

**МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ**  
**ЗАХІДНОУКРАЇНСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ**  
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**КУРС ЛЕКЦІЙ З ДИСЦИПЛІНИ**  
**«ЛІТЕРАТУРА ЗАРУБІЖНИХ КРАЇН**  
**англійською та німецькою мовами»**  
Частина 2 – англійською мовою

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Курс лекцій з дисципліни «Література зарубіжних країн (англійською та німецькою мовами)» для студентів 4 курсу, ступінь вищої освіти – бакалавр, галузь знань – 03 «Гуманітарні науки», спеціальність – 035 «Філологія», спеціалізація – 035.041 Германські мови та літератури (переклад включно), ОПП «Бізнес-комунікація та переклад»

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Курс лекцій, розроблений відповідно до навчальної програми курсу "Література зарубіжних країн" (німецькою та англійською мовами.), містить художній, науковий, довідковий і методичний матеріал з літератури англослов'янських країн від героїчного епосу середніх віків до сьогодення. Мета збірки лекцій - дати можливість тим, хто вивчає англійську та німецьку мови, одержати цілісне уявлення про основні закономірності розвитку англослов'янської літератури, поглибити свої теоретичні знання, удосконалити вміння та навички практичного володіння англійською мовою, організувати аудиторну та позааудиторну самостійну роботу студентів.

## **ПЕРЕДМОВА**

Пропонований курс лекцій англійською мовою "Література зарубіжних країн" призначений для студентів, які вивчають англійську і німецьку мови як основний фах і як засіб професійного спілкування. Він може бути також використаний при вивченні іноземної мови як додаткової спеціальності та всіма, хто цікавиться зарубіжною літературою.

Основна мета курсу лекцій - дати можливість тим, хто вивчає німецьку та англійську мови, отримати цілісне уявлення про основні закономірності розвитку літератури від героїчного епосу середніх віків до сьогодення, розкрити її значення в загальному світовому літературному процесі, поглибити знання про основні літературні течії, познайомити з творчістю видатних письменників, сформувані вміння аналізу літературних творів із погляду їхньої історичної, ідейної, естетичної значущості, а також удосконалити вміння й навички практичного вивчення зарубіжної літератури.

У збірці лекційних матеріалів зроблено спробу об'єднати художній, довідковий, науковий і методичний матеріал. Робота структурована відповідно до хронологічного принципу викладення лекційного курсу і охоплює вісім тем. До кожної теми пропонуються запитання і завдання для самоконтролю.

Збірник складено відповідно до програми дисципліни, в якій більше половини годин трудомісткості відводиться на самостійну роботу, оскільки курс зарубіжної літератури від самого початку має на увазі більшу частку самостійності студентів у навчальному процесі і передбачає самостійне освоєння іншомовних літературних джерел. У зв'язку з цим курс лекцій може бути використаний як в аудиторній роботі викладача і студентів, так і в самостійній роботі, при раціональній організації позааудиторної самостійної роботи студентів.

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# **LECTURE 1. Anglo-Saxon period and literature of the Middle Ages**

## **Major periods of English Literature**

### **What is English Literature?**

#### **Part I**

- 1. The Anglo-Saxon or Old English Period (450-1066 AD)**
  - 1.1 Anglo-Saxon Poetry**
  - 1.2 The ‘Eight (8) Major Periods’ of English Literature**
  - 1.3 The Anglo-Saxon Prose**
  - 1.3 The Decline of Anglo-Saxon**
  - 1.4 The Anglo-Norman or Middle English Period (1066-1500 AD)**
    - 1. The Romances of Anglo-Norman Period**
  - 2. Chronicles in the Anglo-Norman Period**
  - 3. The Mystery and Miracle Plays**
    - 4. The Morality Plays**
  - 5. The Anglo-Norman Poets**
  - 6. The Age of Chaucer. The Canterbury Tales**
  - 7. Decline in English Poetry**
  - 8. Folk-Songs and Ballads**
  - 9. The Robin Hood Ballads**

#### **Part II American Literature**

- 1. Major periods of American Literature**
- 2. Early Colonial Literature. 1607-1700**

England has a rich literature with a long history. Literature is the reflection of life. It mirrors the society in which it is generated. The word literature comes from the Latin word ‘litaritura’ meaning “writing organized with letters”. We classify literature according to language, origin, historical period, genre, and subject matter. Initially, literature was a form of entertainment for the people. Over time, it attained the purpose of reform as well. The writers stated highlighting the social issues in their writing. Thus, it became a medium to draw the audience’s attention to certain matters and urge them to think about the reform. From ancient civilizations to the modern era, indeed, all the works of literature have given us insight into the issues and trends prevailing at that time. Literature also provides escape from the ‘grim realities’ of life. While many people read to escape the boredom of their life. Moreover, the higher type of literature helps the reader to escape from trivial reality into significant reality.

**English literature**, however, emerged with the beginning of the history of English people. It refers to all the literary works (novels, short stories, poems, fiction, nonfiction, and plays) composed in English. The earliest works of English literature mirror the life lived by the people of that region at that specific period. For instance, all the changes undergone by English society from the earliest to the modern time have left their imprints on English literature.

Being the literature of a nation characterized by the spirit of determination, adventure, and diligence, English literature is rich in vitality, diversity, and essence.

The **introduction and history of English literature** go side by side. You can't get the complete introduction of English literature without going deep down in its history.

The history of English literature initiated with the history of the English race and kept on developing with the social development of the nation. When we analyze the history of English literature, we discover that it consists of eight (8) major periods and several ages. Each period or age of English literature is named after the central literary figure, or the important rulers of England, or certain literary movements. Moreover each period or phase of English literature has its distinct characteristics.

### **What are the 'Eight (8) Major Periods' of English Literature?**

The major eight (8) periods in the history of English literature are:

1. The Anglo-Saxon or Old English Period (450–1066)
2. The Anglo-Norman or Middle English period (1066–1500)
3. The Renaissance Period (1500–1660)
4. The Neoclassical Period (1660–1798)
5. The Romantic Period (1798–1837)
6. The Victorian Period (1837–1901)
7. The Modern Period (1901-1945)
8. The Contemporary Period (1945–Today)

### **A Brief Overview & Timeline of British Literary Periods**

<b>Literary Periods</b>	<b>Major literary Trends, Movements and Highlights</b>
<b>Anglo-Saxon</b> or Old English Period (450–1066)	<b>Heroic Tradition:</b> poetry focused on hero's bravery <b>Elegiac Tradition:</b> writers mourned the passing of earlier, better times.
<b>Anglo-Norman</b> or Middle English Period (1066–1500)	<b>Popular forms of Writing:</b> Chronicles, Poetry, Drama, Religious and Didactic writing.
<b>Renaissance Period</b> or Age of Shakespeare (1500–1660)	<b>Trends:</b> Revival of learning, Rediscovery of classical philosophy, literature and art, focus on 'Humanism' and 'Puritanism'. Major Forms of literature: poetry and drama.

**Neoclassical Period** or the Enlightenment Age (1660–1798)

**Trends:** Revival of classical art and culture of ancient Greece and Rome, focus on order, accuracy, and structure.  
Poetic Trends: Use of allusions, heroic couplet and strict meter and rhyme.  
Chief Contribution: The Modern Novel.

**Romantic Period** (1798–1837)

**Trends:** The Romantic Movement in Poetry, Gothicism in literature.  
Chief Contribution: Romantic Poetry and The Gothic Novel.

**Victorian Period** (1837–1901)

**Literary Trends & Movements:** Symbolism, Utilitarianism, Oxford Movement, Romantic Protestantism. Age of Prose & Novel.  
Main Focus: individually, morality note, conflict between religion and science, human beings than nature.

**Contemporary Period** (1945-Today)

**Literary Trends:** structuralism, deconstruction, poststructuralism, postmodernism, postcolonialism, and magic realism.  
Main Focus: horrors of war, genocide, life experiences, real-life themes, alienation, transformation, consumption & relativity of truth.

### 1. The Anglo-Saxon or Old English Period (450-1066 AD)

The Anglo-Saxon period in English literature refers to the time period between the 5th and 11th centuries, also known as the Early Medieval period.

The Angles and Saxons were the ancestors of the English race. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the early 5th Century, three Germanic tribes – the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes – saw an opportunity to fill in the power gap and started migrating to Britain. The Anglo-Saxons were fearless, adventurous, and brave people. By 670 A.D. they had occupied the major part of the country, and the *land of Anglos* or *Angloland* – present day England – became their permanent abode.

Infographic Map created by Louis Henwood for The History of English Podcast. The language brought by these Anglo-Saxon settlers together with some Latin and Celtic words became Old English. Anglo-Saxon literature was the earliest phase of English literature. Anglo-Saxon period literature period is diverse and includes epic poetry, religious texts, historical chronicles, and riddles written in Old English in Anglo-Saxon England from the 5th Century AD to the Norman Conquest of 1066.

The Old English spoken by Anglo-Saxon people looks incomprehensible to today's English-speakers. However, there are a good number of words that have survived in modern day English such as “day”, “year”, “kiss”, “love”, “arm” etc.

## 1.1 Anglo-Saxon Poetry

The Anglo-Saxons were fond of singing about battles, gods and their ancestral heroes. It is, however, these songs of religion, wars, and agriculture that marked the beginning of English poetry in ancient England.

The Anglo-Saxon poetry was mostly sung instead of written. That's why there are very few remnants left of it. Among them, the most famous one is *Beowulf*. It is the first English epic poem. *Beowulf* narrates a tale of the adventures of Beowulf, a brave hero. This poem, in fact, abounds in all sorts of references and allusions to great events and the fortunes of kings and nations.

### *Beowulf*

*Beowulf* is the most important poem of the Anglo-Saxon period. Though the Angles brought *Beowulf* with them to England, it has nothing to do with it. The epic is not even about the Anglo-Saxons, but about the Scandinavians when they lived on the continent in the 3rd or 4th century.

The story of Beowulf was written down in the 10th century by an unknown author, and the manuscript is now kept in the British Museum.

Its social interest lies in the vivid description of the life of that period, of the manners and customs of the people at that time, of the relations among the members of the society and in the portrayal of their towns, ships and feasts.

The scene takes place among the Jutes, who lived on the Scandinavian peninsula at the time. Their neighbors were the Danes. The Jutes and the Danes were good sailors. Their ships sailed round the coast of the peninsula and to far-off lands.

The poem describes the warriors in battle and at peace, during their feasts and amusements. The main hero, Beowulf, is a strong, courageous, unselfish, proud and honest man. He defends his people against the unfriendly forces of nature and becomes the most beloved and kindest king on the earth as the theme of the poem is the struggle of good against evil. Beowulf fights not for his glory, he fights for the benefit of his people.

Although Beowulf was a Jute and his home is Jutland we say that *The Song of Beowulf* is an English poem. The social conditions it depicted are English. Both the form and the spirit of the poem are English. The poem is a true piece of English literature. The poem is composed with great skill. The author used many vivid words and descriptive phrases. It is not only the subject of the poem that interests us but also its style. Beowulf is one of the early masterpieces of the Anglo-Saxon or Old English language. The poem is famous for its **metaphors**. For instance, the poet calls the sea "the swan's road", the body – "the bone-house", a warrior – "a hero in battle", etc.

### The Story

The epic consists of two parts. The first part tells us how Beowulf freed the Danes from two monsters. Hrothgar, King of the Danes, in his old age had built near the sea a hall called Heorot. He and his men gathered there for feasts. One night as they were all sleeping a frightful monster called Grendel broke into the hall, killed thirty of the sleeping warriors, and carried off their bodies to devour them in his lair under the sea. The horrible half-human creature came night after night. Fear and death reigned in the great hall. For twelve winters Grendel's horrible raids



continued. At last, the rumour of Grendel and his horrible deed crossed over the sea and reached Beowulf who was a man of immense strength and Anglo-Saxon warrior courage. When he heard the story, Beowulf decided to fight the monster and free the Danes. With fourteen companions, he crossed the sea. This is how his voyage is described in the poem:

The foamy-necked floater fanned by the breeze  
Likest a bird glided the waters  
Till twenty and four hours hereafter  
The twist-stemmed vessel had travelled such distance,  
That the sailing-men saw the sloping embankments,  
The sea-cliffs gleaming, precipitous mountains.

The Danes receive Beowulf and his companions with great hospitality, they make a feast in Heorot at which the queen passes the mead cup to the warriors with her own hand. But as night approaches the fear of Grendel is again upon the Danes. They all withdraw after the king has warned Beowulf of the frightful danger of sleeping in the hall. Beowulf stays in the hall with his warriors, saying proudly that since weapons cannot harm the monster, he will wrestle with him barehanded. Here is the description of Grendel's approach to Heorot:

Forth from the fens, from the misty moorlands,  
Grendel came gliding – God's wrath be bore –  
Came under clouds, until he saw clearly, Glittering  
with gold plates, the mead hall of men. Down fell the  
door, though fastened with fire bands; Open it sprang  
at the stroke of his paw. Swollen with rage burst in  
the bale-bringer; Flamed in his eyes a fierce light,  
likest fire.

Breaking into the hall, Grendel seizes one of the sleepers and devours him. Then he approaches Beowulf and stretches out a claw, only to find it clutched in a grip of steel. A sudden terror strikes the monster's heart. He roars, struggles, tries to free his arm; but Beowulf leaps to his feet and grapples his enemy barehanded. After a desperate struggle Beowulf manages to tear off the monster's arm; Grendel escapes shrieking across the moor, and plunges into the sea to die.

Beowulf hangs the huge arm with its terrible claws over the king's seat; the Danes rejoice in Beowulf's victory. When night falls, a great feast is spread in Heorot. Beowulf receives rich presents, everybody is happy. The Danes once more go to sleep in the great hall. At midnight comes another monster, mother of Grendel, who wants to revenge her son. She seizes the king's best friend and councillor and rushes away with him over the fens. The old king is broken-hearted, but Beowulf tries to console him:

Sorrow not, wise man. It is better for each  
That his friend he avenge than that he mourn much.  
Each of us shall the end await

Of worldly life: let he who may gain

Honour

Then Beowulf prepares for a new fight. He plunges into the horrible place, while his companions wait for him on the shore. After a terrible fight at the bottom of the sea in the cave where the monsters live, Beowulf kills the she-monster with a magic sword which he finds in the cave. The hero returns to Heorot, where the Danes are already mourning for him, thinking him dead. Triumphant Beowulf returns to his native land.

In the last part of the poem there is another great fight. Beowulf is now an old man; he has reigned for fifty years, beloved by all his people. He has overcome every enemy but one, a fire dragon keeping watch over an enormous treasure hidden among the mountains. Again Beowulf goes to fight for his people. But he is old and his end is near.

In a fierce battle the dragon is killed, but the fire has entered Beowulf's lungs. He sends Wiglaf, the only of his warriors who had the courage to stand by him in his last fight, to the dragon's cave for the treasures. Beowulf dies, leaving the treasures to the people.

**Key Characteristics of Anglo-Saxon Poetry:** Heroic poetry elements, Christian ideals, **Synecdoche**, **Metonymy**, and Irony.

After embracing Christianity, the Anglo-Saxon poets began to write religious poetry. Therefore, the major portion of Anglo-Saxon poetry encompasses religion. The most famous religious poets of the Anglo-Saxon period were **Caedmon** and **Cynewulf**.

**Caedmon** was a shepherd, who started singing verses and became a poet. Later monks took him to a monastery where he made up religious poetry. He wrote a poem – *the Paraphrase*. It tells part of a Bible-story. **Caedmon** is famous for his Hymn in which praises in honor of God.

Cynewulf's famous religious poems were *Juliana*, *The Fates of the Apostles*, *Crist*, and *Elene*. Among them, 'Crist' is the most popular one telling the event that occurred in the life of Jesus Christ.

Another writer of this time was **Bede**. He described the country and the people of his time in his work *The History of the English Church*. His work was a fusion of historical truth and fantastic stories.

It was the first history of England and Bede is regarded as "the father of English history".

**Who was the first English writer?** Caedmon was the first English writer. He wrote his poetry in the Old English language. His only surviving work is 'Caedmon's Hymn.'

### 1.3. The Anglo-Saxon Prose

The Anglo-Saxons replaced Latin prose with English which observed all the rules of ordinary speech in its construction. The famous Anglo-Saxon king, **Alfred the Great**,

Alfred the Great (849-901), the king of Wessex. He translated most of the famous Latin Chronicles in English.

However, the second famous prose writer of the Anglo-Saxon period was, no doubt, **Aelfric**. He was actually a priest. Though he was a soldier he fought no wars except those in order to defend his country. He built a fleet of ships to beat the Danes who had again come to invade Wessex. He also made up a code of law. He tried to develop the culture of his people. He founded the first English public school for young men. He translated the Church-history of **Bede** from Latin into a language the people could understand, and a portion of the Bible as well. Among his famous writings were *Lives of the Saints*, *Homilies*, and *Grammar*. Moreover, compared to other contemporary prose writers of the period, Aelfric's prose was easy and **alliterative**.

**What was the first work in English literature?** Beowulf was the earliest most popular epic poem of English literature.

### **1.3. The Decline of Anglo-Saxons**

The Anglo-Saxon period flourished until the Norman Conquest of 1066. After the defeat of Harold, the last of Saxon kings, by William who was the Conqueror of Normandy, France, the Anglo-Saxon period finally came to an end. In history, their ruling period extends roughly from 450 A.D. to 1066 A.D.

There is no doubt that the Anglo-Saxons lived a life rich in courage, splendor, savagery, and sentiment. Their literature, thus, remarkably contains all these traits. It reflects all the main principles of their life, for instance, the love of personal freedom, religion, appreciation for womanhood, responsiveness to nature, and the struggle for glory.

With the Norman conquest began a new era in the history of England literature. The Normans brought with them their rich French culture and language. They had adopted the French civilization and language. They were good soldiers, administrators and lawyers. The literature of this period comes under the category of Norman-French Literature or Anglo-French Literature. Since the Anglo-Norman period belonged to the Middle Ages or Medieval times in Britain History, we also call it the Middle English period in the history of English literature.

The Norman Conquest brought a radical change in English culture, law, language, and character. English became the language spoken only by the poor and powerless. While Norman-French became the language of the rich. It also became the symbol of social status and prestige. The Anglo-Normans wrote mainly to cater to the taste of Norman rulers. Moreover, only the monarchs and courtiers of that time had a right to encourage the literary writings.

We can't deny the fact that the Norman Contest stimulated the awakening of the people, who extremely needed an outside stimulus at that time. Soon the people got influenced by a new vision and ultimately united in a common hope. As a result, the Anglo-Saxons' hostility towards the Normans also turned into national unity. The Normans brought with them their soldiers, **artisans**, traders, **chroniclers**, **minstrels**, and scholars. With their help, they wanted to revive knowledge, record memorable events, celebrate victories, and sing of love and adventure. In addition,

the most popular forms of writing for the Anglo-Normans were chronicles, religious and didactic writing, poetry, romances and drama.

### **2.1. The Romances of Anglo-Norman Period**

The Normans brought to England romances – love stories and lyrical poems about their brave knights and their ladies. The first English romances were translations from French. But later on in the 12th century, there appeared romances of **Arthur**, a legendary king of Britain. In the 15th century **Thomas Malory** collected and published them under the title **Sir Thomas Malory's Book of King Arthur and of his Noble Knights of the Round Table**. The knights gathered in King Arthur's city of Camelot. Their meetings were held at a round table, hence the title of the book. All the knights were brave and gallant in their struggle against robbers, bad kings and monsters. King Arthur was the wisest and most honest of them all. The townsfolk expressed their thoughts in fabliaus (funny stories about townsfolk) and fables. Fables were short stories with animals for characters and contained a moral. Anglo-Saxon was spoken by the common people from the 5th till the 14th century. The songs and ballads about harvest, mowing, spinning and weaving were created by the country-folk, and were learnt by heart, recited and sung accompanied by musical instruments and dancing. In contrast to the courage, seriousness, and **savagery** of the Anglo-Saxon literature, the Normans introduced romantic tales of love and adventure in literature. This made the Anglo-Norman period to be **chivalric** rather than a heroic one. Romance became the most popular form of literature during the Anglo-Norman or Middle English period. These romances were famous for their stories rather than poetry. Most of them, in fact, had their origin in Latin and French sources. They told the stories of King Arthur, The War of Troy, the mythical doings of *Charlemagne*, and Alexander the Great.

**What was the first work in English literature?** Beowulf was the earliest most popular epic poem of English literature.

### **2.2. Chronicles in the Anglo-Norman Period**

In the Anglo-Norman period of English literature, chronicles became a well-established form of writing. These chronicles basically recorded the history of kings. Though written in the Anglo-Norman language, these chronicles, however, became the major source of historical knowledge for medieval people. Additionally, they contained historical events, and legendary material without any interpretation or comment by the author.

### **2.3. The Mystery and Miracle Plays**

Another remarkable achievement of the Middle English Period, however, was **religious or didactic writings**. Under this category came the **Mystery and Miracle plays**. The Mystery plays were based on subjects taken from the Bible while the Miracle plays depicted the lives of saints. Since only the clergymen of the church had the authority to write and perform these plays, they chose Latin as the medium of writing and performing these plays.

### **2.4. The Morality Plays**

In the Middle English period, Morality plays also became very popular. **Allegory** was, in fact, the main streak of these plays. In the Morality plays characters were

personified abstractions presenting the conflict in the human soul. The sole purpose of these plays was to instruct the people through the Bible, lives of saints, and the conflict between good and evil. Hence, these plays also came under the category of religious and didactic writing of that period.

## **2.5. The Anglo-Norman Poets**

Some of the famous poets of the Middle English period and their notable works are briefly discussed below:

### **2.5.1. Philippe de Thaun**

**Philippe de Thaun** was one of the earliest Anglo-Norman poets of the period. He was mainly famous for his two significant poems. The first one was '*Livre des Creatures*'. It was a treatise on astronomy written around 1119. His second famous work was the allegorical poem '*Bestiaire*' written around 1121 in the Anglo-Norman dialect.

### **2.5.2. Reginald of Canterbury**

Another famous Anglo-Norman poet is **Reginald of Canterbury**. He was a monk as well. His most famous poem is '*The Legend of St Malchus*' which was written around 1112.

### **2.5.3. Hilarius**

**Hilarius** was another Anglo-Norman poet of the 12th century. He was an Englishman but wrote his poems in Latin. In his poems, he has mainly addressed to English persons.

### **2.5.4. Benoit de Sainte Maur**

**Benoit de Sainte-Maure** was a famous French poet in the 12th century. His most famous work was '*Roman de Troie*' (The Romance of Troy).

### **2.5.5. William Langland**

One of the notable poets of the *Middle Ages*, **William Langland** emerged in the 14th century. He held a significant place in the history of English literature and wrote many important poems. His most famous poem is '*A Vision of Piers the Plowman*'. As a satire on the corrupt religious practices, Langland's poem clearly discusses the ethical problems of that time. Most of his poems are satirical in nature and bring about moral, political and social questions.

### **2.5.6. John Gower**

**John Gower** also occupied a significant place in the development of English poetry of the Medieval period. He wrote around the 14th or 15th century bringing about the poems that represented the English culmination of courtly medieval poetry. His poems, indeed, proved that English can compete with the other languages that had distinguished themselves in poetry. Gower was mainly a narrative poet and a moralist. His most famous poem is *Confession Amantis*, written in the form of conversation between the divine interpreter and the poet. Like **Chaucer**, John Gower also played a significant role in developing English language as a thoroughly equipped medium of literature.

## **2.6. The Age of Chaucer**

Towards the end of the Middle English period came '*The Age of Chaucer*', covering the period from 1343 to 1450. It is the most significant time period in the literary history of English literature. The most vivid description of the 14th century

England was given by **Geoffrey Chaucer**. He was the first truly great writer in English literature and is called the "father of English poetry". Chaucer was born in London, into the family of a wine merchant. His father had connections with the court and hoped for a courtier's career for his son. At seventeen Geoffrey became page to a lady at the court of Edward III. At twenty, Chaucer was in France, serving as a squire. During 1373 and the next few years Chaucer travelled much and lived a busy life. He went to France, made three journeys to Italy. Italian literature opened to Chaucer a new world of art. Chaucer's earliest poems were written in imitation of the French romances. The second period of Chaucer's literary work was that of the Italian influence. To this period belong the following poems: *The House of Fame*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, a poem satirizing Parliament, *The Legend of Good Women* and others.

When Chaucer came back to England, he received the post of Controller of the Customs in the port of London. Chaucer held this position for ten years. He devoted his free time to hard study and writing. Later Chaucer was appointed "Knight for the Shire of Kent", which meant that he sat in Parliament as a representative for Kent. He often had to go on business to Kent and there he observed the pilgrimages to Canterbury. The third period of Chaucer's creative work begins in the year 1384, when he started writing his masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer died in 1400 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Chaucer was the last English writer of the Middle Ages and the first of the Renaissance. Chaucer made a fresh and distinct beginning in English literature and became the 'Father of English literature' as well as the 'Father of English poetry'. Chaucer's poetry has been widely read from his own day to the present time. He was not merely a bookman or the visionary, rather, he was a man of the world and its affairs. Chaucer's most significant work is *Canterbury Tales*. It is a collection of stories related by the pilgrims of different sections of society who are on their way to Thomas Becket's shrine at Canterbury. A landmark in the history of English poetry, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* enriched the English language and meter to an extent that could be conveniently used for any purpose. Furthermore, his introduction of a variety of characters into a single action and their engagement in animated dialogues fulfilled every requirement of the dramatists who were short of bringing their plays on the stage. Chaucer's works also showed to the novelists the way to portray their characters.

### **The Canterbury Tales**

This is the greatest work of Chaucer in which his realism, irony and freedom of views reached such a high level that it had no equal in all the English literature up to the 16th century. That's why Chaucer was called "the founder of realism". It is for the *Canterbury Tales* that Chaucer's name is best remembered. The book is an unfinished collection of stories in verse told by the pilgrims on their journey to Canterbury. Each pilgrim was to tell four stories. Chaucer managed to write only twenty-four instead of the proposed one hundred and twenty-four stories. All his characters are typical representatives of their classes. When assembled, they form one people, the English people. Chaucer kept the whole poem alive and full of

humour not only by the tales themselves but also by the talk, comments and the opinions of the pilgrims.

The **prologue** is the most interesting part of the work. It acquaints the reader with medieval society. The pilgrims are persons of different social ranks and occupations. Chaucer has portrayed them with great skill at once as types and as individuals true to their own age. There is a knight, a yeoman (a man who owned land; a farmer), a nun, a monk, a priest, a merchant, a clerk, a sailor, Chaucer himself and others, thirty one pilgrims in all. The knight is brave, simple and modest. He is Chaucer's ideal of a soldier. The nun weeps seeing a mouse caught in a trap but turns her head from a beggar in his "ugly rags". The fat monk prefers hunting and good dinners to prayers. The merchant's wife is merry and strong. She has red cheeks and red stockings on her fat legs.

The clerk is a poor philosopher who spends all his money on books. Each of the travellers tells a different kind of story showing his own views and character. Some are comical, gay, witty or romantic, others are serious and even tragic. All his characters are typical representatives of their classes. When assembled, they form one people, the English people. Chaucer kept the whole poem alive and full of humour not only by the tales themselves but also by the talk, comments and the opinions of the pilgrims.

In Chaucer's age the English language was still divided by dialects. Chaucer wrote in the London dialect, the most popular one at that time. With his poetry the London dialect became the English literary language. Chaucer does not teach his readers what is good or bad by moralizing; he was not a preacher. He merely paid attention to the people around him; he drew his characters "according to profession and degree", so they instantly became typical of their class.

### **2.6.1. Decline in English Poetry**

The death of Chaucer was a great blow to English poetry. It took two centuries to produce a poet equal to him. The Hundred Years' War ended, but another misfortune befell the country: a feudal war broke out between the descendants of Edward III in the 15th century. When the English were completely driven out of France by 1453, the Yorkists took up arms against the Lancastrians, and in 1455 the Wars of the Roses began. It was a feudal war between the big barons of the House of Lancaster, wishing to continue the war with France and to seize the lands of other people thus increasing their land possessions and the lesser barons and merchants of the House of York, who wished to give up fighting in France as it was too expensive for them (The Yorkists had a white rose in their coat of arms, hence the name of the war).

When the Wars of the Roses ended in 1485 Henry VII was proclaimed King of England. The reign of the Tudors was the beginning of an absolute monarchy in England, and at the same time it helped to do away with feudal fighting once and for all. Chaucer's significance in the development of English literature is remarkable as he shifted poetry from the region of Theology and Metaphysics to the old classical principle of the direct imitation of nature. After Chaucer there came a decline in English poetry for about 100 years. The period from 1400 to the

Renaissance was bereft of quality literature. The poets of that time period produced little work and merely imitated Chaucer and his contemporaries.

Although the beginning of the Anglo-Norman Period is obvious, historians differ on when this period ended. Some historians say that it ended in 1144 or 1066, while for others it lasted up to 1450 or 1500. The Norman Conquest of England had, in fact, a profound effect in introducing various changes in the history of English literature. *'The Age of Chaucer* was followed by *The Renaissance Period* also known as the *Elizabethan Period* or the *Age of Shakespeare* in the history of English literature.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Thanks to what work is Chaucer's name best remembered?
2. Describe the framework of the Canterbury Tales.
3. Speak on the characters' of the Canterbury Tales as typical representatives of their time.
4. Speak on the subject and form of the tales.
5. Comment on the state of the English language at the beginning of the 14th century and Chaucer's contribution to the development of the English language.
6. Speak on Chaucer's place in English literature.

### **3. Folk-Songs and Ballads**

Though there was hardly any written literature in England in the 15th century, folk poetry flourished in England and Scotland. Folksongs were heard everywhere. Songs were made up for every occasion. There were harvest songs, mowing songs, spinning and weaving songs, etc.

The best of folk poetry were the ballads. A ballad is a short narrative in verse with the refrain following each stanza. The refrain was always one and the same. Ballads were often accompanied by musical instruments and dancing. They became the most popular form of amusement. Some ballads could be performed by several people because they consisted of dialogues.

There were various kinds of ballads: historical, legendary, fantastical, lyrical and humorous. The ballads passed from generation to generation through the centuries - that's why there are several versions of the same ballads. So about 305 ballads have more than a thousand versions.

The most popular ballads were those about **Robin Hood**. The art of printing did not stop the development of folk-songs and ballads. They continued to appear till the 18th century when they were collected and printed. The common people of England expressed their feelings in popular ballads.

#### **The Robin Hood Ballads**

England's favourite hero, Robin Hood, is a partly legendary, partly historical character. The old ballads about the famous outlaw say that he lived in about the second half of the 12th century, in the times of King Henry II and his son Richard the Lion-Heart. Society in those days was mainly divided into lords and peasants. Since the battle of **Hastings (1066)** the Saxons had been oppressed by the Normans. In those days many of the big castles belonged to robber-barons who illtreated the people, stole children, took away the cattle. If the countryfolk



resisted, they were either killed by the barons or driven away, and their homes were destroyed. They had no choice but to go out in bands and hide in the woods; then they were declared "outlaws" (outside the protection of the law).

The forest abounded in game of all kinds. The Saxons were good hunters and skilled archers. But in the reign of Henry II the numerous herds of deer were proclaimed "the king's deer" and the forests "the king's forests". Hunting was prohibited. A poor man was cruelly punished for killing one of those royal animals. This was the England of Robin Hood about whom there are some fifty or more ballads. Robin Hood is a brave outlaw. In Sherwood Forest near Nottingham there was a large band of outlaws led by Robin Hood. He came from a family of Saxon land owners, whose land had been seized by a Norman baron. Robin Hood took with him all his family and went to the forest.

The ballads of Robin Hood tell us of his adventures in the forest as an outlaw. Many Saxons joined him there. They were called "the merry men of Robin Hood". Robin Hood was strong, brave and clever. He was much cleverer, wittier and nobler than any nobleman. He was the first in all competitions. Robin Hood was portrayed as a tireless enemy of the Norman oppressors, a favourite of the country folk, a real champion of the poor. He was generous and tender-hearted and he was always ready to respond to anybody's call for help. His worst enemies were the Sheriff of Nottingham, the bishop and greedy monks. He always escaped any trouble and took revenge on his enemies. Robin Hood was a man of a merry joke and kind heart.

The ballads tell us of Robin Hood's friends – of Little John who was ironically called "little" for being very tall; of the jolly fat Friar Tuck who skilfully used his stick in the battle. Their hatred for the cruel oppressors united them and they led a merry and free life in Sherwood Forest.

The ballads of Robin Hood gained great popularity in the second half of the 14th century when the peasants struggled against their masters and oppressors. The ballads played an important role in the development of English poetry up to the 20th century. They became so popular that the names of their authors were forgotten.

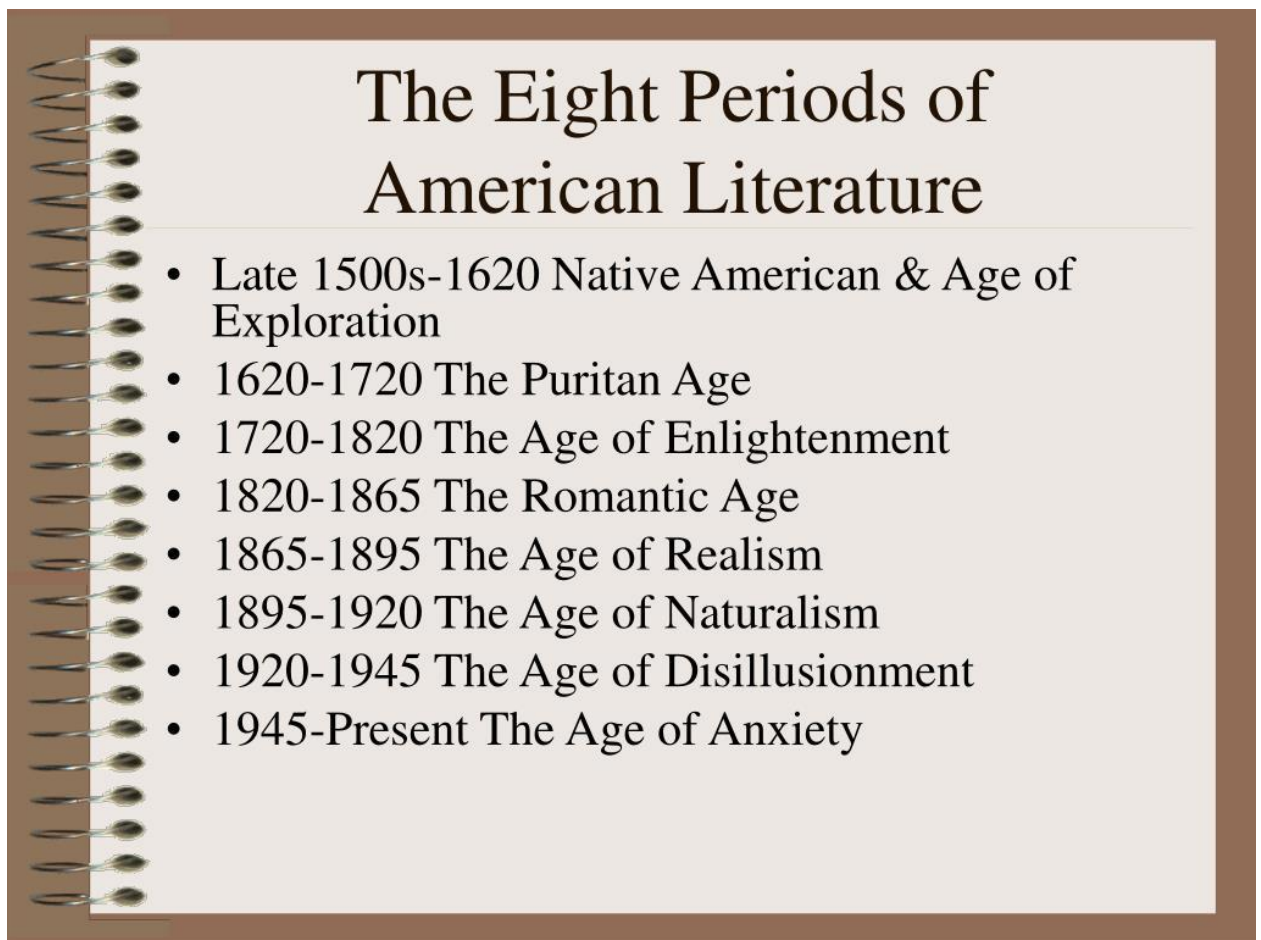
### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What did the old ballads say about the time Robin Hood lived?
2. Describe the conditions of the Saxons after the Norman Conquest.
3. What family did Robin Hood come from?
4. What kind of man was he?
5. Who were his worst enemies?
6. Who were his friends?
7. How was Robin Hood portrayed in the ballads?
8. When did the ballads of Robin Hood gain great popularity?

### **Part II American Literature**

Like other national literatures, American literature was shaped by the history of the country that produced it. For almost a century and a half, America was merely a group of colonies scattered along the eastern seaboard of the North American

continent – colonies from which a few hardy souls tentatively ventured westward. After a successful rebellion against the motherland, America became the United States, a nation. By the end of the 19th century this nation extended southward to the Gulf of Mexico, northward to the 49th parallel, and westward to the Pacific. By the end of the 19th century, too, it had taken its place among the powers of the world – its fortunes so interrelated with those of other nations that inevitably it became involved in two world wars and, following these conflicts, with the problems of Europe and East Asia. Meanwhile, the rise of science and industry, as well as changes in ways of thinking and feeling, wrought many modifications in people's lives. All these factors in the development of the United States molded the literature of the country.



The history of American literature reaches from the oral traditions of Native peoples to the novels, poetry, and drama created in the United States today. This list describes its six major periods.

### **Pre-colonization**

American literature begins with the orally transmitted myths, legends, tales, and lyrics (always songs) of Indian cultures. There was no written literature among the more than 500 different Indian languages and tribal cultures that existed in North America before the first Europeans arrived. As a result, Native American oral literature is quite diverse. Narratives from quasi-nomadic hunting cultures like the Navajo are different from stories of settled agricultural tribes such as the pueblo-

dwelling Acoma; the stories of northern lakeside dwellers such as the Ojibwa often differ radically from stories of desert tribes like the Hopi.

Tribes maintained their own religions – worshipping gods, animals, plants, or sacred persons. Systems of government ranged from democracies to councils of elders to theocracies. These tribal variations enter into the oral literature as well. Still, it is possible to make a few generalizations. Indian stories, for example, glow with reverence for nature as a spiritual as well as physical mother. Nature is alive and endowed with spiritual forces; main characters may be animals or plants, often totems associated with a tribe, group, or individual. The closest to the Indian sense of holiness in later American literature is **Ralph Waldo Emerson's** transcendental "Over-Soul," which pervades all of life.

The Mexican tribes revered the divine Quetzalcoatl, a god of the Toltecs and Aztecs, and some tales of a high god or culture were told elsewhere. However, there are no long, standardized religious cycles about one supreme divinity. The closest equivalents to Old World spiritual narratives are often accounts of shamans initiations and voyages. Apart from these, there are stories about culture heroes such as the Ojibwa tribe's Manabozho or the Navajo tribe's Coyote. These tricksters are treated with varying degrees of respect. In one tale they may act like heroes, while in another they may seem selfish or foolish. Although past authorities, such as the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, have deprecated trickster tales as expressing the inferior, amoral side of the psyche, contemporary scholars – some of them Native Americans – point out that Odysseus and Prometheus, the revered Greek heroes, are essentially tricksters as well.

Examples of almost every oral genre can be found in American Indian literature: lyrics, chants, myths, fairy tales, humorous anecdotes, incantations, riddles, proverbs, epics, and legendary histories. Accounts of migrations and ancestors abound, as do vision or healing songs and tricksters' tales. Certain creation stories are particularly popular. In one well-known creation story, told with variations among many tribes, a turtle holds up the world. In a Cheyenne version, the creator, Maheo, has four chances to fashion the world from a watery universe. He sends four water birds diving to try to bring up earth from the bottom. The snow goose, loon, and mallard soar high into the sky and sweep down in a dive, but cannot reach bottom; but the little coot, who cannot fly, succeeds in bringing up some mud in his bill. Only one creature, humble Grandmother Turtle, is the right shape to support the mud world Maheo shapes on her shell – hence the Indian name for America, "Turtle Island."

The songs or poetry, like the narratives, range from the sacred to the light and humorous: There are lullabies, war chants, love songs, and special songs for children's games, gambling, various chores, magic, or dance ceremonials.

Generally the songs are repetitive. Short poem-songs given in dreams sometimes have the clear imagery and subtle mood associated with Japanese haiku or Eastern-influenced imagistic poetry. A **Chippewa song** runs:

A loon I thought it was  
But it was

My love's  
splashing oar.

**Vision songs**, often very short, are another distinctive form. Appearing in dreams or visions, sometimes with no warning, they may be healing, hunting, or love songs. Often they are personal, as in this Modoc song:

I  
the song  
I walk here.

Indian oral tradition and its relation to American literature as a whole is one of the richest and least explored topics in American studies. The Indian contribution to America is greater than is often believed. The hundreds of Indian words in everyday American English include "canoe," "tobacco," "potato," "moccasin," "moose," "persimmon," "raccoon," "tomahawk," and "totem." Contemporary Native American writing, discussed in chapter 8, also contains works of great beauty.

### **THE LITERATURE OF EXPLORATION**

*Had* history taken a different turn, the United States easily could have been a part of the great Spanish or French overseas empires. Its present inhabitants might speak Spanish and form one nation with Mexico, or speak French and be joined with Canadian Francophone Quebec and Montreal.

Yet the earliest explorers of America were not English, Spanish, or French. The first European record of exploration in America is in a Scandinavian language. The Old Norse *Vinland Saga* recounts how the adventurous Leif Eriksson and a band of wandering Norsemen settled briefly somewhere on the northeast coast of America – probably Nova Scotia, in Canada – in the first decade of the 11th century, almost 400 years before the next recorded European discovery of the New World.

The first known and sustained contact between the Americas and the rest of the world, however, began with the famous voyage of an Italian explorer, Christopher Columbus, funded by the Spanish rulers Ferdinand and Isabella. Columbus's journal in his "Epistola," printed in 1493, recounts the trip's drama – the terror of the men, who feared monsters and thought they might fall off the edge of the world; the near-mutiny; how Columbus faked the ships' logs so the men would not know how much farther they had travelled than anyone had gone before; and the first sighting of land as they neared America.

**Bartolomé de las Casas** is the richest source of information about the early contact between American Indians and Europeans. As a young priest he helped conquer Cuba. He transcribed Columbus's journal, and late in life wrote a long, vivid *History of the Indians* criticizing their enslavement by the Spanish.

Initial English attempts at colonization were disasters. The first colony was set up in 1585 at Roanoke, off the coast of North Carolina; all its colonists disappeared, and to this day legends are told about blue-eyed Croatan Indians of the area. The second colony was more permanent: Jamestown, established in 1607. It endured starvation, brutality, and misrule. However, the literature of the period paints America in glowing colors as the land of riches and opportunity. Accounts of the colonizations became world-renowned. The exploration of Roanoke was carefully

recorded by **Thomas Hariot** in *A Briefe and True Report of the New-Found Land of Virginia* (1588). Hariot's book was quickly translated into Latin, French, and German; the text and pictures were made into engravings and widely republished for over 200 years.

The Jamestown colony's main record, the writings of Captain John Smith, one of its leaders, is the exact opposite of Hariot's accurate, scientific account. Smith was an incurable romantic, and he seems to have embroidered his adventures. To him we owe the famous story of the Indian maiden, **Pocahontas**. Whether fact or fiction, the tale is ingrained in the American historical imagination. The story recounts how Pocahontas, favorite daughter of Chief Powhatan, saved Captain Smith's life when he was a prisoner of the chief. Later, when the English persuaded Powhatan to give Pocahontas to them as a hostage, her gentleness, intelligence, and beauty impressed the English, and, in 1614, she married John Rolfe, an English gentleman. The marriage initiated an eight-year peace between the colonists and the Indians, ensuring the survival of the struggling new colony.

In the 17th century, pirates, adventurers, and explorers opened the way to a second wave of permanent colonists, bringing their wives, children, farm implements, and craftsmen's tools. The early literature of exploration, made up of diaries, letters, travel journals, ships' logs, and reports to the explorers' financial backers – European rulers or, in mercantile England and Holland, joint stock companies – gradually was supplanted by records of the settled colonies. Because England eventually took possession of the North American colonies, the best-known and most-anthologized colonial literature is English. As American minority literature continues to flower in the 20th century and American life becomes increasingly multicultural, scholars are rediscovering the importance of the continent's mixed ethnic heritage. Although the story of literature now turns to the English accounts, it is important to recognize its richly cosmopolitan beginnings.

## LECTURE 2

### English literature of the Renaissance and the seventeenth century

1. Historical background of the Renaissance Period
2. Thomas More
3. Christopher Marlowe
4. Elizabethian Drama
5. Ben Johnson and other other major figures
6. The Puritan Age (1600-1660)

The word "renaissance" means "rebirth" in French and is used to denote a phase in the cultural development of Europe between the 14th and 17th centuries. The Middle Ages were followed by a more progressive period due to numerous events. The bourgeoisie appeared as a new class. Italy was the first bourgeois country in Europe in the 14th century.

Columbus discovered America. Vasco da Gama reached the coast of India making his sea voyage. Magellan went round the earth. The world appeared in a new light. The Copernican system of astronomy shattered the power of the Catholic Church, and the Protestant Church was set up.

Printing was invented in Germany in the 15th century. Schools and universities were established in many European countries. Great men appeared in art, science and literature. In art and literature the time between the 14th and 17th centuries was called the Renaissance. It was the rebirth of ancient Greek and Roman art and literature. Ancient culture attracted new writers and artists because it was full of joy of life and glorified the beauty of man. The writers and learned men of the Renaissance turned against feudalism and roused in men a wish to know more about the true nature of things in the world. They were called humanists. Man was placed in the centre of life. He was no longer an evil being. He had a right to live, enjoy himself and be happy on earth.

The humanists were greatly interested in the sciences, especially in natural science, based on experiment and investigation. These new ideas first appeared in Italy, then in France and Germany, and shortly afterwards in England and Spain. The Italian painters and sculptors **Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo** glorified the beauty of man. The Italian poets **Dante, Petrarch** and the Italian writer **Boccaccio**, the French writer **Rabelias**, the Spanish writer **Cervantes**, and the English writer **Thomas More** and the poet Shakespeare helped people to fight for freedom and better future.

The Renaissance was the greatest progressive revolution that mankind had so far experienced. It was a time which called for giants and produced giants – giants in power, thought, passion, character, in universality and learning. There was hardly any man of importance who had not travelled extensively, who did not speak four or five languages.

Indeed, **Leonardo da Vinci** was a painter, sculptor, architect, mathematician and engineer. **Michelangelo** was a sculptor, painter and poet. **Machiavelli** was a statesman, poet and historian.

The wave of progress reached England in the 16th century. Many learned men from other countries, for instance the German painter Holbein, and some Italian and French musicians, went to England.

In literature England had her own men. One of them was the humanist **Thomas More**, the first English humanist of the Renaissance.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What does the word "renaissance" mean?
2. Talk about the great events that gave rise to the movement.
3. What were the different views regarding man in the Middle Ages and during the epoch of the Renaissance?
4. Who were the humanists?
5. In what country did the Renaissance start first?
6. What do you know about the Renaissance in Italy?
7. When did the wave of progress reach England?

### **Thomas More**

**(1478-1535)**

Sir Thomas More was born in London and educated at Oxford. He was the first English humanist of the Renaissance. He could write Latin very well. He began life as a lawyer. He was an active-minded man and kept a keen eye on the events of his time. Soon he became the first great writer on social and political subjects in English. The English writings of Thomas More include: discussions on political subjects, biographies, poetry.

Thomas More was a Catholic, but fought against the Pope and the king's absolute power. The priests hated him because of his poetry and discussions on political subjects. Thomas More refused to obey the king as the head of the English Church, therefore he was thrown into the Tower of London and beheaded there as a traitor. The work by which Thomas More is best remembered today is *Utopia* which was written in Latin in the year 1516. It has been translated into all European languages.

Utopia (which in Greek means "nowhere") is the name of a nonexistent island.

This work is divided into two books.

In the first, the author gives a profound and truthful picture of the people's sufferings and points out the social evils existing in England at that time. In the second book Thomas More presents his ideal of what future society should be like. It is an ideal republic. Its government is elected. Everybody works. All schooling is free. Man must be healthy

and wise, but not rich. Utopia describes a perfect social system built on equal principles. The word "utopia" has become a **byword** and is used in modern English to denote an unattainable ideal, usually in social and political matters.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Who was the first English humanist of the Renaissance?
2. When did Thomas More live?
3. What kind of man was he?
4. What did the English writings of Thomas More include?
5. Comment on the composition of his best work Utopia.

6. What was More's idea of what future society should be like?
7. What did Thomas Moore fight against?
8. Why was Moore thrown into the Tower of London and beheaded?

Summary.

The *Renaissance Period* in the history of English literature is also known as the *Elizabethan Period* or the *Age of Shakespeare*. It is, in fact, the 'golden age' in the history of English literature. After the *Middle Ages* in Europe came the Renaissance, meaning revival or rebirth. As a result, the darkness of the middle ages was replaced by the enlightenment of the human mind with the 'Revival of Learning', which the Renaissance prompted.

The major characteristic of the Renaissance was its focus on Humanism i.e. man's concern with himself as an object of observation. *The Renaissance actually started in Italy by Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch. However, it became popular in Europe during the Elizabethan Period. Beside focusing on the 'study of mankind', Renaissance had numerous subordinate trends which were actually the significant aspects of Humanism. These include:*

- The rediscovery of classical antiquity, particularly of ancient Greece.
- The rediscovery of the external universe, and its importance for man.
- The problems of human personality.
- The enhanced sensitivity to formal beauty, and the cultivation of the aesthetic sense.
- The belief that men are responsible for their own actions.

Instead of looking up to some higher authority for guidance, as was done in The Middle Ages, the writers of the Renaissance Period found guidance from within.

## **2.1. Elizabethan Drama**

During the Renaissance art and literature developed. People liked to sing and act. Drama became a very popular genre of literature. The Renaissance dramas differed greatly from the first plays written in the Middle Ages. As in Greece drama in England was in its beginning a religious thing. The clergymen began playing some parts of Christ's life in the church. The oldest plays in England were the "Mysteries" and "Miracles" which were performed on religious holidays. These were stories about saints and had many choral elements in them. Gradually ceremonies developed into performances. They passed from the stage in the church to the stage in the street. At the end of the 14th century the "Mysteries" gave way to the "Morality" plays. The plays were meant to teach people a moral lesson. The characters in them were abstract vices and virtues.

Between the acts of the "Morality" and "Miracle plays" there were introduced short plays called "interludes" – light compositions intended to make people laugh. They were performed in the houses of the more intelligent people.

Longer plays in which shepherds and shepherdesses took part were called "Masques". These dramatic performances with music were very pleasing and were played till the end of the 17th century.



Soon the plays became complicated. Professional actors travelled from town to town performing in inn yards. The first playhouse in London was built in 1576. It was called "The Theatre". A more famous theatre was the "Globe", built in 1599. It was like the old inn yard open to the sky. Galleries and boxes were placed round the yard. The stage was in the middle of it. There was no scenery. The place of action was written on a placard, e. g., a palace, London, etc. There was no curtain, either. The actors stood in the middle of the audience on the stage. Women's parts were acted by boys or men.

Drama from its very beginning was divided into comedy and tragedy. The first English tragedies and comedies were performed in London in about 1550.

In the 16th century a number of plays were written in imitation of Ancient Roman tragedies and comedies. There was little action on the stage. The chorus summed up the situation and also gave moral observations at the end of each act. Such plays were called classical dramas. The greatest playwrights of the time were men of academic learning, the so-called "University Wits". Among the "University Wits" were **John Lyly**, **Thomas Kyd**, **Christopher Marlowe** and others. Each of them contributed something to the development of the drama into the forms in which Shakespeare was to take it up.

There was a famous group of dramatists in the Elizabethan Period known as 'University Wits'. It was actually a professional set of literary men. Of all the members of this group Marlowe was the greatest, while other dramatists such as **Lyly**, **Peele**, **Greene**, **Lodge**, and **Nash** were minor artists.

### **2.1. John Lyly,**

**John Lyly**, (born 1554?, Kent, Eng.—died November 1606, London), author considered to be the first English prose stylist to leave an enduring impression upon the language. As a playwright he also contributed to the development of prose dialogue in English comedy.

Lyly was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and went to London about 1576. There he gained fame with the publication of two prose romances, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578) and *Euphues and His England* (1580), which together made him the most fashionable English writer of the 1580s. *Euphues* is a romantic intrigue told in letters interspersed with general discussions on such topics as religion, love, and epistolary style. Lyly's preoccupation with the exact arrangement and selection of words, his frequent use of similes drawn from classical mythology, and his artificial and excessively elegant prose inspired a short-lived Elizabethan literary style called "euphuism." The *Euphues* novels introduced a new concern with form into English prose.

After 1580 Lyly devoted himself almost entirely to writing comedies. In 1583 he gained control of the first Blackfriars Theatre, in which his earliest plays, *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, were produced. All of Lyly's comedies except *The Woman in the Moon* were presented by the Children of Paul's, a children's company that was periodically favoured by Queen Elizabeth. The performance dates of his plays are as follows: *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, 1583–84; *Gallathea*, 1585–88; *Endimion*, 1588; *Midas*, 1589; *Love's Metamorphosis*, 1590; *Mother Bombie*, 1590; and *The Woman in the Moon*, 1595.

All but one of these are in prose. The finest is considered to be *Endimion*, which some critics hold a masterpiece.

Lyly's comedies mark an enormous advance upon those of his predecessors in English drama. Their plots are drawn from classical mythology and legend, and their characters engage in euphuistic speeches redolent of Renaissance pedantry; but the charm and wit of the dialogues and the light and skillful construction of the plots set standards that younger and more gifted dramatists could not ignore. Lyly's popularity waned with the rise of Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, and William Shakespeare, and his appeals to Queen Elizabeth for financial relief went unheeded. He had hoped to succeed Edmund Tilney in the court post of Master of the Revels, but Tilney outlived him, and Lyly died a poor and bitter man.

### **Thomas Kyd**

**Thomas Kyd**, (baptized Nov. 6, 1558, London, Eng.—died c. December 1594, London), English dramatist who, with his *The Spanish Tragedy* (sometimes called *Hieronimo*, or *Jeronimo*, after its protagonist), initiated the revenge tragedy of his day. Kyd anticipated the structure of many later plays, including the development of middle and final climaxes. In addition, he revealed an instinctive sense of tragic situation, while his characterization of Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy* prepared the way for Shakespeare's psychological study of Hamlet. The son of a scrivener, Kyd was educated at the Merchant Taylors School in London. There is no evidence that he attended the university before turning to literature. He seems to have been in service for some years with a lord (possibly Ferdinando, Lord Strange, the patron of Lord Strange's Men). *The Spanish Tragedy* was entered in the Stationers' Register in October 1592, and the undated first quarto edition almost certainly appeared in that year. It is not known which company first played it, nor when; but Strange's company played *Hieronimo* 16 times in 1592, and the Admiral's Men revived it in 1597, as apparently did the Chamberlain's Men. It remained one of the most popular plays of the age and was often reprinted.

The only other play certainly by Kyd is *Cornelia* (1594), an essay in Senecan tragedy, translated from the French of Robert Garnier's academic *Cornélie*. He may also have written an earlier version of *Hamlet*, known to scholars as the *Ur-Hamlet*, and his hand has sometimes been detected in the anonymous *Arden of Feversham*, one of the first domestic tragedies, and in a number of other plays. About 1591 Kyd was sharing lodgings with Christopher Marlowe, and on May 13, 1593, he was arrested and then tortured, being suspected of treasonable activity. His room had been searched and certain "atheistical" disputations denying the deity of Jesus Christ found there. He probably averred then and certainly confirmed later, in a letter, that these papers had belonged to Marlowe. That letter is the source for almost everything that is known about Kyd's life. He was dead by Dec. 30, 1594, when his mother made a formal repudiation of her son's debt-ridden estate.

**Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)** was a young dramatist who surpassed all his contemporaries. His father was a shoemaker in Canterbury. Christopher Marlowe studied at Cambridge University and was greatly influenced by the ideas of the Renaissance. Almost nothing is known of his life after he left the University. He was killed at a tavern at the age of twenty-nine. Christopher Marlowe is famous for his four tragedies: “*Tamburlaine the Great*”; - Marlowe’s first play *Tamburlaine* appeared in 1587 and took the public on a storm due to its impetuous force, sensitivity to beauty, and splendid command of ***blank verse***. *Doctor Faustus* which is considered to be the best of his works. Marlowe approached history from a Renaissance point of view. His tragedies show strong men who fight for their own benefit. No enemy can overcome them except death. They are great personalities who challenge men and gods with their strength.

Marlowe used in it the German legend of a scholar who for the sake of knowledge sold his soul to the devil. Dr. Faustus wants to have power over the world: "All things that move between the quiet poles shall be at my command". The devil serves him twenty-four years. When Faustus sees the beautiful Helen he wants to get his soul back. It is too late. Marlowe's plays taught people to understand a tragedy which was not performed just to show horror and crime on the stage, but to reveal the suffering of man. Marlowe introduced blank verse in his tragedies and pointed out the way to William Shakespeare, the greatest of the Renaissance humanists. In imagination, richness of expression, originality and general poetic and dramatic power he is inferior to Shakespeare alone in the 16th century.

Nevertheless, Marlowe’s contributions to the Elizabethan drama were remarkable. Although his plays were different from Shakespeare’s in content and style, yet he raised the subject-matter of drama to a higher level. It was Marlowe who gave beauty, dignity, and poetic glow to the drama. There is no doubt that he did the groundwork on which Shakespeare built the grand edifice. Therefore, Marlowe has been rightly called “**the Father of English Dramatic Poetry.**”

His other famous work, however, include *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* which tells the story of a scholar who sells his soul to the devil for unlimited power and worldly enjoyment. The third famous tragic play of Marlowe is *The Jew of Malta*. Though it has a glorious opening, it is not as fine as *Doctor Faustus*. Marlowe’s last play is *Edward II* which is best from technical point of view but lacks the rhythmic beauty as well as grandeur of his earlier plays.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What became a very popular genre of literature during the Renaissance?
2. Describe the Renaissance dramas.
3. What were the oldest plays in England?
4. When did the "Mysteries" give way to "Morality" plays?
5. What plays were called "Masques"?
6. Tell the main facts of Marlowe's life.
7. What is Marlowe's famous for?
8. Comment on his tragedies.
9. What is considered to be the best of his works?
10. What can you say about the plot of *Doctor Faustus*?

11. Speak on the meaning of Marlowe's plays.

**Summarizing:**

During the Renaissance Period the most important achievement in English literature was in the field of drama. The dramatists of this golden period include William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Lyly, George Peele, Thomas Kyd, Robert Greene and others. All these writers produced prolific works. However, the greatest among all Elizabethan dramatists was Shakespeare in whose hands the Elizabethan drama reached its climax. He took English drama to the level which could not be surpassed till today.

The main characteristics of the Elizabethan drama include—revenge themes, internal conflicts, good versus evil, melodramatic scenes, hero-villain protagonists, tragic-comedy, presence of supernatural beings such as ghosts and witches and the use of blank verse.

**3.1. Ben Jonson (1573-1637)**

Ben Jonson was Shakespeare's contemporary as well as a prominent dramatist of his times. But he was just the opposite of Shakespeare. A moralist, reformer, and a classist, Jonson in his works presented a true picture of contemporary society. He wrote his plays in a realistic manner and introduced his theory of 'humour'. His famous comedies are: *The Alchemist*, *Bartholomew Fair*, *Volpone*, *Every Man in His Humour*, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, and *The Silent Woman*.

Ben Jonson occupies by common consent the second place among English dramatists of the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. He was a man of contraries. For "twelve years a papist," he was also – in fact though not in title Protestant England's first poet laureate. His major comedies express a strong distaste for the world in which he lived and a delight in exposing its follies and vices. A gifted lyric poet, he wrote two of his most successful plays entirely in prose, an unusual mode of composition in his time. Though often an angry and stubborn man, no one had more disciples than he. He was easily the most learned dramatist of his time, and he was also a master of theatrical plot, language, and characterization. It is a measure of his reputation that his dramatic works were the first to be published in folio (the term, in effect, means the "collected works") and that his plays held their place on the stage until the period of the Restoration. Later they fell into neglect, though *The Alchemist* was revived during the 18th century, and in the mid-20th century several came back into favour: *Volpone*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair* especially have been staged with striking success.

Jonson's chief plays are still very good theatre. His insistence on putting classical theory into practice in them has reinforced rather than weakened the effect of his gift of lively dialogue, robust characterization, and intricate, controlled plotting. In each of them he maneuvers a large cast of vital personages, all consistently differentiated from one another. Jonson's plots are skillfully put together; incident develops out of incident in a consistent chain of cause and effect, taking into account the respective natures of the personages involved and proceeding confidently through a twisting, turning action that is full of surprises without relying on coincidence or chance. Sometimes Jonson's comedy derives

from the dialogue, especially when it is based on his observation of contemporary tricks of speech. But there are also superbly ludicrous situations, often hardly removed from practical joke.

Jonson is renowned for his method of concentrating on a selected side, or on selected sides, of a character, showing how they dominate the personality. This is to some extent a natural outcome of his classical conception of art, but it also stems from his clear, shrewd observation of people. In Jonson's plays both eccentricity and normal behaviour are derived from a dominating characteristic, so that the result is a live, truthfully conceived personage in whom the ruling passion traces itself plainly. The later plays, for example, have characters whose behaviour is dominated by one psychological idiosyncrasy. But Jonson did not deal exclusively in "humours." In some of his plays (notably *Every Man in His Humour*), the stock types of Latin comedy contributed as much as the humours theory did. What the theory provided for him and for his contemporaries was a convenient mode of distinguishing among human beings. The distinctions so made could be based on the "humours," on Latin comic types, or, as in *Volpone*, in the assimilation of humans to different members of the animal kingdom. The characters Volpone, Mosca, Sir Epicure Mammon, Face, Subtle, Dol Common, Overdo, and Ursula are not simply "humours"; they are glorious type figures, so vitally rendered as to take on a being that transcends the type. This method was one of simplification, of typification, and yet also of vitalization.

The Restoration dramatists' use of type names for their characters (Cockwood, Witwoud, Petulant, Pinchwife, and so on) was a harking back to Jonson, and similarly in the 18th century, with such characters as Peachum, Lumpkin, Candour, and Languish. And though, as the 18th century proceeded, comic dramatists increasingly used names quite arbitrarily, the idea of the Jonsonian "type" or "humour" was always at the root of their imagining. Jonson thus exerted a great influence on the playwrights who immediately followed him. In the late Jacobean and Caroline years, it was he, Shakespeare, and Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher who provided all the models. But it was he, and he alone, who gave the essential impulse to dramatic characterization in comedy of the Restoration and also in the 18th and 19th centuries.

### **3.2. William Tyndale** is known as 'The Father of English Prose'

William Tyndale, (born c. 1490–94, near Gloucestershire, England—died October 6, 1536, Vilvoorde, near Brussels, Brabant), English biblical translator, humanist, and Protestant martyr. Because of the influence of printing and a demand for Scriptures in the vernacular, William Tyndale began working on a New Testament translation directly from the Greek in 1523. After church authorities in England prevented him from translating the Bible there, he went to Germany in 1524, receiving financial support from wealthy London merchants. His New Testament translation was completed in July 1525 and printed at Cologne. Again under pressure, this time from the city authorities, Tyndale fled to Worms, where two more editions were published in 1525. The first copies were smuggled into England in 1526, where they were at once proscribed.

When the New Testament was finished, Tyndale began work on the Old Testament. The Pentateuch was issued in Marburg in 1530, each of the five books being separately published and circulated. Tyndale continued to work on the Old Testament translation but was captured in Antwerp before it was completed. Condemned for heresy, he was executed by strangulation and then burned at the stake at Vilvoorde in 1536.

At the time of his death, 18,000 copies of his New Testament had been printed; however, only two complete volumes and a fragment remain today, at London's British Library. Tyndale's greatest achievement was the ability to strike a felicitous balance between the needs of scholarship, simplicity of expression, and literary gracefulness, all in a uniform dialect. The effect was the creation of an English style of Bible translation, tinged with Hebraisms, that was to serve as the model for future English versions for nearly 400 years, beginning with the King James Version of 1611.

### **3.3. The Puritan Age (1600-1660)**

In the 17th century came the decline of the Renaissance spirit. The writers of that time either imitated the Elizabethan masters or paved new paths. The 17th century's literature is divided into two periods – The Puritan Age or the Age of Milton (1600-1660) and the Restoration Period or the Age of **Dryden** (1660-1700). Up to 1660, Puritanism dominated the 17th Century. **John Milton** was the greatest representative of the Puritan spirit. The Puritan movement in literature is also called the second Renaissance because of the revival of man's moral nature. It stood for people's liberty from the shackles of the despotic ruler and introduced morality and high ideals in politics.

**John Milton(1608-1674)** was the most significant poet of the Puritan Age. He was a great scholar of classical as well as Hebrew literature. A child of the Renaissance, Milton was also a great humanist. As an artist we may call him the last Elizabethan. Milton's greatest poetical works are *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. Besides Milton, the poetry of The School of Spenser, The Metaphysical Poets, and The Cavalier Poets also earned great fame. But no one of them was as noblest and indomitable representative of the Puritan spirit as John Milton.

Moreover, this period was rich in prose as well. Among the great prose writers of the Puritan Age include Francis Bacon, Milton, Robert Burton, Jeremy Tayler, Sir Thomas Brown and Clarendon. During this period we find English prose developing into a magniloquent and rich instrument capable of expressing all types of ideas, such as scientific, philosophical, poetic, religious and personal.

## LECTURE 3.

**William Shakespeare: life, drama, poetry.**

**William Shakespeare (1564-1616)**

It was Shakespeare, the greatest of all Elizabethan dramatists, who took English drama to the highest peak of fame. He was, indeed, a gifted man. His brilliant imagination, keen insight, and a creative mind gave new life to the old familiar stories and made them glow with tenderest feelings and deepest thoughts. His style and versification were extremely remarkable. He was not only the greatest dramatist of his time, but also a famous poet as well. His sonnets, replete with passion and aesthetic sense, also possess a significant place in the history of English literature. Although Shakespeare belonged to the Elizabethan Age, due to his universality he belongs to all times. He is often called by his people "Our National Bard" (bard = a singer of ancient songs, a poet), "The Immortal Poet of Nature" (When the English people called Shakespeare "the poet of Nature" they meant "the poet of realism", but they didn't know such a word then) and "the Great Unknown". Indeed very little can be told about his life with certainty, as no biography of Shakespeare was published during his life time nor for 93 years after his death. Yet, patient research by certain scholars has uncovered the biography, but not fully.

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon on the 23rd of April, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was a farmer's son, who came to Stratford in 1551 and became a prosperous tradesman. John Shakespeare was elected alderman and later by the time his eldest children were born he acted as **bailiff** which meant he had to keep order in the town according to the local laws. John Shakespeare was illiterate; he marked his name by a cross because he was unable to write it. His mother, Mary Arden was a farmer's daughter. John and Mary had eight children, four girls and four boys, but their two eldest daughters died at an early age. The third child was William. William was a boy of a free and open nature, much like his mother who was a woman of a lively disposition. Of Shakespeare's education we know little, except that for a few years he attended the local grammar school where he learned some Latin, Greek, arithmetic and a few other subjects. His real teachers, meanwhile, were the men and women around him. Stratford was a charming little town in the very centre of England. Near at hand was the Forest of Arden, the old castles of Warwick and Kenilworth, and the old Roman camps and military roads. The beauty of the place must have influenced powerfully to the poet's imagination. When Shakespeare was about fourteen years old, his father lost his property and fell into debt and so the boy had to leave school and help his family. On leaving school, William Shakespeare began to learn foreign languages. His father had an Italian in his house who was quite a good scholar. This Italian taught William the Italian language, brushed up his Latin and studied the poetry of many Latin, Greek and Italian authors with him.

William was still a boy when his first poems appeared. Writing poems was very common in Shakespeare's days. It was called sonnetising]. His future wife Anne

Hathaway also expressed her feeling for William in verse. Anne and William met by the river Avon, and she calls him "Sweet Swan of Avon". In his nineteenth year William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a well-to-do farmer. They had three children — Susanna, and the twins, Judith and Hamnet. A few years later after his marriage, about the year 1587, Shakespeare left his native town for London.

At this time the drama was gaining rapidly in popularity through the work of the University Wits. Shakespeare soon turned to the stage and became first an actor, and then a "play patcher", because he altered and improved the existing dramas. Thus he gained a practical knowledge of the art of play writing. Soon he began to write plays of his own, first comedies and then historical plays. New plays by William Shakespeare appeared almost every year between 1590 and 1613, in some years one play, more often two.

In 1593 and 1594 he published two long poems — Venus and Adonis and Lucrece. Both poems were dedicated to the young Earl of Southampton, a great admirer of Shakespeare's plays. Until Shakespeare printed his poems the public had no idea he was a poet. He was known as an actor and a writer of plays. At that time playwrights wrote for a definite theatrical company, and the theatre became the owner of the play. Shakespeare's plays were very popular. Actors and writers respected him and admired his genius. As his popularity with the people grew, the aristocracy too became interested in his work. When Queen Elizabeth wanted to see a play, she usually ordered a performance at court.

In 1594 Shakespeare became a member of the Lord Chamberlain's company of actors. He wrote plays for the company and acted in them. His early plays were performed in the playhouses known as "The Theatre" and "The Curtain". When the company built the "Globe" theatre most of his greatest plays were performed there. By that time Shakespeare was acknowledged to be the greatest of English dramatists. His career as a dramatist lasted for nearly twenty-one years.

His financial position also improved. He was a shareholder of the "Globe" theatre and he purchased property in Stratford and in London. But the years which brought prosperity also brought sorrows. He lost his only son, his brother and parents. In spite of prosperity he must have left lonely among the people surrounding him. In 1612 he returned to Stratford-on-Avon for good.

The last years of his life Shakespeare spent in Stratford. He died on the 23rd of April 1616. He is buried in his native town Stratford-on-Avon. In 1616 a month before his death he wrote his will.

On his tomb there are four lines which are said to have been written by William Shakespeare:

Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear  
To dig the dust enclosed here;  
Blessed be he that spares these stones,  
And cursed be he that moves my bones

These lines prevented the removal of his remains to Westminster Abbey; only a monument was erected to his memory in Poets' Corner

### **Questions and Tasks**



1. What titles have the English people conferred on William Shakespeare?
2. Where was Shakespeare born?
3. When was he born?
4. What did his father, John Shakespeare, do?
5. How many children did John and Mary Shakespeare have?
6. What kind of boy was William?
7. What do you know of Shakespeare's education?
8. What must have influenced powerfully to the poet's imagination?
9. What happened when William was about fourteen years old?
10. When did his poems begin to appear?
11. When did he marry Anne Hathaway?
12. How many children did they have?
13. Talk about the first period of Shakespeare's life in London.
14. What poems did he publish in 1593 and 1594?
15. To whom were these poems dedicated?
16. When did he become a member of the Lord Chamberlain's company of actors?
17. Where were most of Shakespeare's plays performed?
18. Prove that his financial position improved.
19. When did Shakespeare return to Stratford-on-Avon?
20. When did he die?

Shakespeare's works include non-dramatic poetry consisting of two narrative poems, *Venice and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, 154 sonnets, and 37 plays. His work as a dramatist extends over some 24 years (1588-1612), and is divided into *four* periods. Let's briefly overview this period:

West Side Story (1961): One of the most famous musical adaptation of Romeo and Juliet, ever.

### **1577-1593: First Period**

This period includes Shakespeare's early experimental work. The famous works of this period are: the revision of old plays as the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Titus Andronicus*; his first comedies—*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Love's Labor's Lost*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Comedy of Errors*; his first chronicle play—*Richard III*; and his most famous youthful tragedy — *Romeo and Juliet*.

The first period is marked by youthful optimism, great imagination and extravagance of language. In these years Shakespeare created a brilliant cycle of comedies. They are all written in his playful manner. The gay and witty heroes and heroines of comedies come into conflict with unfavourable circumstances and wicked people. But their love and friendship, intellect and faithfulness always ***take the upper hand***.

The comedies are written in the bright spirit of the Renaissance. The heroes are the creators of their own fate, that is to say they rely on their cleverness to achieve happiness. Shakespeare trusted man's virtues and believed that virtue could bring happiness to mankind. Shakespeare was optimistic, therefore love of life is the main feature of his comedies, notable for their wit, comic characters and situations,

for the smoothly flowing language and harmonious composition. Shakespeare's comedies were written to take the spectator away from everyday troubles. In them people lived for merriment, pleasure and love.

### **Sonnets**

The sonnet is a poetical form that appeared in Italy in the 14th century. It was introduced into English literature during the first period of the Renaissance. Shakespeare's sonnet has 14 lines. It is divided into three stanzas of four lines with a final rhyming couplet.

The sonnets of Shakespeare were published in 1609, but were probably written between 1597— 1600. The first 126 are addressed to a man. A certain "W. H." whose identity remains unknown. He is the author's friend, and the sonnets are addressed to him. Shakespeare complains of his hard life in which his love for his friend is the only comfort (sonnets 26 — 29), but his friend often forgets him (sonnet 33).

Beginning with sonnet 127 a new person appears — The Dark Lady. The author and his friend are in love with her. The author both loves her and hates her for making him and his friend suffer (sonnet 133). Thus the sonnets are connected by their common theme — love and friendship. But this is not the only theme of the sonnets. In one of his best sonnets, 66, Shakespeare expresses his indignation with the state of things around him.

#### **Sonnet 66**

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry, As,  
to behold Desert a beggar born, And needy  
Nothing trimm'd in jolity. And purest Faith  
unhappily forsworn,

And golded Honour shamefully misplaced,  
And maiden Virtue rudely strumpeted. And  
right Perfection wrongfully disgraced, And  
Strength by limping Sway disabled,

And Art made tongue — tied by Authority,  
And Folly doctor-like controlling Skill, And  
simple Truth miscall'd Simplicity, And captive  
Good attending captain.

Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,  
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

#### **Sonnet 91**

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill, Some in their  
wealth, some in their body forth; Some in their garments,  
though new-fangled ill; Some in their hawks and hounds,  
some in their horse;

And every humor hath his adjunct pleasure,  
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest; But these  
particulars are not my measure, All these I better  
in one general best.

Thy love is better than high birth to me, Richer  
than wealth, prouder than garments' cost, Of more  
delight than hawks or horses be; And having thee,

of all men's pride I boast.  
Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take. All  
this away and me most wretched make

### Sonnet 130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun; Coral  
is far more red than her lips' red; If snow be white,  
why then her breasts are dun; If hairs be wires,  
black wires grow on her head.

I have seen roses damasked, red and white, But  
no such roses see I in her cheeks; And in some  
perfumes is there more delight Than in the breath  
that from my mistress reeks.

I love to hear her speak, — yet well I know  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;

I grant I never saw a goddess go —

My mistress when she walks treads on the ground  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare As  
any she belied with false compare

All Shakespeare's sonnets have been translated into Ukrainian by Ivan Franko, Yuriy Fedkovych, Pavlo Hrabovskiy, Panas Caksahanskyi, Dmytro Pavlychko, Maxym Rylskyi, Ivan Kocherha, Yuriy Klen. The most outstanding among them are Todos Osmachka, Mike Yohansen, Mykola Lukash, Mykola Bazhan. (Іван Франко, Юрій Федькович, Павло Грабовський, Панас Саксаганський, Дмитро Павличко, Максим Рильський, Іван Кочерга, Юрій Клен. До найвизначніших належать "Макбет" Тодоса Осьмачки, "Отелло" Майка Йогансена, "Троїл і Крессіда" Миколи Лукаша, "Буря" Миколи Бажана).

### Histories

During the first period Shakespeare wrote histories (chronicles) which are a poetic history of England. Shakespeare gives a broad panorama of England life. Scenes of private life alternate with episodes of war and political intrigues. Shakespeare shows the real world of feudal relations between people. The histories show the defeat of the feudal lords and the necessity of a strong national state united under the power of the king.

The historical plays (chronicles) are:

*King Henry VI* — 1592,

*The Tragedy of King Richard III* — 1593,

*Titus Andronicus* — 1594,

*The Tragedy of King Richard II* — 1594,

*The Life and Death of King John* — 1594,

*King Henry IV* — 1597,

*The Life of King Henry V* — 1599.

It is true that the historical dramas or chronicles, full of tragic events and bloodshed, also belong to the first period, but if we regard them in the order in which they are written, it turns out that they too have a happy end.

Two tragedies *Romeo and Juliet* (1593) and *Julius Caesar* (1599) were written during this period too.

Tragedy does not belong to one single period of Shakespeare's work. It is with him in the first two stages of his literary career.

### **Romeo and Juliet**

Romeo and Juliet was Shakespeare's first tragedy. He turned from the romantic comedies to make the romantic tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. The play is still very popular and the names of Romeo and Juliet are used to describe any great lovers. In the tragedy the problem of love is raised to a deep social problem. The play treats love as a serious tragic subject. Romeo and Juliet are the victims of a long senseless feud between their families. The world of the Montagues and Capulets is antagonistic to their love. The young people are to fight against feudal traditions and patriarchal morality. The death of the young people makes the older generation realize the absurdity of their feud and leads to the reconciliation of the two families. The tragedy ends in an optimistic mood.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. How many plays and sonnets did Shakespeare write?
2. What are Shakespeare's genres?
3. What are the periods of Shakespeare's creative work?
4. What are the characteristic features of Shakespeare's comedies?
5. Name the best Shakespeare's comedies.
6. What is a sonnet?
7. When was it introduced into English literature?
8. What is a Shakespeare sonnet?
9. What are Shakespeare's sonnets about?
10. Talk about the main idea of sonnet 66.
11. Point out the lines which form the frame. What is the function of this frame?
12. What is the main idea of sonnet 91?
13. In what other sonnet does Shakespeare deal with the same problem?
14. How did Shakespeare describe his beloved in sonnet 130?
15. Who gave Shakespeare's sonnets new life and made them part of Russian poetry?
16. What other plays belong to the first period of Shakespeare's creative work? Name them.
17. What are the themes of the histories?
18. What tragedies belong to this period too?
19. What is the central theme of the tragedy Romeo and Juliet?

### **1594-1600: Second Period**

This period reveals Shakespeare's development as a great thinker and artist. The works of this period includes Shakespeare's great comedies and chronicle plays such as: *The Merchant of Venice*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *King John*, *Henry V, Part I and II*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Training of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Twelfth Night*.

### **Twelfth Night**

*Twelfth Night* is one of the most charming and perfect of Shakespeare's plays. It was the last of his merry comedies. Afterwards he wrote mainly tragedies. The

play was written to say good-bye to the Christmas holidays which were celebrated with great pomp and lasted for twelve days. Twelfth Night was the end of merry-making. Hence the title of the comedy.

The plot of the play is centred round Viola. She is a clever, intelligent and noble-hearted woman. Making a sea voyage she and her twin brother Sebastian [si 'baestjan] are shipwrecked on the coast of Illyria governed by Duke Orsino. The captain of the ship brings Viola safe to shore. Her brother has apparently drowned. The captain tells Viola that Duke Orsino is in love with Countess Olivia whose father and brother have recently died. For the love of them she avoids people. Viola wishes to serve this lady, but Olivia admits no person into her house. Then she makes up her mind to serve Orsino as a page under the name of Cesario [si 'zemau]. She puts on her brother's clothes, and looks exactly like him. Strange errors happen as the twins are mistaken for each other.

The Duke is fond of Cesario and tells him about his love for Olivia and sends him to her house to talk to her about his love. Viola goes there unwillingly because she herself loves Orsino.

On seeing Cesario Olivia falls in love with him, "I love thee<sup>1</sup> so, that, in spite of your pride, nor wit nor reason can my passion hide".; In vain, Cesario's resolution is "never to love any woman". In the meantime Sebastian comes to Olivia's house, she mistakes him for Cesario and proposes they should marry. Sebastian agrees. Soon Cesario – Viola enters. Everybody wonders at seeing two persons with the same face and voice. When all the errors are cleared up, they laugh at Olivia for falling in love with a woman. Orsino, seeing that Cesario would look beautiful in a woman's clothes, says to him that for the faithful service Viola has done for him so much beneath her soft and tender breeding, and since she has called him master so long, she should now be her master's mistress, and Orsino's true duchess. The twin brother and sister are wedded on the same day: Viola becomes the wife of Orsino, the Duke of Illyria, Sebastian – the husband of the rich and noble Countess Olivia.

In the character of Viola Shakespeare embodied the new ideal of a woman, which was very different from that of feudal times. The woman described in the literature of the Middle Ages, especially in the romances, were shown as passive objects of love.

Shakespeare shows that women have the right to equality and independence. Viola defends her right to happiness and love.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What is the plot of Twelfth Night?
2. What features of Shakespeare's comedies can be found in Twelfth Night?
3. What ideas did Shakespeare embody in the character of Viola?

### **1601-1608: Third Period**

This period includes Shakespeare's greatest tragedies and somber comedies. His main concern there is to reveal the darker side of human personality and its destructive passions. Shakespeare's dramatic genius was at its highest in the third

period of his literary work, when all of Shakespeare's famous tragedies appeared. In the plays of this period the dramatist reaches his full maturity. He presents great human problems. Shakespeare proves that it is not enough to be clever in order to achieve happiness, that human relations derive from social problems. He shows the social injustice and suffering of man. Something must be done to change the world, the laws of man and his morals. This is particularly stressed in the great tragedies of Hamlet and King Lear. The other major works of this period are: *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Julius Caesar*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, *Coriolanus*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Timon of Athens*. His comedies (*All's Well that Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*) were named the dark comedies and differ from those written during the first period as they have many tragic elements in them

### **Hamlet**

*Hamlet* is a philosophical drama, the tragedy of a humanist. It is the most widely staged, read and discussed of all Shakespeare's tragedies. Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is at the University of Wittenberg. A poor student Horatio [ho'reijiau] becomes his friend. Unexpectedly Hamlet learns of his father's death and hurries home to Elsinore. On his arrival Hamlet is shocked at finding his mother married to his uncle, his father's brother, Claudius, who becomes King of Denmark. The scene is laid in Denmark. It is night. Several soldiers are on guard. They are talking about the ghost that appears near the castle every night. The soldiers start to speak to him, but the ghost does not answer and disappears. They tell Hamlet about the ghost. Soon Hamlet comes and sees the ghost. In the ghost he recognizes the image of his father. The ghost beckons him and in spite of Horatio's warnings Hamlet follows him. The ghost tells Hamlet that his father has been treacherously killed by his brother Claudius. Claudius poured some poison into his ear while he was asleep in the garden. Having married Queen Gertrude he inherited the throne. The ghost calls on Hamlet to avenge his father's death. Hamlet is overwhelmed. He takes an oath to avenge his death. So

Hamlet pretends to be mad and makes biting remarks to the Queen, King and all the courtiers. Polonius, one of the Queen's courtiers, has two children, a daughter Ophelia and a son Laertes. Hamlet loves Ophelia, but he puts aside his love and simulates madness to conceal his plans. Hamlet's mother thinks it is only her unfaithfulness that has made him mad, and Polonius thinks Hamlet's love for his daughter is the only reason. Ophelia in her natural simplicity admires Hamlet, but in her blind obedience to her father she avoids him. Seeing the change in Hamlet, her heart nearly breaks with pity and sorrow. Hamlet wants to force the King to admit his crime. When a company of actors visits the castle, he arranges a play in which the actors perform the scene of a king's murder. Hamlet wants to make sure of the King's guilt. He says: "the play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king" And so he does. The King now understands that Hamlet knows his secret. Hamlet watches the behaviour of the Queen and the King and becomes sure of the treacherous murder of his father. In confusion the King and Queen leave the performance. Soon Hamlet is called to his

mother. He can't forgive her because she has married his father's murderer, and Hamlet tells her what he thinks of her. The Queen is frightened, she calls for help. During all this time Polonius stays hidden behind the curtains. On hearing the Queen's cry for help he makes a move behind the curtains. Hamlet thinks that it is the King and kills him. The death of Polonius by Hamlet's hand is at the same time a crushing blow to Ophelia. She becomes insane and drowns herself. The death of Polonius gives the King grounds for sending Hamlet out of the kingdom. On board a ship Hamlet goes to England under the care of two courtiers Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. They are given letters to the English court which read that Hamlet should be put to death as soon as he lands in England. Hamlet, suspecting some treachery, secretly gets the letters, and changes his name for the names of the courtiers. Soon after that their ship is attacked by pirates and Hamlet is taken prisoner but then he is set free. When Hamlet gets home the first thing he sees is the funeral of Ophelia. On learning of Hamlet's return the King thinks of a plan to do away with Hamlet. He persuades Laertes to challenge Hamlet to a duel and advises Laertes to prepare a poisoned weapon. In the duel Laertes inflicts a mortal wound on Hamlet. And then Hamlet and Laertes exchange swords and Hamlet wounds Laertes with his own poisoned sword. At that moment, the Queen, who is also present at the duel,

cries out that she is poisoned. She has drunk out of a glass of poisoned wine which the King prepared for Hamlet. The Queen dies. Laertes, feeling his life go, tells Hamlet that Claudius is the cause of all the misfortunes. With his last strength Hamlet kills him with his spear and both of them die.

Hamlet's last words are addressed to his friend Horatio whom he asks to tell his story to the world, as if commanding others to continue the struggle after his death. Hamlet is one of the greatest characters in world literature and the play is the internal drama of a human soul. The Renaissance atmosphere of art and learning governs this play, in which the central character is himself a Renaissance man.

### **1608-1612: Fourth Period**

This period includes Shakespeare's later dramatic romances and comedies. Here we see a decline in his power of thought and expression. Still his plays are tender and gracious. The famous works of this period are: *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *Cymbeline*, and *Henry VIII*. He wrote all these plays in collaboration with other dramatists.

These plays are called romantic dramas. There are no great problems and strong conflicts in them. Shakespeare has entered into the beautiful world of fantasy and allegory. Still, all the plays are masterly written, and they express his belief in the future happiness of mankind. Nature occupies an important place in Shakespeare's works. His own attitude to it changes as the author himself changes. In the early comedies his heroes find happiness and peace of mind in nature, in the tragedies nature turns against them, and in the romantic dramas one feels that man can conquer nature.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What plays was written by Shakespeare in the third period?
2. What problems does he present in the tragedies?

3. Compare the plays written in the second period with those written in the first. Comment on the change of mood in the second period.

4. What is the plot of Hamlet?

5. What makes Hamlet one of the greatest of Shakespeare's masterpieces?

6. What accounts for Hamlet's melancholy and irresolution?

### **Shakespeare's Contribution to the World Literature**

To sum up we can say that during his life-time Shakespeare created a variety of plays and characters. The ideas set out by the Renaissance, the struggle for happiness and freedom, are expressed by him in the most realistic forms.

Shakespeare's plays have become so popular in the world because of his great humanist ideas and his realistic characters. Shakespeare did not idealize the people he portrayed. He painted them as they were in his time. He created characters of great depth and unusual intellects. We see a philosopher in Hamlet, a learned man in Horatio, a cunning diplomat in Claudius.

Many scholars have studied Shakespeare. These are the central themes Shakespeare dealt with in his plays:

1. The idea of freedom for peoples. This is felt in his tragedies and historical plays.
2. Humanism. The love for mankind is seen in every play.
3. Freedom for the individual.
4. The idea of patriotism.
5. National unity under one strong king. The last two themes are stressed in King Lear.

6. Social relations between people.

7. The masses as a political force.

8. The themes of love and friendship which are developed in his sonnets as well as in his plays.

9. The struggle against cruel medieval blood-feuds (in Romeo and Juliet).

Shakespeare achieved great skill in speech individualization of his characters through the choice of words, and the use of folklore — popular songs, ballads and sayings. That is why the plays are written in the living language of the epoch.

There are some phrases that have become part of the everyday language of Englishmen. They have become sayings:

◆ All's well that ends well.

◆ All that glitters is not gold.

◆ A sea of troubles.

◆ Brevity is the soul of wit.

◆ To be or not to be, that is the question.

◆ Conscience doth make cowards of us all.

◆ Love's labour's (is) lost.

◆ Much ado about nothing.

◆ There is no darkness but ignorance.

◆ ...best men are moulded out of faults.

Shakespeare's ideas of love, freedom, humanism and national unity are still very popular. Shakespeare is far from us only in time. When he speaks in his plays, we feel that he speaks for us and to us. His plays are staged by all the world's theatres



and Ukraine as well. (Bohdan Beniuk) Fourteen operas were composed on the theme of Romeo and Juliet. Verdi, Rossini, Berlioz wrote operas on Othello and Macbeth. There are many symphonic works. Almost all Shakespeare's comedies and tragedies have appeared in the cinema. One of the best productions are Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Why have Shakespeare's plays become so popular in the world?
2. What characters did Shakespeare create?
3. What central themes did he deal with in his plays?
4. How did Shakespeare achieve great skill in speech individualization of characters?
5. Talk about the language of Shakespeare's plays.
6. Name the most important phrases which have become part of the language of Englishmen.
7. Prove that Shakespeare's plays are very popular.
8. Comment on Shakespeare's contribution to world literature.

# LECTURE 4

## Enlightenment and Pre-romanticism in English literature.

- I. **Enlightenment in English literature.**
  1. **Main features of Enlightenment**
  2. **Daniel Defoe**
  3. **Robinson Crusoe**
  4. **Jonathan Swift**
  5. **Robert Burns (1759-1796)**
- II. **Pre-romanticism in English literature. William Blake**
- III. **Enlightenment in American Literature**
  1. **Thomas Paine**
  2. **Thomas Jefferson**
  3. **Benjamin Franklin**
  4. **Philip Freneau.**

Literature during this period was often considered a tool for the advancement of knowledge. Writers were often found observing nature in their attempts to express their beliefs. Human nature was considered a constant that observation and reason could be applied to for the advancement of knowledge. Within these circumstances, the Age of Satire was born. Satire was the most popular literary tool that was utilized by writers of the time. With the help of satire, writers were better able to educate the public through literature. Its function was to acknowledge a problem in society and attempt to reform the problem in a comical manner while still educating the public. Its effectiveness can be seen in literary pieces by Jonathan Swift such as *A Modest Proposal* where he addresses and criticizes the problem of a growing famine in Ireland. Playwrights of the time were also known to incorporate satire in their plays. Through the use of satire, they were able to expose and critique social injustices. "Over the thirty years of its triumphs, Restoration comedy, in an astounding fugue of excesses and depravities, laid bare the turbulence and toxins of this culture" (Longman). Satire was a highly successful literary tool that worked to promote social awareness through literature, the theater and periodicals of the time.

To call the 18th century the Age of Reason is to seize on a useful half-truth but to cause confusion in the general picture, because the primacy of reason had also been a mark of certain periods of the previous age. It is more accurate to say that the 18th century was marked by two main impulses: reason and passion. The respect paid to reason was shown in pursuit of order, symmetry, decorum, and scientific knowledge; the cultivation of the feelings stimulated philanthropy, exaltation of personal relationships, religious fervour, and the cult of sentiment, or sensibility. In literature the rational impulse fostered satire, argument, wit, plain prose; the other inspired the psychological novel and the poetry of the sublime. The cult of wit, satire, and argument is evident in England in the writings of Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, and Samuel Johnson, continuing the tradition of Dryden from the 17th century. The novel was established as a major art form in English literature partly by a rational realism shown in the works of Henry

Fielding, Daniel Defoe, and Tobias Smollett and partly by the psychological probing of the novels of Samuel Richardson and of Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.

### **Daniel Defoe (1661-1731)**

Daniel Defoe is regarded as the founder of realistic novel in English and European literature. Daniel Defoe's life was complicated and adventurous. He was the son of a wealthy London butcher and received a good education. His father, being a *puritan*, wanted his son to become a priest. He preferred, however, the life of a merchant. He travelled in Spain, Germany, France and Italy on business. He spoke half a dozen languages and was a man of wide learning. From 1694 Defoe took an active part in public affairs. His energy enabled him to combine the life of a man of action with that of a writer. He was the earliest literary journalist in England. He wrote political pamphlets on any subject and every event. He was a man of an active and original mind, an independent and courageous thinker who dealt with social questions.

In his interesting *Essay on Projects* (1698) Daniel Defoe suggested all kinds of reforms in different spheres of social life: to establish savings-banks, to construct railways, to give higher education to women, to protect seamen etc.

In 1702 Defoe published a satirical pamphlet written in support of the protestants, or dissenters persecuted by the government and the Church. In the pamphlet *The Shortest Way Mrith the Dissenters* he defended the freedom of religious belief. He was punished for this and had to stand for three days in the pillory. The pillory sentence turned to his triumph. People brought him flowers and sang his *Hymn to the Pillory* (1703) in which he criticized the law.

After producing political pamphlets Defoe turned to writing novels. He came to it when he was nearly sixty. His first book of fiction was *Robinson Crusoe* [ 'robmsn 'km:sau] (1719). Its success encouraged Defoe. There followed a series of other novels: *Captain Singleton* (1720), *Moll Flanders* (1722), *Coione7Jacqrue* (1722) and *Roxana* [rok'saem) (1724). Daniel Defoe died in London in 1731 in poverty. He left behind him more than three hundred published works, and the reputation of being the "First English Journalist". Also, with his imaginative account of the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, he has become regarded as the forerunner of the great English novelists.

**Robinson Crusoe** is the story of an Englishman who travels abroad. He is trying to increase his wealth by trade. He is born in a well-to-do family and receives a good education. His father wants him to become a lawyer, but Robinson "would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea". He runs away from home, and his adventures begin: he is

shipwrecked several times, escapes out of slavery, works with great success on his plantation in Brazil until on his way to Guinea [ ' gmi] for Negro slaves he is shipwrecked and finds himself on a desert island.

Robinson settles there and carries money and a lot of various goods from the wreck to the island. He learns to tame wild goats, grow corn and make bread. One day he saves a man from cannibals and calls him Friday. Friday turns out to be a clever man. He learns English and becomes a devoted servant and companion to his

master. After many years Robinson and Friday help the captain of an English ship to defeat the crew who wants to leave their captain on the desert island. The ship takes Robinson to England.

The novel was suggested to Defoe by the story of Alexander Selkirk ['selk3:k], a Scotch sailor. He had left England for a voyage to the Southern Seas in 1704. The ship was not seaworthy, and Selkirk who had quarrelled with his captain insisted on going ashore. He was put ashore on a desert island where he lived quite alone for 5 years.

In 1709 he was picked up by a passing vessel. Defoe's hero, Robinson Crusoe, spends 28 years on a desert island, and the most famous part of the book concerns this time in his life. Robinson is both an individual outside society and a typical businessman. He makes use of the equipment which he takes from the ship: tools, pistols, money and other things. His behaviour is practical. He builds a house and fortifies it, he cultivates the ground, he tames animals. His religion is also business like: God helps those who help themselves.

Alone and defenceless Crusoe tried to be reasonable in order to master his despondency (loss of hope and courage). He knew that he must not give way to self-pity or fear, or to lose himself in mourning for his lost companions. Robinson Crusoe's most characteristic trait is his optimism. His guiding principle in life became "never say die". Sometimes of course, especially during earthquakes or when he was ill, panic and anxiety overtook him, but never for long. He had confidence in himself and in man and believed it was within the power of man to overcome all difficulties and hardships.

Another of Crusoe's good qualities which saved him from despair was his ability to put his whole heart into everything he did. He was an enthusiastic worker and always hoped for the best. The other central character of the book is Friday. Defoe makes the reader sympathize with Friday. Friday is intelligent, brave, generous, and skilful. He performs all tasks well. It is to Defoe's credit that he portrays the Negro as an able, pleasant human being at a time when coloured people were treated very badly. The second part of the book shows Robinson Crusoe as an old man who is still fond of the sea. He sets on a new series of adventures. He visits his island, China, Siberia and other places and returns home at the age of 72. The novel glorifies energy and practicalness. It is a praise to human labour and the triumph of man over nature. The book is still considered one of the masterpieces of English prose. It is read by both children and grown-ups throughout the world.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate briefly the story of Defoe's life.
2. Speak on Defoe's pamphlets. What themes did he touch upon in his articles and pamphlets?
3. What novels did Defoe write?
4. Discuss Robinson Crusoe according to the following plan:
  - a) the origin of the plot;
  - b) Crusoe — the main character of the book;
  - c) the educational value of the novel.
5. What characterizes Defoe as an Enlightener?

6. Say something about Friday, the other central character of the book.
7. What do you know about the second part of the book?
8. What does the novel glorify?

### **Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)**

The greatest of the prose satirists of the age of the Enlightenment was Jonathan Swift. His bitter satire was aimed at the policy of the English bourgeoisie towards Ireland. That's why Irish people considered Swift their champion in the struggle for the welfare and freedom of their country.

Jonathan Swift was born in Dublin, but he came from an English family. His father died before he was born. The boy saw little of his mother's care: she had to go back to her native town. He was supported by his uncle and from his very boyhood he learned how miserable it was to be depended on the charity of relatives. He was educated at Kilkenny school and Dublin University, Trinity College, to become a clergyman. At school he was fond of history, literature and languages. After graduating from the college he went to London and became private secretary to Sir William Temple who was a retired statesman and writer. Jonathan Swift improved his education at Sir William's library and in 1692 he took his Master of Arts degree at Oxford. He got a place of vicar in Ireland and worked there for a year and a half. He wrote much and burned most of what he wrote. Soon he grew tired of the lonely life in Ireland and was glad to accept Sir William Temple's proposal for his return to him. Swift lived and worked there until Temple's death in 1699. The satire *The Battle of the Books* (1697) marked the beginning of Swift's literary career. It depicts a war between books of modern and ancient authors. The book is an allegory and reflects the literary discussion of the time. Swift's first success was *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), a biting satire on religion. In the introduction to *A Tale of a Tub* the author tells of a curious custom of seamen. When a ship is attacked by a whale the seamen throw an empty tub into the sea to distract the whale's attention. The meaning of the allegory was quite clear to the readers of that time. The tub was religion which the state (for a ship has always been the emblem of a state) threw to its people to distract them from any struggle.

The satire is written in the form of a story about three brothers symbolizing the three main religions in England: Peter (the Catholic Church), Martin (the Anglican Church) and Jack (puritanism). It carries such ruthless attacks on religions that even now it remains one of the books, forbidden by the Pope of Rome.

In 1713 Swift was made Dean of St Patric's Cathedral in Dublin. Living in Dublin Swift became actively involved in the struggle of the Irish people for their rights and interests against English oppression and poetry. Swift's literary work was also closely connected with his political activity. In the numerous political pamphlets Swift ridiculed different spheres of life of bourgeois society: law, wars, politics etc. In 1726 Swift's masterpiece *Gulliver's Travels* appeared. All Swift's inventive genius and savage satire were at their best in this work. This novel brought him fame and immortality. Swift died on the 19th of October, 1745, in Dublin.

## **Gulliver's Travels**

Swift's novel *Gulliver's Travels* made him one of the greatest English prose writers of the 18th century. It has been translated into many languages. It is popular as a children's book, but it was meant for adults.

In the book Swift attacks his contemporary world and the social and political system of England. The book describes the adventures of Lemuel Gulliver, a ship's surgeon. It has four parts: Gulliver's voyages to 1) Lilliput, 2) Brobdingnag, 3) Laputa, 4) the country of the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos.

Originally the novel was to be the story of an imaginary world voyage by a certain Martin Scriblerus. Swift began to work on it in 1711 but it was not published till 1726, and in the interval the hero had changed his name to Lemuel Gulliver. He was not a ship's surgeon, but a farmer. People called him Big Doughty as he was of colossal size and had the strength of a Hercules. Swift made his acquaintance in Ireland, in the country of Cavan, where the writer used to pass his summer holidays. Big Doughty loved to show off his skill. Once he rescued a fellow-farmer from the persecution of a tax-collector by hiding him under the skirts of his overcoat. On another occasion he lifted a poor widow's cow out of a pound where it had been imprisoned for straying and delivered it safely to its mistress. The highlight of this show of strength was to carry a horse from one field to another across the fence. This impressed Swift tremendously. That is how Gulliver originated.

On the first voyage Gulliver is shipwrecked and finds himself in Lilliput. To his surprise, people are only "six inches high" there but they have the same vices and faults as the English: shallow interests, corrupted laws and evil customs. Their two struggling parties, the Big Endians and Little-Endians, distinguish themselves only by the high and low heels on their shoes. They drive the country into war over the question of whether an egg should be broken on its big or its little end.

The statesmen obtain posts by dancing on a tight rope. Whoever jumps the highest before the king gets the highest post. In this Swift satirizes the English court and aristocracy. Swift hated the English state system and looked for a better one. He believed in an ideal enlightened monarch. Gulliver meets such a king on his second voyage to Brobdingnag.

This is a country where giants live. Gulliver appears as ridiculous to these people of enormous size as the Lilliputians seemed to him. The country of the giants is

governed by common sense, reason and justice which is not the case in England. But even a clever king cannot do much for his people.

When Gulliver's box is carried off by an eagle and dropped into the sea he is rescued by an English ship. It takes Gulliver a long time to get used to the littleness of the houses, trees and the people once back in England. As far as the people are concerned it is their moral littleness that surprises Gulliver.

In the third part the author takes Gulliver to Laputa and the Academy in Lagado. In this part Swift laughs at every kind of impractical science and philosophy. The Laputans had illbuilt houses without one right angle.

They are odd, clumsy and unhandy people in their common actions and behaviour. Laputa is a flying island. It may be put in a position that it can take away the lands underneath "of the benefit of the sun and the rain and afflict the inhabitants with death and diseases". The flying island helps the king to exploit his people. In the description of the Academy Swift satirizes all kinds of inventors for their attempts to improve everything. They want to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, to soften marble for pillows, to simplify the language by abolishing words, etc. The Academy of Lagado is Swift's parody on projectors whose "science" has nothing to do with real life.

It is in Book IV that Swift's satire is the bitterest. Gulliver finds himself in a land ruled by Houyhnhnms, intelligent and virtuous horses who are ignorant of such vices as stealing, lying, love of money. The rest of the population is made up of Yahoos, ugly creatures that look like human beings in appearance and possess all the human vices. They are greedy, envious and malicious. Gulliver admires the simple modest way of life of the Houyhnhnms and is disgusted with the Yahoos who remind him so much of his countrymen that he hates. Swift used his favourite weapon — laughter — to mock at bourgeois reality. He criticized it and his criticism was hidden away in a whole lot of allegorical pictures.

Thackeray, an outstanding English writer, described Jonathan Swift: "As fierce a beak and talon as ever stuck, as strong a wing as ever beat, belonged to Swift". Swift's art had a great effect on the further development of English and European literature. Swift's democratic ideas expressed in the book had a great influence on the English writers who came after Swift.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Jonathan Swift born?
2. Where did he get his education?
3. Speak about his first notable work The Battle of the Books.
4. What biting satire was Swift's first success?
5. Speak on the pamphlets written in defence of Ireland.
6. When did Swift's masterpiece Gulliver's Travels appear?
7. How many parts does the novel Gulliver's Travels consist of?
8. What did Swift mock at in the part devoted to Lilliputs?
9. Speak on Swift's world outlook as shown in the second part of the book.
10. What did Swift ridicule in Gulliver's third travel?
11. Comment on Swift's attitude to science. What kind of science does he criticize?
12. Speak on the meaning on the last part of the book.

13. What did Thackeray say about Jonathan Swift?
14. What is the origin of the novel Gulliver's Travels?

### **Robert Burns (1759-1796)**

The greatest poet of the 18th century was Robert Burns. His popularity in Scotland is very great. The Scottish bard was born in a clay cottage in the village of Alloway. His father was a poor farmer, but a man who valued knowledge. It was from his father that Robert received his learning and his love for books. His mother had a beautiful voice and taught Robert old Scottish songs and ballads which he later turned into his best poems.

Robert Burns had no regular schooling. But when Robert was seven, his father engaged a teacher to educate him and his brother Gilbert. John Murdoch, an eighteen year-old scholar, was a very enthusiastic teacher. He taught Robert, who was his favourite, many subjects, French and literature among them.

However, Robert could not afford much time for his studies. His father wanted to try his hand at farming and Robert had to help him on the farm.

At the age of thirteen he had to take over from his father most of the work on the farm as his father was growing old.

Those were hard times for Robert, and he had to leave school. Nearly all life Robert Burns worked on his small piece of land. At fifteen he did most of the work on the farm, his father's health being very poor. And as Burns followed the plough he whistled and sang. He made up his own words to the old folk tunes of Scotland that he knew so well. In his songs he spoke of what he saw—of the woods and fields and valleys, of the deer and the skylark and the small field-mouse, of the farmer's poor cottage.

Burns wrote his first verses when he was fifteen. Very soon his poems became popular among his friends and acquaintances. In 1785 he met a girl, who became the great love of all his life and inspirer of his numerous lyrical verses. Jean had a wonderful voice and knew a lot of old melodies to which Burns composed his songs.

In 1786 Burns published his first book under the title of Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect. The book was a great success. He was invited to Edinburgh. He conquered the Edinburgh society by his wit and manners as much as by poetry. In Edinburgh he was often advised to write in standard English on noble themes, but he refused. He wanted to write poetry about the people and for the people. While in Edinburgh Burns got acquainted with some enthusiasts of Scottish songs and ballads and became engaged in collecting the treasures of the Scottish folklore. He travelled about Scotland collecting popular songs.

After his father's death he did not give up farming and worked hard to earn his living. In 1791 Burns got the post of excise officer and moved to Dumfries. The last years of his life were very hard. The hard daily work on the farm, the constant starvation and privations finally undermined Burns's health. On July 21, 1796, at the age of 37, Burns died. His body rests in a Mausoleum in Dumfries. The house in Alloway, where he was born, has now been restored. Every year thousands of people from all over the world come there to pay homage



to the great poet.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Robert Burns born?
2. What can you say about his mother and father?
3. Where was he educated?
4. Why couldn't he afford much time for his studies?
5. Why did he have to leave school?
6. How did Burns make up his songs?
7. When did he write the first verses?
8. Who was his inspirer of the numerous lyrical verses?
9. What was the title of his first book?
10. Where was Burns invited?
11. How was he met by the Edinburgh society?
12. When did Burns get the post of excise officer in Dumfries?
13. When did he die?
14. Where does his body rest?
15. Relate the main facts of Burns's life

### **Burns's Literary Work**

Robert Burns's poetry was inspired by his deep love for his motherland, for its history and folklore. His beautiful poem *My Heart's in the Highlands*, full of vivid colourful descriptions, is a hymn to the beauty of Scotland's nature and to its glorious past. He admires the green valleys, "mountains high cover'd with snow, and wild hanging woods". He calls his country: "The birthplace of valour, the country of worth."

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,  
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;  
Chasing the wild-deer, and following the roe,  
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,  
The birth-place of Valour, the country of Worth ;  
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,  
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains, high-cover'd with snow,  
Farewell to the straths and green vallies below;  
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods,  
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,  
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;  
Chasing the wild-deer, and following the roe,  
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

In Burns's poems nature forms a part of people's life, though he does not personify it. Burns is inspired by deep love for Scotland, its history and folklore.

Address to Edinburgh is a hymn to the common Scottish people:

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,  
With open arms the stranger hail;  
Their views enlarg'd, their liberal mind,  
Above the narrow, rural vale:  
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,  
Or modest Merit's silent claim;  
And never may their sources fail!  
And never Envy blot their name!

Burns's poetry is closely connected with the national struggle of the Scottish people for their liberation from English oppression, the struggle that had been going on in Scotland for many centuries. His favourite national hero is William Wallace (1270-1305), the leader of the uprising against the English oppressors. The Scottish people led by Wallace and Robert Bruce (1274- 1329), King of Scotland, overthrew the English army in the battle at Bannockburn in 1314 and secured Scottish independence.

Bruce at Bannockburn is one of the best poem by Burns. It is the poet's call to his people to keep up the freedom-loving spirit of their fathers.

Scots, who have with Wallace bled,  
Scots, whom Bruce has often led,  
Welcome to your gory bed, Or  
to victory!  
By oppression's woes and pains! By  
your sons in servile chains! We will  
drain our dearest veins, But they shall  
be free!  
Lay the proud usurpers low!  
Tyrants fall in every foe!  
Liberty's in every blow! -  
Let us do, or die!

Robert Burns is a true son of the Scottish peasantry. His poems express their thoughts and hopes, their human dignity, and their love of freedom and hatred for all oppressors. In his poem *A Man's A Man For A' That* Burns says that it is not wealth and titles, but the excellent qualities of man's heart that make "a man for a' that".

The poet praises the healthy, happy, wise Scottish peasant, who in his shabby clothes is worth a score of lords, however fine.

*A Man's A Man For A 'That'*

Is there for honest Poverty  
That hings his head, an' a' that;  
The coward-slave, we pass him by,  
We dare be poor for a' that!  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
Our toils obscure an' a' that,  
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,  
Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that;  
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine;  
A Man's a Man for a' that:  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Their tinsel show, an' a' that;  
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,  
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,  
Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that,  
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,  
He's but a coof for a' that.

For a' that, an' a' that,  
His ribband, star, an' a' that,  
The man o' independent mind,  
He looks an' laughs at a' that.

A Prince can mak a belted knight,  
A marquis, duke, an' a' that!  
But an honest man's aboon his might –  
Guid faith, he mauna fa' that!

For a' that, an' a' that,  
Their dignities, an' a' that,  
The pith o' Sense an' pride o' Worth  
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,  
As come it will for a' that,  
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth  
Shall bear the gree an' a' that.  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
It's comin yet for a' that,  
That Man to Man the warld o'er  
Shall brithers be for a' that.

Titles and riches are not enough to make people happy. Many verses of the poet were inspired by the French Revolution which he supported with all his heart. In his poem *The Tree of Liberty* Burns praised the French revolutionaries who planted "The Tree of Liberty" in their country. In this poem Burns expresses his belief that the time will come when all people will be equal and happy.

Like brothers in a common cause We'd  
on each other smile, man; And equal  
rights and equal laws World gladden  
every isle, man.

In spite of his poverty, hunger and never-ceasing toil, Burns was an optimist. He enjoyed life as few of his contemporaries did. The poem *John Barleycorn* expresses Burns's optimism. It tells of the way people prepare whiskey. The poem is symbolic in its meaning. John Barleycorn personifies the strength of the common people which is immortal and cannot be done away with. Three kings wanted to kill John Barleycorn.

John Barleycorn  
The were three kings into the east,  
Three kings both great and high, And  
they had sworn a solemn oath  
John Barleycorn should die.

They took a plough and ploughed him down,  
Put clods upon his head, And they had  
sworn a solemn oath  
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerful spring came kindly on, And  
showers began to fall;  
John Barleycorn, got up again, And  
sore surpris'd them all.

However, all their efforts were in vain. John Barleycorn was not dead, as his joyful spirit was alive in those who had a chance "to taste his blood".

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,  
Of noble enterprise, For if you  
do but taste his blood,  
It will make your courage rise.

It will make a man forget his woe;  
It will heighten all his joy: It will make the  
widow's heart to sing,  
Though the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,  
Each man a glass in hand; And  
may his great posterity  
Ne'er fail in old Scotland.

Burns was a remarkable lyric poet. His lyrical poems are known for their beauty, truthfulness, freshness, depth of feelings and their lovely melody. Among his best lyrics is *Oil, My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose*.

O my Love's like a red, red rose  
That's newly sprung in June; O  
my Love's like the melody That's  
sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass<sup>3</sup>, So deep in  
love am I; And I will love thee still, my  
dear, Till all the seas go dry.

Till all the seas go dry my dear, And the  
rocks melt with the sun; OI will love  
thee still, my dear, While the sands of  
life shall run.

And fare thee well, my only Love! And  
fare thee well a while! And I will come  
again, my Love, Though it were ten  
thousand mile!

Many of Burns's lyrical poems have been put to music and are sung by all English-speaking people. One of them is *Auld Lang Syne*, a beautiful song of brotherhood and friendship.

#### **Auld Lang Syne**

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind ?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And days of lang syne!

Chorus

For auld lang syne, my dear,  
For auld lang syne,  
We'll take a cup of kindness yet  
For auld lang syne!  
We two have wandered in the brook From

morning sun till dine<sup>3</sup>, But seas between us  
broad have roared Since auld lang syne.  
And there's a hand, my trusty friend,  
And give us a hand of thine<sup>4</sup>; And we'll  
take a right hearty drink. For auld lang  
syne.

Burns's wit, humour, contempt for falsehood and hypocrisy are best revealed in his epigrams — short four line satirical verses in which he attacks lords, churchmen, persons of rank. The biting satire of his epigrams was greatly admired by the common people. Here are the three epigrams in which Robert Burns shows the ignorance of the nobility, the falsehood of the priests and his hatred of the rich.

### *Epigrams*

#### **The Book-Warms**

Once Burns was invited by a nobleman to see his magnificent library. Observing a splendidly bound, but uncut and worm-eaten copy of Shakespeare on the table, the poet left the following lines in the volume:

Through and through the inspired leaves, Ye  
maggots, make your windings; But, oh!  
respect his lordship's taste, And spare the  
golden bindings.

#### **The Parson's Looks**

Someone remarked that he had seen falsehood in the very look of a certain priest. The poet replied:  
That there is falsehood in his looks I  
must and will deny; They say their  
master is a knave — And sure they  
do not lie.

#### **Pinned to a Lady's Coach**

The following lines were addressed to the coach of a very rich lady.  
If you rattle along like your mistress's tongue, Your  
speed will outrival the dart; But a fly for your load,  
you'll break down on the road, If your stuff be as  
rotten's her heart.

The name of Burns is very dear to all English-speaking nations because the source of his poetry was the folklore and the songs of his people whose true son he was. In our country Robert Burns is widely known, loved and sung. Now Robert Burns is considered the national poet of Scotland, and January 25 — the date of his birth — is always celebrated by Scotchmen.

### **Another trend in the English literature of the second half of the 18th century was the so-called pre-romanticism.**

It originated among the conservative groups of men of letters' as a reaction against Enlightenment. The mysterious element plays a great role in the works of preromanticists. One of pre-romanticists was William Blake (1757 -1827), who in spite of his mysticism, wrote poems full of human feelings and sympathy for the

oppressed people. Blake's effectiveness comes from the poetic "contrasts" and simple rhythms.

### **William Blake (1757-1827)**

William Blake was born in London into the family of trades people. The family was neither rich nor poor. Blake did not receive any formal education but he demonstrated good knowledge of English literature, particularly Milton'. At the age of 14 he became an apprentice engraver, and is as well known for his engravings as for his poetry. Blake has always been seen as a strange character, largely because of his childhood experience of seeing visions.

He was a very religious man, but he rejected the established church, declaring that personal experience, the inner-light, should direct and guide man.

William Blake had a very individual view of the world. His religious philosophy is seen through his works *Songs of Innocence* (1789), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790) and *Songs of Experience* (1794). His poems are simple but symbolic. For example, in his poems *The Tiger* and *The Lamb*, the tiger is the symbol of mystery, the lamb – the symbol of innocence.

*The Tyger* is a mystical poem that, rather than describes a tiger, an animal that Blake had never seen, is a perception of the Universal Energy, a power beyond good and evil. In the poem the nature of universal energy becomes clear through a series of questions, which the reader is forced to answer. This makes the reader enter into the poem, becoming part of the poetic experience. During the poem, the reader passes from a state of ignorance to a state of understanding. In this way the poem becomes an "experience" for the reader as well as a picture of an experience felt by the poet.

*From Songs of Experience*

#### **The Tyger**

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,  
Could twist the sinews of the heart?  
And when the heart began to beat,  
What dread hand?  
And what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil?  
What dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And water'd heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he make the Lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger! Burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

Blake's later poems are very complex symbolic texts but his voice in the early 1790s is the conscience of the Romantic age. He shows a contrast between a world of nature and childhood innocence and a world of social control. Blake saw the dangers of an industrial society in which individuals were lost, and in his famous poem *London* he calls the systems of society "mind forged manacles". For Blake, London is a city in which the mind of everyone is in chains and all individuals are imprisoned. Even the River Thames has been given a royal charter (charter'd given rights) so that it can be used for commerce and trade.

*From Songs of Experience*  
*London*

I wander thro' each charter'd street. Near  
where the charter'd Thames does flow, And  
mark in every face I meet Marks of  
weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man, In every  
Infant's cry of fear, In every voice,  
every ban The mind forg'd  
manacles I hear.

William Blake thought that childhood was the perfect period of sensibility and experience, and he fought against injustices against children. In his poem *The Chimney Sweeper* he shows how the modern world, the world of chimney sweepers, corrupts and "dirties" children.

Using the symbolic technique of a "dream", Blake presents a heavenly view of children who are clean, naked, innocent, and happy, and contrasts it with the reality of the sweep's life, which is dirty, cold, corrupted and unhappy.

The poem refers to the terrible social conditions of the sweep. These children were sold by their parents when they were very young. They got up early in the morning and worked all day in awful conditions, suffering from the cold. In Tom's dream, happiness and delight become reality. The poem is simple and sentimental. Blake avoids in it the more complex aspects of his mystical symbols. William Blake's poetry was not immediately recognized during his lifetime, because of its mysticism. His etchings were more immediately popular and, like his poetry, reflect his great power of imagination.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. How was the trend in the English literature of the second half of the 18th century called?
- 2 What is the reason of its origination^
- 3 Characterize the works of the pre-romanticists.
- 4 Tell the main facts of William Blake s lite. Give a brief account of his literary career

## **Part III**

### **ENLIGHTENMENT IN AMERICA**

In America the literature of the Enlightenment is closely connected with the War for Independence against the British Empire. It lasted for eight years (1776-1783). The war ended in adopting the Declaration of Independence. A Federative Democratic Republic – the United States of America – was founded. This event was extremely significant for the further development of the country, as it gave freedom and independence to the American colonies.

But the Bourgeois Revolution had its drawbacks. It did not abolish slavery, nor did it improve the life of American colonists, the working people and farmers.



The progressive writers of that time protested against the injustice of slavery and the growth of reaction.

American literature of the Enlightenment period is characterized by its fighting character. The writers of that time wrote political pamphlets and revolutionary poetry. The most popular writers of the time were **Thomas Paine**, **Thomas Jefferson** and **Benjamin Franklin**, and the poet **Philip Freneau**.

**Thomas Paine** (1737— 1809) was the most democratic representative of the American Enlightenment movement.

In 1775 he published his pamphlet *Common Sense* which urged the separation of the American colonies from England. During the War of Independence he wrote *The Crisis* (1776 -1783), a series of pamphlets, containing his comments on the events of the war against England. While in France he wrote *The Rights of Man* (1791 - 1792), a political essay.

Thomas Jefferson (1743— 1826) was a writer of the revolutionary period in America. Besides he was a lawyer, philosopher, architect, statesman. In 1776 as a member of the Continental Congress he was in the committee of five to draft the Declaration of Independence. He

outlined the principles of revolutionary bourgeois democracy. In 1800 Jefferson won the elections and served two terms as President of the USA.

**Benjamin Franklin** (1706-1790) is the most significant representative of the Enlightenment period in American literature. He distinguished himself as a great statesman, a scientist, a journalist, an economist, and a philosopher.

Franklin's most important pamphlets and essays were published in his famous *Poor Richard's Almanac* (1732— 1757) which played a very important role in spreading ideas of the Enlightenment period.

Franklin made a fundamental contribution to the Declaration of Independence.

**Philip Freneau** (1752— 1832) was the most outstanding poet of the Revolution. He wrote political poems.

A Poem of the Rising Glory of America (1772) was full of belief in the birth of a new world where freedom would reign. In the poem *To the Americans* (1775) the poet called for a rebellion against the British rule. The Republican Genius of Europe welcomed the French Revolution. In his poems Freneau described his disappointment with the revolution as he thought that the American Bourgeois Revolution had not satisfied the demands of the people.

Though Freneau's political verse was his most important contribution to American poetry, he wrote also lyrical poems of which *The Indian Burying Ground* and *The Wild Honey Suckle* are the best.

Freneau also wrote prose. He published some letters and essays. Philip Freneau is considered to be one of the first truly American poets. He was the poet of American independence. He was the poet-journalist of contemporary affairs. All his life he fought for freedom in America.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What is the literature of the Enlightenment in America closely connected with?
2. What was adopted when the war ended?
3. Why was this event extremely significant for the country?
4. What drawbacks did the Bourgeois Revolution have?
5. What is American literature of the Enlightenment period characterized by?
6. What did the writers of that time write?
7. Name the most popular writers of that time.
8. What were Pain's famous works before and during the Revolution?
9. Characterize Jefferson as a writer and a statesman.
10. What did Franklin do for the American Revolution as a journalist, and as a statesman?
11. Give a brief account of Philip Freneau's literary career.
12. Why can Freneau be considered one of the first truly American poets?

## **LECTURE 5. The Romantic Period (1798-1837)**

### **I. Difference Between Classicism and Romanticism**

- 1. William Wordsworth (1770-1850)**
- 2. George Byron (1788-1824)**
- 3. Percy Bysshe Shelley**
- 4. Walter Scott**

### **II. American Literature of Romanticism**

The most flourished period in the history of English literature is the *Romantic Period*. It was a revolt against the Classical school of the 18th Century.

Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Shelley, Keats, and Byron belonged to this period. The Romantic Age was basically the age of poetry. With the publication of *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth and Coleridge introduced a new form of poetry in opposition to the poetry of the Classical school.

The Romantic poets focused on the simplicity of language and chose the language of the common people. They looked back to the Elizabethan masters—Shakespeare, Spenser and others—in order to take inspiration from them. Their poems usually dealt with the events of everyday life. The Romantic poets proved that if the trivial aspects of nature and the common things of life are treated in the right way, they could be as interesting and significant as the grand aspects of nature and life.

The prose writers of the Romantic period also rejected the Augustan style of writing. They reverted to the ponderous, poetical and flowery prose of the Renaissance. Since the Romantic Age was characterized by the excess of emotions, it produced a new type of novel—the Gothic Novel—which soon became popular among the multitude of readers with its Gothic elements such as supernatural, gloomy settings and bizarre situations.

#### **5.1 Difference Between Classicism and Romanticism**

Romanticism was explicitly opposed to Classicism. While the Classical Age was the age of prose, the Romantic Age was the age of poetry. During the Romantic Period, poetry became the proper medium of the expression of thoughts, emotions, and imaginative process of the artist. Classicism laid stress upon the impersonal aspects of life, whereas Romantic literature openly shifted the center of art to the personal aspects of individuals.

Moreover, the heroic couplet was the only form of writing poetry in the Classical Age. While in the Romantic Period, the poets focused on simple and natural diction. The liberty of the poet from the shackles of the literary rules was the watchword of the Romantic movement. Thus, Romantic literature is a genuinely creative literature focusing on the highest creative faculty of man.

### **ROMANTICISM**

The period of Romanticism covers approximately 30 years, beginning from the last decade of the 18th century and continuing up to the 1830s. Romanticism as a literary current can be regarded as a result of two great historical events: 1) the

Industrial Revolution in England and 2) the French Bourgeois Revolution of 1789. The Industrial Revolution began with the invention of a weavring-machine which could do the work of 17 people. The weavers that were left without work thought that the machines were to blame for their misery. They began to destroy these machines, or frames as they were called.

The frame-breaking movement was called the Luddite movement, because the name of the first man to break a frame was Ned Ludd. The reactionary ruling class of England was against any progressive thought influenced by the French Revolution. The last decade of the 18th century became known as the "white terror". Progressive-minded people were persecuted and forced into exile.

The Industrial Revolution in England, as well as the French Bourgeois Revolution, had a great influence on the cultural life of the country. Romanticists were dissatisfied with the present state of things in their country. Some of the writers were revolutionary: they denied the existing order, called upon the people to struggle for a better future, shared the people's desire for liberty and objected to colonial oppression. They supported the national liberation wars on the continent against feudal reaction. Such writers were George Gordon Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Others, though they had welcomed the French Revolution and the slogan of liberty, fraternity and equality, later abandoned revolutionary ideas. They turned their attention to nature and to the simple problems of life. They turned to the ideas of the feudal past by way of protest of capitalist reality. Among these writers were the poets William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, who formed the "Lake School", called so because they all lived for a time in the beautiful Lake District in the north-west of England. They dedicated much what they wrote to Nature. Legends, tales, songs and ballads became part of the creative method of the romanticists. The romanticists were talented poets and their contribution to English literature was very important.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. When did romanticism come into being?
2. What historical events did this new literary current coincide with?
3. Why did romanticism come into being?
4. What were romanticists dissatisfied with?
5. Comment on the differences between the revolutionary romanticism of England and the poets of the "Lake School".
6. What are the representatives of revolutionary romanticism?
7. What writers belonged to the "Lake School"?
8. What themes did the poets of the "Lake School" choose for their verses?

### **William Wordsworth (1770-1850)**

William Wordsworth was the greatest representative of the Lake School Poets. He was born in a lawyer's family and grew up in the Lake District, a place of mountains and lakes. Soon after mother's death in 1788 he was sent to Hawkshead Grammar School, situated in a lovely village near Lake Windermere. The boy was

allowed plenty of leisure: to go boating and fishing on the lake and studying wild life in the woods. There William came to know and love the world of nature. His father died leaving him an orphan at the age of thirteen. His two uncles sent him to Cambridge University. During his college days William took a walking tour in France, Switzerland and Italy. After graduating he toured Wales and France and became deeply involved in the cause of the French Revolution in which he saw a great movement for human freedom. Later he was greatly disappointed at the outcome of the Revolution. He thought that it had brought only cruelty and bloodshed. William withdrew into the quiet of the country. In about 1795 William Wordsworth met the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who became one of his closest friends. In 1797 he two poets published their best work Lyrical Ballads.

William Wordsworth wrote sonnets and ballads. The most characteristic themes of Wordsworth's poetry were the common people, their feelings and beliefs, the beauty of nature. Every object in nature was in his eyes a source of poetry. His fame grew worldwide.

When he died he was buried in the little church at Grasmere in the Lake District.

### *The Daffodils*

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden daffodils,  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;  
A poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company.  
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the Milky Way  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of the bay;  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads  
in sprightly dance.

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude  
And then my heart  
with pleasure fills,  
And dances with  
the daffodils.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Give a brief account of Wordsworth's life.
2. Name his first notable work.
3. What did Wordsworth write?
4. What were the most characteristic themes of Wordsworth's poetry?
5. What was every object in nature in his eyes?
6. Express the idea of the poem *The Daffodils* in some sentences.

### **George Byron (1788-1824)**

George Gordon Byron, the great romantic poet, has often been called a poet of "world sorrow". In almost all his poetry there is a current of gloom and pessimism. The reason for this gloom and sorrow may be found in the social and political events of his day which influenced him so deeply. During his childhood the First Bourgeois Revolution took place in France. At the same time the Industrial Revolution developed in England and the invention of new machines, which supplanted workers, brought misery to thousands of labourers. Wars,

political oppression of the masses, all these facts observed by the poet, gave rise to his discontent with the social and political life of his time and that's why his poetry was full of gloom and sorrow. But Byron was not inclined to accept the then existing conditions passively. He raised his voice to condemn them, and to call men to active struggle against the social evils of his time. That's why he may be rightly called a revolutionary romanticist. Byron's heroes, like the poet himself, are strong individuals who are disillusioned in life and fight single-handed against the injustice and cruelty of society.

The poet was born on January 22, 1788 in an ancient aristocratic family in London. His father, an army captain, died when the boy was three years old. The boy spent his childhood in Aberdeen, Scotland, together with his mother. His mother, Catherine Gordon, was a Scottish lady of honorable birth and respectable fortune. Byron was lame and felt distressed about it all his life, yet, thanks to his strong will and regular training, he became an excellent rider, a champion swimmer and a boxer and took part in athletic activities.

When George lived in Aberdeen he attended grammar school. In 1798 George's granduncle died and the boy inherited the title of lord and the Byron's family estate, Newstead Abbey. It was situated near Nottingham, close to the famous Sherwood Forest. Together with his mother the boy moved to Newstead Abbey from where he was sent to Harrow School. At the seventeen he entered Cambridge University. He was very handsome. He had a beautiful manly profile. His contemporary young men tried to imitate his clothes, his manners and even his limping gait. He seemed proud, tragic and melancholic. But he could also be very cheerful and witty.

Byron's literary career began while he was at Cambridge. His first volume of verse entitled *Hours of Idleness* (1807) contained a number of lyrics dealing with love, regret and parting. There were also some fragments of translation from Latin and Greek poetry. His poems were severely criticized by the Edinburgh Review, the leading literary magazine of that time. The poet answered with a biting satire in verse, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809), in which he attacked the reactionary critics and the three Lake School Poets, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey.

After graduating from Cambridge University in 1809 Byron started on a tour through Portugal, Spain, Greece, Turkey and Albania. He returned home in 1811. By right of birth he was a member of the House of Lords. On February 27, 1812 Byron made his first speech in the House of Lords. He spoke passionately in defence of the Luddites (*Luddites were workers who expressed their protest against exploitation by breaking machines. Ned Ludd was the first to destroy frames*)

He blamed the government for the unbearable conditions of workers' life. In his parliament speech Byron showed himself a staunch champion of the people's cause, and that made the reactionary circles hate him.

In 1812 the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* were published. They were received by his contemporaries with a burst of enthusiasm. He became one of the most popular men in London. He himself remarked, "I awoke one morning

and found myself famous".

Between 1813 and 1816 Byron composed his *Oriental Tales*. The most famous of tales are *The Giaour*, *The Corsair* and *Lara*, all of which embody the poet's romantic individualism. The hero is a rebel against society, a man of strong will and passion. Proud and independent, he rises against tyranny and injustice to gain his personal freedom and happiness. His revolt, however, is too individualistic, and therefore it is doomed to failure.

In this period Byron began to write his political satires, the most outstanding of which is the *Ode to Framers of the Frame Bill*.

In 1815 Byron married Miss Isabella Milbanke, a religious woman, cold and pedantic. It was an unhappy match for the poet. Though Byron was fond of their only child Augusta Ada, he and his wife parted. The scandal surrounding the divorce was great. Byron's enemies found their opportunity and used it against him. They began to persecute him. The great poet was accused of immorality and had to leave his native country.

In May 1816 Byron went to Switzerland where he made the acquaintance of Percy Bysshe Shelley, and the two poets became close friends.

While in Switzerland Byron wrote Canto the Third of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1816), *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816), a lyrical drama *Manfred* (1817) and a number of lyrical poems.

*The Prisoner of Chillon* describes the tragic fate of the Swiss revolutionary Bonnivard who spent a number of years of his life in prison with his brothers. Chillon is a castle on the shore of Lake Geneva, Switzerland. The story told by Byron had real historical foundation. Bonnivard was an active fighter for the liberation of his native city of Geneva from the control of Charles III, Duke of Savoy. Bonnivard was a republican, and the Duke of Savoy imprisoned him in the Castle of Chillon where he was kept from 1530 to 1536 without trial. In 1536 the citizens of Bern, Switzerland, captured the Castle of Chillon and released Bonnivard.

In 1816 Byron wrote his *Song for the Luddites* where he again raised his voice in defence of the oppressed workers, encouraging them to fight for freedom.

In 1817 Byron went to Italy, where he lived till 1823. At this time political conditions in Italy were such as to rouse his indignation. He wished to see the country one and undivided. Acting on this idea, the poet joined the secret organization of the Corbanari which was engaged in the struggle against the Austrian oppressors.

The Italian period (1817-1823), influenced by revolutionary ideas, is considered the summit of Byron's poetical career. Such works as *Beppo* (1818), and his greatest work *Don Juan* (1819-1824) are the most realistic works written by the poet. It is a novel in verse, that was to contain 24 cantos, but death stopped his work and only 16 and a half cantos were written. Though the action in *Don Juan* takes place at the close of the 18th century, it is easy enough to understand that the author depicts the 19th century Europe and gives a broad panorama of contemporary life.

Other works of this period are: *Canto the Fourth of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1817), *The Prophecy of Dante* (1821), where speaking in the person of the great Italian poet Dante, Byron calls upon Italians to fight for their independence; the tragedy *Cain* (1821).

Once Byron wrote:

When a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,  
Let him combat for that of his neighbours.

The defeat of the Carbonari uprising (1823) was a great blow to Byron. The Greek war against Turkey attracted his attention. He went to Greece to take part in the struggle for national independence. His restless life ended there. Soon after his arrival he was seized with fever and died on April 18, 1824. He was thirty-six years old. The poet's heart was buried in Greece, his body was taken to England and buried near Newstead. The government did not allow him to be buried in Westminster Abbey.

Only in 1969 the authorities finally allowed his remains to be buried in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. His death was mourned by the progressive people throughout Europe. Goethe spoke of him in his *Faust*.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Why has Byron often been called a poet of "world sorrow"?
2. What was the reason for this gloom and sorrow?
3. What were the political events of his time which influenced him so deeply?
4. How did Byron accept the existing conditions?
5. Why may he rightly be called a revolutionary romanticist?
6. What are the characteristic features of Byron's heroes?
7. Relate the main facts of Byron's childhood.
8. Where did Byron get education?
9. When did his literature career begin?
10. How was his first volume of verse entitled?
11. What was Byron's first speech in the House of Lords about?
12. When did he become one of the most popular men in London?
13. What period is Byron's creative work usually divided into?
14. What works were written by Byron in the London period?
15. Characterize the hero of his *Oriental Tales*.
16. What are the titles of his works in the Swiss period?
17. Speak on the origin of the plot of his poem *The Prisoner of Chillon*.
18. What can you say about the Italian period of his work?
19. Why did Byron go to Greece?
20. When did he die?

### **Childe Harold's Pilgrimage**

#### **Don Juan**

#### **Mazepa**

**Percy Bysshe Shelley** (1792-1822) – Percy Bysshe Shelley was the most progressive revolutionary romanticist in English literature.



Like Byron, he came of an aristocratic family and like Byron he broke with his class at an early age. He was born at Field Place, Sussex. His father was a baronet. Shelley was educated at Eton public school and Oxford University.

There he wrote a pamphlet *The Necessity of Atheism* for which he was expelled from the University. His father forbade him to come home. Shelley had an independent spirit, and he broke with his family and his class for ever. He travelled from one town to another, took an active part in the Irish liberation movement and at last left England for Italy in 1818. There he wrote his best poetry. Shelley's life was mainly spent in Italy and Switzerland, but he kept ties with England.

In 1822 the poet was drowned. When his body was washed ashore he was cremated by Byron and his other friends. His remains were buried in Rome. The inscription on his tomb reads:

*Percy Bysshe Shelley*

*Cor Cordium (the heart of hearts)*

Like Byron, Shelley was devoted to the revolutionary ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. He believed in the future of mankind. He never lost faith in the power of love and good will. He thought that if men were granted freedom and learned to love one another they could live together peacefully. This hope fills his first poems *Queen Mab* (1813), *The Revolt of Islam* (1818) and his later poetic drama *Prometheus Unbound*.

The plot of the poem *Queen Mab* is symbolic. Queen Mab, a fairy, shows the past, present and future of mankind to a beautiful girl. Queen Mab shows the ideal society of the future where men are equal, free and wise.

*The Revolt of Islam* is a romantic and abstract poem, but it is a revolutionary one. Shelley protested against the tyranny of religion and of the government, gave pictures of the revolutionary movement for freedom and foretold a happier future for the whole of mankind.

In *Prometheus Unbound* Shelley gives the Greek myth his own interpretation. He sings of the struggle against tyranny. The sharp conflict between Prometheus and Jupiter (the chief of the Roman gods) is in the centre of the drama. Prometheus is bound to a rock by Jupiter for stealing fire from the gods and giving it to mankind. The huge spirit Demogorgon, representing the Creative Power, defeats Jupiter and casts him down. Prometheus is set free and reunited with his wife Asia (Nature). The fact that Jupiter is dethroned symbolizes change and revolution. Now the mind of man can look forward to a future which is "good, joyous, beautiful and free. When Shelley got news that the workers of Manchester had been attacked by government troops, his indignation was aroused, and he immediately wrote the poems *The Masque of Anarchy* and *Song to the Men of England*. In the first part of the poem *The Masque of Anarchy* the procession of horrible masks may be regarded as an allegorical picture of the then rulers of England. In the second part the poet sings the men of England, their strength and future victory. He calls on them to rise against their human leeches.

Rise, like lions after slumber In  
unvanquishable number! Shake your

chains to earth, like dew Which in  
sleep had fall'n on you: Ye are many  
— they are few.

*(The Masque of Anarchy, XCI)*

In his great lyric *Song to the Men of England* Shelley calls upon the workers to take up arms in their own defence. This poem and other revolutionary poems of his became the popular songs of the workers.

### *Song to the Men of England*

Men of England, wherefore plough  
For the lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

The seed ye sow, another reaps; The  
wealth ye find, another keeps; The robes  
ye weave, another wears; The arms ye  
forge, another bears.

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save, From  
the cradle, to the grave, Those ungrateful  
drones who would Drain your sweat – nay,  
drink your blood?

Sow seed, – but let no tyrant reap; Find  
wealth, – let no impostor heap; Weave  
robes, let not the idle wear; Forge arms  
– in your defence to bear.

Shelley is also known as the author of many lyrical poems devoted to nature and love. He was sure that the world and nature are ever changing, ever developing to higher forms. He was very fond of nature, he wrote of the clouds, and of the wind and of the high snow-covered mountains. Yet above all other things he loved the sea. Among his nature poems are *The Cloud*, *To a Skylark*, *Ode to the West Wind* and many others.

#### *The Cloud*

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,  
From the seas and Streams;  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In their noonday dreams.  
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And the again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

Shelley's poetry is musical, deeply sincere, and original in form. Shelley lived a short life. He was only twenty-nine when he died. But the people of England did not forget the poet who had been their champion and friend. Shelley's entire life and art were devoted to struggle against oppression and tyranny in every form.

### (Mary Shelley)

#### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What family did Shelley come from?
2. Where was he educated?
3. Why was he expelled from the university?
4. Why did Shelley break with his family?
5. Where did he live after he had left England?
6. When did he die?
7. How did it happen?
8. Why can we call Shelley the most progressive revolutionary romanticist?
9. Name his first notable works. Relate briefly the plot of these works.
10. On what occasion was the poem *The Masque of Anarchy* written?
11. Comment on the poem *Song to the Men of England*.
12. Describe Shelley's lyrical poems.
13. Express the idea of the poem *The Cloud* in some sentences.
14. What can you say about Shelley's place in English literature?

#### **Walter Scott (1771-1832)**

Walter Scott, the father of the English historical novel, was born in the family of a lawyer. His mother was the daughter of a famous Edinburgh physician and professor. She was a woman of education and stirred her son's imagination by her stories of the past as a world of living heroes. As Walter was lame and a sickly child he spent much of his boyhood on his grandfather's farm near the beautiful river Tweed. He entered into friendly relations with plain people and gained first-hand knowledge of the old Scottish traditions, legends and folk ballads. At the age of eight Walter entered the Edinburgh High School. Later Walter Scott studied law at the University. Though he was employed in his father's profession he was more interested in literature than in law. As a boy and man he was fond of spending time in the country in the Highlands and in the Border. He collected and studied the native ballads, legends, folk-songs and poems.

Walter Scott's literary career began in 1796 when he published translations of German ballads. In 1802 he prepared a collection of ballads under the title of *The Minstrelsy' of the Scottish Border*. In 1804 Walter Scott gave up the law entirely for literature. His literary work began with the publication of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), a poem which made him the most popular poet of the day. A series of poems followed which included *Marmion* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810). These poems brought fame to the author. They tell us about the brave Scottish people, their past and the beauty of their homeland.

Soon, however, Scott realized that he was not a poetic genius, and he turned to writing in prose.

Scott's first historical novel *Waverley* published in 1814 was a great success and he continued his work in this new field. Novel after novel came from his pen. His novels appeared anonymously.

Nobody knew he was a writer. From 1814 to 1830 he wrote 29 novels, many of which are about Scotland and the struggle of this country for independence. Such novels as *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering* (1815), *The Antiquary* (1816), *The Black Dwarf* (1816), *Old Mortality* (1816), *Rob Roy* (1818), *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) describe Scotland in the 18th century.

*The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) and *The Legend of Montrose* (1819) have the 17th century background. *Ivanhoe* (1820) deals with the English history of the 12th century. *The Monastery* (1820), *The Abbot and Kenilworth* (1821) describe the times of Mary Stuart and Queen Elizabeth. *Quentin Durward* (1823) refers to the reign of Louis XI in France. It was only in 1827 that Walter Scott declared openly the authorship of his novels. He worked hard. The writer turned out, on an average, a novel and a half a year. His mind was so crowded with stories, characters and incidents that invention came without apparent effort.

Misfortune struck the great novelist in 1825-1826: the publishing firm, where he had been partner went bankrupt.

Walter Scott had to pay a large sum of money. This affected his health and he died on September 21, at his estate in Abbotsford. Walter Scott was buried at Dryburgh Abbey.

Walter Scott was the creator of the historical novel in English literature. He realized that it was the ordinary people who were the makers of history and the past was not cut off from the present but influenced it. This romantic love of the past made him create rich historical canvases with landscape and nature descriptions, as well as picturesque details of past ages. His descriptions of the life, customs and habits of the people are realistic. We can agree with Belinsky that the reader of Scott's novels becomes, in a way, a contemporary of the epoch and a citizen of the country in which the events of the novel take place.

Walter Scott was the first to depict personalities typical of the period and the country described. His characters are vivid and expressive.

This makes Walter Scott one of the greatest masters of world literature. His influence can be seen in the historical novels of almost every nation.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Give a brief account of Walter Scott's life.
2. How did he acquire his vast knowledge of ballads, legends, folk-songs?
3. What was the beginning of his literary career?
4. What poems brought fame to the author?
5. Why did he turn to writing in prose?
6. What was Walter Scott's first historical novel?
7. What was the main historical theme he wrote about in his first novels?
8. Name Walter Scott's novels which describe Scotland.
9. What other themes did he touch upon in his novels?
10. What novels did he write about England and France?
11. How many novels did Walter Scott write from 1814 to 1830?

12. What misfortune struck the great novelist in 1825-1826?
13. Why was he obliged to work very hard?
14. When did he die?
15. What is the contribution of Walter Scott to the development of the historical novel in English literature?

**Jane Austen (1775-1817)** - Jane Austen was born on December 16, 1775, in the Hampshire village of Steventon, where her father, George Austen, was rector. She was the second daughter and seventh child in the family of eight: six boys and two girls. Her closest companion was her elder sister. Her formal education began in about 1782, when the sisters were sent to be taught by Mrs Cawley at Oxford; and, in 1784, they moved to the Abbey School, Reading, where they remained until 1787. After that their education continued at home. This was no deprivation, as the household at the rectory was unusually gifted. Her father encouraged the love of learning in his children. Her mother was a woman of wit. Reading and writing were enjoyed as family activities.

Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding were favourite novelists. The great family amusement was acting. Austen's earliest known writings date from 1787, and between then and 1795 she wrote a large body of material that was collected in three manuscript notebooks: *Volume the First*, *Volume the Second*, and *Volume the Third*. In all, these contain 21 items: plays, verses, short novels, and other prose.

In 1793-1794 Jane Austen wrote a short novel-in-letters *Lady Susan*. Jane was a girl of seventeen. Some of the letters tell of her enjoyment of local parties and dances in Hampshire, of visits to London, Bath, Southampton, Kent and to seaside resorts in Devon and Dorset. *Sense and Sensibility* begun about 1795 as a novel-in-letters called *Elinor and Marianne* after its heroines. She contrasted two sisters: Elinor who is rational and self-controlled, and Marianne who is more emotional. Between October 1796 and August 1797 she completed the first version of *Pride and Prejudice*.

*Northanger Abbey* was written in about 1798- 1799.

In 1811 she began her novel *Mansfield Park*. Between January 1814 and March 1815 she wrote *Emma*. In these novels she showed that it was important to know oneself in order to make the right choices in love and marriage. Although her endings are generally happy, her novels make readers feel that they have been made to think about themselves and their moral lives.

Jane Austen's novels are deeply concerned with love and marriage. The novels provide indisputable evidence that the author understood the experience of love and of love disappointed. This observation relates most obviously to her last novel, *Persuasion* (1815-1816). The years after 1811 seem to have been the most rewarding of her life. She had the satisfaction of seeing her work in print and well reviewed and of knowing that the novels were widely read. The reviewers praised the novels for their moral entertainment, admired the character drawing, and welcomed the homely realism. Although Jane Austen preserved her anonymity and avoided literary circles, she knew about the reception of her novels.

For the last 18 months of her life, she was busy writing. In 1817 she began her last

work *Sandition*, but it was put aside on March 18. Her health had been in decline since early 1816. In April she made her will.

On the morning of July 18 she died. She was buried in Winchester Cathedral. Her authorship was announced to the world at large by her brother Henry, paying tribute to her sister's qualities of mind and character.

Jane Austen is different from other writers of her time, because her main interest is in the moral, social and psychological behaviour of her characters. She writes mainly about young heroines as they grow up and search for personal happiness. She does not write about the social and political issues, but her observations of people apply to human nature in general.

Modern critics are fascinated by the structure and organization of the novels, by the realistic description of unremarkable people in the unremarkable situations of everyday life.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Jane Austen born?
2. What family did she come from?
3. Where was she educated?
4. When did she write her first works?
5. What was her first novel-in-letters?
6. What did some of the letters tell of?
7. Name Jane Austen's notable novels.
8. What themes did she deal with in her books?
9. What years seem to have been the most rewarding of her life? Why?
10. What did the reviewers praise her novel for?
11. When did she die?
12. Why are modern critics fascinated by Austen's novels?

## LECTURE 6

### American Literature of Romanticism

The literary current of Romanticism appeared in America as the result of the Bourgeois Revolution of 1776-1783. It was inspired also by the deep disillusionment of the progressive people in the results of the revolution.

The contradictions between the rich and the poor were as strong as ever. Negro slavery flourished in the Southern states, the Indian tribes were exterminated. Romanticism brought with it the first important works of American poetry and fiction, and the first foundations of American national literature were laid.

Romanticism in America differed in some ways from the European Romanticism. European writers could at any moment look back on the cultural heritage of their countries; Americans began everything, including their literature from scratch.

The writers of Romanticism depicted life as a struggle between vice and virtue, and insisted that virtue should defeat evil. But when they looked for the triumph of virtue in real life, they could not find it. Here we come to the most characteristic feature of Romanticism: this is the great gap between reality and the ideal – the dream of the poet, artist or writer.

Another feature of Romanticism was that the writers, having created personages, wished through them to bring moral judgment on the nation as a whole, disregarding the existence of classes, or different sections of the population. The romantic poets and writers produced a powerful literature with wide variations. They developed such genres as the novel (historical, social, fantastic), the romance and the short story. They gave their readers a taste for old ballads, epics, and the folk-tales of the Indians.

Nature is one of the major themes of the American Romanticists. It was a time when new lands were discovered. Courageous pioneers and trappers penetrated into the wilderness of the boundless forest and prairies. Man's struggle with nature and his victory over it inspired many of the American writers.

The writers of Romanticism were true patriots. They loved their country and recognized the importance of developing national literature and national history. In Romanticist literature a reader finds a complicated plot, dynamic development of the events and sudden changes in the fates of the heroes. Many complicated dramatic conflicts were solved with the help of chance accidents, fatal meetings or the discovery of dreadful secrets.

Flourishing from 1820-ies to the 1850-ies, Romanticism can be divided into Early Romanticism (the twenties and thirties) and Late Romanticism (the forties and fifties).

The early period began with the romances and short stories of **Washington Irving** (1783-1859). These forms were developed later by other American writers. The historical novel began in America with **Fenimore Cooper** (1789-1851). Romantic poetry appeared in great variety; most outstanding were the poems of **Edgar Allan Poe** (1809-1849).

The Late Romanticism were the years of mature Romanticism in American literature. Characteristic of this period were Cooper's later novels, Edgar Allan Poe's romances and poems written during the last eight years of his life, the works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 -1882), and the poems by Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892).

Early Romanticists were more optimistic about the American reality than Late Romanticists were. Criticizing the drawbacks of American civilization, they believed that it provided vast possibilities for development.

Late Romanticism developed in an atmosphere of sharp class contradictions, influenced by the development of capitalism in the country. The fiction of Late Romanticists was permeated with a tragic mood, sharp conflicts, confused feelings. American Romanticism as part of world romantic literature played an important role in the cultural life of America. The works of romantic writers of America are still read and admired.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. When did the literary trend of Romanticism appear in America and what social events led to it?
2. How did Romanticism in America differ from the European Romanticism?
3. Characterize the principal features of Romanticism.
4. What genres did the romantic poets and writers produce?
5. What is one of the major themes of the American Romanticists?
6. What was the creative method of the writers of Romanticism?
7. When did Romanticism in America flourish?
8. What periods can it be divided into?
9. What are the main representatives of Early and Late Romanticism?
10. Why were early Romanticists more optimistic about the American reality than late Romanticists?

### **Washington Irving (1783-1859)**

Washington Irving , the first American romantic writer was born in New York in a wealthy merchant's family. Washington, the youngest of eleven children, being sickly in childhood, was not sent to school. His English-born mother had educated him at home. He was well read in Chaucer and Spenser, and the 18th century English literature. He used to read a lot. Books of voyages and travels were his passion. He was fond of legends, fairy-tales and records of ancient and local customs.

Washington was fond of wandering around the Country-Side. On the outskirts of his native city he made himself familiar with places famous in history and legends. When he grew older, he longed to travel.

At fifteen he tried his hand at writing. Some little satires on New York life were even printed in his brother's magazine. Writing became his hobby, but his father wanted him to be a lawyer, and at seventeen he was set to studying law.

In 1806 he was admitted to the bar. Yet the law did not fascinate him and he decided to become a writer.

After two years of travelling in Germany, Spain, France, Italy and England Washington Irving returned to the United States. With some friends he started a



paper called *Salmagund*. The very title of the paper showed it to be a humorous periodical published by the authors just for fun. The Salmagundi papers possess, in addition to their interest as humorous sketches, historical value as pictures of social life in New York during the first decade of the 19th century. Irving's first major work was *A History of New York*, published in 1809. The book was an immediate success. Washington Irving's humour was highly appreciated by Walter Scott and Charles Dickens.

After a brief period of military service, a partnership in his brother's firm and a couple of years of travelling and writing Irving completed his most famous works, a series of sketches, short stories and essays, which were published in New York in 1819 -1820 and in London in 1820, under the title of *The Sketch Book*.

Irving's other story books are *Bracebridge Hall* (1822), *Tales of a Traveller* (1824) and *The Alhambra* (1832), mostly covering descriptions of Europe in which the author discovered romantic castles and a departed glory unknown to America.

Irving also wrote historical biographies: *A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (1828); *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith* (1840) and *The Life of George Washington* (1855- 1859).

On November 28, 1859 he died, at the age of 76.

Irving was the Father of the American short story. His graceful style and colourful descriptions of landscapes made him the Father of American prose. He started that clever humour, the mixture of fine irony and jolly caricature. Irving's wit was caught up and developed by many American writers. He was the first American writer to win European approval.

### **The Sketch Book**

It consists of 34 sketches depicting both English and American life. The majority of the sketches are descriptions of rural England, the most famous being *Stratford-on-Avon*, *Westminster Abbey*, *Rural Life in England*. Yet, Irving's main merit lies in his creation of folk-tales of the Dutch colonial settlers of New York and sketches of the American Indians. They express the character, ways of thought, ideals and aspirations of the American simple people. The best known sketches of American life are *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

In his sketches Irving uses legends, fairy-tales and records of customs and characters which he had collected from personal talks with old folks and which, to his mind, created the genuine history of society.

Irving also describes the charm of American countryside with their lakes, their majestic mountains, wild forests, fertile valleys and boundless plains.

The Sketch Book is more than a romantic fairy-tale about the past of America. It contains rather sharp social observations. Thus, when Rip awakes after his 20 years' sleep, he finds America unchanged though a very important event, the American Revolution has taken place. Irving describes Rip's return to his village during an electioneering campaign with much irony.

The Sketch Book established Irving as one of the creators of the genre of story in America. The style of Irving's writing is easy, natural and graceful. His style and colourful descriptions of landscapes make him Father of American prose.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Give the main facts of Washington Irving's life.
2. What was Irving's first major work?
3. What was his most famous work?
4. Comment on the composition of *The Sketch Book*.
5. Speak on Irving's other works.
6. Why is Irving called the Father of American prose?

**Fenimore Cooper** (1789-1851) James Fenimore Cooper was born in Burlington, New Jersey, in the family of a rich landowner. This place now called Coopers-town, was a frontier town; beyond it was wooded wilderness. The future author grew up in Cooperstown where he saw the varied life on the border of wilderness. He heard many tales of adventures and learned to feel the mystery of the dark forest.

He studied at Yale for three years but most of their education he got from out-door life. When James was ten years old, he could ride on horseback, fish, swim, shoot with bow and arrow and skate. In 1806 he joined the navy and for a year he served on a merchant ship as an ordinary sailor and then he was a midshipman in the United States Navy. In 1810 James Cooper married and settled down to a life of a farmer and country gentleman.

Cooper began writing at the age of thirty. In 1820 he produced his first novel *Precaution*. This novel on English manners was a failure but it succeeded in arousing persistence in the young writer. In 1821 he published his second book *The Spy* which dealt with events of the War of Independence. The book was an immediate success in England and America. Its success made him write another book *The Pioneers*, and later *The Last of the Mohicans*. He wrote six novels for five years, and they established his reputation as a writer.

In 1826 Cooper went to Europe for a tour. He had spent seven years (1826— 1834) travelling in England, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. He worked all the time. He wrote seven novels, a lot of articles, essays and letters.

Cooper left about 40 books belonging to various genres: 1) five romances of the American frontier *The Leatherstocking Tales*; 2) sea tales, the most famous among which are *The Pilot* (1823), *Red Rover* (1827), and *The Two Admirals* (1842); 3) historical novels, such as *Lionel Lincoln* (1825), *The Bravo* (1831), and *The Heidenmauer* (1832) and *The Headsman* (1833); 4) a social satire *The Monikins* (1836).

According to their merits Cooper's works are very unequal and his views on various subjects are contradictory. In his historical novels on Europe Cooper showed the superiority of American democracy. Later, when he returned from the trip to Europe, he was disappointed in American life. In his novels *Homeward Bound* (1838), *Home as Found* (1838) and his essays *A Letter to his Countrymen* (1834) and *The American Democrat* (1838) Cooper criticized the bourgeoisie, its lack of culture and the corruption of the press. James Fenimore Cooper died at Cooperstown on September 14, 1851.

### **The Leatherstocking Tales**

Cooper's fame as a novelist rests on his five novels of the American frontier, called *The Leatherstocking Tales*. To follow the sequence of events we should read them

in the order given below: *The Deerslayer* (1841), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Pathfinder* (1840), *The Pioneers* (1823) and *The Prairie* (1827). The name of the hero is Natty Bumppo.

The author describes the America of the 18th century when it was still being explored and colonized by Europeans who settled there and drove the Indians from their land. *The Deerslayer* shows Bumppo's youth as a hunter brought up among the Delaware Indians. He is a perfect woodsman. The Delaware Indians are his best friends. They have taught him to read the signs of the virgin forest, to follow trail, to become a good marksman.

Every leaf or twig tells him a whole story of people and wild animals passing through the wood. Cooper stresses that Bumppo's nobility of spirit, his self-reliance, justice and fidelity have been developed by the life he has led in the forest and his closeness to the Indians. The writer emphasizes that the white people, intruding on the Indian hunting-grounds, provoke wars and bring corruption to the noble and simple Indians.

In *The Pioneers* Natty Bumppo comes into an open conflict with the bourgeois law which defends property. He is punished for hunting a deer out of season.

In *The Prairie*, Natty, now an old man, leaves his forests, being driven out by the advance of civilization, and lives as a trapper on the Western Plains. The sound of the axe drives him further and further to the West. He dies conquered by the civilization he hates.

Cooper was a good storyteller. His descriptions of nature, exciting incidents, pursuits, last-minute rescues keep the reader in suspense. His fame rests on the variety of dramatic incident and vivid depiction of romantic backgrounds.

The portraits of the Indians depend on whether they support the English or their enemies, the French. The supporters of the English are noble whereas those of the French are cunning. Yet, the customs of the Indian tribes and their struggle against the invaders have been described in detail and true to historical facts.

Cooper's main merit lies in the fact, that he managed to convince the readers of the human worth of the Indians. The character of Natty Bumppo will remain in the reader's memory as one of the most remarkable fictional heroes in world literature.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the story of James Fenimore Cooper's life.
2. When did Cooper start writing?
3. What book was an immediate success in England and America?
4. How many books did Cooper write?
5. What genres do they belong to?
6. Name the five novels Cooper's fame rests on.
7. Describe the hero of the novels Natty Bumppo.
8. Why do Cooper's novels keep the reader in suspense?
9. Comment on Cooper's contribution to American literature.
10. What does his main merit lie in?

**Edgar Poe** (1809-1849) Edgar Allan Poe, outstanding romantic poet and short-story writer, was one of the first professional writers of the United States. But in his lifetime he was more popular in Europe than at home.

Edgar Poe was born in Boston in 1809. The son of actor parents, he was left an orphan at the age of three. And though he was taken under protection of a prosperous tobacco merchant John Allan, his childhood was miserable. Mr Allan's business took him abroad, and from 1815 to 1820 Poe lived with the family in Scotland and England. He attended a fine classical preparatory school. There he wrote Latin verses and learned boxing. Back in the United States, he was sent to the University of Virginia. These studies he combined with writing poetry, and all the while he read and read and read. Yet Poe was unhappy at the university. His sensitive pride was wounded by the social barrier between him and the rich Southern boys. At the end of the first year Mr Allan decided to remove him from the university. The tobacco merchant had never understood the boy's vocation for art. He made him a clerk in his business. Poe immediately ran away and went to Boston. In Boston he published his first volume of poetry *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827). Not a single copy was sold. Then he published in Baltimore his second volume of poems *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Minor Poems* (1829). His poems again passed unnoticed. In 1831 Poe published his third edition of poems, this time in New York. However, Poe first became famous not as a poet, but as a writer of fiction, with a story he wrote for a magazine. It was the story *MS (manuscript) Found in a Bottle*, It was printed in the Baltimore Saturday Visitor and won him a prize of 50 dollars. In 1835 he got a position on the Southern Literary Messenger. He published his old and new tales and poems in this magazine. He wrote many book reviews which won popularity for the magazine. After Poe had married a very young girl Virginia Clemm, the daughter of his father's sister, Maria, he spent the rest of his life in Philadelphia and New York. Soon his young wife became very ill with tuberculosis. In 1847 his wife died, and in October 1849 Edgar Allan Poe's life ended. During his lifetime only a few of his stories and poems won fame.

Edgar Poe distinguished himself in three fields: in the short story, poetry and criticism. He wrote about 60 stories and 48 poems. The writer is a great master of the short story. His prose is direct, energetic, clear and aimed to focus the reader's attention on one particular idea. His aim in every work, he said, was to make a strong impression on the reader. Poe's stories may be divided into: 1) horror stories and 2) detective stories.

The most distinguished horror stories are: *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Black Cat*, *The Descent into Maelstrom*. The horror stories concentrate on various forms of suffering. They represent a psychological study of anxiety and terror, of passion, anger, revenge and other emotions suffered by men who think they are destined for some strange fate. All Poe's best stories show some triumph of mind over the danger to which the hero seems doomed.

The detective stories are mathematical at their foundation. Having invented a combination of events and circumstances the author logically follows step by step their development and the consequence comes with the precision of the solution of a mathematical problem.

Poe is the father of the detective story in America. He created the first of a long line of fictional master detectives Auguste Dupin. Dupin is a very attractive

character in Allan Poe's stories. The reader delights in his common sense, wit and optimism.

The author endows him with extraordinary powers of deduction and analysis. Dupin is the forerunner of Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. Poe's best known detective stories are: *The Murder in Rue Morgue* and *The Mystery of Marie Roget*. Poe is a poet of beauty. His constant themes are the death of a beautiful woman and the grief caused by it.

Poe's best poems are: *The Raven*, *The Bells*, *Eldorado*, *Annabel Lee*, and some of the lyrics and sonnets.

The European poets appreciated the harmony between idea and form achieved by Edgar Allan Poe.

### Questions and Tasks

1. Give a brief account of Poe's life.
2. When was the beginning of his literary career?
3. Did he write some more poems?
4. Did Poe become famous as a poet or as a writer of fiction?
5. What story won him a prize?
6. What fields of literature did Poe distinguish himself?
7. Characterize Poe's stories.
8. Comment on his horror stories and detective ones.
9. Name Poe's most distinguished horror and detective stories.
10. Who is a very attractive character in Allan Poe's stories?
11. What are the themes of Poe's poems?
12. What are his best poems?
13. What did the European poets appreciate in his poems?

### Henry Longfellow (1807-1882)

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in the little town of Portland, in the State of Maine on the Atlantic coast in the family of a well-to-do lawyer. The family kept alive the memory of the War of Independence, and as a boy Longfellow was told about the heroic deeds of his grandfather who had been a general in Washington's army, and about his uncle Henry who had been an officer in the US Navy and had been killed in 1804 while defending his country. The family traditions of heroism played a great role in the life of young Longfellow.

Prepared mostly at private schools, he attended Bowdoin College from 1821 to 1825, and there he wrote his first verses and stories and showed great aptitude for foreign languages. Having published his first poem at thirteen he dreamed of a literary career. On his graduation, he was made professor of Modern Languages at Bowdoin. He spent three years in France, Spain, Italy and Germany, studying European languages and literature.

In 1829 Longfellow returned home and began teaching foreign languages, first at Bowdoin College and then, in 1834, as a professor of Harvard University.

In 1835 Longfellow published his first book *Outre-Mer* (фр. «За морем»), *A Pilgrimage Beyond the Sea*, a series of travel-sketches modelled on Washington Irving's Sketch Book. In 1835 he made a second trip to Europe, visiting Germany,

Sweden, Denmark and Holland, where he studied German and Northern literatures to qualify himself for his appointment at Harvard. In 1839 he published his novel *Hyperion* and a collection of poems *Voices of the Night*. In 1841 a new book of poems *Ballads and Other Poems* saw print. By that time he was well known as an American poet, and his fame steadily spread.

After his third trip to Europe Longfellow published his masterpiece, a collection of verses *Poems on Slavery* (1842). Slavery had become the most urgent question of the day. In these verses Longfellow condemned the shameful institution of slavery. In his political lyrics he gives the sad and shameful picture of slavery in the South of America.

In the poem *The Slave's Dream* a black slave, on a hot summer noon on a Southern plantation, weary from his heavy work, falls asleep in the sun, his hand grasping the reaping hook. He dreams he is back in his native Africa. He sees his wife and children. Suddenly this vision is rudely and cruelly interrupted by two severe blows of a long whip. The raging overseer whips the slave to death.

In another poem, *The Negro in the Dismal Swamp*, the author describes a typically American scene of those days — the hunting down of a slave.

In the dark fens of the Dismal Swamp  
The hunted Negro lay; He saw the fire of the  
midnight camp, And heard at times a horse's  
tramp And a bloodhound's distant bay.

Where hardly a human foot could pass,  
Or a human heart would dare,  
On the quaking turf of a green morass  
He crouched in the rank and tangled grass,  
Like a wild beast in his lair.

A poor old slave, infirm and lame;  
Great scars deformed his face;  
On his forehead he bore the brand of shame,  
And the rags, that hid his mangled frame,  
Were the livery of disgrace.  
All things above were bright and fair, All  
things were glad and free; Lithe squirrels  
darted here and there, And wild birds filled  
the echoing air With songs of Liberty!

On him alone was the doom of pain,  
From the morning of his birth; On him alone the  
curse of Cain ' Fell, like a frail on the  
garnered grain, And struck him to the earth!

The *Poems on Slavery* were published eighteen years before the Civil War broke in 1861. Longfellow foretold the coming of a war that would free the Negro slaves at a time when nobody believed it could be possible.

Another poem which was finished in 1847 was *Evangeline*. It was the story of how the Acadian farmers were driven away from their village. It was the most beautiful

poem Longfellow had written so far.

Longfellow's philosophical lyrics were a great success in the fifties and sixties during the Civil War. Especially popular was his poem *The Building of the Ship*. The people in Longfellow's poem are represented by a tireless master worker who spares no effort to build a beautiful ship – a democratic state, a republic, where the freedom and equality of the citizens is the supreme law. In this poem Longfellow clearly expresses his social ideals.

In his mature years Longfellow created beautiful lyrics about nature. American nature came to life under Longfellow's pen. Before him the descriptions of nature by poets, though very beautiful, were abstract. He was especially skilful in depicting the seasons of the year.

### **Rain in Summer**

How beautiful is the rain!  
After the dust and heat, In the  
broad and fiery street<sup>1</sup>, In the  
narrow lane, How beautiful is  
the rain!

How it clatters along the roofs,  
Like the tramp of hoofs!  
How it gushes and struggles out  
From the throat of the overflowing spout.

Across the window pane  
It pours and pours;  
And swift and wide,  
With a muddy tide,  
Like a river down the gutter roars  
The rain, the welcome rain.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a great friend of the Indians. Even as a student he began to collect Indian folklore. But it was some 30 years after he had graduated from the university that he was able to finally complete his epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha* – the only epic poem in American literature in which the manner of life and the beliefs of the Indian people are described. *The Song of Hiawatha* appeared in 1855. It made the name of Longfellow famous all over the world.

Henry Longfellow knew twelve foreign languages, as well as ancient Greek, Latin, Gothic, Hebrew, old French and old German. He compiled and translated a vast anthology called *Poets of Europe*.

This colossal work of translating poets of different times and different peoples was finished by the end of the seventies when the last of the 31 volumes saw print. Up to the present day this anthology remains one of the best of this kind. Besides this collection of European, lyrical poetry Longfellow translated in 1865-1867 Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

By the end of his life Longfellow had won recognition all over the world. Many universities awarded him with honorary degrees.

He was also elected to membership by the Spanish, British and French Academies of Sciences. Even when already an old man, Henry Longfellow continued writing. Longfellow died at the age of 75. He is the only American poet whose bust is in Westminster Abbey's Poets' Corner.

### **The Song of Hiawatha**

America had no ancient folk-songs similar to the great epic of other nations. Longfellow made a study of European poetry and chose the Finnish epic poem Kalevala as his model for the epic poem he was to write. The second source of his poem was Indian folklore. Already at college he had read much about the Indian nation, their history, manners and customs, on the basis of which he wrote his epic poem The Song of Hiawatha.

The poem relates of the Indian warrior hero, Hiawatha, partly a legendary, partly a historic personality. According to a North American Indian legend, the hero was sent by the Great Spirit Manito to unite the various Indian tribes.

Hiawatha was born of the daughter of a Star Wenonah, and the West Wind, Mudjekeewis. After his mother's death, the boy grows up in the wigwam of Nakomis, his grandmother, the daughter of the Moon. The young Hiawatha learns all the arts and the skills of the Indians and comes to know all the secrets of nature. He learns the language of the birds and animals and calls them "Hiawatha's brothers". He grows into the youth of unusual strength, swiftness and cleverness.

Then the little Hiawatha Learned their names  
and all their secrets, How they built their  
nests in Summer, Where they hid themselves  
in Winter, Talked with them whene'er he met  
them, Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens",  
Of all beasts he learned the language,  
Learned their names and all their secrets,  
How the beavers built their lodges, Where  
the squirrels hid their acorns, How the  
reindeer ran so swiftly, Why the rabbit was so  
timid, Talked with them whene'er he met  
them, Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers".  
Out of childhood into manhood  
Now had grown my Hiawatha,  
Skilled in all the craft of hunters,  
Learned in all the lore<sup>1</sup> of old men,  
In all youthful sports and pastimes,  
In all manly arts and labors.  
Swift of foot was Hiawatha;  
He could shoot an arrow from him,  
And run forward with such fleetness,  
That the arrow fell behind him!  
Strong of arm was Hiawatha;  
He could shoot ten arrows upward,  
Shoot them with such strength and swiftness,  
That the tenth had left the bow-string  
Ere the first to earth had fallen.  
He had mitens, Minjekahwun,



Magic mittens made of deer-skin;  
When upon his hands he wore them,  
    He could smite the rocks as under,  
    He could grind them into powder,  
    He had moccasins enchanted,  
    Magic moccasins of deer-skin,  
When he bound them round his ankles,  
    When upon his feet he tied them,  
    At each stride a mile he measured!

When Hiawatha learns, how his father deserted his mother, he decides to punish him. In the land of the West Wind, he and Mudjekeewis fight for three days. Being a god, Mudjekeewis is immortal.

However, he acknowledges Hiawatha's courage and nobility and sends him to the earth to fight evil, to do deeds of valour and unite the Indian peoples. On his way Hiawatha stops in the land of Dako-tahs and meets a lovely girl, the daughter of the arrow maker, Minnehaha, and takes her home as his bride. Among Hiawatha's heroic deeds is the defeat of Mondamin, the Corn Spirit, whose death teaches Hiawatha and his people how to grow maize. Together with his good friends, Chibiabos, "the best of all musicians and the sweetest of all singers", and Kwasind, "the strongest of all mortals", Hiawatha kills Pearl-Feather, who brings death and diseases on the Indians, clears the rivers and streams, so that his people can sail on them in safety, teaches them to follow trail, collect herbs and use medicine. "Buried is the warclub", peace rules among the Indian tribes, and happy days follow in the Ojibway land. Hiawatha and Minnehaha have a gay wedding party at which the guests relate stories and legends, and the reader learns of many interesting Indian customs. Then evil times come to the Indians. Chibiabos perishes, breaking through the ice into a lake. Strong Kwasind, too, is killed by the evil dwarfs who conquer him using the cone of the blue fir-tree. With winter, the famine and fever come. Hungry are the women and the children.

    O the long and dreary Winter!  
    O the cold and cruel Winter!  
    Ever thicker, thicker, thicker  
    Froze the ice on lake and river,  
    Ever deeper, deeper, deeper  
    Fell the snow o'er all the landscape,  
    Fell the covering snow, and drifted  
    Through the forest, round the village.  
    Hardly from his buried wigwam  
    Could the hunter force a passage;  
    With his mittens and his snow-shoes  
    Vainly walked he through the forest,  
Sought for bird or beast and found none,  
    Saw no track of deer or rabbit,  
    In the snow beheld no footprints,  
    In the ghastly, gleaming forest  
Fell, and could not rise from weakness,  
    Perished there from cold and hunger.  
    O the famine and the fever!  
    O the wasting of the famine!

O the blasting of the fever!  
O the wailing of the children!  
O the anguish of the women!  
All the earth was sick and famished,  
Hungry was the air around them,  
Hungry was the sky above them,  
And the hungry stars in heaven  
Like the eyes of wolves glared at them!

Minnehaha dies of starvation. Hiawatha sails to rule over the land of the Northwest wind.

At a time, when the Indians were considered a lower race, Longfellow managed to show the beauty of their character, their valour, their closeness to nature, the charm of their customs and legends.

The Songs of Hiawatha was translated into many European languages. The originality and novelty of its literary form, the unknown poetic world of Indian folklore surprised everyone and attracted world attention.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow born?
2. What played a great role in the life of young Longfellow?
3. Where was Longfellow educated?
4. When did he write his first verses and stories?
5. What career did Longfellow dream of?
6. What did he begin doing on his graduation from Bowdoin College?
7. What was Longfellow's first book?
8. Name his other notable works published from 1839 to 1841.
9. What theme did he touch upon in his collection of verses Poems on Slavery?
10. Retell the contents on the poems The Slave's Dream and The Negro in the Dismal Swamp.
11. Comment on Longfellow's poem The Building of the Ship.
12. Dwell on his lyrics about nature.
13. Speak on the subject of Longfellow's masterpiece The Song of Hiawatha.
14. Retell in your own words The Song of Hiawatha.
15. What is the importance of Longfellow's work as a translator?
16. What was his contribution of American literature?
17. Prove that by the end of his life Longfellow had won recognition all over the world.

## LECTURE 7. The Victorian Period (1837–1901)

1. Early Victorian Period
2. Charles Dickens's Literary Work
3. William Thackeray. *Vanity Fair* (A Novel without a Hero)
4. The Bronte Sisters
5. Later Victorian Period
6. Robert Louis Stevenson
7. Oscar Wilde
8. Rudyard Kipling

The critical realism of the 19th century flourished in the forties and at the beginning of the fifties. The critical realists set themselves the task of criticizing capitalist society, exposing the crying social contradictions. Their strong point was their true reflection of life and their sharp criticism of existing injustice.

The merit of English realism lies in its profound humanism – its sympathy for the working people. The greatest English realist of the time was Charles Dickens. With striking force and truthfulness he described the sufferings of common people.

Another critical realist was William Makepeace Thackeray. His novels mainly contain a satirical portrayal of the upper strata of society. Here belong, of course, Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot. These writers showed a realistic picture of their contemporary England. All these novelists portrayed everyday life, with a little man as the central character.

Beginning in the second quarter of the 19th Century, the *Victorian Period* is so long as well as complicated. Moreover, there are numerous great writers who flourished during that period. That's why, for the sake of convenience, the Victorian Period is divided into two further periods - *Early Victorian Period* (1837-1870) and *Later Victorian Period* (1870-1901).

### 5.1. Early Victorian Period

The **Earlier Victorian Period** was, in fact, dominated by middle class supremacy, the age of 'laissez-fair' or free trade, and of unrestricted competition. The great writers of this period were **Robert Browning, Alfred Tennyson, Charles Dickens, Matthew Arnold, Carlyle, Thackeray and Ruskin**. All these poets, novelists, and prose writers, in spite of their individual differences, exhibited the same approach to contemporary issues. Due to this, they form a certain homogenous group possessing the same social, literary, and moral values.

**Charles Dickens** Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth on the 7th of February, 1812. He was the second child and the eldest son of John and Elizabeth Dickens. John Dickens was a clerk in the Navy Pay Office.

After a short period in London, John Dickens in 1817 was transferred to the dockyard at Chatham, and here the family remained until 1822. These were the happiest years of Charles Dickens's childhood and youth. Here Dickens went to a small day-school. He also learnt much from his mother, who was a well-educated woman, and from the books she gave him to read.

It was here, years later, when he was at the height of his fame, that he returned to live, buying Gad's Hill place, the very house that he and his father had so often admired when out walking.

The little boy, eager, bright, sensitive, energetic but not really robust, found life opening out for him wonderfully during these years at Chatham.

His recollections of these years, seen in the golden haze of childhood, played a very important part in his work. If he had not had this happy time, brightening his childhood; the novels of Dickens would have been darker. When Charles was about ten, the family left Chatham as John Dickens had been recalled to London. John Dickens had left Chatham in debt, even after selling off some of his furniture, and nobody in London came to the rescue of John and Elizabeth Dickens and their six children. Everything that could be was given to the pawnshop, and young Charles was often sent on errands of this sort, for he was no longer going to school. He had done well at school in Chatham. But his parents had made no plans for him to continue his education in London.

A friend of the family helped Charles find work at a blacking warehouse. His parents instantly agreed. Charles had to paste labels on the jars of blacking. He received six shillings a week. Only a few days after Charles started work at the blacking warehouse, his father was arrested and sent to the debtors' prison, the Marshalsea. John Dickens was a happy-go-lucky, irresponsible man, and he usually spent more than he earned. As a result of such living he was thrown into the debtors' prison. Later, Mrs Dickens and the younger children joined him. Little Charles did not live in the prison.

He had to live in miserable lodgings and to feed himself. It came to an end when a relative of the family left Mr Dickens a legacy which was enough to pay his debts and leave the prison. When his father was set free, Charles was sent to a private school where he remained for three years. He was fifteen when his education ended, and he was sent again to earn his living this time as a clerk in a lawyer's office in London. All his spare time he spent in learning shorthand and visiting the British Museum Library filling up the gaps in his education by reading. Just before his seventeenth birthday Charles became a reporter. Soon he was recognized to be one of the best reporters in the whole country. He was invited to join several papers. When he was nineteen he was able to do some reporting in the House of Commons for newspapers.

Finally in 1834 he became the star reporter on the Morning Chronicle.

Young Dickens, with his restless energy and illimitable curiosity, went everywhere and noticed everything. His power of observation and memory were phenomenal. He went all over the country getting news, writing up stories, meeting people and using his eyes. These early days of a reporter made very deep impressions on his mind and provided him with material for his books.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Charles Dickens born?
2. When was he born?
3. What did his father, John Dickens, do?
4. Where was John Dickens transferred in 1817?

5. What were the happiest years of Charles Dickens's childhood?
6. Describe the years Charles spent in Chatham.
7. When did the family leave Chatham?
8. Give a brief account of the financial position of the family.
9. What happened to Mr Dickens?
10. How did Charles live when his family was in prison?
11. What helped the Dickens's family leave the Marshalsea?
12. Where did Charles study?
13. What did he do when his education ended?
14. What did Charles become just before his seventeenth birthday?
15. What kind of reporter was he soon recognized to be?
16. What traits of character helped him become the star reporter on the Morning Chronicle?
17. Why were these early days as a reporter very important for Charles Dickens in his later life?

### **Charles Dickens's Literary Work**

Charles Dickens began his literary career in 1833. He wrote some sketches under the title Sketches by Boz. Boz was his pen-name. It was a nickname of his younger brother. The work was warmly received, but it was in 1836 that Charles Dickens rose to fame with the publication of *The Pickwick Papers*. A new firm of publishers, Chapman and Hall, asked Dickens to write some sort of humorous text, describing sporting misadventures, to support the drawings made by a popular comic artist called Seymour. Dickens agreed, but only on his own terms.

These were that the drawings must illustrate the text, not the text the drawings. The first instalment of *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (the full title of the book) came into being and brought the author world-wide fame.

The *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* is a humorous description of funny adventures and misadventures of the members of the Pickwick Club which was founded by Mr Pickwick, a rich old gentleman, who had retired from business. The purpose of the club, according to its members, was "for the observations of character and manners". All the members, like Mr Pickwick, are rather well-to-do; they spend their time in travelling and in looking for mild adventures. Long before the twentieth and last number of the paper with *The Pickwick Papers* came out, the country was Pickwick-mad. The name was given to all manner of things, from coats and hats to canes and cigars.

Encouraged by his success Dickens set to work as a novelist. His next novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) deals with social problems. It is the story of a little boy born in a workhouse and left an orphan. The kind and honest boy by nature finds himself in the environment of thieves and lives through terrible hardships.

As Dickens believes in the inevitable triumph of good over evil, it is only natural, therefore, that *Oliver Twist* overcomes all difficulties. The novel ends happily which has become a characteristic feature of the greater part of Dickens's works. With *Oliver Twist* still in hand, Dickens began to work on his next novel *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839).

The book deals with another burning question of the day – that of the education of the children in English private schools.

Nicholas Nickleby becomes a teacher of a typical English boarding school for children of parents of modest means.

There is no question of real education at the "school". Its halfstarved pupils are used by the master of the school and his wife for domestic work. Its master, Mr Squeers very cruel to the children and his only aim in life is to have as much profit as possible out of his establishment. The scenes of the children's life were so realistic and true to life that a school reform was carried out in England after the publication of the novel.

Dickens's next novel was *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841). It is a story of the sufferings and hardships of an old man named Trent, and his granddaughter, Nell, who live in London.

Dickens's first historical novel *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) was published before his visit to America in the autumn of 1841. There were many good reasons for going to America. He wanted to lecture on his works as he knew he would have a large admiring public there. Besides, he wanted to meet some American writers, especially Washington Irving, with whom he had exchanged enthusiastic letters. After his return from America Dickens wrote *American Notes* (1842) and *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-1844) which created a sensation in America. They were social satires of the American way of life.

Between 1843 and 1848 Dickens published his *Christmas Books – A Christmas Carol, The Chimes, The Cricket on the Hearth*. In 1846 he visited Switzerland and Italy. There he began *Dombey and Son* (1848). In the fifties and sixties the most profound novels were written – *David Copperfield*, (1850), *Bleak House* (1853), *Hard Times* (1854) and others.

*David Copperfield* is, to a great extent, an autobiographical novel. In the character of David Copperfield, Dickens shows many features of his own life. The hero of the novel is a young man who lives through hardships and injustice but in the end achieves well-being.

*Bleak House* is a bitter criticism of England's courts of justice. *Hard Times* is a novel depicting the conditions of the working class in England.

*Little Dorrit* (1855-1857) is the story of a little girl whose parents are thrown into a debtor's prison.

With *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) Dickens returned to the historical novel. It is devoted to the events of the French Revolution of 1789-1794. The beginning of the sixties saw the publication of *Great Expectations* (1860-1861) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-1865).

The beginning of the sixties saw the publication of *Great Expectations* (1860-1861) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-1865).

Dickens died in 1870, leaving his last work *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* unfinished. From 1858 to 1868 Dickens gave dramatic readings of his novels in England and America. He was a brilliant reader of his novels, but he overworked and died at the age of fifty-eight. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Charles Dickens was one of the greatest novelists that ever put pen to paper. His

novels are now translated into most languages and are highly valued for their realism, their humour and their just criticism of English life.

### **Dombey and Son**

*Dombey and Son* is one of Dickens's best works. Dickens enjoyed life, but he criticized the social system into which he had been born. As he grew older the criticism of his age became bitterer. The main subject of his later novels is money and the things that go with money – power, position and so on. In *Dombey and Son* the symbol of money-power is Mr Dombey himself, to whose pride of position as a British merchant everything must be sacrificed – affection, wife, children and love. According to Dombey "The earth was made for *Dombey and Son* to trade in, and the sun and the moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows to give them promise of fair weather; winds blew for, or against, their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre». Mr Dombey is a prosperous businessman, a starchy and purse-proud merchant. He is selfish to the core, he bends down only before the power of gold. He looks upon the people surrounding him only from a business point of view. His coldness, his absolute lack of human feeling towards people is extraordinary. The firm, which is his life, is called *Dombey and Son*. He has a daughter, Florence, whom he considers to be "a piece of base coin" because she is a girl. He does not love her, he does not notice her, although the little girl loves him dearly. When at last a son is born, it is he who becomes the centre of Dombey's life and interests. He is to continue to increase his riches. But the dreams of Mr Dombey are not realized. Little Paul is a sickly child and he feels that he will not get better that he will die like his mother died when he was born. He cannot understand why the money, that his father considers to be so powerful, could not save his mother and cannot make him strong and completely well.

Little Paul dies and the hopes of Mr Dombey never come true. Mr Dombey marries again, but the marriage is a bargain. Dombey is sure that money can buy obedience, devotion, love, faithfulness. But money fails to bring what he expected. His second wife, Edith, hates him and leaves him. Florence runs away from his house, too. Misfortune falls on him in business as well. Mr Corker, his secretary, ruins Dombey and perishes himself. Dombey is left all alone. The atmosphere of cold reigns in the house.

The character of Dombey is a symbol of evil. Dickens shows how wrong and mistaken are all those who believe that money can buy everything: affection, happiness, love.

With great talent and power Dickens shows that money brings only evil, poisons the minds of people, makes them egoistic and cruel. Opposed to Mr Dombey are his two children, Florence and Paul.

Dickens made them loving and lovable creatures who hated money. Only Florence's love for Mr Dombey remains unchanged, and she and her husband take care of the lonely old man.

Dickens managed to show the ugliness of relations based on money in a work of art. Up to now Dickens has remained one of the great realistic writers.

## Questions and Tasks

1. When did Charles Dickens begin his literary career?
2. What was his first work?
3. Give a brief summary of the contents of the *Pickwick Papers*.
4. What Dickens's novels dealing with social problems can you name?
5. What historical novel was written by Dickens before his visit to America?
6. Why did Dickens want to visit America?
7. What novels were written by Dickens after his return from America?
8. What is his autobiographical novel?
9. Name some other notable works by Dickens.
10. Why is the novel *Dombey and Son* considered to be one of Dickens's greatest works?
11. Give the main idea of *Dombey and Son*.
12. What social problems did Charles Dickens write about?

**William Thackeray** (1811-1863) William Makepeace Thackeray was the second representative of critical realism in English literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Dickens and Thackeray were such near contemporaries that their work was often compared, but Thackeray's life was different from that of Charles Dickens. William Makepeace Thackeray was born into a prosperous middle class family. When his father died, the boy, aged six, was sent to England where he attended the famous Charterhouse School. In 1828 Thackeray entered Cambridge University.

While a student, he was clever at drawing cartoons and writing verses, chiefly parodies. He did not stay long at the University. The stagnant atmosphere of the place suffocated him. Besides, his wish was to become an artist, and therefore he left the University without graduating and went to Germany, Italy and France to study art. Intending to complete his education, Thackeray returned to London and began a law course in 1833. Meanwhile, the Indian bank in which the money Thackeray inherited from his father was invested went bankrupt, and Thackeray was left penniless. Thus, he was obliged to drop the studies to earn his living. For a long time he hesitated about whether to take up art or literature as a profession. At last he decided to try his hand as a journalist. He wrote humorous articles, essays, reviews and short stories which he sent to London magazines.

He illustrated his works with amusing drawings. The first book which attracted attention was *The Book of Snobs* (1847), which deals with the upper classes and their followers in the middle classes, whose vices the author criticizes with the sharp pen of satire.

The book draws a gallery of English snobs of different circles of English society. In Thackeray's view a snob is a person who bows down to and flatters his social superior and looks down with contempt on his social inferiors. In his book the author declares war against snobbery, vanity and selfishness.

It was followed by *Vanity Fair* (A Novel without a Hero) – the peak of social realism, which brought great fame to the novelist, and remains his most-read work up to the present day. It appeared first in twenty-four monthly instalments which Thackeray illustrated himself, and then in 1848, as a complete book.



The novels of the later period, *The History of Pendennis* (1850) and *The Newcomes* (1855) are realistic, but they show the gradual reconciliation of the author with reality. In the other novels, *Henry Esmond* (1852), and *The Virginians* (1859) Thackeray turned to historical themes, showing a remarkable knowledge of history. Thackeray's last novel, *Denis Duval*, remained unfinished, for Thackeray died in 1863.

Numerous other works written by Thackeray include essays, short stories, sketches, satirical poems. These were popular during the writer's life-time but, for the most part, forgotten by the next generation of readers.

Thackeray is at bottom a satirist. In his novels he gives a vivid description of the upper classes of society, their mode of life, manners and tastes. His knowledge of human nature is broad. His criticism is acute, his satire is sharp and bitter.

Thackeray used to say that he wished to describe men and women as they really are. Thackeray's books are often very sad. He tells us clearly that not only people are often wicked, vain and unjust, but that they can be only what they are due to existing conditions. As Thackeray had no hope of change, many of the pages he wrote are filled with sorrow for the world's ills.

The picture of the life of the ruling classes of England created by Thackeray remains a classic example of social satire to this very day.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What family did Thackeray come from?
2. Where was he educated?
3. What was he clever at while a student?
4. Why didn't he stay long at the University?
5. Where did he go to study art?
6. What did Thackeray begin to study when he returned to London?
7. Why was he obliged to drop his studies?
8. What did he begin to write?
9. Say a few words about Thackeray's first novel *The Book of Snobs*.
10. Who is a snob in Thackeray's view?
11. What novel is Thackeray's masterpiece?
12. Name his other notable works.
13. What characterizes Thackeray as a satirist?
14. Why are many of the pages he wrote filled with sorrow?

### **Vanity Fair (A Novel without a Hero)**

The subtitle of the book shows the author's intention to describe not individuals, but the bourgeois-aristocratic society as a whole. The author pictures the world he describes in the novel as a "very vain, wicked, foolish place, full of all sorts of humbugs, and falsenesses and pretensions". *Vanity Fair* is a social novel which describes not only society as a whole, but the very laws which govern it. Using satire the author mercilessly exposes the vices of the aristocracy and the merchants, their self-conceit, narrow-mindedness, their worship of money, and moral degradation.

The interest of the novel centres on the characters, rather than on the plot. The author shows various people, their thoughts and actions in different situations.

There is no definite hero in the book. In Thackeray's opinion there can be no hero in a society where the cult of money rules the world.

The novel tells of the fates of two girls with sharply contrasting characters – Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley. The daughter of a rich city merchant, Amelia Sedley, is a young girl representing "virtue without wit". She is sweet, honest and naive. Her friend Rebecca Sharp or Becky is clever, talented, charming, energetic and pleasant to look at. She possesses a keen sense of humour, and a deep understanding of people's nature. The girls meet at school. Becky's father was a teacher of drawing there. After his death Becky has to earn her own living. She understands that society is split into the rich and the poor. Into the world to which Amelia belongs, Becky Sharp, representing "wit without virtue", forces her way after many struggles. Her only aim in life is to get to high society at all costs. She decides to get to the top of it through marriage. Rebecca tries to entrap Amelia's brother Joseph. He is lazy and foolish, but rich. Her plans are ruined by George Osborn, Amelia's fiance. Becky believes neither in love nor friendship. She flirts with George Osborn, though he is the husband of her friend. She is ready to marry any man to gain wealth and title. Becky begins to work at Sir Pitt Crawley's as a governess. She secretly marries Sir Pitt Crawley's son Rawdon, who is to inherit his rich aunt's money. But old Miss Crawley cannot forgive her favourite nephew this foolish step and leaves her money to Rawdon's brother, Sir Pitt. No wonder Rebecca almost loses "her presence of mind" when she realizes how wrong her calculations were. At that time Pitt Crawley himself proposes to her. The fact that Pitt is old and that she despises him does not count with her. Pitt is the owner of Queen's Crawley. He possesses money and title and these were the only things Becky's greedy nature wishes. "I would have had the town-house newly furnished and decorated. I would have had the handsomest carriage in London, and a box at the opera, ... All this might have been; and now – now all was doubt and mystery."

Flattery, hypocrisy, lies and other mean actions help Becky to join the upper classes of society, but no happiness is in store for her. Her life has neither real feelings, nor honest aims in view. Contrary to Becky, Amelia is honest, generous and kind to all the people she comes in touch with, and is admired by all. "... she could not only sing like a lark... and embroider beautifully, and spell as well as a Dictionary itself, but she had such a kindly, smiling, tender, gentle, generous heart of her own as won the love of everybody who came near her..." But for all that Amelia cannot be regarded as a heroine of the novel: she is not clever enough to understand the real qualities of the people who surround her. She is too unintelligent, naive and simple hearted to expose all the dirty machinations of the clever and sly Rebecca. She is absolutely "blind" to all the faults of her lightminded and selfish husband, and even after his death she is determined to remain faithful to him.

Suddenly Sedley goes bankrupt. Old Osborne disinherits his son because he has married Amelia, the daughter of his bankrupt friend. Soon after their marriage George is sent to Belgium to fight against Napoleon's army. He is killed on the field of Waterloo. Now Amelia and her son George are very poor. They only

receive occasional presents from little Georgy's godfather, Colonel Dobbin. He loves Amelia and little Georgy and after his friend's death proposes to Amelia. Only in the end Amelia learns that her husband wanted to leave her and flee with Becky. Then she agrees to marry Dobbin. Though Dobbin, like Amelia, is an exception in *Vanity Fair*, he is too primitive and narrowminded to be admired by the author.

Captain Rawdon Crawley returns a colonel. Rebecca is presented to the court and recognized by upper society. Yet her career soon comes to an end. Her relations with Lord Steyne are disclosed, and her husband leaves her. Her son is adopted by Rawdon's brother. Rebecca becomes an adventuress.

Old Osborn dies leaving his money to his grandson. Dobbin is appointed as Georgy's guardian. *Vanity Fair* is one of the greatest examples of critical realism of the 19th century. The action is carried forward by a series of plots and subplots; the setting is detailed and varied, the characters are real individuals.

### Questions and Tasks

1. Explain the meaning of the subtitle of *Vanity Fair*.
2. What vices of bourgeois-aristocratic society are mercilessly exposed by Thackeray in the book?
3. Name the main characters of the novel.
4. Give the main facts of Amelia's and Rebecca's life.
5. Why do we say that Rebecca Sharp embodies the spirit of *Vanity Fair*?
6. Do you find any characters that are either all good or all bad?
7. What traits of character do Amelia and Rebecca possess?
8. Why do we consider *Vanity Fair* to be one of the greatest examples of the 19th century critical realism?

### The Bronte Sisters

There were three Brontes-novelists: Charlotte (1816-1855), Emily (1818-1848) and Anne (1820-1849). Their father was an Irish protestant, a clergyman in Yorkshire. Their mother died when the girls were little. The children were entirely devoted to reading, writing, drawing, wandering over the open moors and playing a game of story telling about their imaginary heroes. The sisters received their education at a charity school and worked as governesses. Private teaching was the only profession open to educated women, and the Brontes needed to earn their living. Their life was hard, and they tried to create a new world of their imagination. The sisters turned to literature though they knew of the difficulties a woman writer had to face when it came to publication. Their first volume of verse was published under a masculine pseudonym. *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell* (1846) Nowadays Charlotte and Emily rank among the greatest realists of the 19th century. Anne is less known, though her *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* cannot be ignored, either.

**Charlotte Bronte** Charlotte Bronte's first attempt at prose writing, the novel *The Professor* (1847) was rejected by publishers. But the young author was not

discouraged and began her next novel *Jane Eyre* (1847) which brought her fame and placed her in the rank of the foremost English realistic writers. She was personally acquainted with Dickens and Thackeray, and the latter greatly influenced her literary method. In 1849 Charlotte Bronte published *Shirley*. The novel dealt with the life of workers at the time of the Luddites' movement. The last novel by Charlotte Bronte, *Villette*, which came out in 1853, is a realistic description of her experiences at a boarding-school in Brussels. In her novels Charlotte Bronte combined scenes from her own life with the far richer and more romantic experiences which she imagined. She aimed to make her novels a realistic picture of society but she also added to her realism elements of romanticism. The main subject of her books is the soul of a woman, a governess or a teacher. Her heroines are generous, intelligent, modest and gentle. Charlotte Bronte attacks the greed and lack of culture of the bourgeoisie and sympathises with the workers and peasants. She is convinced that society can be reformed by means of education.

### **Jane Eyre**

On the first pages of the book the reader meets Jane Eyre as a small girl at her aunt's house. She loses both of her parents shortly after birth. Her aunt, Mrs Reed, a woman of despotic character is rude and unjust to the poor orphan. Mrs Reed's children also find pleasure in teasing and mocking Jane.

One day, unable to bear the torture any longer, Jane tells straight to her aunt's face all she thinks of her. She is an orphan, a plain and penniless girl, but she possesses her own feelings of right and wrong.

Mrs Reed is furious and gets rid of her hated niece by sending her to the Lowood Institution, a charity school for poor girls. Jane meets with terrible living conditions in Lowood. She stays there for eight long years, six spent in studies, and the remaining two as a teacher.

The other part of the book is one of the most romantic love stories in English literature. When Jane grows up she becomes the governess of Mr Rochester's foster daughter. Mr Rochester is a rich squire. He is a strong, noble, proud, manly and tragic figure. He is much older than Jane. His life has been miserable. He has been wandering here and there seeking rest and dulling his intellect. Heart-weary and soulwithered Mr Rochester meets Jane. He finds in her many of the good and bright qualities which he has sought for twenty years. He proposes to Jane. She is in love with her master and agrees to become his wife. The young woman does not know the truth: for years Mr Rochester has kept a lunatic wife in his house in charge of a servant. Nobody suspects her existence. On the eve of Jane's marriage the lunatic enters Jane's room and tears her bridal veil in half. In the church she learns Mr Rochester is married. Shocked by the news, she thinks she must leave Thornfield, though she still loves Mr Rochester.

Half-starved, worn-out and soaked to the skin Jane comes across a parson who helps her to get the job of a teacher in a village-school. Soon she discovers the parson to be her cousin and that she is the heiress of a large sum of money that her uncle on her father's side has left her.

Meanwhile, a great misfortune happens to Mr Rochester: he loses his sight during the fire in the house, caused by his mad wife who meets a tragic death by jumping

off the roof in spite of his attempt to save her. Hearing that Mr Rochester is quite broken down, Jane Eyre comes to him and becomes his right hand and the apple of his eye. They marry and their life is very happy.

*Jane Eyre* depicts a poor girl's rebellion against cruelty, injustice, the division of people into the rich and poor, the inhuman educational system in English charity schools. Another problem raised in the novel is the position of women in society. The novel examines many sides of the circumstances of women, and Jane's words at the end, "Reader, I married him" show a new move towards freedom and equality. Jane controls her own life and, through all her difficulties and problems, becomes more independent.

Charlotte Bronte presents things in a realistic and satirical way. In Mr Rochester's house Jane meets the county gentry – uncultured, ambitious, cold and vulgar. They are contrasted with Jane, a poor orphan. She is honest, intelligent, brave and strong-willed. There are a lot of emotional and thrilling episodes in the novel. Charlotte Bronte also has fine knowledge of the English language and she uses it skilfully.

### **Emily Bronte**

Emily Bronte wrote only one novel *Wuthering Heights* – her prose-poem. This book is regarded as one of the most remarkable novels in English literature.

It is a novel of passion, an early psychological novel. The central characters, Cathy and Heathcliff live out their passion in the windy, rough countryside of Yorkshire, and the landscape is as wild as their relationship. The novel is very original in the way it is written, moving backward and forward in time, and in and out of the minds of the characters. Again it presents a new view of women and their emotions.

The book is strange. On the one hand the plot is full of mystery. On the other hand the novel is very concrete: the time of the action, the landscape, geography and climate are realistic. The author of the book makes no difference between the supernatural and natural. Both work together to serve her artistic purpose. The mystery and the supernatural are used as romantic elements in her original study of violent characters.

Emily Bronte's characters and actions may seem unbelievable but they convince us. They are unique, and their violent emotions are connected with the Yorkshire moors where the action takes place. The moors are varying to suit the changing moods of the story, and they are beautifully described in all seasons. Emily Bronte very skilfully shows the reader her heroes' psychology and moral conflicts, their desires, passions, temperaments and human weaknesses.

**Anne Bronte** The youngest Bronte sister, Anne, wrote *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) also with an unusual central female character and involving complex relationships and problems. It was first published in 1848 under the pseudonym Acton Bell. Probably the most shocking of the Brontës' novels, it had an instant and phenomenal success, but after Anne's death her sister Charlotte prevented its re-publication in England until 1854.

The novel is framed as a series of letters from Gilbert Markham to his friend about the events connected with his meeting a mysterious young widow, calling herself Helen Graham, who arrives at Wildfell Hall, an Elizabethan mansion which has been empty for many years, with her young son and a servant. Contrary to the early 19th-century norms, she pursues an artist's career and makes an income by selling her pictures. Her strict seclusion soon gives rise to gossip in the neighbouring village and she becomes a social outcast. Refusing to believe anything scandalous about her, Gilbert befriends her and discovers her past. In the diary she gives Gilbert, she chronicles her husband's physical and moral decline through alcohol and debauchery in his dissipated aristocratic milieu. Ultimately she flees with her son, whom she desperately wishes to save from his father's influence. The depiction of marital strife and women's professional work is mitigated by the strong moral message of Anne Brontë's belief in universal salvation.

Most critics now consider *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* to be one of the first feminist novels. May Sinclair, in 1913, said that "the slamming of [Helen's] bedroom door against her husband reverberated throughout Victorian England". In leaving her husband and taking away their child, Helen violates not only social conventions but also early 19th-century English law.

All three Brontë sisters faced these kinds of problems into the novel with unusual courage and directness, and together they changed the way the novel could present women characters: after the Brontës, female characters were more realistic, less idealized and their struggles became the subject of a great many novels later in the nineteenth century.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Name the three Brontës – novelists.
2. What do you know about their childhood?
3. Where did they receive their education?
4. What profession was open to educated women at that time?
5. Why did the Brontës turn to literature?
6. What was their first volume of verse?
7. Who ranks among the greatest realists of the 19th century?
8. What was Charlotte Brontë's first attempt at prose writing?
9. What novel brought her fame?
10. What were her last two novels about?
11. Name the main subject of Charlotte Brontë's books.
12. What traits of characters do her heroines possess?
13. Give a brief summary of the contents of *Jane Eyre*.
14. What themes does Charlotte Brontë touch upon in *Jane Eyre*?
15. What can you say about the only novel of Emily Brontë *Wuthering Heights*'?
16. Comment on the plot and the characters of the novel *Wuthering Heights*.
17. What novel was written by Anne Brontë?
18. What is the Brontë sisters' contribution to the development of the English novel?

## **5.2. Later Victorian Period**

The **Later Victorian Period** began after 1870. The most prominent writers of that period were **Christiana Rossetti, Charles Swinburne, George Eliot, William Morris, Thomas Hardy, Oscar Wilde, Pater** and others. In poetry, **Morris, Swinburne Rossetti** were the protagonists of a new literary movement – the *Pre-Raphaelite Movement*. Later on, this movement was followed by the *Aesthetic Movement*. Its protagonists were **Oscar Wilde, Earnest Dowson, Arthur Symons** and **Lionel Pigot Johnson**. In the field of novels, however, **George Eliot** laid the foundation of the '*Modern Psychological Novel*', followed by **Thomas Hardy** and **Meredith**.

### **Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)**

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh. His father was a civil engineer. The boy's health was poor, and later on he often spoke about it in his poems:

#### *The Land of Counterpane*

When I was sick and lay a-bed, I had  
two pillows at my head, And all my  
toys beside me lay To keep me happy  
all the day.

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets All  
up and down among the sheets; Or  
brought my trees and houses out, And  
planted cities all about.

And sometimes for an hour or so I  
watched my leaden soldiers go, With  
different uniforms and drills, Among the  
bed-clothes, through the hills;

I was the giant great and still That sits  
upon the pillow-hill, And sees before  
him, dale and plain, The pleasant Land of  
Counterpane.

Stevenson studied law and engineering at the University of Edinburgh, but never practised them. Since childhood he had dreamt of literary career. His life was a heroic struggle with a lung disease, and he spent much time abroad. Stevenson's last years of life passed in Samoa. He loved the land and its oppressed people. When he died, he was carried to his grave by the natives who mourned for him as their friend and protector. A bronze tablet on his tomb bears the epitaph he wrote for himself:

#### *Requiem*

Under the wide and starry sky,  
Dig the grave and let me lie.  
Glad did I live and gladly die,  
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:  
Here he lies where he longed to be;  
Home is the sailor, home from sea, And  
the hunter home from the hill

The charm of Stevenson's personality is reflected in his poems for children *A Child's Garden of Verse* (1885). These poems reveal a child's freshness, directness and naivety of thought. His other volumes of poetry are *The Underwoods* (1887), *Ballads* (1890) and *Songs of Travels* (1896).

Stevenson first won fame with the publication of a novel entitled *Treasure Island*. It was immediately popular with the public. *Treasure Island* was followed by the historical novels *The Black Arrow* (1888), *Kidnapped* (1886), and *Catriona* (1893). *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) shows the battle of good and evil in man's heart. Stevenson is also the author of *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), *The Wrong Box* (1889) and a number of mystery stories. At his death he was working on *Weir of Hermiston*. This unfinished novel is considered to be the best of Stevenson's whole work. Robert Louis Stevenson is generally referred to as a neoromanticist. Neo-Romanticism was a trend in literature which came into being at the end of the 19th century. The writers of this literary trend turned to the past or described exotic travels and adventures.

Stevenson was attracted to the romance of adventure and freedom, of risky undertakings in lonely seas and exotic countries. He idealized the strong and brave men who went down to these lands in ships. In his novels Stevenson told his readers about life full of novelty, about high passions and thrilling sensations. He was a gifted and original writer. Stevenson considered art superior to life for art could create a new and better reality.

### **Treasure Island**

*Treasure Island* is the first of Stevenson's romances of adventure. This novel belongs to the class of books which are at once existing for boys and fascinating for adults. It is interesting for the reader by the romantic situations, fascinating events and the most exciting adventures of the characters.

*Treasure Island* is a story of a search for buried treasure. The hero of the novel is Jim Hawkins. It is he who tells the reader about his adventures. At the Admiral Benbow Inn an old sailor leaves a chest with some papers. Among the papers there is the map of Treasure Island. From this very moment Jim's adventures begin. He and his friends, Doctor Livesey and Squire Trelawney set out for the island. They outfit a ship, but there are some dangerous men in the crew. To make the matters worse, Long John Silver and his gang are also after the treasure. At the end of the story Jim returns home from the island with the treasure.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Give a brief account of Stevenson's life.
2. Speak on Stevenson's poems.
3. What novel brought him fame?
4. What can you say about the plot of *Treasure Island* and its main characters?
5. Name some other literary works of Stevenson.
6. What literary trend does he belong to?
7. What themes did the writers of Neo-Romanticism turn to?
8. Who were the most popular heroes of Stevenson's novels?
9. Speak of Stevenson's place in English literature.



## **Oscar Wilde** (1856-1900)

Oscar Wilde was born in Dublin on October 16, 1856. His father was a famous Irish surgeon and his mother was a poetess. In his youth he was very much influenced by his mother, who was a highly educated woman. He received a very good education at Trinity College in Dublin and Oxford University. At school he was a brilliant pupil and later at Oxford he displayed considerable gifts in art and humanities. The young man received a number of classical prizes, and graduated with first-class honours. While at the University, under the influence of his teacher, the writer **John Ruskin**, Wilde joined the then young "aesthetic movement", which came into being as a protest against bourgeois hypocrisy, but later turned reactionary. The future writer became a most sincere supporter of this movement.

After graduating from the University, Wilde turned his attention to writing, travelling and lecturing. The "aesthetic movement" became popular, and Oscar Wilde earned the reputation of being the leader of the movement and an apostle of beauty.

In 1881 he went to America to lecture on the "aesthetic movement" in England. His lecture tours were triumphantly successful. The next ten years saw the appearance of all his main works. In 1881 Oscar Wilde published his *Poems*. The beautiful fairytales *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* appeared in 1888, his only novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891). Oscar Wilde won his fame as a dramatist. The most significant of his comedies are: *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892); *A Woman of No Importance* (1899); *An Ideal Husband* (1895); *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895). Oscar Wilde's sparkling comedies of fashionable life still attract many theatre-goers. They reveal the selfishness, vanity and corruption of English higher society in a playful manner. The plays are notable for their brilliant dialogues, witty paradoxes and entertaining plots. Wilde also wrote poems, essays, reviews, political tracts, letters on every subject he considered worthy of attention – history, drama, painting and others – some serious, some satirical. At home and abroad Wilde attracted the attention of his audience by the brilliance of his conversation, the scope of his knowledge, and the force of his personality.

At the height of his popular success tragedy struck. He was accused of immorality and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. In prison Oscar Wilde wrote his powerful poem *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898). The hero of *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* is a young man who has killed his unfaithful sweetheart. The ballad tells of cruelty, injustice, corruption. When released from prison Oscar Wilde went to France. He died in Paris on November 30, 1900 and is buried there.

### **Oscar Wilde's**

#### **Literary Work The Picture of Dorian Gray**

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* describes the life of a young man, Dorian Gray. The author touches on many important problems of contemporary life: morality, art and beauty in particular.

At the beginning of the novel we see an inexperienced youth, a kind and innocent young man. "... he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely-curved

scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair. There was something in his face that made one trust him at once. All the candour of youth was there, as well as all youth's passionate purity." Dorian is influenced by two men with sharply contrasting characters: Basil Hallward and Lord Henry Wotton.

The three principal characters – Dorian Gray, the painter Basil Hallward and the cynical Lord Henry – discuss the problems of art and reality, beauty and morality. Basil is an artist to the core. He paints Dorian Gray and puts his whole soul into the work. To Basil beauty is a source of inspiration and creative work. His portrait of Dorian Gray is a masterpiece. He worships Dorian's beauty. On seeing the picture Dorian exclaims: "I shall grow old and horrible and dreadful. But the picture will remain young. If it were only the other way! I would give my soul for that.

Youth is the only thing worth having." Dorian Gray meets Lord Henry Wotton, a typical aesthete admiring only beauty. He is handsome, pleasant to listen to. But at the same time he is heartless, cynical and immoral.

Lord Henry and Basil struggle for the soul of Dorian and Lord Henry is victorious. Influenced by Lord Henry Dorian tries to satisfy his wishes at any cost. He becomes a selfish and cruel dandy who commits terrible crimes. Years pass, his face remains young and beautiful, but the portrait changes. Dorian's picture is the reflection of his soul. His face there becomes wrinkled, old, ugly and vicious. The portrait shows a cynical, aged and corrupted man.

Wishing to do away with his former life and being disgusted with the ugliness of his portrait, the only evidence left against him, Dorian decides to get rid of it and stabs the picture with a knife. That is the last of his crimes. He falls down on the floor, with a knife in his heart, "withered, wrinkled and loathsome of visage". But on the wall is again hanging a splendid portrait in all its original beauty. An immoral life leads Dorian to catastrophe. Though the novel presents Oscar Wilde's aesthetic theory in which he glorifies beauty and conveys the idea that it is not at all necessary that books should be realistic and teach morality, it is only fair to state that Oscar Wilde is not always consistent. The end of the book is a contradiction of Wilde's decadent theory. The fact that the portrait acquired its former beauty and Dorian Gray lay withered and wrinkled on the floor, shows the triumph of real beauty – a piece of art created by an artist, a unity of beautiful form and content. Besides that, it conveys the idea that real beauty cannot be part of an immoral life.

Dorian Gray's portrait is symbolic. It shows not only a handsome young man, but also the inner world of the artist who created it, and the spiritual life of the sitter.

### **Oscar Wilde's Tales**

Though Oscar Wilde rejects realism and considers that art exists apart from reality in some of his tales, *The Happy Prince*, *The Selfish Giant*, *The Devoted Friend*, *The Nightingale and the Rose* he introduces social motives. The reader feels a humanist behind every tale.

In these tales Oscar Wilde sings the beauty of the human heart and the ability of common people to show great and selfless love. The secret of life is to be helpful and good to others. He admires unselfishness, kindness and generosity (*The Nightingale and the Rose*), he shows deep sympathy for the poor (*The Devoted*

*Friend*) and despises egoism and greed (*The Selfish Giant*). Oscar Wilde's tales are like poems in prose, lyrical, vivid and graceful. His vocabulary is rich. His tales are admired by both children and adults.

Oscar Wilde's greatest merit is his beautiful style: laconic, exact, expressive and colourful; it has enriched the English language. His great gift lies in his ability to express the contradictions of life in paradoxes. This, as well as Wilde's outstanding knowledge of language and a gift for dialogue, make his works sparkle with wit. Here are some of Oscar Wilde's paradoxes and witty sayings from his plays.

- ◆ A moment may ruin a life. ("Lady Windermere's Fan")
- ◆ Don't use big words. They mean so little. ("An Ideal Husband")
- ◆ Duty is what one expects from others, it is not what one does oneself. ("A Woman of No Importance")
- ◆ Experience is the name every one gives to their mistakes. ("Lady Windermere's Fan")
- ◆ In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it. ("Lady Windermere's Fan")
- ◆ It is always worth while asking a question though it is not always worth while answering one. ("An Ideal Husband")
- ◆ Little things are so very difficult to do. ("An Ideal Husband")
- ◆ Memory is the diary that we all carry about with us. ("The Importance of Being Earnest")
- ◆ Nothing is so dangerous as being too modern. One is apt to grow old-fashioned quite suddenly. ("An Ideal Husband")
- ◆ Questions are never indiscreet. Answers sometimes are. ("An Ideal Husband")
- ◆ Sooner or later we have all to pay for what we do. ("An Ideal Husband")
- ◆ There is nothing like youth. Youth is the Lord of life. ("A Woman of No Importance")
- ◆ What a pity that in life we only get our lessons when they are no use to us! ("Lady Windermere's Fan")
- ◆ Youth is the time for success. ("An Ideal Husband")

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Oscar Wilde's life.
2. What genres does the author use in his works?
3. Name the most significant of his comedies.
4. Why do Oscar Wilde's sparkling comedies still attract many theatre-goers?
5. What themes did Oscar Wilde touch on in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*?
6. Relate briefly the contents of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.
7. Does Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* confirm the decadent motto "art for art's sake", or does it disprove this theory?
8. Compare Basil Hallward and Lord Henry Wotton as portrayed by Oscar Wilde and comment on their influence on *Dorian Gray*.
9. What part of the novel is a contradiction of Oscar Wilde's decadent theory?

10. Name the most popular of Oscar Wilde's tales.
11. What social motives does he introduce in his tales?
12. What does Oscar Wilde sing in the tales?
13. Why are the tales admired by both children and adults?
14. Comment on Oscar Wilde's language and style.
15. What quotations from Oscar Wilde's plays do you know?
16. What is the contribution of Oscar Wilde to the development of English literature?

### **Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)**

Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay, on December 30, 1865. His parents were English. His father was an artist, professor at the Bombay school of Art and curator of the Government Museum. Rudyard spent his early childhood in Lahore. The Hindoo servants loved him very much. They taught him tales and songs of Indian folklore. At six young Kipling went to England and was educated at an English school. There he was editor-in-chief of the school paper *The Chronicle*. The boy had inherited some of his father's artistic talent and showed a literary interest. He wrote his first book *Schoolboy Lyrics* at the age of sixteen. His first working home was India, where, from 1882 till 1889 he was engaged in journalistic work for various periodicals.

At twenty-one he published first volume *Departmental Ditties*, a small book of verse. This book was followed by *Barrack Room Ballads* (1892), *The Seven Seas* (1896) and *The Five Nations* (1903). All of them deal with the British in India and glorify the English nation. The verses of Kipling are devoted to universal human values—man's courage, energy, patience and self-possession. One of his best poems was devoted to his son.

If...

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, But  
make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting, Or  
being lied about don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise...

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
If all men count with you, but none too much,

If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And — which is more, — you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling was a poet, a novelist and a short-story writer. When he was twenty-four he had published his six small collections of stories. Among these early works some of the best are *Soldiers Three*, *The Phantom Rickshaw* and *Wee*

*Willie Winkie*. These and the stories which followed were recognized in India and then in England.

Kipling was a born storyteller. Between 1887 and 1899 he travelled around the world. He was in China, Japan and America. During this period he wrote some of his very popular works. These were his stories for children *The Jungle Books* (1894), *Captains Courageous* (1897) and *Just So Stories* (1902). Kipling knew how to keep the story moving, how to bring it to its culmination and give it point. His two *Jungle Books* and *Just So Stories* have been translated into dozens of languages and are still read all over the world.

In his well-known animal stories *The Jungle Book* he described how the child Mowgli was brought up by wolves and taught by them and the black panther, the law of the jungle, and how Mowgli became the master of the beasts. Kipling had seen India as a child, and this helped him to give his descriptions a unique quality. In 1936 Kipling worked on autobiographical notes when he died on January 17. In a year there appeared *Something of Myself*, a collection of notes containing memoirs.

Rudyard Kipling was very popular among ordinary people as well as by well known writers such as Oscar Wilde, Somerset Maugham and many others. He was exceedingly popular in the late 19th century. In 1907 Kipling was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. He was the first writer and the first Englishman to whom this prize was given. The reason of his popularity lies in the interesting plots, the variety of characters and the force of narration.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Rudyard Kipling's life.
2. When did he publish his first book of verse?
3. What were his verses devoted to?
4. What were his most popular works?
5. Why was Kipling very popular with the readers?
6. Comment on his well-known animal stories *The Jungle Book*.
7. What can you say about the plots and the characters of Kipling's books?

The Victorian Period exhibits a unique and complex amalgamation of two opposites - Romanticism and Classicism. Basically, its inclination towards Classicism was due its rational approach to the problems of life, deeply moral attitude, and a search for stability and balance. On the other hand, it exhibited close proximity to the Romantic spirit which had not completely exhausted itself but suddenly ended due to the following reasons: the premature deaths of Keats, Byron, and Shelley, the disillusionment resulted from industrialization and material prosperity, the social and economic unrest.

## **LECTURE 8**

### **Realism in English literature.**

- 1. George Eliot**
- 2. Lewis Carroll**
- 3. Thomas Hardy**

Realism is a literary movement which began in the late 19th century and has since had a profound influence on the written word today. It is a literary style which focuses on the accurate representation of life and its events, often with a focus on its more mundane details. Realism seeks to portray life as it actually is, rather than idealising it, and so often eschews fanciful elements in favor of typical, down to earth settings and characters.

Towards the middle of the 19th century the romantic trend in American literature gave way to new, realistic forms. Critical realism as a trend in American literature developed after the Civil War. The critical realistic literature differed greatly from that of the previous writers such as Irving, Cooper and Longfellow.

The romanticists wrote their stories about ideal individuals through which they showed their emotions. The realists understood that the people should be shown as a whole. They saw man on the background of social conflicts of the day and explained human feelings in relation to this background.

Among the most outstanding American realists in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were Mark Twain, O. Henry and Jack London.

Mark Twain depicted common American people with great sympathy and humour. At the same time he cruelly condemned hypocrisy, bigotry and greed.

Jack London and O. Henry created typical characters of the American common people – farmers, workers, intellectuals. They revealed the truth of American life in their works.

American critical realism developed in contact with European realism. But American realism enriched world realism by introducing such problems as social injustice and Negro and Indian questions. American writers using the methods of critical realism created great works of art.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. When did the romantic trend in American literature give way to realistic forms?
2. How did the critical realistic literature differ from that of the romanticists?
3. Name the most outstanding American realists in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.
4. Comment on the works of Mark Twain, Jack London and O. Henry.
5. The works of what writers influenced the development of American critical realism?
6. What problems were introduced by American critical realism?
7. Did it enrich world literature? Why?

### **Popular Pioneers**

Realism was first popularised in England by writers such as **George Eliot** and **Thomas Hardy** (a depiction of Tess from Hardy's famous novel *Tess of the D'urbervilles* is discussed above), who sought to portray life in a more honest and relatable way. These writers sought to portray characters who were neither perfect nor heroic, but were instead more 'realistic', complex and often flawed individuals who made their own mistakes and strove to overcome their internal and external struggles. This style of writing was incredibly influential in the development of English literature, inspiring other authors, including Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray, who all sought to portray life in this more honest manner.

### **Widely Influential**

Realism had a huge effect on all forms of literature, but perhaps particularly so the novel. Its rise as a popular form of literature was largely due to realism's influence, as stories often sought to portray everyday life in a more identifiable way. Classics such as Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* were incredibly influential in the development of the novel, and their emphasis on realism was a major contributing factor in their success.

Realism also had an influence on the development of poetry in England. Poets such as Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning and John Keats all wrote about events and experiences which were often more rooted in reality than Romanticism.

### **A Quality Authors Still Aspire To Today**

Realism has had a profound effect on English literature, and this can still be seen in the works of modern writers. On the page it has served to create a more genuine representation of life, inspiring authors to focus on people in a more accurate way.

**Realism** was by no means a uniform or coherent movement; a tendency toward realism arose in many parts of Europe and in America, beginning in the 1840s. The major figures included Flaubert and Balzac in France, George Eliot and Charles Dickens in England, as well as William Dean Howells and Henry James in America. The most general aim of realism was to offer a truthful, accurate and objective representation of the real world, both the external world and the human self. To achieve this aim, realists resorted to a number of strategies: the use of descriptive and evocative detail; avoidance of what was fantastical, imaginary and mythical; adhering to the requirements of probability, and excluding events which were impossible or improbable; inclusion of characters and incidents from all social strata, dealing not merely with rulers and nobility; focusing on the present and choosing topics from contemporary life rather than longing for some idealized past; emphasizing the social rather than the individual (or seeing the individual as a social being); refraining from the use of elevated language, in favor of more colloquial idioms and everyday speech, as well as directness and simplicity of expression. All of these aims and strategies were underlain by an emphasis on direct observation, factuality, experience and induction (arriving at general truths only on the basis of repeated experience). In adopting the strategies listed above, realism was a broad and multipronged reaction against the idealization, historical retrospection and the imaginary worlds seen as characterizing Romanticism.

Naturalism was the ancient term for the physical sciences or the study of nature. Naturalism explicitly endeavors to emulate the methods of the physical sciences,

drawing heavily on the principles of causality, determinism, explanation and experimentation. Some naturalists also drew on the Darwinian conception of nature and attempted to express the struggle for survival, as embodied in the connections between individuals and their environments, often portraying the physiologically and psychically determined dimensions of their characters as overwhelmed by accidental circumstances rather than acting rationally, freely and heroically upon the world.

**Literary realism** was a literary movement of the second half of the 19th century . It meant a break with the ideological, formal and artistic precepts of romanticism . That is why it is considered an alternative to romantic renewal or post-romanticism.

As its name indicates, the fundamental perspective of realism consists of the literary representation of reality in a more faithful, more objective and less ideal way.

Realism was not exclusive to literature . In reality, it was a philosophical and aesthetic movement that encompassed various arts and currents of thought . In all of them there is a certain fascination with scientific progress.

Following the spirit of the time, realism was interested in objective and verifiable knowledge . In this way, an attempt was made to make the work of art a kind of document or testimony of the society in which it arose.

In this sense, realism is heir to the precepts of the Enlightenment . It resumes its emphasis on reason and thought as fundamental tools to direct the steps of the species and the ultimate value of the human condition.

### **George Eliot.**

George Eliot is the penname of Mary Ann Evans, who began writing fiction when she was already middle-aged. Until then she had worked as a journalist. Mary's father was a land agent. She was born some twenty miles from Stratford-on-Avon, but spent her childhood on a farm in the Midlands. The girl studied at two private schools for young ladies. After her mother's death she left school at the age of seventeen. Since that time, to almost thirty she kept house for her widowed father. Along with her work in the house, she found time to study languages, biology and other sciences. Mary read a great deal and became interested in social and philosophical problems. She became one of the most learned women of her time. After she had moved to London she translated some philosophical works from German into English and acted as assistant editor of the *Westminster Review*. George Eliot best works are: *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and **Silas Marner** (1861). These books are a wonderful study of English provincial life. They deal with rural society – the farmers, the small landlords and the clergy of Warwickshire.

Eliot's works are also rich in descriptions of the English countryside, drawn with exactness and a deep love of nature. The persons she writes of are for the most part the common people of the country and village, whom she knew from her earliest years. George Eliot very skilfully reveals to the reader her heroes' psychology and moral conflicts. Their desires, passion, temperament and human weaknesses are



always struggling with their moral duty. That is why in her novels George Eliot deals mostly with the problems of religion and morality. Eliot shows an emotional sympathy and tenderness towards her heroes, praising their human dignity, unselfishness, honesty and frankness, and at the same time pitilessly unmasking the hypocrisy and wickedness of those who make them suffer.

The works of the later period – *Romola* (1863), *Felix Holt*, the *Radical* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1872) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876) – are much weaker. They contain less observation and inspiration.

But George Eliot must be judged by the books in which she gave her talent, the books that brought her fame and made her one of the most distinguished English novelists of the period.

George Eliot's work belongs to the later period of the 19th century novel. She has sometimes been described as the first modern English novelist. Her great merit is a deep psychological analysis of the characters she portrays, and a keen observation of their inner world.

*The Mill on the Floss* George Eliot's most widely read book is *The Mill on the Floss*. It is an original study of English provincial life and the story of a brother and a sister. The central character is Maggie Tulliver. As a child she is intellectual, emotional and strong in character. Her brother Tom is a contrast to her sister, being noisy, dull and shallow, yet Maggie adores him. The life of the children is shown in their relations to their parents and a circle of aunts and uncles. The reader sees the middle-class family through Maggie's experience. It is a hardworking, economical, proud and narrowminded family. When Maggie grows up she dreams about a larger world of the mind and emotions. Her ardent nature is never satisfied with "a little of anything". "That is why better to do without earthly happiness altogether", she says to her friend Philip Wakem. Maggie is ever ready for self-sacrifice. She thinks she has found peace in subduing her own will. But the reader doubts in this. So does Philip. He loves Maggie and therefore he sees that Maggie is only trying to deceive herself. Maggie is engaged to Philip but she falls in love with Stephen Guest, who, in his turn, is engaged to her cousin Lucy Deane. She has to make a moral choice between the two men. The author solves Maggie's dilemma by a quite tragic ending. George Eliot invents a flood of the Floss. Maggie tries to rescue her brother from it, but both drown in the river.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate briefly the story of George Eliot's life.
2. Comment on George Eliot's best works.
3. What problems does she deal with in her novels?
4. Name her works of the later period.
5. What is the merit of the work *The Mill on the Floss*?
6. Retell the contents of *The Mill of the Floss*.

**Lewis Carroll** (1832-1898) The real name of Lewis Carroll, the author of the Alice stories, was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. He was born in Darisbury, England in 1832. He studied at Richmond and then at Rugby School. He graduated in Mathematics at Oxford in 1854 and he remained at the University as a lecturer

until 1881. He received Holy Orders<sup>1</sup> in 1861, but never became a priest. He never married and lived the rather secluded life of a bachelor within the University. He corresponded widely and had many friends in the literary and academic world. Fascinated by logarithms and mathematical problems as a child, many of the riddles and unsolvable problems in *Wonderland* reflect his scientific interests. Carroll always loved children. As a child himself, he engaged in complex games with animals, built a puppet theatre and wrote little plays for the benefit of his nine sisters and two brothers. As an adult, he enjoyed playing with children, going on trips with them and corresponding with children. His favourite child was Alice Liddell, the daughter of the Deap of his College, for whom he often invented stories and who became the model for Alice. ' And it all happened by chance. One hot day in the summer of 1862 he, an adult friend, and three small sisters were going up Oxford's River Isis for a picnic. The youngest girl, Alice Diddel, was Dodgson's special love. She was bored on this trip. To keep her and others amused, Dodgson began a story. "Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book", thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"

He invented the rest as he went along. That night he wrote it down. Later he added to it. Two years after, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published. It was the product of several afternoons of story-telling with the Liddell children.

Before anything else, the book is fun. It is full of delicious nonsense. But the nonsense appeal to the adult as much as to the child. Alice finds herself in Wonderland. She is confused. In a tree she sees the huge, grinning Cheshire Cat, and asks for help: "Cheshire Puss...

Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to", said the Cat.

"I don't much care where...", said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"... so long as I get somewhere", Alice added.

"Oh, you are sure to do that", said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."

Carroll loved playing with words and ideas. In one section of *Alice in Wonderland*, the Mock Turtle is telling Alice what he studied at school.

"Reeling and Writing, of course, to begin with, and then the different branches of Arithmetic – Ambition, Distraction, Uglification and Derision..." It was a school where they studied "Ten hours a day, nine the next and so on..." Notice the names of the different subjects. In order they should be reading and writing, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, Carroll thought children at school learned only ambition, distraction from the real world, uglification of themselves, and derision that comes with failure. Carroll's view of childhood is significant. To him it is a time of innocence when a child is protected and free from care. The child lives happily unaware of its future. This is clearly said in the serious poem at the beginning of *Through the Looking Glass*.

Published in 1865 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* quickly became a classic. Critics, academics and intellectuals have often battled to understand the meaning of the story, searching for a single solution to the book, but the genius of Lewis Carroll is his ability to keep the reader guessing.

Certainly the story is far more than the witty and wonderful adventures of a little girl who falls down a rabbit hole into a strange, upside-down world. The book presents the themes of anger and alienation, of frustration and intolerance, malice and violence.

The story is absurd and plays on the absurdity of language and people to create the plot, which is really just a series of absurd encounters and adventures. Lewis Carroll loved riddles, puns, unanswered questions and jokes that depend on the uses or misuses of certain words or expressions. Nothing is certain in Wonderland except that nothing is what it seems to be. As Alice moves through this odd landscape, the reader becomes aware of the malign character of the world, where cruelty and uncertainty exist everywhere, and only Alice can really recognize the absurdity of it all. Lewis Carroll plays with «reality, language and logic in ways that are both comic and frightening. His most popular works are *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), *Alice through the Looking Glass* (1872) and *The Hunting in the Snark* (1876)

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Lewis Carroll's life.
2. How did Carroll's novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* originate?
3. Give a brief summary of the contents of the novel.
4. What is the main idea of the book?
5. What is Carroll's view of childhood?
6. Comment on the language of the novel.
7. What are the most popular works of Lewis Carroll?

### **Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)**

Thomas Hardy is a great representative of the late 19th century realism in England. He was born in Dorsetshire, a country in the south-west of England. He was the son of an architect. He attended grammar school and studied architecture. His father's cottage was in a picturesque village. As a child Thomas danced to his father's music, wandered with his mother across the nearby heath, played the violin at weddings throughout the countryside. The beauty of the country and the peasant ways and thoughts gave rise to *At the age of twenty-two Hardy left for London. Hard reading, the study and practice of architecture and the writing of poetry were his life there. In his twenty-seventh year he gave up living in London, turned to prose fiction and for his setting chose his own part of England.*

In 1871 Hardy published his first novel *Desperate Remedies*.

Shortly after the publication of his first novel, he gave up his architectural career and spent the next twenty-five years of his life writing a series of books that placed him high in the ranks of the English novelists. The best of them are those classified by the author as "novels of character and environment". They are: *Under the*

Greenwood Tree (1872), Far from the Madding Crowd (1874), The Return of the Native (1878), The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886), The Woodlanders (1887), Wessex Tales (1888), Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891), Jude the Obscure (1896). At first Hardy was called "a second-rate romanticist", his best novels were given a hostile reception by the public. At the end of his life he was regarded as one of the greatest figures in English literature. That is why he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

In his works he portrays all the evils of his contemporary society - poverty, exploitation, injustice and misery. He conveys the idea that people cannot be happy in the environment where true love and sincere friendship are ruined by the prejudices of narrow-minded people. Man is a victim of a blind chance and a mysterious, all-powerful fate, and so man's longing for happiness is doomed to disappointment. The optimism of his predecessors, with their belief in liberty and happiness gives place in Hardy's works to bitterness and despair. Hardy's character is best reflected in his description of the country people and their patriarchal mode of life. His heroes are small people: farmers, schoolteachers, petty tradesmen, etc., and for them he has warm affection. Hardy's characters are unforgettable, indeed; particularly his women, because their fates are unforgettable.

Thomas Hardy began as a poet and continued writing poetry in the intervals of writing novels. His poetry is various in subject and form. There are poems on the Napoleonic wars, merry and tragic ballads, little stories of bitter irony, sad beautiful love lyrics, philosophical poems in which the poet speaks of his thoughts concerning the destiny of man, life and death.

Hardy's largest poetic work is *The Dynasts* (1903-1908), a dramatic epic written in dialogue, partly verse, partly prose. It tells of the Napoleonic wars, of Napoleon's career from his invasion of England in 1804 to his defeat at Waterloo in 1815. His lyric poetry is simple, sharp and direct.

A Night in November

I marked when the weather changed,  
And the panes began to quake, And the  
winds rose up and ranged, That night,  
lying half-awake.

Dead leaves blew into my room,  
And alighted upon my bed, And a  
tree declared to the gloom Its  
sorrow that they were shed.

One leaf of them touched my hand, And  
I thought that it was you, There stood as  
you used to stand And saying at last  
you knew!

From 1896 until his death Hardy wrote only poetry. In spite of the opposition to his last novels, Hardy is one of the outstanding writers of his generation.

## **Tess of the D'Urbervilles**

It is Hardy's masterpiece. The novel shows the tragic fate of a poor girl. She struggles for happiness, but all the forces of her social environment are arranged against her and she perishes. Tess, the daughter of poor parents and a descendant of a proud and ancient family, is seduced by a young man Alec D'Urberville. A child is born but dies in infancy. Some years later when Tess is working as a milkmaid on a large dairy farm, she falls in love with a clergyman's son Angel Clare, who learns farming from her employer. On their wedding night Tess tells Angel about her past, and there upon her husband leaves her.

After a brave fight against poverty and other evils, she is forced by the needs of her family into the protection of D'Urberville. When Angel Clare returns from Canada, he finds her living with Alec. In order to be free to join her husband Tess murders Alec. After a time she is arrested, tried and hanged. While reading the book, one can't help thinking that it is not Tess who is guilty of the crime, but society.

Thomas Hardy is angry at the ruin of Tess. He is against the judgement of society which proclaimed her a "fallen" woman. The rough and cruel judgement of society, acting on her through other people, wastes her youth, her beauty and her love. It drives her to misery and crime. Her husband, Angel Clare regards Tess as hopelessly spoiled. It is a cruel action on his part to leave her, the result of a false idea of purity.

The novel was called an immoral book, for in the title page Hardy calls Tess a pure woman. Indeed, in her heart she remains pure. Whatever happens to her, her spirit and love remain Clare's and unspoiled. Tess's faith and devotion, her strength in love, her sweetness make the reader share the author's pity for her sorrows.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Give the main facts of Hardy's life.
2. What was his first novel?
3. Name his best novels classified by the author as 'novels of character and environment'.
4. What did Hardy portray in his works?
5. Speak on the characters of his books.
6. Characterize Hardy's poetry.
7. Give a brief summary of the contents of Tess of the D'Urbervilles.
8. What is the author's attitude towards the main character of the novel?

## LECTURE 9

### Realistic literature 1865-1914 in the USA

1. **Mark Twain**
2. **O. Henry**
3. **Jack London**

**Mark Twain** (1835-1910) Mark Twain is the pen-name of the Samuel Langhorne Clemens, one of the greatest representatives of American critical realism of the second half of the 19th century. He is known as a great humorist and satirist. Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born on November 30, 1835 in a lawyer's family in a very small town called Florida in Missouri. The family soon moved to Hannibal on the banks of the Mississippi River and there Samuel Clemens spent his boyhood. When Samuel was twelve, his father died and the boy had to earn his own living. He changed several professions: he was a type setter in a district newspaper, a printer and journalist in the office of the Hannibal Journal. While Samuel Clemens was a printer, he began to write for newspapers, sending travel letters to them.

In April 1857, while on the way from Cincinnati to New Orleans, Clemens apprenticed himself as a river pilot on board a Mississippi steamboat. It was one of Sam Clemens's dreams as a boy to pilot a steamboat. He was licensed two years later and continued in that profession until the Civil War closed the river (1861). It was at this period of his life that he made his first attempt at literature having written a number of sketches based on his experiences as a pilot. He signed his articles Mark Twain, i. e. "sounding two", a term used by the sailors to show a depth of the river. That meant the depth was two fathoms (12 feet), and that it was safe for the boat to move ahead (twain = two).

The breaking out of the Civil War stopped the traffic on the Mississippi and Clemens was out of job. His brother had been appointed as Secretary to the Governor of the State of Nevada, and Sam decided to go with him.

About this time silver had been found in Nevada, and a lot of fortune-seekers went to this area. Sam decided to try his luck too. He spent six years in Nevada, digging gold. He found no silver. On rainy days when the mines stopped working Sam wrote sketches which were published in the Territorial Enterprise, a daily paper of Virginia City. It was while working for the Enterprise that Clemens's career as a journalist really began. Here the writer's pen-name appeared for the first time. In 1864 Twain went to San Francisco where he worked for the Golden Era and the Californian newspapers.

Here Mark Twain began to write sketches and stories. In 1865 Mark Twain won national fame with his story *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*. In 1866 journal California proposed Mark Twain to write a series of letters, and he went to Europe for the first time. Thus a series of letters was written as Mark Twain's first important book *The Innocents Abroad* (1869) – a tale of a tour in Europe and the East made by a group of Americans on board a steamer. The work was a great success.

It is very interesting because Europe's scenes and customs are viewed through the eyes of an "innocent" American. After that Mark Twain got the reputation of the most famous American humorist.

Before the book appeared Mark Twain had met Olivia Langdon, whom he married in 1870. In October 1871 Mark Twain moved to Hartford which remained his home for the happiest years of his life.

The years 1874 to 1885 were very productive. In that period he published the following works: *The Gilded Age* (1874), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *A Tramp Abroad* (1880), *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885).

In 1889 Mark Twain wrote *A Connecticut Yankee in the Court of King Arthur*. It is a biting satire on the political and social system of day against the background of a fantastic plot placed in England of the 6th century.

Mark Twain went abroad several times and visited different parts of the world.

Three honorary degrees were given to Mark Twain by American universities, and in 1907 Oxford University in England gave him an honorary Doctorate of Letters.

His last novel *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg* was published in 1899. Mark Twain attacks the hypocrisy and corruption of contemporary society in it.

In the last years of his life Mark Twain wrote several political articles and pamphlets. Till his dying day Mark Twain did not stop his literary activities and continued working on his Autobiography.

### **The Adventures of Tom Sawyer**

Mark Twain's famous novel *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* won the hearts of millions of readers, both young and old. Mark Twain wrote about his book as follows: "Most of the adventures in this book are real. One or two were my own experiences, the rest of boys' who were my school friends. Becky Thatcher is Laura Hawkins, Tom Sawyer is largely a self-portrait but Tom Blankenship, who lived just over the back fence, is the immortal Huckleberry Finn who slept on doorsteps in fine weather and in empty hogsheads in wet. John Biggs was the real, flesh-and-blood version of Joe Harper, the Terror of the Seas. My book is mainly for boys and girls to enjoy, but I hope, men and women will also be glad to read it to see what they once were like".

The plot is full of adventures of smart youngsters and is full of sparkling humor. With Tom's adventures we learn about the life on the Mississippi and that of the provincial town of the USA in the 19th century.

Tom Sawyer, a plain American boy, lives with his younger brother Sid and aunt Polly in St Petersburg, a remote town on the banks of the Mississippi river. Sid is an obedient boy, and he is satisfied with his school and the life of the little town. Tom is quite the opposite of his brother. His close friend is Huck Finn, a boy left by his drunkard of a father. Tom does not like school because of the teachers who beat the pupils. He misses lessons, plays tricks on his teachers, fights his brother Sid. Tom is tired of aunt Polly who wants to make a decent boy of him. From books about Robin Hood, robbers and hidden treasure Tom Sawyer has created an imaginary world which differs from the one he lives in. The novel combines the

elements of realism and romanticism. The realistic picture of the small town with its stagnant life is compared with the romantic world of Tom and his friends. The author praises humanism, friendship, courage and condemns injustice, narrowmindedness and money worship.

### **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a story of a little tramp. His father is a drunkard. When he becomes so violent that Huckleberry fears him, the boy runs away from him. Huck finds a canoe and gets into it and paddles to an island on the other side of the river. He thinks he is alone on the island, but he meets there a young Negro slave Jim. Huck is glad to see him there because he always considers him to be his friend. But when he learns that Jim has run away from his owner, he is very sad because it is a sin to help a runaway slave. But Huck promises not to tell anybody about him.

Huckleberry and Jim are the main characters of the book. They sail down the Mississippi, passing big and small towns, numerous villages and farms. The author and his heroes critically view everything they see. They seldom meet good people. Most of all they come across are robbers, murderers, rogues. They do not wish to earn their living honestly.

The white boy and young Negro become very good friends. They help each other in all the troubles. Huck finds Jim to be a kind, brave and good man.

Mark Twain compares the friendly relations between Huck and Jim with the corruption they see in the towns and villages on the shores. It is to Twain's credit that he has depicted Jim as an honest, kind, sincere and selfless man at the time when the Negroes were considered inferior to the white people. From the time Jim enters the story in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn the book becomes a social novel. It is a judgement of a certain epoch in America.

In The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Mark Twain used his wit and humour to show the social evils of his day. The novel marked the growth of Mark Twain's realism.

Mark Twain began writing as a humorist, but later became a bitter satirist. Towards the end of his life he grew more dissatisfied with American mode of life. In his later works his satire becomes very sharp.

The Prince and the Pauper and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. Both books showed contemporary American problems against the historical background. The Prince and the Pauper is a beautiful fairy-tale about justice and injustice. According to Mark Twain the contrast between poverty and luxury is unjust; the idea that the people from the lowest strata of society are inferior is wrong. He showed that they have as much common sense and wit as their social superiors. The second theme Mark Twain deals with is the corruptive influence of money and flattery on good people.

"Tom Canty liked clothes and ordered more of them. 400 servants he found not enough and made them thrice as many. The flattery of courtiers sounded music to him".

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court is a fantastic novel, a parody on the medieval romance. Placing a Yankee from the 19th century America into the



England of the 6th century the author could compare the Middle Ages and the contemporary bourgeois system and appreciate the progress made, but he leads us to the conclusion that the main laws are the same — the same power of church, ignorance, the same contrast between the oppressed masses of people and the ruling classes.

Mark Twain proves that there is as little or even less freedom and respect for the rights of man in his own days than there was in the times of feudal despotism. Mark Twain makes the king travel among the people in the disguise of a peasant. It is the same device used in *The Prince and the Pauper* when the king comes to see by himself how bitter the life of the people was.

Mark Twain was a very good short-story writer as well. The most popular stories are: *Running for Governor*, *An Encounter with an Interviewer*, *A Chinaman's Letters* and some others. They contain sharp criticism of the political life of the country, of the American system of election and the morals and manners of the reactionary press. Mark Twain was a very good narrator and he wrote as he talked.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Speak about Samuel Clemens's childhood.
2. When did he have to earn his living?
3. Where did he work?
4. Comment on the years Samuel Clemens spent piloting on the Mississippi.
5. When did the writer take the pen-name "Mark Twain"?
6. What does this term mean?
7. What did Clemens do when the Civil War stopped the traffic on the Mississippi?
8. When did Clemens's career as a journalist really begin?
9. What story made him famous?
10. Name Mark Twain's first important book. Comment on it.
11. What novels did he write in the period from 1874 to 1885?
12. What was his last short novel?
13. What Mark Twain's novels won the hearts of millions of readers?
14. What can you say about the plot and the main characters of the *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*?
15. Give a brief summary of the contents of the *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
16. Why can *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* be called a social novel?
17. Analyse the novel *The Prince and the Pauper* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.
18. Speak on Mark Twain's activities as a short-story writer.
19. What else did he write in the last years of his life?
20. Speak on Mark Twain's place in American and world literature

### **O. Henry (1862-1910)**

O. Henry is one of the most popular shortstory writers. His real name was William Sidney Porter . He was born in Greensbore, a little town in North Carolina.

His mother died when he was little. His father spent all his time on inventions of various kinds. His aunt had a private school and she encouraged him to read. His favourite authors were: Brontes, Walter Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Byron and others. His schooling was short. He left school when he was fifteen and worked in his uncle's drugstore as a clerk. In nineteen Porter went to Texas.

He changed a variety of jobs, working as a cowboy, miner, clerk and then a teller of a bank. While working at a bank Porter was falsely accused of embezzlement and he left the bank. He went to Houston where he worked for a Houston newspaper and founded a humorous journal, which he called *The Rolling Stone*. He worked on the newspaper for nearly a year. Then William porter had to return to the Texas capital Austin to start trial for the embezzlement at the bank. He was not guilty. However, the case was so confused that he considered it better not to go there and he went to South America.

In 1897 he returned to his dying wife to the USA and was arrested on the old charge, tried and sentenced to imprisonment. He spent five years in the Ohio State prison. While in prison he started writing stories. He used the pen-name of O. Henry – from the name of the captain of the prison guard, Orrin Henry. When O. Henry was released from prison, he went to New York where he continued writing stories. The first of his volumes of short stories was *Cabbages and Kings* (1904). It was followed by *The Four Million* (1906), *The Trimmed Lamp* (1907), *Heart of the West* (1907), *The Voice of the City* (1908), *The Gentle Grafter* (1908), *Roads of Destiny* (1909), *Options* (1909) and *Strictly Business* (1910). The years of hard work and privations had undermined the writer's health and he died in 1910.

O. Henry worked out the various kinds of the short story: the monologue, the dialogue, the adventure story, the anecdote, the psychological story. O. Henry wrote about 150 stories with a New York background. His stories depict the lives of people belonging to different layers of society from businessmen to beggars. Most of his stories are romantic portrayals of the lives of shop girls, poor artists, unhappy lovers. Social criticism in O. Henry's stories is very mild. The writer's interest is not in the social scene but in some unusual incident in the lives of his heroes.

O. Henry's stories are based on plot. Mood and character are of less importance. He was an entertainer, his aim was to amuse and surprise his readers rather than to analyse a human situation. Nevertheless, his stories attract the readers to this day. He is still a living author. His love for humanity, for the common people, his critical attitude towards injustice appeal readers. O. Henry's works had a great influence on American literature of the 20th century. The most popular O. Henry's stories are: *The Ransom of Red Chief* in which the two crooks who kidnap a boy for ransom cannot stand his pranks and are forced to pay his father two hundred and fifty dollars to get rid of him; *The Gift of Magi*, the story of Jim and Delia, a young couple, whose only treasures are Delia's beautiful long hair and Jim's gold watch. Jim sells his watch to buy Delia a comb for her hair, and she sells her hair to buy a chain for his watch; *A Service of Love*, the story about a young couple, Joe Larrabee and Delia Caruthers, who love each other very much. Each

has a favourite hobby. He likes drawing, and she likes music and plays the piano. Soon they lack money to pay for their lessons, so Delia is going to give music lessons, and Joe too decides to earn money. Delia pretends to give lessons to a general's daughter and Joe pretends that she has sold a sketch. One evening Delia comes home with her right hand tied up with a rag. When Joe sees the bandage, the truth comes out that they have been working in the same laundry. They are happy because Joe says: "When one loves one's Art no service seems - " ; *The Last Leaf* is about an old painter, Behrman, who is a failure in art. He protects the two young artists, two girls, Sue and Johnsy. Johnsy gets very ill and believes she will die when the last leaf of the tree falls down. The old painter saves Johnsy by painting on the wall the last leaf. But he catches cold and dies of pneumonia; *The Cop and the Anthem*, in which a tramp does everything possible to be arrested and put to prison because winter is approaching and he is homeless. O. Henry's stories are related with skill, humour and feeling.

### **Question and Tasks**

1. Where was William Porter born?
2. What do you know about his parents?
3. When did he leave school?
4. What professions and jobs did he have before he became a writer?
5. What happened when he worked at a bank in Texas?
6. Was he guilty?
7. When was he arrested?
8. When did O. Henry begin writing stories?
9. Why did he take this pen-name?
10. What was the first of his volumes of short stories?
11. What kinds of short story did O. Henry work out?
12. Characterize O. Henry's stories.
13. Name the most popular of them and retell their contents.

### **Jack London (1876-1916)**

Jack London, the famous American novelist and short-story writer, was born in San Francisco, California, on January 12, 1876. He was the son of astrologer William Henry Chancy and Flora Willman. When Jack was eight months old, his mother left Chancy, and married John London, whom the boy grew to love more than his own father. Jack took his foster-father's name and this is the one by which history remembers him.

London called his childhood years the hungriest period of his life. So hungry was he that once he stole a piece of meat from a girl's lunch basket.

Years later he wrote about his childhood: "I had been poor. Poor I had lived. I had gone hungry on occasion. I had never had toys of playthings like other children. My first memories of life were pinched by poverty. The pinch of poverty had become chronic... And only a child, with a child's imagination, can come to know the meaning of things it has long been denied." But soon Jack discovered the world of books. In 1885, he was borrowing books from the public library and read

everything he could. He read books of adventure, travel and sea voyages. But as John London was often out of work, Jack had had to work since his early childhood to help his father support the family. He got up at 3 a. m. to deliver newspapers, after which he went to school. After school he delivered evening papers. At weekends he worked as a porter or on an ice wagon. Because of financial difficulties, Jack got only a grammar school education. At the age of 13 he continued working as a newspaper boy and performed some other odd jobs. When he had some spare time from his work, he spent on the waterfront. The sea attracted him, but family affairs went from bad to worse: John London was seriously injured, and now Jack had to provide his family. He found work in a cannery. His pay was very low, and he had to work overtime, standing at his machine for 18 and 20 hours a day. For several months he continued working there but then he joined the oyster pirates and was a sailor on board a schooner bound for Japan. In 1893 he returned to San Francisco. The only job he could find was in a jute mill where he earned one dollar for ten hours a day. After a day's work at the factory Jack was very tired and sleepy, but it was at this time that he managed to publish his first story: the newspaper San Francisco Call offered a prize for a descriptive article. Jack's mother made him try for it. The attempt was successful. The first prize was given to Jack London's story of a Typhoon Off the Coast of Japan (1893). His success in the competition turned his thoughts to writing, but he had to earn his living. He got a job at a power plant, but soon he left the plant and joined an army of the unemployed. He tramped from San Francisco to Washington. Like many others he was arrested and spent a month in jail.

These hardships influenced his outlook. He began thinking of the necessity of improving his education. In 1896, after 3 months of preparatory study, he entered the University in California, but left before the year was up to support his mother and foster-father by working in a laundry. At the same time he decided once again to try his skill in literature. Working day and night, Jack London wrote poetry, essays and stories, sending them to magazines, but receiving only rejection letters. Then gold was discovered in the Klondike and Jack set sail for the Alaskan gold fields. He hoped to get money to be able to devote himself to literature. London mined no gold during his year's stay in the Klondike, but his contacts with many different people and his observations gave him a lot of material for many stories. In 1889 he arrived home to find his father dead.

Jack returned to day labour, and at the same time he was trying to continue his literary work. He felt that in order to become a writer there were two things he had to acquire: knowledge and skill in writing. His reading continued: Kipling and Stevenson were his literary gods. At the cost of tremendous hardships his efforts were rewarded with success. His story *To the Man on Trail* (1898) was published in the *Overland Monthly*. In the course of the next four years London published his collection of northern stories (*The Son of the Wolf* (1900), *The God of His Fathers* (1901), *Children of the Frost* (1902), *A Daughter of the Snows* (1903) and *The Call of the Wild* (1903)), which brought the writer wide popularity.

London knew the North very well. He had met his characters in real life and knew their aspirations and troubles very well that's why all his personages are so realistically depicted.

In 1902 Jack London visited the capital of England. Out of that experience came the terrible picture of poverty, one of London's most popular books – *The People of the Abyss* (1903). The writer drew a realistic picture of the misery and suffering of the poor people who lived in the slums of London.

His new outlook was expressed in his books *The War of the Classes* (1905), *The Iron Heel* (1907) and *Revolution and Other Essays* (1910).

The years 1905- 1910 were the highest point in his political activity. In 1905 Jack London went on a lecture tour of the country, and made a voyage to the Hawaii. On the deck of his yacht the Snark he began writing *Martin Eden*, the finest novel he ever wrote.

The years of 1906-1909 were the prime of London's creative work. He wrote some of his best works: *The White Fang* (1906), *The South Sea Tales* (1907), *Martin Eden* (1909) and many other works that brought the author great fame.

Many novels of his later period show that he made a compromise with those whom he had exposed in his previous books. These were his new works *The Valley of the Moon* (1914), and *The Little Lady of the Big House* (1916).

During the sixteen years of his literary activities Jack London wrote 19 novels, 18 books of short stories and articles, 3 plays and 8 autobiographical and sociological works. His work is very unequal. He expresses widely differing views of life.

However, Jack London must be judged by the books in which he showed all his great talent, the books which brought fame to London's name all over the world.

On November 22, 1916, Jack London was found dead near Santa Rosa, California.

Doctors explained his death as an overdose of morphine. It is believed that it may have been taken deliberately as during the year 1916 London felt very ill. He suffered from an incurable disease.

Jack London is one of the most popular writers in the world. He is still widely read. It is his realism and humanism that keep his writings living and fresh today as they were at the beginning of the century.

### **Martin Eden**

*Martin Eden* is an autobiographical novel in which London tells of his struggle to overcome his lack of knowledge and to turn himself from a plain sailor into an educated person. But this is a social novel as well. It shows the fate of a young man who comes from the working class and becomes a famous writer in bourgeois society.

The main characters of the novel are Martin Eden, Ruth Morse and her family.

Martin saves in a hand-to-hand fight with a group of hooligans a young man named Arthur Morse. Arthur introduces Martin to his family, and he falls in love with his sister Ruth. Martin thinks the Morses to be the realm of spiritual beauty and intellectual life, and he considers Ruth to personify all these qualities.

It becomes Martin's desire to be her intellectual equal and to join the society she belongs to. He decides to educate himself to be worthy of Ruth. *Martin Eden* studies grammar, reads a lot of books. His swift development surprises and

interests Ruth. She realizes that she is in love with Martin, but her parents have other plans for her. When Martin runs out of money he sets out as a common sailor in a ship bound for the South Seas. While on board, a great idea comes to his head – to become a writer. That is a career that will help him to win Ruth.

On his return to Oakland, Martin devotes every minute of his time to writing and studying. He works from early morning till dark and sends the manuscripts to various magazines. His first stories are returned by the publishers, but he keeps on sending them.

In the meanwhile Martin and Ruth are engaged to be married. It is a great blow to Ruth's parents because Eden is a rough sailor. Wishing to have encouragement in his work, Martin shows some of his stories to Ruth. But she has little faith in his power as a writer. Ruth persuades him to give up writing and accept a job at her father's office.

But Martin continues sending his stories to various magazines. His visits to the Morses convince him that he has been under the wrong impression about the high society. He begins to understand that Ruth also shares its narrowness. Under the pressure of her parents Ruth breaks off the engagement. She agrees that they are not made for each other. It is a terrible blow to Martin, and he stops writing. But he continues to send his old rejected stories to the printing houses. And soon they are accepted, one after another.

Through unbearable hardships Martin manages to realize his dream. He becomes a famous writer. His stories and novels are now in great demand. Eden becomes rich and popular, but he is not happy. When he gets into "high society" he understands how shallow and hypocritical these people are. He can't understand that those who despised him before his books become popular, now invite him to dinner.

The Morses, hearing of Martin's brilliant career, are not against his union with Ruth. She even visits Martin to reconcile with him. "She is aware of her humiliation but she does not care. However all her efforts are in vain. The charm of love is gone. There is nothing in common between the youth, who was madly in love with Ruth, and the famous writer, tired, exhausted and indifferent. He cannot bring himself to feel sympathy for Ruth and is as unresponsive as a stone." Martin feels awfully tired. He refuses to write another word. Martin thinks there is no cure for him except to escape from this world and sail on a liner to the South Seas.

Before his departure he feels that it is useless. The only thing he wants is rest, and finally he understands that only death will give him peace, and he commits suicide, he draws himself. Having developed the best traditions of the American critical realism of Mark Twain, O. Henry and others, Jack London became one of the most significant classics of world literature. His talented, realistic works were highly appreciated by many progressive-minded people all over the world, and they inspired his contemporaries and many writers who came after him.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Speak about Jack London's childhood.
2. When was his first story written?
3. Why did Jack London go to the Klondike?
4. How did his stay in the Klondike influence on his writings?

5. Name Jack London's northern stories.
6. What novel was written after his visit to London?
7. When was the prime of London's creative work?
8. What works were written in this period of time?
9. Characterise Jack London's literary activities.
10. When did he die?
11. What was the reason of his death?
12. Analyse the novel Martin Eden.
13. What are the main characters of the book?
14. Give a summary of the contents of Martin Eden.
15. Describe the character of Martin Eden.
16. Comment on Jack London's place in American and world literature.

The radical economic and social changes in American life during the twenties and thirties marked a fruitful time for critical realists. The writers reflected the new realities of American life. New themes, plots and heroes appeared in the novels and stories of the realistic writers. Together with the books, the only purpose of which was to entertain the reader and try to avoid social problems, books appeared the purpose of which was to show the necessity of changing the social order (for example Theodore Dreiser).

The fiction of the critical realists is distinguished by a great interest in social conflicts, attacks on accepted values and criticism of the American way of life.

Among the most outstanding American realists who revealed in his works the truth of American life, showed the tragic fate of young Americans after World War I, reflected the struggle with fascism, exposed industrial conditions and spoke out warmly in defence of labour and depicted the spiritual emptiness of American Society were **Theodore Dreiser**, Francis Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. How can you characterize American life during the twenties and thirties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? What books appeared in this period?
2. Comment on the fiction of the critical realists.
3. Name the most outstanding American realists of that time. What did they show in their works?

### **Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945)**

Theodore Dreiser, novelist, was born in the little town of Terre Haute, Indiana into the family of a bankrupt small businessman. His childhood was a hard one, and he knew poverty and want. His father was a strict Catholic, narrow-minded and despotic. He made the future writer hate religion to the end of his days. At the age of 16 Theodore had to leave school and support himself by doing odd jobs. He worked as a waiter, a dish-washer, a rent-collector, a laundry-worker.

In 1888 Theodore entered the university. But after a year he had to leave the university because of money difficulties.

In 1892 Dreiser turned to journalism working as a newspaper reporter and editor in Chicago, St Louis, Cleveland and Pittsburgh. Then he moved to New-York, where he got work as a magazine editor.

The first significant work by Dreiser was his novel *Sister Carrie* (1900). The book describes the life of a poor country girl who goes to Chicago in search of work. Hardly had the book appeared when it was pronounced immoral and was withdrawn from print. However, in 1907, it became impossible to conceal it from the public, and it then appeared in an American edition. Only in ten years in 1911 was Dreiser's second novel *Jenny Gerhardt* published. It is a life-story of a girl. The book roused further storm of criticism from readers and publishers who declared it immoral.

*The Financier* (1912) and *The Titan* (1914) together with *The Stoic* (published posthumously in 1947) form *The Trilogy of Desire*. Its purpose was to show the ways of American big business at the end of the 19th century. The chief character of all the three novels, Cowperwood, is a typical representative of that big business.

*The Genius* (1915) is the tragic story of a young painter who breaks down under the cruel injustice of bourgeois America.

*An American Tragedy* (1925) is Dreiser's best known novel. It is the story of a young American who is corrupted by the morals of American capitalist society and he becomes a criminal and murderer. The novel shows the American way of life with its contrast of poverty and wealth.

Dreiser supported the working-class movement in America and wrote some publicist works – *Tragic America* (1931) and *America Is Worth Saving* (1941). During the last years of his life he worked at the novels published posthumously—*The Bulwark* (1941) and *The Stoic* (1947).

#### *An American Tragedy*

The novel speaks of the fate of a common American, Clyde Griffiths. His parents are Kansas City street evangelists. They are good people, but very narrow-minded. Clyde is not happy at home. Clyde suffers because of poverty in which he has lived from his early childhood.

Sincerely believing that wealth alone makes people happy, he determines to pave his way to fortune.

Clyde begins life as a bellboy in a large hotel. The duties of a bellboy are to answer when anyone living in the hotel rings a bell and run on different small errands. Clyde thinks he is very lucky to get this situation. He is often given a tip when he is sent on an errand, and he learns that sometimes money can be earned very easily. His employment in the hotel is the beginning of Clyde's corruption. One day an incident happens which greatly influences his character.

When 18 years old, Clyde, together with some other boys, goes out for a good time in a motor-car that one of the boys has "borrowed" from his employer for this purpose. On their way back they run over and kill a child, and Clyde is obliged to leave Kansas City secretly. He roams about the country, works as a salesman,



coachman, dish-washer, and, finally, as a messenger boy in a large hotel in Chicago. Here, by a lucky chance, he meets his uncle, Samuel Griffiths, a prosperous manufacturer in Lycurgus. Samuel Griffiths has not seen his brother, Clyde's father, for 25 years; the wealth of one and the poverty of the other has separated them. Clyde is in need of work, and his uncle gives him a small job as an ordinary worker. One of the girls, Roberta Alden, attracts him, and after a time he falls in love with her. But Clyde's attention is soon transferred to another girl, the wealthy and socially prominent Sondra Finchley. Clyde begins to think that marrying Sondra he will solve all his problems. At this critical moment Roberta discovers she is about to become a mother but Clyde refuses to marry her and doubles his attention to Sondra. At that moment he reads a news account of a boating accident in which a girl is drowned while the companion's body is not found. Horrified at his own thoughts, he decides to free himself by ending Roberta's life. He plans a crime. He takes Roberta for a boat-ride on a distant lake. The boat is capsized and Roberta is drowned. Clyde does nothing to save the girl. The crime is discovered and Clyde is arrested. He is accused of her murder. The whole of the second book deals with the court trial of Clyde's case. The judges pronounce Clyde guilty. But after he is found guilty and is waiting for his execution, Clyde begins to understand the moral meaning of his act. Encouraged by his mother, he looks upon his death as a necessary punishment for his moral cowardice.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What family was Theodore Dreiser born? What can you say about his childhood?
2. What did he do before he became a journalist? What was Dreiser's first significant work?
3. What is the theme of his novel *Sister Carrie*?
4. Name some other works of Theodore Dreiser. What novel is Dreiser's masterpiece?
5. Give a brief summary of the contents of *American Tragedy*. What theme did Dreiser touch upon in the novel?
6. What novels did Dreiser work at during the last years of his life?

# LECTURE 10

## The 20th century literature. Modernism in poetry and Prose. The Modern Period (1901-1945)

- I. Joseph Conrad
- II. William Golding
- III. George Orwell
- IV. Thomas Stearns Eliot
- V. Samuel Beckett

### Supplement I

#### I. The Modern Period

- 1. Francis Scott Fitzgerald
- 2. Bernard Shaw
- 3. Herbert Wells

#### II. Modern Poetry

Aldous Huxley

#### III. Modern Drama

- 1. John Galsworthy
- 2. Gilbert Keith Chesterton

#### IV. Modern Novel

- 1. Somerset Maugham
- 2. James Joyce
- 3. Virginia Woolf
- 4. Edward Morgan Forster
- 5. Agatha Christie
- 6. John Ronald Reuel Tolkien

From the beginning of the 20th Century started the Modern Period in English literature. The most significant feature of Modern literature was that it opposed the general attitude of Victorian writers and people to life and its problems. During the first decade of the 20th Century, the young people regarded the Victorian age as hypocritical, and the Victorian ideals as superficial, mean and stupid. This rebellion hugely affected modern literature which was directed by moral values, spiritual ideals as well as mental attitudes that were dramatically opposed to those of the Victorians.

Moreover, the Modernists no longer believed in the sanctity of home life as Victorians did. They also reacted against the Victorians' attitude of self complacency and self perfection. Since the modern writers could no longer write in the old manner, they devised their own. If they wrote about the contempt of money, natural beauty, divine love, and the sentiments of home and life, they were considered running the risk of striking a false note. Even if they treated the same themes, they had to do it tactfully to evoke unique thoughts and emotions. The modern writers, therefore, had to cultivate a fresh point of view employing fresh techniques.

The main cause of this attitude of interrogations and disintegration of old values was the impact of scientific thought on the people. Many writers of the 20th Century began to study and contemplate seriously over the writings of Karl Marx, Engles, Ruskin, Morris etc. and discuss practical suggestions for the reconstruction of society. The 20th Century literature is full of experimentation and adventures peculiar to the modern age – an age of transition and discovery. In the early 20th century the traditions of critical realism that had developed in the late 19th century were continued and developed. Three names were prominent among the writers who continued the traditions of critical realism. They were George Bernard Shaw, John Galsworthy and Herbert George Wells.

**Joseph Conrad** (1857-1924) (pseudonym of Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski, born in the Ukraine of Polish parents), shared James's sense of crisis but attributed it less to the decline of a specific civilization than to human failings. Man was a solitary, romantic creature of will who at any cost imposed his meaning upon the world because he could not endure a world that did not reflect his central place within it. In *Almayer's Folly* (1895) and *Lord Jim* (1900), he had seemed to sympathize with this predicament; but in *Heart of Darkness* (1902), *Nostromo* (1904), *The Secret Agent* (1907), and *Under Western Eyes* (1911), he detailed such imposition, and the psychological pathologies he increasingly associated with it, without sympathy. He did so as a philosophical novelist whose concern with the mocking limits of human knowledge affected not only the content of his fiction but also its very structure. His writing itself is marked by gaps in the narrative, by narrators who do not fully grasp the significance of the events they are retelling, and by characters who are unable to make themselves understood. James and Conrad used many of the conventions of 19th-century realism but transformed them to express what are considered to be peculiarly 20th-century preoccupations and anxieties.

*Heart of Darkness*, novella by Joseph Conrad that was first published in 1899 in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine and then in Conrad's *Youth: and Two Other Stories* (1902). *Heart of Darkness* examines the horrors of Western colonialism, depicting it as a phenomenon that tarnishes not only the lands and peoples it exploits but also those in the West who advance it. Although garnering an initially lacklustre reception, Conrad's semiautobiographical tale has gone on to become one of the most widely analyzed works of English literature. Critics have not always treated *Heart of Darkness* favourably, rebuking its dehumanizing representation of colonized peoples and its dismissive treatment of women. Nonetheless, *Heart of Darkness* has endured, and today it stands as a Modernist masterpiece directly engaged with postcolonial realities.

#### Summary

*Heart of Darkness* tells a story within a story. The novella begins with a group of passengers aboard a boat floating on the River Thames. One of them, Charlie Marlow, relates to his fellow seafarers an experience of his that took place on another river altogether – the Congo River in Africa. Marlow's story begins in

what he calls the “sepulchral city,” somewhere in Europe. There “the Company” – an unnamed organization running a colonial enterprise in the Belgian Congo – appoints him captain of a river steamer. He sets out for Africa optimistic of what he will find.

But his expectations are quickly soured. From the moment he arrives, he is exposed to the evil of imperialism, witnessing the violence it inflicts upon the African people it exploits. As he proceeds, he begins to hear tell of a man named Kurtz – a colonial agent who is supposedly unmatched in his ability to procure ivory from the continent’s interior. According to rumour Kurtz has fallen ill (and perhaps mad as well), thereby jeopardizing the Company’s entire venture in the Congo.

Marlow is given command of his steamer and a crew of Europeans and Africans to man it, the latter of whom Conrad shamelessly stereotypes as “cannibals.” As he penetrates deeper into the jungle, it becomes clear that his surroundings are impacting him psychologically: his journey is not only into a geographical “heart of darkness” but into his own psychic interior – and perhaps into the darkened psychic interior of Western civilization as well.

After encountering many obstacles along the way, Marlow’s steamer finally makes it to Kurtz. Kurtz has taken command over a tribe of natives who he now employs to conduct raids on the surrounding regions. The man is clearly ill, physically and psychologically. Marlow has to threaten him to go along with them, so intent is Kurtz on executing his “immense plans.” As the steamer turns back the way it came, Marlow’s crew fires upon the group of indigenous people previously under Kurtz’s sway, which includes a queen-figure described by Conrad with much eroticism and as exoticism.

Kurtz dies on the journey back up the river but not before revealing to Marlow the terrifying glimpse of human evil he’d been exposed to. “The horror! The horror!” he tells Marlow before dying. Marlow almost dies as well, but he makes it back to the sepulchral city to recuperate. He is disdainful of the petty tribulations of Western civilization that seem to occupy everyone around him. As he heals, he is visited by various characters from Kurtz’s former life – the life he led before finding the dark interior of himself in Africa.

### **William Golding (1911- 1993)**

William Golding was born in Cornwall, England in 1911. He attended the famous private school, and then went to Brasenose College, Oxford, where he started to study science. After a short period he changed to study English Literature. Golding graduated from Oxford in 1935 and started a career in teaching. At the outbreak of the Second World War, Golding joined the Royal Navy and was involved in active service throughout the war. The effects of the war on Golding were enormous and helped to create his pessimistic view of human nature.

After the war he returned to teaching, a career that he continued even after achieving fame as a writer. His first novel, *Lord of the Flies*, was published in 1954 and was accepted as an immediate critical success. This was followed by *The Inheritors* (1955), a novel set in the prehistoric age. *Pincher Martin* (1956) was followed by *Free Fall*, and then by *The Spire* in 1964. There was a pause in

Golding's literary production, and then in 1979 he published *Darkness Visible* and *Rites of Passage* in 1980. In 1983 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The novel *Lord of the Flies* touches some unusual themes. It received huge critical and popular acclaim on its publication and became an important novel, often studied, cited and read through the '50s, '60s and '70s. Now it remains one of the most important contributions to English literature made this century. The novel is in the form of the fable. A fable is a tale that tells one story through another. The characters exist on two levels: as individuals and as types.

In this novel a group of boys, refugees from an atomic war, are on a deserted island. After an initial sense of liberty and adventure in this tropical paradise, the boys begin to organize themselves into a little democratic society, electing Ralph as their leader. The group hold meetings, go on expeditions to patrol the island, start building shelters to live in, organize the supply of water, and decide to keep a fire burning constantly, with the hope of signalling to passing boats. The group is composed of "littluns" of about six years old and "biguns" of about twelve. Apart from Ralph, another of the biguns, Jack, helps lead the group, by organizing a group of choirboys into a band of hunters, whose task it is to hunt pigs. However, things begin to get out of control. The littluns are afraid by the idea of a "beastie" or "snakeything" that they believe lives in the forest. At night the children suffer from nightmares, even when the rational Piggy, an unpopular but intelligent fat boy, tries to tell them that there is no beast on the Island. The rational projects that they originally established are gradually abandoned, and under the influence of Jack, the boys return to the savage state based around hunting and the fear of the beast, which Jack develops into a kind of God, the Lord of the Flies. Ralph and Piggy try to keep control of the group, but Jack is too strong and all the boys except Ralph, Piggy and Simon, a strange, solitary boy, leave the first camp and follow Jack to live a savage life. The boys now become hunters, painting their faces, chanting and dancing, throwing stones and spears. Maurice and Roger act as Jack's assistants. The fear of the beast grows, particularly when one night a dead man on a parachute falls onto the island. The boys think that the parachute is the beast. Jack encourages the boys to leave "sacrifices" to the beast every time they kill on a hunt.

One night, Simon discovers the true nature of the parachute/ beast, but when he goes to the camp to tell the boys, he is killed, mistaken for the beast. After Simon's death, the hunters led by Jack, Roger and Maurice, kill Piggy and then decide to kill Ralph and to offer him as a human sacrifice to the Lord of the Flies. Ralph is forced to hide while they hunt him. During the hunt, the boys set fire to the island and a passing ship sees the flames and lands to rescue them, thus saving Ralph's life. Golding's development of the novel form during the 1950s and 1960s led him to an interesting experimentation with genre. He used the science fiction genre and the fantasy story to provide an effective narrative style for his analyses of human nature.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate briefly the story of Golding's life. What was his first novel?
2. What can you say about the plot and the main characters of *Lord of the Flies*?

What form is the novel written? What genres did Golding use in the novel *Lord of the Flies*'?

3. Name his other notable works.

4. Speak on Wiliam Golding's place in English literature.

### **George Orwell (1903-1950)**

George Orwell was born Eric Arthur Blair in India in 1903. His family lived in British India where his father worked for the colonial Civil Service. In 1907, the Blair family returned to England where Orwell was educated, first at a private Preparatory School, and then at the famous boys' school, Eton. After leaving school in 1921, Orwell returned to India and became a policeman. His first commission, in 1922, was in Burmah.

He remained in the Police Force until 1928, when he resigned. Orwell then began a most unusual literary career. In 1928, while living in Paris and working in a restaurant washing dishes, he started writing articles for the French newspaper *Le Monde*.

In 1929 he returned to London, where he lived the life of a poor person, collecting information for his book *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933). It was for this book that he first adopted the pseudonym George Orwell. He then published a further three novels. The first, *Burmese Days* (1934), described his experiences in the Police Force in Burmah and demonstrates his developing anti-Imperialist politics.

This was followed by *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935) and *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936) (aspidistra = common English house-plant). In 1936 he was commissioned to research into and write about the situation and conditions of the unemployed in England.

*The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937) was the result of his research, and it was with this book that he established himself as an investigative writer. His political point of view, broadly left-wing, anti-Capitalist and independent, was by now quite clear. With the Spanish Civil War, Orwell left England to fight in Spain for the Republican, anti-Fascist forces. He remained there until he was wounded and forced to return to England.

*Homage to Catalonia* (1938) is about his experiences in the Spanish Civil War. Orwell's health was suffering from tuberculosis. His next novel *Coming up for Air* was written during a period of convalescence spent in North Africa. When he returned to England, his reputation as a political free-thinker and social critic was high. He continued to write and publish an enormous variety of works, essays, criticisms, literary criticisms and political reflections. He also worked as a book reviewer for the magazine *New England Weekly*. During the Second World War he worked for the B. B.C and enlisted in the Home Guard, a volunteer armed body of men, usually too old or too ill to join the regular army. But his tuberculosis prevented him, however, from fulfilling this activity.

In 1944 he worked as the literary editor of the important left-wing newspaper *Tribune*. He wrote his best-known work *Animal Farm* in 1944. In 1948 his novel *Nineteen Eighty-four* was published. It describes a future world (in 1984) when the

political system has total control over people. The slogan Big Brother is Watching You gives an idea of the power of this system.

The novel *Animal Farm* has remained a consistently popular novel with both adults and younger readers. The novel functions as an allegory. The story of *Animal Farm* describes the happenings on a farm, when the animals, angry about the way the human, Farmer Jones, runs the farm and treats the animals, stage a successful revolution. They rid themselves of Jones and his tame crow (which represents the Church) and establish an equal system of government, a republic organized along socialist lines. The revolution is organized by the pigs, the most intelligent animals on the farm, but all the animals take part. But gradually, the day of the glorious revolution is forgotten, as the farm has some economic problems due to its isolation from other farms and markets. To the animals, it seems that they are now working harder and eating less than ever before.

The pigs begin to show signs of corruption and inequality. They become more and more like their masters had been. In *Animal Farm*, after the rebellion, the animals say that all animals are equal. Later the animals create another saying. It is: "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others".

*Animal Farm* is a satire against the political systems which Orwell had seen develop in the 1930s and 1940s.

In this tragic fairy story he shows that a revolution, once it has abandoned honesty, truth and clarity, results in oppression, cruelty and exploitation. Once the individual has been denied the right to knowledge and the right to understand, power can and will be abused. The new class of abuser will resemble in every shape and form, the old abuser, which is just how the novel ends, with the poor animals looking through the window of the farmhouse, where the corrupt pigs and the neighbouring human farmers are drinking and gambling together. "And they were alike. No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which."

Orwell's style is simple, clear and almost journalistic. He follows a great tradition of social critics who turned to the genre of literature to express their ideas and reach a large audience. There are many similarities between Orwell and George Bernard Shaw; for example, in the way that they combined literature and politics and produced works of great political insight. Orwell died in the age of 46 in 1950.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Say a few words about the early period of Orwell's life.
2. How did he begin his literary career?
3. What was his first book?
4. What pseudonym did he adopt for this book?
5. What novels did he write then?
6. What book established him as an investigative writer?
7. What was his political point of view?
8. What did Orwell do during the Spanish Civil War?
9. What book was about his experiences in the Spanish Civil War?

10. Where did he work during the Second World War?
11. What is Orwell's best-known work?
12. Give a brief summary of the contents of *Animal Farm*.
13. What is the main idea of this satire?
14. What can you say about Orwell's style?
15. What themes did Orwell present in his works?
16. Find examples of many similarities between Orwell and George Bernard Shaw.

**T. S. Eliot** is the chief representative of modern poetry. A greatest poet as well as a critic, he reinforced his political theories by his own poetry, and thus exerted a tremendous influence on modern poetry. His most famous poems include *The Waste Land*, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, *The Dry Salvages*, *East Coker*, and *Little Gidding*.

**Thomas Stearns Eliot** (1888-1965)

Thomas Stearns Eliot was born in America, in St Louis, Missouri in 1888. His family had emigrated from England in the 17th century, to Massachusetts, and had played an active part in the spiritual and intellectual life of the growing nation. Thomas Stearns Eliot was educated first in St. Louis and then went to Harvard. At Harvard Eliot developed his interest in poetry, writing, contributing and editing the literary review *The Harvard Advocate*.

In 1910 Eliot left America and went to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. In 1914 he went to Oxford, where he wrote his doctoral thesis.

In England, Eliot quickly made a home. His first volume was published in 1917. This was *Prufrock and Other Observations*. It contains one of Eliot's best-known poems *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* which was first published in 1915. The poem shows Eliot's way of writing – he uses images, fragments and memorable phrases to build up a broad picture of the character, his anxieties, and his time. The poem is about time, and wasted time and how the different inner parts of the character of Prufrock grow old and see his life become more and more meaningless:

*futility of his life falling on him.*

*I have measured out my life with coffee spoons*

*I grow old... I grow old*

*I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled*

The poem consists of the musings of Prufrock, a weary middle-aged man haunted by the feeling that he has lost both youth and happiness: "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons."

"Prufrock" was both Eliot's first major publication and the first masterpiece of modernism in English. Eliot's experiment with poetic form, metre, rhyme, and voice was a radical departure from the restrictions of established forms and diction. We understand from the poem that J. Alfred Prufrock, a bit of dandy, worried about his clothes, going bald and growing old, unsuccessfully tries to find the courage and finally feels the enormous futility of his life falling on him.



*Should I after tea and cakes and ices  
Have the courage to force the moment to its crisis.*

He suffers terrible self-agonies, as memories fill his consciousness. He is constantly aware of the passing of time, but not the clock time of the modern period; he measures the passing of time with "coffee spoons", with the changing light and the afternoons becoming evenings. He physically feels himself ageing and is unable to act, to be or to do.

In 1922 Thomas Stearns Eliot published *The Waste Land* and, ever since, it has been considered the most important single poem of the century. It takes the ideas of time, and waste, already found in *Prufrock* and extends them to all societies, all times, and all cultures. It is a poem full of references to other texts, and is one of the most complex.

The subject of the poem is the collapse of spirituality in modern society, and with it, the cultural and spiritual desolation of the world.

The poet expresses his desire to reconstruct civilization. The poem begins with an echo of Chaucer's Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer writes of the sweet showers of spring, using April as the month which brings the coming of spring, but Eliot changes that positive idea with the words: April is the cruelest month. The poem then goes on to describe London, and the image of all the poem is of wastelands, deserts – the same kind of futility.

The image of the wasteland has come to be one of the most common images of modern times, and Eliot's poem has been discussed and examined by a great many critics.

Eliot believed that post-First World War Europe had become a "waste land" due to the cultural and spiritual desolation.

By 1930, Eliot had entered into a new phase of poetic production. *Ash Wednesday*, a deeply spiritual poem, was followed by other "religious" works, including *Murder in the Cathedral*, a verse drama, *The Four Quartets*, published between 1936-1942, and the play *The Family Reunion* (1939). In 1947 Thomas Stearns Eliot was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He continued his revival of verse-drama and poetic plays, writing three more plays, *The Cocktail Party* (1950), *The Confidential Clerk* (1954) and *The Elder Statesman* (1959).

Thomas Stearns Eliot died in London in 1965 at the age of 77. His influence on English literature was enormous, not only from the point of view of his creative work, but also for his critical articles and essays. He is considered by many critics to be the most important poet in English in the 20th century.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Thomas Stearns Eliot born?
2. Where was he educated?
3. What was his first volume?
4. What Eliot's best-known poem does it contain?
5. What is the main idea of the poem?
6. What Eliot's poem has been considered the most important one of the century?
7. Comment on the subject of the poem *The Waste Land*.

8. Characterize the late period of Eliot's literary activity.
9. When did he die?
10. Speak on Eliot's place in English literature.

### **Samuel Beckett(1906-1989)**

Samuel Barclay Beckett was born in Foxrock, near Dublin, in 1906. He belonged to a middle class family. He distinguished himself at school and then went to Trinity College, Dublin where he studied Modern Languages. After graduating in 1928, he moved to Paris and worked as a teacher of English at the University of Paris (1928-1929). In 1930, he returned to Dublin where he taught French at Trinity College, but in 1931, he left this University career and, after travelling in Germany and Italy, settled in Paris where he lived until his death, concentrating on writing. In Paris, he became friends with many leading intellectual figures of the day, including James Joyce, and dedicated himself to studying and writing. During the war, Beckett joined the French Resistance and fought against the Fascist occupation of France. He was arrested in 1942, as a result of his activities, and went into hiding, spending the rest of the war period working on the land in Provence. After the war, he visited Ireland for a short period, before returning to France as an interpreter with the red Cross. He settled in Paris in 1946.

Beckett's literary production includes prose, novels and short stories, poetry, drama and critical essays. In 1921 he published *Dante... Bruno... Vico... Joyce*, a collection of critical essays, and the monograph, *Proust* in 1931. *More Pricks than Kicks* (1934) was his first experiment with the short story genre, followed in 1938 by his first novel *Murphy*. In 1944 he wrote the experimental novel *Watt* that was published in 1953. This was followed by a trilogy of novels *Molloy* (1955), *Malone Dies* (1956) and *The Unnameable* (1958). In all, Beckett wrote more than nine novels and seven volumes of shorter fiction.

The play *Waiting for Godot* was published first in French in 1952 and was translated into English in 1954. It was immediately received with critical appraisal and met with much popular interest. Some other plays are *Krapp's Last Tape* (1959), *Happy Days* (1961) *Not I* (1973) and *Breath* (1970).

Beckett had found a big English-speaking public that had never read his novels. Controversy and scandal surrounded the dramatic works of Beckett, but he also benefited from the appreciation in literary critics and directors. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969.

Samuel Beckett died in Paris in 1989.

#### *Waiting for Godot*

The absurd play *Waiting for Godot* was produced for the first time at the Theatre de Babylone, Paris on January 5, 1953. It was translated into more than twenty languages, including English (1954). The first English performance was at the Arts Theatre Club, London in August 1955, where it was so successful that it was transferred to the West End, the home of commercial English theatre.

The play is divided into two acts. In Act I, the two central characters, Estragon and Vladimir, who call each other Didi and Gogo, are on a country road, near the tree,

in an attitude of waiting. They explain that they are waiting for Godot, but seem unsure as to why or when this figure will arrive. They spend their time talking, quarrelling and inventing games, oppressed by the fact that nothing happens. Two more characters arrive, Pozzo and Lucky, a strange couple who appear to be a master and his slave. After this couple leave, a boy arrives with a message from Godot, saying that he will not come that day, but that he will arrive tomorrow. Act two begins in the same place, with the same two characters waiting again for Godot. Their uncertainty increases, and the second act is full of desperation and panic.

When Lucky and Pozzo return, they are horribly transformed. Pozzo is blind and Lucky has lost his powers of speech.

At the end of the day, the boy arrives again, to inform Vladimir and Estragon that Godot will not come that day, but that he will arrive tomorrow.

The play ends, as it began, with the two tramps waiting on the edge of the road, unable to sleep or move or even hang themselves, which they try to do unsuccessfully.

The four main characters are organized symbolically in a careful pattern of opposites.

Vladimir and Estragon are complementary parts of a single whole, Estragon is the poet and the dreamer, Vladimir is practical and never dreams. Estragon is cynical about Godot while Vladimir persists in the wait. Estragon is weak, he complains that every night someone comes and beat him, while Vladimir is more courageous. Their costumes and the stage directions suggest that they are clowns. They appear to be fond of each other and need each other in order to survive.

Pozzo and Lucky have a complementary relationship too. Pozzo, who represents the power of the master and the body, loses his sight in the second act and becomes much weaker. Lucky, with his ironic name, is slavish and represents the power of the mind.

For the two tramps, the arrival of Godot will end the wait. While the wait seems to suggest hope, the arrival of Godot suggests salvation, a rescue from the uncertainties of time. The boy, a messenger of salvation, never denies the arrival of Godot, but is unable to confirm it either. Hope keeps the tramps on the road, and hope prevents them from hanging themselves.

The characters in *Waiting for Godot* try and fail to communicate with each other through language, and in this play, in which costumes, scenery and action hardly exist, language is the most important to the development of meaning. Apart from dialogue, silence is important to the development of meaning. The pauses that Beckett uses show the incapacity of words to express meaning.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Samuel Beckett born?
2. Where was he educated?
3. Where did he work after graduating Trinity College?
4. What did Beckett do during the war?
5. Where did he live after the war?
6. What does Beckett's literary production include?

7. Characterize the first period of his literary activity.
8. What plays did he write?

**Robert Bolt**, (born Aug. 15, 1924, Sale, near Manchester, Eng.—died Feb. 20, 1995, near Petersfield, Hampshire), English screenwriter and dramatist noted for his epic screenplays. Bolt began work in 1941 for an insurance company, attended Victoria University of Manchester in 1943, and then served in the Royal Air Force and the army during World War II. After earning a B.A. in history at Manchester University in 1949, he worked as a schoolteacher until 1958, when the success of his play *Flowering Cherry* (London, 1957), a Chekhovian study of failure and self-deception, enabled him to leave teaching. Bolt's most successful play was *A Man for All Seasons*, a study of the fatal struggle between Henry VIII of England and his lord chancellor, Sir Thomas More, over issues of religion, power, and conscience. The play drew intense acclaim in productions at London (1960) and New York City (1961). Bolt wrote the screenplays for director David Lean's epic films *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) and *Doctor Zhivago* (1965) and then adapted *A Man for All Seasons* for director Fred Zinnemann's motion-picture version of the play in 1966. His other screenplays included *Ryan's Daughter* (1970), which was directed by Lean; *Lady Caroline Lamb* (1972), which Bolt himself directed; *The Bounty* (1984); and *The Mission* (1986). The most successful of Bolt's later plays was *Vivat! Vivat Regina!* (1970).

### SUPPLEMENT I

**Francis Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940)** Francis Scott Fitzgerald one of the most outstanding American writers of the lost generation, a generation for whom "all the battles have been fought" and "all the gods were dead". They are empty people, they cannot fight against the corruption of the rich. They try to fill their spiritual emptiness with all kinds of entertainments. Francis Scott Fitzgerald was born in St Paul, Minnesota into the family of a businessman. The family inherited money from Fitzgerald's grandmother who was a wealthy grocer. Fitzgerald attended Princeton, a university for rich Americans. At that time the spirit of competition ruled at the university. Fitzgerald was influenced by it and tried to join the most fashionable clubs, enjoying their aristocratic, idle atmosphere. Money gave him independence, privileges, style and beauty. Poverty was mean and narrow. It is much later that Fitzgerald understood the falseness of his belief. He left Princeton without a degree because of illness. His literary career began at the university. He wrote essays to the university magazine *The Tiger*. In 1917 he joined the army but he was not sent to the war in Europe. At the same time he fell in love with Zelda Laure, the daughter of a wealthy lawyer from Alabama. He married two years later when his first work *The Side of Paradise* was published and was a success. Zelda did not want to marry a poor unknown man. The fact that the rich get the most beautiful girl made Fitzgerald think of social injustice. But he had no consistent world outlook. He viewed the world of the rich with a sense of admiration and contempt. His wife's demands for fashionable life abroad in Paris, the expensive hotel suites and endless parties led Fitzgerald into hackwriting for

popular magazines, and this ruined his talent. However, he managed to write some serious novels and stories. His major novels appeared from 1920 to 1934: *This Side of Paradise* (1920), *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), *Great Gatsby* (1925) and *Tender is the Night* (1934).

Fitzgerald's best stories have been collected in the volumes: *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922), *All the Sad Young Men* (1926) and some others. The main theme of almost all Fitzgerald's works is the corrupting force of money. He thought that the rich were a special race and only gradually he found out their corruption inhumanity, spiritual emptiness and futility. He found it out together with his heroes who are largely autobiographical.

### **The Great Gatsby**

Fitzgerald's best work *The Great Gatsby* tells the life story of Jay Gatsby, the son of a poor farmer, who falls in love with a rich and beautiful girl Daisy Fay. She answers his love while his uniform conceals for a time his poverty. When war is over Daisy marries the rich Tom Buchanan. Gatsby does everything he can to get money and social position to be worthy of Daisy. He devotes all his life to it. But he can achieve it only by bootlegging and doing some other dubious things. When later Gatsby meets Daisy again, she believes the rumours of his large fortune, rich mansion and fashionable parties. She tells him she will leave Tom. But once, driving Jay back from New York to Long Island in his car, she runs over and kills Myrtle Wilson, her husband's mistress. Tom persuades Myrtle's husband that Gatsby was driving the car. He follows Jay and kills him. Daisy, having learned about Gatsby's dubious source of income, leaves him even before his death, in spite of the fact that Gatsby takes the fault of Myrtle's death on himself. The story is told by Daisy's cousin Nick, who at the beginning despises Gatsby for his vanity, vulgar parties, ill-taste, faulty language. He gradually, understands the greatness of his romantic dream and the tremendous energy with which he achieves his aim. At the same time Nick sees the shallowness of Gatsby's dream, as the society he tries to get is cynical, vicious and violent. Gatsby is contrasted to hypocritical, disillusioned and corrupt members of upper society like Tom and Daisy.

Gatsby's fanatic attempt to reach his dreams is contrasted to the disillusioned life of the cynical members of upper society who do not know what to do. Satire in the portrayal of the empty pleasures of the rich is combined with lyrical atmosphere enveloping Gatsby's romantic dream.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Fitzgerald's life.
2. What was his first work?
3. When did his major books appear?
4. Name his notable novels and the best collections of stories.
5. What theme did he touch upon in almost of all his works?
6. Give a brief summary of the contents of *The Great Gatsby*.
7. What features of Fitzgerald's outlook are revealed in *The Great Gatsby*?
8. Speak on Fitzgerald's place in American literature.

**Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)** **George Bernard Shaw**, novelist and playwright, was born in Dublin in an impoverished middle-class family. As a boy he seldom saw his parents. His father was occupied in a business which was almost bankrupt, and his mother devoted all her time to musical interests. She had a beautiful voice; Bernard himself and his sister could sing well enough and there were, besides the piano, many other musical instruments. Music came to play an important educative part in young Shaw's life.

Shaw had a well-educated uncle, a clergyman with whom he read the classics. So when he entered school at the age of ten, he was much advanced and did better than all the other pupils in English composition. He didn't like school, because the school course of studies was dull for him. He left one school for another, and then another, but everywhere the dull textbooks were the same, and they could not rouse the boy's interest. He educated himself by reading, and by studying foreign languages. At the age of fifteen Shaw went to work as a clerk. The monotonous daily routine, the endless figures, the feeling that he had become an insignificant part of a machine, all that alarmed the youth. In many things he was better informed than the most of his fellow clerks.

Shakespeare, Byron, Shelley and many other great poets and writers had been read and reread by him. He could discuss art, for he had studied the best works at the National Gallery in Dublin. At his job he had mastered the problems of his work without any difficulty. Yet he was far from being happy. Bernard Shaw felt that he had to leave and so in 1876 he said goodbye to Ireland and went to London, where his mother had been making a living by giving music lessons. In London he devoted much time to self-education and made his first attempt at literature. He became a journalist and wrote music and dramatic critiques for various periodicals. Bernard Shaw set out to become a novelist. Between 1879 and 1883 he wrote five long novels, which were rejected by all publishers. Thus he gave up writing novels. He became a socialist in 1882 and took an active part in the socialist failed to understand the necessity of a revolutionary reconstruction of the world.

In 1884 Bernhard Shaw joined the Fabian Society, an organization of petty bourgeois intellectuals. It was a reformist organization. They were afraid of any revolutionary changes and preached gradual transition from capitalism to socialism by means of reforms. On the eve of World War I Shaw experienced a deep ideological crisis. His faith in Fabian illusions was shattered considerably. His point of disagreement with the Fabians was their attitude to the war. Shaw set himself resolutely against the militarists and the military points of view.

Shaw gave up writing novels and turned to dramatic writing. He wrote his first play *Widower's Houses* in 1892. It was the first of the three plays published in his first volume called *Plays Unpleasant*. The other two were *The Philanderer* (1893) and *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1894). In the preface to his volume Shaw explained why he called them Plays Unpleasant. They discussed social problems of tremendous importance: the source of earning money by the "respectable bourgeoisie", the miseries of the poor. Their dramatic power is used to make the audience face unpleasant facts. The first performance of Bernard Shaw's play

Widower's Houses was quite a sensation. He was attacked both by the public and the critics.

George Bernard Shaw was a reformer of the theatre. The English Theatre of the 19th century was a theatre of primitive melodrama.

Shaw opened the way for a new drama: a critical and realistic one. Shaw's plays were serious plays, which he called problem plays, full of topical problems of the day.

Shaw was the leader of the revolution against the theory of "art for art's sake". He maintained that art should serve social purposes. He believed that the artist's function was to teach and he saw the theatre as a means of correction of public morals. With his plays Shaw tried to change the world while he entertained it. In 1895 he published some of his plays under the title of *Plays Pleasant* – they include *Arms and the Man* (1894), *The Man of Destiny* (1895) and *Candida* (1894). The title of the plays is rather ironical: through the amusing situations and witty scenes with sparkling dialogues Bernard Shaw continued his criticism of bourgeois morals and ideals. He attacked militarism and war (*Arms and the Man*), showing their senselessness and cruelty, and dethroned Napoleon (*The Man of Destiny*).

The third volume of Shaw's plays was called *Three Plays for Puritans*; these were *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898), *The Devil's Disciple* (1897) and *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* (1899). The title of the third cycle has a double meaning: on the one hand the plays turn against English puritanism and hypocrisy, on the other hand they are directed against the decadent drama.

In 1912 Shaw wrote his most popular play *Pygmalion*, which scandalized the "respectable" public by using dialect words which English usage considered vulgar.

By 1900 Shaw had established his reputation as a playwright. He wrote one play after another as well as books of criticism and pamphlets. Shaw's plays deal with various problems: politics, science, religion, education and economics.

During World War I Shaw wrote long and daring articles, protesting against the imperialist governments and their war policy.

Bernard Shaw was at the peak of his fame (1925) when he received the International Nobel Prize for Literature.

Shaw's plays of the second period become still more complex, for the problems Shaw deals with are now more complicated and significant. The most powerful among the plays are *The Apple Cart* (1929) and *Too True to Be Good* (1931).

In his play *The Apple Cart* Shaw touches upon the theme of rivalry between the USA and England in the political arena.

In his play *Too True to Be Good* Shaw dwells on the decay of the bourgeois system. Besides he depicts the birth and growth of new progressive forces in the world. Shaw's plays are discussion plays full of witty paradoxes and brilliant dialogues. He regards the speeches of his personages not only as means to characterize them but also as a means of expressing his own point of view on this or that problem.

Shaw mocks at bourgeois charity, satirizes businessmen and aristocrats. Each play is a response to current events, a discussion of burning questions. Shaw's way of writing is very peculiar, grotesque. He says true things in such a way that at first one is not sure whether he is joking or serious. He makes a sort of game out of his jokes and witty words. Shaw called himself the "jester" of English society. A jester can say whatever he likes, no one can be offended with a jester's jokes. So as a professional "joker" Shaw told English society some bitter truths which no one would have allowed him to say if he had not been England's jester.

Bernard Shaw chose satire as a weapon to fight for his ideals, and thus he carried on and developed the best traditions of critical realism in English literature.

He died on November 2, 1950 at the age of 94.

Bernard Shaw's best plays are highly appreciated in this country. They are staged in almost all the theatres and are always a success.

**Pygmalion** Pygmalion is one of Bernard Shaw's most popular and successful plays. It is a deep and amusing comedy. Like any of Shaw's plays, Pygmalion is full of criticism of contemporary life. The criticism in this case is directed against social barriers and distinctions. The idea of the play, expressed in the title, originates from an antique myth. Pygmalion, an ancient sculptor, while creating a statue of beautiful girl Galatea, by name, fell in love with his creation. His love was so great that he began to pray to Aphrodite, the goddess of love, to breathe life into his statue. The goddess made the statue alive, and Pygmalion married Galatea. Pygmalion in Shaw's play is Mr Higgins, a professor of phonetics. Galatea is Eliza Doolittle, a street flower seller, and the play itself is the story of Mr Higgins's attempt to make a duchess out of the flower seller.

Professor Higgins meets Eliza one stormy night selling flowers to a crowd under the portico of St Paul's Cathedral. The professor, struck by her remarkably pure Cockney pronunciation, is making notes of her words with a view of studying them at home. A gentleman seems particularly interested in Higgins, and the conversation, which springs up between them reveals that he is Colonel Pickering, a student of Indian dialects.

He and Higgins, it appears, have been interested in each other's work for years. Higgins points out that he can perfect the girl's shocking pronunciation which keeps her selling flowers in the street and prevents her from getting a respectable position as a saleslady in a flower shop.

The remark has made a deep impression on Eliza and the very next day she visits the professor to take lessons in pronunciation, at a price she considers fully sufficient of one shilling an hour. Finding Eliza's offer very interesting Professor Higgins and Colonel Pickering make a bet, that in six months Higgins will teach Eliza the language of "Shakespeare and Milton" and pass her off as a duchess at an ambassador's party. If Higgins succeeds Pickering will pay the expenses of the experiment. Eliza is taken into Higgins's house where for several months she is being taught to speak correct English. While staying at Higgins's home Eliza gets accustomed to Professor Higgins and Colonel Pickering. Higgins is not married and lives alone with his servants and his elderly housekeeper. He often finds Eliza



amusing and Eliza, grateful for the education he is giving her, makes herself useful to him wherever she can.

In order to prove his experiment Higgins dresses Eliza in beautiful clothes and takes her to the Ambassador's Garden Party where she meets the "cream" of society. Everybody takes her for a grand lady. Higgins wins his bet. But he has forgotten that a flower girl is a human being with a mind and a heart. He looks upon her only as a thing. He does not care what is to become of her when he has finished his instruction. He says, "When I've done with her, we can throw her back into the gutter, and then it will be her own business again".

Higgins is not unkind by nature and perhaps he has even grown fond of Eliza without knowing it; but what is an ignorant flower girl to a gentleman of means and wide education... Eliza teaches him how wrong he is, giving him a lesson in feeling. The lesson costs her some pain because not only has she got accustomed to Higgins, but she has also begun to love him.

Higgins and Eliza remain friends, but the play is without an ending. The dramatist thought it best not to go on with the story. Had he given the usual happy ending, the play would have become an ordinary fairytale story.

Bernard Shaw's play Pygmalion is a satire on higher society. Here, aristocrats are opposed to a simple girl. In the play Shaw shows his deep feelings for the common people, their humanism, the beauty of their inner qualities. He shows that good language and correct pronunciation are not only the attributes of people of high social, cultural and moral standing Professor Higgins believes that he can create a new Eliza by teaching her good language and manners. However, the paradox lies in the fact that Higgins only gives an outer polish to Eliza, whose inner qualities have always been greater than the Professor's. Her individuality remains the same, but she is the one who awakens human feelings in the Professor's heart.

Language can be learned; the inner qualities of a person do not depend on it.

### **Questions and tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Bernhard Shaw's life.
2. What did he begin writing first?
3. Why did he give up writing novels?
4. What organization did he join in 1884?
5. What did the members of the Fabian Society preach?
6. What was Shaw's point of disagreement with the Fabians?
7. What was Bernard Shaw's first play?
8. How did he call the first volume of plays?
9. Explain why he named these plays in such a way.
10. What changes did Bernard Shaw introduce into the theatre of England?
11. What plays did he publish under the title of Plays Pleasant?
12. Comment on the third volume of Shaw's plays.
13. What is his most popular play?
14. What problems do Shaw's plays deal with?
15. Characterize the second period of his literary work.
16. Describe Shaw's way of writing.
17. What is the main idea of the play Pygmalion?

18. What is the origin of the plot?
19. Give a brief summary of the contents of *Pygmalion*.
20. Against what is the criticism of the play directed?

### **Herbert Wells (1866-1946)**

Herbert George Wells is often called the great English writer who looked into the future. He was born in the small town of Bromley into a middle-class family. He was the second son in a family of three boys. His father was a shopkeeper and at the same time he was a professional player of the national English game – cricket. His mother was a housekeeper in a large country house. Wells combined his studies at Midhurst Grammar School by working as a draper's then a chemist's apprentice.

By means of a scholarship he had won he was able to study at the Royal College of Science in London.

In 1886 he took his B. Sc. (Bachelor of Science) degree with honours at London University. Then he took to teaching mostly as a private schoolmaster in biology. In 1893 he turned to journalism and literature.

Scores of novels, histories, philosophical books and scientific works followed. The end of the century made him famous as a writer. The First World War brought a crisis in the outlook of the great writer. At the beginning he believed that the war would teach all nations to live in peace and that the peoples of the world would want to build up a new society. He expressed his ideas in a series of articles.

They were later collected in the book called *The War That Will End War* (1914). But the book was not popular.

The October Socialist Revolution of 1917 shook Wells. He was greatly interested in the events going on in Russia. In 1920 he visited the Soviet Union. On his return to England he published his book *Russia in the Shadows* where he described the Soviet country ruined by the Civil War and foreign intervention.

During the Second World War Wells wrote against fascism. He lived to be nearly 80 years old. He died on 13 August, 1946.

Herbert Wells devoted more than fifty years of his life to literary work. He was the author of more than forty novels and many short stories, articles and social tracts. His novels are of three types: science fiction, realistic novels on contemporary problems and social tracts in the form of novels.

Wells belonged to the world of science. Science played an important part in his best works, but the principal theme, even in these works is not science but the social problems of the day. His creative work is divided into two periods. The first period begins in 1895 and lasts up to the outbreak of the World War I. His famous works are: *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), *The War of the Worlds* (1897), *The First Men in the Moon* (1901) and others.

The second period comprises works written from 1914 up to the end of World War II. His most important works are: *The War That Will End War* (1914), *Russia in the Shadows* (1920), *The World of William Clissold* (1926), *Mr Bletts worthy on Rampole Island* (1928), *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934) and many others.

Being greatly influenced by the outstanding achievements of the famous scientists of his day as Faraday, Darwin, Wells begins to explore in his works the new world opened up by modern science.

His books show not only the ability to make science the matter of a story, but a rare gift of scientific imagination. Wells's science-fiction novels are always built on a scientific basis. All of them are based on real scientific discoveries. The discovery of x-rays prompted Wells to write *The Invisible Man*. Wells tried his best to make his fantasies convincing. For this reason he would give accurate description of nonexistent machines, cite fictitious newspaper articles and scientific reports.

Some of his works show his scientific foresight. For instance in the novel *The War in the Air* (1908) Wells describes war planes which were first used during World War I. In the novel *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1899) Wells writes about A-bombs and their radio-active effect 30 years before their invention. These predictions show the author's imagination and profound scientific knowledge. The main trait of Wells's creative works is his concern for the fate of mankind.

The originality of Wells's science-fiction novels lies in their social problems. Thus in *The Time Machine* (1895) the theme of an unusual scientific invention – a machine capable of travelling through time – is connected with the theme of class struggle, class antagonism leading to the degeneration of mankind. The author describes a fantastic machine made of nickel, ivory and crystal and with great artistic mastery depicts the flight through time when days and nights seem like the flapping of a black wing and the sun and the moon become streaks of fire in the sky. However, it is not the main theme in the story. The principal idea of the book is the contrast of the two degenerated races – the Eloi and the Morlocks into which mankind has been divided.

Having reached the year 802701, the Time Traveller meets the Eloi – beautiful and graceful, but quite helpless creatures who live in old buildings. They are the descendants of the ruling classes, the product of luxurious life and aversion for work. The other race, the horrible and pale Morlocks are the descendants of workers who had lived in the dark underground factories many years before. They continue working for the Eloi, they provide them with clothes and food, but hunt the Eloi at night and feed on their meat.

The more remote future visited by the Time Traveller is even worse. He sees a desert land of monster crabs creeping out of the sea.

In *The Time Machine* one can feel Wells's pessimism. The writer does not see any ways of saving mankind from war and moral degradation. Wells thought the working class was too ignorant to fight for its happiness. This idea gave birth to the horrible figures of the Morlocks. Despite his pessimism Wells hoped that mankind would be able to escape degeneration and build life on more rational basis. The dreadful scenes depicted by the author serve as a warning to mankind.

*The Invisible Man* deals with another theme – the loneliness of the scientists in the bourgeois world and the danger of science in the hands of individualists.

The action is set in a small town in the south of England. The talented physicist Griffin who becomes invisible having discovered the secret of the colouring of

tissue perishes. He turns into a savage and commits horrible crimes. A great scientist becomes a dangerous maniac and murderer. Thus, Wells showed how tragic the achievements in science could be if they were used with destructive intentions.

He saw very clearly the contradictions that surrounded him but he did not see the way out.

Wells's contribution to literature becomes quite clear when we view him as a scientist. He is not a pure scientist, who works for the experiment only. He is much more interested in the fate of humanity than in science as such. Wells's aim was to show today through what might happen tomorrow. Man should realize that the future depends on what he is doing today. One must admire his courage and his faith in written word. "We are going to write about the whole of life", he announced, and so he did.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Wells's life.
2. Name Wells's different kinds of literary works.
3. What are the three types of his novels?
4. What themes did Wells touch upon in his works?
5. Name the two periods of his creative activity.
6. What is the peculiarity of Wells's science fiction?
7. Give a brief summary of the contents of *The Time Machine*.
8. Comment on the novel *The Invisible Man*.
9. What is the contribution of Wells to world literature?
10. Why is Herbert George Wells called the great English writer who looked into the future?

### **Modern Poetry**

Modern poetry followed an entirely different tradition from the Romantic and Victorian tradition of poetry. The modern poets believed that the poet's business was to be uniquely himself, and to project his personality through the medium of his art. Poetry to them was a method of discovering one's self, and then a means of projecting this discovery. The years between 1917 and 1930 form the first period in English 20th century literature – were years of changes. Basic religious and political beliefs were questioned by more people. The crisis of the bourgeois world reached its highest point. The writers of this period were greatly influenced by various decadent philosophical theories which led to the creation of works marked by great pessimism.

A symbolic method of writing had already started early in the 20th century. Along with works of Critical Realism produced by Shaw, Wells and Galsworthy there were writers who refused to acknowledge reality as such. They thought reality to be superficial. They were sure that everything that happened, – that is, what led to events – was the irrational, the unconscious and the mystical in man. These writers

called the inner psychological process "*the stream of consciousness*" and based a new literary technique on it.

The most important author who used this new literary technique was **James Joyce** (1882-1941). Decadence marks his works. He influenced many writers. A remoteness from actuality is clearly seen in the works of **Virginia Woolf** (1882-1941). Mystification on contemporary society are to be traced in the works of **Aldous Leonard Huxley** (1894-1963). **Thomas Stearns Eliot** (1888-1965) belongs to the same trend of writers for whom individualism and pessimism became the most characteristic traits.

The second period in the development of English literature was the decade between 1930 and World War II. The thirties are marked by an acute struggle of the writers realists representing different generations against decadent and modernist tendencies in English literature.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Characterize the years between 1917 and 1930.
2. What were the writers of this period greatly influenced by?
3. When did a symbolic method start?
4. What writers were there along with the writers of Critical Realism?
5. Comment on a new literary technique.
6. What author used this new literary technique?
7. Speak about the writers for whom remoteness from actuality, mystification of society, pessimism became the most characteristic traits.
8. When was the second period in the development of English literature of the 20th century?
9. Comment on the works of the writers of this period.

Other famous modern poets are **Aldous Huxley, Robert Bridges, Gerard Manley Hopkins, A. E. Houseman, Wilfred Owen, W. B. Yeats** and others.

**Aldous Huxley** (1894-1963)

Aldous Leonard Huxley was born on July 26, 1894, into a family that included some of the most distinguished members of the English intellectual elite. Aldous' father was the son of Thomas Henry Huxley, a great biologist. His mother was the sister of Mrs Humphrey Ward, the novelist; the niece of Matthew Arnold, the poet; and the grand-daughter of Thomas Arnold, a famous educator and the real-life headmaster of Rugby School.

Undoubtedly Huxley's heritage and upbringing had an effect on his work. But his own experiences made him stand apart from the class into which he was born. Even as a small child he was considered different, showing an alertness, an intelligence, what his brother called a superiority. He was respected and loved for these abilities. When Huxley was 16 and a student at the prestigious school Eton, an eye illness made him nearly blind. He recovered enough vision to go on to Oxford University and graduate with honors, but not enough to fight in World War I, an important experience for many of his friends, or to do the scientific work he had dreamed of. Scientific ideas remained with him, however, and he used them in

many of his books. He entered the literary world while he was at Oxford. Huxley published his first book, a collection of poems, in 1916. He married Maria Nys, a Belgian, in 1919. The family divided their time between London and Europe, mostly Italy, in the 1920s, and travelled around the world in 1925 and 1926, seeing India and making a first visit to the United States. Huxley liked the confidence and vitality he found in American life.

Huxley's *Crome Yellow* (crome = bright) (1921) was his first success, and *Antic Hay* (wild dance) (1923) continued this.

In 1928, he published his novel *Point Counter Point*, which was his best-seller. However, Huxley is best remembered for his novel *Brave New World* (1932), with its vision of a society controlled by scientific progress.

In 1937, the Huxleys came to the United States; in 1938, they went to Hollywood, where he became a screenwriter. He remained for most of his life in California, and one of his novels caricatures what he saw as the strange life there: *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*. In it, Jo Stoyte tries to achieve immortality through scientific experimentation, even if it means giving up humanity and returning to the completely animal state.

In the 1950s Huxley became famous for his interest in drugs. He was looking for a drug, that would allow an escape from the self and that if taken with caution would be physically and socially harmless.

He put his beliefs in such a drug into several books. Two were nonfiction: *Doors of Perception* (1954) and *Heaven and Hell* (1956). But Huxley warned of the dangers of such experiments in an appendix he wrote to *The Devils of Loudun* (1952).

Another work centering on drugs was *Island* (1962), a novel that required 20 years of thought and five years of writing.

Huxley produced 47 books in his long career as a writer. Some critics thought that he was a better essayist than novelist because he cared more about his ideas than about plot or characters. But we cannot hide one important fact: the books he wrote are most read and best remembered today are all novels – *Crome Yellow*, *Antic Hay*, and *Point Counter Point* from the 1920s, *Brave New World* and *After Many a Summer Dies a Swan* from the 1930s.

In 1959 the American Academy of Arts and Letters gave him the Award of Merit for the Novel, a prize given every five years; earlier recipients had been **Ernest Hemingway, Thomas Mann, and Theodore Driser**.

The range of Huxley's interests can be seen from his note that his "preliminary research" for *Island* included "Greek history, translations from Sanscrit and Chinese of Buddhist texts, scientific papers on pharmacology, psychology and education, together with novels, poems, critical essays, travel books, political commentaries and conversations with all kinds of people, from philosophers to actresses. He used similar, though probably fewer, sources for *Brave New World*. This list gives you some perspective on the wide range of ideas that Huxley studied. He also wrote an early essay on ecology that helped inspire today's environmental movement. Huxley remained nearly blind all his life. He died November 22, 1963.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. What family was Aldous Leonard Huxley born?
2. What were his relatives?
3. What traits of character did he possess being a small child?
4. Where was Aldous educated?
5. When did he enter the literary world?
6. What was his first book?
7. What works brought him success?
8. Characterize Huxley's principal works.
9. What did he become famous for in the 1950s?
10. How many books did he produce for his long career as a writer?
11. Why did some critics think that he was a better essayist?
12. What Huxley's novels are most read and best remembered?
13. Prove that the range of ideas that Huxley studied was wide.

## 7.2. Modern Drama

Drama in England suffered a decline for about two centuries after the death of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. It was revived, however, in the last decade of the 19th Century. The two important dramatists who took a significant part in the revival of drama were the Irish men – **George Bernard Shaw** and **Oscar Wilde**. Shaw practiced the *Comedy of Idea*, whereas Wilde practiced the new *Comedy of Manners*. Shaw, a great thinker, represented the Puritan side of the Anglo-Irish tradition. Wilde, on the other hand, was fond of a luxurious life. He was not a deep thinker as Shaw was and his attitude to life was essentially a playful and entertaining one.

Besides the comedy of manners and ideas, another type of drama evolved in England under the influence of the Irish Dramatic Movement. Its originators were **Lady Gregory** and **W. B. Yeats**. The two important dramatists of this movement were **J. M. Synge** and **Sean O' Casey**. Other famous modern dramatists include **Harold Pinter**, **John Galsworthy**, **John Masefield**, **J. M. Berrie**, and **Harley Granville-Barker**.

**John Galsworthy** (1867-1933)

Among the English authors of the close of the last century and the beginning of the 20th century John Galsworthy is one of the outstanding representatives. He was a novelist, dramatist, short-story writer and essayist. He created brilliant realistic pictures of life and typical characters. John Galsworthy was born in a well-to-do family in Surrey. His father was a rich lawyer, and he wanted his son to follow the career. John Galsworthy got his first education at home. At age of fourteen he was sent to Harrow School, a very old and famous public school for boys. At Harrow Galsworthy distinguished himself as an excellent student. After Harrow he studied at Oxford; but he did not find his studies in law exciting. He received an honours degree in law in 1889 and was admitted to the Bar. But very soon he gave up law for literature and went travelling all over the world.

In 1899 Galsworthy published his first novel *Jocelyn* and then *Villa Rubein* (1900) appeared under the pseudonym John Sinjohn.

Afterwards, at frequent intervals he wrote plays, novels and essays. His first notable work was *The Island of Pharisees* (1904) (Pharisees were people of the ancient Hebrew sect distinguished for their strict observance of religious laws under which they pretended to be superior to other people). Galsworthy gave this name to the English privileged classes. This word is used speaking about self-righteous hypocritical persons. In the five works entitled *The Country House* (1907), *Fraternity* (1909), *The Patrician* (1911), *The Dark Flower* (1913) and *The Freelands* (1915) Galsworthy criticizes country squires, the aristocracy and artists and shows his deep sympathy for strong passions, sincerity, true love. However he gained popularity only after the publication of *The Man of Property* – the first part of *The Forsyte Saga*. It consists of three novels and two interludes, as the author calls them:

*The Man of Property* (1906);

*In Chancery* (1920);

*To Let* (1921);

*Awakening* (interlude);

*Indian Summer of a Forsyte* (interlude).

*The Forsyte Saga* is followed by *A Modern Comedy*, also a trilogy, consisting of three novels and two interludes:

*The White Monkey* (1924);

*The Silver Spoon* (1926);

*The Swan Song* (1928);

*A Silent Wooing* (interlude);

*Passers-by* (interlude).

The trilogy called *End of the Chapter*, written at a later period, consists of three novels:

*Maid in Waiting* (1931);

*Flowering Wilderness* (1932);

*Over the River* (1933).

The Forsyte Saga is a great panorama of English life, covering nearly fifty years. It is a family chronicle. Galsworthy presents the story of the Forsyte family. His most interesting character is "the man of property", Soames Forsyte, the typical bourgeois to whom everything is a matter of proprietorship not only money, and houses, and position, but also works of art, and human hearts and feelings. The second trilogy is dedicated to the younger generation of the Forsytes. They are depicted against the background of post-war England. The action is centred round Soames' daughter Fleur.

In the *End of the Chapter*, written after World War I, Galsworthy's criticism becomes less sharp. The old generation of the Forsytes does not seem so bad to the author, compared to the new one. During his progress through six novels and four interludes Soames Forsyte becomes almost a positive character, in spite of the author's critical attitude towards him at the beginning of the Saga.



It took Galsworthy 22 years to accomplish this monumental work. For *The Forsyte Saga* John Galsworthy was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1932.

Galsworthy was also a great playwright of his time. From 1909 he produced in turn plays and novels. His plays deal with the burning problems of contemporary life. The author describes the hard life of the workers in *Strife* (1909), attacks the cruel regime in English prisons in *Justice* (1910), expresses his indignation towards wars in *The Mob* (1914), rejects the colonial policy of England in *"The Forest"*. Galsworthy's plays were very popular, yet it is not his dramatic works, but his novels and *The Forsyte Saga* in particular, that made him one of the greatest figures in world literature.

Galsworthy is not only a novelist and a dramatist, but also a shortstory writer and an essayist. His short stories give a most complete and critical picture of English bourgeois society in the first part of the 20th century. It is in his short stories that Galsworthy touches upon the most vital problems of the day – he condemns the war, exposes the propertied classes that bring suffering and unemployment to the people, showing his sympathy for the so-called "little man".

Galsworthy's mastery lies in his realistic depiction of life and characters and exciting plots. Though Galsworthy's criticism is not so sharp as that of Dickens and Thackeray, he is justly considered to be one of the greatest realists of his time. A bourgeois himself, Galsworthy nevertheless clearly sees the decline of his class and truthfully portrays this in his works.

Galsworthy gave a comprehensive and vivid picture of contemporary England. His art was greatly influenced by French literature. Maupassant was the first writer who gave him "real aesthetic excitement".

"The men we swear by", he used to say, "are Maupassant, Flaubert, Anatole France".

### *The Man of Property*

At the beginning of the novel we see the Forsyte family in full plumage. All the Forsytes gather at the house of old Jolyon to celebrate the engagement of Miss June Forsyte, old Jolyon's granddaughter, to Mr Philip Bosinney. Old Jolyon is the head of the family. Eighty years of age with his white hair, his domelike forehead and an immense white moustache, he holds himself very straight and seems master of perennial youth. He and his five brothers and four sisters represent the first generation of the Forsytes. All of them are rich businessmen, heads of various firms and companies. With distrust and uneasiness they watch June's fiance – a young architect without any fortune. In their opinion Jolyon ought never to have allowed the engagement. Bosinney seems to be an impractical fellow with no sense of property, while the Forsytes consider property to be a sacred thing, an object of worship and respect.

The most typical Man of Property is Soames Forsyte, a representative of the second generation of the Forsytes. Soames' sacred sense of property even extends to works of art, human feelings and family relations.

Having married Irene, a woman who never loved him, Soames treats her as though she were his property. Wishing to get his beautiful wife out of London, away from

opportunities of meeting people, Soames decides to build a house in the country. He asks Bosinney to design the house, because he thinks that Bosinney will be easy to deal with in money matters. Irene falls in love with the young architect and Soames, driven by jealousy, brings a suit against Bosinney for having exceeded the sum of money which had been fixed for the construction of the house. On the day of the trial Bosinney meets with a tragic death. Being passionately in love with Irene and depressed by his hopeless state of affairs, he wanders aimlessly in the foggy streets of London and is run over by an omnibus.

Irene leaves Soames. But she is forced to return to him though not for a long. The new house remains empty and deserted. The Man of Property represents a typical bourgeois who is the slave of property, which is to him not only money, houses and land, but also his wife, the works of art and the talent of artists whose works he buys.

Soames believes that the souls and thoughts, ideas and love, the kindness and sympathy of a warm heart are all to be bought at their face-value.

Every Forsyte feels great pleasure speaking about money matters. If he sees anything, he immediately states the value of it. The Forsytes estimate people in the same way as they estimate things. A man who can make a great deal of money is a person of importance, deeply respected by the Forsytes; one who cannot, is despised by them. No matter how honourable this or that profession may be, it is not considered of by the Forsytes unless it can bring in money.

There are some characters in the novel who are created as a contrast to the Forsytes with all their prejudices and negative features. These are the characters of Irene and Bosinney and old Jolyon, young Jolyon and his daughter June. These characters have the sympathy of the author and the reader. The characters of Irene and Bosinney are not so vivid as those of the Forsytes. Though old Jolyon and young Jolyon belong to the Forsytes, the possessive instincts of both Jolyons are not so strong as those of the other members. Old Jolyon is one of the most attractive personages of the novel. At the beginning of the book he is a typical Forsyte. His son's marriage to a governess caused his indignation. He disinherited young Jolyon and did not want to see him. Later he was sorry and did all he could to help his son's second family. At the close of his life old Jolyon came to realize that there was something more precious in life than property. Egoism, snobbery, contempt for everything "foreign", a sense of property and money-worship — these are the most characteristic features of the Forsytes.

The collision between the sense of property and money-worship, on the one hand, and true love and a keen sense of beauty, on the other, is the main theme of the novel. Galsworthy's realism, his sincerity, his objective portrayal of contemporary life and his keen sense of beauty link him with the best writers of world literature.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of John Galsworthy's life.
2. Give a brief account of the beginning of Galsworthy's literary work.
3. What novel brought him fame?
4. Describe the composition of The Forsyte Saga.
5. What themes does the author touch upon in the novel?

6. Name his chief plays and the problems they deal with.
7. What can you say about Galsworthy's short stories?
8. What are the chief characteristics of Galsworthy's works?
9. Comment on the influence of French literature on Galsworthy's literary activity.
10. Give a brief summary of the contents of *The Man of Property*.
11. Comment on the most typical features of the Forsyte family.
12. Which of the Forsytes is the most representative man of property?
13. Compare the characters of Philip Bosinney and Irene with those of the Forsytes.
14. What is the author's opinion of such characters as old Jolyon, young Jolyon and June?
15. What is the main theme of the novel *The Man of Property*?
16. Explain what makes it possible to link Galsworthy with the best writers of world literature.

### **Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936)**

**Gilbert Keith Chesterton** is known as critic, author of verses, essays, novels and short stories. He was born on May 29, 1874 in London.

Chesterton was educated at St Paul's School and later studied art at the Slade School and literature at University College, London.

He began his career as a literary journalist, and it is in this genre that his most successful work was done. His first book of poems was *The Wild Knight* (1900). His writings to 1910 were concerned with three main areas. First, his social criticism was expressed in his works *The Defendant* (1901), *Twelve Types* (1902), and *Heretics* (1905).

Second, his works of literary criticism, which include *Robert Browning* (1903), an excellent guide, *Charles Dickens* (1906), an enthusiastic study, *George Bernard Shaw* (1909), *William Blake* (1910) and *Robert Louis Stevenson* (1927). These works of Chesterton are among the finest contribution to criticism.

Chesterton's third main concern was theology and religious argument.

Many readers value Chesterton's fiction most highly. He wrote several novels such as *The Napoleon of Netting Hill* (1904), *The Club of Queer Trades* (1905), *The Man Who Was Thursday* (1908) and others.

Chesterton wrote a number of detective stories in which the detective is the Catholic priest Father Brown. The first volume of these was *The Innocence of Father Brown* (1911), then *The Wisdom* (1914), *The Incredulity* (1926), *The Secret* (1927), *The Scandal of Father Brown* (1935) and others. Chesterton's detective stories are excellent light entertainment. They show Chesterton's favourite ideas about life, ordinary men, happiness and the wisdom of the heart. Chesterton's published works run to over 100 volumes.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was Chesterton born?
2. Where was he educated?
3. How did he begin his literary career?

4. What were the three main areas of his writings?
5. Comment on them.
6. What do readers value most highly in his work?
7. Speak on his novels and detective stories.
8. Prove that Chesterton was a prolific writer.
9. What is his contribution to English literature?

### 7.3. Modern Novel

The modern novel is realistic as well as psychological. The Modern novelists had introduced into the novel subtle points of view, reserved and refined characters, and intangible delicacies of motive. All these had never been attempted before by any English novelist. The modern novelist in their works employed the 'stream of consciousness' technique. This technique not only helped them to reveal the character completely and present development in character. Besides being realistic and psychological, the modern novelists were quite frank with sexual matters. The modern novelists who dominated the earlier part of the 20th Century were H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, Henry James, **Joseph Conrad**, Rudyard Kipling, John Galsworthy and E. M. Foster. From the beginning of World War I new experiments were made in the field of literature on account of the new forces which resulted from war and broke the old tradition. The writers such as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Aldous Huxley, D. H. Lawrence, and Somerset Maugham made the greatest contribution to this century.

#### **Somerset Maugham (1874-1965)**

**William Somerset Maugham** is one of the best known writers of the present day. He was not only a novelist of considerable rank, but also one of the most successful dramatists and short-story writer. William Somerset Maugham was born in Paris in 1874. His father was a solicitor for the British Embassy. His mother died when he was eight. Two years later his father followed, and the orphan child was sent to his uncle, a clergyman in Whiteable, Kent. At thirteen he was sent to Kings School, Canterbury, with an intention that he should go to Oxford and prepare to enter the church.

But he had always wanted to write, and in 1890 he went abroad and studied at the University of Heidelberg, from which he returned in 1892. According to his uncle's will he had to choose a profession and he chose medicine, thus entering St. Thomas Hospital in London. In 1898 he got his medical degree, but he never practised, except for a year in the Lambeth slums.

Of this period of his life he writes: "All this was a valuable experience to me. I do not know a better training for a writer than to spend some years in the medical profession. In those six years I must have witnessed pretty well every emotion of which man is capable. It appealed to my dramatic instinct. It excited the novelist in me. I saw how men died. I saw how they bore pain. I saw what hope looked like, fear and relief. I saw dark lines that despair drew on a face".

His experience in treating the sick in the slums gave Maugham material for his first work, *Liza of Lambeth* (1897), a realistic novel characterized by a powerful photographic portraiture of life. After that he decided to devote his life to literature. Soon after the publication of his first novel Maugham went to Spain and then travelled to all parts of the world. He visited America, Asia and the Polynesian Islands, and wherever he was, he always sought material for his books. He was a keen observer of life and individuals.

During World War I he enlisted with a Red Ambulance Unit. Later he was transferred to the Intelligence Service (Secret Service). Early in the 1930's Maugham settled down near Paris. At the outbreak of World War II he was appointed to special work at the British Ministry of Information in Paris. The Nazi advance overtook him there; he managed, however, to reach England, leaving behind him all his belongings and many of his unfinished manuscripts. In the years following he settled down in England.

The most mature period of Maugham's literary career began in 1915, when he published one of his most popular novels *Of Human Bondage*. It was started in 1905, abandoned for a time and then taken up again. The book is considered to be his masterpiece. *Cakes and Ale* (1930) was named by Maugham himself to be best of his books. It represents the backstage life of literary profession. The revolt of the individual against the accepted customs of society is a theme which has always fascinated Somerset Maugham. It inspired his novel *The Moon and Sixpence* (1919).

The novel which has rather an unusual plot is partly based on the life story of the famous French painter Gauguin, who was an innovator and rebel in art.

The hero of the novel, Charles Strickland, is a prosperous stockbroker. At the age of forty he leaves his wife and children and goes to Paris, where he devotes himself to painting. Strickland is aware of all the hardships in store for him, but his desire to paint is so strong that no arguments can convince him to change his decision to devote his life to art.

Strickland's life in Paris is "a bitter struggle against every sort of difficulty". But the hardships do not affect him. He is indifferent to comfort. Canvas and paint are the only things he needs.

Strickland does not care for fame. Nor does he care for wealth. He does not sell his pictures and he is almost starving. His only aim in life is to create beauty. The only person who understands Strickland's creative genius is the painter Dirk Stroeve. Trying to save Strickland from a terrible disease and starvation, Dirk Stroeve brings him home where he sacrifices his time, his comfort and his money for Strickland. But instead of gratitude Strickland shows his inhumanity towards Dirk Stroeve. He seduces Stroeve's wife Blanche who falls in love with him. When Strickland takes no more interest in her, she commits suicide. These two men with their sharply contrasting characters are equally responsible for Blanche Stroeve's tragic death, which is caused both by her husband's kindness and by Strickland's cruelty.

Thus after years of resultless struggle in Paris Strickland moves to Marseilles. He spends about four months at Marseilles where he finds it impossible to earn the

small sum he needs to keep body and soul together. His imagination being haunted for a long time by "an island all green and sunny, encircled by sea more blue than is found in the Northern latitude", he decides to go to the South Seas.

By a chance of luck he boards a ship bound for Australia, where he works as a stoker thus getting to Tahiti. There he marries a Polynesian woman Ata and devotes the rest of his life to painting. Strickland dies of leprosy. According to his will his wife burns their house the walls of which had been covered from ceiling to floor with compositions by Strickland. Only on discovering some canvases Strickland had once put aside during his years of unrewarded work, the world art realizes it has lost a genius. Strickland is concentrated on his art. He is indifferent to love, friendship and kindness. He ruins the life of Dirk Stroeve and his wife who nursed him when he was dangerously ill. He does not care for his own wife and children and brings misfortune to all the people who come in touch with him. But on the other hand we cannot deny his talent as an artist, a creator of beauty. Strickland cannot care for anything else but art as art is the only means for him to express himself.

Society, however, is hardly ever patient with geniuses. Most often a genius has to die before he is acknowledged.

Maugham shows how blind the bourgeois public is to real beauty. Later Strickland's works are bought by the public because it is fashionable to have them in one's flat.

Another important character of the novel, Dirk Stroeve, is a very kind man, but a bad artist, though he possesses a keen sense of beauty and is the first to appreciate Strickland's talent. Stroeve paints easily and is able to satisfy the vulgar tastes of the public.

The author shows that the public lacks imagination; therefore, real art is as far for the rich as the moon is. The title serves to Maugham as a symbol for two opposing worlds – the material world which is left by Strickland, where everything is thought of in terms of money and the world of art. Other most prominent works by Somerset Maugham are the novels: *Theatre* (1937) and the *Razor's Edge* (1944). He has written nineteen novels, twenty-four plays and a large number of short stories, in addition to travel works and an autobiography.

Few of his plays have stood the test of time. He is primarily a shortstory writer and a novelist.

The most popular stories are *Rain*, *The Unconquered*, *Gigolo and Gigolette*, *The Man with the Scar*, *The Luncheon*. A realistic portrayal of life, keen character observation, interesting plots, beautiful, expressive language and a simple style, all place Somerset Maugham on a level with the greatest English writers of the 20th century.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Say a few words about Somerset Maugham's life.
2. What was his first work?
3. When did the most mature period of Maugham's literary career begin?
4. What is the main theme of the novel *The Moon and Sixpence*?
5. Give a brief summary of the contents of *The Moon and Sixpence*.

6. Discuss the main character of the novel Charles Strickland.
7. In what way did Strickland fulfil the purpose of his life?
8. Which character is shown as an antipode to Charles Strickland?
9. What idea does Maugham deal with in the novel?
10. What can you say about the title of the book?
11. Name some other prominent works by Somerset Maugham.
12. What stories by Somerset Maugham are the most popular?
13. Speak on Somerset Maugham's place in English literature

### **James Joyce (1882-1941)**

James Joyce was born in Dublin on February 2, 1882. His family was middle class and very large. He was educated at a Catholic School, then at a Jesuit college, and finally at University College, Dublin. His school interests were Languages, Poetry, Latin and Philosophy. James Joyce first published work was a volume of poems called *Chamber Music* (music played with a small group of instruments) (1907). He wrote in many genres. In 1914 Joyce wrote *Dubliners*, a collection of fifteen short stories set in Dublin.

"It is a chapter of the moral history of my country", Joyce commented. It has become one of the best known books of its time. The short story form, dating back to the middle years of the 19th century, is used by Joyce in this collection of tales to show the lives and experiences of people in Dublin.

Joyce analyses Dublin as a city which cannot change, and whose people are dying. The collection starts with *Eveline*, a story of adolescence, and finishes with the story *The Dead*, the title of which signifies the conclusion both of the life and of the book. Each story presents a moment of self realization in the life of one person from Dublin. The same theme is found in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, published in 1914-1915. This is almost an autobiography, although the hero is called Stephen Dedalus. He wants to become a writer, like Joyce himself, and finally has to leave Ireland to find his true voice as an artist. He says, near the end of the novel: "I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church, and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use, silence, exile and cunning"

#### *Ulysses*

In 1922, James Joyce's *Ulysses* was published. It was published in Paris, and immediately caused great controversy – some people saw it as the most important novel of the country, but for others, including the British authorities, it was obscene, and was banned until 1936.

The novel concerns the experiences of two men during one day, 16th June, 1904, in Dublin, and one of the main characters, is Stephen Dedalus again. Leopold Bloom and Molly Bloom are the other main figures in the novel, which follows the two men through a day, and ends with a stream-of-consciousness monologue by Molly: "What shall I wear shall I wear a white rose those cakes in Lipton's I love the smell of a rich big shop at 7 V2d a pound or the other ones with cherries in

them of course a nice plant for the middle of the table I love flowers I'd love to have the whole place swimming in roses".

Molly's thoughts and feelings here flow in a stream of consciousness. There is no punctuation as thoughts, memories and reflections move into one another. Joyce also uses a wide range of references as well as using the styles of many works of literature from The Odyssey of Homer, on which the structure of Ulysses is based, through Chaucer to the moderns. Joyce wanted to write the novel that was the climax of the traditions of English literature.

And after Ulysses he went further. He wrote *Finnegan's Wake*, which was finally published in 1939. Joyce took the novel and language to new limits. It is a highly experimental novel and very surprising to read. The main theme is Fall and Resurrection, told about Dublin settings. The novel uses dreams, play on words, invented words and jokes to make a unique text.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. When was James Joyce born?
2. Where was he educated?
3. What were his school interests?
4. What was Joyce's first published work?
5. Speak on Joyce's collection of short stories Dubliners.
6. What can you say about the plot and the main character of Joyce's novel A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man'?
7. Give a brief summary of the contents of the novel Ulysses.
8. Comment on Joyce's last novel Finnegans Wake.

### **Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)**

Virginia Woolf was born in London in 1882. She had two brothers, Thoby and Adrian, and one sister, Vanessa. Her mother, Julia, died in 1895, when Virginia was thirteen years old. Her father, Leslie Stephen was a noted intellectual of the day, a philosopher and a critic. He was connected with many of the leading artists and writers of that period. After the death of his wife, he became depressed and suffered a great deal. Virginia's early life was very hard. She witnessed her father's depression and suffered a mental breakdown herself after her mother's death. She was to suffer another breakdown in 1914, when her father died, this time trying to commit suicide.

After the death of their father, Thoby, Adrian, Vanessa and Virginia moved to Bloomsbury, and the two sisters began experimenting, painting and writing. Their house in Bloomsbury became the centre of literary interest among the intellectuals and artists of that time – the Bloomsbury Group.

In 1917 Virginia, now married to Leonard Woolf, started the publishing company that printed, apart from some of Virginia's own work, Thomas Stearns Eliot, Edward Morgan Forster and Virginia's best friend, Katherine Mansfield.

Virginia Woolf's first novel was *The Voyage Out* (1915). It was followed by *Night and Day* (1919). Then in 1922, she published *Jacob's Room*. It was set during the first World War, and tells a story very close to the death of the authors' own



brother Thoby. It was the first of her novels to use the impressionistic technique which were to make her famous. She wanted to leave realism, and move into a new kind of expression which would allow a more internal exploration of the described events and emotions. She continued this in her next novels, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927). In *The Waves* (1931), which is her most experimental novel, Woolf shows six different characters, all at different points in their lives, and explores how they are each affected by the death of someone well known to all of them.

*Orlando* (1928) is a very literary fantasy which takes its main character from the Elizabethan age to modern times, and through a change of sex, as he/she meets all sorts of literary and historic figures. She spoke out for women, particularly in *A Room of One's Own* (1929). She also published a lot of criticism, such as *The Common Reader* (two series, 1925 and 1932). Her final works *The Years* (1937) and *Between the Acts* (1941) continue her experiments, and prove her to be one of the most important and original novelists of the 20th century.

Virginia Woolf committed suicide in 1941.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Virginia Woolf's life.
2. What was her first novel?
3. Give a brief account of Woolf's literary career.
4. What were the main literary principles of Virginia Woolf?
5. What is the contribution of Woolf to English literature?

### **Edward Morgan Forster (1879-1970)**

Edward Morgan Forster belongs to the elder generation of the 20th century writers. He was educated at Tonbridge School and King's College, Cambridge. Forster gradually became interested in literature, and wrote a novel at twenty, but it was never completed. After his graduation he began to write short stories, some of which appeared in print.

When he had left Cambridge he lived for a time in Italy writing there two novels: *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905) and *A Room with a View* (1908). These novels had an Italian background, but *The Longest Journey* (1907) dealt with Tonbridge and Cambridge. Forster returned to England in 1907, delivered lectures at the Working Men's College, and finished off *A Room With a View*, which was soon followed by *Howards End* (1910), his most mature novel thus far.

In 1911 Forster was engaged in literary journalism. He wrote a play *The Heart of Bosnia*, which never saw the stage. Then he went to India, where he collected material for what was to be his novel. During World War I he was in Alexandria, doing civilian war work.

While there, he contributed to the Egyptian Mail a number of studies and wrote *Alexandria: a History and Guide* (1922).

After the war Forster returned to London and did a great deal reviewing several daily papers, acting for a short time as literary editor of the *Labour Daily Herald*.

He went to India again in 1921 and in 1924 brought out *A Passage to India*, which is considered his best work. It is a brilliant study of the difficulties experienced by an Indian and some English people; and it won prizes in 1925.

In 1927 Forster was invited to Cambridge to deliver lectures on his *Aspects of the Novel* (the book appeared in the same year).

In 1928 he published *The Eternal Moment*, a collection of short stories. Another production of the twenties *Abinger Harvest* (1926) consists of some reprints of reviews and articles out of various journals. He has also written essays collected in *Two Cheers for Democracy* (1951).

Forster's power of characterization, his wit, and irony, and the peculiarity of his style places the author on a level with the greatest writers of his time.

### *A Passage to India*

In 1911, Forster had the opportunity to live in India, and it meant a great deal to him as a novelist. *A Passage to India* arose from his own experience. It is a novel about the relations of Englishmen living in India as representatives of the British Empire on the one hand and the natives of India on the other hand.

The novel is divided in 3 sections: Mosque Caves and Temple, and each depicts different scenes from Anglo-Indian life. The novel begins with Mrs Moore's and Miss Quested's arrival in India with a view to visit Mrs Moore's son Ronny, a government official in the colonial country.

The general meaning of the first part of the novel is best expressed in the scene between Mrs Moore and Aziz, a young Indian doctor whom she meets in a mosque. In a dialogue, they reach a surprisingly friendly relationship and mutual sympathy. From this scene and from similar episodes the reader concludes that the communication between Britons and Indians is possible.

Adela Quested feels real sympathy towards the native inhabitants of the country, and wants to get closely acquainted with their way of life. Thus, when Aziz proposes a trip to the Marabar Caves, it seems that the expedition will be a triumph of Anglo-Indian friendship.

But Ronny, the official representative of the English government, interprets the episode as a native insolence.

Adela and Ronny quarrel rather bitterly over Aziz's invitation. Seeing Ronny's arrogance, Adela suddenly realizes that she has left out love in deciding to marry him. The connection between the caves and the unsatisfactoriness of marriage is made at various points in the narrative of Adela and Ronny's engagement.

But after the tour to the Marabar Caves had taken place, the caves symbolized the failure of all communication between the two nations: the English and the Indians. Doctor Aziz is brought to trial for having molested Miss Quested in the Caves. At the trial Adela understands everything, and is sure that Aziz did not assault her. But their attempt to make some kind of contact between an Englishman and an Indian failed completely.

In the last section of the novel Temple, the author describes a meeting between Aziz and Mr Fielding who defended him at the trial. It is a story about an Englishman and an Indian who are trying to understand each other to resume their relationship. But this attempt is a failure.

For a brief time Fielding and Aziz are friends, but their friendship is unstable. In the concluding words of the novel we are told that "The Temples" do not want them to be friends.

Forster as a social observer describes Anglo-Indian relations, and shows that they split completely, with the exception of Mrs Moore, Miss Quested and Mr Fielding who are always informal and honest with the Indians.

Mrs Moore is one of the central figures of the novel. She expresses Forster's own point of view, his belief that democracy is a kind of medicine for all human diseases; tolerance, sympathy and good will are all that really count. The attitude of the heroes of the novel shows that they are firmly convinced that personal relationship is more important than the relations of the countries. But the social wrongs the Indians suffered so long do not allow them to appreciate the few honest Englishmen who have no prejudices against their community.

Although Forster's sympathy is with those who feel the necessity of friendly relations, he fails to see that friendship and human contact among people of different nations is possible without equality in their relationship.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the story of Forster's life. Name his notable works.
2. What novel is considered to be his best work?
3. What can you say about the plot and the main characters of *A Passage to India*?
4. What is the main theme of the novel?
5. What character of the book is Forster's sympathy with?
6. What character of the novel expresses Forster's own point of view?
7. What places Forster on a level with the greatest writers of his time?

### **Agatha Christie (1890-1976)**

Agatha Christie is known all over the world as detective novelist and playwright whose books have been translated into 103 foreign languages. She is one of the best-selling authors in the world, whose books were sold more than 100 000 000 copies.

Agatha Mary Clarissa Christie was born on September 15, 1890 in Torquay, Devonshire. She was educated at home by her mother and took singing lessons in Paris. She began writing detective fiction while working as a nurse during World War I. Her first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, was published in 1920. That was the first appearance of Hercule Poirot, who became one of the most popular private detectives. This little Belgian amazes everyone by his powerful intellect and his brilliant solutions to the most complicated crimes. He reappeared in about 25 novels and many short stories before returning to *Styles*, where in *Curtain* (1975) he died. The elderly Miss Jane Marple, Christie's other principal detective figure, first appeared in *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926), which is considered Christie's masterpiece. It was followed by some 75 novels that usually made best-seller lists. Her plays include *The Mousetrap* (1952), which set a world record for the longest continuous run at one theatre (8,862 performances – more than 21 years – at the Ambassadors Theatre, London); and *Witness for the Prosecution*

(1953) which, like many of her works, was adapted into a very successful film (1958). Agatha Christie's first marriage, to Col. Archibald Christie, ended in divorce in 1928. After her marriage in 1930 to the archaeologist Sir Max Mallowan, she spent several months each year on expeditions in Iraq and Syria. Agatha Christie's success with millions of readers lies in her entertaining plots, excellent character drawing, a great sense of humour. The reader cannot guess who the criminal is up to the end of the novel. Fortunately, evil is always punished in her novels.

Agatha Christie also wrote romantic, non-detective novels such as *Absent in the Spring* (1944) under the pseudonym Mary Westmacott.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Agatha Christie's life.
2. What is her first novel?
3. Where was the first appearance of Hercule Poirot?
4. What was last Poirot book?
5. Who was Christie's other principal detective figure?
6. What novel did Miss Jane Marple appear in?
7. What play set a world record for the longest continuous run?
8. Why are Christie's books so popular with the readers?

### **John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892-1973)**

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born in the town of Bloemfontain, South Africa on January 3rd, 1892, to English parents. In 1895 Ronald, his mother, and brother Hilary returned to England. Ronald's memories of Africa were slight but vivid, and influenced his later writing to some extent. His father died in 1896. In the autumn of 1899 Ronald took the entrance exam for King Edward School, but failed to obtain a place.

He retook the exam a year later, and was accepted. In 1904 his mother died, and Ronald and his brother were left to the care of Father Francis Morgan a priest. In 1908 Ronald began his first term at Oxford.

In 1915 Ronald graduated from Oxford with a First in English Language and Literature. In 1916 John Ronald Reuel Tolkien married Edith Bratt, and in 1917 his first son John was born. Tolkien worked as an assistant on the Oxford English Dictionary for two years. A year after that, his second son Michael was born. In 1921, Tolkien began teaching at the University of Leeds. Three years later, he became Professor of English Language at Leeds.

Also that year, his third son Christopher was born. In 1925, Tolkien moved to Oxford, where he served as Professor of Anglo-Saxon. In 1929 his fourth child, Priscilla, was born.

Over the past few years, Tolkien had already started to write a great cycle of the myths and legends of Middle-earth, which was to become *The Silmarillion*. Around 1933, Tolkien first began telling his children of a funny little creature named Bilbo. Tolkien got the idea for *The Hobbit* from these stories, and in 1936,

he completed the book. A year later *The Hobbit* was published, and proved to be very successful.

In 1945, Tolkien became Professor of English Language and Literature at Oxford; a position he held until his retirement in 1959. He completed the sequel to *The Hobbit* in 1948.

The first two parts were published in 1954, under the titles *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers*. A year later the third part, *The Return of the King* was published.

In 1954-1955 Tolkien wrote *The Lord of the Rings*, which are set in prehistoric era in an invented version of the world which he called by the Middle English name of Middle-earth.

In 1965 *The Lord of the Rings* was published. *The Lord of the Rings* rapidly came to public notice. It had mixed reviews. Tolkien received different honorary degree and C. B. E. (Commander of (the Order of) the British Empire) from the Queen.

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien died on September 2, 1973 at the age of eighty-one.

The flow of publications was only temporarily slowed by Tolkien's death. Tolkien got into the habit of writing the children annual illustrated letters as if from Santa Claus, and a selection of these was published in 1976 as *The Father Christmas Letters*. The long-awaited *Silmarillion* edited by his son Christopher Tolkien, appeared in 1977.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Tolkien's childhood and youth.
2. Where was he educated?
3. When was he married?
4. How many children did he have?
5. Where did Tolkien serve in Oxford?
6. How did his book *The Hobbit* originate?
7. What was his second notable work?
8. Where does the action of the novel *The Lord of the Rings* take place?
9. When did Tolkien die?
10. What Tolkien's books were published after his death?

## LECTURE 11.

### WW II and PostModernism Literature. Late 20th and early 21st Century

1. William Faulkner
2. Ernest Hemingway
3. John Updike
4. African American Literature

#### Supplement I

#### American Literature in the Post-War Period

1. Margaret Mitchell
2. Jerome Salinger
3. Jack Kerouac
4. Ken Kesey

The outbreak of war in 1939, as in 1914, brought to an end an era of great intellectual and creative exuberance. Individuals were dispersed; the rationing of paper affected the production of magazines and books; and the poem and the short story, convenient forms for men under arms, became the favoured means of literary expression. It was hardly a time for new beginnings, although the poets of the New Apocalypse movement produced three anthologies (1940–45) inspired by Neoromantic anarchism.

The remarkable political and social changes in Great Britain within the years following World War II had a great influence on intellectual life and on literature in particular.

During the 1950s a new kind of drama began to reach the theatres in Europe. There were two new trends in drama in the 1950s — absurd drama and social drama. Absurd drama began in France in the 1940s and reached Britain with *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Becket in 1955. The term "absurd" means unreasonable, illogical. It shows a general sense of this new literature. This kind of drama explains how meaningless life is.

The playwrights Eugene Ionesco, Arthur Adamov, Samuel Beckett and others are known today as contributors to the theatre of the absurd. They describe the absurd elements of the human condition. "Cut off from religious roots, man is lost: all his actions have become senseless, absurd, useless".

To underline the spiritual and physical immobility of man pauses and silences are repeated in Absurd Drama. The most memorable literary form which told the stories of the Second World War was the novel. The novel with a philosophical tendency was born and the traditional satirical novel flourished to the full. The essence of all these literary phenomena was the earnest search of the writers for their place in life, for a better future.

#### Questions and Tasks

1. Did the political and social changes in Great Britain within the years following World War II have a great influence on literature?
2. What new trends were in drama in the 1950s?
3. When did absurd drama begin?

4. What does the term "absurd" mean?
5. What does this kind of drama explain?
6. What playwrights are known as contributors to the theatre of the absurd?
7. What was the most memorable literary form of this period?
8. Characterize the novel of this period

After World War II, new trends appeared in English literature. Although poetry was the most memorable form to come out of World War I, the novel was the form which told the stories of World War II. This was because mass media, cinema, newspapers, and radio had changed the way of information and entertainment. There were many writers who wrote about war. For instance, Henry Greene's novels – *Nothing* (1950), *The End of Affair* (1951), and *A Burnt-out Case* (1961) deal with war. These novels explore regions of human unhappiness in many different areas of the world.

### **William Faulkner (1897-1962)**

William Faulkner one of the leading American 20th century novelists, was born in New Albany, Mississippi, in an impoverished aristocratic family. Faulkner was in the eleventh grade of the Oxford High School, when World War I broke out. His war experiences played an important part in the formation of his character. He enlisted as a cadet in the Canadian branch of the Royal Flying Corps in 1918. He was trained as a pilot, but the war was over before he finished his studies. After the war Faulkner returned to Oxford and worked as a postmaster at the University of Mississippi. At the same time he took some courses at the University and began writing. At first he wrote poetry and then stories. His first published work, a volume of poems entitled *The Marble Faun* (1924) was not successful. Then he wrote his novel *Soldier's Pay* (1926) which was close to the moods of the lost generation. He showed the tragedy of people who returned to peacetime life crippled both physically and spiritually. The novel was not a great success, but it established Faulkner's reputation as a creative writer.

From 1925 to 1929, he continued working as a carpenter and housepainter writing novels at the same time. In 1927 he published *Mosquitos* and in 1929 *Sartoris*. In the same year Faulkner published *The Sound and the Fury* which brought him fame in literary circles.

After that he devoted himself to full-time writing. His work *Sanctuary* (1931), a story of murder and violence created a sensation and brought its author financial independence.

In the thirties Faulkner wrote his horror novels: *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Light in August* (1932) and *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936). In 1942, Faulkner published a collection of stories entitled *Go Down, Moses, and Other Stories*. It includes one of his best stories *The Bear*. In 1948 he wrote *Intruder in the Dust*, one of his most important social novels on the Negro problem. In the forties and fifties Faulkner published his best work – *The Snopes Trilogy* consisting of *The Hamlet* (1940), *The Town* (1957) and *The Mansion* (1959). Faulkner's last novel was *The Fable* (1954), the theme of which is humanity and war.

Faulkner was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950. He died at the age of sixty-five.

William Faulkner is a very complicated writer. He belongs to the Southern School of American writers. A Southern Novelist touches on the history of the South of America and especially the Civil War.

He deals with the Negro problem in his books, but the Negro problem is not social but psychological. Faulkner sees the Negroes and whites bound together by the irony of history. He condemned racism and violence, but he is convinced that neither the whites nor the Negroes were ready for legislative measures. Faulkner's criticism is of a moral character. Faulkner is a social-psychological novelist.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the main facts of Faulkner's life.
2. What was his first published work?
3. What novel established Faulkner's reputation as a creative writer?
4. What theme did he deal with in his novel *Soldier's Pay*?
5. Name the most notable works by Faulkner.
6. What problems did he touch on in his works?
7. What kind of novelist is Faulkner?

**Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961)** Ernest Hemingway is one of the most widely read writers of the 20th century. He is a classic of American and world literature. He was born in Oak Park, Illinois, into the family of a provincial doctor. His father was fond of hunting and fishing, and he taught his son to shoot and fish, and to love sports and nature.

Ernest's mother was a religious woman, and she was wholly absorbed in church affairs.

There were constant conflicts between his parents, and that was the reason why Ernest did not feel at ease at home. Ernest's favourite place was the family's house in northern Michigan where the family usually spent their summer vacations. The boy used to accompany his father on sporting trips. Ernest received a good education at the Oak Park High School. At school he was recognized as a very good football player and boxer. He was also fond of fishing and hunting. At school Ernest was a gifted, energetic, successful pupil and a good sportsman. He played football, was a member of a swimming team, and learned to box. Then he began to be interested in literature, wrote to weekly news-sheet, and contributed poetry and prose to the school's literary magazines. Ernest's schooldays were not quite unanxious. The atmosphere created by his mother in the family oppressed him so much that he twice ran away from home, working at farms as a laborer, a dishwasher or as a waiter.

In 1917, when the United States entered the First World War, Hemingway volunteered for active service, but he was not taken because of his injured eye. Then he went to Kansas to stay with his uncle. There he began to work as a reporter on the *Kansas City Star*. The journalistic training he received there marked his style for the rest of his career. In the spring of 1918, Hemingway heard that volunteers were needed to drive Red Cross ambulances on the Italian front. He



sailed for Europe. After a short stay in France, he went to Italy. Two months later, he was badly wounded.

He was taken to hospital in Milan, where 227 shell fragments were removed from his body in the course of twelve operations. When he recovered, he served for two months with Italian infantry, and was awarded a silver medal by the Italian Government.

Hemingway's war experience was very important for him. It influenced not only his life, but also all that he wrote. In 1920, Hemingway returned to America and worked as a reporter for the *Toronto Star*. In 1921, he returned to Europe and settled in Paris. To collect the material for his future stories and novels Hemingway travelled all over the world. He visited Germany, Spain, Switzerland and other countries. His first work *Three Stories and Ten Poems* (1923) was not a success. His next book, a collection of stories entitled *In Our Time* (1923) won public recognition.

Hemingway's first novel *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) (the second title is *Fiesta*) is his most well-known book. *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), portraying World War I and its consequences, brought great popularity to the author.

In the late twenties and the thirties Hemingway published two story collections *Men Without Women* (1927) and *Winner Take Nothing* (1933). The most prominent novels written in the first half of the 30's are *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) and *The Green Hills of Africa* (1935). *Death in the Afternoon* describes the bullfights in Spain. *The Green Hills of Africa*, and his well-known stories *The Snow of Kilimanjaro* (1936) and *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber* (1936) were written about Hemingway's hunting trip in Africa. A lover of nature he masterfully describes African landscapes. In 1936 the Civil War in Spain began and Hemingway hurried to Spain to take part in the war as an anti-fascist correspondent and a writer. The next three years of his life were closely connected with the struggle of the Spanish people against the fascists.

He participated in the shooting of a documentary film *The Spanish Earth* which defended the cause of the Spanish people. Hemingway wrote the film script and did the reading of the text himself. He wrote his only play *The Fifth Column* (1938) out of his Spanish war experience and a novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), which he considered his best work.

Deep hatred for fascism made Hemingway an active participant in World War II. He served as a war correspondent in Europe. He volunteered for service with his motor-yacht to support an antisubmarine patrol in Cuban waters. He took part in air raids over Germany. Together with the French partisans he was among the first to free Paris from the German troops.

Hemingway, who had participated in all the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, summed up his war experience in the preface to *Men at War* (1924), a collection of the best war stories of all time.

In his 1948 preface to *A Farewell to Arms* he wrote that the people who had "planned the war and would plan another" should be shot on the first day of the war by sentence of the people. He considered World War I "the most colossal, murderous butchery that has even taken place on the earth". On the contrary, the

Spanish Civil War was for him "a strange new kind of war", a just war of a people who fought "to be allowed to live as human beings".

World War II also made sense to him as it was a war against fascism. After the war Hemingway settled on a farm, Finca Vigia, in Cuba, visiting America and Spain. He heartily supported the Cuban revolutionaries in their struggle. Simple Cuban people were his friends.

In Cuba Hemingway worked on a big novel about the land, the sea and the air. *The Old Men and the Sea* (1952) is the epilogue of a novel about the sea. In 1954 Hemingway was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The prize committee especially mentioned *The Old Man and the Sea*.

During his African trip he suffered two airplane crashes. The last years of his life he was seriously ill. In November 1960, Hemingway returned to America, and on July, 1961, in Ketchum, Idaho, after a long and exhausting illness, he committed suicide. He was buried at Ketchum. His house in Cuba is a museum now. In 1966 a memorial was erected to his memory with the following words on it:

*Best of all he loved the fall  
The leaves yellow on the cottonwoods  
Leaves floating on the front streams  
And above the hills  
The high blue windless skies  
... Now he will be part of them forever.*

Hemingway is a great writer who was extremely honest and /hose principles were:

- 1) never write if you have nothing to say;
- 2) to write only when you can't help it;
- 3) to write things you know well.

Hemingway studied carefully both American and European literature. He admired the works of many writers, among them Flaubert, Maupassant, Stendal, Dante and many others.

*A Farewell to Arms*

*A Farewell to Arms* is one of the best novels about World War I. The book is considered to be Hemingway's masterpiece and it was translated into many languages.

In the novels *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* Hemingway describes the tragedy of the so called "lost generation". The term "lost generation" was introduced by an American writer, Gertrude Stein, who once addressed Hemingway saying: "You are the lost generation".

The "lost generation" were the people who suffered all the horrors of World War I. The post-war generation was disillusioned, because they realized that all the sacrifices and deaths were in vain. The ideals: freedom, brotherhood, justice, patriotism were mere words, in which nobody believed. The "lost generation" saw no purpose in life and gradually it became spiritually dead.

In the first novel the author shows the results of World War I, and in the second – the process which created the "lost generation".

The novel *A Farewell to Arms* is partly autobiographical. Like his hero, Frederick Henry, the writer himself was an American volunteer, a lieutenant in the Italian

ambulance corps, was badly wounded, saw the horrors of the war and came to hate it.

There are two main themes in the novel: war and love. At first Fredric Henry is sure that he is fighting a just war, but gradually he doubts it, and at last he understands that the war is being waged for the benefit of those who profit by it. Frederic's opinion is shared by soldiers, drivers, workers and other common people.

Having decided it is not his war, Frederic makes a "separate peace" and becomes a deserter.

The other theme of the novel is love. Fredric falls in love with Catherine Barkley, a volunteer nurse from Great Britain.

When he is wounded, she takes care of him. Then Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley escape to Switzerland. For a while they are happy, living together, but it does not last long. Catherine dies in childbirth. After her death he remains quite alone. He is very much depressed. The author proves that private happiness is impossible in the restless world of the 20th century. Seeing misery around him, Hemingway's hero cannot be happy. It also emphasizes the fact that you cannot make a separate peace. The motifs of pessimism and despair are characteristic of the novel, as well as of other works written in the 20's, but in *A Farewell to Arms* Hemingway for the first time calls World War I a crime against humanity.

Hemingway's style of narration is laconic. He does not use the long detailed descriptions which were characteristic of his predecessors.

Inner dialogues are typical for him. He seldom speaks of the feelings of his characters, much is left unsaid, but he manages to make the reader feel what his hero feels.

One more peculiarity of Hemingway's style is the use of weather as an accompaniment to the emotional tones of different scenes. The background of every tragic episode in *A Farewell to Arms* is "rain". It was raining when Catherine died.

### *The Old Man and the Sea*

Hemingway himself said of his book: "I tried to make a real old man, a real boy, a real sea and a real fish and real sharks. But if I made them good and true enough they would mean many things". The story is a realistic description of an episode from the life of a fisherman. The author himself was a fisherman, and his close friendship with Cuban fishermen helped him to describe all the details of the process.

Santiago is a poor man, a widower and he lives alone. He is very lonely and then he finds that he has a devoted friend – the boy Manolin, whom he teaches the craft of fishing. Manolin looks after the old man, takes care of the old man's food. The boy loves the old man for his kind heart, his skill, his devotion to sea. The boy's parents have forbidden him to go fishing with the old man, because Santiago's luck has deserted him. Manolin thinks that he will bring him good luck, and he wants to go fishing with Santiago again.

The old man goes out to fish alone and hooks one of the biggest marlines. The battle with the fish is very hard and full of danger. Santiago has conquered the

marline but the battle with the sea has not ended. Sharks start swimming after the skiff and the fish. Santiago kills the strongest, but the shark takes his harpoon and the rope. Santiago does not give up the fight. Almost broken physically, but spiritually undefeated, he reaches shore safely.

At the end of the story Santiago says: "... man is not made for defeat.

... A man can be destroyed but not defeated".

These words is the main idea of Hemingway's story. Santiago's character embodies all the positive features of an ordinary man. When he meets disaster, his courage, moral strength and resolution support him in the most desperate moments of his life.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate the story of Hemingway's childhood and schooldays.
2. What did he do when the USA entered World War I?
3. Why was Hemingway's war experience very important to him?
4. What was his first work?
5. What war books did Hemingway write?
6. Comment on Hemingway's war books.
7. What novel describes the bullfights in Spain?
8. What Hemingway's works are written about his hunting trip to Africa?
9. How did the Civil War in Spain affect Hemingway?
10. What works did Hemingway write out of his Spanish war experience?
11. Prove that Hemingway was an active participant of World War II.
12. How many wars did Hemingway take part in?
13. Where did he live after World War II?
14. What story did he write in 1952?
15. When was Hemingway awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature?
16. In what novels did Hemingway depict the tragedy of the so called "lost generation"?
17. Explain the term "lost generation".
18. Give a brief account of the novel A Farewell to Arms.
19. Comment on Hemingway's style of narration.
20. What can you say about the plot and the main characters of The Old Man and the Sea?
21. What is the main idea of Hemingway's story?

### **John Updike (1932-2009)**

John Updike was born in Shillington, a small town in Pennsylvania. In his childhood he lived in an isolated farm, from where he dreamed to escape. After high school in Shillington, where his father worked as a science teacher, Updike chose Harvard as his university. After graduating from the university he spent the academic year 1954-1955 at Raskin School of Drawing and Fine Arts in Oxford, England. In 1955, he joined The New Yorker staff, writing editorial poetry, stories and criticism.

In 1957, Updike left the magazine and became a full time writer. He moved to Ipswich, Massachusetts, where he lived for seventeen years. His first book, *The Carpentered Hen and Other Tame Creatures*, a collection of poetry, appeared in

1958. Updike's first novel *The Poorhouse Fair* was published in 1959. The first book about his famous hero, Harry Angstrom, a star athlete was *Rabbit Run* (1960). After that the novels *Rabbit Redux* (1971), *Rabbit Is Rich* (1981) and *Rabbit at Rest* (1990) followed. After leaving *Rabbit* in 1990, Updike published in 2000 a novella called *Rabbit Remembered* in a collection of short stories. *The Centaur* (1963) used a mythological framework to explore the relationship of a schoolmaster father and his son.

*The Coup* (1979) was an exotic first-person narration by an exdictator of a fictitious African state. Updike has become one of the most successful American writers. As an essayist, Updike is a gentle satirist. He observes the ordinary life he sees around him.

Updike have received several awards. His novel *Rabbit Is Rich* and *Rabbit at Rest* won Pulitzer Prizes. John Updike was an American novelist, short story writer and poet, internationally known for his works.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Where was John Updike born?
2. Where was he educated?
3. When did he become a full time writer?
4. Give a brief account of Updike's literary career.
5. What can you say about the main character of his novels *Rabbit, Run, Rabbit Redux, Rabbit is Rich* and *Rabbit at Rest*?
6. What novels won Pulitzer Price?

### **African-American Literature. The late 19th and early 20th centuries**

As educational opportunity expanded among African Americans after the war, a self-conscious Black middle class with serious literary ambitions emerged in the later 19th century. Their challenge lay in reconciling the genteel style and sentimental tone of much popular American literature, which middle-class Black writers often imitated, to a real-world sociopolitical agenda that, after the abandonment of Reconstruction in the South, obliged African American writers to argue the case for racial justice to an increasingly indifferent white audience. In the mid-1880s Oberlin College graduate Anna Julia Cooper, a distinguished teacher and the author of *A Voice from the South* (1892), began a speaking and writing career that highlighted the centrality of educated Black women in the broad-gauged reform movements in Black communities of the post-Reconstruction era.

African American poetry developed along two paths after 1880. The traditionalists were led by Albery Allson Whitman, who made his fame among Black readers with two book-length epic poems, *Not a Man, and Yet a Man* (1877) and *The Rape of Florida* (1884), the latter written in Spenserian stanzas.

On August 25, 1893, Whitman shared the platform for African American literature at the Chicago World's Fair with a 21-year-old Ohioan named **Paul Laurence Dunbar**, who had just that year published his first volume of poetry, *Oak and Ivy*. Though not the first Black American to write poetry in so-called Negro dialect, Dunbar was by far the most successful, both critically and financially. Deeply ambivalent about his white readers' preference for what he called "a jingle in a

broken tongue,” Dunbar wrote a great deal of verse in standard diction and form, including a handful of lyrics, such as “*We Wear the Mask*,” “*Sympathy*,” and “*The Haunted Oak*,” that testify candidly and movingly to his frustrated aspirations as a Black poet in a white supremacist era. The first professional African American writer, Dunbar also authored a large body of fiction, including four novels, the most important of which – *The Sport of the Gods* (1901) – offered a bleak view of African American prospects in urban America that anticipated the work of **Richard Wright**.

### **Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois**

As segregation regimes took hold in the South in the 1890s with the tacit approval of the rest of the country, many African Americans found a champion in Booker T. Washington and adopted his self-help autobiography, *Up from Slavery* (1901), as their guidebook to improved fortunes. Washington portrayed his own life in such a way as to suggest that even the most disadvantaged of Black people could attain dignity and prosperity in the South by proving themselves valuable, productive members of society deserving of fair and equal treatment before the law. A classic American success story, *Up from Slavery* solidified Washington’s reputation as the most eminent African American of the new century. Yet Washington’s primacy was soon challenged. In his landmark collection of essays, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, a professor of sociology at Atlanta University, disputed the main principle of Washington’s political program, the idea that voting and civil rights were less important to Black progress than acquiring property and achieving economic self-sufficiency. Unlike Washington, who foresaw the steady obliteration of racial prejudice and discrimination, Du Bois prophesied in the opening lines of *The Souls of Black Folk*: “The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line.” An uncompromising advocate of civil and voting rights, Du Bois asserted in *The Souls of Black Folk* that through “work, culture, and liberty” the dual heritage of African Americans—what he called “double-consciousness”—could be melded into a force for positive social and cultural change in the United States. Du Bois’s striving to dramatize in his narrator a synthesis of racial and national consciousness dedicated to “the ideal of human brotherhood” made *The Souls of Black Folk* one of the most provocative and influential works of African American literature in the 20th century.

During the first two decades of the 20th century, rampant racial injustices, led by weekly reports of grisly lynchings, gave strong impetus to protest writing. From the editor’s desk of the *Colored American Magazine*, Pauline E. Hopkins wrote novels, short stories, editorials, and social commentary in the early 1900s that attempted to revive the fervour of the antislavery era. The founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 in New York City put Du Bois in charge of its organ, *The Crisis*, which, as its editor from 1910 to 1934, he fashioned into the most widely read African American magazine of its time. In 1912 future NAACP leader James Weldon Johnson, poet, diplomat, and journalist, published anonymously *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*,

a psychological novel that employed the theme of passing for white to explore the double consciousness of its protagonist with a dispassionate objectivity unattempted in African American fiction up to that time. By the time the United States entered World War I in 1917, Harlem was well on its way to becoming what Johnson called “the greatest Negro city in the world,” attracting key intellectual leaders and artists such as Du Bois and Johnson, not to mention thousands of migrants from the South and Midwest whose talents and aspirations would fuel in the 1920s the second great renaissance of African American culture.

During the 1930s and '40s Hughes and Sterling A. Brown kept the folk spirit alive in African American poetry. An admirer of Hughes, Margaret Walker dedicated *For My People* (1942), the title poem of which remains one of the most popular texts for recitation and performance in African American literature, to the same Black American rank and file whom Hughes and Brown celebrated. By the early 1940s three figures, Melvin B. Tolson, Robert Hayden, and Chicagoan Gwendolyn Brooks, were showing how the vernacular tradition could be adapted to modernist experimentation. The variety of expressiveness and formal innovation in African American poetry of the 1940s is reflected in Tolson's densely allusive *Rendezvous with America* (1942), Hayden's meditative history poems such as “Middle Passage” (1945) and “Frederick Douglass” (1947), and Brooks's tribute to the vitality and rigours of Black urban life in *A Street in Bronzeville* (1945) and her Pulitzer Prize-winning volume, *Annie Allen* (1949). The 1940s was also a decade of creative experimentation in autobiography, led by Du Bois's *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), a self-styled “essay toward an autobiography of a race concept”; Hurston's *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942), an early venture in “autoethnography,” the writing of self via the characterization of a culture (in this case, the rural Southern Black culture of Hurston's roots); J. Saunders Redding's *No Day of Triumph* (1942), the story of an alienated Northern professional's quest for redemptive immersion in Southern Black working-class communities; and Wright's *Black Boy*.

### **Ralph Ellison**

In 1949 the young New York essayist James Baldwin, a protégé of Wright, published “Everybody's Protest Novel,” a criticism of protest fiction from Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to *Native Son*. Baldwin's charge that the protest novel was prone to categorize humanity rather than reflect its full “beauty, dread, and power” heralded a shift in the 1950s away from Wright's brand of realism. The most enduring African American novel of the 1950s, *Invisible Man* (1952), by another Wright protégé, Ralph Ellison, answered Baldwin's call for “a new act of creation,” a new kind of Black hero, and a new way of picturing that hero's participation in post-Depression, post-World War II American reality. The protagonist of Ellison's novel is an unnamed Black everyman who makes the traditional journey in African American literature from the South to the North, where he goes in search of conventional success and ends up, through a series of ironic revelations, discovering himself. The *Invisible Man* has been called a

modern Odysseus and a 20th-century Candide, in tribute to Ellison's ability to invest in his central character a universality that bespeaks its author's wide reading in Western myth and European, British, and American literature. But foremost the *Invisible Man* is a Black American engaged, willy-nilly, in an often painful process of education. Part Douglass, part Washington, and part Du Bois, he struggles with the dominant "isms," from Freudianism to Marxism, of the first half of the 20th century to decide what Black intellectual leadership can and should be in the second half of the century. Encountering a volatile American reality that defies every political or philosophical attempt to define and control it, the *Invisible Man* comes to realize that his African American folk and cultural heritage, embodied in a series of Black antagonists and enigmatic mentors, represents some of the most valuable wisdom he needs in order to discover his role and responsibilities in modern America. *Invisible Man* won the National Book Award in 1953, reflecting the enormously positive critical reception the novel enjoyed. Ellison never published another novel during his lifetime, but his essays, reviews, and interviews, published as *Shadow and Act* (1964) and *Going to the Territory* (1986), acknowledged his unwavering commitment to a pluralistic ideal of art that knows no allegiance to any school or program.

### **James Baldwin**

In 1953 Baldwin's first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, testified anew to the sophisticated formal experimentation and piercing examination of African American consciousness of which the writers coming of age in the 1950s were capable. The story of religious conversion experienced by 14-year-old John Grimes of Harlem, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* places in creative tension its hero's spiritual awakening and his determination to gain his independence from his oppressive stepfather. The result is a novel of unprecedented honesty in its revelation of generational and gender conflicts between its central characters, who constitute an African American family haunted by self-hatred, guilt, the psychological scars of racism, unsanctioned sexual desire, and a hunger for deliverance. Two years after *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, Baldwin collected his essays in *Notes of a Native Son*, a mix of autobiography and political commentary on race in America that identified Baldwin as the new conscience of the nation on racial matters. Subsequent volumes of essays, *Nobody Knows My Name* (1961) and *The Fire Next Time* (1963), underlined Baldwin's fame as the most incisive and passionate essayist ever produced by Black America. His novels of the 1950s and '60s—particularly *Giovanni's Room* (1956), the first African American novel to treat homosexuality openly, and *Another Country* (1962), a best-seller that examined bisexuality, interracial sex, and the any prejudices that enforced hierarchies of difference in American society—confirmed Baldwin's leadership among those Black American writers at mid century who wanted to move fiction toward a renewed search for personal meaning and redemption while challenging the white American consensus that viewed triumph in World War II as a vindication of the American way on the racial home front.



## Supplement I

### Margaret Mitchell (1900-1949)

Margaret Mitchell was born in Atlanta, Georgia. She was the daughter of an attorney who was president of the Atlanta Historical Society. All the family were interested in American history and she grew up in an atmosphere of stories about the Civil War.

Margaret Mitchell lived in one of the most important cities in the American South and her family had shaped Atlanta's history for three generations before her birth. She was educated at Washington Seminary in Atlanta and Smith College, Northampton. She worked for a time on the Atlanta Journal. She wrote hundred of essays, articles and reviews for the journal in the four years of her employment there between 1922—1926. She read all the standard journals, magazines, and reviews of her time.

The vivacity and intensity of her personality shines through everything she did, said, or wrote.

In 1925 Margaret Mitchell married John Marsh, and it was then she began to put on paper all the stories she had heard about the Civil War.

The result was *Gone with the Wind*, first published in 1936. She worked on the book for ten years. It is a novel about the American Civil War and the Reconstruction as seen from a Southern point of view. The novel is a variant on the tradition of Southern romance fiction. Its action turns on the attempts of the heroine, Scarlett O'Hara, to restore Tara, the family plantation, and on her love relationships. Margaret Mitchell became world-famous as the author of *Gone with the Wind*, the America's classic best-seller. More than 8 million copies were sold in 40 countries.

The novel was translated into eighteen languages. It won the Pulitzer Prize<sup>1</sup> for fiction in 1937. It was later made into a highly successful film starring Vivien Leigh, Clark Gable and Leslie Howard.

Margaret Mitchell produced the most famous novel in the English speaking world. This book was her only published work. She died in 1949.

### Questions and Tasks

1. Where was Margaret Mitchell born?
2. What was her family interested in?
3. Where was she educated?
4. Where did she work for a time?
5. What did she write for the journal?
6. When did she begin to write the novel *Gone with the Wind*?
7. How long did she work on the book?
8. Comment on the plot of the novel.
9. Why do we say that the book was America's classic best-seller?
10. When did she get the Pulitzer Price for fiction?
11. What can you say about the film based on the novel?

### Jerome Salinger (1919 -2010)

Jerome David Salinger was born in 1919 in New York into a prosperous family. His father was an importer of ham and cheeses. The boy had a sister eight years older than he. Salinger did not study well at school, that's why his parents enrolled him in the Valley Forge Academy in Pennsylvania. It was a military academy. He began writing his first short stories there. When Salinger graduated from the Valley Forge Academy he told his parents that he wanted to become a writer. But his father did not think that it was a suitable career for his son and sent him to Poland to learn the ham business. For some time he slaughtered pigs. Then he returned to America. In 1940 he published his first story the Young Men. During World War II Salinger spent four years in the army. In 1943, when he was in France, the American magazine Saturday Evening Post published his story *The Varioni Brothers*. In 1944 Salinger met Ernest Hemingway, who was a war-correspondent in France then. Hemingway had read Salinger's stories and said that the young writer was talented. In 1946 Salinger wrote some stories which brought him fame as a writer. They were published in the New Yorker, a very respectable literary magazine.

### **The Catcher in the Rye**

In 1951 Salinger wrote his novel *The Catcher in the Rye*. It is one of the best novels devoted to youth problems in the postwar period. The book became popular with the readers. The story is told by a teenager Holden Caulfield. He is a sixteen-year-old pupil of the Pencey Preparatory school, which is a boarding school. He has been expelled from several schools, and he is about to be expelled from this school, too, as he has failed in a number of subjects. He is not sorry. He hates school and teachers. Finally, he runs away from school and goes to New York, where his parents live. Afraid to approach them, he registers at a hotel. During the few days he stays away from home, he goes to a restaurant, meets a girl friend, his sister Phoebe and his former teacher Mr Antolini. Holden loves Phoebe, and he tells her of his troubles. She is much younger than he but she always listens to him and understands him.

Touched by Phoebe's wish to run away from home with him, he decides to go home with her instead. Holden observes the hypocrisy and false values in the adult world.

He is against judging people by their wealth. At school he hates insincerity. He does not like cheap, sensational films and plays shown at the Broadway theatres. He is against the American way of life. He is devoted to the few genuine people in his life.

His sister Phoebe is one of them. His deepest concern is to save other children from the pain of adapting themselves to the false adult world. His dream is to become a catcher in a rye field keeping watch on the edge of a steep cliff and saving little children from falling into the abyss.

Really, Holden's dream is unreal as children cannot avoid growing up. Holden's former teacher tries to persuade him that belonging to the adult world means maturity.

But the hero refuses to compromise his false environment and this leads him to a nervous breakdown.

Holden's way of talking is ungrammatical and slangy. But it produces a great impression.

Jerome David Salinger has become a classic because of his understanding of American youth. In his works he portrays young boys and girls who can't find their way after the war. They are honest, kind and good young people who look odd in the surroundings of modern society.

### **Questions and Tasks**

1. Give a brief account of Jerome David Salinger's life.
2. Where was Salinger during World War II?
3. When did Salinger meet Ernest Hemingway?
4. What was Hemingway's opinion of his stories?
5. What novel brought Salinger fame as a writer?
6. What literary form did Salinger choose for his novel *The Catcher in the Rye*?
7. Comment on the contents of the novel.
8. Characterise the main character of the novel.
9. What does the rye field represent in Holden's imagination?
10. Who is the catcher?

**Jack Kerouac** (1922-1969) Jack Kerouac was born in Lowell, Massachusetts on March 12, 1922. His family were of French Canadian and North American Indian descent. His family were Catholic and he was educated at a Jesuit school, graduating from High School in 1939. At school he distinguished himself as a sportsman. He left University after less than one year. Kerouac loved literature, composing poems and writing, short novels from a very early age. He was particularly influenced by the work of Jack London, and determined, like London, to become a wandering poet and traveller.

During the Second World War, Kerouac joined the Merchant Navy and began to write his first novel, *The Sea Is My Brother*, which was never published. In 1944, he returned to New York where he met and started lasting friendship with the poet Allen Ginsberg and the novelist William Burroughs. Later they became termed as the *Beat Generation*. Their work and their lifestyles, characterized by drugs, alcohol and jazz music, were considered very shocking in the 1950s to the majority of middle-class Americans.

In 1944, after the accidented stabbing of a friend of Kerouac's by another friend, Kerouac was arrested and charged by the Police as a witness to murder. He left prison on bail.

In 1946 he went travelling across America, by car, train or hitchhiking. These wild adventures on the road, filled with stories of girls, music, problems with the police formed the material for his greatest novel *On the Road*.

Kerouac constantly kept a journal during his journeys, and *On the Road*, which he wrote in seven days in 1951, was the result of his semi-autobiographical, semi-fictional experience travelling around.

This novel was followed by *The Dharma Bums* (1958), *Doctor Sax* (1959), *Big Sur* (1962), and *Destonation Angels* (1965), which are his most notable novels and the most typical of the Beat generation. He also published poetry and other

biographical fragments. After the publication of *On the Road*, Kerouac became interested in Oriental spiritualism and Buddhism.

He lived a rather solitary life increasingly dependent on alcohol. He died at the tragically young age of 47.

His novel *On the Road* describes the adventures of a group of young people who refuse to be tied down to steady jobs or any social obligations and wander all over Canada and Mexico.

Kerouac's characters live as simply as possible and register spontaneous impressions of people, events and things. They do not try to understand the world around them. Travel is both a liberation from society and a narcotic to them.

The rebellion of the beat writers was personal. It was a protest against the mean, limited, provincial, narrow and hypocritical values of a society in crisis.

The novel *On the Road* has had many imitators, and continues to be a popular novel in Europe as well as in America.

### **Questions and tasks**

1. When was Jack Kerouac born?
2. Where was he educated?
3. When did he begin to compose poems and write short novels?
4. What writer was he particularly influenced by?
5. What did he do during the Second World War?
6. Characterize the writers of the Beat Generation.
7. What happened to Kerouac in 1944?
8. How did his greatest novel *On the Road* originate?
9. Speak on the plot of the novel *On the Road*.
10. Name his other notable works.
11. When did Kerouac die?

### **Ken Kesey (1935-2001)**

Ken Kesey was born on September 17, 1935 in La Junta, Colorado. In 1946 his family moved to Springfield, Oregon, where he spent several years on his family's farm. He was raised in a religion household. During high school and later in college, Kesey was a champion wrestler, setting longstanding state records in Oregon. After high school Kesey attended the University of Oregon with a degree in Speech and Communications. Then he enrolled in the Creative Writing program at Stanford. While at Stanford, he participated in experience involving chemicals at the psychology department to earn extra money. It was the experience that fundamentally altered Kesey, personally and professionally. While working as an orderly at the psychiatric ward of the hospital, Kesey began to hallucinate. This formed the basis of his writing project *The Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Kesey published it in 1962. The novel was an immediate critical and popular success. Later it was adapted into a successful stage play and then it was made a screen adaptation in 1979. His second novel *Sometimes a Great Notion* was published in 1964.

Kesey became notorious for his use of drugs, and some time later he was arrested on a marijuana charge.

Upon his release from prison, Kesey moved to a farm in Pleasant Hill, Oregon. His third novel *Sailor Song* - was published in 1992, and besides he wrote several shorter works.

**Questions and Tasks**

1. Relate briefly the story of Kesey's childhood and youth.
2. What fundamentally altered him personally and professionally?
3. What was his first novel?
4. What happened to him later on?
5. Name some other Kesey's works.

## LECTURE 12.

**The Contemporary Period. Modern English literature representatives - John Fowles, Julian Barnes, Tom Stoppard, Peter Ackroyd, Malcolm Bradbury, Graham Swift.**

**Literature vs other types of art in the context of culture.**

**Modern trends in literature.**

**Contemporary literature** refers to works of prose, poetry, and drama published since 1945. Precisely, it refers to postmodernism and what has come afterward. Contemporary literature reflects social and political viewpoints. **Postmodernism** is a deepening and extension of the previous literary movement, **Modernism**, represented by such writers as Virginia Woolf and Ernest Hemingway. Both modernists and postmodernists criticized romantic era notions of finding divinity in nature, seeking ideal virtues within the individual, and characterizing reality in all-embracing narratives that lead to belief in just one interpretation of the world.

Post-modernism lasted through the 1990s when a new sensibility in literature began to emerge, gradually replacing post-modernism with something else that has been called various names, such as post-postmodernism or posthumanism. Recently, many critics have settled on **metamodernism** to label this current period of contemporary literature. Metamodernism is a turning away from the excesses of post-modernist thought, especially its reliance on self-referential irony, absurdity, and cynicism.

During and after WWII, Britain saw unprecedented changes in society. The 1942 Beveridge Report looked into the welfare of British citizens. Its findings revealed a dire situation and led to a welfare package which aimed to provide for the people “from the cradle to the grave.” The 1944 Education Act gave the underprivileged access to higher education. The 1945 General election was won by the Labour Party and C. Atlee became the Prime Minister. Gas, coal and the railways were nationalized, and the NHS (National Health Service) was created in 1948. Despite the continuing austerity and rationing, the novelties of the welfare state gave working-class people the impression that Britain was soon to become a classless society. Instead, the Angry Young Men movement emerged. The wave of post war optimism even affected political leaders. H. Macmillan, a Conservative PM between 1957 – 1963, said Britain: “never had it so good.”

**John Fowles**(1926 - 2005)

**John Fowles**, English novelist, whose allusive and descriptive works combine psychological probings – chiefly of sex and love – with an interest in social and philosophical issues.

Fowles graduated from the University of Oxford in 1950 and taught in Greece, France, and Britain. His first novel, *The Collector* (1963; filmed 1965), about a shy man who kidnaps a girl in a hapless search for love, was an immediate success. This was followed by *The Aristos: A Self-Portrait in Ideas* (1964), a collection of essays reflecting Fowles’s views on such subjects as evolution, art, and politics. He

returned to fiction with *The Magus* (1965, rev. ed. 1977; filmed 1968). Set on a Greek island, the book centres on an English schoolteacher who struggles to discern between fantasy and reality after befriending a mysterious local man. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969; filmed 1981), arguably Fowles's best-known work, is a love story set in 19th-century England that richly documents the social mores of that time. An example of Fowles's original style, the book combined elements of the Victorian novel with postmodern works and featured alternate endings. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is a tale of seduction in two senses: of 'fallen woman' Sarah Woodruff by the highly respectable gentleman geologist Charles Smithson; and of the reader by the author. Fowles offers pleasure and sentiment in the mode of the nineteenth century realist novel, complete with wonderfully realised characters, epigraphs to its chapters, and even sets it in his own town of Lyme Regis in Dorset. But this is written by a modern consciousness, aware of Darwin, Marx and Freud, (not to mention Barthes and Robbe-Grillet) and the wretched mid-nineteenth century conditions of the servant and labouring classes. Set alongside Fowles' socio-historical commentary, the players are made ever more ambiguous author's playthings. Sarah turns out to be an arch manipulator herself, whose story is an almost complete fabrication. Sarah's priggish employer Mrs Poulteney is imagined falling into hell, only to be reprieved by the author. And yet - the scene in which Smithson's naïve fiancée Ernestina is rejected by him is truly affecting. Dickens himself could hardly have bettered the scheming servants Sam and Mary, 'low' characters speaking in local dialect, whose domestic happiness runs throughout as a counterpoint to Charles and Sarah's doomed yearnings. Fowles' cutting through fiction's illusion is, however, shown most starkly when Sarah has fled to a small room in Exeter. She unwraps a toby jug that is sadly cracked, 'as I can testify', the author comments, 'having bought it myself a year or two ago for a good deal more than the three pennies Sarah was charged'.

Fowles's later fictional works include *The Ebony Tower* (1974), a volume of collected novellas, *Daniel Martin* (1977), and *Mantissa* (1982). His last novel, *A Maggot* (1985), centred on a group of travelers in the 1700s and the mysterious events that occur during their journey. Fowles also wrote verse, adaptations of plays, and the text for several photographic studies. *Wormholes*, a collection of essays and writings, was published in 1998.

**Julian Barnes**, (born January 19, 1946, Leicester, England), British critic and author of inventive and intellectual novels about obsessed characters curious about the past.

Barnes attended Magdalen College, Oxford (B.A., 1968), and began contributing reviews to the *Times Literary Supplement* in the 1970s while publishing thrillers under his Kavanagh pseudonym. These books – which include *Duffy* (1980), *Fiddle City* (1981), *Putting the Boot In* (1985), and *Going to the Dogs* (1987) – feature a man named Duffy, a bisexual ex-cop turned private detective.

The first novel published under Barnes's own name was the coming-of-age story *Metroland* (1980). Jealous obsession moves the protagonist of *Before She Met Me* (1982) to scrutinize his new wife's past. *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984) is a humorous mixture of biography, fiction, and literary criticism as a scholar becomes obsessed with Flaubert and with the stuffed parrot that Flaubert used as inspiration in writing the short story "Un Coeur simple." Barnes's later novels included *A History of the World in 101/2 Chapters* (1989), *Talking It Over* (1991), *The Porcupine* (1992), and *Cross Channel* (1996). In the satirical *England, England* (1998), Barnes skewers modern England in his portrayal of a theme park on the Isle of Wight, complete with the royal family, the Tower of London, Robin Hood, and pubs.

Critics thought Barnes showed a new depth of emotion in *The Lemon Table* (2004), a collection of short stories in which most of the characters are consumed by thoughts of death. He explored why some people are remembered after their death and others are not in the historical novel *Arthur & George* (2005), in which one of the title characters is based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In 2011 Barnes published *Pulse*, a collection of short stories, as well as *The Sense of an Ending*, a Booker Prize-winning novel that uses an unreliable narrator to explore the subjects of memory and aging. In *The Only Story* (2018), Barnes explored memory and first love as a man looks back on his relationship with an older woman. In 2022 he published *Elizabeth Finch*, which centres on a man whose intellectual crush on one of his teachers has a lasting impact on his life. Barnes's nonfiction work included *Something to Declare* (2002), a collection of essays about France and French culture; *The Pedant in the Kitchen* (2003), which explores his love of food; *Through the Window* (2012), an exploration of his literary influences; and *Keeping an Eye Open: Essays on Art* (2015). His memoir *Nothing to Be Frightened Of* (2008) is an honest, oftentimes jarringly critical look at his relationship with his parents and older brother. *Levels of Life* (2013)—which pays tribute to his wife, who died in 2008—is a series of linked essays. Barnes used the story of the pioneering surgeon Samuel Pozzi to explore Belle Époque Paris in *The Man in the Red Coat* (2019).

**Tom Stoppard**, (born July 3, 1937, Zlín, Czechoslovakia [now in Czech Republic]), Czech-born British playwright and screenwriter whose work is marked by verbal brilliance, ingenious action, and structural dexterity.

Stoppard's father was working in Singapore in the late 1930s. After the Japanese invasion, his father stayed on and was killed, but Stoppard's mother and her two sons escaped to India, where in 1946 she married a British officer, Kenneth Stoppard. Soon afterward the family went to live in England. Tom Stoppard—he had assumed his stepfather's surname—quit school and started his career as a journalist in Bristol in 1954. He began to write plays in 1960 after moving to London. His first play, *A Walk on the Water* (1960), was televised in 1963; the stage version, with some additions and the new title *Enter a Free Man*, reached London in 1968. Stoppard's play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1964–65) was performed at the Edinburgh Festival in 1966. That same year his



only novel, *Lord Malquist & Mr. Moon*, was published. His play was the greater success: it entered the repertory of Britain's National Theatre in 1967 and rapidly became internationally renowned. The irony and brilliance of this work derive from Stoppard's placing two minor characters of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* into the centre of the dramatic action. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* transferred to Broadway in 1967 and later received a Tony Award for best play.

A number of successes followed. Among the most-notable stage plays were *The Real Inspector Hound* (1968), *Jumpers* (1972), *Travesties* (1974; Tony Award for best play), *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* (1978), *Night and Day* (1978), *Undiscovered Country* (1980, adapted from a play by Arthur Schnitzler), and *On the Razzle* (1981, adapted from a play by Johann Nestroy). The Tony-winning *The Real Thing* (1982), Stoppard's first romantic comedy, deals with art and reality and features a playwright as a protagonist. *Arcadia*, which juxtaposes 19th-century Romanticism and 20th-century chaos theory and is set in a Derbyshire country house, premiered in 1993, and *The Invention of Love*, about A.E. Housman, was first staged in 1997.

The trilogy *The Coast of Utopia* (*Voyage*, *Shipwreck*, and *Salvage*), first performed in 2002, explores the lives and debates of a circle of 19th-century Russian émigré intellectuals; it received a Tony Award for best play. *Heroes* (2005), translated from a play by Gérald Sibleyras, is set in a retirement home for French soldiers, and it received a Laurence Olivier Award for best new comedy. *Rock 'n' Roll* (2006) jumps between England and Czechoslovakia during the period 1968–90. In *The Hard Problem* (2015), Stoppard explored consciousness. *Leopoldstadt* (2020) follows a Jewish family in Vienna from the early 20th century through the Holocaust; the critically acclaimed work won the Olivier Award for best new play.

Stoppard wrote a number of radio plays, including *In the Native State* (1991), which was reworked as the stage play *Indian Ink* (1995). He also wrote a number of notable television plays, such as *Professional Foul* (1977). Among his early screenplays are those for *The Romantic Englishwoman* (1975), *Despair* (1978), and *Brazil* (1985), as well as for a film version (1990) of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* that he also directed. In 1999 the screenplay for *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), cowritten by Stoppard and Marc Norman, won an Academy Award. Stoppard also adapted the French screenplay for the English-language film *Vatel* (2000), about a 17th-century chef, and wrote the screenplay for *Enigma* (2001), which chronicles the English effort to break the German Enigma code. He later penned scripts for a lavish miniseries (2012) based on novelist Ford Madox Ford's tetralogy *Parade's End*. Stoppard also cowrote the historical drama *Tulip Fever* (2017), which is set in 17th-century Amsterdam. Stoppard's numerous other honours included the Japan Art Association's Praemium Imperiale prize for theatre/film (2009). He was knighted in 1997.

**Peter Ackroyd** is an English novelist and biographer with a particular interest in the history and culture of London.

*Peter Ackroyd's* mother worked in the personnel department of an engineering

firm, his father having left the family home when Ackroyd was a baby. He was reading newspapers by the age of 5 and, at 9, wrote a play about Guy Fawkes. Reputedly, he first realized he was gay at the age of 7.

Ackroyd was educated at St. Benedict's, Ealing and at Clare College, Cambridge, from which he graduated with a double first in English. In 1972, he was a Mellon Fellow at Yale University in the United States. The result of this fellowship was Ackroyd's *Notes for a New Culture*, written when he was only 22 and eventually published in 1976. The title, a playful echo of T. S. Eliot's *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1948), was an early indication of Ackroyd's penchant for creatively exploring and reexamining the works of other London-based writers. Ackroyd's literary career began with poetry, including such works as *London Lickpenny* (1973) and *The Diversions of Purley* (1987). He later moved into fiction and has become an acclaimed author, winning the 1998 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for the biography Thomas More and being shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1987.

Ackroyd worked at The Spectator magazine between 1973 and 1977 and became joint managing editor in 1978. In 1982 he published *The Great Fire of London*, his first novel. This novel deals with one of Ackroyd's great heroes, Charles Dickens, and is a reworking of *Little Dorrit*. The novel set the stage for the long sequence of novels Ackroyd has produced since, all of which deal in some way with the complex interaction of time and space, and what Ackroyd calls "the spirit of place". It is also the first in a sequence of novels of London, through which he traces the changing, but curiously consistent nature of the city. Often this theme is explored through the city's artists, and especially its writers.

Ackroyd has always shown a great interest in the city of London, and one of his best known works, *London: The Biography*, is an extensive and thorough discussion of London through the ages.

His fascination with London literary and artistic figures is also displayed in the sequence of biographies he has produced of Ezra Pound (1980), T. S. Eliot (1984), Charles Dickens (1990), William Blake (1995), Thomas More (1998), Chaucer (2004), William Shakespeare (2005), and J. M. W. Turner. The city itself stands astride all these works, as it does in the fiction.

From 2003 to 2005, Ackroyd wrote a six-book non-fiction series (*Voyages Through Time*), intended for readers as young as eight. This was his first work for children. The critically acclaimed series is an extensive narrative of key periods in world history.

Early in his career, Ackroyd was nominated a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1984 and, as well as producing fiction, biography and other literary works, is also a regular radio and television broadcaster and book critic.

In the New Year's honours list of 2003, Ackroyd was awarded the CBE.

**Ray Bradbury** (1920-2012) was born in Waukegan, Illinois, on the 22nd August 1920. When he was a child, he liked reading adventure and fantasy fiction and

decided to become a writer at the age of eleven. When he was 12, he received a toy typewriter that he used to type his first stories.

Ray Bradbury's professional career as a writer started several years after his family moved to Los Angeles in 1934. He published his first professional science fiction short story "Pendulum" (co-authored with Henry Hasse) in 1941. As it is mentioned in the "Dictionary of Literary Influences: The twentieth Century, 1914-2000. While selling newspapers for income, 1940-43, Bradbury broke into the professional market in 1941 with a story co-written with Henry Hasse. As Bradbury's reputation grew, Arkham House published a book-length collection of his short stories, *Dark Carnival* (1947). The fantasy and horror stories written in his distinctive poetic style were readily accepted by genre magazines.... His first novel, *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), is revered as both an attack on censorship and the growing power of television in the mass culture. Between the 1960s and 1970s Bradbury focused on dramatic writing and poetry. He returned to fiction and short stories in the 1980s and published a fourth novel, *From the Dust Returned* (2001), based on his fantasy short stories.

During his lifetime R. Bradbury was given various awards, namely:

- the O. Henry Memorial Award,
- the Benjamin Franklin Award,
- the Aviation-Space Writer's Association Award,
- the World Fantasy Award for lifetime achievement,
- the Grand Master Award from the Science Fiction Writers of America etc.

Ray Bradbury who was a famous American novelist, short story writer, essayist, playwright, screenwriter and poet, became one of the most celebrated 20<sup>th</sup> century American writers during his lifetime. Ray Bradbury died in Los Angeles on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June, 2012, at the age of 91.

Novelist **Graham Swift** was born in London in 1949.

He was educated at Dulwich College, Queens' College, Cambridge, and York University. He was nominated as one of the 20 'Best of Young British Novelists' in the Book Marketing Council's promotion in 1983. He is the author of several novels. The first, *The Sweet Shop Owner* (1980), is narrated by disillusioned shopkeeper Willy Chapman, and unfolds over the course of a single day in June. The narrator of his second novel, *Shuttlecock* (1981), winner of the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize, becomes obsessed with his father's experiences during the Second World War.

*Waterland*, his acclaimed third novel, was published in 1983. Narrated by history teacher Tom Crick, it describes his youth spent in the Norfolk fens during the Second World War. These personal memories are woven into a greater history of the area, slowly revealing the seeds of a family legacy that threatens his marriage. The book won the *Guardian* Fiction Prize and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. It was followed by *Out of this World* (1988), the story of a photojournalist and his estranged daughter, and *Ever After* (1992), in which a university professor makes a traumatic discovery about his career.

Swift's sixth novel, *Last Orders* (1996), which won the Booker Prize for Fiction and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize (for fiction), recounts a journey begun in a pub in London's East End by four friends intent on fulfilling a promise to scatter the ashes of their dead drinking-partner in the sea. A film adaptation of the novel starring Michael Caine and Bob Hoskins was first screened in 2001. His novel, *The Light of Day* (2003), is the story of a murder, a love affair and a disgraced former policeman turned private detective. *Tomorrow* (2007), explores complex themes of parenthood, coupledness and identity via the personal thoughts and memories of the protagonist, Paula, as she lies awake one night in bed. His latest novel is *Wish You Were Here* (2011).

His first non-fiction book is *Making an Elephant: Writing from Within* (2009). Graham Swift is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He lives in London.

Contemporary literature of the English-speaking countries is represented by various poets, who deserve recognition, as their literary work is inspirational, powerful and points out at the heart of life. Although the question of influence is a tricky one in the literary realm, the name of **Claudia Emerson**, is among the names of the most important contemporary poets. She was honored the Pulitzer Prize for her collection "Late Wife" in 2006 and later served as Virginia's poet laureate from 2008 to 2010. She also won the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Intro Award (1991), Academy of American Poets Prize (1991), Erskine J. Poetry Prize (2004) and a 2011, Guggenheim fellowship, which she used to travel to Italy to pursue a poetry project about mummies. Although Claudia Emerson was a classic example of the late-blooming poet, she was very prolific. She published her first volume of poems, "*Pharaoh, Pharaoh*" (1997), at the age of 40. Her other collections included:

- "*Pinion: An Elegy*" (2002),
- "*The Late Wife*" (2006),
- "*Figure Studies*" (2008),
- "*Secure the Shadow*" (2012),
- "*The Opposite House*" (2015).

In addition to these collections, her poems were also included in such anthologies as:

- "*Yellow Shoe Poets*",
- "*The Made Thing*",
- "*Strongly Spent: 50 Years of Shenandoah Poetry*",
- "*Common wealth: Contemporary Poets of Virginia*".

Claudia Emerson is one of the finest American poets of her generation whose poems echo with remarkable insight into the true nature of life. Her poetry includes such themes as the nature of faith, relationships between women and men, person's identity, death, love, memory, etc.

**Thomas Ruggles Pynchon**, (1937) Jr. is a prominent American novelist and a short story writer whose fiction and nonfiction is distinguished by various genres and themes. Thomas Ruggles Pynchon, Jr. won the 1974 U.S. National Book Award for Fiction.

His famous novels include:

- “V.” (1963);
- “The Crying of Lot 49” (1966);
- “Gravity’s Rainbow” (1973);
- “Mason & Dixon” (1997);
- “Bleeding Edge” (2013).

Another contemporary American novelist, short-story writer, essayist and poet whose works contain various fresh ideas and culture resonance is Sandra Cisneros (b. 1954). She is one of the first American writers of Mexican origin whose works are dedicated not only to different conflicts among city residents but also to social problems, which Mexican-American women face. Sandra Cisneros is the author of several poetry collections, novels and essays. Most literary critics admit that her writing is full of different emotions and feelings among which alienation and degradation take an important place.

“The House on Mango Street” published in 1984 is one of the most prominent novellas written by Sandra Cisneros.

Many traditional literatures are now accessible through online platforms and form a bases of modern day literature. New trends are replacing the linear, solitary and closed reading with the internet, causing a transformation in the way literature is written, perceived and read. There is a wide spread of information available some of which is balanced literature while others are biased and linked to virtual or mass media ties. In the past there was a lot of emphasis on authors and histories however, writers who are renowned as literary scholars are now integrating and investigating objects that are non-textual cultural, in the way that they would have previously examined literature. This is renowned textuality (Moretti, 2000) which is characterized through the way in which objects are read, identified and perceived. It can be categorized through fictionality, rhetoricity and historicity. When a cultural object is formed textually for example it is built, moulded, woven or shaped it can be perceived as an artefact. Likewise, literary fiction is not governed by natural laws however, it may be perceived as following rules of artifice. This is largely because it presents non-testable claims to truth. Rhetoricity assumes that language has a probable purpose or effect, while historicity is governed by artefacts that are from a time period and conditioned over time. Their past is vital to their meaning, enabling people to show interest through literature and connect. Globalization and technological advancements have created a change in the methods through which literature is conveyed and perceived. The way literature is studied by modern day scholars has transformed predominantly onto digital platforms which can be accessed anywhere from a digital device. It is quick, convenient, inexpensive and generally accessible. It allows easy access to vital information and exchanging ideas allowing literature to be analysed. But, within the fast pace of life new trends in literature have been formed that consist of short, challenging and creative stories enabling writers to explore their creative abilities. The ‘6-word novel’ is a new field for writers to experiment. “After she died, he came alive” by Rebecca James and “One gun, two shots, three dead” by Marcy are

examples of a sixword novel. This is a new fashion of writing which is challenging and creative. It may be easy to write a long, narrative and detailed novel but writing a novel as short as six words requires innovation. Hundred years back no one would have thought of writing a novel in six words. Mr. Dickens is definitely turning in his grave. Sixword novels leave the reader curious and thoughtful. The meaning is also left to reader's interpretation. It requires a lot of creativity and imagination... We are moving ever closer to the concept of the "Death of the Author", that Roland Barthes had propounded. The text now has more and more "gaps" that makes it more and more "readerly" than "writerly". Literature is also an art of writing; the above-mentioned forms are not only new trends and ways of enhancing but also re-altering art. It has diverse, exigent and very spontaneous forms and unlike the conventional. It has gained immense popularity. It gives you the pleasure of knowledge and quenches your curiosity in small and controlled doses. It definitely creates new and different genres of literature. These forms have come in to acceptance because of their popular demand. These new and recent trends are unimaginable concepts from the point of view of anyone living a few decades ago. Blogging, twittering, micro blogging, 6-word novels, all of them are changing the trends of literature with regards to reading and writing. It's giving opportunity to upcoming talent and is helping decentralize the processes of who gets to publish what in the world of literature. Literature is also an art of writing; the above-mentioned forms are not only new trends and ways of enhancing but also re-altering art. It has diverse, exigent and very spontaneous forms and unlike the conventional. It gives you the pleasure of knowledge and quenches your curiosity in small and controlled doses. These forms have come in to acceptance because of their popular demand. These new and recent trends are unimaginable concepts from the point of view of anyone living a few decades ago. Blogging, twittering, micro blogging, 6-word novels, all of them are changing the trends of literature with regards to reading and writing. It's giving opportunity to upcoming talent and is helping decentralize the processes of who gets to publish what in the world of literature. Of course, these new trends are fascinating and interesting but, according to some literary purists, it is degrading the classics and the conventions of literature. Literary purists are put off by internet slang, which according to them gives rise to the abuse of language and superficiality. Grammar is lost and has almost disappeared in today's scenario. SMS languages have ruined the role of vocabulary and spelling. Spellings with missing vowels are now growing famous. The fast-paced life is short-lived for literature. No longer do many want to learn the details of any book, grammar or even poetry. Somehow, Classics are now growing old fashioned and boring. Anything that is short and interesting is definitely catchy for today's generation. We want to know everything now! Who cares if it's missing a comma or two or that it lacks in depth and research. Lastly in cybernetic culture, hypertext may survive as an art form by offering pleasures of virtual immediacy, spontaneity, rich web of texts in various media and interactivity for the reader. Literature as a form of art, can be studied in depth; adding more weightage to the content. Otherwise, the subject in itself is losing its importance and charm. Hypertext version can be the boon to revive Literature. For e.g., D.G.

Rosetti's "The Blessed Damozel" in its hypertext version will have the poem and the painting juxtaposed. Using zoom in and zoom out the student and/or reader can view the relevant sections of the painting and be able to relate better with the poem. How many times have we literature students heard the word "boring" being tagged along with our stream of study. The decisive moment of literary life will be that of reading. Mankind is beginning to understand how to dismantle and reassemble the most complex and unpredictable of all its machines: Language. This has resulted in debates amongst researchers implying that the varieties of English standards are affected through the development of internet based English learning (Kern, 2006). However, it can also be argued that English online is a linguistic revolution, and has given rise to a new form of literature and internet linguistics (Crystal, 2011). The rise of electronic books (E-books) has been proven to encourage reading literature and improve reading and writing skills despite location (Schiff, 2003). This is because they can be accessed from any digital device including smartphones and tablets. It allows readers to analyse historic literature on one device, in comparison to collecting numerous physical books to read. The contemporary lifestyle and habitat are vastly different to the past hence, causing literature to transform to a vastly different social and technological world. It has been proven that the influence of social media is a contributing factor towards this change in writing styles within literature, some authors believing it has a positive impact (Lamy & Zourou, 2013). However, results have also shown that social media is replacing traditional reading cultures with new literature, that is inhibiting art and culture development (Morris & Philippa, 2015). Many social media platforms allow literature in the form of stories, that can be read by numerous people. This can cause a conflict between literature found on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, in comparison to literature written in a traditional form. The literature available in modern day is expressed in many ways still inclusive of art and books, generally associated with being read by serious avid readers. Within history, it allows the generation of new ideas and a platform for writers to express their outlook on various topics, ranging from health like in the current Covid-19 pandemic, political aspects, religious viewpoints and social issues. They can also be expressed through visual re-presentations like films, newspapers, magazines and journals. Literature will always be available despite the era we reside in, time or place. English literature is appreciated by the whole world and the desired medium of transmission, fortunately the modern era allows global accessibility to this literature.

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