularly of evolution; and changes in the role of women.

All of these issues, and the controversies attending them, informed Victorian literature. In part because of the expansion of newspapers and the periodical press, debate about political and social issues played an important role in the experience of the reading public. The Victorian novel, with its emphasis on the realistic portrayal of social life, represented many Victorian issues in the stories of its characters. Moreover, debates about political

representation involved in expansion both of the franchise and of the rights of women affected literary representation, as writers gave voice to those who had been voiceless.

England is the process of rapid industrialization. Social mobility is growing rapidly. With the rise of the merchant middle class, one's birth no longer necessarily determines one's social class for life. Chance occurrences can make or break a person's success. Moreover, there is no single coherent religious order. Evangelical Protestants, Catholics, and Anglicans live side by side. As a result, religious conflicts abound in the novel, particularly those centering on the rise of Evangelical Protestantism, a primarily middle-class religion that created heated doctrinal controversy.

In the past, the landed gentry occupied the top of the social ladder. A gentleman had no determined occupation. In fact, a gentleman didn't work, because his money allowed him to live a life of leisure. Working for a living was considered beneath him. Eager to ameliorate the stigma of earned money, many members of the middle class ascribed to this moral system. A growing middle class and a strict moral system characterize the Victorian period.

Although industrialization created greater freedom of choice in vocation and greater upward social mobility, it also created insecurity. A middle-class man's moral exterior was supposed to coincide with his private life. If there was a contradiction, he was expected to hide it well. The social and economic cost of ostracism for the revelation of private sins raised the stakes for contradictions between one's public and private selves. Respectability, like wealth, had to be earned. The blessings of the range of opportunities available to the self-made man were mixed. Private actions that contradicted the public veneer of respectability could destroy everything.

15.6. The Context of *Middlemarch*

Eliot scorned the stereotypical female novelist; rather than writing the silly, unrealistic romantic tales expected of women writers, she wrote according to her own tastes. Her first attempt to write *Middlemarch*—now her most famous novel—ended in failure and despair. Shortly after this initial failure, she

began a short novella entitled *Miss Brooke*. The writing proceeded quickly, and she later integrated the novella into *Middlemarch*. The novel was published serially in eight parts.

Middlemarch is a novel of epic proportions, but it transforms the notion of an epic. Epics usually narrate the tale of one important hero who experiences grand adventure, and they usually interpret events according to a grand design of fate. Every event has immediate, grand consequences. Kings and dynasties are made and unmade in epic tales.

Middlemarch's subtitle is "A Study of Provincial Life." This means that *Middlemarch* represents the lives of ordinary people, not the grand adventures of princes and kings. *Middlemarch* represents the spirit of nineteenth-century England through the unknown, historically unremarkable common people. The small community of *Middlemarch* is thrown into relief against the background of larger social transformations, rather than the other way around.

England is the process of rapid industrialization. Social mobility is growing rapidly. With the rise of the merchant middle class, one's birth no longer necessarily determines one's social class for life. Chance occurrences can make or break a person's success. Moreover, there is no single coherent religious order. Evangelical Protestants, Catholics, and Anglicans live side by side. As a result, religious conflicts abound in the novel, particularly those centering on the rise of Evangelical Protestantism, a primarily middle-class religion that created heated doctrinal controversy.

Middlemarch readers will be astonished by the novel's amazingly complex social world. Eliot continually uses the metaphor of a web to describe the town's social relations. She intricately weaves together the disparate life experiences of a large cast of characters. Many characters subscribe to a world-view; others want to find a world-view to organize their lives. The absence of a single, triumphant world-view to organize all life is the basic design of *Middlemarch*. No one occupies the center of the novel as the most important or influential person. In *Middlemarch* social relations are indeed like a web, but the web has no center. Each individual occupies a point in the web,

affecting and affected by the other points. Eliot's admirable effort to represent this web in great detail makes her novel epic in length and scope. Unlike in an epic, however, no single point in the web and no single world-view reigns triumphant.

Middlemarch is quite an unusual novel. Although it is primarily a Victorian novel, it has many characteristics typical to modern novels. It is regarded as Eliot's masterpiece work and received mixed reactions. A common accusation leveled against it was its morbid, depressing tone. Many critics did not like Eliot's habit of scattering obscure literary and scientific allusions throughout the book. In their opinion a woman writer should not be so intellectual. Eliot hated the "silly, women novelists". In the Victorian era, women writers were generally confined to writing the stereotypical fantasies of the conventional romance fiction. Not only did Eliot dislike the constraints imposed on women's writing, she disliked the stories they were expected to produce. Her disdain for the tropes of conventional romance is apparent in her treatment of marriage between Rosamond and Lydgate. Both Rosamond and Lydgate think of courtship and romance in terms of ideas taken directly from conventional romance. Another problem with such fiction is that marriage marks the end of the novel. Eliot goes through great effort to depict the realities of marriage.

Moreover, Eliot's many critics found *Middlemarch* to be too depressing for a woman writer. Eliot refused to bow to the conventions of a happy ending. An ill-advised marriage between two people who are inherently incompatible never becomes completely harmonious. In fact, it becomes a yoke. Such is the case in the marriages of Lydgate and Dorothea. Dorothea was saved from living with her mistake for her whole life because her elderly husband dies of a heart attack. Lydgate and Rosamond, on the other hand, married young.

Short, romantic courtships lead to trouble, because both parties entertain unrealistic ideals of each other. They marry without getting to know one another. Marriages based on compatibility work better. Moreover, marriages in which women have a greater say also work better, such as the marriage between Fred and Mary. She tells him she will not marry if he becomes a clergyman.

Her condition saves Fred from an unhappy entrapment in an occupation he doesn't like. Dorothea and Casaubon struggle continually because Casaubon attempts to make her submit to his control. The same applies in the marriage between Lydgate and Rosamond.

The choice of an occupation by which one earns a living is also an important element in the book. Eliot illustrates the consequences of making the wrong choice. She also details at great length the consequences of confining women to the domestic sphere alone. Dorothea's passionate ambition for social reform is never realized. She ends with a happy marriage, but there is some sense that her end as merely a wife and mother is a waste. Rosamond's shrewd capabilities degenerate into vanity and manipulation. She is restless within the domestic sphere, and her stifled ambitions only result in unhappiness for herself and her husband.

Eliot's refusal to conform to happy endings demonstrates the fact that *Middlemarch* is not meant to be entertainment. She wants to deal with real-life issues, not the fantasy world to which women writers were often confined. Her ambition was to create a portrait of the complexity of ordinary human life: quiet tragedies, petty character failings, small triumphs, and quiet moments of dignity. The complexity of her portrait of provincial society is reflected in the complexity of individual characters. The contradictions in the character of the individual person are evident in the shifting sympathies of the reader. One moment, we pity Casaubon, the next we judge him critically.

15.7. Let Us Sum Up

The lesson paints the picture of George Eliot, the person and the kind of writer she was. Her woes reflected the complexities of real life, the same ones that their author had been unafraid to confront. *Middlemarch* stubbornly refuses to behave like a typical novel. The novel is a collection of relationships between several major players in the drama, but no single person occupies the center of the action. No one person can represent provincial life. It is necessary to include multiple people. Eliot's book is fairly experimental for its time in form and content, particularly because she was a woman writer.

15.8. Fill in the Blanks

- a) George Eliot is the _____ name of Mary Ann Evans.
- b) The title of Eliot's first long novel is _____
- c) _____ is regarded as Eliot's masterpiece.
- d) *Middlemarch* represents the spirit and life of the _____ century England.
- e) The novel, *Middlemarch*, was published serially in _____ parts.

15.9 Suggested Reading

1. Ashton, Rosemary. *George Eliot : A life* London. Penguin Books 1997.
2. Hughes, Kathryn. *George Eliot : The Last Victorian*. New York : Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1999.
3. Karl, Frederick R. *George Eliot, Voice of a Century : A Biography*. New York. WW.Norton, 1999.

15.10 Answer Key

Blanks: a) pen, b) *Adam Bede*, c) *Middlemarch*, d) nineteenth, eight

GEORGE ELIOT—*MIDDLEMARCH*

STRUCTURE

- 16.1. Objectives
- 16.2. Introduction
- 16.3. A Brief Summary of the Novel
- 16.4. Chapter-wise Summary
- 16.5. Let Us Sum Up
- 16.6. Multiple Choice Questions
- 16.7. Examination Oriented Questions
- 16.8. Answer Key
- 16.9 Suggested Reading

16.1. Objectives

The lesson provides a detailed summary of the novel. The main and important happenings in the course of the narrative are reiterated so that the students do not miss the crucial information regarding the development of the plot and various themes.

16.2. Introduction

Middlemarch, published in 1871-72, carries the subtitle “A Study of Provincial Life”. The novel is not about individuals’ stories but also their place in the society of the times. By telling the story of three young women of slightly

different classes, their suitors and the social milieu in which their relationships develop, Eliot is able to show the nuances of class in the 1830s.

16.3. A Brief Summary of the Novel

Middlemarch is a novel of epic proportions, but it transforms the notion of an epic. Epics usually narrate the tale of one important hero who experiences grand adventure, and they usually interpret events according to a grand design of fate. As *Middlemarch*'s subtitle, "A Study of Provincial Life", suggests, the novel represents the lives of ordinary people, not the grand adventures of princes and kings. *Middlemarch* represents the spirit of nineteenth-century England through the unknown, historically unremarkable common people. The small community of Middlemarch is thrown into relief against the background of larger social transformations, rather than the other way around.

Two major life choices govern the narrative of *Middlemarch*. One is marriage and the other is vocation. Eliot takes both choices very seriously.

Middlemarch presents an amazingly complex social world. Eliot continually uses the metaphor of a web to describe the town's social relations, while she intricately weaves together the dissimilar and incongruent life experiences of a large cast of characters. Many characters subscribe to a world-view; others want to find a world-view to organize their lives. However, here is no single world-view that stands triumphant, as each struggles to organize one's own life. Neither is there single character to occupy the centrestage in the novel and be the most important or influential person. All are so scattered that it is impossible to locate a centre. Each individual occupies a position, affecting and getting affected by the others' positions.

16.4. Chapter-wise Summary

16.4.1. Book I

The first chapter introduces the character of Dorothea Brooke. She and her sister Celia are orphans in the care of their uncle, Mr. Brooke. Although she is from a wealthy family, Dorothea prefers to dress plainly and hopes to

live an ascetic life devoted to improve the world around her. She keeps convincing her uncle to spend money to improve the lot of the tenants on his estate. Mr. Brooke is afraid that her Puritan character will hinder her marriage prospects. However, many men find her bewitching, especially on horseback. Dorothea is oblivious to this. Even Sir James Chettam's frequent visits to Tipton Grange, the Brooke estate, she believes are because his interest in marrying Celia but it is the opposite.

When, on Celia's insistence, Dorothea divides their late mother's jewellery, she takes only an emerald ring and a matching bracelet for herself and allows Celia to take the rest. Innocently, Celia asks whether Dorothea will wear the ring and bracelet in company. The question offends Dorothea.

During a small dinner party at Tipton Grange, Sir James informs Mr. Brooke and Dorothea of his plans to improve conditions for the tenants on his estate. While Mr. Brooke says that he spends far too much on such works, Dorothea points out that Mr. Brooke spends good amount of money on entertainment and little on socially responsible projects. Her well-spoken retort catches the attention of Mr. Casaubon, a middle-aged scholar and clergyman. Dorothea admires Casaubon for his dignified, intellectual conversation. Celia knows that Sir James wishes to marry Dorothea and believes that Casaubon is old, boring, and ugly. For her part, Dorothea thinks that Sir James is silly. Casaubon and Dorothea begin to spend more time in conversation. He admires her because she does not care for the frivolous and trivial things in life. She admires him for his "great soul". On the other hand, Sir James attempts to please Dorothea by showing interest in her "plan for cottages".

Dorothea devotes her spare time to drawing plans for better housing for the tenants on Brooke's estate. Sir James states that he would like to follow her plans at Freshitt, his own estate. Dorothea is delighted, and the two of them set to work on putting the plan into action. Celia informs Dorothea that Sir James wishes to marry her; Dorothea reacts with utter disbelief and plans to discourage him. However, Mr. Brooke arrives to tell her that Casaubon has asked him for her hand in marriage. Dorothea is overjoyed and accepts the

proposal right away.

Brooke does not understand why she prefers Casaubon over Sir James, but he wishes to allow her to make her own choice. Dorothea informs Celia of her engagement to Casaubon. Celia reacts with anxiety and sadness at the news. Mrs. Cadwallader, learning of Dorothea's engagement from Mr. Brooke, reports the news to Sir James. Sir James reacts with disbelief. Mrs. Cadwallader states that Dorothea is too high-flown and strictly religious for him anyway. However, she had planned to play match-maker for Dorothea and Sir James since she had come to live with Mr. Brooke. She resolves instead to get Sir James and Celia married. Sir James decides to be a gentleman. He continues collaborating with Dorothea on the cottages according to her plans.

Casaubon looks forward to the end of the courtship, as he is eager to return his energies to his great work, the Key to all Mythologies. Dorothea offers to learn Latin and Greek in order to help him with his project. Casaubon, pleased with her submissive affection, consents to teach her.

Sir James believes that Brooke should not have allowed Dorothea to become engaged to such an old, dry man as Casaubon. He appeals to Mr. Cadwallader to speak to Brooke about putting a stop to the marriage and feels that the difference in age between bride and groom is enough justification for postponing the marriage. However, he finds that his relationship with Dorothea is easier because he no longer has any "passion to hide or confess".

The Brookes visit Lowick manor, Casaubon's residence. Dorothea notices the miniature portraits of Casaubon's mother and her older sister. Casaubon confirms her assertion that there is little resemblance between the sisters. During the tour of the grounds, they notice a young man drawing sketches, who is introduced as Will Ladislav, his second cousin. Brooke and Celia admire his sketches, but Dorothea says that she is not educated enough to judge them. Will thinks she means to criticize or insult him. They bid good-bye to Will, and Casaubon tells them that he fears that Will has no ambition. He has agreed to pay the expenses of a trip abroad for Will, however, to give him time to settle on a profession.

At the engagement party, Dorothea meets Lydgate, the new, young surgeon. Lydgate thinks she is a fine girl, but too earnest. She wants too many reasons for everything. He prefers the company of Rosamond Vincy, the daughter of the mayor. She is beautiful and looks at things from “the proper feminine angle”. Rosamond becomes interested in Lydgate. She prefers to marry a man who is not from Middlemarch, and she believes Lydgate has important, aristocratic relatives.

Rosamond and her brother, Fred, decide to go visit their elderly uncle, Peter Featherstone. Featherstone’s second wife, Mrs. Vincy’s sister, died with no children. She hopes that her own children, especially Fred, will inherit Featherstone’s wealth. Featherstone accuses Fred of borrowing money for gambling debts, using his possible inheritance of Featherstone’s wealth as security. He names Mr. Bulstrode, Fred’s uncle, as the man who could prove or disprove the rumor. Bulstrode, a wealthy banker, would know everything about the borrowing or lending of money. Featherstone demands that Fred secure a letter from Bulstrode confirming or denying the rumor. Mary Garth, Featherstone’s niece by his first marriage, is charged with the care of the sick old man. Fred is also madly in love with her. He asks Rosamond if Mary mentioned anything about him. He fears that Mary has heard the rumor about his gambling debts. Rosamond replies that Mary only said that he is unsteady and that she would refuse to marry Fred if he proposed.

16.4.2. Book II

Bulstrode plans to have Lydgate as superintendent of the new Fever Hospital. Farebrother warns Lydgate that he will incur professional jealousy among other Middlemarch medical men because he wants to reform their outdated treatments. The hospital lies within Mr. Farebrother’s parish, but Bulstrode wishes to elect another clergyman because he doesn’t like Farebrother’s doctrine. He wishes to elect Mr. Tyke as chaplain for the hospital. Lydgate replies that he doesn’t want to become involved in clerical disputes. Lydgate is the orphan son of a military man, and he settled on the medical profession at a young age. His guardians paid for his education, but he is

forced to earn his own living, and he doesn't plan to marry soon. He once fell in love with an actress who killed her husband on stage. She reported that it was an accident, and Lydgate helped clear her of charges. She later confessed that she meant to do it, and he resolved to avoid romantic entanglements for a long while. He wants to discover the tissue that is the most basic building block of life.

Bulstrode arrived in Middlemarch some twenty years ago, and no one knows his origins. He managed to marry Mr. Vincy's sister and ally himself with an important, respectable family. He has an intimate view into the private lives of Middlemarch citizens through their finances. He uses his money as a lever to spread his strict Protestant ethic and to scrutinize its effect on his fellow citizens. Power is his favorite game.

Mr. Vincy arrives, and Lydgate is rescued from the sticky situation. Fred has told his father about Featherstone's request. Bulstrode is reluctant to write the letter because he disapproves of Fred's extravagant habits. He believes that Vincy made a mistake in paying for Fred's expensive college education. Vincy criticizes Bulstrode for moralizing and hints that his sister, Mrs. Bulstrode, will disapprove of Bulstrode's refusal to help her brother's family. Bulstrode agrees to write the letter after a short consultation with his wife.

Fred delivers the letter, and Featherstone gives him one hundred pounds as a gift. Fred retreats to speak with Mary. Fred demands that she promise to marry him, but she refuses. She suggests that he pass his exam as proof that he is not an idler, even though she thinks he would be an unfit clergyman. She refuses to encourage his marriage prospects. He owes one hundred and sixty pounds for a gambling debt. His creditor holds a bill signed by Mary's father as security against the debt.

Lydgate attends dinner at the Vincy household, where the debate over Tyke rages on. Vincy states his preference for Farebrother on matters of doctrine. Lydgate states that he only wants to choose the best man for the job, rather than the person he likes most. The debate turns to reforms of the medical profession, and Lydgate finds himself in the minority when he supports

them. He inadvertently insults the Middlemarch coroner. Farebrother arrives and invites Lydgate to visit him. Lydgate observes Farebrother's skill at card games. Later, he wonders whether Farebrother cares for the money he wins at cards. His thoughts turn to Rosamond. He admires her, but he doesn't plan to marry for some years. Meanwhile, Rosamond believes she will live in aristocratic style as his wife.

Lydgate visits Farebrother and learns that he supports his mother, aunt, and sister on his meager income. He also learns that Tyke is a fervent, strict person. He also learns that Farebrother smokes, gambles, and studies entomology as well. Farebrother warns Lydgate of Middlemarch's petty politics and prejudices. Lydgate's liking for Farebrother increases with greater acquaintance, but he disapproves of Farebrother's gambling, and he knows that Farebrother wants the chaplaincy for the forty-pound salary. Lydgate is also frustrated that his vote will damage his relationship with Bulstrode. He begins to feel the harness of petty Middlemarch politics. During the election, Lydgate votes last, breaking a tie. Farebrother's supporters state that they know how Lydgate will vote and why. The hints insult Lydgate, but he votes for Tyke anyway. Farebrother treats Lydgate no differently than before.

Naumann, a painter friend of Will Ladislav, draws his attention to a beautiful woman on the streets of Rome. The woman is Dorothea. Will informs him of her identity, and Naumann asks him to persuade Dorothea to sit for a portrait. Meanwhile, Dorothea is sobbing. She cannot name the reason for her sadness. She has begun to realize that her marriage is not what she expected it to be. Casaubon states that he wishes to return to his work soon. She hints that he should begin sifting through his notes and writing his book. Casaubon takes her suggestion as criticism. He suggests that she defer to his better judgment. Dorothea, although indignant, bows to his will because the quarrel pains her.

Ladislav visits the Casaubons, but only Dorothea is home. Casaubon arrives, interrupting the conversation. His dry, dark, aged appearance contrasts starkly with Will's sunny, bright youth. Will agrees to dine with them the next

day. Dorothea begs forgiveness for her short temper with him earlier, but peace is not fully restored.

Ladislaw takes Dorothea and Casaubon to visit Naumann's studio. Naumann wants to sketch Dorothea. He flatters Casaubon and asks him to sit as a model for Thomas Aquinas. Afterwards, he asks to do a quick sketch of Dorothea. Will is stricken with an intense admiration for Dorothea. He wishes her to take special notice of him, so he schemes to see her alone. He goes to visit when he knows Casaubon will not be at home. During their conversation, Will declares that he will renounce Casaubon's charity because he wishes to be independent. He hopes to impress Dorothea. She admires his resolve, but she pleads that he never mock Casaubon's work again. Dorothea reports Will's plan to Casaubon. He replies that Will is of little interest to him except as an object of duty, and he asks her not to mention him again.

16.4.3. Book III

Fred did not want to go to his father about his debt, because Mr. Vincy tends to rage about his expensive habits. He settled on Caleb Garth, Mary's father, who had always liked Fred. However, the family has little money, because Garth failed in the building business. He makes his living managing the estate of wealthy landowners. Mrs. Garth, a former schoolteacher, supplements their income by giving lessons. Garth did not tell his wife that he co-signed a debt for Fred Vincy. Fred attends a fair, sells his horse, and buys another with Featherstone's gift. He hopes to sell the new horse at a profit and pay his debt. The new horse turns out to be a nasty one, however, and lames itself during a struggle. Fred, miserable at his bad luck, resolves to confess his inability to pay his debt. He visits the Garth home and tells Mrs. Garth.

Mrs. Garth must part with all the money that she has saved to pay the fee to apprentice her fifteen-year-old son to a trade. They have to ask Mary to part with some of her own savings to cover the rest of the debt. Fred apologizes generously and rides to Stone Court, Featherstone's estate, to confess all to Mary. Mrs. Garth expresses deep disappointment in Fred and scolds her husband for being foolish enough to co-sign the debt. Fred arrives

at Stone Court and declares to Mary that she will think of him as a good-for-nothing. He suggests that she ask Featherstone to advance the money to apprentice her brother, but Mary replies that her family prefers earning their money to begging for it. She accuses him of being selfish because he does not think about the consequences others suffer as a result of his actions. Garth arrives to collect a portion of her savings and tells her that he fears that Fred is not to be trusted. Mary assures her father that she will not engage herself to Fred if he remains so irresponsible. Featherstone lets Mary know that he is aware of what has occurred, and he criticizes her father's lack of financial sense.

Fred catches a terrible fever, but Mr. Wrench, the Vincy family doctor, says that it is not serious. The medicines he prescribes, however, have no effect. Mrs. Vincy catches sight of Lydgate, so she asks him to examine her son. He diagnoses Fred with typhoid fever. Mr. Vincy is furious with Wrench's mistake, so he tells Wrench his opinion of him and names Lydgate as the new family doctor. Wrench is insulted, and Lydgate makes an enemy.

Meanwhile, Featherstone sends messages wishing Fred well and urging him to visit Stone Court when he is able. Fred listens to the message, hoping for a scrap of information concerning Mary. Lydgate feels a growing attachment to Rosamond, so he looks forward to the end of Fred's illness. Flirtation is all very nice, but he still sticks to his plan to defer any romantic entanglements for a period of years. Meanwhile, Rosamond dreams of marrying, ridding herself of boring Middlemarch society, and choosing all the best furnishings for her new home. Ned Plymdale and other men who hoped to court Rosamond become increasingly jealous. Lydgate begins to build his medical practice despite his growing feud with other medical men. One day a servant of Sir James arrives to ask him to visit Lowick Manor. After returning home from Rome, Dorothea contemplates the portrait of Casaubon's ill-fated aunt and feels a reluctant kinship with her because she experienced marriage difficulties. Brooke comments to her that Casaubon looks pale. Celia tells Dorothea that she is engaged to Sir James Chettam. Casaubon thought he had found everything he wanted and more in Dorothea: a ready helpmate with "the purely appreciative, unambitious

abilities of her sex.” He wanted a wife who would admire him uncritically, but he doesn’t experience the bliss he expected.

Two letters from Ladislav arrive, and Casaubon reports that Ladislav suggests that he would like to visit Lowick Manor. Casaubon tells her he must decline because Will’s presence would distract him from work. Irritated, Dorothea responds that she could not take pleasure in anything that would displease him. Casaubon begs her to drop the subject. They work for a short while until Casaubon collapses with some kind of fit. They send for Sir James, who suggests that they have Lydgate examine Casaubon. Lydgate advises Casaubon to be satisfied with moderate work and frequent relaxation. In private, Dorothea begs him to tell her if she is to blame for Casaubon’s heart attack. He tells her that she is not guilty. He states that Casaubon could live another fifteen years only if he is careful to follow Lydgate’s advice. Dorothea reads Ladislav’s letters and requests that Mr. Brooke write Will and tell him not to come to Lowick because Casaubon is ill. Brooke invites Will to come and stay at Tipton Grange without telling Dorothea.

Selina Plymdale, Ned Plymdale’s mother, tells Mrs. Bulstrode that she believes Rosamond and Lydgate are secretly engaged. Mrs. Bulstrode visits Rosamond to ask her about her secret engagement. Rosamond informs her that she has not become secretly engaged to Lydgate. Mrs. Bulstrode warns Rosamond that Lydgate is not wealthy and that the medical profession is not likely to make him wealthy. Rosamond tells her that she is sure Lydgate has good connections, so he must not be poor.

Mrs. Bulstrode hints to Lydgate that Rosamond has gotten the wrong idea. Lydgate resolves to stay away from the Vincy household. Rosamond becomes very unhappy. However, one day she has to go to see Mr. Vincy because Featherstone’s health is beginning to fail. Vincy is not home, but Lydgate sees Rosamond, whose obvious heartache touches him. She begins to cry, and he kisses her tears away. He leaves the Vincy household as an engaged man. He asks Mr. Vincy’s permission to marry Rosamond. Vincy is so delighted that Featherstone is on the brink of death—he hopes Fred will inherit his

estate—that he gives his blessings.

The news of Featherstone's imminent demise brings all of his relatives to Stone Court. They all watch one another suspiciously and quarrel over who deserves to get Featherstone's money and land. Featherstone refuses to see any of them. One night, Featherstone tells Mary that he has written two wills, and he plans to burn one of them. He asks her to open his iron chest and take out the will inside it. She refuses. He is too weak to do it himself, so he tries to bribe her. Mary says she won't compromise her reputation. Featherstone dies that night clasping his would-be bribe money and the key to his iron chest.

16.4.4. Book IV

Featherstone's funeral is large and impressive in accordance with his wishes. Dorothea and the Brookes watch the funeral from a window. They observe a frog-eyed stranger in attendance. Celia informs Dorothea that Ladislav is staying at Tipton Grange. The news displeases Casaubon. He believes that Dorothea asked Mr. Brooke to invite Ladislav to Tipton Grange. She cannot explain in front of the others that she had nothing to do with his presence in Middlemarch. All of Featherstone's relatives attend the reading of the will, as does the frog-eyed stranger. Rumor has it that his name is Mr. Rigg and that he is Featherstone's illegitimate son. Featherstone's lawyer, Mr. Standish, reads the earlier will first. Featherstone leaves small bequests to his siblings, which causes a flurry of indignant outbursts. The first will leaves ten thousand pounds to Fred, but the land is left to Joshua Rigg, who is to take the name of Featherstone.

The second will revokes everything except some small bequests. Joshua Rigg receives everything else excepting some property to be used for the erection of some almshouses in Featherstone's name. Mary wonders if her decision to refuse Featherstone's last request deprived Fred of his ten thousand pounds. Fred laments that he will have to become a clergyman after all.

Mr. Vincy regards Fred's idleness with increased severity and determines to send Fred back to school to pass his examination. Mr. Vincy resolves to

revoke his consent to Rosamond's marriage. However, Rosamond is determined to have her way. Vincy also makes it clear that he won't advance any money should he and Rosamond get into financial straits.

Lydgate arranges to rent a nice home in preparation for married life. Lydgate decides to hasten the marriage and the purchase of furnishings for his new home. His savings begin disappearing rapidly, so he begins buying on credit. Rosamond insists on visiting Lydgate's uncle, Sir Godwin, during their wedding journey. She begins planning to have Lydgate leave Middlemarch and find a practice elsewhere.

Meanwhile, Mr. Brooke hires Will Ladislaw as editor of the *Pioneer*, a newspaper he has purchased. Ladislaw believes Casaubon wronged Dorothea in marrying her, so he resolves to stay near her and watch over her. He sets out to visit Dorothea. Dorothea regrets that Casaubon will not hire a secretary. He announces that he plans to stay in Middlemarch. Dorothea reports this information to Casaubon. The news greatly distresses him. He believes that Will feels contempt for him. Without telling her, Casaubon writes Will requesting that he leave Middlemarch, because he feels his chosen profession reflects badly on him. Dorothea asks Casaubon to leave half his wealth to Will upon his death to make amends for the disinheritance of his grandmother. Casaubon orders her to cease interference in his relationship with Will. He suspects Will and Dorothea are conspiring against him. Meanwhile, Will writes to state that he will not leave Middlemarch. Casaubon forbids Will to come to Lowick again.

Sir James and the Cadwalladers discuss Brooke's political ambitions and hope that the public embarrassment will prompt him to improve the conditions on his estate. Sir James attempts to convince Brooke to hire Garth to manage his estate, but he is unable to succeed. Sir James convinces Dorothea to aid in reforming Brooke. Dorothea expresses admiration that he plans to make the conditions on his own estate coincide with his political ambitions to "enter Parliament as a member who cares for the improvement of the people."

Farebrother arrives to deliver a message on Fred's behalf. Fred has left

to return to college, and his shame over his debt prevented him from delivering his farewell in person. He reports that Fred has asked him to try and convince Mr. Vincy to allow Fred to choose a profession other than the Church. Mr. Garth plays with the idea of taking Fred into his business, but Mrs. Garth thinks his family would never allow it. He also tells his wife that it appears that Mr. Bulstrode plans to buy Stone Court from Joshua Rigg Featherstone.

Joshua Rigg Featherstone argues with John Raffles, his abusive stepfather. Raffles hassles him for money, but Rigg will pay his mother a weekly allowance and no more. Raffles notices a letter signed by Mr. Bulstrode and carries it away with him.

Despite all of her devoted care, Casaubon is convinced that Dorothea judges him harshly. His speculations regarding Will and Dorothea are full of suspicion and jealousy. He believes she is vulnerable to Will's manipulation. He resolves to protect Dorothea from Will's machinations. He consults Lydgate about the state of his health. Lydgate replies that his health is fragile, but he could still live another fifteen years.

16.4.5. Book V

Dorothea visits Lydgate's home to ask if Casaubon consulted him because of new health problems. Lydgate is not home, but she discovers that Will is there visiting with Rosamond. Will offers to go to the New Hospital to fetch Lydgate, but Dorothea chooses to go to the hospital herself. She does not want to speak with Will, because she knows she could not tell Casaubon about it without upsetting him. She also doesn't want to hide things from her husband. Dorothea's abrupt departure mortifies Will, and he suspects he has fallen in her opinion. Rosamond teases Will by saying he worships Dorothea. Lydgate sets Dorothea's mind to rest about Casaubon's health.

Public opinion of Lydgate's support of reform of the medical profession is divided. Lydgate's sparing use of drugs arouses distrust in potential patients, professional jealousy in other doctors, and anger in the local apothecaries.

His habit of sometimes contradicting other doctors' methods angers and embarrasses his colleagues. However, Lydgate's successful treatment of some serious illnesses balances the public distrust somewhat.

Bulstrode would be happy to pay for everything at the hospital in return for the exclusive right to manage it, except for the fact that he wishes to purchase Stone Court from Joshua Rigg Featherstone. Therefore, he must secure large donations for the hospital. He gives Lydgate full authority over the treatment of the patients. Other doctors can consult, but they cannot contravene Lydgate's decisions. Every medical man in town refuses to visit the Fever Hospital. Rosamond tells Lydgate that she wishes he weren't a medical man. Lydgate tells her that she cannot love him if she can't love the medical man in him.

Casaubon suspects that Will plans to fool Dorothea into marrying him when she becomes a widow in order to get possession of his wealth. However, Will worships Dorothea for other reasons. He plans to go to Lowick Church during services in order to catch a glimpse of her, even though it would be an outright defiance of Casaubon's prohibition. He goes nevertheless, but he regrets his impetuous action immediately because Dorothea pales when she sees him. Dorothea is upset that her husband continues in refusing to speak to Will. Casaubon's health continues to decline. Later that night, Casaubon asks Dorothea to make a promise. She asks him to defer the matter until the next morning. In the morning Casaubon takes a walk. Dorothea resolves to promise whatever Casaubon wants and searches for him on the grounds. She finds him seated on a bench and discovers that he has died.

The day after Casaubon's burial, Sir James and Mr. Brooke discuss a codicil to his will. Casaubon has forbidden Dorothea to marry Will Ladislaw. Sir James demands that Brooke send Ladislaw out of the country, but Brooke says that he can't ship Will off like a head of cattle. They resolve to keep the codicil a secret from Dorothea, but they fear that gossip will soon endanger Dorothea's reputation. Dorothea insists that she look through Casaubon's papers. She wants to find some clue about the unspecified promise he wanted of her.

Celia reveals the details of the codicil. If Dorothea were to marry Will, she would be stripped of Casaubon's property. The knowledge that Casaubon viewed her with suspicion embitters Dorothea.

Lydgate tells Dorothea to consider allowing Farebrother to take over the parish at Lowick instead of Tyke.

Will doesn't know of Casaubon's codicil. He only knows that Brooke arranges for him to be at Tipton Grange as little as possible. He concludes that Dorothea's friends want him to stay away on her account. He wonders if they view him with suspicion. He despairs at the growing chasm between them and considers leaving the neighborhood, but he wants to coach Brooke for the Parliamentary elections.

Brooke gives an election speech. He notices an effigy of himself held above the shoulders of the crowd.

Farebrother learns that he is to have the Lowick parish. His mother, aunt, and sister urge him to court Mary Garth now that he has sufficient income to marry. Fred, having taken his degree, requests that Farebrother ask Mary if there is any chance that she would marry him. Farebrother assures Mary that her refusal to burn Featherstone's second will made no difference in Fred's lot. It would have been valid regardless. He asks Mary about her feelings for Fred. Mary states that she won't marry Fred if he becomes a clergyman and if he doesn't settle on a steady occupation. Farebrother hints that he himself loves her. Mary says that she loves Fred too much to give him up for another. Feeling pained for his loss and proud for having done his duty, Farebrother leaves to deliver the message.

John Raffles learns that Bulstrode purchased Stone Court from his stepson, Rigg Featherstone. Bulstrode bribes Raffles to stay away from Middlemarch. Raffles could damage Bulstrode's reputation as an eminent Christian by revealing the fact that Bulstrode contrived to prevent his first wife from finding her missing daughter and grandchild. The missing daughter's married name was Ladislaw.

16.4.6. Book VI

Dorothea returns to Lowick Manor. She wishes to get to know Farebrother's household better. She also wishes to hear some word of Will, but she fears asking about him directly. Will himself chooses to visit her at Lowick. Will tells Dorothea that he plans to depart from Middlemarch soon, hoping to elicit some sign of strong feeling from her. Sir James arrives and interrupts their visit. He treats Will with disdain, arousing Will's indignation and pride and Dorothea's sadness. Mrs. Cadwallader connives to marry Dorothea off as soon as her period of mourning ends. Everyone hopes that a speedy marriage will cut short any malicious gossip regarding her relationship with Will. Irritated at such meddling, Dorothea declares that she will never marry again.

Dorothea hires Caleb Garth to manage her estate. On her behalf, he negotiates with a company wishing to purchase rights to build a railway through Lowick parish.

Garth is angry that he cannot work without his assistant, so Fred offers to help with the day's work. Fred asks Garth if he would consider hiring him. He confesses his love for Mary and informs Garth that she has refused to marry him if he becomes a clergyman. Garth tells him to report to his office early the next morning. He decides to consult his wife before taking any steps, however. He tells her he wants to hire Fred. He also tells her about Mary's conditions for marrying Fred. Mrs. Garth is disappointed that Farebrother seems to have no chance of marrying her daughter.

Fred arrives at Garth's office in the morning, and Garth asks him to demonstrate his handwriting. Fred's handwriting is terrible, but Garth decides to give him a chance.

Fred visits the Garth household to speak with Mrs. Garth. He wishes to win her goodwill. She tells him that Mary's willingness to consider marrying him surprised her. She says that he made a mistake in asking Farebrother to speak to Mary on his behalf. She admonishes him for thinking of his own

wants without considering what his wishes might cost others. Astonished, Fred asks if Farebrother loves Mary too. She confirms his speculation. Fred walks to Lowick to find Mary. He finds her in the company of Farebrother's mother, aunt, and sister. Farebrother returns home and contrives to allow Fred and Mary some time alone together. When they are alone, Fred declares that he has no chance, because she will probably marry Farebrother after all. Mary assures Fred that Farebrother has not tried to win her away from him and admonishes him for his unfair distrust of Farebrother. Fred is relieved, but he stills feels an intense jealousy.

Captain Lydgate, Lydgate's cousin and son of Sir Godwin, comes to visit. The captain takes Rosamond out riding. Lydgate forbids her to go riding again because of her pregnancy. Rosamond defies him; she suffers an accident and miscarries. Rosamond wants to ask her father for money, but Lydgate forbids it. She tries to persuade him to sell everything and leave Middlemarch, but he refuses. He asks her to choose some of their dishes and her jewelry to return. She sullenly places all of her jewelry in front of Lydgate and tells him to choose everything himself. Lydgate relents and tells her to keep her jewelry.

Gossip concerning the codicil to Casaubon's will spreads throughout Middlemarch. Rosamond mentions it to Lydgate, who knows more than most. He advises Rosamond not to mention it to Will. Will knows nothing of the codicil until Rosamond defies her husband's advice and teases him about it. She is surprised to find that Will knew nothing of it. She is unhappy with her marriage, and she has already unsuccessfully tried to get money from her father.

Bulstrode hires Will to attend an auction and bid for a painting that Mrs. Bulstrode wants. Will meets John Raffles there. Raffles says he knew Will's mother and that her parents made a fortune by selling stolen goods.

In his youth, Bulstrode met Mr. Dunkirk, a pawnbroker, at church and befriended him. He became a partner in the business and slowly discovered that they were selling stolen goods. Dunkirk died, leaving his wife a wealthy

woman. Her son died. She wanted to marry Bulstrode, but she asked him to locate her missing daughter before she would consent. Bulstrode hired Raffles to find her. The daughter, Sarah Ladislaw, and her small child, Will, were found, but Bulstrode bribed Raffles to keep silent. He married Mrs. Dunkirk and received all of her wealth upon her death. Bulstrode tells Will that he married his grandmother and that he became wealthy as a result. He offers to give Will a fair share of the inheritance that would have come to him if Bulstrode had located Will's mother. Later, Bulstrode admits his guilt and says he wants to atone for it. Will asks if Bulstrode's wealth derives from the thievery Raffles hinted at. Bulstrode replies that he entered the business after it had already become established. Will refuses Bulstrode's tainted money, because he doesn't want to do something that would disappoint Dorothea.

16.4.7. Book VII

Farebrother catches Lydgate alone after dinner at the Vincys. He thanks Lydgate for freeing him of his gambling habit by convincing Dorothea to give him the Lowick parish. He says that he is chastened to realize how much a man's good behaviour depends on not being in want of money. Lydgate coldly replies that all money seems to come by chance, especially money earned in a profession. Lydgate's fatalistic attitude surprises Farebrother. He intuits that Lydgate is having trouble, so he hints that a man should depend on his friends. Lydgate continues to behave coldly. His distrust wounds Farebrother. Lydgate is so deeply in debt that he needs at least one thousand pounds. He tells Rosamond that he wishes to move to a smaller, cheaper house. Ned Plymdale and his new wife are looking for a suitable home. They are wealthy, and Lydgate thinks they will take the house as well as most of the furniture. Lydgate plans to employ Trumbell to negotiate the deal with Plymdale. Rosamond pleads that Lydgate write Sir Godwin and ask for money. Lydgate refuses.

Rosamond secretly pays a visit to Trumbell and revokes Lydgate's order. She needles the information out of Lydgate that a thousand pounds is

necessary to remain in their present home. She secretly writes Sir Godwin asking for that sum. Lydgate tells her that he plans to instruct Trumbell to advertise their home in the papers, and Rosamond confesses that she revoked his order. Lydgate is furious. He begins thinking about traveling to see his uncle, Sir Godwin, to ask for money.

A letter from Sir Godwin arrives ordering Lydgate never again to set his wife to write him when he has something to ask. He has no money to spare, because the rest of the family is continually draining him. Lydgate rails at his wife, but she responds with stubborn silence. Finally, she tells him that he has made her life unpleasant and that marriage has brought hardships upon her. She cries and Lydgate tenderly consoles her.

Lydgate goes to the Green Dragon to speak with Mr. Bambridge about trading his good horse for a cheaper hack. Bambridge is not there, however, so Lydgate plays billiards to pass the time. The spectators begin placing bets. Before long, Lydgate is betting on his own play and winning. Meanwhile, Fred Vincy arrives. Lydgate's frenzied betting startles him. He considers placing some bets, but Lydgate's strange behaviour kills the impulse. Lydgate has begun to lose, but he doesn't stop betting.

Fred receives the message that Farebrother is waiting to speak with him downstairs. Hoping to save Lydgate from further loss, Fred asks him to act as a shield because Farebrother is sure to castigate him. Lydgate agrees. After some small talk, Lydgate departs, and Farebrother hints that he will court Mary himself if Fred falls into his former extravagant ways. Fred promises to stay away from the Green Dragon. Lydgate's financial troubles reach fever pitch. He learns that Rosamond has twice asked her father for money and been refused. She presses him to leave Middlemarch and practice elsewhere. Bulstrode suggests that Lydgate approach Dorothea and ask her to increase her contribution accordingly. Lydgate swallows his pride and asks for a loan. Bulstrode refuses and tells Lydgate that he should declare bankruptcy. Looking rather ill, Raffles appears at Bulstrode's home on Christmas Eve and spends the night. Bulstrode sends him away the next morning with

a hundred pounds. Bulstrode's wife is uneasy, so he tells her he is merely taking care of the "wretched creature".

Anxious to earn Lydgate's goodwill, Bulstrode tells him that he has changed his mind and wants to loan Lydgate the money. Enormously relieved, Lydgate goes away with a check for a thousand pounds. Exhausted, Bulstrode asks the housekeeper to take over. The housekeeper knocks on his door and tells him that Raffles is begging for brandy. After a moment's hesitation, Bulstrode gives her the key to the liquor cabinet. Lydgate returns in the morning to watch Raffles take his dying breath. Lydgate is puzzled at the change, but he is so happy to be saved from bankruptcy that he thinks nothing of it. Bulstrode is doomed. They also know that the auction of Lydgate's furniture was canceled suddenly. Suspicions grow about the circumstances of Raffles' death and Lydgate's sudden freedom from debt. The gossip spreads like wildfire.

Bulstrode attends a town meeting to discuss sanitation measures. Every important Middlemarch citizen attends the meeting. Lydgate notices strange looks when he and Bulstrode take their seats. A member of the board, Mr. Hawley, announces that there are scandalous accusations against Bulstrode. He demands that Bulstrode deny them or resign from all public positions. Lydgate notices Bulstrode shrink with misery. The other men request that Bulstrode leave the meeting.

Dorothea learns of whole sad story from Farebrother and Mr. Brooke after they return from the meeting. She asks how they could believe Lydgate could be guilty. She demands that they learn the truth and clear him.

16.4.8. Book VIII

Dorothea asks Farebrother if it would be possible to approach Lydgate about the scandal and offer help. Farebrother tells her that Lydgate may not respond positively to questioning. Sir James says that they cannot manage another man's life for him. Dorothea decides to wait until she approaches Lydgate about taking over Bulstrode's interest in the hospital before broaching the subject of the scandal. Lydgate deduces that Bulstrode loaned him the

money to bind him through a strong obligation in the event that Raffles disclosed any damaging details about his past. The townspeople avoid him, and he begins losing clients. He resolves to stay in Middlemarch and face the worst, but the thought of Rosamond's reaction pains him deeply.

Bulstrode knows that his wife returned home, claiming that she wasn't well, so he perceives that she has heard everything. He prepares himself to hear her say that she is leaving him. She dresses herself in mourning clothing and goes to see him. He will not look at her. A wave of compassion hits her when she sees his shrunken frame. He bursts into tears with her sitting by his side. His confession and her resolve to stick with him are unspoken.

Happy to be free of debt, Rosamond sends out invitations to a dinner party but they are declined. She visits her parents. They tell her everything and say that Lydgate will probably have to leave town. Dorothea summons Lydgate to discuss her involvement in the hospital. He tells her not to depend on him to manage the hospital, as he may have to leave town. Dorothea states her belief in his innocence and says that she wants to clear his name. Her support touches Lydgate deeply. He tells her that he must consider Rosamond's happiness, so he is disposed to leave Middlemarch. She offers to speak with Rosamond to show her that they are not completely abandoned. Dorothea decides to take over Lydgate's debt to Bulstrode. She sets out to visit Rosamond with a check for one thousand pounds. She encounters Will Ladislaw clasping Rosamond's hands. Rosamond has been crying. Dorothea recalls all the gossip concerning Will's relationship with Rosamond, so she departs abruptly. She considers Lydgate's marriage troubles under a new light, and she is ready more than ever to be his champion.

Will knows exactly what Dorothea thinks. He is shattered at the loss of her good opinion. Rosamond tries to touch his coat sleeve, but he angrily shakes her off. She sarcastically tells him to go after Dorothea. They quarrel, and Will leaves her home in a huff. Later, Rosamond collapses sobbing into Lydgate's arms. He doesn't know the cause of her depression.

Will returns to the Lydgate home later. Lydgate informs him that Rosamond

is ill. He tells Ladislav that his own name is included in the present scandal. Dorothea's anger and disappointment dissipate. She resolves to see Rosamond again. Lydgate consents to allow Dorothea to take over his debt from Bulstrode. Dorothea tells Rosamond that she, Farebrother, Sir James, and Mr. Brooke all support Lydgate wholeheartedly. Rosamond bursts into hysterical crying. Dorothea comforts her and counsels her to cling to her husband. Rosamond tells Dorothea that she is wrong to think badly of Ladislav. She tells her that Will has done nothing wrong. She hints that Will loves another woman. Lydgate and Rosamond reach an uneasy peace.

However, he still must suffer the gossip about his parentage. People say that he is the grandson of a thieving Jewish pawnbroker. They kiss, but Will declares sorrowfully that they can never be married. Dorothea replies that she cares nothing for her wealth and that her heart will break if they must part. She has a sufficient income from her deceased parents and Mr. Brooke. They become engaged. Sir James reacts with anger, partly because he dislikes Ladislav and partly because he wants his son to inherit both Tipton and Freshitt. Dorothea decides to go to London and live with Will Ladislav.

Bulstrode prepares to leave Middlemarch. He doesn't want to sell Stone Court. He asks his wife if there was anything she would like him to do. She asks him to do something for Lydgate and Rosamond, but Bulstrode tells her that Lydgate has refused any further service from him. He tells her that Garth once planned to manage Stone Court in order to place Fred there. Since Garth declined to do business with him, he tells his wife to ask Garth to enter into an agreement with her.

Garth approaches Mary to see if she still wants to marry Fred considering the scandal concerning his uncle Bulstrode and his brother-in-law, Lydgate. She says that she still loves Fred, and that there has been no change in her plans. He tells her of the offer he has received from Mrs. Bulstrode. Fred is delighted at the news. He and Mary plan to marry shortly after he settles into Stone Court.

Fred and Mary settle into a solidly happy marriage and have three sons. They never become rich, but they manage comfortably. Lydgate leaves Middlemarch and sets up a successful practice elsewhere. He still considers himself a failure and dies at fifty. His marriage never becomes a peaceful or wholly happy arrangement. He never has anything but praise for Dorothea, which continually arouses Rosamond's jealousy. Rosamond later marries a wealthy physician. Will Ladislaw becomes an ardent public man working for reforms. Dorothea remains happy in her position as wife and mother. Dorothea's son inherits Tipton Grange.

16.5. Let Us Sum Up

The lesson, through the summaries of novel's chapters, offers a close look into the way that people in England lived, worked, and behaved, as represented by George Eliot. In fact, the provincial life that Eliot portrays in this novel is different from what even some of the characters expected. The developing relationships of four couples form the backbone of the novel as these young people learn to relate to each other and the world around them.

16.6. Multiple Choice Questions

1. When was Middlemarch published?

- a) 1800-01
- b) 1831-32
- c) 1871-72
- d) 1894-95

2. Whom does Tertius Lydgate marry?

- a) Rosamond Vincy
- b) Mary Garth
- c) Celia Brooke
- d) Miss Noble

3. What is the name of the Garth's oldest son, a well regarded young scholar of solid character?

- a) Edward
- b) Harold
- c) William
- d) Christy

4. Which sanctimonious character was involved early in his career in a seedy business and cheated Will Ladislaw's mother out of an inheritance?

- a) Mr. Bulstrode
- b) Mr. Cadwallader
- c) Tertius Lydgate
- d) Mr. Featherstone

5. What plagues Tertius Lydgate and places a severe strain on his marriage?

- a) a shadowy past
- b) substantial debt
- c) alcoholism
- d) a secret affair

6. Who is the blackmailer who emerges later in the novel?

- a) Mr. Dill
- b) Mr. Rigg
- c) Mr. Baldwin
- d) Mr. Raffles

7. Whom does Dorothea Brooke marry after the death of her first husband?

- a) Tertius Lydgate
- b) Will Ladislav
- c) Sir James Chettam
- d) Mr. Featherstone

8. What is the subtitle of *Middlemarch*?

- a) A Study of Provincial Life
- b) A Study in Manners
- c) A Village Apart
- d) Village Life and Manners

9. George Eliot is a pen name of which person?

- a) Mary Anne Evans
- b) Elizabeth Burnett
- c) Henrietta Scott
- d) Constance Jones

10. Whom does Mr. Brooke employ as his assistant in his unsuccessful bid to win a seat in Parliament?

- a) Mr. Casaubon
- b) Mr. Bulstrode
- c) Will Ladislav
- d) Mr. Featherstone

16.7. Examination Oriented Questions

1. The novel *Middlemarch* carries the sub title as “a study of provincial

life”. Discuss if this is appropriate?

2. Draw a character sketch of Dorothea Brooke.
3. Draw a contrast between two women characters — Rosamond Vincy and Dorothea Brooke.

16.8. Answer Key

Correct options: 1. c, 2. a, 3. d, 4. a, 5. b, 6. d, 7. b, 8. a, 9. a, 10. c

Ans. 2. Character sketch of Dorothea Brooke

Dorothea is an exceptional woman: she is smart, pious, and beautiful, and the governing principle of her character is her desire to help the needy, seen in her interest in redesigning the local farmers’ cottages. Described as a modern-day St. Theresa, “helped by no coherent social faith and order which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul,” unable to find an outlet for her spiritual needs in the England of 1830s. Eliot clearly indicates from the very beginning that Dorothea has a mind of her own: “[t]he thing which seemed to her best, she wanted to justify by the completest knowledge; and not to live in a pretended admission of rules which were never acted on” (Eliot, III). Dorothea is also stubborn and strong-willed, going against common advice to wed Casaubon, a much older man.

Even though it is obvious that Dorothea would rather work on improving the cottages, she is reminded of her “feminine” mind over and over by her uncle, Mr. Brooke. When Dorothea mentions her indifference towards domestic music and feminine arts during a visit by Mr. Casaubon, Mr. Brooke quickly remarks that “there is a lightness about the feminine mind—a touch and go—music, the fine arts, that kind of thing—they should study those up to a certain point” (Eliot, 112). Since Dorothea is unable to make good of her intellect, she basically decides to accept the marriage proposal from the man who seems to be the most intelligent in Middlemarch, Mr. Casaubon. Mr. Brooke, whose mind is traditionalist in some aspects and progressive in other, leaves the decision of who to marry up to Dorothea. This shows that he says things

dismissive of Dorothea's intellect not because he wants to be insulting but because notions like these are so deeply rooted in the society that they seem completely normal.

Dorothea marries Casaubon but the marriage does not fulfil her expectations. Since she was imagining herself almost like one of Milton's daughters, helping the blind poet, it is rather a disappointment for her that Casaubon is quite secretive about his work. He does, however, consent to teach Dorothea the basics of Latin and Greek. Casaubon is happy that Dorothea is so submissive and wants to be taught, indeed it seems that all Casaubon needs is a completely submissive woman. On the other hand, Dorothea is obviously not studying classic languages just to please Casaubon. Since as a woman she has practically no possibilities to obtain institutional education in these subjects, she uses Casaubon, so to say.

During honeymoon in Rome, Dorothea for the first time fully realizes that her marriage is something completely different than what she expected. While Dorothea is unhappy, Casaubon thinks that he has found a perfect wife and assistant with "the purely appreciative, unambitious abilities of her sex" (Eliot, Ch. 11). Casaubon does not even think about whether he is adequate for Dorothea because "society never made the preposterous demand that a man should think as much about his own qualifications for making a charming girl happy as he thinks of hers for making himself happy." (498).

The marriage works for some time in this strange mode where neither Casaubon, nor Dorothea is really happy. When Will Ladislaw's visits to Dorothea start being more numerous Casaubon starts to be silently jealous. Casaubon's jealousy progressively grows stronger and after some time he writes a letter to Will saying that he is no longer invited in the Lowick Manor, Mr. Casaubon's house. Will is about to leave Middlemarch but then he is approached by Mr. Brooke, who has bought local newspaper in hopes of being elected into the Parliament. Since he considers Will to be a smart man with a brain for such matters, he is naturally Brooke's first choice as the editor of the newspaper. Will accepts and stays in Middlemarch, which angers Casaubon even more.

After some time, however, Mr. Casaubon dies of heart attack. Dorothea is devastated and then Mr. Brooke and Sir James Chettam find out that Mr. Casaubon amended his last will in such a way that Dorothea would lose the whole inheritance if she married Will Ladislaw. Casaubon does not prevent her from marrying altogether; he is just very particular about Dorothea not marrying Will. Sir James is especially furious about the fact that Casaubon would do something like this. Interestingly, in the very end of the novel when Dorothea marries Will after all, it is Sir James who finds it unacceptable and disreputable to marry like this. It should be noted however that Sir James acts as a voice of tradition in *Middlemarch* and thus it is quite understandable that he would be against a widow's marriage.

16.9 Suggested Reading

1. Arnold Kettle : *An Introduction to the English Novel-Volume Two: Henry James to the Present.*
2. Georg Lukacs : *The Historical Novel.*
3. Raymond Williams : *The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence.*
4. Raymond Williams : *Culture and Society : 1780-1950.*
5. Wayne C. Booth : *The Rhetoric of Fiction.*
6. G.K. Chesterton : *Charles Dickens : A Critical Study.*
7. Kathleen Tillotson : *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties.*
8. Morris-Shapira (ed) : *Henry James : Selected Literary Criticism.*
9. F. R. Leavis : *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad.*
10. Percy Lubbock : *The Craft of Fiction.*
11. Joseph Gold : *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralists.*

GEORGE ELIOT—*MIDDLEMARCH*

STRUCTURE

- 17.1. Objectives
- 17.2. Introduction
- 17.3. A Detailed Analysis of the Novel
- 17.4. Let Us Sum Up
- 17.5. Self-Assessment Questions
- 17.6. Examination Oriented Questions
- 17.7. Answer Key
- 17.8. Suggested Reading

17.1. Objectives

The aim of the lesson is to offer insights into the novel and help learners appreciate the text. It is with an objective of providing an analysis that would improve learners' critical appreciation and textual analysis of the literary text.

17.2. Introduction

George Eliot through her novel *Middlemarch* underscores different nuances of social life towards the end of nineteenth century as the times and conditions were changing in England. The lesson offers a detailed analysis of each section of the novel, bringing out the symbolism, metaphorical suggestions and underlying meanings in the literary text.

17.3. A Detailed Analysis of the Novel

17.3.1. Book I

The Prelude refers to the life and work of Saint Theresa, a sixteenth-century Spanish mystic. She devoted her life to a combination of religious deliberations and practical actions. The narrator states that her “passionate, ideal nature demanded an epic life”. However, there are many “Therasas” who have been born since then without the opportunity to have an epic life. The narrator attributes this to the absence of a “coherent social faith and order” through which they could enact great works. It is obvious that the Prelude positions Dorothea as an unsung Theresa. While the real Theresa is a famous, well-known saint, Dorothea is an ordinary, unknown woman in a small, provincial community.

Eliot uses this metaphor to point out that even the most ordinary life can be extraordinary. Dorothea stands out even in poor dress, she does not meet the general standard of feminine virtue like her sister, Celia. Social convention requires women to avoid too much learning, not have an opinion of their own and to dress with a touch of the coquette. Dorothea is none of these. She doesn't shy away from criticizing and offering a piece of her own mind. Her interest and her participation in politics and social reform make her different from other women. She believes she can do much more in life than being only a home-maker. But since she is a woman, being an intellectual philanthropist becomes a taboo for her. But she thinks she can live out her dreams through Casaubon after becoming his wife. She would then be able to assist Casaubon in his scholarly pursuits and through this role, she also gains access to the education available to men only. Besides, for Dorothea it is unconditional and complete devotion that is the mark of happy companionship, and happy married life. She makes Casaubon into her ideal potential husband, and she will later suffer for her idealism.

From another perspective, it can be said that Dorothea has little self-knowledge. She dreams of submitting herself to an epic theory of self-sacrifice and virtue, but she has more pride than she is aware of. Her social reality and

her idealism do not coincide, and Dorothea will be forced to undergo a process of disillusionment.

Casaubon himself suffers from unrealistic notions regarding the ideal wife. Dorothea may not relate to him as an individual, but he does not relate to Dorothea as an individual either. He wants a completely submissive helpmate. Despite numerous clues, he fails to recognize her stubborn, independent streak. People continually describe Dorothea and Casaubon with opposing metaphors. Casaubon is dry, old, and deathly; Dorothea is young and lively. Dorothea's idealism also leads her to misinterpret the assistance Casaubon gives Will. He helps Will out of a strict notion of duty. Dorothea believes he does so out of a naturally generous nature.

The Vincy family represents the successful middle-class family with upper-class pretensions. The changing social structure brought about by industrialization made upward social mobility possible. Walter Vincy is not a worldly, educated man, but he dreams of offering his children a step up the social ladder. He pays for Fred's expensive college education in order to socialize him into manners and customs of the landed gentry, as well as to prepare him for a career as a clergyman.

For the Vincy daughter, however, the process of upward social mobility is different. Rosamond represents one stereotypical view of women. She has been trained to be a socialite wife by going to an expensive finishing school. Her "education" has molded her into the perfect ornament for a wealthy husband. Rosamond views her future husband with an unrealistic idealism. To her, Lydgate is the mysterious newcomer in town with rumored family connections. She views him as though he stepped out of a conventional romantic novel. Lydgate himself suffers from stereotypical ideals of femininity. He finds Dorothea "troublesome". His ideal wife is an adornment to his life. He believes that he wants an ornament, not a partner. However, he will find that his "ideal" wife isn't necessarily the best wife for him.

17.3.2. Book II

Lydgate is an orphan and a newcomer to Middlemarch. The orphan is

a metaphor for the changing social structure. Before industrialization, familial connections largely determined social status. Family honour largely determined the range of social possibilities for the individual, including marriage and profession. As an orphan, Lydgate is less fettered by familial concerns. Moreover, Lydgate represents the example of an important, and distinctly modern, character type: the self-made man. He represents the growing importance of modern scientific thought, further strengthening his position as herald of modernity. He comes to Middlemarch as a reformer of outdated medical practice, which further marks him as a representative of social change. Moreover, he dislikes his aristocratic relations, and he chose the medical profession against their wishes. A fierce individualism characterizes Lydgate's personality. He disdains petty social politics. For him, the hospital represents a purely professional project, not a social or political entanglement.

Bulstrode was once a newcomer to Middlemarch as well, but method of integration into the community is directly opposed to Lydgate's. Bulstrode took great pains to insert himself deeply into the web of Middlemarch society by marrying Walter Vincy's sister and allying himself with an old, influential family. Bulstrode intends to use Lydgate's professional and personal obligation to him in order to control Lydgate's vote in the clerical dispute. Lydgate does not realize that the new opportunities for social mobility carry disadvantages as well as advantages. He achieves one form of personal independence as a self-made man, but he must deal with matters of professional obligation. Even though Bulstrode is extremely powerful, he too must deal with the constraints within the web of social relations.

In many ways, money performs the function that family honour once did. The growth of the middle class has increased social mobility and freed many individuals from the constraints imposed by ideas of family honour.

Most characters in *Middlemarch* suffer conflicts with independence. The prevalence of these conflicts owes largely to the transitions undergone by most social relations. There is more opportunity for independence because of social mobility; family name and honour don't outright determine an individual's life choices, but they still carry influence. The blurred definition of "debt"

carries social pitfalls. Bulstrode and Featherstone deliberately keep the matter of “debt” indistinct. They leave the question of “debt” somewhere in between its strict financial meaning and the vaguer notion of personal obligation.

Lydgate’s relationship with Farebrother is rife with personal conflicts. He is caught between his friendship with Farebrother and his professional relationship with Bulstrode. The election for the chaplaincy quickly develops into a moral dilemma. Lydgate is a moral man, but he suffers from “spots of commonness”. Like most other characters in *Middlemarch*, he has a number of small prejudices and moral failings related to the need to balance self-interest and other people’s interests.

Lydgate undergoes a process of self-deception to justify giving into Bulstrode’s pressure.

17.3.3. Book III

Fred learns the social cost of the careless pursuit of self-interest. He wants to hide his money problems, and he knows that pursuing a loan through official channels will mean revealing his troubles to his uncle Bulstrode. He chooses to find a co-signer through a more informal channel: friends. He settles on Caleb Garth. Fred soon learns that financial favours obtained on the basis of friendship incur far greater debts than official loans. Unlike a defaulted official loan, his inability to pay means more than the loss of pride, minor personal embarrassment, and a tirade from his father.

The relationships between men and women are characterized with unrealistic, stereotypical ideals. Lydgate’s ideal wife is little more than a beautiful ornament. Rosamond’s ideal exists only in romance novels. Dorothea’s ideal is a “great soul,” not a man. Casaubon’s ideal is an utterly submissive servant. All of these ideals are produced by conventional gender roles. Men and women do not often relate to one another as individuals, but rather through the distorting lens of social expectations and their own self-delusion.

Lydgate’s entanglement in professional politics leads to a further social entanglement. His treatment of Fred draws him into Rosamond’s proximity. He

flirts with her as though he were merely playing a romantic game until social opinion forces him to be a gentleman. His disregard for the rules governing the relationships between men and women leads him into a troubled marriage.

Casaubon's heart attack forces him to face his mortality. His embittered response to Lydgate's advice reveals his fear of dependence. He doesn't want to enter a second childhood or a period of extreme infirmity. Dorothea's anxious concern for his health increases his feelings of helplessness. These personal difficulties generally highlight Casaubon's fear that he is slowly losing his masculine pride. He cannot mold his wife into a model of appreciative submission; she threatens to rival him in conventionally masculine scholarship, and he feels inadequate to deal with her emotionally. He feels threatened in his capacity to do his duty toward Will, both by Dorothea's interference and Will's rejection of his financial assistance. He must rely on Dorothea after his heart attack. He is continually described as old, unattractive, and dry, descriptions that emphasize his frailty and lack of virility.

Whether Lydgate likes it or not, his flirtation with Rosamond is public material. Their mutual interest in one another angers Rosamond's previously frustrated suitors. Lydgate's naive disdain for the importance of the web of social relations has only succeeded in making him a very unpopular man. His belief that he can work with Bulstrode and still remain independent of any personal or professional consequences is equally naive. Rosamond regards Lydgate as a character from a romance novel come to life. Lydgate himself, despite his rational scientific zeal, is attracted to this role. After a bad experience in love, he resolves to avoid romantic entanglements afterwards, but he nevertheless plays the romantic gallant when he sees Rosamond's tears, forgetting the practical matter of his meager income. Like many characters in *Middlemarch*, Lydgate deceives himself.

17.3.4. Book IV

It is significant that everyone in Dorothea's home can watch Featherstone's funeral even though they are not in attendance. This demonstrates that privacy is extremely difficult to maintain in a small community like

Middlemarch. They comment at great length on those who attend the funeral from a vantage point from which they themselves cannot be seen. An individual can never be sure who may be watching, so secrets are difficult to keep.

Featherstone's final defeat is ambiguous. He fails in his attempt to do what he wants at last by burning one of his wills. However, Fred learns of a large inheritance bestowed by the first will only to have it revoked by the second. Featherstone's mercurial, manipulative nature continues jerking Fred's chains from the grave. He displays his wealth with a lavish funeral only to bring a largely neglected, illegitimate son out of the woodworks and leave everything to him. Fred himself was a tool to manipulate and antagonize his other relatives. Featherstone promises Fred a light and comfortable future only to tie a heavy stone to all his dreams.

Rosamond's marriage prospects are affected deeply by the financial misfortunes of her male relatives. Fred's disappointment affects her plans to marry. Her only notion about money is that it will be provided when she wants or needs it.

By now it is quite clear that for many characters in the novel, making the correct choice of a profession is an issue. In those days, industrialization had increased the available options as far as occupations were concerned. On the other hand, when industrialization began, money earned through work carried a stigma. The only really "clean" money was inherited money.

The rise of the middle class accompanied the rise of the strict, moralizing Protestant work ethic.

Bulstrode represents the middle class Victorian morality. He illustrates the ambiguous moral status of earned money. As a banker, he is even more interesting. He makes money with money. In the older paradigms of Christian morality, income generated from the lending of money was actually completely un-Christian. Money-lending was a Jewish occupation. However, Bulstrode is an Evangelical Christian. His money occupies an even greater ambiguous moral status than Vincy's money. He lives by a stricter moral system as well. His strict Christian value system "cleanses" his money somewhat. Moreover, he

uses his money to enforce his moral system on others, making himself the means of “moral improvement” for his fellow Middlemarch citizens.

17.3.5. Book V

Lydgate experiences problems when he continues to ignore the importance of social relations. He concentrates so strongly on reforming the practice of medicine in Middlemarch that he fails to realize the importance of establishing cordial relationships with his colleagues. His professional life cannot be independent of the web of social relations. His resistance to dispensing drugs threatens the livelihood of the local apothecaries. Ironically, it threatens Lydgate’s livelihood as well, because potential patients distrust his treatment, as they are accustomed to receiving drugs.

However, he treats the community of Middlemarch as a passive body on which he can experiment with his reforms. His refusal to recognize the human aspect of the web of multiple social relations entails consequences.

Rosamond’s dream is to live an aristocratic lifestyle. The narrow range of possibilities for self-realization available to women is perhaps partly responsible for Rosamond’s manipulative nature. She can achieve her dream only through a man. She, without much education, certainly cannot hope to earn a fortune on her own, as a man would. Conventional gender roles stifle Rosamond’s natural ambition, and because of her frustrated ambition, both she and her husband are miserable.

Casaubon pursues a similar path with Dorothea. He treats her like a child because he resolves to “protect” her from Will’s supposedly ulterior motives. He convinces himself that Will wants to get Dorothea’s money. A woman’s safety is a man’s concern, not her own. Dorothea’s idealization of self-sacrificing virtue comes to an end. She has tried to submit to Casaubon in accordance with this moral system. However, her idealization of self-sacrifice actually arises from a suppressed pride. She expects appreciation for her submissive self-sacrifice. However, Casaubon considers her self-sacrificing submission part of her duty as a wife, not a mark of extraordinary virtue.

In fact, Casaubon's tragedy is an ordinary human tragedy. Petty jealousy and the small failures of character make his end almost pathetic. However, it is difficult not to sympathize with his struggle to maintain his moral system until the very end. He justified the idea of adding the contemptible codicil by telling himself he was only doing his duty as a husband by providing for Dorothea's protection after his death. He lived continually with the fear that others would discover his self-doubt, and he dies leaving behind the glaring evidence of those very doubts.

Lydgate, however, manages a small triumph. He once deprived Farebrother of a much-needed boost in income. When he voted against Farebrother for the chaplaincy, he furthered his own personal interests and the interests of a wealthy man at the expense of a poor man. In a manner of speaking, Lydgate repays a debt when he speaks with Dorothea on Farebrother's behalf. He secured the financial resources offered by Bulstrode by denying much-needed financial resources to Farebrother, so he now goes against Bulstrode's wish to secure the Lowick parish for Tyke. Lydgate's debt to Farebrother doesn't involve money directly, but money is nevertheless deeply entangled in it.

There is a great deal of irony in Lydgate's redemption. He himself has had a chance to experience the anxiety that minor debts can entail. Lydgate's experience with small financial needs modifies his earlier contempt for the manner in which small, unmet financial needs govern a man's actions. Lydgate himself must now contend with the responsibility of supporting a woman in times of financial troubles.

The greatest irony is that Lydgate never really knows the full extent of the social cost incurred by following one's ambitions at the expense of another person. He didn't know that the marriage prospects of either Farebrother or his sister depended on his vote. Neither does he know that his act of redemption made any bigger difference in Farebrother's life beyond alleviating the pressure to gamble. Eliot clearly demonstrates that ordinary actions made by ordinary people can have a truly significant impact.

Bulstrode's world is about to come crashing down around him. The contradiction between his public self and his private sins is about to come to light. It is money that leaves the trail that Raffles follows. A letter written to Joshua Rigg Featherstone regarding his purchase of Stone Court is the clue that leads his tormentor to him. Bulstrode makes the mistake of using the same tainted money to try to cover the trail by bribing Raffles to leave Middlemarch.

17.3.6. Book VI

Casaubon's unwarranted suspicion and his contemptible codicil compromise Dorothea's reputation. There are few secrets in Middlemarch. Gossip spreads through the community like wildfire. Dorothea's Puritan attitude and behaviour does not coincide with an extramarital affair.

However, standards for men and women are different. Featherstone can bring his illegitimate son out of the woodworks and make him into a landed, wealthy gentleman by tacking on his last name to Rigg and signing a piece of paper. His extramarital sexual activities aren't necessarily damaging. But, the standard of behaviour is a much different matter where a woman is concerned. If Dorothea were suspected of an extramarital affair, even one that had not been consummated, it would destroy her reputation.

Caleb Garth represents the Victorian ideal of the virtue of work. He sees work as a redeeming activity. His primary joy is not the money he receives in payment. He often says he would be glad to do his job for free if it were not for the fact that he has a family to support. Work is an end in itself for Caleb Garth. His basic philosophy of work mirrors the idealized Victorian conception.

Fred, in a manner of speaking, is trying to repay his debt to the Garths. The debt he owes them is not strictly financial. He disappointed their expectations of his honour. They trusted him to be a gentleman and keep his word to pay the loan Garth co-signed for him. He failed to comply with their expectations and caused them a good deal of trouble.

Rosamond's miscarriage is infused with symbolic meaning. The

conventional expectation of wives is that they obey their husbands' wishes. To disobey a husband's wisdom is a transgression of her socially accepted gender role. Moreover, the wife's primary duty is to produce and care for children. Rosamond fails in both respects. Her first transgression is "punished" by the second. Her behavior might inspire harsh criticism, but before one judges, it is necessary to attend to Eliot's rich psychological treatment of Rosamond's character. Her transgression of conventional expectations placed on women's behaviour is met with an unfortunate, regrettable accident. The miscarriage should be read symbolically. It is a symbolic punishment for exercising the power of her free choice. It is a sign that demonstrates in no uncertain way the consequences of her resistance against the constraints of conventional gender roles.

Moreover, Rosamond has an agenda that goes contrary to Lydgate's. He plans to stay in Middlemarch for the long term. She wants to leave. Husband and wife do not form a complementary unit.

Meanwhile, Bulstrode continues using tainted money to cover the trail leading back to its tainted origins. Ironically, Bulstrode's one inability to contradict his outward presentation of himself as an eminent Christian is probably the strongest reason that he fails to save his reputation. He can't lie.

Mary refused to accept bribe money because she knew the trail it would leave behind. Her choice likely saved her reputation. Moreover, Will refuses to accept Bulstrode's barely veiled attempt to bribe him. Bulstrode quickly learns that the power he gained through his tainted money is also the heaviest stone that weighs him down.

17.3.7. Book VII

Lydgate's bitter response to Farebrother's offer of help directly names a major theme in *Middlemarch*. Many of the triumphs and misfortunes of the characters in the novel arise because of combination of their determined action and the vicissitudes of chance. Those characters who do not respect the power of random fluctuations of chance to affect their lives suffer for their hubris. They believe that their success and failure depend solely in their self-determined

actions. Lydgate believes he can control all the variables in his life, that his conscientious professional merit will win him success in Middlemarch. Bulstrode trusts in his ability to control all the variables of his life by using his money to influence people and events.

However, chance plays a significant role. It is impossible to control everything. Bulstrode cannot control the fact that Featherstone's illegitimate son would be Raffles' stepson. He cannot control the chance event that results in Raffles finding a letter he wrote to Rigg Featherstone. Various minor factors affect major life events in the lives of Rosamond, Lydgate, and Bulstrode. If Fred Vincy had never gotten typhoid fever, Lydgate and Rosamond would never have spent such long periods of time in close proximity. It is difficult to predict what would have happened, but Fred's illness clearly served as a catalyst for their relationship.

Rosamond might have reacted differently had she never suffered her miscarriage.

The novel points out the obviously flawed reasoning that leads people to believe the course of their lives can be controlled completely through self-determined action. Bulstrode and Lydgate suffer for their hubris on that count. However, that does not mean that sitting back and letting chance decide everything is any better. Fred illustrates the problems in that approach. His gambling debt is a metaphor for that extreme. Lydgate's despair leads him to interpret all money and all success as chance-gotten. He is deceiving himself again, however; both he and Rosamond made determined decisions that contributed to their indebtedness.

Between the two extremes lies Farebrother. He doesn't leave the course of his life entirely to chance, but neither does he attempt to determine every event in it.

As a woman, Rosamond cannot obtain a loan officially, so she tries to get one through informal channels. However, the men she asks decline to deal in financial matters with a woman. Although her secret attempts to get a loan may appear selfish and underhanded, Lydgate's stubborn refusal to ask his

friends for help is not exactly responsible either. He waits until the last minute to ask Bulstrode, after the debt has grown to a thousand pounds. Rosamond is unable to help, because men do not believe women should be involved in money matters, even though her own support depends on it. Lydgate stubbornly refuses to take her suggestions. They never reach a compromise, so the conflict and resentment escalate on both sides.

Another theme that should be clear by now is that an individual life is greatly formed by its relations to other lives. Human society and all of its institutions are basically a collection of relations, class and gender being two very important factors in the novel. In the older paradigm of social relations, one's birth and family name determined one's relationship to the rest of society. After the rise of the middle class and the resultant transformation into a cash economy, money became a major metaphor for social relations.

Money is pure relation. Money in and of itself is worth absolutely nothing, but it has worth as a sign measuring social relations between buyer and seller, worker and employer, and agent and client. The standardization brought about by a cash economy allowed for an explosive growth of diverse social relations. Because all money looks alike, the specifics of those social relations were often ambiguous. This most likely contributed to the general stigma attached to earned money. The wealth of the landed gentry came from a very clear source.

The earned money of the middle class, however, was a different matter. The middle class phenomenon of the strict Protestant moral value system was, in many ways, an attempt to ameliorate the ambiguous moral status of earned money. There is nothing on the money itself that names its origins. It's impossible to know if it came by thievery or by application of the Protestant work ethic.

Caleb Garth's new-found prosperity is much too precious to lose. He is not willing to take the chance of giving Bulstrode the benefit of the doubt. He can't be sure that the origin of Bulstrode's money is morally safe. Therefore, he cannot allow himself to accept doubtful money. Accepting tainted money would establish a compromising relationship between him and Bulstrode's past

sins, the origin of Bulstrode's wealth.

The spread of guilt by association very much mirrors the spread of disease through a population. Disease too was a marker of a relation in a population (indeed, Lydgate wants to study the spread of disease through populations). However, his mind is much too literal to make the connection between the spread of physical disease and its metaphorical mirror, the spread of guilt through tainted money. Lydgate's desperation leads him to accept unknowingly a bribe from Bulstrode. Not naming the money as a bribe allows Bulstrode to tie a yoke to Lydgate surreptitiously. He merely wants to establish an obligation that he may need later to manipulate Lydgate should Raffles talk. He obscures the origins of his motivation in giving Lydgate the loan in order to continue obscuring the origin of the money itself.

Lydgate's tainted money spreads its poison like a disease. Unfortunately, Lydgate does not recognize the metaphorical illness, because the literal one occupies his attention. Bulstrode's control over the course of his own life is rapidly spinning out of control. He suffers most from the blow of fateful circumstances. Raffles' arrival and discovery of his whereabouts could never have been foreseen, and the effect of his presence cannot be controlled. Even name "Raffles" implies the unlucky blows of fate. In the course of chance events, Bulstrode's raffle ticket spells disaster. Lydgate suffers the unfortunate coincidence between Raffles' illness and the desperate escalation of his financial emergency. He is a sitting duck for a manipulator like Bulstrode.

Of course, the publication of the auction of his furniture also coincides with these events, unfortunately. The public has concrete proof of the extent of his desperate financial straits. The coincidence between Raffles' death, Lydgate's sudden financial salvation, and Bambridge's attendance at a horse-fair is a final cruel blow of chance events that lead to Lydgate's devastating association with Bulstrode's sins.

Lydgate seals his relationship with Bulstrode's infamy when he helps him walk from the room during the town meeting. The moment of revelation has come. Bulstrode is called to answer for his private crimes in the public

sphere. A contradiction between his public presentation of himself as a moral, upright Christian and his private life has arisen. Bulstrode cannot reconcile that contradiction, so he is ejected from his position of public influence.

17.3.8. Book VIII

The lives of wives are deeply affected by their husbands' social status. Just as in financial matters, however, Rosamond and Harriet Bulstrode are kept in the dark about everything. The scandal is a fairly petty, provincial kind of scandal. The only truly dramatic element to all of it is the suspicion of murder. The scandal is, in short, not particularly extraordinary. However, various players in the drama experience moments of extraordinary dignity and courage. Lydgate struggles with his duty to his intractable, yet extraordinarily fragile wife. His determined courage to face the scandal head-on, despite the slow blackballing occurring against him, is admirable. He realizes the full weight he has taken on with marriage. He must consider the vulnerable position Rosamond occupies as his wife.

His moral nature, which drives him to help the shattered Bulstrode out of the town meeting, demonstrates that Lydgate has learned a great deal about the social web. He offers a moment of dignity to a destroyed man at significant social cost to himself. It is an admirable sacrifice, considering his weak moment when he voted for Tyke.

The most poignant moment in this section, however, occurs when Bulstrode's wife goes to meet her husband after she learns the full details of his past. She has the opportunity to leave him and save herself the worst of the consequences. The town doesn't blame her, although it associates her with his false life in Middlemarch. In spite of her window of opportunity to escape the scandal, she decides to stay with him. His life is shattered, and she is all he has left. Her sacrifice in the midst of a petty, small-town scandal is a quiet moral triumph.

Dorothea encounters her own test when she mistakenly assumes that Ladislaw and Rosamond are having an affair. She is forced to confront the conflict between her own individual desire and the self-interest of the people

she has vowed to help. Her abrupt departure and her sleepless night hint that she fails to rise to the occasion. She opens the novel as an unsung Theresa, so her failure to help Rosamond seems to indicate that she fails to live up to early predictions for her character.

In the end, Dorothea lives up to the Prelude's prediction. In an extraordinary moment of courage, she returns to see Rosamond a second time. Rosamond herself rises above her vanity and selfishness. She puts aside her own jealousy to tell Dorothea the truth. This means giving up her entertaining fantasies about Will and herself. It is the first time that Rosamond does not act according to her own personal desire, but out of consideration for someone else.

Dorothea cleanses Lydgate's tainted loan by replacing it with her own money. Although it doesn't stop Lydgate from leaving Middlemarch, it removes Lydgate's humiliating relationship with Bulstrode. His reputation in Middlemarch is damaged beyond repair; the virtue of Dorothea's act of kindness toward him is that Lydgate knows that at least one person in Middlemarch has a good opinion of him.

At the last, even Bulstrode himself makes a small step towards redemption. Through his actions, Fred and Mary are finally able to marry. Caleb Garth himself is good enough not to lump Harriet Bulstrode in with her husband's crimes. He doesn't entertain himself with her misery like some people do.

Dorothea's final situation illustrates again the regrettable restrictions on access to the public sphere for women. She makes one independent act by helping Lydgate, and her assistance is a much-needed balm on the misery and stress of the Lydgates. However, her marriage to Will signifies her return to the narrow domestic sphere. The promise she shows as a reforming philanthropist is never realized independently. She lives her chosen occupation through her husband. Will becomes the ardent public advocate of reform, and Dorothea lives in his shadow as his wife and the mother of his children. Rosamond and Lydgate never really achieve an easy peace in their marriage, so it is unclear

whether Dorothea's help made much of a difference.

In short, the ending is ambiguous. We have followed two unhappy marriages to their conclusion. Lydgate's only escape from his unhappy marriage is an early death. After becoming a widow, Dorothea marries the man she loves. We are never sure if she is satisfied with the domestic sphere. The unhappy marriages have failed due to various personality differences, unrealistic ideals of the respective roles of husbands and wives, and the processes of self-deception that seem to mark all human activity.

There is one possible, happy marriage that doesn't happen, however. Farebrother advised Lydgate to marry a "good, unworldly woman." This is the opposite of Rosamond. Farebrother was recommending a woman who doesn't mind waiting through the years it takes to build a lucrative practice. Moreover, Farebrother was recommending someone who appreciates Lydgate's passion for his vocation. This advice clearly suggests Dorothea; the marriage that doesn't happen is, obviously, the one between Lydgate and Dorothea. She shares his passion for reform and his human concern for the alleviation of suffering. She doesn't care for wealth. She also showed a strong interest in the New Hospital itself. However, they met before each of them had obtained real life experience. They met before they had lost their unrealistic idealism about marriage. They were married to other people before they could appreciate one another.

It is difficult to tell whether Dorothea would have been able to exercise a public role in the hospital had she married Lydgate, but there is some indication that she would have. The best wife for Lydgate would have been a patient, equal, sensible partner. Dorothea would have been that woman. However, the vicissitudes of fate worked against their marriage.

17.4. Let Us Sum Up

George Eliot's novel, regarded as the study of a provincial life, is set in the period of 1829-32. The novel, which is a work of realism, touches on various themes like the status of women, the nature of marriage, idealism, self-interest, religion, hypocrisy, political reform, and education. The lesson

analytically presents the reading of the chapters, discussing the social realities that lie behind the conception of a society.

17.5. Self-Assessment Questions

1. Who marries Edward Casaubon?

- a) Celia Brooke
- b) Dorothea Brooke
- c) Rosamond Vincy
- d) Mary Garth

2. What is the title of the scholarly work that Casaubon is writing?

- a) Mythologies of the World
- b) Mythology for Dummies
- c) The Key to All Mythologies
- d) Mythologies Past and Present

3. What is the occupation of Tertius Lydgate?

- a) Doctor
- b) Lawyer
- c) Innkeeper
- d) Merchant

4. What relation is Will Ladislaw to Edward Casaubon?

- a) Cousin
- b) Son
- c) Nephew
- d) Employee

5. Who initially courts Dorothea Brooke but ends up marrying her sister Celia?

- a) Edward Casaubon
- b) Fred Vincy
- c) Mr. Featherstone
- d) Sir James Chettam

6. What is Dorothea Brooke's defining character trait?

- a) selfishness
- b) idealism
- c) skepticism
- d) hard-nosed pragmatism

7. What is the relation of Mr. Brooke to Dorothea and Celia?

- a) father
- b) uncle
- c) brother
- d) cousin

8. Which is the best description of Rosamond Vincy's character?

- a) vain and shallow
- b) generous and selfless
- c) versatile and clever
- d) socially inept

9. Who is the mayor of Middlemarch?

- a) Mr. Featherstone

- b) Mr. Vincy
- c) Mr. Cadwallader
- d) Caleb Garth

10. Which character is in love with Mary Garth?

- a) Mr. Bulstrode
- b) Mr. Featherstone
- c) Fred Vincy
- d) Mr. Tyke

17.6. Examination Oriented Questions

1. Discuss the relationship between Dorothea and Casaubon.
2. Describe the society of Middlemarch as presented in the novel.
3. What two issues or problems does Eliot present as central to life of the characters in the novel *The Middlemarch*?

17.7. Answer Key

Correct option : 1. b, 2. c, 3. a, 4. a, 5. d, 6. b, 7. b, 8. a, 9. b, 10. c

Ans.1 Relationship between Dorothea and Casaubon

Dorothea and Casaubon, though get engaged believing that they are both fond of each other, prove incompatible after marriage. Dorothea's personality and basic philosophy of life are directly opposed and contradictory to that of Casaubon. Dorothea protests Will Ladislaw's assertion that her belief system is remarkably similar to mysticism, but Will comes closer to an accurate description than she thinks. The comparison between Dorothea and Saint Theresa, a mystic nun, also defines Dorothea's philosophy in the same way.

Casaubon's philosophy can best be described as Rationalism. He places far more emphasis on strict, academic reasoning than he does on emotions. He

interprets reality through abstract, theoretical terms such as duty, for example. Dorothea, however, in accordance with mysticism, places emotional response above abstract reasoning as the motivation for moral choices. Casaubon's *Key to All Mythologies* is a metaphor for Rational thought. He wants to construct an all-encompassing method to interpret the world through rational, academic reasoning.

Casaubon first noticed Dorothea for her intelligence and assertiveness. However, these very qualities make him unhappy after his marriage. Casaubon isn't the "great soul" that Dorothea wants him to be, and she isn't the docile, submissive woman he wants her to be. Casaubon is an insecure man. His life-long work, *Key to All Mythologies*, is impossible to complete. He views the process of beginning to write it with apprehension and anxiety.

George Eliot sympathetically represents the disappointment of both Casaubon and Dorothea. She presents human nature as a necessarily contradictory thing. The qualities that Casaubon admired before marriage become a threat after marriage. Casaubon views Dorothea's involvement with his project as intellectual rivalry. Her desire to learn Latin and Greek further increases this feeling. As a woman and a wife, her rivalry with his field of research heightens his self-doubt. An unambitious, appreciative wife would bolster his esteem. However, Dorothea only exacerbates his pre-existing anxieties.

Dorothea's passionate, emotional temperament bewilders Casaubon. She needs an emotional response, but he is too strictly rational. His inability to give her what she needs makes him feel inadequate as a husband. The collective effect of these anxieties doesn't dispose him to react positively to Dorothea's relationship with Will. Dorothea's attempt to become involved in his dealings with Will further increases his self-doubt. He takes it as a tacit criticism of his ability to do his duty towards Will.

Casaubon drains Dorothea's vitality and happiness out of her, and she increases his anxieties and self-doubts. The juxtaposed metaphors of youth and death used to describe them come to take on a morbid quality. Casaubon's unnamed promise bears a strong symbolic relationship to the structure of their

marriage. Dorothea is never able to agree to his promise. She will never be able to make him happy. His unnamed need haunts her, because she will never be able to please him. The unnamed promise symbolizes the inability of both to fulfill their idealized expectations of one another. It is a promise never spoken, but one that inevitably will be broken.

Dorothea fails to realize that Casaubon doesn't want an equal partner. She even deludes herself into thinking she *wants* to submit to him. Her self-delusion arises partly out of a need to legitimize her pursuit of higher learning, but it also arises from her idealization of self-sacrifice.

Dorothea also wants passionate, tender affection from Casaubon. However, he considers her happiness in the same way he views Will's. He wants to do his duty as a husband.

17.8 Suggested Reading

1. Crompton, M (1960). *George Eliot, The Woman*, New York. Thomas Yoseloff.
2. Hughes, K (1998). *George Eliot : The last Victorian*, New York : Farrowv, Straux, and Giroun.

GEORGE ELIOT—*MIDDLEMARCH*

STRUCTURE

- 18.1. Objectives
- 18.2. Introduction
- 18.3. Social Environment in the novel
- 18.4. Brief notes on Themes
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18.1. Objectives

The lesson aims to emphasise certain themes of George Eliot's novel *Middlemarch* and shows how the sub-title of the novel— "A Study of Provincial Life"—is justified.

18.2. Introduction

Middlemarch is a major novel by any standard. The historical canvas is very wide. The several storylines of the multiple plot are traced from their beginning, gradually combining into a drama which gathers intense human and moral interest.

18.3. Social Environment in *Middlemarch*

Bernard J. Paris, in his essay *George Eliot's Religion of Humanity* quotes an idea by George Henry Lewes, an idea that Eliot very much admired, saying that “human psychic phenomena cannot be fully explained unless they are regarded as the products of our organic inheritance from the past—of the “psychological evolution of sociological material”—and of our interaction with the super-organically evolved social medium” (Paris, 422). This clearly illustrates how important was the role of society in Eliot’s writing. Social environment including social setting and economic and political life as these are the aspects to which Eliot pays the greatest deal of attention and which shape the plot of the novel in a significant way.

The subtitle of *Middlemarch*, “*A Study of Provincial Life*” suits the novel rather well indeed because the novel, in all its rich descriptions and various details really is an almost perfect and complete study of the provincial life in England in the early 1830s. Eliot manages to cover almost all of the aspects of social, political and economic life of this particular place and period. Most of these aspects are undergoing rapid changes, most notably in the form of the building of the railroads, the passing of the Great Reform Bill and the continuing industrialization. This development means that the provincial life of the Old England, so to say, seems to be progressively vanishing.

Since *Middlemarch* takes place in the early 1830s but was first published in 1874, Eliot does look on the social environment of the 1830s England with a view of how things were changing. She begins the novel with a description of an “old provincial society” which experiences only subtle movement. The society is mostly closed and only gradually opens up to the external influence:

Municipal town and rural parish gradually made fresh threads of connection—gradually, as the old stocking gave way to the savings-bank, and the worship of the solar guinea became extinct; while squires and baronets, and even lords who had once lived blamelessly afar from the civic mind, gathered the faultiness of

closer acquaintanceship. Settlers, too, came from distant counties, some with an alarming novelty of skill, others with an offensive advantage in cunning. (Middlemarch, Ch. 11)

The town of Middlemarch is depicted as a provincial, somewhat backward and suspicious of outsiders who are expected to be swallowed and assimilated into the society. The society itself is clearly divided into ranks which hardly ever mix together. This is first illustrated on the relations between the Garths and Vincys. Caleb Garth, the head of the Garth family, is quite successful in his work as an administrator of various local estates but is still unable to provide an income large enough to be considered rich. Mr. Vincy, on the other hand, as the mayor of Middlemarch and a businessman dealing with dyes, is regarding himself as socially superior. As Eliot puts it, there are “nice distinctions of rank in Middlemarch; and though old manufacturers could not any more than dukes be connected with none but equals, they were conscious of an inherent social superiority which was defined with great nicety in practice, though hardly expressible theoretically” (Eliot, Ch. 23). Eliot goes on to explain that even though Caleb Garth has earned esteem through his work, in “no part of the world is genteel visiting founded on esteem, in the absence of suitable furniture and complete dinner service.” In addition to her Husband’s status, since Mrs. Garth has been working as a teacher before her marriage, she was looked down upon by women like Mrs. Vincy who considered themselves socially higher.

While Eliot makes sure to draw the boundaries between social groups very clearly, she nevertheless manages to create an interesting contrast a few chapters later while comparing the ways in which Mr. Vincy and Mr. Garth work.

Through the contrast of Mr. Garth and Mr. Vincy, Eliot compares their social classes and for the first time in *Middlemarch* rather openly and directly criticizes a character in higher social rank while focusing on a hard-working man of lower social status. Gillian Beer, in her essay *What’s Not in Middlemarch* argues that for the reader of the 1870s their presence was readily recognized. As she puts it, “the workers in the mines and the dyeing

houses and at the hand-looms are crucial to the town of Middlemarch, its economy and its psychic health. These industrial workers are present in the plot and in the discourse of the novel” (Beer, 23).

There are nevertheless characters in the novel that some kind of expectations from their future lives in regards to the social mobility and their possible advancement.

Probably the most striking examples of this issue are the three marriages, namely between Fred Vincy and Mary Garth, Rosamond Vincy and Tertius Lydgate and finally Dorothea Brooke and Edward Casaubon. All six of these characters move up and down in terms of their social status only slightly, certainly not in any extreme manner, as none of the characters really leaves the upper-middle class. Still, Eliot recognizes this limited mobility and does not portray her characters completely conserved in their respective social classes, although any significant improvement in the social standing seems impossible. Dorothea marries Ladislaw even though it means losing the property she inherited from Casaubon, Fred Vincy marries Mary Garth even though he is from the very beginning pushed by his parents’ expectations into marrying someone of a higher social status than she is and Rosamond Vincy’s hopes of using Lydgate’s aristocratic connection prove to be in vain. The following paragraphs will deal with the marriages one by one, examining their initial social status, the expectations they or their surroundings had on the advancement of their social status and finally their position in the final parts of the novel.

18.4. Brief Notes on Themes

18.4.1. The Imperfection of Marriage

Most characters in *Middlemarch* marry for love rather than obligation, yet marriage still appears negative and unromantic. Marriage and the pursuit of it are central concerns in *Middlemarch*, but unlike in many novels of the time, marriage is not considered the ultimate source of happiness. There are two major broken marriages in *Middlemarch*. The first is Dorothea and Mr. Casaubon and the second is Tertius Lydgate and Rosamond Vincy. Both marriages share the same initial problem; the haste with which the partners

get married. Dorothea's marriage fails because of her youth and of her disillusion about marrying a much older man. It is obvious from the first pages of *Middlemarch* that Dorothea is exceptionally intelligent but also rather naïve and the fact that she accepts Casaubon's marriage proposal with such haste only reinforces the impression of naivety. After a very short time it becomes clear that Dorothea expects something completely different in a marriage from what Mr. Casaubon expects. Dorothea wants some kind of an intellectual and romantic soul mate while Casaubon seems to simply need someone who will organize materials for his *Key to All Mythologies*. Be as it may, when Casaubon dies the marriage is over anyway, Dorothea finds the truth about the secret part of the last will and in her anger she refuses to finish the *Key to All Mythologies* that Casaubon did not finish due to his premature death. Not only this, Dorothea in the end marries Will Ladislaw even against Casaubon's clear prohibition of any such thing. The marriage of Ladislaw and Dorothea, however, turns out completely opposite to the marriage with Casaubon. Will and Dorothea find mutual respect and love in the marriage, something not really possible in Dorothea's previous marriage. In the very end of the novel Will gets into the parliament and becomes a public speaker. As Eliot puts it: "Many who knew her, thought it a pity that so substantive and rare a creature should have been absorbed into the life of another, and be only known in a certain circle as a wife and mother" (Eliot, Ch. 86).

On the other hand, Lydgate's marriage fails because of irreconcilable personalities. Rosamond's own ambitions for upward social mobility are stunted by the rigid social constraints on women. Unlike Lydgate, she has no public vocation to perform. She has no outlet for her intractable, headstrong energies outside her home. Her only outlet for her frustrated ambition is her husband. Captain Lydgate represents the social world she wishes to enter. Lydgate forbids her to go out riding with his cousin a second time, but Rosamond is already restless, so Lydgate's order only exacerbates those feelings. He represents yet another male voice telling her what to do with her life. Rosamond is not willing to play the passive ornament to Lydgate's life. Neither do

Lydgate and Rosamond form an amicable partnership. In other words, there is a deep conflict in their marriage. The efforts of one spouse resist the efforts of the other. Such a situation produces nothing but conflict.

Mr. and Mrs. Bulstrode also face a marital crisis due to his inability to tell her about the past, and Fred Vincy and Mary Garth also face a great deal of hardship in making their union. As none of the marriages reach a perfect fairytale ending, *Middlemarch* offers a clear critique of the usual portrayal of marriage as romantic and unproblematic.

18.4.2. The Harshness of Social Expectations

The ways in which people conduct themselves and how the community judges them are closely linked in *Middlemarch*. When the expectations of the social community are not met, individuals often receive harsh public criticism. For example, the community judges Ladislav harshly because of his mixed pedigree. Fred Vincy is almost disowned because he chooses to go against his family's wishes and not join the clergy. It is only when Vincy goes against the wishes of the community by foregoing his education that he finds true love and happiness. Finally, Rosamond's need for gentility and the desire to live up to social standards becomes her downfall. In contrast, Dorothea's decision to act against the rules of society allows her to emerge as the most respectable character in the end.

18.4.3. Self-Determination vs. Chance

In *Middlemarch*, self-determination and chance are not opposing forces but, rather, a complicated balancing act. When characters strictly adhere to a belief in either chance or self-determination, bad things happen. When Rosamond goes against the wishes of her husband and writes a letter asking for money from his relative, her act of self-determination puts Lydgate in an unsavory and tense situation coupled with a refusal to help. On the flip side, when Fred Vincy gambles away his money, relying solely on chance, he falls into debt and drags with him the people who trust him. Only when he steps away from gambling and decides not to go into the clergy do good things begin to happen for him. In particular, the character of Farebrother demonstrates

the balance between fate and self-determination. This balance is exemplified in his educated gamble in the game of whist. Through a combination of skill and chance, he is able to win more often than not. His character strikes a balance between chance and his role in determining that fate. The complexity of the tension between self-determination and chance is exemplary of the way in which the novel as a whole tends to look at events from many vantage points with no clear right or wrong, no clear enemy or hero.

18.5. Important References

Not only young virgins of that town, but grey-bearded men also, were often in haste to conjecture how a new acquaintance might be wrought into their purposes, contented with very vague knowledge as to the way in which life had been shaping him for their instrumentality. Middlemarch, in fact, counted on swallowing Lydgate and assimilating him very comfortably.

This passage, located at the end of Chapter 15 after Lydgate is introduced as the idealistic new doctor, introduces the neighborhood of Middlemarch as a sort of character. Middlemarch is not particularly interested in Lydgate as an individual and instead views him as an instrument and part of the greater community. This illustrates the pull between individual and community that drives the novel forward. In the novel *Middlemarch*, there cannot be individuals without community nor a community without individuals. This passage also shows a contradiction between Middlemarch as an ominous force that swallows its inhabitants and a comfortable force that draws its inhabitants into its community that is part of the structure of the novel. It demonstrates the pluses and the minuses of living in a country community, much like the entire book does. It captures the realistic, contradictory nature of Eliot's realistic portrayal of country living.

"It was wicked to let a young girl blindly decide her fate in that way, without any effort to save her."

Sir James makes this remark in Chapter 29, when he learns that Mr. Casaubon has fallen ill. Sir James finds it morally deplorable that Dorothea

was allowed to choose her own husband. While he is somewhat motivated by his own jealousy that Dorothea didn't marry him, he is more distressed that she was not better advised as to the ramifications of marrying an older and not very desirable man. That it was wicked to not interfere in the affairs of another shows how important community interference and interaction is to the novel. This quotation also draws attention to the novel's tension between self-determination and chance. The contradiction in the phrase "decide her fate" shows that Sir James (and by extension the novel) believes that the individual has a part in deciding his or her own fate, even if, at times, a person's life seems to move forward of its own accord, for better or for worse.

"I mean, marriage drinks up all of our power of giving or getting any blessedness in that sort of love. I know it may be very dear—but it murders our marriage—and then the marriage stays with us like a murder—and everything else is gone."

Dorothea makes these comments to Rosamond at the end of Chapter 81. Dorothea believes that Rosamond is having an affair with Ladislaw, and this quotation shows how Dorothea believes romantic love and marriage are incompatible. By linking marriage and murder, Dorothea's quote supports the idea prevalent in the work that marriage isn't always perfect or always a guarantee of happiness. The choice of the metaphor of murder is particularly interesting because she is speaking of Lydgate being under suspicion of aiding in the Raffles' murder. Murder, in the literal sense, is already a part of Rosamond's married life.

But we insignificant people with our daily words and acts are preparing the lives of many Dorotheas, some of which may present a far sadder sacrifice than that of the Dorothea whose story we know.

In her final thoughts at the end of the novel, Eliot shifts from third person to first person plural in order to present the moral of the story. The shift to the "we" breaks the rigidity of Dorothea's story being particular to the fictional world of *Middlemarch* and expands it to the greater real world.

By calling attention to how the acts of common people create cultural norms, Eliot holds everyone who does not question the norms of social life responsible for the sadness of their fellow citizens. By focusing on the trials of Dorothea, Eliot calls particular attention to a woman's role in marriage. Ending on this thought makes Eliot's concern with conventional marriage the central theme of the story. This move points to a particularly feminist type of thought in a novel long before feminism was a common ideology.

18.6. Let Us Sum Up

The lesson throws light on how *Middlemarch* is a complex work of art and a number of themes and ideas are woven into its complex fabric. One of its major themes, however, is the frustration of noble ideals and lofty aspirations by meanness of opportunity. The novel represents the spirit of nineteenth-century England through the unknown, historically unremarkable common people.

18.7. Self-Assessment Questions

1. Where do Will and Dorothea live after they get married?

- a) Tipton Grange
- b) London
- c) Stone Gate
- d) Lowick

2. How much money does Lydgate need to settle his debts?

- a) 160 pounds
- b) 10,000 pounds
- c) 500 pounds
- d) 1,000 pounds

3. What does Raffles take from Rigg's home with Bulstrode's name on it?

- a) Bank papers
- b) A letter
- c) A calling card
- d) An invitation

4. Which one of their mother's jewels does Celia think her sister should keep?

- a) A pearl cross
- b) An emerald ring and bracelet
- c) A purple amethyst ring
- d) A diamond ring

5. What is Fred's inheritance in Featherstone's will?

- a) Land only
- b) Money and land
- c) Nothing
- d) Money only

6. What is the cause of Lydgate's death?

- a) Breathing trouble
- b) Heart trouble
- c) Cancer
- d) Liver failure

7. What is the name of the horse that Fred buys hoping to settle his debt?

- a) Nickel
- b) Quartz

c) Gold

d) Diamond

8. With what disorder does Lydgate say Raffles is suffering?

a) Alcohol poisoning

b) Cirrhosis of the liver

c) Alcohol withdrawal

d) Cholera

9. How are Raffles and Rigg related?

a) Uncle and nephew

b) They aren't related

c) Father and son

d) Stepfather and stepson

10. To whom is Lydgate able to tell his side of the story concerning Raffles' death?

a) Rosamond

b) Rigg

c) Dorothea

d) Farebrother

11. What is Casaubon's profession?

a) He is a professor

b) He is a clergyman

c) He is a doctor

d) He is a banker

12. Who tells Mrs. Bulstrode the truth about her husband?

- a) Raffles
- b) Her brother
- c) Mr. Bulstrode
- d) Will Ladislav

13. To whom is Lydgate attracted?

- a) Mary
- b) Rosamond
- c) Celia
- d) Dorothea

14. In the minds of most people in *Middlemarch*, for what purpose does Bulstrode give Lydgate 1000 pounds?

- a) Medical services
- b) Hush money
- c) A loan
- d) A gift

15. Who buys Stone Court from Rigg?

- a) Bulstrode
- b) Fred Vincy
- c) Caleb Garth
- d) Ladislav

16. Who is with Featherstone when he dies?

- a) Raffles
- b) Fred
- c) Riggs

d) Mary

17. Who is put in charge of Stone Gate when the Bulstrodes move?

a) Caleb Garth

b) Lydgate

c) Farebrother

d) Fred Vincy

18. What does Bulstrode allow Mrs. Abel to give Raffles that he isn't supposed to have?

a) Opium

b) Brandy

c) Soup

d) Money

19. What does Featherstone ask Mary to do for him?

a) Burn his second will

b) Apologize to Fred

c) Find his son

d) Hide his money

20. What gift does Sir James Chettam try to give Dorothea that she refuses?

a) A cottage

b) A horse

c) A puppy

d) A ring

21. What does Raffles know about Bulstrode?

- a) His lineage
- b) His real name
- c) How far in debt he is
- d) How he earned his money

22. Whom does Dorothea decide to hire as the new clergyman at Lowick?

- a) Lydgate
- b) Tyke
- c) Fred Vincy
- d) Farebrother

23. What does Featherstone demand from Fred to prove he didn't put Featherstone's land up as a surety on his loan?

- a) Full payment of the loan
- b) A signed note from Bulstrode
- c) A signed note from Garth
- d) A new horse

24. For whom does Lydgate want to vote for in the chaplain election?

- a) Bulstrode
- b) Farebrother
- c) Tyke
- d) Casaubon

25. Who suggests to Dorothea how much Will cares for her?

- a) Mr. Brooke

- b) Celia
- c) Rosamond
- d) Bulstrode

18.8. Examination Oriented Questions

a) Explain the following lines from George Eliot's novel:

“The Women were expected to have weak opinions; but the great safeguard of society and of domestic life was, that opinions were not acted on. Sane people did what their neighbours did, so that if any lunatics were at large, one might know and avoid them.” (Book 1, Chapter 1 paragraph 4)

- b) Is marriage always more of a prison for women than for men in the world of *Middlemarch*?
- c) Draw the character sketch of Tertius Lydgate.
- d) What conflicts do characters experience between their ideals and their realities? How do these conflicts relate to marriage? Consider the role of gender and the contradictions between the public and private worlds.

18.9. Answer Key

Correct options: c, a, a, b, c, b, d, b, b, c, b, b, b, b, a, d, d, b, a, c, d, d, b, b, c

Ans. c. Character sketch of Tertius Lydgate

As Rosemary Ashton argues in her introduction to *Middlemarch*, the novel “is above all about change and the way individuals and groups adapt to, or resist, change. In their marriages, in their professions, in their family life and their social intercourse, the characters of the novel are shown responding in their various ways to events both public and private” (Ashton, ix). Tertius Lydgate is a doctor who moved to Middlemarch in hopes of establishing a fever hospital and enhancing the quality of medical profession in Middlemarch by using modern methods he acquired during his studies in Paris. However,

not just Lydgate's methods are new the whole concept of a physician as a hero. Lydgate fights with the backwardness of both doctors and patients in Middlemarch.

Ultimately losing his battle against backwardness, Lydgate moves away from Middlemarch, into an unspecified spa town. The best way to emphasize Lydgate's modernity is to compare him with another scholar and scientist, Mr. Casaubon. While Casaubon, writing his *Key to All Mythologies* is deeply rooted in the past, becoming almost a living fossil, Lydgate is concerned with the future of medicine. While Casaubon's greatest work aims at summing up the mythologies, which are by their very nature connected with the past, Lydgate is portrayed as using the newest and most modern medicinal practices of the day. Even though eventually both men fail to accomplish their most important goals, the finishing of the *Key* in the case of Mr. Casaubon and a scientific breakthrough in the case of Tertius Lydgate, the latter seems to be generally more successful, as Casaubon dies without having children or finishing his great work.

Lydgate first appears in the tenth chapter during a party, although his presence in Middlemarch is only hinted by Lady Chettam and Mrs. Renfrew in a scene where the two women share some local gossip, one of them describing Lydgate as a new young surgeon who appears to be "wonderfully clever" and a "fine brow indeed" (Eliot, ch. 10). Although Mr. Brooke, who seems to be one of the more forward-thinking and liberal citizen, argues that Lydgate has "lots of ideas, quite new, about ventilation and diet," he is immediately challenged by Mr. Standish who argues that it was the old treatment that made the Englishmen what they are. Mr. Bulstrode claims that the medical profession in Middlemarch is undeveloped and Lydgate will be only helpful, Mr. Standish again says that he will rather trust medicine that has been already tested. Nevertheless, Mr. Bulstrode gains the help of Lydgate in the building of a new fever-hospital. Mr. Featherstone, the oldest man in Middlemarch, after asking Lydgate some questions "screws up his face while he hears the answers, as if they were pinching his toes" (Middlemarch, ch. 11).

The event that changes the public opinion in his favour, at least to a certain degree, is the illness of Fred Vincy. Fred, besides his financial problems, seems to have caught a serious case of fever. Mr. Wrench, the Vincy family doctor is called but contrary to the family's expectations, pronounces the fever to be only a mild illness. However, the prescribed medicine does not help Fred and the Vincys contact Lydgate. Lydgate immediately recognizes that Fred is suffering from typhoid fever and prescribes the correct medicine.

All in all, the development of Lydgate and his character up until this part of the novel shows Lydgate as a voice of reason and progress in Middlemarch. By this time, Lydgate is still convinced and confident in his resolution to be a man of medicine and science and stay above the gossip and all the internal relationships present in Middlemarch. By this time, he however also divides the public opinion about his person, makes a first enemy in Middlemarch, becomes entangled, although only a little, in the politics of Bulstrode's hospital and also starts to notice Rosamond Vincy.

Lydgate's primary concerns still lie with medicine and science and marriage, for him, is only something a proper gentleman does as a supplement to his life. It is certainly not his main objective to marry, and by this time he does not even want to marry prematurely, at least not until his physician's practice grows and he finds a proper place to live. In the end, however, Lydgate does marry Rosamond Vincy even though he has not yet achieved any of his goals. But the marriage is unsatisfactory for both Lydgate and Rosamond. Due to the haste with which they married and their differing expectations, Lydgate soon runs out of money and his medical and scientific breakthrough is even further than when he arrived to Middlemarch. By the end of the novel, when a man who knows about Mr. Bulstrode's shady past, Mr. Raffles, comes to Middlemarch and falls ill, Lydgate shows his medical skills again.

Lydgate after all leaves Middlemarch and dies relatively young, never making any significant scientific or medical discovery. As Eliot puts it, "he always regarded himself as a failure: he had not done what he once meant to do" (*Middlemarch*, ch. 86). From the analysis of the events that lead to this end it

becomes obvious that Lydgate's failure is caused not by him being an unqualified doctor or scientist. Rather, it is caused by social factors, like his failed marriage ("an unmitigated calamity, (Middlemarch, ch. 63)" as he puts it) and the society itself.

18.10. Suggested Reading

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THOMAS HARDY-*TESS OF THE*
D'URBERVILLES

STRUCTURE

- 19.1 Objectives
- 19.2 Introduction
- 19.3 Hardy's Life and Works
- 19.4 Hardy as a Regionalist
- 19.5 Suggested Reading

19.1 Objectives

- To acquaint the learners with the life and works of Hardy.
- To introduce the learners to Hardy as a Regionalist.

19.2 Introduction

Thomas Hardy is one of the greatest novelists in the whole range of English literature. His first novel *The Desperate Remedies* appeared in 1871, and thereafter novels after novel flowed from his pen in quick succession. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *The Return of the Native*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* are regarded by universal consent as his masterpieces, and they have been compared to the four great Shakespearean tragedies.

19.2 Hardy's Life and Works

Thomas Hardy, very cautiously, termed his ideas and emotions as his "tentative metaphysic." This metaphysic took shape so gradually that we cannot, for sure, put our finger on a particular date when his youthful fatalism gave way to his later determinism. We can, of course, trace anticipations of his mature

convictions in his earliest writings. Similarly, we can trace the vestiges of his early speculation in his latest writings. His career as a poet and novelist also cannot be separated by any linear demarcation. It is generally said that he turned to poetry when forced to abandon fiction writing. But that is not true. As a matter of fact, it was poetry that he first started writing. The publication of Hardy's first volume of poems took place in 1898, although he had been writing poems in his youth. He only withheld their publication for some years. He also turned to fiction only when he did not find audience for his poetry. But he never renounced his ambition to be a poet during the entire period of twenty-five years when he was writing novels. He, finally, reverted to poetry when forced to abandon his fiction. We say forced because his last two novels – *Jude the Obscure* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*–provoked violent protests, including burning of his novels. This discouraged him and he discontinued writing novels, which he had considered a more effective medium for the expression of his ideas on man, nature and society. It is not possible, therefore, to divide Hardy's writing career into periods of poetry and novel. There does, of course, exist a natural sort of division in terms of his early and later periods. We need not relate these phases to the kind of writing he produced. The titles of the two volumes of his memoirs, too, make a similar kind of distinction. These titles, that he had thoughtfully chosen, are *The Early Life* and *The Later Years*.

Thomas Hardy was born in a small hamlet close to the wild stretch of upland in Dorsetshire which he called Egdon Heath. His life-span spread from 1840 to 1928. He belonged to the old yeoman stock. From his early childhood, Hardy carried in his mind strong impressions of the past, relating to the Celtic, Roman, Saxon, Medieval, and Georgian. It is perhaps for this very reason that there remained vestiges of primitive ideas and superstitions, folkways and folklores right through the more superficial, modern and sophisticated strata of his novels. No doubt, he came under the strong influence of the modern scientific ideas, especially those espoused by Darwin and other evolutionary thinkers, but he always remained attentive to whatever was uncanny and preternatural in life. Peasant song and dance as also the church music always fascinated him. His father's trade of master-builder determined his choice of

architecture as a profession. At the same time, when the movement for church restoration was in full swing, he was articled to a local practitioner. Later, he continued his profession of architecture in London. His natural bent of mind was towards literature, not architecture. He remained at the centre of intellectual ferment during the critical years of the 1860's. Reading Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*, he contemplated upon the unknown First Cause as well as upon the incalculable element of "Casualty" in the affairs of men. It was also during this very period that he wrote a good deal of poetry. He later destroyed many of the poetic compositions of the period. Some did survive in their original form, while others were later worked into changed or revised compositions. Some of these poems have for their themes the freaks and pranks of the purblind "Doomsters" who mismanage man's life. In some of them, there are also hints of the contrast between the "unweening" First Cause and the human consciousness, which by some unaccountable cosmic irony has evolved from that Cause.

In Hardy's poems, we find, that chance is sometimes personified as a malignant deity who deliberately sports with human misery. For this kind of angry fatalism, Hardy found support in Swinburne's "upbraiding of the gods." Hardy was, in fact, highly influenced by Swinburne. As is clear from Hardy's response to Spencer, Swinburne, etc., he was highly sensitive to the intellectual and emotional atmosphere of the time. And it was from his active response to the climate of his times that he shaped his thoughts towards that "twilight view of life" which was highly deprecated by writers like Meredith. Although Hardy's novels as well as poems portray a dark picture of life, it is not entirely unredeemed. The despondency is reduced, if not redeemed, by his rustic humour. What comes out more convincing in Hardy's world than his "cosmic pessimism" is his genuine resentment against the social distinctions and discriminations, of which he was made to become more conscious in London than in his native Dorset. Something of the spiritual conflict which Hardy experienced in the early years of his life is certainly reflected in the narrative of Angel Clare's renunciation of the Christian ministry in *Tess*. Similarly, something of the social conflict is reflected in Jude Fawley's thwarted aspirations in *Jude the*

Obscure. In his older age, Hardy, of course, flatly denied the existence of any autobiographical substratum in his novels. Nevertheless, it is very much there, although it need not be literally interpreted.

Hardy's first novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady* (1867-1868), shows that to begin with there is very little of metaphysical speculation. There is, of course, a good deal of social radicalism, reflected in a mix of rural life with satire directed against the metropolitan "upper-classes." Since this novel was rejected by publishers, portions of it were incorporated in the subsequent novels. One section of it survived in the form of a short novel or novelette, *An Indiscretion in the Life of a Heiress* (1878). The left-over pages of the manuscript were destroyed. The publishers' readers, George Meredith (himself a novelist) and John Morley, advised Hardy to avoid social satire and contrive an intricate plot. The younger Hardy followed the advice. The result was the next novel, *Desperate Remedies* (1871), which is a highly improbable tale of mystery and murder. In its sensational incidents and complex concatenation of circumstances, the novel betrays the influence of Willkie Collins. Hardy discovered his subject and style in the composition of *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872). The title, we know, is derived from Shakespeare's comedy, *As You Like It*, in which there is a song under that heading. It is a slight tale of rural courtship and feminine wiles mingled with episodes of rich rustic humour.

Hardy's next novel, *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), combines sensational intrigue and incredible coincidences in the fast-moving narrative of a romantic tragedy. The strength of the novel lies in its yokels which, in the humorous or gruesome episodes are drawn with a more intimate art than their social superiors in the main plot. This novel (or romance) was an instant success. One evidence of its success was an invitation from Leslie Stephen for contribution to *Cornhill Magazine*. Hardy happily responded. As a result, Hardy's first masterpiece, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, appeared in 1874 in the columns of *Cornhill*. Hardy chose not to give his name for its authorship, which became a cause for widespread speculation. The novel's success made Hardy feel securely launched upon his career. He soon after married, and remained in different cities in England as well as abroad thereafter. Finally, in

1885, Hardy settled at Max Gate on the outskirts of Dorchester, which remained Hardy's home for the rest of his life, that is until 1928. His next major novel, *The Return of the Native* (1878), came to be considered as a great work of art in terms of its balance and control. How the public taste dominated the fortunes of fiction those days can be gauged from the circumstances associated with the publication of this novel. It was refused publication by Leslie Stephen on the ground that a story of tragic passion would annoy *Cornhill's* clientele. And it was published by *Belgravia* only after Hardy agreed to twist the novel's secondary plot to a happy ending. In such a situation, one wonders how much of a work is genuinely the author's own. What judgements can be passed on the merit or demerit of such a work?

Hardy's next novel, *The Trumpet-Major* (1880), generally considered the most genial of the Wessex Novels, reflects the Napoleonic era. The next novel, *Two in a Tower* (1882), is rather fragile in theme and carries dream-like tone. But it is memorable for its projection of human passion against the background of starry distances. Hardy's outspoken treatment of sexual relations in this novel was viewed as a violation of literary propriety of the Victorians. It caused rumblings of British prudery. This was followed by a rather minor novel, *The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid* (1883). But then came out Hardy's masterpiece under the title *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886). In this, he focused the novel's action on the fortunes of a single character, Michael Henchard. Although external circumstances and crass coincidences continue to play their part in the novel's action, one can see a new emphasis on the role of character in shaping one's destiny. The novel moves, like the Greek tragedy, with a rapid pace, going through reversals and recognitions, always heading, with a sense of inevitability, towards the final and total disaster. The tragedy takes place because of the tragic flaw in the character of Henchard. Otherwise, there is Farfrae as foil to Henchard, who prospers, progressively, in quiet and steady movement towards the peak of his fortunes. He succeeds because he is not flawed. He succeeds also because he is devoid of elemental (or human) passions of Henchard. What the novel lacks is the sweetness, the poetry, of the earlier novels.

What, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* lacked, being tragic, is in abundance

in, *The Woodlanders* (1887). It is perhaps the tenderest of Hardy's novels. It is thrilling in its narrative power and memorable for its main characters (who are noble) as well as for its exquisitely observed scenes and customs of woodland folk. Hardy's first volume of short stories, *Wessex Tales* (1888), was followed by several other volumes in the same vein. Notable among these are *A Group of Noble Dames* (1891), *Life's Little Ironies* (1894), and *A Changed Man and Other Stories* (1913). A few of these are excellent stories, but most cannot be considered artistically perfect. Largely, they are either trivial or extravagant local anecdotes cast in literary form or else give the impression of being sketches or drafts for full-length novels. The tone of many is rather bitter, in some cases even sinister, though they do not afford much scope for an explicit comment on the human quandary. Decidedly and evidently, short-story was too small a canvas for Hardy to depict his view of life. Especially now in the mature years of his life, when he had developed almost a philosophy of life, he needed the full-scale canvas of the novel to make an exposition of that philosophy. Hence, he took up writing of his two most philosophic novels, namely, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*.

Hardy made his first notes for *Jude the Obscure* in 1887, and the composition of *Tess* was taken up soon after. Since he was well aware of the public reaction to what he was going to portray in these two novels, he tried to prepare the public for the acceptance of his rather unconventional, in fact, provocative, novels. He wrote for the purpose, two articles in the nature of manifestoes, namely, *The Profitable Reading of Fiction* (1888) and *Candour in English Fiction* (1890). In these two articles, he pleaded for the novelist's right to treat conventional topics with the same sincerity as is permitted in private intercourse, to discuss candidly the sexual relation, the problems of religious belief, and the position of man in the universe. Notwithstanding this urgent argument, however, he was forced for the sake of his livelihood, to expurgate (remove) and dismember *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* when it was serially published in 1891. Although the most famous of Hardy's novels, *Tess* was bitterly denounced when Hardy restored its integrity in the book form. The two-fold polemic—against social prejudice and against “the President of the Immortals”—roused a storm of protest. He felt perturbed by the public reaction and remained disturbed for quite sometime. In fact, the effect of public hostility

caused artistic damage to his next novel, *Jude the Obscure* (1895).

Hardy's last novel, *Jude the Obscure*, is a powerful but overwrought story of "the derision and disaster that follow in the wake of the strongest passion known to humanity." The very fact that a novel like this could be printed, despite recent protests against *Tess*, only shows that the Victorian prudery was waning. At the same time, the fact that it caused a great scandal shows that the Victorian prudery was not quite extinct. The experience of these last two books "cured" Hardy, as he wrote afterwards, of any desire to write more novels. As a matter of fact, he had used to the maximum the medium of the narrative fiction for the depiction of life as he saw it. Also, despite his mastery over the art of story-telling, he never felt as comfortable in the medium as he did in that of poetry. He always took poetry to be the native country of his mind. So, once again, he turned to composing poems, to forget the bitter experience of the last two novels. But he never reverted to writing novel, thereafter, even until his death in 1928.

In poetry too, Hardy showed his genius and talent, which seemed to some more remarkable than that displayed in his fiction. Also, he proved to be as prolific in writing poetry as he had done in writing novel. Two volumes of poems followed at the turn of the nineteenth century, namely *Wessex Poems* (1898) and *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1902). And not long after followed his epic-drama, *The Dynasts* (1903-1906-1908). This work was the result of Hardy's life-long interest in the Napoleonic Wars. It was also, even more, an exposition upon the amplest scale of his philosophy of mechanistic determinism. There followed more volumes of poems, which included *Time's Laughing-Stocks* (1909), *Satires of Circumstance* (1914), *Moments of Vision* (1917), *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922), *Human Shows* (1925), and *Winter Words* (posthumously in 1928). Hardy also wrote in these later years of his life a poetic drama called *The Queen of Cornwall* (1923). It is a short play on the legend of Iseult, which is more ingenious than convincing to harmonize the two conflicting versions of the story. In these very years Hardy also occupied himself with the memoirs which appeared after his death as a biography professedly by his own widow.

When Hardy's first wife died in 1912, his mind turned to their romance of

long ago about which he produced some wonderful little elegies or elegiac poems. It is these poems that F.R. Leavis has highly praised in his *New Bearings in English Poetry*. Differences of temperament and opinion had come between the couple, but it never reached the breaking-point of separation. In a second marriage, that took place in 1914, to Florence Emily Dugdale, he found congeniality and happiness. During the last two decades of his life, when his fame had widened enormously, Hardy bore his honours with deprecating modesty. But he remained curiously sensitive to the few voices of dissent. He died in January, 1928. His ashes were placed in Westminster Abbey among England's poets.

19.4 Hardy as a Regionalist

As a regionalist writer, more as novelist than as poet, Hardy has fore-runners of sorts in Maria Edgeworth and other Irish novelists, also in John Galt and other Scots. But none of these predecessors of the regional novel had confined to a small, and well-defined area, the way Hardy did in his novels. As a matter of fact, all of them were nationalists, rather than regionalists. In a modest way, the claim to be Hardy's predecessor actually belongs to the Dorset poet, William Barnes. However, similar to Barnes in several ways, steeped as both were in the traditions of their countryside, Hardy was not primarily "folkloristic." His yokels do not form a class entirely apart from the other characters in the Wessex novels. They are, in fact, by almost imperceptible gradations, through persons of middle rank, connected with the characters who are higher in the social scale. From these characters of higher social class the rustics are distinguishable by their use of dialect and by the serenity with which they hold their poverty. Instead, he insisted that their misery had been much overestimated. He shows, on the contrary, that they have discovered the secret of happiness. This secret, as is expressed in *The Woodlanders*, lies in limiting one's aspirations. Many of them are shrewd, some witty, nearly all unselfconsciously humorous. They are, at once, a part of the Wessex background as well as a sort of chorus commenting upon the actions in which their superiors are engaged.

Hardy's depiction of his rural characters is not sentimental at all. These characters are rather a normal stuff, neither saints nor villains. They are the true representatives of common humanity, without vicious as well as virtuous

extremes. His villains are invariably sophisticated intruders from the world outside of Wessex. His leading characters are always of Wessex blood. As and when Hardy ventured beyond Wessex, as he does in some of his minor novels, he found himself beyond his range. In that case, he could never come as good as he did in his Wessex novels. He strongly believed, like Wordsworth, that in rustic life “the essential passions of the heart find a better soil” and are “less under restraint” than in urban life. The closer man lives to nature in humility and ignorance, the likelier he is to be happy, for knowledge is sorrow. But nature, in Hardy, is no friend, nor mother, nor guide as in Wordsworth. Here, it is shown full of cruelty. In fact, Hardy stresses in his novels only those aspects of nature that are found inimical to man. Yet with faulty logic, Hardy is on the side of natural impulse, as in *Tess* or *Jude*, in opposition to social law, convention, and restrictions. Also, nature is not just a setting for his stories and novels, poems and plays, but rather an integral part of them.

Man in Hardy’s novels, is shown to be a plaything in the hands of natural or cosmic forces. The dominant theme is the struggle of the individual against the obscure power which moves the universe. This struggle, however, inevitably ends in failure and tragedy because man is no match to the powerful cosmic forces. Since love accentuates individuality, it is in love that the conflict of humanity with destiny is at its most intense. In his earlier masterpieces like *The Return Of The Native* and *The Mayor Of Casterbridge*, the blows of fate are shown to be consequent upon weaknesses of character. One could recall here A.C. Bradley’s dictum about Shakespeare’s great tragedies where, he says, character is destiny. Chance or coincidence as cause of human tragedy is not altogether absent in Shakespeare’s great tragedies. The chance fall of handkerchief in *Othello* is a significant instance to this effect, although, it is never as predominant as in Hardy’s novels. In Hardy’s later novels, it assumes a much darker aspect, where blind destiny strikes the innocent and the guilty with mindless impartiality. In fact, Hardy seems to place man and nature together on the one side as sufferers of their common tormentor, the blind destiny or the cosmic imbecility. His myth-making imagination gave “a kind of rationality to the hoary old superstitions of hostile or capricious powers which he cherished and half-believed.”

Hardy was, in fact, a scientific determinist. He meant by "Fate" or "Chance" or "Casualty" human life as determined by all antecedented circumstances in a chain of causality. Groping for a name for this concept, he discarded such terms as "Nature" or "God" and finally chose to call the unintelligent and unconscious urge or impulse in things the "Immanent Will." Whether it was before or after he read Schopenhauer is a debatable point, but the affinity between the two on the question of the nature of cosmic force is more than obvious. In Hardy, the term Immanent Will is, however, not more than a "metaphysical convenience" to express the unity and pattern of existing things. Critics have generally deplored Hardy's sacrifice of tragic grandeur which this concept logically demands. For once you reduce human protagonists to an automata so that even in their struggles against destiny they are merely pulled to and fro by the "halyards" of the Will, there is no room for that internal conflict which is taken to be the essence of tragedy. Hardy would have readily agreed. The root of his indictment against life was "the intolerable antilogy of making figments feel." As he remarked, "the emotions have no place in a world of defect, and it is a cruel injustice that they should have developed into it." Yet in the inexplicable evolution of human consciousness from the unconscious and of intelligence from the unknowing lay Hardy's strange, dim hope that "in some day unguessed of us" the Will may "lift its blinding incubus" and, becoming informed by consciousness, "fashion all things fair."

Hardy was not at all bitter in his personal relations. In fact, he was quite jovial. His temperament, however, was basically saturnine. He found the "twilight view of life," just as Hawthorne did, congenial to his temperament. A rich fund of sympathy with suffering often made him angry and indignant. But, with a want of love, he indicted circumstances and the miseries of man's own contriving alike. He was not a sociological novelist, but he was happy to recognize that reforms often begin in sentiment and sentiment sometimes begins in a novel. As a professional writer, he openly used fiction as a medium for polemic. It was only in his early phase, and that too under pressure from public, that he accepted his profession as an entertainer. However, what came out openly and clearly in his later novels was always implicitly there in his early novels. Hardy's architectural ability is clearly evidenced by the compact construction of his fictional plots. Among his

contemporaries, he remained unmatched in this aspect of the novel.

19.5 Suggested Reading

1. *Adams, James Eli, ed. Encyclopedia of the Victorian Era (4 Vol. 2004), short essays on a wide range of topics by expert.*
2. *Bailey, Peter Leisure & Class in Victorian England, 1830-1902 (Oxford UP, 1970), contains a short narrative history and 147 "Selected documents" on pp 195-504.*

THOMAS HARDY-*TESS OF THE*
D'URBERVILLES

STRUCTURE

- 20.1 Objectives
- 20.2 Introduction
- 20.3 Hardy as a Wessex Novelist
- 20.4 As a Tragic Novelist
- 20.5 Hardy's Pessimism
- 20.6 Suggested Reading

20.1 Objectives

- To introduce the learners to Hardy as a Wessex novelist.
- To make the learners analyse Hardy as a pessimist.

20.2 Introduction

Thomas Hardy is a regional novelist. He is the creator of "Wessex". Wessex has an epic grandeur and his principal characters have the greatness of epic heroes and heroines. He has thus imparted a new emphasis and significance to the regional novels which had already been dignified by the Brontes.

20.3 Hardy as a Wessex Novelist

Hardy's novels, from his earliest to the last, carry a distinct flavour of the region he chose to call by the name of Wessex. In *Far From the Madding Crowd* as well as in *Under the Greenwood Tree*, we are introduced

to a scene, set in a region whose particularities are gradually unfolded in a series of novels following these early ones. It was a region that was to become familiar in the mind's eye as the "Wessex of Thomas Hardy." It is a region which is centred in the hamlets, villages, towns, woods, meadows, and heathland of Dorset and overflowing into the adjoining counties. It is a countryside inhabited by rural people living, largely, under the conditions prevailing at the time when Hardy was a boy. The character of the place and more so the attitudes of the people have drastically changed since then. It is infact, these outer and inner changes, which began over a hundred years ago, that are invariably linked with the tragedies of his protagonists. However, the memory of the region (Wessex) is fixed for posterity as long as the English novel would continue to be read. The "Wessex" of Hardy's novels lives in our imagination more distinctly than any other region created by an English writer, maybe any writer. Compared with Scott's or Burns' country, or the Lake country of Wordsworth, Hardy's Wessex clearly comes out much more distinct a presence than any of these. Here, in Hardy's world one experiences a reality which is charged with all that is intimate and poignant in human experience.

The power of Hardy's Wessex is captivating. Not only are we shown the wild expanse of Egdon Heath, the rich meadowland of Talbothays, where Tess milked her cows and Angel Clare made love to her; the fire plantations of the Hintocks among which moved Giles Winterbourne and Marty South; the houses and streets and cornmarket of Casterbridge, frequented by all the farmers of the neighbourhood; but also we become aware of these places as influences subtly entering into the lives of the men and women born and living there, who inherit memories, habits, and instincts handed on through the centuries. Those born in the Hintocks with "an almost exhaustive biographical or historical acquaintance with every object, animate and inanimate, within the observer's horizon know all about those invisible ones of the days gone by, whose feet have traversed the fields which look so grey from the window; recall whose creaking plough has turned those sods from time to time; whose hands planted the trees that form a crest to the opposite hill;

whose horses and hounds have torn through that underwood; what birds affect that particular brake; what bygone domestic dramas of love, jealousy, revenge, or disappointment have been enacted in the cottages, the mansions, the street or the green." Thus, the Wessex country, inhabited by simple people and the ghosts of their ancestors, and no less by living animals and trees and grasses, is the background which is never wholly absent from Hardy's work, in prose or verse.

What Hardy tells us of Clym Yeobright, walking on Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native*, could as well apply to the author himself :

If anyone knew the heath well, it was Clym. He was permeated with its scenes, with its substance, with its odours. He might be said to be its product. His eyes had first opened thereon; with its appearance all the first images of his memory were mingled; his estimate of life had been coloured by it; his toys had been the flint knives and arrow-heads which he found there, wondering why stones should "grow" to such odd shapes; his flowers, the purple bells and yellow gorse; his animal kingdom the snakes and croppers; his society, its human hunters.

One can see Hardy's coloured vision in this description also. There are no song birds here, nor rainbow in the sky; even the toys are knives and arrow-heads; and the animal kingdom confined to snakes and croppers. He was always observant, percipient, sensitive and thoughtful, and yet he was a person of great simplicity. There was something of the peasant in him which his intellectual sophistication did not wholly eliminate. Hence, when he depicts his Wessex world both the peasant as well as the philosophic side of his personality leave their mark on the representation. He grew up to know a world of a certain kind, filled with a certain life, human and natural. And he grew up to know this world in all its beauty, its contrariness, and its perplexing painfulness. That life, which he calls the Wessex, as he had known from his childhood, he absorbed imaginatively, and it became the raw material of his art.

Hardy was never to be at his best except when writing about Wessex, although he transcended its narrow limits and placed it in a wider context. Even when he was growing, his view of this world was being modified by his reading of English literature, the classics, and history, by his careful study of architecture, by his interest in pictures and in acting, his disturbing contacts with Darwin and Spencer and Schopenhauer and his puzzled study of the Oxford Movement theologians and their opponents. It can be seen that as he grew up, he became more and more uneasy at innovations which were displacing rustic customs and social ideas at variance with the older codes of life. He felt evils were aggravated by the intolerant judgement of society, as if there were not enough that are beyond man's control and inherent in human life. The problems that were thus revealed were to become insoluble and almost unbearable. They became all the more painful because the men and women of Wessex, the raw material of his art, with primitive passions and developing consciousness, continuing their plodding existence, were converted into tragicomic realities of the imagination. "The business of the poet and novelist," he wrote in his Memoranda two days after he had written the last page of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, "is to show the sorriness underlying the grandest things, and the grandeur underlying the sorriest things."

The people and the countryside of Wessex, seen through the prism of a romantic imagination, gave to Hardy the Archetypal forms of human existence. During the entire period of his career as a novelist the kind of life he depicted in his various works became like the notes and chords in an orchestral composition, moving from theme to theme as the motive dictated. In his case, it can be said that the author is possessed by his subject. In his novels, a more than personal richness has found expression. They bring into literature a very rare combination of influences and gifts. None of these novels with the possible exception of *The Hand of Ethelberta*, is metropolitan in its setting. All show evidence, directly or indirectly, of the tension in Hardy's mind between the world of Dorset (Wessex) and that of London. There is no comparison between his Wessex and Barsetshire. His local or country attachment or piety had in it, no doubt, some desire for simplification. But Hardy was not self-deceived. He

knew that a way of life was vanishing in his time. Being a “meliorist,” he was on the side of the steam engines. He was not, however, a prophet of *The Waste Land*. He was much occupied with the idea of the return of the native, but he was primarily aware of his own good luck and his rich sense of connection. Of course, much of what he felt connected with had already become a matter of antiquarian lore, or recollection in “the Mead of Memories” where “the sad man sighed his fantasies.”

When we have made all deductions, and have pointed out the merely literary, faintly Shakespearean, ancestry of many of his rustic humourists, there is still left enough truthfulness in Hardy’s vision of Wessex to make his attitude of suspense between things ancient and modern a poignant one.

20.4 As a Tragic Novelist

The five novels which are considered as Hardy’s great work, are all tragedies on the grand scale. They are all of them love stories, as before, but the men and women who suffer this passion in its extremity, individuals as they are, also become representatives of the human race. We are to look at these love stories through Hardy’s eyes, as Aeschylus saw Prometheus chained to a rock, against a vast background of nature, the victim of “the President of the Immortals.” The wonderful opening description of Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native* shows what sort of a place it was in which the persons were to suffer. It creates an impression of Nature which appeared to share the sufferings of men. “Fair prospects wed happily with fair times; but alas, if times be not fair...Haggard Egdon appealed to a subtler and scarcer instinct, to a more recently learnt emotion...wearing a somberness distasteful to our race when it was young.” “The storm was its lover, and the wind its friend.” It could become “the home of strange phantoms.” “Like man, slighted and enduring,” it was “colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony.” In *The Woodlanders*, too, though there are some gentler pictures, “the bleared white visage of a sunless winter day emerged like a dead-born child.” Also, in the wood we observe “the unfulfilled Intention, which makes life what it is,” working havoc underground – “the leaf was deformed, the curve was crippled, the taper was

interrupted; the lichen ate the vigour of the stalk and the ivy slowly strangled to death the promising sapling.” Though Nature assumes a far sweeter aspect at Talbothays during those months when Tess and Clare were working among the cows and the meadows, the sweetness of it becomes as a foil to the horrors which are to follow.

Hardy peoples this alternately lovely and sinister world with men and women, the more ordinary of whom play the chorus, and others, the exceptional ones, feeling in themselves “the ache of modernism.” These men and women of the latter category are the tragic lot. In *The Return of the Native*, the hero Clym Yeobright’s face reflected, we are told, “the view of life as a thing to be put up with replacing that zest for existence which was so intense in early civilizations.” Henchard in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* perceives more simply but passionately. The shape of his ideas in time of suffering simply “a moody ‘I am to suffer, I perceive.’” His superstitious nature leads him to the grim conclusion that his misfortunes are due to “some sinister intelligence bent on punishing him.” In *Jude the Obscure*, the percipience of the new type of man reaches an extremity where it becomes unbearable. Even as a boy Jude shows that he is “the sort of man who was born to ache.” At times, he is “seized with a sort of shuddering.” And as a man he is a victim of “the modern man of unrest.” Sue the ethereal, the fine-nerved, the idealist, has the same sensitiveness. She becomes almost a masochist in her love of suffering. Hardy pursues the theme of tragic suffering to a point where it becomes almost horrible. He reproduces, for example, the affliction of the parents in their children. “I ought not to be born, ought I?” says Little Father Time, working himself up to the mood which ends in the hanging of his baby brother and sister followed by his own. “The doctor,” it is reported, “says there are such boys springing up amongst us – boys of a sort unknown in the last generation.... It is the beginning of the coming universal wish not to live.”

These five novels, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* being one of these, are not to be taken as a statement of Hardy’s philosophy. However, in giving body to human life as Hardy finds it there does appear a pattern, in accordance with

which human life manifests itself. The pattern does yield a philosophy, imposed on Hardy by his intuitive apprehension of life. There does emerge in these novels a theory of society into which the facts, as he sees them, fit. The theory then widens into nothing less than a view of the universe. In *The Return of the Native*, we see the problem of a young man of bucolic origin moving too quickly to intellectual and sophisticated aspirations. He reaches a condition of imbalance between the two elements – of body and mind or earth and fire – in himself. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge* we see in Lucetta the half-emancipated woman – “I’ll love whom I choose,” though, the old superstition still strong in her, she shrinks and withers to her death before the terrors of the skimmity-ride. In *The Woodlanders* we are confronted with the deficiencies of the divorce laws. In *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* we are introduced to the cruelty of public opinion towards those who have offended against its decrees. In *Jude the Obscure* Sue Bridehead, so clear-sighted in vision, though so unreasonable in action, makes her explicit protest against “the social moulds civilization fits us into.” She asks in an agitated state of mind whether a marriage ceremony is a religious thing, or “only a sordid contract, based on material convenience in householding, rating, and taxing, and the inheritance of land and money by children.” “When people of a later age look back upon the barbarous customs and superstitions of the times that we have the unhappiness to live in, what will they say!” she exclaims. Jude, too, makes a disturbing comment on the institution of marriage, the fundamental error of “having based a permanent contract on a temporary feeling.”

In these five of his subtlest and most tragic novels (like the great tragedies of Shakespeare), Hardy has made a searching criticism of modern life and finally of all life. In these novels, just as in the great tragedies of Shakespeare, we have all the chorus of ordinary men and women, with rustic minds not yet unhinged, accepting life and judging it, gaily or sadly, in accordance with the conventional norms. But in the forefront of the same chorus we have others, born in the same milieu, who, confronted with odds of social and cosmic life, come to question almost everything from social institutions to cosmic order. These are the ones who have acquired the self-

consciousness which is the distinctive mark of modern man. He questions the fundamentals of the society in which he is born to live, its social conventions. He questions the very progress of a civilization which keeps bringing so much misery to men. Finally, he questions the benevolence or the omnipotence of the Power that is said to rule the universe. For instance, Clym Yeobright in *The Return of the Native* sees “the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain.” Henchard in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* fears “some sinister intelligence.” Tess in *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* supposes that we are living on a star that is “a blighted one.” She questions the “use of learning,” though she says “I shouldn’t mind learning why – why the sun do shine on the just and the unjust alike.... But that’s what books will not tell me.” Sue Fawley in *Jude the Obscure* once imagines that “the world resembled a stanza or melody composed in a dream.” Her fully awakened intelligence, however, concludes: “the First Cause worked automatically like somnambulist, and not reflectively like a sage.” She continues, “All the ancient wrath of the Power above us has been vented upon us, His poor creatures, and we must submit.” Thus, these characters in Hardy, like those in Shakespearean tragedy, emerge more sinned against than sinning. They are those of human beings who are set in a framework of universal Destiny.

20.5 Hardy’s Pessimism

Much has been written about Hardy’s “pessimism” and “philosophy”, considering both as intimately related to each other. Probing the problem the critics have inevitably traced on him the influence of various thinkers of his time, notably John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, Leslie Stephen, and Schopenhauer. No doubt, the serious view of life which underlies his early comedies intensifies into a tragic (call it pessimistic) vision in his later novels. It cannot be ignored that there is in his mature works the inherited and timeless quality of Hardy’s skepticism, which deepened into pessimism under the stress of personal experience and the spirit of the age. Fundamentally, his was the normal skepticism which subsists peaceably beside local pieties and traditions. It resembles the fatalism of the milkmaids in *Tess*, who “had been reared in

the lonely country nooks where fatalism is a strong sentiment.” Hardy never outgrew, it seems, his preoccupation with class. Significantly, his first novel, never published and now lost, was entitled *The Poor Man and the Lady*. He, also frequently, betrays a certain measure of personal involvement or self-projection in majority of his major novels. The involvement is, of course, not on the emotional level so much as on the intellectual. We find that his ideas on man, society, and universe quite often find direct expression in these novels.

At the same time, it will not be proper to insist that Hardy set out to give us a pessimistic philosophy in his novels. He did set out, for sure, to show how certain persons, selected because they were interesting, having certain characters, would behave under certain given circumstances. One might say that these circumstances in his novels, created for his characters to confront, are arbitrarily conceived. But it cannot be said that these circumstances or the way the characters confront them are implausible or impossible. In bringing his characters to an almost inevitable disaster, Hardy is, decidedly, prone to tilt the chances against their prosperity by too many coincidences. His frequent use of the unlucky accident is a blemish in nearly all of his plots. The action in Hardy’s novels is always significant. It moves according to a pattern which is part of the pattern of all life. As such, it yields an account of the world and the universe we live in. This seen tract of life, as it is unfolded before our eyes, springs from the author’s vision of life as a whole. It is nothing short of his conception of the Universe expressing itself at given moments of time and in a given place. In fact, in his novels, the time and even the place participate in his cosmic conception.

Hardy’s tragic pattern, however, does not always follow (just as Shakespeare’s pattern does not) the Aristotalian rules of construction. A good plot (in spite of the coincidences); characters, serious and deserving of our attention; action, calling forth pity and fear; all of these are present. But Hardy does not hesitate to violate the rules which forbade the shocking spectacle of a virtuous person (such as Tess) brought, though no fault of her/his own, from prosperity to adversity, or from happiness to hardship. In *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy goes to the extreme in showing men and women relentlessly chased by

a cruel “Universe” through no fault of their own. At the end of the novel, one experiences a sense of horror which no tragedy, including *King Lear* of Shakespeare, had ever before unleashed. Even *Tess*, which is quite cruel a tragedy in many ways, does not cause as much horror as *Jude* does. When “Justice” is done, and “the President of the Immortals,” in Aeschylean phrase, “has ended his sport with Tess,” and has shown the last of her, so grimly, on the gallows, the penultimate scene does have its compensation. It brings happiness, at least so Tess calls it, in the final reunion and understanding between herself and Clare. When the pursuers at last find them at Stonehenge, “It is as it should be,” she murmurs. “Angel, I am almost glad – yes, glad! This happiness could not have lasted. It was too much.” She faces the end bravely, heroically, with her habitual courage. “I am ready,” she says quietly.

Hardy’s pessimism has a very sharp pointed edge. It is not an all-round sort of pessimism. He is pessimistic only with regard to the governance of the Universe. He is not quite pessimistic about human beings. In his lesser books, there are conventional villains playing their melodramatic parts, but in his greater novels there are no villains of that order. There are people, who are weak, and volatile, and selfish people, like Wildeve or Fitzpiers, but they are not manipulative Machiavellians or scheming scoundrels. We can come across in his novels a coarse and unscrupulous creature like Arabella, but not villainous like Lady Macbeth. Besides, Hardy’s chorus of ordinary men and women are full of good humour and the milk of human kindness. His heroes and heroines have noble and lovable qualities. They stand in sublime contrast to the Supreme Powers. Being a meditative poet, Hardy gave to the novel a sublimity which in his own country it had not attained before.

One can see from the long series of his novels that Hardy was not a powerful analyst of human life. He was instead, a meditative story-teller, a meditative poet, or romancer, who shared keenly the imagined vicissitudes of his characters enacting their destined roles against the background of an agricultural setting menaced by the forces of change. He had the story-teller’s unselfconscious liking for his own command of dialect, which accounts for the

length of some of his rustic dialogues. His short stories counterbalance the intense pessimism of his major and mature novels. These stories help us to see the novels as the creation of a writer, not, like George Eliot, primarily interested in the processes of moral choice, frustration, and fulfillment, but rooted in place, reflective, fond of pathos, fluent, humorous rather than witty, slightly bewildered and upset by his later notoriety as the exponent of advanced moral views, much ahead of his time. Hardy is always at pains in his mature fiction to explain that because everything is destined or fated, the characters can only suffer as they follow their appointed courses. Like all dogmas which oversimplify the moral texture of life, Hardy's deterministic notions, whether derived from Aeschylean tragedy or his own contemporary evolutionism did not help him to overcome his prime weakness as a novelist, his inability to go beyond stereotypes of character and to deepen the intrinsic development of his plot. As a result, there always remains a gap between his general statement of themes and the action (or the objective correlative) which should embody them. The gap is quite glaring in the case of *Tess*. Not less glaring is the gap in *Jude the Obscure* and *The Return of the Native*.

20.6 Suggested Reading

1. Chadwick, Owen. *The Victorian Church* (2 Vol. 1966), covers all denominations.
2. Flint, Kay. *The Cambridge History of Victorian Literature* (2014).
3. Harrison, J.F.C. *Late Victorian Britain 1875-1901* (Routledge, 2013).

THOMAS HARDY-*TESS OF THE*
D'URBERVILLES

STRUCTURE

- 21.1 Objectives
- 21.2 Introduction
- 21.3 Story and Plot of Tess
- 21.4 Suggested Reading

21.1 Objectives

- To acquaint the learners with the story and the plot of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

21.2 Introduction

Thomas Hardy was the first English novelist who dared to make a woman who had sinned, or who was an adultress, the heroine of his novels. Tess is a woman with a past, yet Hardy had made her the heroine of *Jude the Obscure*, is an adultress. Hardy, thus, shocked Victorian notions of morality and was vehemently criticized as being immoral and a corrupter of the people.

21.3 Story and Plot of Tess

The publication of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* in 1891 caused the storm of public protests in various forms. It did, however, blow out itself after about two years. The work survived the storm. It has become one of the classics in English literature. The famous ending of the novel, "Justice was done, and the President of the Immortals, in Aeschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess," refers to the *Prometheus Vincit*. The story of

Tess, like the legend of Prometheus chained on the mountain crag, embodies an heroic attempt to bring light to mankind. Although much else went into the making of the novel about Tess, there lies at its centre an impassioned plea for warmth and charity towards women, for a more enlightened view of the sexual relationship. There is, indeed, a plea for justice to women at various levels of the man-woman relationship. Hardy's sub-title to the novel, "A Pure Woman," was an afterthought. But it is not without substance. Several times in the story's narration the author stresses the essential purity of Tess, both in terms of her womanhood as well as her human heart. The emphasis, that the novel clearly makes, is that although in conventional terms Tess is a "fallen" woman, she should be judged not in conventional terms, but by her intentions, her life and nature seen as a whole. What she feels and thinks constitute her character; since her feelings and thoughts are pure, so her character is pure. It is on the basis of this premise that Hardy calls her a pure woman. Tess is a spirit of pure loving-kindness. More than thirty years before he created the character of Tess, Hardy had underlined in his copy of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, "Who so ever has chastity, not that which is taught in schools, but that which is by nature." Tess is one of those who are "chaste" by nature.

If the contours of the plot of *Tess* are followed, the novel can be seen as the hounding to death of a graceful, innocent animal. But for a few respites, Tess is always on the move, like a hunted deer that finds all the exits closed. It is a rather long chase. From Marlott in the Black moor Vale to Cranborne Chase in the north-east; from the Chase to the Vale of the Great Dairies in the south; then east to Woolbridge, far west to Port Bredy, back to central Dorset – the starveling farm at Flintcomb Ash, and west again to Emminster; the chase goes on. Tess, like the hunted creature twists and doubles in her tracks, till she is hunted out of her own territory, and brought to bay far east on Salisbury Plain, where the President of the Immortals "ended his *sport* with Tess." The scene of her ravishment (in our idiom rape) by Alec D'Urberville is a mist-bound wood where she is lying like a dead-bead animal on a pile of dead leaves. Returning home, she shuns mankind – "On these lovely hills and

dales her quiescent glide was of a piece with the element she moved in. Her *flexuous and stealthy* figure became an integral part of the scene.” Later, Hardy speaks of her as “a bird in a springe.” Then, we come upon the following: “‘Now, punish me!’ she said, turning up her eyes to him with the hopeless defiance of the sparrow’s gaze before its captor twists its neck.” Or again, “there was something of the habitude of the wild animal in the unreflecting instinct with which she rambled on.” Then, at the end “her breathing now was quick and small, like that of a *lesser creature* than a woman.” Not only in such allusion as these, but almost all along the novel’s narrative do we get images of hunted and hunter, chased and chaser. From this angle, the story of Tess reads like the story of the hare and the hound.

But the pertinent point that arises in the narrative is who is the hunter. About the hunted there remains no ambiguity. But about the hunter, there certainly remains a cloud of mystery as to the precise identity of the chaser. Is it an individual? Is it Man? Is it Destiny? Or should we see *Tess* as the tragedy of a born victim, and her fate as self inflicted? Hardy did have as one of his beliefs that some women are inevitably attracted to those who will hurt and destroy them. As he once said, women have “an illogical power entirely denied to men in general—the power not only of kissing, but of delighting to kiss the rod.” Whatever Hardy might have said elsewhere, so far as *Tess* is concerned its heroine is not at all a case of pessimism, nor is she fatally attracted to her destroyer. Tess as a woman is a rare combination of a dove and a tigress. While in love, she is pliant, docile, and self-sacrificing. But otherwise she is also a person of spirit and independence. In any case, she is far from being a doormat or a meek martyr. To have a clear understanding of her character, we must realize how much Hardy’s thinking was influenced by the Greek tragedies. He was intellectually influenced by it because it emotionally appealed to him. It appealed to a deep vein of melancholy in his disposition, and the countryman’s fatalism he inherited from his forebears. It can be seen in his use of coincidence, which is generally viewed as arbitrary, even reckless. There is plenty of it in *Tess*. However, it is not there just as a facile means of weaving the plot. Hardy, in fact, saw in chance a paradigm of the inscrutable

workings of Destiny.

It is very true that coincidences would seem improbable or meaningless if they were related with the conscious, purposive designs of the human mind. But if we believed, as Hardy did, that “crass Casualty” disregards and overrides such designs, imposing upon our lives a pattern we can seldom comprehend or modify. In that case, we shall accept coincidences as moves in a game whose rules are hidden from us. This sort of fatalism is, no doubt, a cheerless creed. Also, in the case of an author less compassionate than Hardy, it is likely to be artistically sterile. Hardy achieved through it not only pathos but grandeur. Like the Greek heroines, Antigone and Electra, Tess achieves that glorious status. The one difference between the Greek tragedies and Hardy’s *Tess* is that in the latter it is far from self-evident that the struggle is only or chiefly against Fate. Tess does indeed seem to be dogged by Fate; and we feel that Hardy meant this to be so. But viewed closely, the course of Tess’ tragedy shows at every step that human institutions, or states of mind produced by them, are no less responsible for her misfortunes. It *may* be that an external Fate is working through them. However, on the face of it, not much happens to Tess which could not be put down solely to human agency – to the harshness of custom and moral law, and man’s perverse inhumanity.

At the start of the novel’s story, Tess goes to Trantbridge because her parents have been corrupted by the news that John Durbeyfield is a descendant of an old Dorset landed family. Tess’ slightly superior education leads to the quarrel with the “Queen of Spades.” This leads Tess to accept Alec’s escort home, which results in his ravishing (raping) her. “Doubtless, some of Tess d’Urberville’s mailed ancestors rollicking home from a fray had dealt the same measure even more ruthlessly towards peasant girls of their time.” It is, as a matter of fact, the opportunism and snobbery of Tess’ mother which exposes the girl to danger at Alec’s hands. The girl’s mother goes to the extent of even rebuking her for failing to get a marriage ring from him. It is highly (morally) creditable for Tess that despite this early, rather devastating, disgrace, she is not fully demoralized. Not less creditable is the fact that she refuses to be tempted by the “dreams of hell” her mother nourishes for her—that she focus

on attracting the impure and immoral rich, Alec. At this point of narrative Hardy comments, “but for the world’s opinion those experiences would have been simply a liberal education.” Towards the end of the tale, it is the village gossip and the system of life-tenancy which force Tess into accepting Alec’s protection for the sake of her impoverished family.

These are just a few instances of the way human institutions or human weaknesses indirectly create the “opposing environment” which prevents Tess’ natural fulfillment. More directly, her tragedy is caused by the two men who walk into her life. It is the work of Alec D’Urberville and Angel Clare. Alec, unfortunately, is an absurd character. He is the conventional rapist, the bold, bad, seducer of the melodrama (like the Hindi movies). He literally twirls his moustaches and says, “Ha, ha, my Beauty!” He is hardly more convincing in this role than later as a convert to evangelical Christianity. But, for whatever little he is worth, this innately brutal character has been further depraved by too much money and leisure. He represents Hardy’s view of the idle rich. Like any view, however, it may not be universally true of all the idle rich. But, like all views, it has the force of universality, given the attitude to life and people that the likes of Alec’s have. Besides, Hardy does not present Alec as prototype of the rich. He is substantially individualized as character. Decidedly, Hardy is no Bunyan or Spenser.

The other man, Angel Clare, is a very different proposition. Compared with Tess, he comes out a rather bloodless figure. But he certainly has more reality about him than he is generally credited with. This wrong impression about his substantiality is, perhaps, because Hardy puts a certain amount of his own self into the character of Angel: “something nebulous, preoccupied, vague in his bearing and regard, marked him as one who probably had no very definite aim or concern about his material future.” As it is, this description of Angel Clare would not be far amiss if applied to Hardy as a young man. Angel has gone away from the simple Christianity of his excellent parents. This has happened under the influence of contemporary skepticism. One can at once see the case of Hardy in this aspect of Angel. But, “despite his heterodoxy, faults, and weaknesses, Clare was a man with a conscience.” Here, again, the

similarity between Hardy and Clare is unmistakable. Like Hardy, again, Clare, we are told, was one who came to feel “the great passionate pulse of existence, unwarped, uncontroverted, untrammelled by those creeds which futilely attempt to check what wisdom would be content to regulate.”

But there is a worm in this seemingly wholesome fruit. Angel Clare loved Tess “rather ideally and fancifully than with the impassioned thoroughness of her feeling for him.” So, when Tess makes her confession, we find that “with all his attempted independence of judgement this advanced and well-meaning young man...was yet the slave to custom and conventionality.” No wonder that even Tess’ heart-rending appeals break on a heart petrified and arid. We comprehend this arid and petrified heart when we are told: “Within the remote depths of his constitution, so gentle and affectionate as he was in general, there lay hidden a hard logical deposit, like a vein of metal in a soft loam [rich soil], which turned the edge of everything that attempted to traverse it.” As it comes out in the novel’s plot, the basic flaw in Angel’s character is a morbid idealism. It is an idealism which is derived from certain human institutions and certain social attitudes prevalent in his time and class, but has now gone bad and become negative. Before their marriage takes place, Tess’ intuition has divined this danger to her. She says in her solitude, “she, you love is not my real self, but one in my image; the one I might have been!” And, after she has made a confession to him, Angel, out of his frozen recalcitrance, echoes it again and again – “You were one person, now you are another...the woman I have been loving is not you.” So, blinded by his idealistic prejudice, which overpowers his intelligence as well as his tenderness, Angel Clare cannot even glimpse the height and depth of the love he is rejecting. Rather than appreciate Tess’ own ideal of honesty and her innate innocence, he follows the conventional notion of chastity and rejects her outright and at once. This “vein of metal” in his constitution sours his love and destroys Tess’ life.

Hardy being an omniscient narrator keeps educating us about his characters at every stage of the plot’s development. When Clare rejects Tess after marrying her, we are told: “Clare did not know at that time the full depth

of her devotion, its single-mindedness, its meekness; what long-suffering it guaranteed, what honesty, what endurance, what good faith.” One recalls here the rashness with which Henchard, in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, sells his wife to a sailor for a few pounds. Henchard, at least, was drunk and did not quite know what he was doing. Here, rashness is all the more inexcusable or unpardonable because Clare is under no intoxication except that of his male arrogance acquired from his patriarchal environment. Tess is, in truth, a perfect image of woman’s love. The moral attitudes that force her love to run to waste are, of course, no longer in vogue, carrying no credibility, the meaning of her story, just as the beauty of her character, remain unimpaired. Hardy has not presented Tess as an idealized character. She does possess all the qualities which Angel realized, too late, that she possessed. But she is, at times, also moody, over-impulsive, crude, self-deceiving, quick-tempered, proud, too self-absorbing, and under great stress—in-firm of moral purpose. As C. Day Lewis has rightly observed, “No other heroine of fiction, save Anna Karenina, is so intensely present to the reader in all her changes of mood, her emotional force, her physical charm. Through that rank, sappy, milky, perfumed summer at Talbothays Farm, we are made even more aware of her sensuous bloom; while in the terrible winter at Fintcomb Ash her steadfastness is unforgettably imaged. With Tess, as with Anna, we seem to enter into the whole nature of woman.”

The plot of *Tess* is not without its share of flaws. The dialogue, for example, is often stagey. There are in the narrative, naïve and untimely moralisings. In the later part of the novel, there is a good deal of melodrama. There are a lot many improbabilities in the last fifteen chapters. But all these flaws of the plot are overcome by the vitality of the person and character of Tess. And yet Hardy does not romanticise her character in any sense. As the poet Lewis puts it, “With her heart of gold, her genius for suffering and for long-suffering, her moments of more-than-mortal stature, she remains a village girl, the heroine and victim of a simple village tragedy, a child of the earth who, milking, harvesting, hoeing turnips, tending the threshing machine, stays close to her roots and draws reality from them.” In Hardy’s novel, the moral virtues

of simplicity, honesty, purity, loyalty, love, faith are not mere words; they are unquestionable facts of the fictional narrative, and of life, the life that the novel represents. These values are made all the more real by the searching sincerity of the author himself.”

The plot of *Tess* is not perfect, not well-rounded, is also borne out by the fact that it originally appeared in sketches, in bits and pieces. Hardy, in his “Explanatory Note,” reveals it all: “The main portion of the following story appeared – with slight modifications – in the *Graphic* newspaper; other chapters, more especially addressed to the adult readers, in the *Fortnightly Review* and the *National Observer*, as episodic sketches.” Although Hardy had much better sense of structure than most novelists of the Victorian period, the bane of “episodic sketches” was too dominant a practice to escape in that age. Those wanting to escape it would face the inevitable option of not being acceptable to the conventional public of the Victorian period. At the same time, Hardy remained a lone fighter in his age for the freedom of the artist, who alone took risks in writing about forbidden subjects, raising inconvenient issues, questioning social cruelties, especially against women. His own assertion in the “Explanatory Note” makes it clear :

I will just add that the story is sent out in all sincerity of purpose, as an attempt to give artistic form to a true sequence of things; and in respect of the book's opinions and sentiments, I would ask any too genteel reader, who cannot endure to have said what everybody nowadays thinks and feels, to remember a well-worn sentence of St. Jerome's: If an offence comes out of the truth, better is it that the offence come than that the truth be concealed.

Truth being the overriding concern of Hardy, he was bound to be less mindful of fable's form so long as it conveyed his philosophic truth. As a matter of fact, his philosophy always spoils partly, if not wholly, Hardy's artistic forms, his plots and stories. He took his philosophy of the Immanent Will very seriously, and, undoubtedly, saw Tess as the victim of the “President

of the Immortals.” Undoubtedly, there is behind *Tess* the author’s conscious philosophy, a pessimistic and deterministic view of life of the world in which man (more so, woman) is at the mercy of an unyielding outside Fate. The novel’s subtitle, ‘a pure woman,’ indicates the kind of significance Hardy attached to his story of Tess. There is also no doubt that this conscious philosophy affects the novel’s plot in general for the worse. As Arnold Kettle argues, “It is responsible for instance, for the ‘literary’ quality which mars the final sentence. It is responsible for our sense of loaded dice. And it is responsible ultimately for the psychological weakness such as the idealisation of Tess, for the characters are made too often to respond not to life but to Hardy’s philosophy.”

Kettle has argued it well. There is all the force in the argument. One point, of course, is not palatable, the one about the idealisation of Tess. We have seen earlier, and we have well documented the case from the narrated facts, that Tess is not at all idealized. She is very much a “human” character, a village girl with all the purities and impurities her environment permits. With the exception of this remark, however, Kettle’s observation is a brilliant one, and is very well formulated, its rhetorical construction notwithstanding. The critic sounds more convincing when he asserts that Hardy’s novel (*Tess*) survives Hardy’s philosophy. The reason that he attributes to the novel’s survival, too, is equally, in fact, more convincing. The novel survives, we are told, because the novelist’s imaginative understanding of the disintegration of the rural way of life is more powerful than the limiting tendency of his conscious outlook on life. What salvages Hardy’s pessimism in the novel is his sound basis for this pessimism in the natural outlook of the Wessex peasantry facing an extinction in the Darwinian struggle for survival in which only the fittest survives. In this case, the fittest are those materially and scientifically best equipped but morally and spiritually equally defenceless.

To carry argument further it could be said that there is in *Tess* an unceasing battle between the author’s philosophic ideas and his imaginative

understanding. As can be easily comprehended, it is the untenability of his ideas that gives to the novel's plot an oddly thin and stilted quality which leads to the unsatisfactory manipulation of chance and coincidence. It sounds like a desperate attempt to create an artificial stipulation for achieving a communication otherwise unobtainable. Hardy's understanding of the fate of the Wessex peasants is sound, indeed. He convincingly displays an instinctive comprehension of the problem being faced by the Wessex folk. However, his conscious philosophy does not always give him adequate expression to say it. Consequently, the plot comes to be governed by the long, and highhanded arm of chance and coincidence. It also results in half-digested classical allusions and apparent psychological weaknesses in the novel's narrative. Thus, there emerges the novel's strength from its social understanding, the superb expression of the relation of men to nature, the haunting evocation of the Wessex landscape, not as backcloth but as the living challenging material of human existence, and the deeply moving tale of the peasant girl Tess.

It is quite easy to find faults with Hardy's plots, notoriously as he has been for the dominance of chance and coincidence in his fictional narratives. That has been the case too often and too much of it. What is not so easy is to appreciate the novel's strength without ignoring its weakness. The novel's triumph is aptly symbolized by the extraordinary final scene at Stonehenge. We could do no better in summing up the novel's triumph than citing on the subject Arnold Kettle's well-formulated judgment:

There is nothing bogus about the achievement here, no sleight of hand, no counterfeit notes of false emotion. The words of speech have not quite the ring of speech nor the integral force of poetry; the symbolism is obvious, one might almost say crude. And yet this very clumsiness, the almost amateurish manipulation of the mechanics of the scene, contributes something to its force, to its expression of the pathetic and yet heroic losing battle waged by Tess against a world she cannot successfully fight and can only dimly apprehend. The

final mood evoked by Tess of the D'Urbervilles is not hopelessness but indignation and the indignation is none the less profound for being incompletely intellectualised. Hardy is not a Shakespeare or an Emily Bronte. His art does not quite achieve that sense of the inner movement of life which transcends abstractions. He is constantly weakening his apprehension of this movement by inadequate attitudes and judgments. But in spite of this weakening Tess emerges as a fine novel, a moral fable, the most moving expression in our literature – not forgetting Wordsworth – of the destruction of the peasant world.

Thus, the story and plot of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* are moving and powerful, not without flaws, but more with merit, making an overall impact of a lasting experience and distinguished work of art. Compared to Hardy's early comedies, it is a sad work. Compared to his later tragedies, especially *Jude the Obscure*, it is sad but not shocking. It deeply hurts, but it does not destroy the grandeur that Tess the heroine has, still the hope of humanity.

21.4 Suggested Reading

1. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Graphic, XUV, July December 1891.
2. *Review Tess of the d'Urbervilles a Pure Woman faithfully presented by Thomas Hardy. The Athenacum (3350) : 49-50. January 9, 1892.*

**THOMAS HARDY-*TESS OF THE
D'URBERVILLES***

STRUCTURE

- 22.1 Objective
- 22.2 Introduction
- 22.3 *Tess* as a Social Chronicle
- 22.4 Suggested Reading

22.1 Objective

- To make the learners analyse *Tess* as a Social Chronicle.

22.2 Introduction

Thomas Hardy is a master of the art of characterisation. Some of his characters are among the immortal figures of literature. He chooses his characters from the lower strata of society. His female characters are better and more forceful than his male characters, because women are more elemental “nearer to nature” than men.

22.3 *Tess* as a Social Chronicle

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

novel. The thesis here is that the disintegration of the English peasantry, or the agrarian way of life, having had its beginning in the eighteenth 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-labourers. It is a class, as the novel explains, "including the carpenter, the smith, the shoemaker, the huckster, together with nondescript workers other than farm-labourers; 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 Durbyfields 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 nail-cart "with its two noiseless wheels, speeding along these lanes 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. Consequently,

they were frequently run-down by army vehicles, although the army drivers were not always to blame. What is to be noted about these accidents is that every accident represented a clash between something more than two individual vehicles. The result was always an addition to the misery of the peasant, who could hardly afford even to replace his cart.

It is Tess' sense of guilt over this accident that allows Tess to be persuaded by her mother into visiting the Trantridge D'Urbervilles to "claim kin" with a more prosperous branch of the family. As we know so well, it is from this very visit that the tragedy of Tess flows. It is all the more important to note that in the ten to twelve opening chapters of the novel there is an immediate and insistent emphasis on historical processes. One way of doing it is to give weight to characters more as social entities than as individuals. In *Tess*, from the very start of the narrative, the characters are not seen merely as individuals. For instance, the discovery by John Durbeyfield, Tess' father, of his ancestry is not just an introductory comic scene, a delineation of a quaint character. It hits upon the very base of the subject Hardy intended to handle in the novel. The subject, clearly, is what the Durbeyfields have been and what they become. The description of the landscape in the second chapter, which is far more effective than the famous set-piece at the beginning of *The Return of the Native*, carries significance almost entirely in terms of history. The "club-walking" scene, again, is contrasted with the May Day dances of the past. Also recalled here are the early pagan rites for contrast. Tess is recalled as one of a group, as a typical ("not handsome than others") peasant girl, not just an individual. Even in the comparison made between Tess and her mother it is the changes effected by the historical process which are emphasized. John Durbeyfield lives in the peasant folk-lore of the past. In contrast to that fact, we are told, Tess has been to a National school – a new phenomenon. "When they were together the Jacobean and the Victorian ages were juxtaposed." Evidently, the characters of John and Tess are historical, not individual.

The sacrifice of Tess by her parent to D'Urberville, too, is symbolic of the historical process at work. It is made clear, for one thing, that D'Urberville is not a D'Urberville at all. He is instead the son of the *nouveau riche* stoke

family. They are a family of capitalists who have bought their way into the gentry. In this context, the cry that Tess raises at the sight of the D'Urberville estate carries a good deal of irony: "I thought we were an old family; but this is all new." Tess herself does not want to go to D'Urberville's. When she is compelled to do so, she dresses in her working clothes. Her mother also insists upon her dressing up for the occasion :

'Very well; I suppose you know,' replied Tess with calm abandonment. And to please her parent the girl put herself quite in Joan's hands, saying severely, 'Do what you like with me, Mother.'

Once again the moment is symbolic. Here is a working-class girl being handed over to one of the ruling class for use. The girl, with her new consciousness, is unwilling to submit herself as a slave. But she is compelled by the forces of change, the historical forces, into submitting to the change. It is this very reluctance, ultimately, on the part of Tess which will become the cause of her tragedy. She is crushed by the forces at large, playing havoc with whatever appears to put up resistance to them.

From the moment of her seduction (we call it rape today) by D'Urberville, the story of Tess becomes a losing battle, a hopeless struggle, against overwhelming odds, to maintain her self-respect. After the death of her child, she becomes a wage-labourer at the dairy-farm at Talbothays. Her social degradation is mitigated by the kindness of the dairyman and his wife. The work they offer her is, however, seasonal only. The more important thing that happens here is that she meets Angel Clare with whom she soon falls in love. She thinks that through her marriage with him, she will be able to escape her fate. But she experiences, after marriage, an altogether a new Clare. The intellectual Clare turns out to be more cruel than D'Urberville, the sensualist. With all his emancipated ideas, Angel is actually a prig and a hypocrite and a snob. He understands nothing of the decline of the D'Urbervilles, and his attitude to Tess remains one of self-righteous idealisation :

'My position—is this,' he said abruptly. 'I thought—any man

would have thought—that by giving up all ambition to win a wife with social standing, with fortune, with knowledge of the world, I should secure rustic innocence as surely as I should secure pink cheeks....’

Now when his dream of securing rustic innocence does not come good and is instead shattered, he can only taunt Tess with the following :

‘Don’t Tess; don’t argue. Different societies, different manners. You almost make me say you are an unapprehending peasant woman, who have never been initiated into the proportions of social things....’

Sensitive as Tess is, she is stung by the retort even at the moment of her deepest humiliation :

‘Lots of families are as bad as mine in that! Retty’s family were once large landowners, and so were Dairyman Billett’s. And the Dibbyhouses, who now are carters, were once the De Bayeux family. You find such as I everywhere; ’tis a feature of the country, and I can’t help it.’

It is important to note that both Tess and Clare speak, not as individuals, but as representatives of certain classes of the Victorian society. And it is the classes here, not the individuals, that are being discussed by the two. Such passages carry within them the weight of the novel’s subject. They reveal the full dimensions of the novel’s social or historical theme, of the kind of novel it is. Such passages, read as “psychological drama,” as some have done, sound rather absurd. The interpretations of the kind ring rather queer on the ear. The instance only proves yet another time that every text sets its own bounds, and the reader cannot interpret it any way he likes. We say it here, and say it with emphasis, because in this our era of post-modernism, of post-death-of-the-authorism, it has become a fashion to do, in the name of reader-based theories, with the text whatever one likes to do. One is reminded here of E.D. Hirsch, a contemporary American critic, who

still (and sensibly) insists that a text means what its author intended. Intention is, therefore, not a fallacy, whatever the New Critics like Wimsatt and Beardsley might say. Here, the bounds of the text and the author's intention both clearly suggest a social theme, which cannot be overlooked for a proper and full reading of the work. The function in the novel of the passages like the ones we cited above is evidently to stress the social nature of Tess' individual destiny and its typicality.

Carrying his conventional notion of a woman's chastity (which Tess has lost because she was raped in a state of unconsciousness), this so-called intellectual or pseudo-intellectual at once abandons Tess even after marriage. We must note here the integrity and honesty of the girl who considers it her duty to reveal all about her to her husband. Had she been a woman of the world like her husband who is the man of the world, she would have kept quiet about her past and, perhaps, he would have never known about it. But in her peasant innocence and simplicity, in her rural straightforwardness, she told him all. The result was not better understanding between them, which was expected, but the reversal of expectation, the Aristotolian reversal in the manner of the Greek tragedy. He leaves her callously to her own fate with no shelter, no money, to survive on her own in a hostile world. Imagine a young and beautiful girl thrown on the road, so to say. She is fully at the mercy of the social sharks like D'Urberville who would make a quick meat of her and enjoy her as a commodity.

After she has been abandoned by Clare, the social degradation of Tess continues. At the farm at Flintcomb Ash, she and the other girls become fully proletarianised, working for wages in the hardest, most degrading conditions. It also needs to be noted here that Tess' fate is shared by Marion and Izz who have not, in the same way, "sinned" morally. At the farm, the threshing scene is particularly significant. It is a symbol of the dehumanized relationships of the new capitalist farms. At Talbothays there remained at least some possibility of pride and interest in the labour, as well as a certain humanity in the common kitchen where the dairyman's wife dominated. Here nothing is either satisfying or humane and the emphasis on Marion's bottle

is not passing, not just a matter of an individual trait. These selections of small scenes from the life of Tess as a working-class girl are carefully chosen and arranged to effect significance through design, or structural pattern. They are neither there for their own sake, nor are they without a studied pattern. Hardy, we know, was an architect, and knew very well the significance of structures and patterns. *Tess*, more than any other novel of its status, is very well designed and patterned.

All hopes of Tess to maintain her self-respect are dashed to the ground when her father dies leading to the ejection of the Durbeyfields from their cottage. John Durbeyfield had been a life-holder :

But as the long holdings fell in they were seldom again let to similar tenants, and were mostly pulled down, if not absolutely required by the farmer for his hands. Cottagers who were not directly employed on the land were looked upon with disfavour, and the banishment of some starved the trade of others, who were thus obliged to follow. These families, who had formed the backbone of the village life in the past, who were the depositories of the village traditions, had to seek refuge in the large centres; the process, humorously designated by statisticians as 'the tendency of the rural population towards the large towns,' being really the tendency of water to flow uphill when forced by machinery.

Now, driven out of the family cottage and driven off the land, Tess is finally forced, by the dire need to support her family, back to Alec D'Urberville. And when Angel Clare, now chastened and penitent, returns, the final sacrifice becomes necessary and inevitable. Tess is left with no choice but to kill D'Urberville. The policemen take her from the altar at Stoneherge and the black flag is run up on Winchester jail.

With these events narrated to us in the style carrying the stamp of authenticity about the life rendered, it is important for a number of reasons to

emphasize that Hardy's novel, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, is very much of a moral fable. It is, decidedly, the expression of a generalized human situation placed in a historical context. As such, it will be unfair to consider the novel, as is often done, either an individual tragedy or a philosophic comment on life. As a matter of fact, both these aspects, though not absent, are subsidiary to the main theme, which is the social change involving the tragic end of English peasantry. Once it is conceded, in fact recognized, that the subject of *Tess* is the decline and destruction of peasantry in rural England, then many of the more casual interpretations of the books, especially the detracting ones, will be found to be rather wide of the mark. Merely, or narrowly psychological and formal or generic interpretations, for instance, belong to this category. To justify those interpretations, one would have to ignore not only the stylistic thrust of the narrative but also a bulk of the wealth of detail the novel contains.

One of the issues that's needed to be considered in this context is the character of Alec D'Urberville. Many interpreters have taken offence to his presentation in the novel as the stock villain of Victorian melodrama. He seems to represent the typical moustache-twirling, florid bounder who refers to the heroine (whom he is about to rape) as "Well, my beauty...." The question raised about Alec is: Is he not a character who has stepped-out of the third-rate theatre? One can raise a similar question about Tess and say, is she not that usual melodramatic stuff where we say, "Oh! She was poor but she was honest." However, to view these characters and the novel in which they are leading characters as mere stereotypes is to take Hardy's novel rather casually and overlook all that carries weight in its narrative. As Arnold Kettle has rightly argued, "the whole point about D'Urberville is that he is indeed the archetypal Victorian villain. Far from being weakened by the association of crude melodrama, he, in fact, illuminates the whole type and we understand better *why* the character of which he is a symbol did dominate a certain grade of Victorian entertainment and was enthusiastically hissed by the audience. It is the very typicality of D'Urberville that serves the purposes of the novel."

Just as the treatment of the stock but typical character has direct relevance to the social theme of the novel, so does the treatment of Christianity.

D'Urberville's conversion is not, in itself, necessary to the plot of the novel. For his rediscovery of Tess could have been easily contrived in some other way. Clearly, Hardy's objective in this context is to heighten the association, implied all along the narrative, of the Christian faith and Tess' downfall. In the novel's pattern, the Christian church is seen as at best a neutral observer, at worst an active abettor in the process of destruction. And historically considered, it is not an unreasonable comment. The position of the Christian church just stated applies to a good deal more than Hardy's view of religion. One of the aspects of *Tess* that we tend to find peculiarly unconvincing – if not downright impulsive – is the sense of the loaded dice to which J.I.M. Stewart makes a reference. In its least acceptable form, it emerges in those passages of the novel which are very clearly intended as fundamental philosophical comment. For instance, this is the famous episode in which Tess, driving the cart to market, speaks to her little brother of the stars:

'Did you say the stars were worlds, Tess?'

'Yes.'

'All like ours?'

'I don't know; but I think so. They sometimes seem to be like the apples on our stubborn-tree. Most of them splendid and sound – a few blighted.'

'Which do we live on – a splendid one or a blighted one?'

'A blighted one.'

''Tis very unlucky that we didn't pitch on a sound one, when there were so many more of 'em!'

'Yes.'

'Is it like that really, Tess?' said Abraham, turning to her much impressed, on reconsideration of this rare information. 'How would it have been if we had pitched on a sound one?'

'Well, Father wouldn't have coughed and creaped about as he does, and wouldn't have got too tipsy to go this journey; and Mother wouldn't have been always washing, and never getting finished?'

'And you would have been a rich lady ready-made, and not have had to be made rich by marrying a gentleman?'

'O Ahy, don't – don't talk of that any more.'

This and similar episodes in the novel are rejected on two grounds: in the first place, it is said that no peasant girl can talk so intelligently as does Tess here; in the second, it is said that the philosophy implied in the episode here, as well as elsewhere, is not calculated to win our support. The whole pattern of the novel's plot, however, makes us give it the weight of the author's full sympathy. It is also alleged that the presentation of the world as a blighted apple is an image too facile to satisfy the reader, even though it may emphasise the force of Tess' pessimism. What is generally ignored in such allegations against *Tess* is the fact that even in a passage like the present, the pessimism expressed is given a very explicit basis in actual conditions in which Tess is living. It is the kind of life the family of Tess is made to live that drives her to the feelings of despair. What Tess finally says about her mother "never getting finished" actually saves the scene. For here there is no pretentious philosophy of fatality. It is only a bitterly realistic recalling of the actual fate of millions of working women.

It is such scenes in the novel – and they are not just a few – that make available to us most perceptive insight into the kind of work *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is. It is not a psychological novel. Nor is it a symbolic novel in the manner of *Wuthering Heights*. Hardy does not go deep into the innermost level of Bronte's understanding of the process of life. When he does choose to make philosophical generalizations, the result is rather embarrassing. And yet, this novel, with its cramped literary style and its rather imposed Aeschylean philosophy, gets hold of something of life. It illuminates a phase of human history with an extraordinary compulsion and an insight of oddly moving delicacy. The ultimate strength of the novel, therefore, lies in its social and

historical content, not in its philosophy or pessimism. Also, Hardy is not Chaucer, who chronicled his age with greater warmth and gentler irony than any critical account of an age we have had in a literary composition. In the case of Hardy, the presentation or chronicling of the age perforce tends to be rather bitter and pessimistic. However, its specificity and solidity are so strong in Hardy that the representational aspect, or the socio-historical aspect, absorbs much of its bitterness and grounds its pessimism in an intimate experience.

What one does look for in *Tess* is a reconciliation between the historical and the tragic elements, for these two normally would conflict in a single structure. One simple reason for this conflict is that while tragedy demands intensity of action, history requires adequate width to come out convincingly. The fictional narrative, by its very nature, cannot, of course, attain the tragic intensity of the dramatic form. However, in the hands of a novelist like Hardy, large part of this difficulty is overcome through the condensation effected with the devices of both style and structure. Thus, in *Tess*, he is able to combine with a measure of success the antithetical form of tragedy and history. Both are happily reconciled without permitting either to encroach upon the claims of the other. Such a combination is also not without a precedent. Shakespeare's plays, such as *Antony and Cleopatra*, are histories as well as tragedies.

22.4 Suggested Reading

1. Watts, Cedric (2007). *Thomas Hardy Tess of the d'Urbervilles Penrith Humaites Ebooks pp. 32-3 ISBN 9781847600455*.
2. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1952) (TV) -1 Mob*.
3. C. J. Webev. *Hardy of Wessen (1965)*.

THOMAS HARDY-*TESS OF THE*
D'URBERVILLES

STRUCTURE

- 23.1 Objective
- 23.2 Introduction
- 23.2 Hardy's Characters
- 23.3 Examination Oriented Questions
- 23.4 Suggested Reading

23.1 Objective

- To acquaint the learners with Hardy's art of characterisation.

23.2 Introduction

Hardy's writing often explores what he called the "ache of modernism", and this theme is notable in *Tess*, which, as one critic noted, portrays the energy of traditional ways and the strength of the forces that are destroying them. In depicting this theme Hardy uses imagery associated with hell when describing modern farm machinery as well as suggesting the effect nature of city life as the milk sent there must be watered down because towns people cannot stomach whole milk.

23.3 Hardy's Characters

As a creator of characters, Thomas Hardy was very different from his contemporaries, such as George Eliot. He was almost diametrically opposite to George Eliot. She is considered a psychological novelist, whereas Hardy is more of a chronicler, like Scott, of a society. He is, in fact, so much less of

a psychologist that whenever he makes an attempt to offer an analysis of a character, he generally succeeds only in reducing the power of his tragic heroes and heroines. The worst examples of such an attempt are the characters of Clym and Father Time. The reason for the inadequacies of his analyses is that he is never able to conceive characters in terms of their own motivations. In other words, since his conception of human character is governed by his cosmic philosophy, motivations alone cannot offer adequate explanations for what they do and why they act as they do. Sometimes, as with Sue in *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy cannot himself adequately 'explain' his characters' motives. Even though Sue is subtle and complex, she has been instantly apprehended by her creator (Hardy). She has, like all Hardy's great tragic characters, the authority, only dimly and half apprehended, of a force of nature. In this sense, his characters sound more natural than they sound convincing. They may not (logically or rationally) be found consistent, but they are always found forceful.

Thus, Hardy's characters tend to be differentiated only in the great emotional situations. And then their triumphant life comes and form the poetry that invests them. The most glaring example of this is Bathsheba Everdene's realization, in the fir plantation at night, of the presence of Sergeant Troy, in *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), and the miraculous description of Troy's sword-play which follows a little later:

He flourished the sword by way of introduction number two, and the next thing of which she was conscious was that the point and the blade of the sword were darting with a gleam towards her left side, just above her hip; then of their reappearance on her right side, emerging as it were from between her ribs, having apparently passed through her body. The third item of consciousness was that of seeing the same sword, perfectly clean and free from blood held vertically in Troy's hand (in the position technically called 'recover swords'). All was as quick as electricity....

In the instant the atmosphere was transformed to Bathsheba's eyes. Beams of light caught from the low sun's rays, above, around, in front of her, well-nigh shut our earth and heaven – all emitted

in the marvellous evolutions of Troy's reflecting blade, which seemed everywhere at once, and yet nowhere specially. These circling gleams were accompanied by a keen rush that was almost a whistling – also springing from all sides of her at once. In short, she was enclosed in a firmament of light, and of sharp hisses, resembling a sky-full of meteors close at hand.

Never since the broadsword became the national weapon had there been more dexterity shown in its management than by the hands of Sergeant Troy, and never had he been in such splendid temper for the performance as now in the evening sunshine among the firs with Bathsheba. It may safely be asserted with regard to the closeness of his cuts, that had it been possible for the edge of the sword to leave in the air a permanent substance wherever it flew past, the space left untouched would have been almost a mould of Bathsheba's figure.

With so much poetry in the description, with so much emphasis on light and shade, sound and silence, sides and curves, there is hardly any scope left for a movement verticle. The whole thing is so dazzling in terms of sensuous apprehension that the analytic mind is laid asleep. No activity of the mind remains possible after such a body concentration. Also, after all this, there is no necessity for analysis. Bathsheba's sudden subjugation to Troy, her complete possession by him, is shown in the most striking way possible. She is as much his victim, as helpless before him, as if she had really met him in the field of battle.

Just as in Shakespeare's tragic heroes, poetry is the constant attendant of Hardy's tragic characters. Of course, his is not an intellectual poetry like that of Meredith. It is much more primitive and magical. But it always heightens the significance of the characters. Besides, it enhances the reader's consciousness of their tragic grandeur. As Hardy moved away from the prose norm to the poetic, from the comic to the tragic, so he move his novels more and more out of the realm in which they could be criticized from the prose

point of view. In some ways, his simplest and the most successful tragic novel is *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Henchard is his grandest tragic hero, and Tess his most moving heroine. In fact, much of Henchard's tragic grandeur springs from his impercipient. He can be said to contain all nature within himself. This almost animal impercipient removes him far away from the tragic heroes of Shakespeare. And yet, in one respect at any rate, it is Macbeth with whom he invites comparison. External nature fights against Henchard, but it is nature interpreted by superstition. It is actually the poetic quality of the whole that makes the superstition credible. The poetry heightens and deepens our sense of the hero's tragic fate. Here, we can cite two instances of poetry, which will clarify the point. One of these is the moment when Henchard's wedding present to his daughter, Elizabeth Jane, is discovered. Note, what follows the discovery: "a new bird-cage shrouded in newspaper, and at the bottom of the cage a little ball of feathers – the dead body of a goldfinch." The second instance is the scene in which Henchard sees the dead body, "lying stiff and stark upon the surface of the stream:"

In the circular current imparted by the central flow the form was brought forward, till it passed under his eyes; and then he perceived with a sense of horror that it was himself. Not a man somewhat resembling him, but one in all respects his counterpart, his actual double, was floating as if dead in Ten Hatches Hole.

To match the first of these with pathos and the second for the twitch of horror felt along the nerve one has to go back to Webster.

Thus, characterization in Hardy is not merely a matter of depicting actions, thoughts, emotions, manners, etc., of men and women, but equally a matter of evoking the environment, involving the cosmos, capturing the circumstances. What has been named 'poetry', here is one of the most potent devices Hardy uses for drawing the portraits of his characters. Sometimes, the poetry is the poetry of attendant and pervasive circumstances. An example of this is the description of the Valley of the Great Dairies in *Tess of the D'Urberville*. It provides setting to Tess' meeting and falling in love with

Angel Clare. The setting contributes to the revealing of characters placed in it as much as does action or dialogue or description. Hardy's poetry, working through imagery as much as it does through setting, is another effective device used in the service of characterization. Thus, Hardy describes Tess as having been "caught during his days of immaturity like a bird in a springe." In another novelist this could turn into a sentimental cliché. It is not so in Hardy. As John Holloway has pointed out, "it is an exact and insistent image to remind us that when Tess was seduced [raped] at night in the wood, her experience really was like that of an animal caught in a trap – as might have happened in the very same place." The image goes to the heart of Tess' situation. She is caught in tragedy because she is innocent like an animal. However, had she been a mere animal like, it would not have been a tragedy.

Like Henchard and Tess, Jude is also a distinct character Hardy created. There had been no other like him in fiction until Hardy's time. Jude, we are made aware, is sensualist and a man who, at crucial times in his life, seeks escape in drink. But as we see him under these times in his life, he is certainly not a mere sensualist. In fact, his tragedy lies in that he is not. What brings him down are the intellectual ambitions beyond his station, his dream of the student life at Christminster. The commonsense advice to a man in his station, with his aspirations, is the Master of Biblioll's: "Judging from your description of yourself as a working man, I venture to think that you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your own trade than by adopting any other course." Had he taken the master's advice, he might have indulged in drink and fornication far beyond anything suggested in the novel with relative impunity. The tragedy of Jude is one of unfulfilled aims, which were impossible of fulfillment in the age in which he lived, even if he had had the purity and self-control of a saint. In the case of Jude, for the first time in Hardy, we notice a strong undercurrent of what can only be called class-consciousness.

Characters of Hardy's earlier novels did not show any signs of this consciousness. They did not have this because there was no need for it. Hardy was dealing with events and characters in those novels belonged to

a world which was still traditional. But in *Jude*, by making the hero a working-class intellectual, Hardy removed the novel's action far away from the world of Wessex. But perhaps he could do no other because he had chosen his theme and his hero from a world which was strictly contemporary. It has been noted by every reader how the rustic chorus, so predominant in Hardy's other novels, disappears altogether from *Jude*. Even the texture of writing in this novel becomes much thinner in comparison to what we have in *Tess* or *The Return of the Native*. The links between men and women on the one hand and nature on the other, so definingly strong in other novels, almost disappears in this one. There is no place in *Jude* for the heroic or poetic scenes which delineated the character in earlier novels. All these absent elements represent an enormous loss, precisely where Hardy was strongest, and his characters most convincing. But these elements had to go, because they stand for that way of life from which Jude and Sue Bridehead, by virtue of their being working-class intellectuals, are totally uprooted.

Nevertheless, Jude remains the characteristic Hardy hero. He is hypersensitive, high-principle, essentially soft-minded-made actual in a Victorian working man. We get to know him in much more detail than we do, say, Clym Yeobright in *The Return of the Native*, or Angel Clare in *Tess of the D'Urberville*. But the same cannot be said of Sue Bridehead. She cannot be claimed a typical Hardy woman. She marks a clear departure from the typical Hardy women. Sue is, decidedly, the opposite of Eustacia Vye, Bathsheba Everdene, and Tess. She is different from them not merely in the fact that she is an intellectual, but because she is much more than Hardy's version of the "New Woman." She has her charms much beyond her intellectualism. She has survived as a character because of her ambiguity, her sexual ambivalence. She, too, is not fully in grasp of its real nature. She is aware of it all the time, but she is able to have an understanding of it :

'At first I did not love you, Jude; that I own. When I first knew you I merely wanted you to love me. I did not exactly flirt with you; but that inborn craving which undermines some women's morals almost

more than unbridled passion – the craving to attract and captivate, regardless of the injury it may do the man – was in me; and when I found I had caught you, I was frightened.

Perhaps the key to her character lies in Hardy's word "intellectualized." Sue can be said to be the most subtle creation of a not uncommon type of woman in the modern world. It is also significant that the only writer on Hardy who has fully understood his achievement in creating her is D.H. Lawrence.

Summing up Hardy's status as a novelist, one can say that despite his glaring faults of plotting and characterization, despite the occasional oddities of his style, he remains almost the only tragic novelist in English literature. When one considers his tragic status as a writer one has ultimately to do so in relation to Shakespeare and Webster and to the Greek dramatists. In many ways, the subsequent novelist most akin to him has been D.H. Lawrence. When all this is said about Hardy one cannot resist the recall of his supreme talent for integrating his characters with the environment, the setting, in which they are placed. Even more difficult to resist in this context is the recall of the last chapter of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, the chapter closing on the hanging of Tess. Here is that short last scene full of sheer poetry and pathos:

The city of Wintoncester, that fine old city, aforetime capital of Wessex, lay amidst its convex and concave downlands in all the brightness and warmth of a July morning. The gabled brick, tile, and freestone houses had almost dried off for the season their integument of lichen, the streams in the meadows were low, and in the sloping High Street, from the West Gateway to the medieval cross, and from the medieval cross to the bridge, that leisurely dusting and sweeping was in progress which usually ushers in an old-fashioned market-day.

From the western gate aforesaid highway, as every Wintoncestrian knows, ascends a long and regular incline of the exact length of a measure mile, leaving the houses gradually behind. Up this road from the precincts of the city two persons were walking rapidly, as if unconscious of the trying ascent – unconscious through preoccupation and not through buoyancy. They had emerged upon this road though a narrow barred wicket in a high wall a little

lower down. They seemed anxious to get out of the sight of the houses and of their kind, and this road appeared to offer the quickest means of doing so. Though they were young they walked with bowed heads, at which gait of grief the sun's rays smiled on pitilessly.

One of the pair was Angel Clare, the other a tall budding creature – half girl, half woman – a spiritualized image of Tess, slighter than she, but with the same beautiful eyes – Clare's sister-in-law, 'Liza-Lu. Their pale faces seemed to have shrunk to half their natural size. They moved on hand in hand, and never spoke a word, the drooping of their heads being that of Giotto's 'Two Apostles.'

When they had nearly reached the top of the great West Hill the clocks in the town struck eight. Each gave a start at the notes, and, walking onward yet a few steps, they reached the first milestone, standing whitely on the green margin of the grass, and backed by the down, which here was open to the road. They entered upon the turf, and impelled by a force that seemed to overrule their will, suddenly stood still, turned, and waited in paralyzed suspense beside the stone.

The prospect from this summit was almost unlimited. In the valley beneath lay the city they had just left, its more prominent buildings showing as in an isometric drawing – among them the broad cathedral tower, with its Norman windows and immense length of aisle and nave, the spires of St. Thomas', the pinnacled tower of the College, and, more to the right, the tower and gables of the ancient hospice, where to this day the pilgrim may receive his dole of bread and ale. Behind the city swept the rotund upland of St. Catherine's Hill; further off, landscape beyond landscape, till the horizon was lost in the radiance of the sun hanging above it.

Against these far stretches of country rose, in front of the other city edifices, a large red-brick building, with level gray roofs, and rows of short barred windows bespeaking captivity, the whole contrasting greatly by its formalism with the quaint irregularities of the Gothic erections. It was somewhat disguised from the road in passing it by yews and evergreen oaks, but it was

visible enough up here. The wicket from which the pair had lately emerged was in the wall of this structure. From the middle of the building an ugly flat-topped octagonal tower ascended against the east horizon, and viewed from this spot, on its shady side and against the light, it seemed the one blot on the city's beauty. Yet it was with this blot, and not with the beauty, that the two gazers were concerned.

Upon the cornice of the tower a tall staff was fixed. Their eyes were riveted on it. A few minutes after the hour had struck something moved slowly up the staff, and extended itself upon the breeze. It was a black flag.

'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals, in Eschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess. And the D'Urberville knights and dames slept on in their tombs unknowing. The two speechless gazers bent themselves down to the earth, as if in prayer, and remained thus a long time, absolutely motionless: the flag continued to wave silently. As soon as they had strength they arose, joined hands again, and went on.

23.4 Examination Oriented Questions

1. Discuss the Victorianism of Thomas Hardy as a novelist.
2. Write a note on the pessimism of Thomas Hardy with special reference to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.
3. Discuss Hardy's philosophy of life as it emerges in his novels, especially *Tess*.
4. Examine the case of Hardy as a regional novelist or the novelist of Wessex.
5. Discuss *Tess* as a tragedy in narrative form.
6. Make a feminist interpretation of *Tess*.
7. Write a note on Tess as a tragic heroine.
8. What is the role of "nature" in Hardy's novels? Discuss *Tess* in the light of this aspect of his fiction.

23.5 Suggested Reading

1. Joseph Warren Beach. *The Technique of Hardy* (1922).
2. D.H. Lawrence. *Study of Hardy in The Phoenix* (1936).
3. Edward Blunden. *Thomas Hardy* (1941).
4. Douglas Brown. *Thomas Hardy* (1954).
5. John Holloway. *The Charted Mirror* (1960).
6. H.C. Duffin. *Thomas Hardy* (1964).
7. C.J. Weber. *Hardy of Wessex* (1965).

VIRGINIA WOOLF : MRS DALLOWAY**STRUCTURE**

- 24.1 Objectives
- 24.2 Introduction
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24.1 Objectives

The objective of this lesson is to familiarize the learners with the author and also give the literary background of the age to which she belongs. It also focusses on her works and her contribution to literature.

24.2 Introduction

Virginia Woolf was a British born novelist, critic, essayist and publisher who was best known for works such as *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Light house*, and *A Room of One's Own*. She was famous for pionering the stream of consciousness method of writing, as well for experimenting with various forms of narration in her other novels and stories. Today she is considered to be one of the most important and influential modernist writers of the 20th Century.

24.3 Virginia Woolf and Her Age

The literature of the first half of the twentieth century has come to be known as the “Modernist Literature,” which moved in two different and contrary directions. One of these two types was the literature of action, “in the destructive element immerse.” The other type was the literature of recollection, “be still and know.” While, the major representatives of the first type were Joyce, Lawrence, who wrote the novels of violence. The second included Forster, Myers, and Virginia Woolf. One thing common between the two types was the technical experimentalism. Another was their concern with the “modern” consciousness as against the conventional. There were others, such as, Shaw, Wells and Galsworthy, whom Spender called “contemporaries,” not modern. The modern writers refused the conventional forms as well as the notion of art as social representation.

Virginia Woolf began to write fiction around 1915, when James and Conrad had already made departure from the Victorian convention of the novel as social comedy or social tragedy. They had rejected the restrictions of realism to move into the deeper region of reflection. Woolf went a step further to abandon action altogether, rejecting the conventional notions of plot and character, subject and style. Since she was aiming at something new, deliberately not using a conventional technique or seek to arouse stock responses in her readers, her novels came to be commonly held as “difficult.” Her very first novel, *The Voyage Out*, makes clear her intention to make a radical departure from the Victorian model of the English novel. Terence Hewet, a character in that novel, confides to Rachel Vinrace: “I want to write a novel about Silence... the things people don’t say.” Woolf actually did what Hewet wishes to do as a novelist; she wrote novels about “things people don’t say.” She shared this interest with her contemporaries like, Lawrence and Joyce. The common interest of all the three was to make silence speak, to give a tongue to the complex inner world of feeling and memory, and to establish the validity of that world’s claim to the term “reality.” This subjective reality came to be identified with the technique rather loosely called “stream of consciousness.”

24.4 Literary Influences on Woolf :

For this then new technique of “stream of consciousness” Woolf is said to have been indebted to M. Proust, D. Richardson, and H. Bergson. However, it is less

important as specific indebtedness than as a symptom of “the dominant metaphysical bias of a whole generation.” Literary historians have generally made a trio of Woolf, Joyce and Lawrence, emphasizing that the three shared this “Metaphysical bias.” But we need to remain aware as much of their singularities as of their shared attitudes and techniques. For example, it is not quite, certain that Woolf and Lawrence shared the same narrative strategies in their novels. One of the common thing between Woolf and Lawrence, at least while they were alive, has been the creation of their legendary characters. Both remained for a long time victims of their respective obscuring personal legends. Ultimately, both have of course, survived their obscuring legends and have secured safe places in the history of the English novel.

Speaking of the legend about Woolf, one cannot ignore the special complication it carried in her connection with Bloomsbury. Once she wrote in her diary: “Bloomsbury is ridiculed; I am dismissed with it.” To describe Bloomsbury, it is a London neighbourhood near the British Museum, where Virginia Woolf and her brother Adrian moved after their father’s death in 1904. Virginia’s sister, Vanessa, and her husband, the art critic, Clive Bell, were already residing in that area. Virginia’s father was the famous Leslie Stephen who, along with Huxley and Spencer, spearheaded the revolution of “agnosticism” during the Victorian age. While some considered the use of “Bloomsbury” for the group rather incorrect, Leonard Woolf did consider it valid as it referred to the years 1912-1914 and included the three Stephens, Bell, himself, Lytton Strachey, John Maynard Keynes, E.M. Forster, Roger Fry, Desmond MacCarthy and Sydney Saxon-Turner. By 1912, all of the members of “old Bloomsbury” “live geographically in Bloomsbury within a few minutes walk of one another.” The roots of Bloomsbury go back to Cambridge where all the men had known one another and had come under the influence of the philosopher G.E. Moore. Friendship was a critical part of his teachings and of the ideals of his admirers. For our purposes, Bloomsbury matters more for the aesthetic upper class aura critics of the 1930’s saw in it than for what it may have been. For them, it cast the same “peculiar atmosphere of influence, manners, responsibility” Leonard Woolf had found in the Stephen home.

E.M. Forster, himself a member of the Bloomsbury group, wrote an essay on Virginia Woolf, concluding that she “escapes the Palace of Art.” His essay reflects the view that Mrs. Woolf lived in an ivory tower during the politically left-oriented 30’s, that she was remote from reality (though at times a shrill feminist), ignorant

of the class struggle, and in William Troy's words, "as acutely refined and aristocratic" as Henry James. This criticism became still stronger in the writings of F. R. Leavis and his *Scrutiny* group. Besides her own and her father's agnosticism, her deep concern with the status of women, her marriage to a life-time left-socialist journalist who, despite his Cambridge background, would as a Jew always be an outsider in England, their management of the Hogarth Press which they started in their basement, the death of her nephew, Julian Bell, in the Spanish Civil War and her anxiety over the rise of Hitler - all these at the time honorific participations were ignored by critics like Leavis and his followers while drawing the hyperaesthetic portrait of this "quiet" and feminine novelist.

As one can clearly see, Virginia Woolf became a victim of hostile criticism for reasons entirely unliterary, reasons which only expose her opponents for their inherent prejudices against agnosticism, which she inherited from her father, against the Jews one of whom happened to be her husband, and against women, the "weaker sex." All the three prejudices combined to give a punch to the hostile criticism against her, criticism which made her intellectual class a social one and dubbed her as an aristocrat, which she never was, neither by origin, nor by marriage, nor by temperament. Another fact that seems to have added to the adverse criticism of Woolf and her work was their knowledge of her mental illness. It may have reinforced for many the frailness and the remoteness they found in her fiction. The publication of *A Writer's Diary* and of Leonard Woolf's autobiographies after her death made available to us more details about her maniac-depressive condition which governed her life, resulting in four mental breakdowns and suicide attempts. Her death by suicide was more the culmination of life-long condition than it was the inability of a sensitive soul to take the bombing of Britain during World War II as was suggested by certain critics.

What seems an important aspect for critical consideration is that Virginia Woolf's depression which brought on her death came, as three previous severe depressions did, with the completion of a novel, *Between the Acts*. The testimony of *A Writer's Diary* shows Mrs. Woolf quite able to function under the strain of bombing and the fear of invasion that so totally filled the years 1940 and 1941. It can, therefore, be concluded with some certainty that critical attitudes towards her personality, her origins, and her literary-political circle must have conditioned the

“partisan” portrait of her person which has affected (rather adversely) the reading and interpretation of her fiction as “disengaged.” Her novels can, in fact, justifiably claim to have represented a portion of “reality,” even of social reality. For an artist so deeply committed to subjective vision, Virginia Woolf was, like D.H. Lawrence (“Never trust the artist. Trust the tale.”), unusually insistent on the separation of the self from the artist. T.S. Eliot can be said to be the pacesetter in this regard. It was he who, as early as 1920, had pleaded in “Tradition and Individual Talent,” the separation of the “man who suffers and the artist who creates.” During the gestation of *The Waves* Virginia Woolf had asked herself: “Who thinks it? And am I outside the thinker? One wants some device which is not a trick?” Another diary entry notes, apropos of a visit from Sydney Webb: “Sydney comes and I’m Virginia; when I write I’m merely a sensibility.” The time when readers and critics should see her as writer rather than Virginia did not arrive during her life-time.

The publication of *A Writer’s Diary* in 1953 significantly brought that time closer. It brought before the reader a complete picture of Mrs. Woolf’s life as a writer and of the genesis and growth of her major novels. It initiates a less partisan reading of her work. The subsequent years have also made additional biographical material about her and her circle of writers and friends available to us. This includes Leonard Woolf’s autobiographical volumes, John Maynard Keynes’s earlier essay, “My Early Beliefs,” the two volume biography of Lytton Strachey, the memoirs of Sir Harold Nicolson (the husband of Vita Sackville-West) and those of John Lehmann, one of the first employees of Hogarth Press. Letters and manuscripts have also become available meanwhile. This sort of material related to her own life and the life around her has been swelling since her death. But this particular kind of material can impede as well as enlighten our reading of her works. As one of her own characters puts it, “so much depends upon distance.” It does make a more enduring examination of the relationship between art and autobiography more possible than it has been during her life time, or even soon after her death.

One thing that has become clear over the years is that Virginia Woolf’s novels are not unstructured thoughts and feelings flowing through the stream of consciousness of her central characters. The fact that one of her novels went into nine different versions or revisions before it could be published shows, how

consciously the novels were constructed by her to give them form and meaning. There have been lot of studies of her work showing how there is consistency and coherence in each of her novels, and how all her novels constitute a single body showing her growth as an artist. After the advent of feminist criticism, her work has assumed much greater importance than it enjoyed ever before. Critics have discovered much more beyond her use of the technique of stream-of-consciousness.

A significant critical piece of permanent value about the work of Virginia Woolf appeared at the end of Erich Auerbach's famous book, *Mimesis*. In his rare tribute to her contribution to the European literature, Auerbach, as an outsider uninvolved in local prides and prejudices, placed her in the larger tradition of Western Literature, developing the concluding chapter of his study of the representation of reality in Western literature from Homer to the present, to Virginia Woolf, stressing that she, rather than Joyce, exemplifies the modern vision of subjective reality. Published after Woolf's death, Auerbach essay appeared earlier than her own *A Writer's Diary*. Another significant seminal criticism of her work appeared in the special number of *Modern Fiction Studies* (February 1956), which laid stress on the poetic element of her work. These two critical works of her fiction have proved trend-setters that gave direction to the subsequent studies forming a sort of mainstream in the critical heritage. The final outcome has been the emergence of Virginia Woolf as a tougher and more focused writer than she was thought to be in the early phase of her criticism.

24.5. Her desire for New Experiments in Literature :

Virginia Woolf, like any other writer, was of her age, in the first place. She shared the restless experimentalism of the modern period in the history of English literature. The drive to make it new, as Pound kept hammering it, can be seen as a sort of compulsion with Woolf; it can be seen as a kind of courage, an artistic strategy that is anything but soft. It fits into the scheme of Pound's other slogan for the modern age: Make It Hard. Before Woolf had given *The Waves* its name or design, she noted her lack of "any notion what it is to be like," and assumed it would be "a complete new attempt," adding "So I always think." However, each of her new attempt did contain a set of constants, one of which was her need to explore her double vision of reality. This double vision is also reflected in her division of her work into novels of fact and novels of vision. Her view was that this classification

is inherent in life and in fiction. Although in her essay “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown,” she attacked the realism of Wells-Bennett-Galsworthy, her own work is an evidence that fact did not interest her less than vision. If death invariably appeared in the midst of life in all her novels, fact is always found in the midst of her vision.

24.6 Her Novels :

Virginia Woolf's first two novels are apprentice works that put in too much and include too little. No later novels took so long or was rewritten so much as *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day*. As these two titles indicate, she had a constantly adventuring spirit as also an equally constant sense of duality of terror and ecstasy, flux and the moment, fact and vision. Both these novels are social comedies, showing deep dissatisfaction with the conventional modes of courtship and marriage. Her third novel, *Jacob's Room* shares with the other two its literary talk and literary allusions. Although much shorter in length than the first two, *Jacob's Room* uses time far more selectively and is more consistent in tone and method than the novels preceding it. It also shows for the first time Woolf's characteristic repetition and use of imagery for structural purposes. What the reader is made to follow all the time in this novel are the portraits of Jacob projected by other people, not the true life of Jacob as he lives it from cradle to grave. This new technique makes *Jacob's Room* a first novel of its kind. In short, Woolf's third novel represents her true beginning, for from now on, her novels came quickly and regularly, usually written in a year, sometimes two, and usually alternating with critical writing. No wonder that her next four turned out to be her best, which are *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Light House*, *Orlando*, and *The Waves*.

The first two of Woolf's great novels abandon the narrative forms of *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day*. They also abandon the cradle to grave chronology of *Jacob's Room*. What is known as “tunnelling process” in *Mrs Dalloway*, in which the narrative moves between the present time of one day and the personal past of Clarissa, Peter and Septimus, also looks forward to the culminating event of the day, Clarissa's party. The other great novel of Woolf, *To The Light House*, deals with a past created in the novel rather than with one that existed prior to the novel as in *Mrs. Dalloway*. In both the novels, however, time and memory are handled with wit and risk, although the greater risk in *Mrs Dalloway* is not the manipulation of

memory but the splitting up of personality into a man and a woman who never meet. Thus, both novels may be said to use the chronology of a day as basic strategy; but Mrs. Woolf had clearly learned how to use and how to escape chronology at the same time.

In the other two great novels, *Orlando* and *The Waves*, Virginia Woolf had moved further and further away from the kind of modern novel she helped to define. Even in her own canon, however, *Orlando* is a sport, an “essay novel” on English literature, character and manners from Elizabethan times of the present, a fantasy with a main character who changes sex in 1683 and is over 300 years old when the novel closes in 1928. On the other hand, *The Waves*, considered by some critics her best novel, can be called an anti-novel, with its artistic risk in the splitting up of personality into six voices only tenuously connected to external reality. Bernard, the talkiest of the six, wonders: “Am I all of them?” This novel, of voices without bodies or setting, may be an intellectualized-tour-de-force that the common reader Mrs. Woolf prized would never return to, a kind of sport, like *Orlando*.

Woolf’s last two novels have been considered re-combinations of familiar fictional strategies, as though the writer were enjoying a conventional holiday – one quite unlike the writer’s holiday she said she was taking when she wrote *Orlando*. The principle of selection her mature works reflects is no longer there in *The Years*, but reasserts itself in *Between the Acts* in which the evocation of England is achieved more effectively than in its predecessor. The counterpoint of a village pageant play which covers the English past against a few hours of present time moves lyrically and unostentatiously within what are essentially traditional novelistic techniques of dialogue and description. *Orlando* may also look ahead to these last two novels which are less interested in personal memory or personality than in nationality, tradition and myth – the dimension Mrs. Woolf was likely to continue to explore had she written more novels.

Both as a reader and a critic Mrs. Woolf used these activities for the enrichment of her fiction. In these areas, her first publications were reviews for the *Times Literary Supplement*. Her reading was quite avid and deep, especially in English literature. As a reader she was more a common reader in her taste than a selective or exclusionary reader friends like T.S. Eliot were. Although she chafed under the

need to write reviews, she chose not to give them up when she was financially able to do so. These reviews were for her both refreshment as well as exploration. Novels like *Orlando* and *Between the Acts* are only more obviously connected with her deep involvement in English tradition than are her other novels. Although she has usually been considered more impressionist than formalist as a critic, a case has also been made for her criticism as formalist in foundation. At least two of her essays have been considered seminal for an understanding of modernist fiction theory. In her frequently anthologized “Modern Fiction” (1919) and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown” (1924), she appeared to have articulated the dissatisfactions and the yearnings of a whole generation.

Virginia Woolf’s feminism may be another facet of her toughness, perhaps best seen against her constant sense of opposing states. She describes *Orlando*, as also perhaps herself, as “censuring both sexes equally, as if she belonged to neither.” The engagement of her first fictional couple, Terence and Rachel, may postulate a united androgynous self. But the union never takes place as Rachel dies. Only in fantasy, only in *Orlando* can ideal androgyny exist. A witty view, yes; also a shrewd one.” Mrs. Woolf’s couples in her later novels are more separated than united. Her best female figures are, in fact, her wives and mothers – an interesting paradox in a woman violently attacked for her feminism. The artistic relevance of her feminism has received less partisan examination than before. In fact, in the postmodernist era, Woolf has received special attention as a leading feminist in the early 20th century British literature.

A central emphasis in Virginia Woolf’s novels seems to be her perception of human insufficiency. One can see here, of course, affinities with existentialism and the novel of violence. However, where the existentialists give up in despair and the likes of Lawrence and Greene seek their panacea in action - that is, in the movement away from the still centre - Virginia Woolf works consistently inwards, away from the world of events. A fine example to this effect can be given from her last novel, *Between the Acts* (1941). In the passage cited below, we find a positive statement, that is, a presentation of a moment of sufficiency. However, what we are shown is that such a moment can exist only under special circumstances: in the mind of a child

rather than an adult, in the absence of distraction, and subject to the threat of instant destruction.

Amy was saying something about a feller when Mabel, with her hand on the pram, turned sharply, her sweet swallowed. 'Leave of grubbing,' she said sharply. 'Come along, George.'

The little boy had lagged and was grouting in the grass. Then the baby, Caro, thrust her fist over the coverlet and the furry hear was jerked overboard. Amy had to stoop. George grubbed. The flower blazed between the angels of the roots. Membrane after membrane was torn. It blazed a soft yellow, a lambent light under a film of velvet, it filled the caverns behind the eyes with light. All that inner darkness became a hall, leaf smelling, earth smelling of yellow light. And the tree was beyond the flower; the grass, the flower and the tree were entire. Down on his knees grubbing he held the flower complete, then there was a roar and a hot breath and a stream of coarse grey hair rushed between him and the flower. Up he leapt, toppling in his fright, and saw coming towards him a terrible peaked eyeless monster moving on legs brandishing arms.

Here, the description of Little George's moment of sufficiency is flanked by two insufficiencies: The nursemaids' with their talk of 'fellers' and their sweets, the old man with his Afghan bound and the need to impose himself on his grandson. The vision which consists in a perfect observation of and identification with that which is (in this case the flower, roots, and soil at the foot of a tree) is broken by the incomprehension of an adult world. This is the final example of Mrs Woolf's work of a repeated pattern. It can be observed in passing here that there is no condemnation of the nursemaids for being stupid or of Bart for being tyrannical: things are what they are, and we have moved out of the moral, discriminatory world of Dickens and Thackeray. This absence of judgement in Mrs. Woolf can be called a note of modernity and indeed of maturity, for we do not come upon this aspect in her earlier work. Her early work, like Forster's, offers value-judgements, particularly in situations directed against organized religion and its ministers. There

is, it is true, a survival of this in the clergyman of *Between the Acts*, but the balance is preserved with the sympathetic portrait of Lucy fingering her crucifix. In her mature work, all that Mrs. Woolf does is to put her experience into words and leave it there.

24.7 Examination Oriented Questions :

- a) Discuss Virginia Woolf as a novelist
- b) What were the literary influences on Woolf ?

24.8 Suggested Reading :

1. David Daiches, *Virginia Woolf* (Marfolk : New Directions, 1942).
2. A. D. Moody, *Virginia Woolf* (Edinburgh : Oliver & Boyd, 1963).

COURSE CODE : ENG 213

LESSON No. 25

NOVEL-II

UNIT-VI

VIRGINIA WOOLF : MRS DALLOWAY

STRUCTURE

25.1 Objective

25.2 Introduction

25.3 Summary

25.4 Stream of Consciousness Technique

25.5 Examination Oriented Questions

25.6 Suggested Reading

25.1 Objective

The aim of this lesson is to introduce the learners to the stream of consciousness technique used by Virginia Woolf in her works.

25.2 Introduction

Despite debilitating battles with mental breakdowns, Woolf produced a body of work considered among the most ground breaking in 20th Century literature. Her father was a literary critic, and her mother a renowned beauty and artist's model. Her mother's sudden death when she was thirteen may have been the catalyst for the first of her recurrent breakdowns. As a young woman, Woolf developed her writer's voice with a number of literary pursuits. She wrote criticism and essays while her literary reputation modestly and steadily increased.

25.3 Summary

The novel's narration is third-person omniscient, but it changes its focus throughout. The narrative begins and ends with Clarissa as it details a day in her life. Clarissa is a seemingly disillusioned socialite whose mood fluctuates: at some moments she seems delighted, at others she seems depressed. Her overall affect suggests suppressed symptoms of depression.

Mrs. Dalloway begins with Clarissa's preparatory errand to buy flowers. Unexpected events occur—a car emits an explosive noise and a plane writes in the sky—and incite different reactions in different people. Soon after she returns home, her former lover Peter arrives. The two converse, and it becomes clear that they still have strong feelings for each other. In a moment of shared vulnerability, Peter asks Clarissa if she is happy. Before Clarissa can answer, her daughter, Elizabeth, interrupts them.

Perspectives switch, and the narrator inhabits Septimus Warren Smith, a World War I veteran suffering from shell shock. He is waiting with his wife, Lucrezia, to see a psychiatrist named Sir William Bradshaw. The reader is informed that Septimus has been suffering greatly since returning from the war, and his suffering is something the other characters are unable to grasp.

The perspective shifts to Richard, Clarissa's husband. In a fit of passion, Richard wants to run home and tell Clarissa he loves her. However, he finds himself unable to do more than give her flowers. Clarissa acknowledges that she respects the gulf between herself and Richard, as it gives both of them freedom and independence while also relieving them of paying attention to certain aspects of life.

The novel's perspective shifts back to Septimus, who has been told that he is to be taken to a psychiatric hospital. Septimus would rather die than see himself inside such a place, so he throws himself out of a window and becomes impaled on a fence. The narration then switches to Clarissa's perspective again, this time during her party. She is primarily concerned with entertaining her guests, some of whom are very esteemed. Sir William Bradshaw arrives with his wife, who announces that Septimus has killed

himself. Clarissa, though at first annoyed that Mrs. Bradshaw would discuss such a topic at a party, is soon ruminating on Septimus's situation. In a small room, by herself, she identifies with how overwhelmed Septimus must have felt. She respects him for choosing death over compromising the integrity of his soul by allowing it to be confined. In light of what he did to preserve his soul, she feels ashamed of the ways she has compromised her own soul in order to go on living. Thus chastened, she returns to the party as it is winding down.

25.4 Stream of Consciousness Technique

One of the often-quoted statements of Virginia Woolf explains the nature of her novel. "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." Coming after the vogue of Victorian novel as social comedy, as a chain of incidents, logically arranged, this statement must have had a fresh ring to the readers' ears at the time. Not only in rhythm and tone but also in the imponderable vagueness of its diction, the statement shows a sharp departure from the Victorian practice of rhetorical prose. The voice of Mrs. Woolf in the statement echoes the voice of Henri Bergson, who gave to the modern age in the early twentieth century the new concept of time, the simultaneity of past, present, and future than their spatial sequence on a linear plane. Behind the statement lies, decidedly, an acceptance of a whole theory of metaphysics. Also lies behind that assertion Woolf's resistance to the naturalistic formula, all that enthusiastic surrender to the world of flux and individual intuition. Whether Woolf was directly influenced by Bergson, the prime force behind modernist experimentation in form and characterization, or indirectly through Proust, or some other secondary source, is not so important as the fact that the influence is obvious enough. What we often regard as unique in her fiction is, however, less the result of an individual attitude than of the dominant metaphysical bias of a whole generation.

For the modern novelist like, Woolf, Joyce and Lawrence, who were concerned with fiction the philosophy of flux and intuition offered a relief from the cumbersome technique and mechanical pattern of naturalism. Against even such mild practioners of the doctrine as Wells and Bennett, Mrs. Woolf raised the tirade in her critical

piece *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*. Besides, the new philosophy opened new treasures of interest for fiction which made it possible for the “modern” writer to do away with whatever values the Victorian novelists had depended upon. Like naturalism, however, modernism brought with it its own version of aesthetic; it made available a medium which carried no values except the primary one of self-expression. Of course, we cannot altogether ignore the wonderful help psychology extended with its new tool of psychoanalysis. The modernist novel, therefore, derived its new narrative strategies from sources both metaphysical as well as psychological. World War I provoked men and women of sensibility to make a personal statement about the new or modern world that followed the international disaster.

Inheriting his father’s philosophic bent of mind, then schooled in abstract theory, especially interested in the new ideas of her time, Virginia Woolf felt naturally attracted by a method which was contemporary and challenging. This method was the stream of consciousness which she used in several of her novels. The subjective method suited her sensibility. She felt fascinated by the functioning of the human mind, its movements and vacillations. Proust had found the method most suitable for his needs. Mrs. Woolf, too, found it the only method capable for projecting the sensibility. One of Mrs. Woolf’s creations, Bernard in *The Waves*, shows what sort of stuff she was really interested in:

A space was cleared in my mind. I saw through the thick leaves of habit. Leaning over the gate I regretted so much litter, so much unaccomplishment and separation, for one cannot cross London to see a friend, life being so full of engagements; not take ship to India and see a naked man spearing fish in blue water. I said life had been imperfect, an unfinished phrase. It had been impossible for me, taking snuff as I do from any bagman met in a train, to keep coherency - that sense of the generations, of woman carrying red pitchers to the Nile, of the nightingale who sings among conquests and migrations...

This piece of prose is quite representative of Woolf; her characters, certainly the central ones, speak that way. From such a passage as this it can be appreciated how perfectly the subjective or “confessional” method is adapted to the particular

sensibility reflected through her work.

As subject determines style, so sensibility selects medium. Mrs. Woolf's use of stream of consciousness technique was necessitated by the kind of subject - the workings of sensibility - she had chosen to write about. From *The Voyage Out* to *The Waves* she has written about only one class of people, almost one type of individual, whose experience is largely vicarious, whose contacts with realities have been rather incomplete, unsatisfactory, or uninhibited. This class consists of poets, thinkers, scientists, painters, etc., whose world is a sort of superior Bohemia, as acutely refined and aristocratic in its way as the world of Henry James, with the only exception that its inhabitants concentrate on their sensations and impressions rather than on their problems of conduct. Life for these people is painful less for what it has done to them than for what their excessive sensitivity causes them to make of it. No consolation is left for them but solitude, a timeless solitude in which to descend to a kind of self-induced Nirvana. Through solitude these people are able to relieve themselves with finality from the responsibilities of living, they are able to complete their divorce from reality even to the extent of escaping the burden of personality. Once, one has abandoned the effort to act upon reality, either with the will or the intellect, the mind is permitted to wander in freedom through the stored treasures of its memories and impressions, following no course but that of fancy or simple association.

Nothing in Mrs. Woolf's work serves as a better revelation of the way her characters as a whole live than these ruminations of Mrs. Ramsay in *To The Light House*:

To be silent; to be alone. All the being and the doing, expansive; glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunk, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness.... When life sank down for a moment, the range of experience seemed limitless.... Losing personality, one lost the fret, the hurry, the stir; and there rose to her lips always some exclamation of triumph over life when things came together in this peace, this rest, this eternity....

The very stream-of-consciousness which we see at work here in Mrs. Ramsay's interior monologue, which Mrs. Woolf is said to have derived from Proust, is a means of bringing the unconscious to the conscious, of demonstrating how much we are bound in our mental processes by memories, reactions, obsessions. But should the artist also be bound in his art? That, for Mrs. Woolf, is the question, which leads her to make experiment with technique. The question that exercised her mind was: Can words, can phrases, can the very structure of the novel be stripped of their conventional trappings, made to evoke other than stock responses? Can the reader be induced to expect something different, or, if not to expect, at least to accept it? Is it possible above all, to emulate the technique of the painter (we recall here Mrs. Woolf's interest in the post-impressionist painters) and say, 'There is what I saw - that is how the thing you call a rose, a jam-jar, or a boat appeared to me, then, at that moment, under those conditions of light inner and outer'? Can the novel present, as the picture can, the thusness of each object as it exists in relationship to blue sky, yellow sand, or striped table-cloth?

We also need to note the curious manner in which the theme of sensibility, expressed through the suitable technique of stream of consciousness, asserts itself - this time in the unique (even dubious) relationship of author and reader. It is the common reader who now turns back from the immediate experience offered to him by the novelist. The writer comes bearing gifts and is greeted by 'Timeo Danaos'! I offer you, says the novelist, a new slant on life, the immediate perception that I have achieved, I doubt if you have been given anything quite like it before. I don't want your new perception, says the reader, I want Tarzan, or Forsyte, or the mixture as before of Catholicism-and-violence. Go away and leave me in peace. I don't want reality. It bores me and frightens me. In any case, I don't understand you. I can't follow what you are presenting in the 'novel':

The reader fails to follow what the new novelist, Mrs. Woolf, is presenting because what she is attempting in her fiction is not the stuff the reader has been fed on, the conventional stuff. Besides, she is presenting that new stuff in a new fashion altogether, using a new technique. From the very beginning, and right up to the end, Virginia Woolf was intensely conscious of making a different thing out of the novel. The *genre* had, she knew, been developed and exploited by men but she was a

woman, and she was sure that a woman novelist had to create her own form. Jane Austen had done it; but the Brontes and George Eliot had been hampered by too close an adherence to the old masculine pattern. The feminine mind, the feminine sensibility, cannot profitably imitate the masculine. A woman novelist has something new to bring to the art of the novel. And so Virginia Woolf experimented ceaselessly in new forms, new techniques, always trying to get nearer to an integral expression of life. For truth-her great devotion - operates here as well as in the realm of ideas, in how a thing is said as well as in what is said. The form of the conventional social novel (of realism and naturalism) is not *true* in Woolf's terms. It is stereotyped, deals only with certain detached aspects of living (which it exaggerates and distorts for creating comedy) glued together by crude devices such as set descriptions, coincidences, catastrophes, transition passages of mere padding. And all moves on the surface. How, thought Virginia Woolf, how could she find a form that would convey the movement of things under the surface, the free movement of thought, emotion, insight?

To learn to do what she was wanting to do, Virginia Woolf tapped the available sources in the European tradition. She looked around on the continent what her own contemporaries were doing. She read through the works of Proust and Joyce and Dorothy Richardson. Perhaps not fully satisfied, she also tapped the old sources, read the old masters in whose works she discerned the same experimental quality, the same focusing on an interior world. There was Laurence Sterne, for instance, with his technique of disintegration, his flouting of the time sense and of the connecting link. Then, there was Montaigne, with his delicately poised exploration of consciousness, his irony. There were, above all, the Russian stalwarts, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekov, who dominated European novel for half a century. In her early novels, one can also discern quite a strong echo of E.M. Forster. Of course, all those mentioned above were not radical innovators in narrative technique, but their interest in the deeper recesses of human psyche was something that attracted Woolf to them. She felt that they had much to offer to her in the art of characterization, which she had chosen to make the main focus of her fiction.

Perhaps mentioned earlier also, Virginia Woolf was not an experimentalist from the very beginning of her career as novelist. Some of her early novels are quite

conventional, not departing into novelty even as far as Forster had done. Reviewing her novels in chronological order, one finds that *The Voyage Out* (1915) is a fairly straightforward narrative of a young girl, Rachel Vinrace, who is thrust suddenly out of a backwater into the whirl of life, falls in love, and dies. Similarly, *Night and Day* (1919) is about another young girl, Katharine Hilberry, more self-possessed, more mature, who wonders whether falling in love and marrying may not be a matter of quitting life for a backwater. It is only with her next novel, *Jacob's Room* (1922), and perhaps even more with the little volume of short stories, *Monday or Tuesday* (1921), that we find her experimenting: experimenting with the stream of consciousness technique, experimenting, above all, with the disruption of time.

Time was a technical problem for the most of modern writers. They felt bound, cramped, by the necessity of keeping to the strict sequence of events, A followed by B and B followed by C. They envied the plastic artist's freedom of movement in space, his power of presenting a totality to the eye. Poetry, of course, they felt has liberty than prose - poets have always enjoyed a certain license to jump about from present to past and from past to future, to organize their intuitions within not a strictly temporal pattern. But now Woolf began writing fiction that the novel had been bound. Restricted as it was to the sphere of action, to the telling of a story, it had to present the sequence of cause and effect. The reader was eager to know 'what was going to happen next'; in particular, the Victorian convention of serial publication prescribed a rigid scheme of 'continued in our next' and made development and experiment almost impossible. We know very well how the novels of Dickens, Thackeray, and Trollope followed the fortunes of their characters in time sequence from week to week and month to month, like the narration of historical events.

Perhaps the first note of revolt in England was sounded by E.M. Forster. Only tentatively in his novels, but quite boldly in his lectures on the theory of the novel collected under the title *Aspects of the Novel* (1927), he criticized the time-obsession in fiction. Indeed, he assailed the story element in the novel, the element of plot as well, as Mrs. Woolf also pointed out in her review of *Aspects of the Novel*. As she put it,

Many are the judgements that we would willingly linger, as Mr. Forster passes lightly on his way. That Scott is a story-teller and nothing more; that a story is the lowest of the literary organism; that the novelist's unnatural preoccupation with love is largely a reflection of his own state of mind while he composes - every page has a hint or a suggestion which makes us stop to think or wish to contradict.

As a reviewer, Mrs. Woolf had neither time nor space to debate on these issues. As a novelist, we find them influencing her increasingly. The argument about Scott makes its appearance at a crucial point in *To the Lighthouse*. She noted and she contemplated. Even within the limits of her review, she arrives at highly significant conclusions. One of these conclusions is, 'In England at any rate the novel is not a work of art. There are none to be stood beside *War and Peace*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, or *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*.' She calls upon the critic to be less domestic and the novelist, the English novelist, to be bolder.

He might cut a drift from the eternal tea-table and the plausible and preposterous formulas which are supposed to represent the whole of our human adventure. But then the story might wobble; the plot might crumble; ruin might seize upon the characters. The novel, in short, might become a work of art.

There can be no doubt that this bold statement, one among many more of the kind, was stimulated and encouraged by Mrs. Woolf's reading of Forster's *Aspects of the Novel* and such other theoretical pieces on the novel she must have read at the time. We have also seen that just about the same time, in fact, a little earlier, she had started to put into practice most of Foster's hints. *Monday or Tuesday*, however, was only a collection of sketches, but as early as this collection Mrs. Woolf had started to put into practice her "new" ideas on the novel. It was in 1925, with *Mrs. Dalloway*, that she makes her first serious attempt at disruption of the time-pattern within the space of a full-length novel. Here, she makes her bold experiment of restricting her scheme to the limits of a single day, a single district of London, a single in-the-round character (a return to the three unities already signalled in

Joyce's *Ulysses*, 1922) while employing the devices of memory and dramatic counterpoint (Septimus Warren Smith's day is linked harmoniously with Clarissa's, though the two characters never meet) to escape poverty and monotony.

Later, in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) we find Mrs. Woolf playing other tricks with time; in the first section of the novel, the action is restricted to one evening, the hours between six o'clock and dinner, and in fact even these few hours are foreshortened to a single moment, for in obedience to Mrs. Ramsay's 'Time stand still here!' there is a suspension similar to that imposed by Mr. Weston, in T.F. Powys's novel, *Mr. Weston's Good Wine*, on the bewildered inhabitants of Folly Down. In the second section 'Time Passes' but the human element is withdrawn; the house is left alone to decay. In the third section, memory comes into its own and the present is displaced by the past.

Why, one feels inclined to ask, this preoccupation with time on the part of Virginia Woolf as a novelist? Why this ceaseless experimenting with the devices of memory and foreshortening? It is probably not enough to say that Mrs. Woolf found the time-sequence inadequate to her intuition of the structure of reality, though that remains an important point for a writer like her who, as she does, essays to give a this-worldly rendering of an other-worldly pattern or series of patterns or glimpses of patterns. But there seems another reason, equally, or even, more important than the one we just mentioned. Perhaps she found the time sequence also inadequate to the simple rendering of character, to the display of her creatures' inner lives. This can be seen most strikingly demonstrated in her next novel, the fantasy, *Orlando* (1928), in which the life of her heroine, which in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* had been foreshortened to one day, is stretched out to the perspective of four centuries; in which, too, there is a change of sex from masculine to feminine. All this metamorphosis, this complication and explication, is necessary to elucidate the most mysterious entity, the human spirit. 'One wanted fifty pairs of eyes to see with,' Lily Briscoe reflects in *To the Lighthouse*. 'Fifty pairs of eyes were not enough to get round that one woman with, she thought.' Very well, one can imagine Virginia Woolf responding, let us see how many pairs of eyes, in four hundred years, are needed to pluck out the heart of Orlando's mystery. Let us show Orlando as first masculine, and then feminine; first in love, and then loved; first jilting, and then jilted;

a man of action and a poet, a woman of fashion and a Victorian lady.

In a still later novel, *The Waves*, (1931), Virginia Woolf carries the process a step further; indeed, to what we can only imagine to be its conclusion, for further development can hardly be expected along a line which has led, as here, to the suppression of plot, dialogue, and exterior description. *The Waves* presents us with six characters who grow up from children to men and women, but who never address one another, never attain an effective relationship, but more in and out of a pattern as in the intricate steps of a ballet. Counterpointed against the changing emotions and sensations of six lifetimes is the inexorable process of a solar day. We are presented with a tissue of infinite complexity, in which each personality is mirrored in the minds of the other five, and that multiple image is again multiplied in the great mirror of the whole novel, itself a fractional image reflected from the moving pageant of sea, earth and sky which forms the exordium to each of the nine sections of the book. The undertaking is prodigious, and so, I think, is the effect; but many readers have found the effort of concentration which they are called upon to make beyond their powers. More than any other of her novels, *The Waves* deserves to be labelled as the most difficult.

Virginia Woolf's next novel, *The Years* (1937) is a marking time. In some respects, there is a sort of regression to the early technique of *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day*. The element of plot returns, there are hints of set descriptions. Time, it is true, is disrupted, but not in a very radical sense: we are carried from 1880 to 1891, from 1907 to 1910, and so on, but the result is a series of fragmentary impressions rather than a bold and original perception. It is only with her final (and indeed posthumous) novel, *Between the Acts*. (1941), that we find a hint of the new direction along which Virginia Woolf's art is going to develop, a direction which, with its suggestion of a marriage of poetic and prose technique, picks up a note sounded in *Monday or Tuesday* and a thread she had left hanging in her review of Forster's *Aspects of the Novel* :

The assumption that fiction is more intimately and humbly attached to the service of human beings than the other arts leads to a further position which Mr. Forster's book again illustrates. It is

unnecessary to dwell on her aesthetic functions because they are so feeble that they can safely be ignored. Thus, though it is impossible to imagine a book of painting in which not a word should be said about the medium in which a painter works, a wise and brilliant book, like Mr. Forster's, can be written about fiction without saying more than a sentence or two about the medium in which a novelist works. Almost nothing is said about words.

Thus, Mrs. Woolf did supremely well what no one else before her had attempted to do. She explored the world of the mind-especially the feminine mind-under certain precise conditions of character and environment. What Eliot attempted in poetry, she attempted in novel. Both broke the conventional form into fragments and reassembled them on new principles drawn from contemporary knowledge related to Time and Mind. The fragmented modern world of the post-war period could not have been pictured in any conventional form. Hence, both experimented and succeeded.

25.5 Examination Oriented Questions :

- a) Justify *Mrs. Dalloway* as a stream of consciousness Novel.
- b) Analyze Woolf's narrative technique in *Mrs. Dalloway*.
- c) Examine Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* as an illustration of interior monologue technique.

25.6 Suggested Reading

1. A. D. Moody, Virginia Woolf (Edinburgh : Oliver and Boyd, 1963).
2. David Daiches, Virginia Woolf (Norfolk : New Directions, 1942)

VIRGINIA WOOLF : MRS DALLOWAY**STRUCTURE**

- 26.1 Objectives
- 26.2 Introduction
- 26.3 Woolf as feminist writer
- 26.4 Examination Oriented Questions
- 26.5 Suggested Reading

26.1 Objectives

The aim of this lesson is to acquaint the learners with the feminist aspect of Virginia Woolf focussing on her major works.

26.2 Introduction

Virginia Woolf was determined to create a new form of literature that was more internal, a savoring of experience, and a departure from traditional storytelling. Her work *Night and Day* was published in 1919, followed by *Jacob's Room* (1922). The latter was a stream of Consciousness Novel that, according to the Penguin Companion to English Literature breaks down experience into a series of rapidly dissolving impressions that merge together. *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), one of her best known works, takes place in one day of the main character's life, fleshing it out in flash backs taking place within her consciousness. In *To the Light House* (1927), Woolf explores the concept of time and change as it relates to personality. *Orlando* (1928) takes the main character through several lifetimes, changing genders as he/she moves through time.

26.3 Woolf as a Feminist Writer

Although a friend and mentor of Virginia Woolf, E.M. Forster was perhaps the first to attack her feminism. In his famous lecture on Mrs. Woolf, Forster finds feminism “responsible for the worst of her books – the cantankerous *Three Guineas* – and for the less successful streaks in *Orlando*. There are spots of it all over her work, and it was constantly in her mind.” Forster admired her, *A Room of One’s Own* but felt that there is “something old fashioned” about her subsequent concern with the status of women. “By the 1930’s she had much less to complain about and seems to keep on grumbling from habit.” Three things clearly emerge from Forster’s criticism of Woolf’s feminism. First, that feminism makes her work inferior; second, that her feminism is “old-fashioned;” third, that Forster’s use of words like grumbling, “habit,” etc., betray his “mainly” attitude towards women, a conventional gender bias, implying the inferiority of the “other sex.”

Forster’s criticism of Mrs. Woolf’s feminism is rather dismissive, un-willing to consider her case in the context, impatient to pass judgement. For instance, Mrs. Woolf did not write *Three Guineas* in a vacuum. It does not raise an out-dated cry for the voting right to women, but draws on a spirit of resentment which was in some ways peculiar to the 1930’s intensified as it was by the effects of the depression, by certain aspects of Fascism, and by a popular misuse of sexual psychology.

In her considered opinion, the disabilities of women were nothing but a part of malignant conspiracy by which educated women are “the weakest of the classes in the state.” Her specific grievances demonstrate that these weakness are not illusory : women do not fill the top rank in the Civil Service or the Church ; their hold in the universities is precarious ; they are “stateless” in the sense that they take their nationality from their husband; and their slavery as housewives is unpaid.

Unlike the present-day feminists, who are much more aggressive in their posture and believe in all kinds of activism including the political, to secure rightful place to women in every respect, Woolf disliked feminists and was suspicious of organized political activity for women. This can be clearly felt in the caricatures of Evelyn Murgatroyd in *The Voyage Out*, Julia Hedge in *Jacob’s Room*, Mr Claxton and Mrs.

Seal in *Night and Day*, and in the decidedly grudging approval allowed to Peggy (the doctor) in *The Years* and Mary Datchet (who is perhaps the only feminist in the literal sense) in *Night and Day*. As Ruth Gruber, cited earlier, remarked, Virginia Woolf could not forgive women who adopted a “warrior attitude”. How far the feminist movement has come can be noted from the title of Ruth Prawar Jhabwala’s *Get Ready for Battle*, which in fact, is not among the recent. Compared to the present-day feminists, Woolf sounds a member of the “genteel” generation, sharing her sensibility with James and others for whom “culture” of sensibility was above all considerations in human life.

A commentary on Virginia Woolf by Bernard Blackstone reminds us, with characteristic sensitivity, that she values individual life irrespective of gender:

The great duty of the individual is to be himself, to be honest with himself, and not to judge others. Tolerance is the supreme virtue, we must learn to let others alone.

Now, if we place side by side the dicta of ‘to live one’s femininity’ and ‘to learn to let others alone’, as is done in *A Room of One’s Own*, they are tantamount to a positive activity: that of being a mute commentator, or commentator by example, on the actions of men. Virginia Woolf’s instinctive rejection of “The Warrior attitude” can be traced all through her work. We can see how indignant she is with women such as, head-mistresses and principals of colleges because they have abdicated, in her opinion, their specialized role for which their femaleness equips them by adopting male standards. In her view, women must not try to emulate men, for they have a better role of their own to perform. She makes her view clear both explicitly as well as poetically. Women, in her view, can give men a “renewal of creative power” by the contact of contrasting ways of life, and for this reason women’s education should “bring out and fortify the differences rather than the similarities.” In her description of a young couple meeting and taking a cab Virginia Woolf symbolizes, in a rare moment of unqualified generosity, the ideal state of men and women.

Compared to *A Room of One’s Own*, there is greater of the “warrior” in *Three Guineas*, in which the essential point is, itself, not pacific as it is in the former. In the

better-known “feminist” book of Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own*, the point being emphasized is that by their presence and “indifference” women can renew a sense of life (and of the importance of life) in men, and, thereby, protect them from their own instinctual lust for war and death.

In *A Room of One’s Own*, Virginia, a feminist author does not even ask men for cooperation; she only asks for the liberty to live (as a woman) her own feminine life to the full. Men are only asked not to make attempt to re-order their lives, but only to remove the obstacles from hers. The obstacles that she particularly finds in the path of female writers such as, their lack of education, the lack of privacy, the constant distractions, and the interruptions attendant upon life at home, the lack of economic independence, and the use of chastity as fetish to prevent women from expressing themselves freely. This last is also complained in the paper *Professions for Women*, where she decides “the extreme conventionality of the other sex.” More obstacles included in *A Room of One’s Own* are the lack of a tradition of significant relationships between women in English fiction, and the instinctive male dislike of publicity for women.

This gender concern, that women must have the freedom to develop their own personalities, reappears (of course divested of its anger) in most of Mrs. Woolf’s novels. In this regard Forster’s structure, “there are spots of it all over her work,” seems justified. Beyond this fact Forster’s remarks do not seem to have much relevance in understanding the novels of Mrs. Woolf. For instance, her novels do not get impaired, as Forster alleged, by bringing in her feminist concern into their bodies. On the contrary, it is this very concern of her that gives her novels a special status and a firm tone. In both, *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day* a young woman attempting an escape from a suffocating domestic world forms the centre of the action. The effects of the “chastity fetish” are exemplified by Rachel (in *The Voyage Out*), who when awoken to the facts of life exclaims: “that’s why I can’t walk alone.” She “saw her life for the first time a creeping, hedged-in thing.... dull and crippled for ever.” In the theme of escape and fulfillment which runs through these two novels, both written around the time of the 1918 Reform Act, one is made to feel that the atmosphere of vigour and resentment that surrounded the suffragettes has had some influence. Apart from the portrait of Mary Datchet there is little direct reference to the suffrage

movement, but Virginia Woolf conveys a certain indignation when Dalloway, as the average male, says: “may I be in my grave before a woman has the right to vote in England.” This is from Woolf’s novel *The Voyage Out*. Then, there is Hewet who comments on the “curious, silent, unrepresented life” of women. This too, is from the same novel.

In the next three novels, her best known and most representative, Mrs Woolf’s concern with the obstacles in the path of women relaxes, as it seems appropriate to the sense of relaxation among all intellectual women following the 1918 act. In *Clarissa Dalloway (Mrs Dalloway)*, particularly, we have the portrayal of a woman who has fitted so snugly into the limitations of being a female that the awareness of these limitations shrinks into the background.

No doubt, the two major female characters of Woolf - Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay - are not feminist “warriors,” yet if Mrs. Dalloway is a woman who is “feminine” within the intention of *A Room of One’s Own*, who withdraws her life to such an extent that she is free to round it out and make it perfect within its own limitations, Mrs. Ramsay is “feminine” within the intention of *Three Guineas*. The way in which the contrasting ways of life of the two sexes are enriched by contact, and the way in which the male and the female modes of creation, the one an agitation of the brain and the other an outpouring of life, must inevitably conflict, is expressed with a surge of conviction in this novel (*To the Lighthouse*). Mrs. Ramsay’s creative power is seen as a “delicious fecundity, this foundation and spray of life” (the expressions are very much Lawrencian) into which “the fatal sterility of the male plunged itself, like a break of brass, barren and bare” (it again echoes Lawrence). Mrs. Ramsay comforting her husband anticipates, on the domestic level, all the sweetening and civilizing of male life that Virginia Woolf was to urge as the feminine role in *Three Guineas*. In *A Room of One’s Own*, there are passages describing the role of a woman which closely resemble those in *To the Light house* and *Three Guineas*. In all of these, the woman “renews creative power” in the man and makes her house a work of art, in which “the very walls are permeated by [her] creative force.” The present-day Feminists would not accept all this; they would find Woolf’s picture of woman rather conventional that

subordinates her to the other sex, showing only her usefulness for the master, the male. They would firmly insist on equality of sexes, no subordination or secondariness of the female to the male.

Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* is a different kind of novel altogether, a special case. So far, we have been trying to show that "feminism," as we understand it today, is not applicable to Woolf largely because her novels emphasize the differences rather than the similarities between the sexes. Yet this fantasy, *Orlando*, in which a woman lives three hundred years and spends her first century as a man, seems to be a fable in which the author implicitly denies that there is any essential difference between the sexes.

It needs to be noted here that *Orlando* was immediately followed by *A Room of One's Own*. We also need to note that the later work, originally called *Women and Fiction*, was conceived as "a lecture to the Newhamities about women's writing." Both works are, then, out of the same mould, and the focus of *Orlando* is specifically on woman as writer rather than woman as entity (as in *Mrs Dalloway*, for example). The central thread of the work is Orlando's poem, *The Oak Tree*, which takes the full three hundred years of Orlando's life to be written, and the historical settings are taken from literary history, and certainly not from history in the sense in which it is used in *The Years*. Also, the question after Orlando has become a woman is essentially over her liberty to write, and the concern with her liberty to govern her own life is only incidental to this.

The central concern integral to the entire work of Virginia Woolf is the ANDROGYNOUS nature of the literary mind. The persistence of this concern is the more interesting for her reluctance to insist on it categorically. "Perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create, any more than a mind that is purely feminine" and "in fact, one goes back to Shakespeare as the type of the androgynous mind," is how she phrases it in *A Room of One's Own*, and this is an oddly tentative expression of something which is fundamental in her work. In *Orlando*, to take the immediate case first, the same point is expressed, through the fantasy and the fable, with complete

conviction. Orlando as a woman is far more understanding, far more knowledgeable, and, therefore, far better equipped to write, than if she were wholly female. This is expressed in the knowing conversations that she has with Nell the prostitute, whom Orlando (now an eighteenth century lady) visits disguised as a man, and the wide amorous experiences she has as a bisexual Regency rake; “for the probity of breeches she exchanged the seductiveness of petticoats and enjoyed the love of both sexes equally.” When she meets her Victorian husband (a blend, probably, of all the Romantic poets into “Marmaduke Bonthrop Shelmerdine”) they promptly recognize in each other the androgynous writer’s mind: “an awful suspicion rushed into both minds simultaneously. ‘You’re a woman, Shell!’ she cried. ‘You’re a man, Orlando!’ he cried.”

Despite the marriage of Orlando and Marmaduke Banthrop Shelmerdine, one is left with the feeling that the marriage of a woman writer is almost a fraud: “If one still wished, more than anything in the whole world, to write poetry was it marriage? she had her doubts.” This, perhaps, accounts for Mrs. Woolf’s hesitancy over “the type of the androgynous mind.” She loved and admired women like the ideal woman of *Three Guineas*, like Mrs. Ramsay, and like old Mrs. Swithin of *Between The Acts*; women who live with men, sweetening them and making life into an art. Yet, taken to its logical conclusion, the position is at odds with this: in these works woman must withdraw her life from man, rounding it out and making it complete within itself. Woolf's reluctance to make this act in any way aggressive - to make it an act of rejection - is clear from the emphasis she places on this "withdrawal": Mrs. Dalloway's mounting the stairs to her narrow bed, Orlando retiring from life into the privacy of his/her look-out post under the oak tree, and the unnamed woman writer of *A Room of One's Own* insisting on five hundred a year and a private room to write in. Yet rejection of the male is necessarily implicit in this withdrawal, and it is more firmly implied in her theme of the androgynous mind.

26.4 Examination Oriented Questions :

- a) Discuss Virginia Woolf as a feminist Writer.

26.5 Suggested Reading

1. James Hafley. *The Glass Roof : Virginia Woolf as a novelist* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1954).
 2. Harvena Richter. *Virginia Woolf : A collection of Critical Essays* (New Delhi : Prentice - Hall of India Private Limited, 1979).
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VIRGINIA WOOLF : MRS DALLOWAY**STRUCTURE**

- 27.1 Objectives
- 27.2 Introduction
- 27.3 Mrs. Dalloway's Structural Pattern
- 27.4 The Story
- 27.5 Symbols Imagery and Metaphors in the Novel
- 27.6 Key Metaphor in the Novel
- 27.7 Role of Septimus
- 27.8 Examination Oriented Questions
- 27.9 Suggested Reading

27.1 Objectives

The objective of the lesson is to acquaint the learner with the story of the novel and focus on its structural pattern and characters.

27.2 Introduction

Mrs. Dalloway chronicles a June day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway - a day that is taken up with running minor errands in preparation for a party and that is punctuated, toward the end, by the suicide of a young man she has never met. In giving an apparently ordinary day such immense resonance and significance - infusing it with elemental conflict between death and life - Virginia Woolf triumphantly discovers her distinctive style as a novelist.

27.3 Mrs. Dalloway's Structural Pattern

Mrs. Dalloway is not a conventional novel that depicted external reality of incidents and characters woven together into a plot involving those characters in a tragic or comic situation arising out of a logically arranged pattern of incidents. Using the new ideas of Henri Bergson and William James about the simultaneity of time and the associational (not logical) functioning of the human mind, Virginia Woolf came out with a new novel form where the conventional elements of plot and character, setting and situation were totally discarded. Her firm belief was that if a writer wanted to depict full reality, it could not be done within the predetermined framework of 'genre' or its subsidiary concepts of plot, character, etc. As she put it.

Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions-trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from that of old; the moment of importance came not here but there; so that if a writer was a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he want, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style, and perhaps not a single button sewn on as the Bond Street tailors would have it. 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 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? We are not pleading merely for courage and sincerity; we are suggesting that the proper stuff of fiction is a little other than custom would have us believe it.

A few things that become clear from this passage about Woolf's theory of the novel are: first, that she is going to write about men and women, not heroes and heroines; two, that her field of interest would be the internal thoughts and emotions,

memories and recollections of these men and women, not their external incidents and characters; third, that she would not follow the conventional theories of genres or decorum or unities, and that she would 'freely' write about what she feels; that, her fiction would have its own form determined by the very stuff of the mind she would unfold in her composition.

Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* illustrates it all, for it projects the inner life of not so distinguished a woman - her thoughts and feelings, recalls and memories, aspirations and frustrations - as she prepares herself for the evening party she has to arrange at her place.

27.4 The Story :

Woolf's novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, has a story, however scattered and unsequenced, and some characters, however ill-matched and disconnected. By conventional standards, the novel has a fragmentary dramatic design, in which the dramatic sequences are connected through a single metaphorical nucleus, in which the key metaphors are projected and sustained by a continuous web of subtly related minor metaphors and harmonizing imagery. Once this design can be seen as also the vision of life it implies, it can be appreciated as for why *Mrs. Dalloway* takes the form it does, why as a story the novel has properly no beginning or ending. It opens one morning with Clarissa Dalloway in the midst of preparing for a party. The major event of her day is the return of Peter Walsh, the man she had almost married instead of Richard Dalloway, a successful member of Parliament. Clarissa and Richard have a daughter, Elizabeth, who is temporarily attached to a religious fanatic, a woman with the Dickensian name of Miss. Kilman. There is also in the novel another set of characters who at first seem to have no connection with Clarissa and her world: Septimus Smith, a veteran of the First World War, and his Italian wife, Rezia, a hatmaker by trade. Septimus, who is suffering from shell-shock, is being treated - somewhat brutally - by a hearty M.D., Dr. Holmes. During the day of Clarissa's preparations, Septimus visits Sir William Bradshaw, an eminent psychiatrist, who recommends rather too firmly that Septimus should be taken to a sanatorium. In the late afternoon, as Dr. Holmes comes to take him away, Septimus jumps from the balcony of his room and gets killed. That evening, Sir William Bradshaw reports the story of his death to Clarissa's party.

27.5 Symbols, Images and Metaphors in the Novel :

Now, any one who has read the novel would feel the story he has heard and the novel he has read do not quite square with each other. One feels that to put the novel's happenings in the form of a conventional narrative is to lose the peculiar texture of Woolf's book. The ebb and flow of her phrasing and the frequent repetition of the same or similar expressions, through which her characteristic rhythmic and metaphorical designs are built up completely disappear. The words and phrases, images and metaphors and symbols keep recurring, forming a pattern and a rhythm, offering a new form of fiction altogether. The repeated word does not occur in a conventional metaphorical expression, and its metaphorical value is felt only after it has been met in a number of contexts. Woolf's most characteristic metaphors are purely symbolic.

It can be indicated from the adjective "solemn" how a recurrent expression acquires its special weight of meaning. If we can see how metaphor links with metaphor, we can also get a notion of the interconnectedness of the entire novel. The word "solemn" appears on the very first page of *Mrs. Dalloway*:

How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen....

It is then echoed on the very next page, in the first account of Big Ben's striking (an important passage in relation to the whole novel):

For having lived in Westminster - how many years now? Over twenty, - one feels even in the midst of traffic, or waking at night, Clarissa was positive, a particular hush, or solemnity; an indescribable pause; a suspense (but that might be her heart, affected, they said, by influenza) before Big Ben strikes. There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air.

Now, we can see how the word "solemn," which in its first appearance on the opening page had only a vague local meaning of "something awful about to happen," is now connected with a more particularized terror, the fear of a suspense, of a pause

in experience. Each time that “solemn” is repeated in subsequent descriptions of Big Ben, it carries this additional meaning. The word appears three times in the afternoon scene in which Clarissa looks across at an old woman in the next house:

How extraordinary it was, strange, yes, touching, to see the old lady (they had been neighbours over so many ears) more away from the window, as if she were attached to that sound, that string. Gigantic as it was, it had something to do with her. Down, down, into the midst of ordinary things the finger fell making the moment solemn.

And if we move a little further in the novel:

... Big Ben... laying down the law, so solemn, so just... on the wake of that solemn stroke which lay flat like a bar of gold on the sea.

In the early morning scene near the end of the book, we see Clarissa going to the window, again seeing the old lady, thinking, “It will be a solemn sky ... it will be a dusky sky, turning away its cheek in beauty.” In the passage, there is some suggestion in the imagery of Big Ben’s stroke coming down and marking an interruption in the process of life. By the end of the book, we see the significance in the use of “solemn” on the first page in a passage conveying a sharp sense of freshness and youth. The terror symbolized by Big Ben’s “pause” has a connection with early life, “... one’s parents giving it into one’s hands, this life, to be lived to the end.” The “something awful... about to happen” was associated with “the flap of a wave, the kiss of a wave”; the “solemnity” of life is a kind of “sea-terror” (so Shakespeare might express it in *The Tempest*). Wave and water images recur in other “solemn” passages: “the wave,” “the wake,” “the leaden circles dissolved in the air.” Thus, through a chain of various associations, the word “solemn” acquires symbolic significance in the story of the novel. Some terror of entering the sea of experience and of living life and an inexplicable fear of a “suspense” or interruption.

Thus, it can be seen that in *Mrs. Dalloway* the novel’s meaning is contained in a web of metaphors and symbols with various associated images around them, one leading to another, a cluster gathering into a significance, finally related to the psychological state of mind of the central character in the novel. Also, we need to carefully note that in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the metaphor that links the continuities (such

as “solemn”) and give unity to the novel's dramatic design is not a single, easily describable analogy, but two complementary and extremely complex analogies which are gradually expressed through recurrent words and phrases and through the dramatic pattern of the various sequences. Also, even though these recurring words and the sequences they create are salient in relation to all the major characters, they are best interpreted from the sequences related to Clarissa Dalloway, the novels' central figure. This is so because it is her experience which forms the focal point of the reader's attention.

Looking for these little poles in the novel's design of sequences one discovers that one of the two metaphorical poles of the novel emerges in a passage that comes just after the first account of Big Ben's striking:

Such fools we are, she thought, crossing Victoria Street. For Heaven only knows why one loves it so how one sees it so, making it up, building it round one, tumbling it, creating it every moment afresh; but the veriest trumps, the most dejected of miseries sitting on doorsteps (drink their downfall) do the same; can't be dealt with, she felt positive, by Acts of Parliament for that very reason: they love life. In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jungle and the strange high singing of some over plane over head was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June.

Here, as it seems evident, the key phrase in the passage is “they love life,” and what is meant by “life” and “loving it” is indicated by the other metaphors surrounding it, such as “building it,” “creating it every moment,” “the swing, tramp, and trudge” - and also by the various images of sights, sounds, actions.

27.6 Key Metaphor in the Novel :

The crucial metaphor in novel, especially with reference to Clarissa's narrative, is twofold : the exhilarated sense of being a part of the forward moving process and the recurrent fear of some break in this absorbing activity, which is symbolized by the “suspense” before Big Ben strikes. We are to feel all sorts of experiences qualified

as at once “an absorbing progression.” Such in crudely schematic terms are the two analogies which make up the metaphorical nucleus of the novel. As has been indicated earlier, this complex metaphor is expressed through a large number of variant minor metaphors and images. Here is one such instance:

Quiet descended on her, calm, content, as her needle, drawing the silk smoothly to its gentle pause, collected the green folds together and attached them, very lightly, to the belt. So on a summer’s day waves collect, overbalance, and fall; and the whole world seems to be saying “That is all” more and more ponderously, until even the heart in the body which lies in the sun on the beach says too, that is all. Fear no more, says the heart. Fear no more, says the heart, committing its burden to some sea, which sighs collectively for all sorrows, and renews, begins, collects, lets fall. And the body alone listens to the passing bee; the wave breaking; the dog barking, far away barking and barking.

Note carefully, how the opening statement expands the wave simile in a metaphorical bloom which expresses in miniature the essence of the novel. The quiet, calm, and content (Clarissa’s absorption in what she is doing) and the rhythmic movement of the needle are the points in the immediate situation from which the two main meanings of the key metaphor grow. The comparison between sewing and wave movements draws in these further levels of meaning, thanks to the nice preparation of the earlier scenes and the delicate adjustment of those that follow. There the wave and sea images which have been appearing when Clarissa recalls the terror of early life or when she hears Big Ben’s solemn stroke merge into each other. Much later in the novel, there is Clarissa at her party scene, the waves mainly symbolize Clarissa’s complete absorption in life: “That is all” - the phrase she had used twice while shopping and which had come back in her musings on “the solemn progress up Bond Street.” At this moment, there is nothing for the heart except the process, and the individual becomes a mere percipient body, intensely aware of the immediate sensation. But the moment has a dual value, as suggested indirectly by the allusions to solemnity and terror. Thus, the reader is fully prepared for the return of “Fear no more” which clearly suggests freedom from interruption, meanings which are dramatized in the scene that comes immediately after.

Clarissa's quiet, we find then, is rudely shaken by the sound of the front-door bell. Note how Woolf expresses it:

“Who can - what can,” asked Mrs. Dalloway (thinking it was outrageous to be interrupted at eleven o'clock on the morning of the day she was giving a party), hearing a step on the stairs. She heard she heard a hand upon the door. She made to hide her dress, like a virgin protecting chastity, respecting privacy.

Here, the mature Mrs. Dalloway, feeling an interruption, by the return of her former lover, Peter Walsh, responding to the interruption “like a virgin protecting chastity, respecting privacy,” echoes another analogy in the novel, which is simply a special aspect of the “life” metaphor. This may be termed as the “destroyer” theme. Peter's temporary presence destroys Clarissa's domesticity, even her marriage. As a lover Peter had allowed her no life of her own. Clarissa reasserts herself and her life by calling after him as he leaves, “Remember my party to- night.” Peter is one of those who would cut her off from her way of living by making her into another person: he is one of the “destroyers of the privacy of the soul.” Here, it will not be out of place to recall that in Hawthorne and James and, in fact, even later in the American tradition, such persons are portrayed as evil characters - Chillingworth in *The Scarlet Letter* and Gilbert Osmond in *The Portrait of a Lady* belong to that type.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, compulsion of this sort is a special form of the “suspense” in life's exhilarating process. The “suspense” may be fear itself, or the sense of time's passing, or death, or a failure in personal relationship, or, finally, the loss of independence with results from love or hatred or officiousness. What deserves special attention is the remarkable extent to which the novel's central metaphor penetrates and organizes the novel's pattern. The dramatic sequences of the major characters are all connected with Clarissa's through a shuttling pattern of verbal reminiscences. Although “life” is peculiarly the key figure in Clarissa's experience, it has some, if not the same, importance in that of other characters, including Septimus and Miss Kilman, who are unable to live as Clarissa lives. We can recall here Hemingway's “lost generation” people, majority of whom get “broken” by the war, but some, such as, the Hemingway hero, emerge stronger at the broken points. While Septimus and Kilman get broken, Clarissa emerges stronger at the broken points.

27.7 Characters in the Novel :

Virginia Woolf seems to have deliberately set up a contrast between the characters of Clarissa and Septimus - the one who finds a meaning in life by committing herself to certain pattern of living and the other, who unable to connect and commit himself to any pattern, is sucked by the vacuum created by the experience of war. While Clarissa generally feels her inclusion in everything and only occasionally feels *outside*, Septimus is almost always “alone” and unable to connect with the world about him. He had “felt very little in the war,” and “now that it was all over, truce signed, and the dead buried, he had, especially in the evening, these thunder-claps of fear. He could not feel.” Rezia, his wife, is his refuge from fear, though like Clarissa she too has moments of panic when she cries, “I am alone; I am alone!” But she is shown as having some of Mrs. Dalloway’s gift for active enjoyment, and through her Septimus is, for, once able to recover his power of feeling and to enter into the real life around him. The moment comes near the end of his narrative, in late afternoon, as he lies on a sofa while Rezia is making a hat. The writing in this scene shows remarkably the way in which the novelist moves from one narrative plane to another via image and metaphor.

Just before this scene, is the episode of Elizabeth’s bus ride, with “this van; this life; this procession.” We find that later these very metaphors are echoed in a long description of cloud movements which cast changing lights on the moving buses; the transition to Septimus takes place as he watches the “goings and comings” of the clouds. The movements and colours referred to and the verbal rhythm (“watching watery gold glow and fade”) prepare us easily for the return of the wave and sea imagery of Clarissa’s and Peter’s monologues:

Outside the trees dragged their leaves like nets through the depths of the air; the sound of water was in the room and through the waves came the voices of birds singing. Every power poured its treasures on his head, and his hand lay there on the back of the sofa, as he had seen his hand lie when he was bathing, floating, on the top of the waves, while far away on shore he heard dogs barking and barking far away. Fear no more, says the heart in the body; fear no more.

Here, we can see how the last words anticipate the next phase of the scene. Septimus watching Rezia sew a hat, loses himself for a moment in his interest in her

activity; “She built it up, sewing is decidedly symbolic.” Septimus begins to take note of actual objects around him, as Rezia extends him assurance that real things are real: “There she was, perfectly natural, sewing.” The words, “There she was” (as also the last sentence of the novel) are an exact repetition of one of Peter’s earlier remarks about Clarissa, where they signified her “extraordinary gift, that woman's gift, of making a world wherever she happened to be.” Septimus’s participation in life is interrupted, as was Clarissa’s, by one of the compeller’s, Dr. Holmes. His suicide is a protest against having his life forcibly remade by others.

27.7.1 Role of Septimus

Septimus Smith is a complex character who is not easily understood. He went to war in order to defend his country, in an attempt to exert his masculine, protective traits, but he came up short. During the duration of the book, Septimus seems to be on an emotional rollercoaster. He moves around from being contentedly happy with his circumstances, then goes on to feel anxious and fearful. Septimus Smith's war experiences severed his ability to cope with daily life. After witnessing the horrors of the war and the death of his friend Evans, Septimus finds himself disconnected and unfeeling. His inability to come to terms with his relationship with Evans and the loss of his ability to feel eat away at him- he panics and impulsively marries an Italian girl Lucrezia and returns home to England - a last-ditch effort to break through to the world - but regrets not loving or ever loving her. Septimus outwardly acts as one would expect a senile person to do- shouting randomly, snapping at his wife without reason, and being generally unstable (threatening to kill himself in public). He is very removed from the world around him; not being able to connect with anyone in the real world and instead living in his own mind, where he contemplates the world in a deeper sense than most of the other characters in the book. He is often overwhelmed with the beauty he sees in the world, which is first exhibited when he begins crying at the sight of an airplane writing a message into the sky. Though Septimus believes he has no feeling, he actually has an excess of it. He is too sensitive for the world in which he lives. Like his wife, he is a foreigner, but in terms of social conformity, rather than national identity.

Dr. Holmes has been treating Septimus, although he does not take his patient's problems seriously; nor does Septimus have any respect for Dr. Holmes. Conversely, Sir William Bradshaw immediately sees there's a problem with Septimus. The only

trouble is that his philosophy of wellness-based on Proportion and Conversion- has a creepy scientific and inhuman sound to it, and involves Septimus being placed in one of his mental homes, away from everything he cares about. Septimus is clearly affected by post-traumatic stress disorder, but the only mention Bradshaw makes of damage from the war comes at the party, where he says there should be some governmental provision regarding shell-shock. Under the care of these doctors, Septimus senses that they're part of the same authoritarian system that controlled the war. As these doctors see him, Septimus is a danger to society because he serves as a reminder of the damage of war, instead of the heroism. He must be put away so people can still believe in the grandness of English empire.

In the introduction to the 1928 edition of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf explains outright that Septimus and Clarissa are doubles. In fact, she originally planned to have Clarissa kill herself in the end. Both Septimus and Clarissa are disturbed by the social structure and oppressions of British life. They both love Shakespeare, and are both very attuned to life's deep meaning, and both have bird-like faces.

The two protagonists also share psychological qualities. Where Clarissa manages to feel nothing after witnessing the death of her sister, Septimus is also initially pleased with his manly, detached attitude toward the loss of Evans. Thoughts of death are central to both of them: Septimus thinks about Evans' death and Clarissa dwells constantly on her own. Both willingly participate in a lifestyle that validates imperialism, nationalism, and war. And while Clarissa manages far better than Septimus, they both manage to see beauty in the world in spite of the suffering and isolation.

Septimus succeeds in slapping convention in the face, but is only able to do so by killing himself. His death is experienced by Clarissa as an expression of defiance, a real communication of the self, from which she can benefit, too:

A thing there was that mattered; a thing, wreathed about with chatter, defaced, obscured in her own life, let drop every day in corruption, lies, chatter. This he had preserved. Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate; people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded, one was alone. There was an embrace in death.

Neither Woolf nor Clarissa consider Septimus' death a tragedy per se; it's more like the ultimate acknowledgment of the failures of the world around him - a bold rejection of tyranny and the only way to preserve himself. He therefore "plunges holding his treasure", as Clarissa describes it, which is to say that he has held on to part of himself and his dignity.

In the figure of Sir William Bradshaw, we get an almost allegorical representation of a "destroyer." His talk of keeping a "sense of proportion" and his shrewd questions are a cover for his firm intention of getting patients to do what he thinks proper. There is a close relation, we are told, between preaching proportion and being a converter, for proportion has a sister, Conversion, who "feats on the wills of the weakly." Clarissa, too, is pursued by Kilman. She ruins Clarrisa's enjoyment of life and is shown as having herself no capacity for delight. In the mock-heroic tea-table scene, she fails in her mother's party. As Miss Kilman questions Elizabeth, we at once recall Mrs. Dalloway's parting words to Miss Kitman and her daughter which are precisely those that she had used to Peter: "Remember my party!" Her words are symbolic of defiance.

All of the related analogies that make up the key metaphor are combined near the end of the novel, at the point when Bradshaw tells Clarissa of Septimus's death and when Clarissa, reflecting on its meaning, looks out of the window at the old lady going to bed. Bradshaw, a man "capable of some indescribable crime - farcing your soul, that was it -," momentarily ruins her party ("in the middle of my party, here's death, she thought..."). But Clarissa, at once, realizes that Septimus's death has a further meaning in relation to his life and hers. By killing himself, Septimus had defied the men who make life intolerable, and though he had literally "thrown it away," he had not lost his independence of soul. [One cannot help recalling here the case of Dimsdale in *The Scarlet Letter*, whose death, too, is a defiance of people like Chillingworth who are out to capture his soul]. This (in so far as it can be defined) is "the thing" he had preserved. By contrast, Clarissa had sacrificed some of this purity. She had made compromises for the sake of social success, "She had schemed: she had pilfred." But she had not given in to Peter, and by marrying Richard, she had been able to make a life of her own. The delight, though impure, remained. The old lady, in her second appearance as in her first, symbolizes the quiet maintenance of one's own life, which is the only counterbalance to the fear of "interruption" whether by death or compulsion.

Septimus's plunge from the window is linked with those earlier windows and "the triumphs of youth" and, thereby, with the exhilarating and "solemn" sense of delight expressed through the central metaphor of the novel. The recurrence of a single word is a quiet indication of the subtlety and closeness of the structure which Virginia Woolf was "building up" as she wrote this novel. Thus, in order that we may be able to make sense of the novel, we must learn to see it differently, unconventionally, as a pattern of images and metaphors, scenes and symbols, all woven into a web of rich texture.

27.8 Examination Oriented Questions :

- a) Women characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* portray contemporary society. Discuss.
- b) How Septimus holds and advances *Mrs. Dalloway* as a Narrative Comment.

27.9 Suggested Reading :

1. David Daiches, *Virginia Woolf* (Norfolk : New Directions, 1942)
2. A. D. Moody, *Virginia Woolf* (Edinburgh : Oliver Boyd, 1963)

VIRGINA WOOLF : MRS DALLOWAY**STRUCTURE**

- 28.1 Objectives
- 28.2 Introduction
- 28.3 Mrs. Dalloway as a topical Novel
- 28.4 Woolf's Aesthetics of Fiction
- 28.5 Structure of the Novel.
- 28.6 Woolf's use of technique in the novel
- 28.7 Examination Oriented Questions
- 28.7 Suggested Reading

28.1 Objectives

The objective of this lesson is to acquaint the learners with the structure of the novel, Woolf's writing style and other aspects of the novel.

28.2 Introduction

This novel is about an upper-class Londoner, Clarrisa Dalloway, married to a member of Parliament. *Mrs. Dalloway* is essentially plotless; what action there is takes place mainly in the character's consciousness. The novel addresses the nature of time in personal experience through multiple inter women stories, particularly that of Clarissa as she prepares for and hosts a party and that of the mentally damaged

war veteran Septimus Warren Smith. The two characters can be seen as foils for each other.

28.3 Mrs. Dalloway as a Topical Novel

Although Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* is apparently one day's events, mostly memories in the life of Clarissa Dalloway, the heroine of the novel, it offers, however the picture of life in London in the 1920's. One needs to carefully note the wealth of details, through references and reflections about a cross-section of people living in the city of London, the location of Mrs. Woolf's novel. It may sound surprising, but the fact is that Mrs. Dalloway is as much represented a picture of post-war London as Joyce's *Ulysses* is of post-war Dublin, or Eliot's *The Waste Land* is of post-war London. To an extent Mrs. Dalloway is a depiction of London life in the early 1920's, it is a topical novel grounded in the historical context of a nation's life, picturing a particular phase in that history. Such a novel is called a period piece or a topical novel.

Generally considered one of the architects of the stream-of-consciousness novel, or the psychological novel, Virginia Woolf is actually a novelist of sensibility. This sensibility, as in the novels of Henry James, is made the central consciousness of the novel, but what this sensibility registers and records, through an individual experience, encompasses the entire social life of its time. Woolf was well-versed in the writings of Proust, Joyce, and Dorothy Richardson, from whose works, she absorbed a good deal. No doubt, her peculiar contribution to the novel of subjectivity lay in her awareness from the very beginning that she could achieve given effects of experience by a constant search for the condition of poetry, her canvas was never restricted to matters strictly personal and private. The fact that she was highly influenced by James Joyce, known for his comprehensive view of the world, is by itself, enough to prove that she was as much interested in the large issues of life as in the private lives of individuals. We know how she was prompt to seize upon *Ulysses* as a transcendent work long before it was published and only a few chapters had been serialized. What she said about Joyce's work carries significance:

Mr. Joyce... is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickering of that innermost flame which flashes its messages through the brain, and

in order to preserve it he disregards with complete courage whatever seems to him adventitious, whether it be probability, or coherence, or any other of those signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader when called upon to imagine what he can neither touch nor see.... If we want life itself, here surely we have it.

Here, the last sentence is significant: "If we want life itself, here surely we have it." Obviously, Joyce, in her view, has given representation to life in *Ulysses*, life that he saw in the early twentieth century, and that Woolf as reader, at once, acknowledges to be the life she had seen around her. Whatever experiments the modernists might have innovated for representing real modern life, their focus remained representation. Virginia Woolf followed Joyce truly and wholly.

Woolf was to have reservations about Joyce, but these were to be, in effect, afterthoughts. In her early years, she was powerfully impressed by Joyce. Her first two novels, *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day*, published in 1915 and 1919, were conventional enough. The narrative proceeded in a traditional fashion and there was no attempt to go very far into the minds of the characters. There are, however, interesting portents of things to follow. In *The Voyage Out*, one of the characters observes: "What I want to do in writing novels is very much what you want to do when you play piano, I expect. We want to find out what's behind things, don't we? - Look at the lights down there scattered about anyhow. Things I feel come to me like lights.... I want to combine them." It makes clear that the representation of life in modern novel would be, not what we had seen in realism, rendering of surface life, but a rendering of life analyzed. In other words, Joyce and Woolf do give us realism, but it is analytical realism, which gives, along with representations, the reasons behind happenings on the surface. This deeper realism would move as much below the surface as it does on the surface.

28.4 Woolf's Aesthetics of Fiction

Thus, what we find in the novels of Virginia Woolf is the bright flame-like vividness of her books, which creates beautiful illuminated surfaces. There is no tragic depth in them, just as there is no tragic depth in the works of Joyce and Eliot. Instead,

there is only the pathos of things lost and outlived, the past irretrievable or retrieved as an ache in the present. And in this, she was able to fuse the examples of both Proust and Joyce. One would naturally think of Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* as a Joycean novel, diluted, and washed and done in beautiful water-colour. Similarly, *To The Lighthouse* is a Proustean novel in its time-sense, but again the medium is a kind of water-colour of the emotions.

Like Proust and Joyce, Virginia Woolf expressed her aesthetic of fiction. Once she had grasped the lesson of her two great predecessors, she seems to have known exactly how she would apply it. She tried to catch the shower of innumerable atoms, the vision of life, the "luminous halo." It was her way of circumventing the clumsiness of words. She went on to specify:

Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon that consciousness.... Any method is right, every method is right, that expresses what we wish to express, if we are writer; that brings us closer to the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought, every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss.

No matter how much Woolf might assert the need to record the shower of atoms "in the order in which they fall," she neither accepted that order, nor believed in describing their frequent incoherence. Her method was rather similar to that of the lyric poet, her interest being the sharpened image, the moment, the condensed experience. She saw the world around her as if it were a sharp knife cutting way into her being.

What she seems to have obtained from James Joyce is a certain sense of *oneness* and the isolation that resides within it: from him she learned how to give meaning to the simultaneity of experience. In this regards, *The Waste Land* of T.S. Eliot, *Ulysses* of James Joyce, and *Mrs. Dalloway* of Virginia Woolf follow the same subject and the same technique. London is to Mrs. Dalloway what Dublin is to Leopold Bloom. But her London is a large canvas background with light clearly playing over it and, unlike Joyce, her people are distillations of mind and flesh. Eliot's London is the same as Woolf's;

both focus on what had gone wrong with the people in the post-war city of London. Clarissa Dalloway's day in London, also a day in June, just as in Joyce's *Ulysses*, begins at nine in the morning and finishes early the next morning. (Indeed, in most of Woolf's fiction, time is reduced to a few hours, so that even in *To The Light House*, where a number of years are bridged in the middle passage, "Time Passes," it is but to link two single days at each end of that period.) Clarissa Dalloway walks through London, just as Leopold Bloom walks through Dublin, or as the reader is made to see different slides of London in *The Waste Land*. The people around Mrs. Dalloway form an encircling wave as she goes to Bond Street or strolls along the Green Park, while in the midst of the day the big bronze accents of Big Ben remind us of the ticking of mechanical time while we move in and out of Mrs. Dalloway's mind and the minds of other characters in the story.

28.5 Structure of the Novel :

Mrs. Dalloway's structure seems largely modelled on the multiple-scanned chapter in *Ulysses* which is held together by the progress of the vice-regal cavalcade through Dublin's streets. We find ourselves in many minds in the London streets; we get to see through these minds the different faces of the city. However, the mind of Mrs. Dalloway, and that of Septimus Warren Smith, hold the centre of the book, just as do the minds of Bloom and Dedalus in *Ulysses*. The complete inwardness of the novel, its restricted time-frame, the use of multiple views, so that we feel we have seen London through many eyes - and so are aware of it through many awarenesses - the glimpsing of certain characters and then the glimpse of them anew through the perceptions of the Joycean complexities. However, if Bloom and Dedalus are a pair of father and son who meet for a brief moment at the end of a long day symbolically, as Odysseus (in English Ulysses) met Telemachus after a lifetime of wanderings, Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith seem to be two facets of the same personality - indeed, the projection by Virginia Woolf of two sides of herself. Mrs. Woolf's diary shows that she conceived Mrs. Dalloway as an attempt to show "the world seen by the sane and the insane side by side." And we know from the novelist's own preface to it that she first intended Septimus to have no existence: it was Clarissa who too die at the end of her London day and her brilliant party. Finally, she envisaged Septimus as a "double" of Clarissa.

But in what sense can he be the double of Septimus the insane, Clarissa the sane? What connections, one can ask, unified these two seemingly very different from each other? They never actually meet, not even by chance, very much like Bloom and Dedalus do not, although their separate paths converge during the day; and it is the doctor of Septimus, the clumsy inept Harley Street psychiatrist, who brings to Clarissa's party the little piece of news that Septimus has committed suicide. The breaking of this little news, a mere incident in a meta-city, far-removed from Clarissa, plunges her nevertheless into a deep fantasy and identification with the unknown man who is now no more.

What business had the Bradshaws to talk of death at her party?
A young man had killed himself. And they talked of it at her party
- the Bradshaws talked of death.

So far, the incident is the intrusion of unpleasant reality, and Clarissa is hard at work trying to submerge her feelings. Then follows the identification:

He had killed himself - but how? Always her body went through it first, when she was told, suddenly, of an accident; her dress flamed, her body burnt. He had thrown himself from a window. Up had flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes. There he lay with a thud, thud, in his brain, and then a suffocation of blackness. So she saw it. But why had he done it? And the Bradshaws talked of it at her party!

This is Clarissa whom Peter had described as the "perfect hostess" and whom he had remembered as a girl, "timid, hard; something arrogant; unimaginative, prudish." There was a "coldness," a "woodenness," an "impenetrability" in her. But the reader knows better; he knows also that this facade of the perfect hostess submerges Clarissa who has intuitions and feelings which she can never fully confront. It is on the ground of the failure to feel that Clarissa and Septimus are each other's double. Septimus had choked feeling when his friend Evans was killed at his side during the war. He goes through life utterly numbed by this experience:

He could reason; he could read, Dante, for example, quite easily... he could add up his bill; his brain was perfect; it must be the

fault of the world then - that he could not feel.

We need to note here, how in a subtle manner, Woolf connects one individual with another, and both with the war, and then with the big city, creating in this manner an enlarging modern society in a big city where individuals live each in his/her cell, with the world as much inside them as outside. And so these two principal characters dissociate experience constantly from themselves. Both, in their respective ways, are incapable of establishing a meaningful relationship with the emotional texture of life: Clarissa escapes by giving some slight play to her insights and intuitions, "If you put her in a room with someone, up went her back like a cat's; or she purred," but the façade of the perfect hostess remains untouched; the feeling submerged. Septimus escapes by trotting feeling and creating a new world within, filled with private demons and private terrors, from which he can only seek, in the end, the swift obliteration of consciousness.

Mrs. Dalloway, thus, poignantly puts across Mrs. Woolf's response to Joyce's success in reflecting how, in a big city, the modern inferno, people's paths cross and dramas go on within range of dramas, and yet, in spite of innumerable points of superficial contact and relation, each drama remains isolated and each individual remains locked with in the walls of private experience, within an isolated cell. We can recall here Eliot's use of the cell as a symbol of modern individualism and isolationism, and extreme alienation from society. The novel's brilliance as a poetic structure lies in the skill with which Mrs. Woolf weaves from one mind into another. For instance, Septimus sees in the park a man walking towards him and suddenly invests him with the aspect of another man and the man, Peter, who sees only a rather disturbed-looking Septimus and his anxious wife Rezia, without beginning to know what images have been flickering in Septimus's consciousness. This complex inner material could be hindered only by the use of brilliantly evocative poetic narrative. And this novel, like those that Virginia Woolf wrote after it, admirably illustrates the advantage of the symbolist technique in narrative fiction. We have only to think of a Zola or a George Moore creating Clarissa after the manner of their naturalist doctrines to understand the difference. In their version of her character, Clarissa would emerge as a commonplace woman, the façade described in great detail, but no hint of the fascinating and troubled and mysterious personality behind her exterior, the public self. Mrs. Woolf extended with remarkable skill and literary virtuosity the creation of a new type of novel that

conveys inner experience, just as *The Waste Land* does in its own way. Woolf was capable of finding the words that would show the world through the minds of her central characters: and she participated fully in the significant shift of emphasis, initiated by Henry James, from the outer social world - as explored by Balzac or the naturalists - to the sensibility with which that outer world is appreciated and felt.

28.6 Woolf's use of Technique in the Novel :

Virginia Woolf's peculiar technique, as exemplified in *Mrs. Dalloway* as well as other major novels, resides in the fact that the exterior objective reality of the momentary present which the author directly reports and which appears as established fact is nothing but an occasion. The stress squarely falls on what the occasion releases, things which are not seen directly but by reflection, which are not tied to the present of the framing occurrence which releases them. Here, one naturally thinks of Proust's work, where this sort of thing was done for the first time. We know how his entire technique is bound up with a recovery of lost realities in remembrance, a recovery released by some externally insignificant and apparently accidental occurrence. Proust describes the procedure he follows in his narratives more than once. Like Proust, Woolf, too, aims at objectivity; she wants to bring out the essence of events. She strives to achieve this goal by acceptance the guidance of her own consciousness - not, however, of his consciousness as it happens to be at any particular moment but as it remembers things. A consciousness in which remembrance causes past realities to arise, which has long since left present, sees and arranges that content in a way very different from the purely individual and subjective. Getting freedom from its various earlier involvements, consciousness views its own past layers and their content in perspective; it keeps confronting them from their exterior temporal continuity as well as from the narrow meanings they seemed to have when they were bound to a particular present.

The distinctive characteristics of the realistic novel of the era between the two great wars... - multipersonal representation of consciousness, time strata, disintegration of the continuity of exterior events, shifting of the narrative viewpoint (all of which are interrelated and difficult to separate) - seem to us indicative of a striving for certain objectives, of certain tendencies and needs on the part of both the author

and the reading public. One of these tendencies is particularly striking in the work of Virginia Woolf. She holds to minor unimpressive random events: measuring the stocking, a fragment of a conversation with the maid, a telephone call. Great changes, exterior turning points, let alone catastrophes, do not occur; and through such things do get mentioned in the narrative, it is done rather hastily, without preparation or context, incidentally, and as it were only for the sake of information.

At the time of the First World War and after certain writers discovered a method which dissolves reality into multiple and multivalent reflections of consciousness. That this method should have been developed at this time is not hard to understand. But the method is not only a symptom of the confusion and helplessness, but only a mirror of the decline of our world. There is, to be sure, a good deal to be said for such a view. There is in all the major works of modern literature - those of Eliot, Joyce, Woolf - a certain atmosphere of things falling apart. There is often something confusing, something hazy about them, something hostile to the reality which they represent. We frequently find a turning away from the practical will to live, or delight in portraying it under its most brutal forms. *In Mrs Dalloway*, there is an air of vague and hopeless sadness. We never quite get to learn what Clarissa's situation really is. Only the sadness, of lost love, and gained eminence, both dissatisfying at bottom - remembrance of love and solace nor leading eminence any enjoyment. The novel is full of good and genuine love but also, in its feminine way, with irony, amorphous sadness, and doubt of life.

And yet what realistic depth is achieved in every individual occurrence. Aspects of the occurrence come to the fore, and link to other occurrences, which, before this time, had hardly been sensed, and yet they are determining factors in our relatives. And in the process something new and elemental appears: nothing less than the wealth of reality and depth of life in every moment to which we surrender ourselves without prejudice. To be sure, what happens in that moment - be it outer or inner process - concerns in a very personal way that individuals who live in it, but it also (and for that very reason) concerns the elementary things which men in general have in common. It is precisely the random moment which is comparatively independent of the controversial and unstable orders over which men fight and despair; it passes unaffected by them, as daily life. The more it is exploited, the more

the elementary things which our lives have in common come to light. The more numerous, varied, and simple the people are who appear as subjects of such random moments, the more effectively must what they have in common shine forth. In this unprejudiced and exploratory type of representation we cannot but see to what an extent - below the surface conflicts - the differences between men's ways of life and forms of thought have already lessened. The strata of societies and their different ways of life have become inextricably mingled. So the complicated process of dissolution which led to fragmentation of the exterior action, to reflection of consciousness, and to stratification of time seems to be tending towards a rather simple solution.

When all is said about the advantages of the method Virginia Woolf chose to adopt in her work, it will have to be added that neither in *Mrs. Dalloway* nor in any of her other novels does she stand back far enough to see the outline of important features of life; to shift attention from the crocus and the moment to society and the larger, historic flow of time, or to grasp experience not through the limitations of *The Window* but from the expanse of the countryside. Neither *Mrs Dalloway* nor any other of her novels is informed by a sense of the really dramatic uses of juxtaposed and interacting prose and poetry.

Thus, the limitations of sufficient detachment notwithstanding, Woolf's representation of contemporary reality, through the novel technique of reflection through remembrance, bringing reality multilaterally through the parallel functioning of various consciousnesses of different characters. This novel technique does, of course, does take care for direct description or detail, but it does carry us beneath the surface of things to the very depth of events and affairs being recalled and reflected upon. Clarissa's consciousness piles up before us a vast panorama of contemporary life, relating to the years following the First World War, that we get no less a feel of that world than is given to us by Joyce's *Ulysses* or Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Modern techniques, of course, are sophisticated, demanding a good deal of developed consciousness. And to that extent, *Mrs. Dalloway* does not belong to the category of popular literature, such as the Victorian novel, or, in her own time, the work of Galsworthy. Those for popular form of simple literature would brand it elitist. We know how that elitist character of the Bloomsbury group's work had

provoked “the angry young men” of the 50’s to return to the Victorian forms of story telling. All the same, *Mrs. Dalloway* remains a period piece, reflecting the life of its time, as well as a classic for all times having permanent human interest for all those who are given to looking into the inside of things or life around them.

28.7 Examination Oriented Questions

1. What are the aspects of Virginia Woolf's work which reflect the modern period of history between the two World Wars?
2. Discuss Woolf's use of the stream-of-consciousness technique in *Mrs. Dalloway*.
3. In what sense can we consider *Mrs. Dalloway* as a ‘period piece,’ or a ‘topical novel,’ presenting a picture of its time of writing?
4. What aspects of life are most favourite of Virginia Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway*?
5. Discuss *Mrs. Dalloway* as a poem in prose.
6. Write a note on Woolf's use of image and metaphor in *Mrs. Dalloway*.
7. Examine the structural pattern of *Mrs. Dalloway*.

28.8 Suggested Reading :

1. David Daiches, *Virginia Woolf* (Norfolk: New Directions, 1942).
2. James Hafley, *The Glass Roof: Virginia Woolf as Novelist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954).
3. A.D. Moody, *Virginia Woolf* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1963).
4. Harvena Richter, *Virginia Woolf: The Inward Voyage* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).
5. Clarie Sprague, *Virginia Woolf: A Collection of Critical Essays* (New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, 1979).