



Milena Škobo

A GLIMPSE INTO

VICTORIAN LITERATURE

WITH A STUDY GUIDE



Singidunum University
Belgrade

Dr Milena Škobo

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With
A Study Guide

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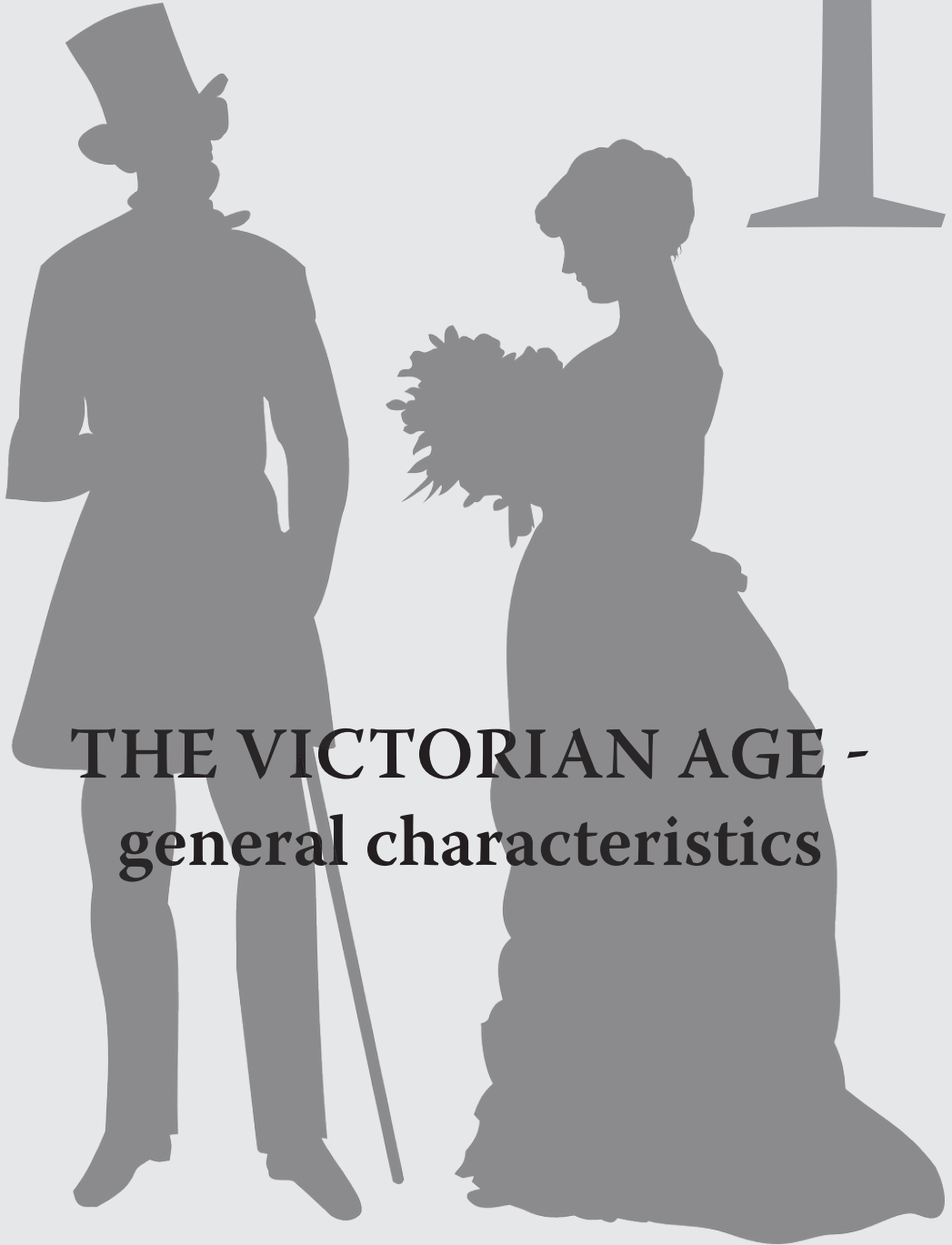
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Part

1



**THE VICTORIAN AGE -
general characteristics**

THE VICTORIAN AGE – general characteristics (1832 – 1900)



The period of time during which Queen Victoria ruled Britain is known as the Victorian era. 1837, the year when the Queen was crowned, and 1901, the year when she died, correspond roughly to the epoch timespan. However, these dates can be slightly modified. The year 1830 can be taken as a convenient starting date for Victorianism as it is a year marked by the last gasp of Romanticism. Following the Georgian period, the Victorian age was indicative of its tendency to rebuff rationalism typical of the previous literary era and raise more interest in romanticist ideas concerning religion, social values, and arts. The religious milieu of Victorian England was reflected in promoting morality and proper behaviour as the Methodists and the Evangelists tried their best to make people adhere to the conventions supporting rigid conservatism.

Queen Victoria became a symbol of the whole period that carried her name since her reign brought great prosperity to the country she ruled so powerfully for more than six decades. Her dominance was ensured by protecting cosmopolitan interests and cultivating international relationships between various dynasties across Europe. Although she was only eighteen when she was crowned, the queen successfully managed to establish her power and authority and live up to the well-known statement made by the Virgin Queen (Queen Elizabeth I) that she was (symbolically “married to her kingdom”).

According to Plunkett (2012: 2), the term 'Victorian' has been relatively recently taken to denote the era. It appeared after World War I when the British intelligentsia was tremendously disappointed and dissatisfied with the British cultural and intellectual tradition, as well as the values that were at the core of the moral and ideological basis of the Victorian period. Over time a more objective attitude to the established values was formed, but the term 'Victorian' remained and as such became a part of everyday language denoting provinciality.

Namely, the common perception of the Victorian period is that a large percentage of the British population at time marked by the rise of the middle class was prudish, narrow-minded, deeply conservative, and hypocritical. Becoming a part of the nobles was the ultimate goal of the newly-formed social class and this could be achieved by the 'proper' behaviour they were expected to show in public. Acting "properly" involved following the conventions and values set by the time and challenging these conventions was out of the question. The Victorians believed in discipline and savings and their ultimate goal was to achieve a civilized lifestyle that assumed the act of acquiring and mastering good manners and proper behaviour.

GENDER INEQUALITY

Lots of hopes had been put into the family with the father at its head. The man (father, husband, brother) was the most dominant figure in the family, as he was the one who provided food and accommodation for his wife/sister/mother and children, while the woman was forced to fit into the social roles imposed by her gender. The woman was expected to be the embodiment of an ideal wife, mother and housewife whose dominance and sovereignty were limited to the realm of domestic life. Social norms determined a woman's physical and mental inferiority and her dependence on a man's good will. Women were expected to avoid the public sphere and dedicate themselves exclusively to taking care of the family and the household, and to observing religious and moral behaviour. Moreover, women were stripped off the rights men enjoyed. They were paid less than men in factories, they had no protection at work, and their working conditions did not improve when they got pregnant or after they had given birth.

It was seen as inappropriate for women to study at the university. Even the upper-class women were not allowed to go to university. Queen Victoria was responsible for the issues regarding the position of women in the Victorian Age. Although the Queen advocated the idea of women's colleges and contributed to the opening of a college in 1847, she opposed to giving women the right to vote as she believed women's subordination was God's provision. On the other hand, men were provided with both classical and professional education. The inability to acquire equal rights to education was a type of paralysis that was overcome by giving the women the status of angels, whose purity, beauty and chastity was used as an ultimate means for making them believe they were designed to resist any worldly temptation. Soon women's ambition boiled down to getting as many accomplishments as needed for a fruitful marriage. It was only through marriage that women could acquire social power.

Female writers whose life ambition was greater than that struggled to fight against gender stereotypes. However, they were sure the only way of making their ideas heard was assuming male pseudonyms. Marianne Evans alias George Eliot wanted to liberate society from these female stereotypes, that is, women's accomplishments (learning to draw, sing, play a musical instrument, and learning languages). Eliot thought the root of the problem lay in the women's passivity. According to Eliot, women could stop being idle by participating in the intellectual life of London, which involved throwing parties and organizing meetings at their homes. Evans used the pseudonym George as it was the name of the man she loved.

George Lewis was a renowned literary critic, already married, and the public condemned his relationship with Evans although his wife let him be with her. This is why Eliot's most striking female protagonist, Maggie, trapped in a love triangle, is placed at the core of *The Mill on the Floss* (1860). Eliot's essay entitled *Silly Novels by Lady Novelists*, published under the same pseudonym four years before the novel featuring Maggie, hinted at the authoress' concern for the state of women's writing and her criticism of popular books published by women on account of their frivolity.

The prejudices against women, such as the inability to educate themselves in accordance with their capacities and the inability to openly express their feelings, placed women in a subordinate position. Another female writer that advocated woman's liberation and equality between the sexes was Charlotte Brontë. With her sisters, Emily and Ann, Charlotte created a fictional world set on the English moors. In her novel *Jane Eyre*, she creates the character of a new, independent woman in the financial sense of the word, where the woman's reputation did not depend entirely on the man and his whims. Similar ideas of women's liberation and self-support were expressed and promoted by Elizabeth Barret Browning, Robert Browning's wife, who wrote about women's independence in her novel written in blank verse entitled *Aurora Leigh* (1857), as well as in her collection of poems *Casa Guidi Windows* (1847).

THE BRITISH EMPIRE



As the British Empire was been one of the leading world powers for a relatively long period of time, it witnessed many boons and drawbacks. One of the most striking setbacks took place in the late eighteenth century when its thirteen American colonies revolted against it - as a result, the United States of America was formed. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, i.e. after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1814, Great Britain became the leading world power. The British pound became the leading currency in world markets and the British fleet enjoyed maximum authority overseas.

The British Industrial Revolution was a major event that revolutionized the society and the world economy. A change in production methods led to the development of the railway and other industries. The Construction of numerous factories and railroad tracks triggered the process of migration and thousands of people living in the rural parts of the country started to inhabit the suburban areas of towns and cities. According to the UK Government Web Archive, the population of England increased very rapidly. Between 1851 and 1901 it almost doubled, reaching a total of 30.5 million from an initial 16.8 million. Due to the fact that a large number of people migrated to towns in search of jobs, the opportunities for work went down. The flow of people into industrial and commercial cities was so huge that there was a lack of housing, which resulted in overpopulation and lack of fresh water and an excess of sewage. In London, with its growing population, the negative consequences of the Industrial Revolution became even more marked, and slum housing, which was being developed at that time, was one of the most obvious indicators.

Factories resembled prisons. Lower-class people worked for fourteen hours in unhealthy conditions. Children under ten were also employed there since their families did not have enough money to survive. However, instead of money, they were given food and accommodation. It was common to sell children to companies, where they would stay for several years, particularly if they were orphans or if their fathers had died. Often the children were forced to live in the streets or in public housing. At the age of five, Charles Dickens was obliged inwork at a blacking factory due to his father's debts. Undoubtedly, the working-class were the worst affected class in the Victorian period. The conditions under which they lived and worked were so brutal that the poor were forced to turn to crime. The crime rate and prevalence of prostitution was so high that Victorian society lost its prestige.¹ Despite the fact that prostitution was perceived as a "great social evil" in Victorian England, it was seen as one of the ways of achieving economic independence. In his study entitled *Prostitution Considered in its Moral, Social, and Sanitary Aspects*, William Acton stresses that there were approximately 8,600 prostitutes in London in 1857. The high rate of prostitution in the Victorian Age was fuelled by the wide gap between the rich and the poor. Girls without parents or benefactors saw prostitution as a means of reaching financial stability. At the same time, as Judith Walkowitz (1980) noted in her book entitled *Prostitution and Victorian Society*, turning to prostitution was believed to be a women's opportunity to gain social and economic independence.

While the working conditions for the members of the lower-class did not improve, the upper-class consisting of the Queen, aristocrats, nobles, dukes and other wealthy families that worked at the courts, enjoyed a life of luxury and wealth. Also, the living conditions of members of the middle-class started to improve in the Victorian era. The women started working outside their houses, accompanied by children. Also, in the early twentieth century, British imperial power rocketed. It exerted its control over various regions including some parts of Asia (the Middle East included), India and Africa. The British Empire encouraged trade between Europe and distant regions, which resulted in the rapid spread of the English language globally. Similarly, this led to animosity towards the British Empire in all the colonized regions.

1 Moralists in the 19th century perceived the slums as disgraceful places that promoted cohabitation, which resulted in the birth of births to a large number of illegitimate children. According to Probert (2012/2008), the rates of cohabitation in 19th-century Britain were dramatically lower than those in the 21st-century Britain. Namely, in Victorian England, less than 5% of the poor and working class members were engaged in cohabiting relationships. In today's Britain, on the other hand, this percentage is significantly higher as "nearly half of all children are born outside marriage, and nine in ten newlyweds have been cohabitating" (Probert 2012/2008).

THE VICTORIAN AGE: THREE PHASES

Michael Sadleir (1945: 17-32) distinguished three periods within the Victorian Age: early Victorianism – the period of political and social unrest that lasted from 1837 and 1850, mid-Victorianism, covering the period between 1851 and 1879, and late Victorianism (from 1880 onwards) marked by advances in technology and the revival of Greek stylistic trends. Perhaps more popular is the division of the Victorian period into three phases: The Time of Troubles' The Age of Improvement, and Decadence of the Victorian values. The first phase, characterized as 'The Time of Troubles', covered the period between 1830 and 1848. This period marked the negative consequences of industrialization. During this time, the rich people, men in particular, were given the right to vote. Namely, in 1832 the Reform Bill was passed, so many of the demands of the middle class, who were starting to exert more influence on the market, were satisfied. The Reform Bill granted those men whose property was worth ten or more pounds the right to vote. Only in 1867 were women granted the opportunity to vote in England. The early Victorian period is marked by the Woman Question, which tackled the issues of sexual inequality, the status of women, their rights and capabilities. Women's right to vote, educate themselves, work and write became a central concern within intellectual circles. Women's intellectual inferiority was a result of the common belief that the female brain weighed less than the male brain (Nassaaar 2004: 95). Taking this into consideration, women were supposed to be in charge of the home and children's upbringing. In politics, women were ranked as second-class citizens. The Queen was the only one who was granted the right to hold office and vote. The women from the lower classes were paid miserable wages. The jobs they could choose from were limited to that of a seamstress, servant or a factory worker. The women belonging to the middle and upper classes had nothing much to do and most of the time they spent at home as they had no access to universities or any other public facility of any importance, which triggered feelings of frustration, idleness and boredom. In 1840 petitions were signed and sent to Parliament demanding the right of women to vote in elections. In his long poem entitled "The Princess" (1847), Tennyson tackles the issue of women's education and their right to obtain higher education (it was only in 1848 when the first women's college was opened in London). The beginning of the 1840s was considered to be a period of turmoil and social unrest, due to the numerous riots caused by the lack of employment. The conditions in the new industrial and coal-mining areas, especially those under which women and children toiled, were bad enough to create fears of revolution.

The prominent literary figures expressed their dissatisfaction with the working and living conditions and started writing about it. Elizabeth Barret Browning's poem "The Cry of the Children" (1843) was based upon reliable evidence concerning five-year-old children who dragged heavy carts of coal for sixteen hours a day. Dickens mostly wrote about the negative sides of the Industrial Revolution, the high rate of crime and prostitution, the poor conditions faced by the working class, especially children working in factories, the great disparity of wealth between the rich and poor, and the hypocrisy of the government and its institutions. Also, John Ruskin, a prominent English art critic, philosopher and a social thinker, wrote about the negative aspects of industrialization regarding arts and people's dissatisfaction with working conditions.

The second phase – 'The Age of Improvement' – covering the period between 1848 and 1870 was regarded as a golden age of the English novel. People started to address the negative consequences of the Industrial Revolution in many spheres of life and culture. It was during this period when Thomas Carlyle invented the phrase the "Condition of England Question", which referred to the bad conditions the working-class people experienced during the process of industrialization. Namely, when the Corn Laws (i.e. tariffs on imported food and grain) were abolished in 1846, which was to be perceived as a sort of transition towards free trade, and the Chartist riots began in 1848, the voice of the working class people was finally heard (Wheeler 2004: 53). During this period, the workers were given certain rights. The Corn Laws first forbade the importation of cheap grain and later imposed steep import duties. Chartism was a movement whose members were working-class men. It got its name from the People's Charter of 1838. The main goal of the movement was to bring about political reforms. The reforms stated within the People's Charter were aimed at transforming the political system in Britain and making it more democratic. Fighting against political corruption was one of the main goals of the Chartists. Conditions for the children working in factories were improved through the passing of a series of acts known as the Factory Acts, which regulated the working hours and welfare of children. The aristocracy was still present, together with the middle class. Both had great power. The former was interested in a conservative lifestyle, the latter in the new world markets.

The main characteristic of this period was the duality of power, i.e. the clash between religion and science. As Nassaar (2004: 96) notices, the Victorian Age witnessed a noticeable growth in the history of atheist materialism, leaving two currents – Traditional Christianity and secular spirituality² – far behind. A hallmark of the Victorian period was religious doubt spawned by scientific discoveries, the greatest of which was the theory of evolution presented in Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1859). The book challenged the story of Creation proposed by the Bible, which resulted in a wave of atheism. Atheist materialism supported by scientific discoveries became another intellectual current. The impossibility to theoretically prove the existence of God led to the long-lasting debates and discussions, which resulted in T. H. Huxley's coining of the term – agnosticism. William Stewart Ross, an editor of the *Agnostic Journal and Eclectic Review*, championed agnosticism as opposed to atheism, the promotion of which was prohibited by Blasphemy laws.

This is why a central theme of the literature produced within the mid-Victorian period was the conflict between religion and science rather. Major mid-Victorian literary figures such as John Stewart Mill, Thomas Carlyle, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Oscar Wilde, Matthew Arnold, and Walter Pater abandoned Christianity and called themselves "freethinkers" or "secularists". It is important to stress that they did not encourage anti-Christian hostility. They supported the view that morality was not automatically bound to the concept of being religious and believing in God. However, Christianity still remained strong in the Victorian era although it stopped being the only intellectual current. Tennyson's poem "In Memoriam" deals with this religious doubt by relying on geological discoveries, but it also represents the reaffirmation of his Christian faith. Robert Browning was a Protestant throughout his life. Both Pater and Wilde returned later to Christianity. Religion was promoted by the Conservatives inspired by the philosophical conservatism of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, while science was advocated by Utilitarians, the followers of Jeremy Bentham. The essays on Bentham and Coleridge written by John Stuart Mill support the views that these two writers were the cause of divisions within the English intelligentsia. The conflict was resolved by higher criticism, i.e., by using the scientific approach to interpreting the Bible.

2 A third religious current, that of secular spirituality, rejects both the Christian belief and atheist materialism. While Carlyle's attitudes towards religion were rather ambiguous, his views on spirituality were quite straightforward. He regarded it as a means of fighting against the world of Machine; Matthew Arnold perceived God as a sort of external power that urged people to behave morally; Butler and Shaw, post-Darwinists, believed in Life Force, the idea of creative evolution; W.B. Yeats and Conan Doyle were passionate followers of Spiritualism. Towards the end of the 1980s Spiritualism became something of a cult and was the most widespread of all alternative religions (Nassaar 2004: 97-98).

Another critic of Victorian industrialism and the state of commerce was the Victorian art critic John Ruskin. Ruskin's book "The Stones of Venice" (1853) deals with the doom of technological culture presented through the depiction of the history of architecture, while "Unto His Last" (1862) criticizes the country's economics. The key novels exploring the social problems people faced in Victorian England were written in the period between 1845 and 1855. The status of women significantly improved during this period. In his essay *The Subjection of Women* (1869), John Stuart Mill advocated the idea that women were equal to men and that they were supposed to gain more freedom (a woman's right to own a property included). In the late nineteenth century, women were granted rights to study at Oxford and Cambridge, the newly opened universities. However, they were unable to get a degree. Even though this period was marked by the emergence of the concept of the "New Woman", the process of woman's liberation was far from complete. Only in the twentieth century were the real consequences of women's social and political advancement to be felt (Nassaaar 2004: 96).

The third phase, "Decadence of Victorian values", covered the period between 1870 and 1901. It was the period of the greatest prosperity. However, the question of religion remained unresolved. This was also a period of stagnancy in moral and social values but prosperity regarding wealth. Matthew Arnold, an essayist, a social critic and a philosopher that lived and worked in the Victorian age, was among the first to point to the bad working conditions within factories as well as the malfunctioning of public institutions, and after 1870 these flaws became evident (i.e. the status of Roman Catholics in England, relations with the Irish, etc.). The central place in literature was now given to man and his psychological state of mind, symbolizing the end of the golden era for the British Empire. Such a shift was best reflected in the works of some Victorian writers who satirized the basic conventions and attitudes held by the majority of the population that lived in the Victorian Age (family life, patriarchy, the tyranny of the father, etc. as demonstrated in *The Way of All Flesh*, a novel written by Samuel Butler). Though Britain was still one of the leading world powers, there was the emergence of new rivals in countries such as France and Germany.

REACTIONS TO THE BOURGEOIS PROGRESS

In the Victorian era the British society had already been a well-developed bourgeois society. Since the Industrial Revolution brought about the innumerable fabrics and new systems of production, a new capitalist society – the industrialists – and the working-class that was growing in number, reformed the existing social class system. The advancements in technology and science affected the social ideology. On one hand, there was an optimistic belief that such an improvement would solve all the problems and would result in the formation of a bourgeois democratic federation as envisioned by Tennyson in his dramatic monologue entitled “Locksley Hall”; on the other hand, the advancements in technology and science caused other problems in terms of adapting to the new and reformed world and its changed values, i. e., the problems of harmonizing the innovations that resulted from numerous scientific discoveries with the existing religious views.

A theory of evolution proposed by Charles Darwin disvalued the perception of the world based on religious beliefs. Religion started to lose its value and its influence was limited to maintaining the traditional ceremonial practices and verbal acceptance of moral principles. Optimism and belief in the progress of capitalist system and bourgeois democracy were reflected in the prominent philosophical systems, such as Utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham’s, or Positivism of George Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. Although these philosophical systems were not quite well accepted across the country, the government agreed with their key concepts. Hypocrisy and double-standards of the Victorian society were seen as the main negative features of this period.

There were many advocates of different life philosophies: some of them promoted Darwin’s Agnosticism (Thomas Huxley), while others (mostly the economists) praised Liberalism Capitalism (David Ricardo). The latter were against the economic intervention by the country and trade union organizations. As a reaction to a bourgeois-optimistic view of the world, several movements were formed, mostly by the British intelligentsia. These reactions were to some extent reflected in literature.

Between the 1930s and 1940s, the Oxford Movement appeared. The advocates of this movement noted that religion was losing influence and their main goal was to renew people’s faith in it. The leader of the movement that advocated the renewal of the Church of England was **John Henry Newman (1801 – 1890)**.

Newman was an English theologian and poet who focused on strengthening the emotional influence of religion by reinforcing religious beliefs and liturgical rituals. He was a controversial figure in the religious history of England due to his conversion to Roman Catholicism. His official leaving the Church of England and becoming a cardinal discredited the movement and made it lose its influence. The major weaknesses of the movement were contradictory statements and preaching the religion that started to become ceremonial and dogmatic. Other people influenced by the movement were the poets Lord Alfred Tennyson and G. M. Hopkins.

The teaching of **Thomas Carlyle (1795 – 1881)** was the second form of a reaction to the bourgeois progress. Carlyle was a prominent British historian, philosopher, essayist and mathematician. His teaching, developed out of the hatred towards the machine, industry and industrialists, had great influence on the society in general. His notable work entitled *The French Revolution* (1837) prompted Charles Dickens to write the novel *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859). Carlyle promoted the rights of the workers during the Chartism. The Chartism was a working class movement which emerged in 1836 with the initiative to gain political rights and influence for the working classes. Although the movement reflected the power of the working class, it had neither clear ideology nor the leader. Carlyle's main preoccupations were to make a balance between feelings and the ideas of freedom, on one hand, and history and politics, on the other. Namely, emotions were given priority to common sense regarding the economics and politics, and he believed in the idea of a heroic struggle that promoted the role of the hero in history, the ideology that resembled the fascist's ideologies that would appear later.

DRAMA IN THE VICTORIAN AGE

In the 19th century the theatre was a centre of entertainment mostly for the rich people. Melodrama, a sentimental and sensationalist playwright with stereotyped plots and characters, was the nineteenth-century theatre's most pervasive form. The theatre became very popular with masses and one of the reasons why many people attended it was the transportation system and the fact that the streets became safer for travelling at night. The theatre provided the working-class audience with an idealized image of life. All those oppressive representatives of the Establishment were generally evil, while farmers, factory-workers and peasants were cheerful and virtuous. Virtue triumphed over evil and adversity. Melodramas provided realistic depiction of London and contemporary social problems, such as the shortage of income for the working class, escalating rents, strikes, and miserable living and working conditions. However, the plays lacked quality. Many of the plays were written by talented poets such as Robert Browning and Alfred Tennyson, but they neither became successful nor had much literary value. The perception of the theatre was improved by Queen Victoria. Theatres became centres of entertainment with a picture frame effect stage which added a realistic feeling to the plays. The number of theatres in London increased between 1850 and 1900 – it varied from nineteen in 1851 to sixty-one in 1899 (Allardyce 1949: 26-49). Between 1860 and 1870 many of the old theatres such as *The Royalty*, *The Globe*, *The Gaiety*, *The Holborn*, *The Charing Cross* and *The Queen's* had been remodeled, while *The Imperial*, *The Court* and *The Opera Comique* were constructed between 1870 and 1880 (Allardyce 1949: 7-26). **Oscar Wilde** was ranked as one of the most distinguished playwrights of the Victorian age. The dramas he wrote at the beginning of the nineteenth century achieved an him an immediate success and became at once popular. Between 1892 and 1895 he published the following plays: *Lady Windermere's Fan*, which deals with a marriage triangle; *A Woman of No Importance*, that satirizes an upper-middle class society, *An Ideal Husband* that explores the theme of political corruption, *The Importance of Being Earnest* that tackles social conventions imposed on people, and a tragedy *Salome* originally written in French. Another important playwright was an Irishman **John Millington Synge**, whose most notable plays were a one-act tragedy entitled *Riders to the Sea* (1904), *The Well of the Saints* (1905), *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) and *Deidre of the Sorrows* (1910). **Dion Boucicault** was another important Irish playwright and actor whose most prominent plays were *The Octoroon* (1859), *The Phantom* (1856), *The Colleen Bawn* (1860) and *The Shaughraun* (1874).

Last but not the least to mention is **George Bernard Shaw** (1856-1950), another prolific Irish playwright that published more than sixty plays that deal with social problems (i.e. *Arms and the Man* (1894), *You Never Can Tell* (1897), *Man and Superman* (1902), *Pygmalion* (1912), etc.). Shaw was also a critic, a political activist and a Nobel Prize winner. It was in 1925 when he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. As a knowledgeable Shakespearian and experienced music and theatre critic, Shaw campaigned against melodrama, sentimentality and stereotypes.

POETRY IN THE VICTORIAN AGE

The conflict between religion and science was one of the central themes explored in poetry of the Victorian Age and one of the most characteristic features of Victorian poetry was diversity. There were numerous lyrical poems, dramatic monologues and narrative poems promoting either religious beliefs, or the key ideas of agnosticism or atheism. There were numerous distinctive verse forms and stanzas in addition to the new ones. As the Victorian era was marked by numerous radical social changes following the Industrial Revolution, many poets disliked a romanticized version of society offered by the Romantics. Victorian poetry was divided into “High Victorian Poetry” which dealt with the issues of patriotism, social reforms and the conflict between religion and science, and “Pre-Raphaelite Poetry” inspired by the philosophy of aestheticism and reformation of Victorian art. The most distinguished poets of the Victorian Age were Lord Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold, Elizabeth Barret Browning, Edward FitzGerald, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, and Gerard Manley Hopkins.³ The most important feature of Victorian poetry was its reliance on the sensory experiences in order to convey the scenes of science/religion conflict, and ideas about nature and romance, explored by Tennyson. Another characteristic was the sentimentality reflected in supporting the Bohemian ideas of the Romantic Poets.

Elizabeth Barret-Browning (1806 – 1861) was Robert Browning's wife and, one of the most distinguished poets in this epoch. As a result of their close relationship a collection of love poems entitled *Sonnets from the Portuguese* was produced. It is a collection of forty-five sonnets published in 1850, and one of the most famous poems in the collection was “How do I love thee” with a rhyming scheme *ababcdcdcd*.

³ As poetry written by Tennyson, Browning and Arnold were discussed in detail in the following chapters, the works of other notable poets would be referred to in the next few passages..

The collection of sonnets was devoted to her husband who called her 'my little Portuguese' because of her dark looks. It was believed she would be given the Laureate as she enjoyed greater popularity than her husband. She was well-known as a poet who fought against the exploitation of children, as evidenced in the poem "The Cry of the Children" /1843/. In addition to this, she was famous for advocating women's rights. Her collection of poems *Casa Guidi Windows* /1851/ was devoted to women's struggle for independence, and the key motive of her novel written in blank verse *Aurora Leigh* /1850/ was women's equality.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), a son of an Italian political refugee, was a British poet, designer, translator and painter. He was a co-founder of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, the group of poets, artists and art critics who drew their inspiration from medieval times, myth and folklore. It was initially an artistic movement that appeared as a sort of an opposition to the official art and painting. Rossetti inspired many artists, poets and writers who also supported the ideas advocated by the Pre-Raphaelite movement (i.e. William Morris). Also, his paintings became a major source of inspiration for the European Symbolists. He was also known as a precursor of the Aesthetic movement. The painters expressed their strong opposition towards realism and didacticism of the Victorian era. The artists of this movement promoted returning to nature, pure beauty, fairy tales, Christian mysticism, and ballads. They opposed rigid Victorian morality, its materialism and utilitarianism, and advocated religious and sexual liberty. The poetry of Pre-Raphaelite movement resembled the poetry of Romanticism, as it promoted a withdrawal from reality and gave priority to the world of fantasy. The key ideas of this movement were originally presented in printed form in the Pre-Raphaelite journal entitled *The Germ* (January-April, 1850) founded by Rossetti. His early poetry was influenced by Blake, Keats, Dante, Browning and E. A. Poe. William Blake, a forerunner of the the Pre-Raphaelite movement, influenced Rossetti's view on philosophy, poetry and art. Rossetti was mostly impressed by Blake's mysticism and his reputation as a rebel, as he was "among the first who raised a lot of provocative questions related to the 17th and 18th-century sensationalist theories" (Nikolić 2013: 112). The women Rossetti depicted in his paintings were mystical and idealized, and were placed in an unusual setting. His main model and muse was, however, his wife, Elizabeth Siddall, who died two years after they got married. It was believed that she was desperate due to her husband's infidelity. Rossetti buried all his manuscripts with his wife. However, they were exhumed after some time. Rossetti's well-known poem "The Blessed Damozel" with the rhyming scheme *abcbdb* was originally published in 1850 in the journal he founded. The second version of the poem was published in *Poems* in 1870.

The poem was an imitation of Keats. It was partially inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven". The poem comprises of numerous archaic words. The poem bears many similarities to the religious lyrical poems written in the 13th and 14th century and to those of folk ballads. It includes lilacs, roses, dove, and the religious numbers three, five and seven: there were three lilies in damozel's hair, five Virgins surrounding the Virgin Mary, seven stars in damozel's hair. All the aforementioned words represent the most important religious motives. Rossetti depicts sadness of the deceased girl who is in heaven. The girl observes her lover on Earth and hopes he will join her when he passes away. The poem deals with the act of escaping the material world and giving priority to the archaic, natural, and mystical. These are also the key concepts explored in Tennyson's poems. Rossetti's poem and the painting with the same title belong to the domain of fiction and imagination. This gives the poetic persona freedom to represent women's bodies as embodiments of his personal desires and conceptions.

Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894), Rossetti's sister, was an English poet and a member of the Pre-Raphaelites who devoted her life to the church and writing. She wrote around 900 poems, most of which were religious, but only a few of them possessed universal value. She was compared to George Herbert, although her artistic value was of a lower rank. She also wrote lyrical poems such as "Remember" – a sonnet about mourning and remembrance that first appeared in *Goblin Market and Other Poems*, a collection of poems that received widespread critical praise after its publication in 1862. The sonnet's key theme is love, as suggested by its form – it is written in the form of a Petrarchan sonnet with the rhyme scheme *abba abba cdd ece*. The second part of the poem in which the poetic persona confesses that she would rather her lover forget her and be happy than remember her and be sad makes the poem less sentimental and thus more powerful and poetic. In this respect, "Remember" (1849) is similar to "Song" ('When I'm dead my dearest'), published in 1848, where the poetic persona declares that she does not want any sad songs to be sung upon her death by her beloved and shows her indifference to her lover's behaviour upon her death.

Edward FitzGerald (1809 – 1883) was an English poet and writer who was the first to provide an English translation of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1859). Khayyam was a mathematician and astronomer from Persia who lived in the 12th century. He wrote bitter-sweet verses in the form of four line stanzas called the ruba'i (the plural is rubaiyat) about the ranges of wine, companionships, and the passage of time. FitzGerald's translation of the *Rubaiyat* from Persian has an abundance of frequent and ubiquitous allusions.

By the 1880s the book became extremely popular throughout England as the poem's lines had served as titles for numerous literary works. The Rubaiyats were present in many Persian manuscripts. Rossetti was first to draw attention to the importance of these poems. There were five editions of Fitzgerald's translation of *The Rubaiyat* (quatrains), the fifth of which was published posthumously. He linked the editions into a whole, translated them freely, mashed the original stanzas to suit his own agenda, and changed their order of appearance (there were around a hundred, while in Fitzgerald's translation there were seventy-five). According to A. C. Benson, Fitzgerald's biographer, Fitzgerald's editions resemble epigrams or mini-sonnets that convey single thoughts (Benson 1905). The main theme is a *Carpe Diem* motif /seize the day/. The quatrains were organized in such a way to symbolize an ephemeral nature of life and celebration of hedonistic lifestyle (wine, play, and life were compared to the chess board, while people were compared to the chess figures and pottery). The whole poem is based on the idea that happiness depends on your ability to socialize and alleviate pain. These lines symbolize the transience of human life, the negation of afterlife, the role of man in life and his search for life's purpose. The secrets of life and death were a mystery to man as his actions had already been predetermined by God. Therefore, man should give in to the life of pleasures. Each stanza ends in a call for wine, grapes and pleasure. It is believed that Fitzgerald's rubaiyat were a result of the crisis of the Victorian Age. The last lines resemble the Romanticists and their call for love, and question whether love can alleviate death.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837 – 1909) was a post-Victorian poet who supported the ideas of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood but never belonged to their circle. He was educated at Eton and Oxford but had never finished his studies. He read classical and Elizabethan literature. He loved Shelley and Baudelaire. Most of his poems were published in the collection entitled *Poems and Ballads*. The first edition published in 1866 shocked the readers with its sexuality charged passages and atheist poems. The second one was published twelve years later - in 1878 - and the third one in 1889. Swinburne also wrote critical studies on Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, William Blake, and Victor Hugo. It is said that his criticism was impressionist. One of his most notable poems published in *Poems and Ballads* is "The Garden of Proserpine" that symbolizes his own qualities and flaws as a poet. It is a descriptive poem composed of twelve stanzas with eight lines with a rhyme scheme *ababcccb*. The poem is permeated with the images of bareness, hopelessness, stagnation and deadness and is regarded as a precursor of modernism and T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land". Proserpine (Persephone in Greek mythology) is a goddess of vegetation married to the god of the underworld - Hades, and the daughter of Zeus and Demeter.

She is associated with spring and the fertility of vegetation. In Swinburne's poem the emphasis is on her role as a goddess of death and eternal sleep, as she stands for the threshold between life and death. The spiritual crisis is one of the poem's key themes, as Proserpine challenges the concept of Christianity. The poem takes a negative tone toward religion. According to some critics, the poem is a miniature masterpiece. Swinburne was liked by the young as he was perceived as a rebellious person who fought against Victorian stereotypes.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844 – 1889) was one of the most authentic Victorian poets. He was a Jesuit priest. His originality was reflected in versification, rhythm (the concept of sprung rhythm⁴) and his use of language (it was full of neologisms, newly coined words with free syntax, compound adjectives, many archaic and dialect words). In addition to this, Hopkins often used literary figures such as alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia and rhyme. Perhaps the most significant features of his poetry are individuality and uniqueness (the concepts of "inscape" and "instress" partly modelled on the ideas advocated by the medieval theologian Duns Scotus). The two major themes in Hopkins' poetry were religion and nature. Robert Bridges, Poet Laureate from 1913 to 1930 and the one responsible for making Hopkins famous, began to publish his poems after his death. His most notable poem written in 1877 is "Pied Beauty" which celebrates God as a creator of everything. The poem is about the worship of nature. It is composed of many peculiar metaphors thanks to which the modernists admired him. Due to these metaphors Hopkins was compared to metaphysical poets, i. e. John Donne. Also, sensibility of the modern age could be discerned within the poem. This might be the reason why some of the most notable poets of the twentieth century (T.S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas, W. H. Auden among others) were inspired by this author.

4 Hopkins's sprung rhythm contains feet which number of syllables varies between one and four per foot and stress always falls on the first one. Sprung rhythm is close to harsh speech and is considered as a sort of reaction to the Romanticist euphony.

LITERATURE OF THE VICTORIAN PERIOD



As the Victorian era spanned over a long period of time (a little more than six decades) it included an expansive range of distinctive characteristics. However, writers had to adapt to the reforms of the time. The weight of the puritan code was widely felt in literature. As novels were commonly read aloud, the Victorian writers tried to respect the established taboos and restrictions and comply with the literary conventions. In addition to this, a lot of pressure was put on the writers. They often had to choose between their public duty to satisfy the expectations of their readers on one hand, and their need to stay loyal to their subjective artistic expression, on the other. Such a dilemma resulting from the concept of the divided self within the writer/poet was a major theme of many Tennyson's poems. Therefore, Victorian literature was marked by a plenty of diverse styles and the authors' searching for the appropriate modes of expression. The poets and writers started experimenting with innovative metrical patterns and forms. Victorian literature was closely bound to literature of the Romantic period. Browning and Swinburne were inspired by Shelley, Matthew Arnold found his inspiration in Wordsworth's poetry, while Tennyson admired the poetry of Keats. The spiritual crisis and religious issues that were explored in the works of the Romanticists became a recurring theme in the works of many Victorians. The poets often explored the aspects of love and love relationships despite the strain of puritanism.

The predominant themes in literature included man's relationship to God, spiritual conflicts, the position of an individual in the age marked by the Industrial Revolution, development of English democracy and the industrial progress, education, the bad conditions of the working-class, man's reflection on the past and his ability to make modernist observations about the future.

In the late 19th and the 20th century, a novel became the most dominant literary genre. The novels dealing with social issues were extremely popular,, as they addressed various challenges following the process of industrialization. The most distinctive feature of the Victorian literature is a strong authorial presence in the narrative. An author-narrator frequently inserted passages of commentaries on some fictional episode, taking the role of a teacher, guide or even prophet (i.e. divorce issue in Dickens's *Hard Times*, or Thackeray's commentary and digressions in *Vanity Fair*). The writers mostly addressed social relations and individual problems of people caught between the traditional and the new way of production. Dickens wrote about a contemporary life of people (*David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*), great wealth disparities between the lower and the higher social classes, exploitation of children in factories, and crime (*Oliver Twist*), the drive for financial and education-based advancement (*Great Expectations*), the industrialized working routine in the industrial town of Coketown that polluted a beautiful natural environment (*Hard Times*), etc. Thackeray satirized the upper-class society and exposed its hypocrisy in *Vanity Fair*. He successfully presented people's attempts to become respectable members of the upper class. Charlotte Brontë tackled the issue of marriage, in particular, marrying outside of one's own social class in her novel *Jane Eyre*. Similar theme was explored in Jane Austin's novel *Pride and Prejudice*, where the gentry strove to advance socially by marrying their children to the upper-class members. In the late eighteenth century married women were given more freedom as they were granted more rights such as the right to own a property – the same right that had been already given to unmarried women. The concept of a lady did not only imply marrying a gentleman but gaining financial independence. The female protagonist of Henry James' novel *Portrait of a Lady* (1881) was a perfect embodiment of altered views on the concept of a lady. The novel deals with a young heroine whose financial independence granted her the right to shatter the conventions imposed on her by the society and make her own choices.

Charlotte Brontë's views on the poor condition of women in the Victorian Age were perhaps the most straightforwardly expressed in her novel *Jane Eyre*. By referring to the "warped system of things" in the preface of the novel, the authoress pointed to the poor and unfair treatment of women and their unequal status as well as to a highly acquisitive society ruled by the power of cash.

A male character that struggles to deal with high standards of living imposed by the social class whose member he so passionately tries to become, was Pip (*Great Expectations*). In order to blend into such a society, he was obliged to get fine clothing, furniture, manners, education, right friends and money. On the other hand, even if he had all of these things, he could not be able to erase the stain of his origins.

In the Victorian novel, money was the engine for social advancement, while the class defined the flow of money. This became evident in the works written by Dickens and Thackeray (i.e. in particular, *Hard Times* and *Vanity Fair*). As the first generation of nouveau riche did not take money for granted and did not believe in all-importance of money, their children or grandchildren believed the cash was all that matters and were, therefore, assimilated without much effort into the upper-class society.

The Victorian novel reflected the greatest chasm in the social system. On one hand, there were people who needed to provide for living by committing themselves to hard manual labour, and on the other hand, there were those who lived comfortably and were not obliged to work at all. Joining the ranks of the nobles was usually the ultimate goal of those who wanted social advancement, as it became evident in Thackeray's novel *Vanity Fair*, where one of its female protagonists used all disposable means to get closer to the members of aristocracy.

The idealized notion of what is "English" originating from the (white) people's tendency to "help" and "civilize" people in colonized parts of the world, as well as the notion of what constitutes the Victorian models for proper behavior were often the recurrent themes in the literary works of the most prominent writers and poets that lived in this period. Such notions provided the period with its stereotypes. Oscar Wilde satirized the "proper" behavior in his notable plays entitled *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Ideal Husband*.

The life of an individual in the family was closely related to larger historical, political, social and spiritual themes. Many writers wrote about a figure of the vulnerable, innocent child who was left alone to cope with a hostile world: Dickens invented his Florence Dombey who lost her mother, and children orphans, such as Oliver Twist, Pip and David Copperfield; the orphan in Thackeray's novel is Henry Esmond, Jane Eyre emerges as a young orphanage in Charlotte Brontë's novel, while Heathcliff appears as someone whose parents are unknown in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. All these characters were depicted as unprotected children in desperate need of human touch. A lack of emotional, mental and spiritual support made these characters vulnerable to the environment that was often presented as threatening and insensitive to their weaknesses.

The inner life of these characters was vividly presented through the author's powerful depictions of nature and the physical surroundings. The crucial factor in determining the characters' development was intimately bound to the external social change.

The characters' behaviour, their attitudes and views on various issues such as social status, money, love, marriage, religion, the concept of God and death, pointed to the class they belonged to. Apart from that, one of the most important features that determined the class the characters belonged to were the circumstances under which these characters lived. Social changes were also depicted in the novels of the Victorian period (i.e. Dickens's novel *Dombey and Son* points to the change in the way of production and the new jobs the characters from the working class begin to get, while people's preference of finance to production was explored in *Our Mutual Friend*).

Since the writers considered it was their duty to boost the morale of the citizens, they were mostly critical of the society in general. Most of them thought literature should have didactic purpose so their literary works promoted the proper code of conduct. Victorian literature was bourgeois in its nature. Although the writers produced their literary works for the public, they always bore in mind the fact that their goal was to address the readers who fitted into the category of gentlemen. Being a gentleman in the nineteenth century implied leading a luxurious lifestyle which was best manifested in fine clothing, having servants, being idle, and attending the Victorian ballrooms. In *Great Expectations*, the first step in becoming a gentleman was buying the appropriate clothes. The amount of money Pip received for the clothes nearly exceeded Joe's yearly income. This is perhaps one of the most obvious examples that pointed to the bad working conditions of the members of the lower class and their extremely low wages (Prewitt Brown 2004: 76). The concept of gentleman in Jane Austen's novels varied from young adult males who were about to inherit an estate (the character of Edmund Bertram in *Mansfield Park*) to those whose fathers earned large amount of money through entrepreneurial practices (the character of Mr. Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice*). As Julia Prewitt Brown (2004: 79) has noticed, the concept of gentleman in the nineteenth century was broadened in the formal sense, as the ability to make money through lucrative business practices and the act of mastering proper, gentlemanlike behaviour became more relevant than being of noble birth. Dickens treated the concept of the gentleman with lots of irony in *Great Expectations*, where Pip's great social expectation was fueled by the money acquired through criminal activities of Magwitch the convict.

The elements of Romanticism could still be felt in the Victorian literature. The features originating from the Romantic period were the following: creativity, subjective sentimentality, worshipping of nature, and praise of originality. However, the readers of the Victorian era appreciated the writers whose characters resembled real people. It was expected from the literary works to bear a message that was in accordance with widely accepted moral standards and set of conventions prescribed. As the novel became a dominant literary form, the writers followed the conventions regarding its form, publishing process and themes. The novels were first published in the form of installments in magazines and then in the book-form. Most of the novels dealt with love stories with happy-endings (George Eliot and Thomas Hardy wrote novels that ended tragically). As Lionel Stevenson (2004: 49) notices, the Victorian novels, though technically deficient, did not lack energy and vividness. In addition to this, through the analysis of Victorian fiction one can follow a gradual process of literary development, as each Victorian writer supplied his individual component, experimented freely and borrowed from the others (Stevenson 2004: 49). With the sense of high-seriousness, typical of the Victorians, came a puritanical attitude towards life. Carlyle was the best spokesman of this new puritanism, urging the Victorians to focus on duty and work instead of a far-reaching happiness. Tennyson's elegy *In Memoriam* symbolized man's tendency to achieve perfection. Changes that occurred in the Victorian period were reflected in man's tendency to replace the artistic lifestyles with hard work, proper behaviour, keeping the public image in line with moral codes, and above all, refraining from breaking the taboo regarding the proper sexual conduct the man was supposed to maintain. Reputation and respectability were another two highly-appreciated notions in the Victorian period. People were to respect set of conventions which constituted the notions of being a lady and gentleman. Maintaining a high moral standard resulted in a great deal of hypocrisy, as evidenced by increasing numbers of prostitutes and a higher crime rate.

During the third phase of the Victorian Age that was marked by a decadence of the Victorian values, the writers became preoccupied with an exploration of the hidden side of human soul. As a result, numerous literary works exploring the concept of the divided-self appeared. In *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Robert Louis Stevenson examined a double nature of human beings, and in *Salomé*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Oscar Wilde examined the origin of evil. Wilde's tragedy *Salomé* is about refuting the idea that people are genuinely good, his only novel about the young man that sold his soul to the devil for eternal beauty deals with the depths of evil, while his play *The Importance of Being Earnest* Wilde criticizes Victorian

high-seriousness and respectability. Wilde reveals man's tendency to lead a secret life and behave immorally by parodying the characters that fail to adhere to high Victorian values imposed upon them.

THE PROMINENT LITERARY FIGURES

John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873) was one of the most influential thinkers, a liberal, a utilitarian, a distinguished British philosopher, and a respectable political economist. By promoting his religious and political ideas, he articulated the spirit of liberalism in the Victorian Age. Since his father did not believe in education system in England, he was educated at home. Although he was raised in utilitarian spirit, he expressed his doubts in Utilitarianism in the essay "What is poetry?" (1833), where he explored whether Utilitarianism could be a good starting point for writing poetry. According to Mill, the best utility is achieved when man conscientiously acts in order to contribute to the total happiness in the world. Achieving social utility, that is, performing actions for the sake of society's welfare should be one's main goal. Mill divided man's pleasures into two categories: the higher and the lower ones. Higher pleasures are those that stem from intellect and morality, while lower pleasures belong to the physical realm and as such they are inferior to the higher ones. In his feminist essay entitled "The Subjection of Women" (1869) Mill advocated the idea of equality between the sexes and granting more rights to women (i.e. the right to vote). According to Mill, the idea of woman's inequality is outdated and infantile, and as such it can no longer survive in the fast-changing world. He believed that the woman's education and social advancement would be beneficial to all community, especially to men and argued that marriage laws ought to be reformed as they were very harsh to women. In the essay "On Liberty" (1859) he tackled the concept of social liberty. However, his conception of liberty is a far cry from the modern understanding of this term. Liberty does not refer to the freedom of will but freedom from tyranny, that is, the freedom of minority (i.e. women) from the tyranny of majority (i.e. men). In his essay, human beings are compared to plants as both of them are in need of an encouraging environment in order to flourish.

John Ruskin (1819 – 1900) was an essayist, philanthropist, an art critic and a prominent social thinker who brought the European spirit to England due to his various travels across the continent. He wrote about social problems, art, architecture and nature. It was through art that he observed the society. He gained public's attention by publishing the first volume of *Modern Painters* (1843), an essay composed to support a British painter, J. M. W. Turner, whose landscape paintings were widely criticized. In the essay Ruskin asserted that the artist should remain truthful when depicting nature. An artist can represent nature in art, through form and colour, by means of direct observation. The variation of the same theme is developed in his work *The Stones of Venice* (1852), where he examines Venetian architecture along with historical recount on Venice. He also wonders whether there are societies in which the artists loved their works of art and promotes the type of a society where people should enjoy their work. He rebelled against the ugliness of an industrial product and bourgeois lifestyle and started to advocate the implementation of the concept of beauty in art and life. Since he endeavored to seek beauty in Gothic forms, his ideas were seen as a reaction to the official, academic art that sought its role models in Renaissance. In his book *Unto His Last* (1860) Ruskin criticizes the concept of liberal economy based on the exploitation of workers and attacks the destructive effects of industrialism upon the natural world. Being rejected by the ideology of the time in which he lived and worked, he stopped writing and retreated into anonymity.

Mathew Arnold (1819 – 1900) was an English poet, theoretician and critic. Although he was raised by strict parents, he led a hedonistic lifestyle during his studies. He advocated liberal humanism inspired by ancient Greek heritage. He attacked some of the characteristics of the British people such as their self-satisfaction, island inclusiveness, provincialism, and morality based on the concept of award and punishment originating from Puritanism as a typical feature of the English bourgeois society. He made compromises with Christianity as he was extracting only those moral values that suited him. His agnosticism was followed by expressing a strong grief for the lost faith and nostalgia for the times when the lives of human beings were governed by faith. Arnold was mostly pessimistic about the society, as he saw no good in any of the social classes. His attitude was typical of those expressed by the intellectuals who lectured people on humanity as they placed themselves above all classes. He wrote poems until 1850. After 1850 he started to publishing essays.

Arnold's lyric poem "Dover Beach" was published in 1867 in the collection entitled *New Poems*. The poem's descriptive lines immediately create a strong visual impression – the introducing lines of the poem immediately bring to mind a beautiful English beach made up of pebbles at the Dover's ferry port in Kent.

There is no one on the beach – even the remains of human's presence are barely visible. The poetic persona listens to "the eternal note of sadness" suggested by the sound of the waves. Bearing in mind the fact that the poem was written in the industrial nineteenth century, the sound of the withdrawing sea is associated with one's spiritual crisis. It is a bleak poem which reflects some of the most typical features of the author himself. It expresses the author's affinity towards love and nature, and his strong intellectual capacities which enable him to give an accurate account of the time he lived in. He was able to discern and expose the faults of his fellow citizens. At the same time, the author is a humanist who yields towards a more beautiful reality, where people are governed by humane principles and "higher order of experience". The poem symbolically represents the loss of faith of an intellectual in the capitalistic civilization. The poem is a synthesis of the author's poetic qualities, a blend of his ideas and emotions. The poem stands for the fact that religion loses its power before science. "The sea of faith" has now disappeared. By losing their faith, the people are stripped off security and are left to cope with loneliness. In the poet's reality there is neither goodness nor faith or beauty. The last stanza of the poem is the appeal for love. Namely, the poet addresses his beloved woman and tries to fight against such a fate by means of love. The only way of escaping the bleak prospects of modern civilization is withdrawing into the private sphere, that is, turning to love that may bring some sort of relief and peace. The absence of love and light causes the world to become a confusing place marked by 'retreating' faith. Many critics interpret the poem as an expression of spiritual anxiety of a Victorian intellectual – beneath a blissful surface lie immorality and destruction. The poet's invitation for love is interpreted as one of the ideas originating from the Romantic period.

His collection of essays entitled *Essays in Criticism* (1865, 1888) is one of the most powerful works on literary criticism, while an essay belonging to this collection "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" explores a position of the critic in the process of analyzing, evaluating and promoting literary works. In this essay he says that creativity is better than the critical power and that man should exercise his own creative power. He admires Goethe and Wordsworth and believes that both Goethe and Byron were very productive. However, he points out that Goethe understood life and the world "much more comprehensively and thoroughly than Byron". Arnold also claims that English literature of the Romanticism possessed lots of energy, creativity and vividness and stresses out that its main weakness was its absence of knowledge. As a result, Byron lacked matter, P. B. Shelley coherency, and W. Wordsworth completeness and variety. Although he admires Wordsworth, he claims that he should have read more books.

Also, he claims that Shakespeare did not read a lot, but he was born in the time which he called a “promised land for literature”. Therefore, it is just not enough to possess a creative power but materials and elements for creation as well. In other words, in order to trigger creativity one needs ideas. The creative power depends on the ideas. He also believes that a masterpiece of literature is created when two powers come together – one comes from the man himself, his creativity and fresh knowledge, while the other comes from the time the man lives in. Both Goethe and Shakespeare lived and worked in the time permeated by fresh thought which enabled creativity to develop and enhance.

Arnold compares the French Revolution (1789) to the English Revolution (1642), saying that the former was a more spiritual event than the latter, that is, it derived “from the force, truth, and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, and from the passion with which it could inspire a multitude for these ideas”. However, the “grand error” of the French Revolution was “quitting the intellectual sphere and rushing furiously into the political sphere.” He also mentions Burke and says that he had been living in the world governed by his own ideas not by party habits. He believes criticism should show disinterestedness, that is, it should be impartial. In Arnold’s opinion, the function of criticism is to “try to know the best that is known and thought in the world”. English criticism, however, as shown in English magazines of his times, lacked such quality. Patience, objectivity, fresh knowledge, simplicity, sincerity, flexibility and constant widening of knowledge are crucial for the critics. Crucial to criticism is an objective aspiration “to learn and promote the best that is known and thought in the world”.

Arnold is a forerunner of modern critics. “The Study of Poetry” is the first essay Arnold wrote for the 1888 volume. According to Arnold, people should turn to poetry since it can console us in the time when religion cannot. This is why he stresses out the importance of learning how to distinguish good poetry from the bad one. Arnold’s essays convey the idea that people should use objective approach to criticism. He is of opinion that the best method is a comparative one, that is, a touchstone method where the literary works should be compared to the works of imminent poets such as Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton. A critic cannot judge a poet’s work objectively if he does not compare it to the great works of classic literature. The literary works should be read in their original form, so that their real worth could be detected. According to Arnold, French poetry is a precursor of English poetry. He further claims that Chaucer is the “father” of English poetry but that he lacks seriousness. Such is the case with Robert Burns as well. He is of opinion that Dryden and Pope had instead of been “genuine” poets as they composed lines and verses from their “reason” not their “soul”.

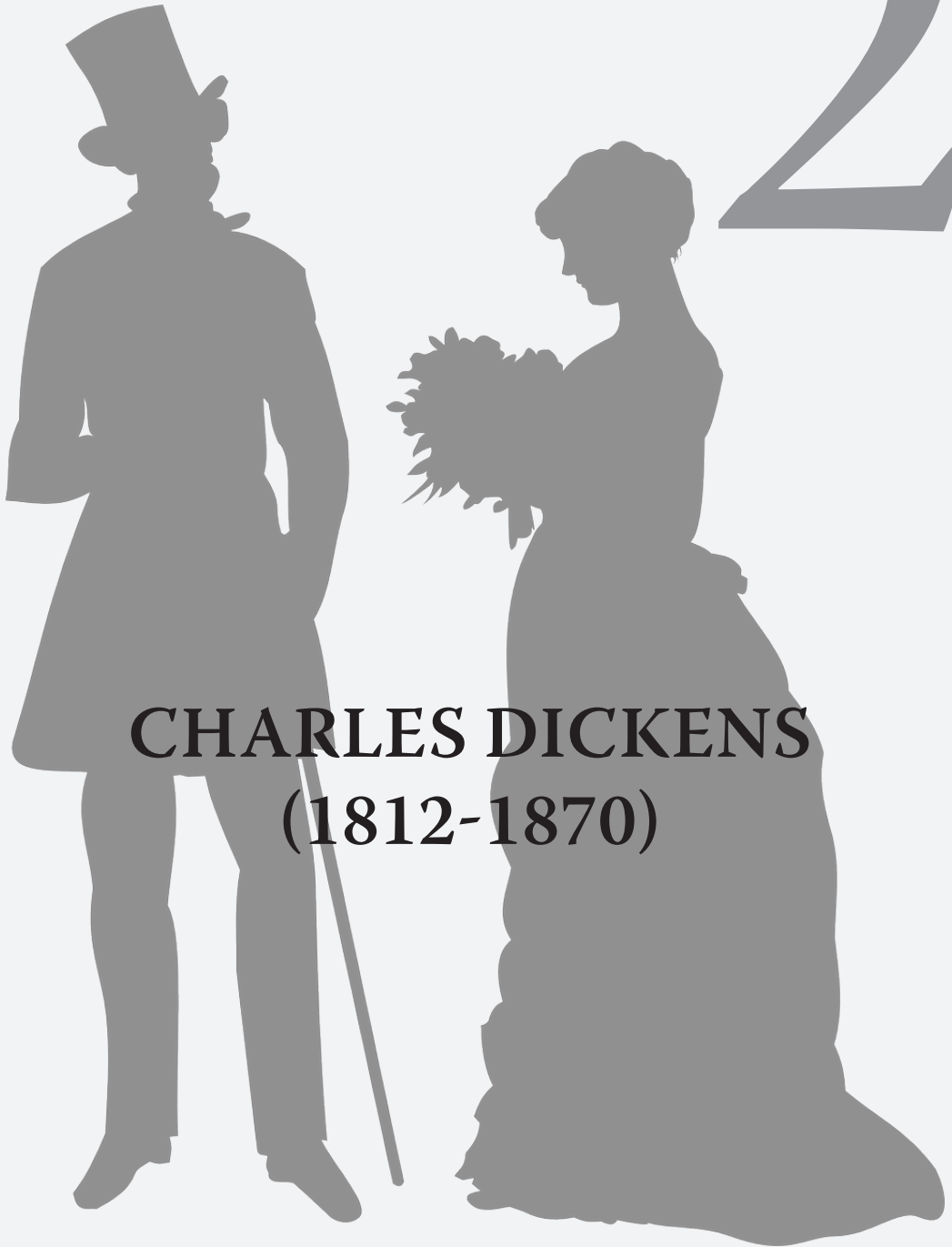
Culture and Anarchy (1869) is a collection of essays in which Arnold contrasts culture – the study of perfection – with anarchy caused by the troubled passing of the Reform Bill of 1867. He classified English society into the Barbarians (their lofty spirit, serenity, inaccessibility of ideas), the Philistines (who were moral and energetic but lacked light) and the Populace (who were blind and still raw). According to Arnold, the Philistines were the most important segment of society, so there was a need for their education and humanization. As a Christian-humanist Arnold criticized the Utilitarianism of the followers of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. According to Arnold, due to the fact that both the government and the church could no longer deal with the growing social unrest, the centre of authority should be shifted to culture that was seen as “a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know [...] the best which has been thought and said in the world”. Culture goes beyond religion as it allows the expansion of all human powers; it is opposed to utilitarianism as utilitarianism worships means rather than ends. Both the ideal of nonconformity and the ideal of the liberal reformers leads to confusion and anarchy. The former meant sacrificing all other sides of human personality to the religious, while the latter meant making the reforms ends instead of means for ensuring harmonious human existence. As Arnold notices, materialism, economic growth, Puritanism, bodily health, individual wealth all lead to anarchy because they are treated as an end. Only culture, the union of poetry (the ideal of beauty) and religion (the ideal of morality) is a means that preserve the totality of the individual.

William Morris (1834 – 1896) was a Victorian designer, artist, writer and socialist who defended the rights of the workers and promoted his ideas on the streets. He was a revolutionary force that significantly influenced ideologies of the Victorian period. While attending Oxford University, he read books by contemporary reformers such as John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle and Charles Kingsley, which prompted him to create an alternative to the dehumanizing industrial systems. In 1890 he published *News from Nowhere*, a novel about futuristic society in which he promoted his socialist ideas and romantic utopianism. In the society presented in the novel there are no private properties, no courts, no class systems, no prisons and no monetary system. People living in such a world find pleasure in nature and their work. In his book *Useful Work Versus Useless Toil*, Morris assumes that work can be pleasurable if the workers are not exploited. The pleasurable work offers the following “hopes” –those of rest, product and pleasure in the work itself. He criticizes the nature of capitalism and its uneven distribution of work among the classes (the rich produce little but consume very much, while the middle class does quite the opposite). In addition to this, the middle class is also focused on acquiring wealth to the

point of not having to work at all in the future. According to Morris, the lower class, which is financially inferior, supports the upper and the middle class, as its main focus lies on work and production. It is the lower class that produces real wealth but it also produces waste which leads to squandering natural resources (the gifts of Nature). Therefore, the production must be distributed evenly, and this could be done by abolishing the class system. He believes the society's main goal should not be satisfying the market needs developing and encouraging people's talents, creativity and skills. Finally, believed that creating a positive and encouraging working environment should make people feel more comfortable and thus more productive. It is the economic system which valued profit that led to chaos and ugliness of our modern living. He also published a narrative poem entitled "Chants for Socialists" in 1935.

Walter Pater (1839 – 1894) was an essayist, humanist, a literary and art critic, a fiction writer and a notable theorist of the Aesthetic movement. His lost belief in Christianity is reflected in majority of his works. Ruskin's *Modern Painters* inspired him to study art. His famous work on art and literature was called *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873). Its title was later slightly modified into *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*. The work is permeated with the author's reflections on the position of Christianity in Western culture in an essay on Leonardo da Vinci, his view of the role of religion in life in his essay on Botticelli, as well as his famous maxim that the art seeks to blend a subject-matter and a form. Many ideas presented within this literary work were regarded controversial as it was thought they promoted hedonistic lifestyle and amorality. In *Appreciations* (1889), his collection of essays dealing with literature, Pater explains why he enjoys the great works of art. The poems written by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Thomas Browne, and Coleridge were particularly praised within the collection.

Part 2



CHARLES DICKENS
(1812-1870)

CHARLES DICKENS

(1812-1870)



Charles John Huffam Dickens was one of the most prolific and imaginative English writers. He was a journalist, editor, social critic and a popular entertainer much loved by the public in the nineteenth-century England, America and Canada. As one of the most influential novelists of the Victorian era, Dickens produced plenty of works that are now considered classics. His works serve as a stark portrait of the Victorian society deeply divided into classes. Dickens was a great connoisseur of the circumstances under which the Victorian working class lived and worked. He was particularly sensitive to bad conditions the poor families faced in factories and prisons, as well as the cruelty and brutality to which children were exposed when forced to work on the streets or in run-down factories in order to help their family or just provide for bare necessities – accommodation and food. The reason why he was focused on depicting the hard lives of the poor lay in the fact that he drew his inspiration from his own experience. He was twice stripped off formal education: first, as a twelve-year old boy when he had to leave school and find himself a job at a boot-blackening factory by the Thames due to his father's imprisonment and inability to pay off the debt; and then, three years later, he dropped out of school and started working as an office boy in order to support the family. It was at this period of time when he started lamenting over his youth and innocence that he felt he irretrievably lost through no fault of his own.

The feelings of abandonment and betrayal by the adults crept over him so harshly that they eventually became the recurring theme in his writing.

Dickens's career of a writer commenced the moment he got a job as a free-lance reporter at the law courts in London and when he began reporting for popular London magazines. In 1833 he started publishing sketches under the pseudonym "Boz". His nickname was inspired by the fictional character called "Moses" from the novel written by Oliver Goldsmith *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766). Dickens used to call his brother "Moses" which he "facetiously pronounced through the nose, [and] became Boses, and being shortened, became Boz". This was what Dickens said about the nickname: "Boz was a very familiar household word to me, long before I was an author, and so I came to adopt it."⁵ *Sketches by Boz* was published three years later, in 1836. Although the tone of the Dickens's first book is generally comic, death is in the core of the eight sketches Dickens produced (Payne 2005: 23-24). Soon after the book's success, he met Catherine Hogarth, whom he soon married and with whom he had ten children. It is said that Dickens was particularly fond of his sister-in-law Mary who came to live with them. Unfortunately, she died at the age of 17. This is why many of his children characters were modelled on Mary (the character of little Nell /*The Old Curiosity Shop*/, Rose Maylie /*Oliver Twist*/, Agnes Wickfield /*David Copperfield*/, and Kate Nickleby /*Nicholas Nickleby*/).

Dickens's second book, *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club or The Pickwick Papers* was published in 1836. It is a series of sketches in the form of monthly serial installments, originally written to accompany humorous illustrations about sports made by an artist Robert Seymour. However, it soon turned out that the sketches became even more popular than the Seymour's illustrations. The book, which achieved great popularity and became highly successful, is about a wealthy old gentleman Samuel Pickwick who travels by coach throughout England with the members of the club he founded and makes reports on their findings.

Between 1837 and 1839, Dickens started publishing his first novel, *Oliver Twist*, in monthly installments in a magazine called *Bentley's Miscellany*. The novel, first published under the author's pseudonym and entitled *Oliver Twist, or, The Parish Boy's Progress*, is about an early life of a boy, an orphan, who experiences lots of troubles while living on his own on the dangerous streets of London, full of all kinds of criminals. The novel exploring London's notorious underworld was later published in the magazines *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. It received positive reviews and gained widespread popularity.

5 Taken from <http://mentalfloss.com/article/548057/facts-about-charles-dickens>

Between 1838 and 1841, Dickens published the following novels: *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge: A Tale of the Riots of Eighty* (also known as *Barnaby Rudge*). The first of these novels deals with the life of Nickolas Nickleby, a young boy who needs to work in order to support his family. The main protagonist of the novel *The Old Curiosity Shop* is a young girl Nell Trent, an orphan, who lives with her grandfather in his shop and who is forced to take care of him until she dies as a result of numerous life struggles she experiences. *Barnaby Rudge* is his first historical novel set in the turbulent times of the eighteenth century.

Upon the publication of the aforementioned novels, Dickens began his first American lecture tour which lasted for five months. At that time, he enjoyed great popularity in the United States and his lectures were widely attended by the public eager to hear him reading aloud his novels and speaking about the opposition of slavery. Dickens noted his impressions about American society and culture in a book entitled *American Notes for General Circulation*, where he particularly criticized American freedom of manners and materialism. Another novel that satirically depicts American culture is *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* published in 1844. In the novel Dickens satirizes the U. S. and expresses his criticism of mass behaviour typical of American citizens by depicting the life circumstances of Martin Chuzzlewit. "We are all described as a filthy, gormondizing race", it is said in the article "Courier and Enquirer", edited by James Watson Webb.

From 1843 Dickens started publishing his Christmas stories. The first one, entitled "A Christmas Carol", deals with the life of Ebenezer Scrooge, a stingy old man who despises Christmas. Apart from "A Christmas Carol", the stories "The Chimes" and "The Cricket on the Hearth" were among the most popular. "A Christmas Tree" was published in *Household Words*, the magazine he edited. He was inspired by the little red riding hood, the main character of the children story with the same name. "She was my first love," he wrote. "I felt that if I could have married Little Red Riding-Hood, I should have known perfect bliss. But, it was not to be."⁶

In 1846 Dickens published a travelogue entitled *Pictures from Italy*. The book was inspired by the trip he made to Italy with his family. It is about his impressions of his first encounter with Italian streets, the Roman carnival and the major Italian attractions. Between 1846 and 1848 his novel *Dealings with the Firm of Dombey and Son* was published in monthly installments. It follows the life of a firm owner who cannot come to terms with his son's sudden death and who has bad relationship with his daughter. The book explores several social themes such as a common practice of arranged marriages, familial relationships and the cruelty towards children.

6 Adapted from: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/548057/facts-about-charles-dickens>

David Copperfield, written between 1845 and 1850, is Dickens's semi-autobiographical work, as it is inspired by some of his personal experiences, and is considered the author's own favourite novel. The story is narrated from the perspective of the main protagonist, David Copperfield, who remembers his childhood and teenage years, his schooling and working in a factory. The novel follows the form of a bildungsroman, as it tracks the protagonist's everyday life and his process of maturation.

The novels published after 1850 are regarded as grim and more serious as they express darker view of the society and stress out the dysfunctionality of public institutions in Britain. It was in this period when Dickens experienced emotional losses in private life – his father and daughter died and his marriage broke down. The novel *Bleak House* (1852-1853), which is told by the novel's heroine Esther Summerson and an omniscient narrator, criticizes the British judicial system; the novel *Hard Times* (1854) - the first novel that is not set in London - deals with the negative consequences of the Industrial revolution, in particular, its deteriorating social and economic conditions; the novel *Little Dorrit*, published between 1855 and 1857, criticizes the British government and its concept of debtors' prisons.

A Tale of Two Cities is his second historical novel published in the magazine *All the Year Round* in 1859. As it is set during the period of the French Revolution, the novel's main action takes place in London and France. Dickens's American biographer Fred Kaplan (1988: 525) claimed that Dickens constantly identified himself with brilliant but alcoholic Sydney Carton, the protagonist of *A Tale of Two Cities*, who tried to drink his way out of depression and used alcohol at every meal. Namely, as Kaplan notices, Dickens's similarity with the character he created nine years earlier was evident at the end of his American lecture tour in 1868, when he homesickness and depression crept over him. Kaplan explains Dickens's daily routine before he had to commit himself to the act of reading in public:

On reading days, at seven in the morning he had fresh cream and two tablespoons of rum, at noon a sherry cobbler and a biscuit, and at three a pint of champagne. Five minutes before his [evening] performance he had an egg beaten into a glass of sherry, during the intermission strong beef tea, and afterward soup, altogether not more than half a pound of solid food in the whole four-and-twenty hours (Kaplan 1988: 525-526).

Dickens's novel - *Great Expectations* – was published in monthly installments between 1860 and 1861 in the periodical *All the Year Round*. It is one of his most popular novels and it follows a life of the protagonist Pip from his childhood and teenage years to his adulthood. The novel is a bildungsroman – it depicts Pip's emotional, physical and mental development. It is narrated in the first person singular, as Pip takes the role of the protagonist and the middle-aged narrator who talks about his childhood and early life long after the events in the story had taken place.

Between 1864 and 1865 Dickens published the novel *Our Mutual Friend* in the book form. It explores the power of money and expectations imposed on an individual by the society. At around the same time, Dickens had a train accident, whose side effects he felt until his death.

His second American tour took place two years later, between 1867 and 1868. According to the *New York Tribune*, "Dickens's second coming was needed to disperse every cloud and every doubt, and to place his name undimmed in the silver sunshine of American admiration". In order to redeem himself in the eyes of the Americans whose habits and behaviour he bitterly criticized, he expressed more favourable views of the country in later editions of *American Notes for General Circulation* and *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* (in the novels' appendix Dickens stressed out hospitability of the American people). While in America, Dickens gave 76 performances for which he earned \$228,000. The second American tour brought him not only money but also even greater popularity. The Englishmen were fascinated with his works and everybody enjoyed his readings of the novels in public.

Dickens died on June 1870, at the age of 58, five years after the rail crush. The only novel that he was unable to complete was *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

DICKENS AND THACKERAY

Dickens and Thackeray were contemporaries – they lived and wrote and began to make efforts to become writers at the same time. So distinctly different from each other, they were two rivals with similar extent and nature of the genius but with totally different condition of the mind – the one was a self-confident young man, almost deaf to adverse criticism, sure of the nature of his talent and able to make the best use of it, while the other, though gifted, was the very opposite of this (Trollope 1879: 18-19). Confident in his own powers and never doubting in himself, Dickens reached almost the zenith of his population and reputation at early stage of his writing career, with the publication of *Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. Thackeray, on the other hand, though one year his senior in age, struggled a lot at the beginning of his writing career as he lacked determination, self-confidence and courage to show the world his talents. His works are full of humour, love, charity, honour and modesty but it seemed there was always a faint touch of vagueness indicating he was not so sure about what he was doing.

What distinguishes Dickens's moral questioning from that of Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, and Hardy's, is his capacity of expressing social criticism and exposing the shortcomings of the government, while at the same time, keeping the faith in humanity (Hardy 1970: 3). Thackeray criticizes the society in the medium of satire, Hardy in the medium of tragedy. Their works express social pessimism and their characters are seen as the social product, wholly determined by the environment. Even the ideal characters (Dobbin or Colonel Newcome, Tess or Jude) are tempered, neutralized, qualified, or destroyed. The good deed does not light the naughty world in *Vanity Fair*, *Henry Esmond*, or *Jude the Obscure*, but generally flickers and is quenched. Those who survive are the fittest, not the virtuous. Dickens, on the other hand, is interested in nourishing the idea of the unconditional virtue in his characters. As Gredina and Allingham (2007) have noticed, Dickens's novels tend to promote the view that virtue and the power and glory of human love triumph in the end. Dickens's narrative style, characterization and themes were highly appreciated by Fyodor Dostoevsky, his Russian contemporary. Dostoevsky was impressed by Dickens's innovative use of language, in particular, his tendency to symbolically express human emotions and relationships. Dickens's themes that he used and exploited in his works were the need for the social reforms and the idea that the rich people should provide more help and show more sympathy and compassion towards the poor. Dickens gave voice to the less privileged in England. Dostoevsky did the same in Russia.

As one author remarks, "Dostoevsky saw a poetic spirituality beyond Dickens's morality" (Gervais 2006: 52). Dickens's language reflects his imagination – it is vivid, inventive, rich and appealing to the senses.

DICKENSIAN NOVEL

In order to understand Dickens's literary technique and ideas he conveyed in his works properly, we should take into consideration the historical period in which he lived and worked. The conventions in terms of writing the novels in the form of serial monthly installments are to be accounted for many technical flaws, various digressions (creating subordinate incidents), looseness of construction, inventions of plenty of subordinate characters and subplots, flat and two-dimensional characters with little or no psychological insight whatsoever, or frequent springs into melodrama and sentimentality. Dickens had no time for revising and polishing the text as he had to adjust to the magazine's schedule of publishing installments. In the Victorian period, the convention of writing a novel in installments was a rather demanding and challenging task for the authors, as they were seldom given the possibility of thinking through the whole work before publishing any of its parts.

Above all, it was the nineteenth-century public whose tastes, interests and expectations had to be satisfied that dictated many of the above-mentioned setbacks listed by the contemporary readers and critics. The practice of reading aloud contributed to the way he was writing the novels since it assumed including many dramatic elements that would enhance oral performance. As opposed to the modern times, the era of digital natives, where everything starts and ends with a "click" on the swift keyboard (Škobo and Đerić-Dragičević 2019), the Victorian Age offered a quite different lifestyle which evolved around different sorts of social gatherings (theatre-going, public reading of the novels, attending balls and dinner parties, etc.) The pace of life was slow and spending quality time with family was a typical everyday activity. The manner of writing novels in the nineteenth-century Britain was reflected in the speech Dickens held on March 19, 1858, while attending dinner organized for the Royal General Theatrical Fund, where he said that "Every good actor plays direct to every good author, and every writer of fiction, though he may not adopt the dramatic form, writes in effect for the stage."

When thinking about Dickens, we must have in mind the fact that he was a storyteller who was writing in a way that would appeal to his contemporary public. At first he was following the literary tradition of the eighteenth-century writers such as Smollett, Fielding, Sterne, Addison, Steele, and Goldsmith. He knew drama from Shakespeare's plays. However, his great talent and inventiveness were more accountable for his success and artistic development than the sources he used and the literary tradition he referred to. He experimented with the popular narrative and dramatic modes of the eighteenth century until he found the form that best suited his imaginative vision. Soon he was able to surpass the great authors of the previous century who wrote about contemporary life in a variety of ways. His passion towards theatre and career of a journalist helped him to explore the real life problems with a feeling for theatrical effects which was best reflected in the novels he wrote at the early stage of his writing career. In *Oliver Twist*, the most remarkable scenes that stay with readers long after the other events are forgotten include the one in which the main protagonist, an orphan in the workhouse, asks for more gruel, and the one that describes the death of Sikes.

The narrative continuity Dickens had to exhibit in order to follow the conventions of serial publication caused him a lot of troubles. The adaptation of his novels to weekly installments was a challenging task, since he had to pay a lot of attention to both the production of each installment as a stand-alone section with its subplots and a demand for developing a main plot within the novel as an independent unity. Numerous illustrations of his increasing preoccupation with narrative continuity can be found in Chapter IV of E. D. H. Johnson's *Charles Dickens: An Introduction to His Novels* (1969: 81-83). The following excerpt, which represents Dickens's announcement about his intention to discontinue writing *Master Humphrey's Clock*, and which is taken from Johnson's book, sums up his concerns:

I have often felt cramped and confined in a very irksome and harassing degree, by the space in which I have been constrained to move. (...) I have been sometimes strongly tempted (and have been at some pains to resist the temptation) to hurry incidents on, lest they should appear to you who waited from week to week, and had not, like me, the result and purpose in your minds, too long delayed. In a word, I have found this form of publication most anxious, perplexing, and difficult. I cannot bear these jerking confidences which are no sooner begun than ended, and no sooner ended than begun again (Johnson 1969: 81-82).

Dickens's characters and plots were products of his vivid imagination. His works are permeated with plenty of eccentric characters with extreme behaviour put in peculiar circumstances. Many critics agree on the fact that Dickens is prone to exaggerating reality. His novels offer a brand new fictional world modelled on the real world and embellished with his strong imaginative power. Most of his characters are two-dimensional. They often embody moral extremes presented in their magnified flaws and virtues. Be as it may, Dickens's world of fiction mirrored reality as he was always well aware of socio-historical and cultural context in which his novels were written and interpreted.

Dickens's critique of the Victorian society was expressed in his depiction of dysfunctional institutions, corrupted government systems and inadequate systems of value according to which people were divided into the categories based on their possessions instead of their personal qualities. This is why his novels embody his belief in humanity in general. The message he wanted to get across is that the quality of being humane should be one's utmost life goal and as such it should be nourished and promoted. As Hardy (1970: 4) notices, Dickens endeavoured to emphasize the power of human love, sympathy and forgiveness, on one hand, and a devastating power of the pressure the modern society imposes on individual, on the other. Hardy further observes that in the early novels "his encapsulated glories are those of angelic children. Oliver, Nell, Barnaby, Paul, and Florence are remarkable in their purity and their effectiveness: they seem to be shut off from corruption but have enough connection with the environment to be able to heal and rescue. The isolated purity is stressed by the darkness and twistedness of the surrounding society" (Hardy 1970: 4-5). Despite the fact that Dickens satirized the society and frequently expressed his suspicion in the government and religious institutions, he was sensitive to the taste of the public and love he possessed towards England and the English nation in general. His insistence on the social reform was fueled by the tender impulses that originated from his faith in humanity and the belief that people were genuinely good. The problem lay, as Dickens believed, in the circumstances surrounding the people and the stifling forces imposed on them by the environment. By tracing and promoting the elements of human goodness, inherent in human nature, the society could improve. The society institutions, on the other hand, are symbols of injustice, indifference and cruelty. If people succumb to their corrupting influences, the trait of humanity within them can never be truly redeemed.

DICKENS'S CHARACTERS

Dickens's characters are considered melodramatic, always on the verge of pathetic sentimentality and two-dimensional, white or black, always representing two moral absolutes – virtue or viciousness. They are also perceived as “flat” because they do not develop during the narrative and do not change through interaction with other characters. These are the reasons why their actions seem incomprehensible and unexpected and their conduct unconvincing given the situation they have been drawn into. It is the environment that shapes Dickens's characters and influences their lives. The way the characters behave was Dickens's main preoccupation. He seemed to have left the exploration of their psychological depths to the modernists. As Barbara Hardy (1970: 4) notices, Dickens focuses on the “nature of society”. The reason why he is often criticized for exaggerating reality and introducing grotesque characters is because his characters are products of the society and as such they are seen as “pretty plainly illustrations, created by needs and roles, seen as agents and victims, within a critical analysis of contemporary England” (Hardy 1970: 4).

Oliver Twist is a typical example of an unchanging character – he is the embodiment of virtue, propriety, innocence, naivety and good-heartedness – the characteristics he exhibits regardless of the situation he has been drawn into. His life seems to depend on the actions of other people in his surroundings. He does nothing to change the circumstances that affect his good fortunes. The protagonist of *Great Expectations*, on the other hand, shows good and bad sides of his personality. He can be good, kind and compassionate, but also cruel, self-centered and scornful. Through the narrative he learns about taking responsibility for his inability to pass fair judgements regarding people's characters, their actions and hidden motives. He learns to acknowledge his mistakes. He learns that no external standards of judgement (social class, rank, status, authority) can be adequate lenses through which he can determine whether the people are good or bad. He learns that he can form an opinion of others only through his interaction with them.

It is often argued that Dickens's second-rank characters and villains are more memorable, convincing and vital than his protagonists – the embodiments of impeccable morality, propriety and virtue. His unsavory and secondary characters usually possess some distinctive feature such as an identity trait that makes them unique and though easily detected. They are regularly equipped with certain bodily gestures or movements they make, or peculiarity of speech or behavior they exhibit (for instance, Jaggers from *Great Expectations* bites his forefinger;

Mr. Bumble from *Oliver Twist* is very sensitive to his cocked hat, a symbol of his pomposity, etc.). Also, it is interesting to mention the way Dickens depicts female characters in *Oliver Twist* and *Great Expectations*. Miss Havisham, Estella and Mrs. Gargery are domineering, aggressive and insensitive women, while Clara Barley and Biddy are two saintly characters. In *Oliver Twist*, Rose is an angelic figure, Mrs. Bumble greedy, and Nancy is a prostitute and a criminal who eventually shows the feelings of guilt and remorse.

However, the environment seems to play the crucial role in all Dickens's novels. The environmental pressures determine motivation for their actions and regulate their conduct of behaviour. It is the society with its corrupting forces and the inability of an individual to resist them that inflict misery upon the individual (Johnson 1969: 129). Although Dickens placed little faith in governmental institutions such as church, school, police or court, he believed the individuals might overcome their shortcomings and change, since there is a genuine goodness resting in each human being. He also believed the society could be improved if provided with proper education. Inadequate schooling, on the other hand, could be worse than ignorance. The embodiment of simplicity and genuinely good-hearted person is Joe in *Great Expectations*. This is one of the reasons why he inserted lessons on morality in his stories and tried his best to make people read his books.

The novels of Dickens are marked by looseness of construction. Along with the central plot, there are numerous subplots with various incidents and characters that play no important role whatsoever that are often seen as more of a distraction than a source of entertainment and humour. The reason lies in the manner of publication of literary works (serialization) and the convention a literary work was to follow - to amuse the audience. Dickens also deploys humour to fulfill these conventions. His humorous riffs are used in two ways: to ornament the story and make the audience enjoy his works and to produce satiric effect by exaggerating weakness or vice. He frequently uses open sarcasm and irony, letting the reader discover the true intent. Dickens perfectly combined storytelling and moralizing – his plots and subplots always entertained the public that expected to be entertained. Apart from offering lively diversion, they also conveyed some crucial lessons on morality.

OLIVER TWIST



Oliver Twist is a novel that perhaps most directly advocates Dickens's strong belief that English society is in serious need of social reform. It exposes numerous flaws that Dickens thought existed in the British justice system, religion, education and public institutions in general. Dickens used his popularity to have his criticism be heard by making the public read his books. Though written to entertain the public and trigger the readers' suspense by each monthly installment, *Oliver Twist* appeared to be a perfect reflection of the society-gone-wrong scenario, that is, the society that promoted rigid morality and proper behavior, but was deeply

engrossed in immorality - crime, hypocrisy and prostitution. The book exposes the cruelty that many orphans experienced during the nineteenth century and depicts sordid lives of many criminals that operated in that time. The novel's subtitle *The Parish Boy's Progress* is an allusion to *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the novel written by John Bunyan in 1678. Dickens suggests the virtue and benevolence should triumph eventually, regardless of the circumstances and wrongdoings of the bad ones who want to destroy them. The novel brings about Dickens's constant concern for the growing disparities between the rich and the poor and their devastating effects on the society in general; he stresses out the fact how devastating and dangerous poverty, homelessness and hunger could be if they were neglected or mistreated by the government. The unromantic portrayal of the criminals, the hardships they experience on every day basis as well as the level of brutality and cruelty they exhibit towards people in their surroundings serve as an alert for the public institutions to resort to immediate societal changes. Dickens seems to suggest that depravation of bare necessities might lead to crime. If poverty is in the core of it, the final judgement for society is its total dehumanization.

The web of circumstances that Dickens has so thoroughly interwoven makes all characters of different backgrounds become involved, at least to some extent, in the two major conflicts in the novel – the one between the main protagonist Oliver and his half-brother Monks, and the other between Fagin the Jew and Bill Sikes, a criminal gang leader. Interacting with Monks and Sikes simultaneously, Fagin becomes the key conspirator in both conflicts.

Dickens seems to suggest that people have little control over their lives since they are influenced by the actions of others and the circumstances they face. The complex situations Dickens's characters are drawn into in *Oliver Twist* trigger intricate social interactions. This is what makes the plot, embroidered with many elements of mystery and suspense, difficult to unravel. Dickens's characters are dragged into a whirlpool of events, accidents and coincidences that render his characters helpless and misfortunate. However, they are so perfectly combined with other improbabilities present within the novel and made seem so real that the reader scarcely observes them as elements that do not fit into a real-life scenario. As a well-known drama-lover, Dickens makes use of a technique called back-illumination to depict the story complications and their resolutions. This technique proved to be a great choice for keeping both the reader's interest and suspense at high level.

What some critics call denouement – unknotting of the story complications – is achieved in two levels. Oliver, who becomes involved in conflict with Fagin involuntarily, is forced to join Sikes in what turned out to be an unsuccessful burglary and eventually gets shot, which makes him utterly helpless. The moment of his biggest life agony, the climax of his misadventures, is a turning point of the novel, since his fortunes steadily improve from there. Oliver's difficulties that arose from the conflict with Fagin are resolved in Brownlow's triumph over Monks. The improvement of Oliver's condition is evidently fabricated and does not resemble real life situations. His life is influenced by the actions of others and he does nothing to initiate any significant development in his life story. Oliver and Monks, though half-brothers, are embodiments of two moral absolutes - Oliver stands for innate innocence, virtue and propriety, while Monks represents malevolent motivation and evil-spirited nature corrupted to the bone – this is what makes both characters unconvincing and their actions incomprehensible.

The climax in the second conflict, the one between Fagin and Sikes, is achieved when Nancy is murdered by Sikes, a bloody act that brings upon the ruin to all members of the criminal gang. Namely, Fagin made Sikes discover that Nancy was planning to betray him by helping Oliver. The resolution of the conflict comes with the death of Sikes who loses his balance just as he finishes tying the noose around his own neck that he had planned to use in order to escape, while the rest of the gang faces similar fate.

Dickens makes use of dreams in a very sophisticated way – the main protagonist, though half-sleeping, intuitively sense that he is in danger. In Chapter 9, though “in a drowsy state, between sleeping and waking”, Oliver notices his mother's locket and a ring among Fagin's stolen possessions (*Oliver Twist*, p. 54).

“At such times,” the author comments, “a mortal knows just enough of what his mind is doing, to form some glimmering conception of its mighty powers, its bounding from earth and spurning time and space, when freed from the restraint of its corporeal associate” (*Oliver Twist*, p. 54). Similar sense of evil approaching Oliver experiences while sleeping in Maylie’s house in Chapter 34. Oliver roused himself from sleep almost convinced that he had been observed by the two villains, Fagin and Monks:

There is a kind of sleep that steals upon us sometimes, which while it holds the body prisoner, does not free the mind from a sense of things about it, and enable it to ramble at its pleasure. So far as an overpowering heaviness, a prostration of strength, and an utter inability to control our thoughts or power of motion, can be called sleep, this is it; and yet, we have a consciousness of all that is going on about us, and, if we dream at such a time, words which are really spoken, or sounds which really exist at the moment, accommodate themselves with surprising readiness to our visions, until reality and imagination become so strangely blended that it is afterwards almost a matter of impossibility to separate the two. (*Oliver Twist*, 2000, p. 222).

Dickens uses melodrama in order to make his characters appealing to the readers. The elements of sentimentality are evident in the case of Dickens’s addressing the characters who face misfortunes - such is the case of Oliver’s sick friend who eventually dies of hunger. Dickens constantly refers to him as “little Dick” as he keeps using the adjective ‘poor’ before Oliver’s name in order to trigger compassion. Other examples of standard melodramatic technique include the doings of the evil brother, a destroyed will, assumed names (Monks), and the discovery of unknown relatives (Rose, Mr. Brownlow). Also, the romantic subplot between Rose and Harry uses elements of melodrama and undertakes the tone of a fairy tale happy ending. Rose is an angelic figure, a perfect example of a benevolent and good-hearted person who deserves her award and eventually gets it as Harry decide to place his true love towards her before his status and wealth.

Dickens deploys many levels of symbolism within the novel. Characters, setting in terms of weather conditions and physical surroundings and even obesity contribute to the novel’s symbolism. The characters’ traits and gestures reveal their true nature. For instance, Mr. Bumble is fond of his hat that stands for his obsession with status and recognition.

Dickens uses obesity as a direct indicator of one's social status. Symbolically, obesity is employed to provide stark contrast to poverty and undernourishment. The most striking examples of obesity are given in a description of the parish board that consists of "eight or ten fat gentlemen": the master of the workhouse is described as a "fat, healthy man", Mr. Bumble is depicted as a "portly person", Giles and Mr. Losberne are labeled as fat, while the one in charge of the Bow Street is described as "a portly man". Setting is used to point to dark deeds and dark passions of his characters. Negative impulses and dark forces are linked with the underworld, darkness, fog and smoke, while bad weather conditions anticipate some brutal and merciless actions undertaken by the characters. For instance, Mr. and Mrs. Bumble's encounter with Monks in Chapter 38 occurs during "a dull, close, overcast summer evening. The clouds, which had been threatening all day, spread out in a dense and sluggish mass of vapour, already yielded large drops of rain, and seemed to presage a violent thunder-storm [...]" (*Oliver Twist*, p. 241). Also, "it was a chill, damp, windy night" [...], "the mud lay thick upon the stones, and a black mist hung over the streets; the rain fell sluggishly down, and everything felt cold and clammy to the touch" when Fagin schemed with Sikes to kidnap Oliver with the help of Nancy in Chapter 19 (*Oliver Twist*, p. 121).

GREAT EXPECTATIONS



Great Expectations was published in *All the Year Round*, the magazine Dickens founded, between 1860 and 1861. The novel is written in the form of a bildungsroman. The pattern that tracks the protagonist's transition from childhood to adulthood had already been detected in many important and popular books written around that time in Europe. Goethe's book *Wilhelm Meister* (1794–1796) was the first of its kind in Europe but it soon got its own counterparts in England. In 1719 Daniel Defoe published *Robinson Crusoe* - a story about a boy that experiences an internal and external journey. More than a century later, in 1847, Charlotte Brontë published *Jane Eyre*.

The novel *David Copperfield* was published around the same time, in 1849. The physical, mental and spiritual journeys taken by the novels' protagonists contributed to their moments of epiphany and moral growth demonstrated in their deep observations about human condition.

The novel draws upon some Dickens's personal experiences. The novel's protagonist Pip dreams big dreams and has got great expectations. Like Dickens himself, he is convinced of his own talents and heads towards London in his early years in order to become a gentleman. It is in London where Pip, like Dickens, succeeds in establishing his reputation and experiencing all the benefits of material possessions.

The novel takes place in Kent and London, at the early 19th century, when the Industrial Revolution triggered the social changes that transformed the country and deepened the gap between the rich and the poor. London became a place populated with the people from rural areas searching for any kind of manual work. Dickens knew London intimately and, relying on his own experiences, decided to draw its precise map in his works (Dexter 1929; Lynch 2012). He created the most memorable images of London's rain, fog, mist and mud, its snowy Christmas and autumnal winds. He was also aware of the fact that London became an epicentre of money making and the place of many devious and shadowy actions of people who fought for their existence.

The capitalists living in London increased both - their wealth and influence – and became an important figure in creating a social, cultural and political milieu of England. The upper class cherished the Victorian values and conventions mirrored in strict and conservative morality, thorough classical education and appropriate conduct in social situations. The novel exhibits the way its main protagonist and narrator Pip, a country labourer who aspires to come to the possession of wealth and acquire social prestige, struggles to fit into the rigid Victorian conventions and expectations of the upper-class members. The novel is about the way in which Pip's social rising negatively affected his morality and personal development. Pip's dilemma – his preoccupation with individual ambition and financial stability – was particularly popular in the Victorian era. Dickens himself was critical of the capitalistic values based on money prevalence and perceived individual ambition as the embodiment of vanity. However, moral dilemma his protagonist Pip faced became more complex and serious in the Victorian period than it was initially envisaged. In the world Pip inhabited, putting principles before money meant depriving oneself of everything that was a product of culture and limiting oneself to life among simple-minded people who were good-hearted but ignorant. Moreover, staying with Joe and Biddy also meant being surrounded with evil persons such as Mr. Pumblechook and accepting conservative propaganda that the poor should render themselves to the will of God and seek happiness in the social circles God predestined to them. Pip's dilemma evolves around two questions: whether he should spend his life in the place he was born in without seeking more than he has been given or whether he should listen to the voice of ambition that calls for action despite danger, fear of the unknown and possible failure and seek better future somewhere else.

Unlike Nicholas Nickleby and Oliver Twist - the protagonists of his early novels who are passive onlookers and whose lives depend on the actions of the others - the hero of *Great Expectations* is an active participant in all events that happen around him. His misconceptions about people, real values, love and status, are the products of his inexperience, innocence and youth. Only when he learns that social status is not indicative of human values will he be able to achieve emotional, spiritual and mental growth. With his maturation comes the realization that his mistakes are made while trying to read values into things and persons that do not possess them. The moments of enlightenment occur when he learns that he should not form an opinion about others on the basis of the social class they belong to, their level of education or appearance. His expectations turn out to be wrong, since he is unable to make fair judgements. However, he does grow throughout the novel since he eventually learns how to disperse his own illusions about life in general and people in his surroundings.

For instance, Miss Havisham, whom he always believed was his secret benefactor, happened to be his tormentor who plotted against him; Estella was not a romantic heroine resembling a princess; a criminal Magwitch was initially a villain and transgressor, but not long afterwards he assumed a parent-like role in Pip's life; Joe - whom Pip rejected on the basis of his ignorance and inability to act as a gentleman - turned out to be a good-hearted person and Pip's loyal friend. Pip learns his life lessons slowly and painfully - he understands that he has been manipulated on the basis of his inexperience, youth and his own misconceptions about social classes and the values they embodied. He manages to acquire self-knowledge by accepting the responsibilities of his own actions - although used and manipulated by others, he realized he had his own share in it.

Pip narrates his life story, starting from his childhood, from the perspective of a middle-aged man. Walder (1995: 143) has noticed that some of the novel's unreal and unusual events, its elements of Gothic and melodrama seem more plausible due to the novel's first person narration. The readers are taken in by the manner of narration as they immediately take to a young orphan Pip who goes through all the miseries of an impoverished and innocent child with little prospects of his change of fortune unless a miracle happens. Pip's narration of the events concerning his childhood triggers sympathy and some sort of justification for the mistakes he makes, especially his inability to value people according to their inner qualities and virtues. What Pip does not understand is the fact that being a gentleman in Victorian England was often limited to adhering to the social conventions on the account of being cruel or showing indifference towards the poor, the elderly, and the less educated and the troubles they experienced. The middle-aged narrator, however, challenges the young Pip's convictions, his vision of the world, his understanding of certain situations as well as the opinions he forms towards the others. Although the protagonist's early years are depicted through the eyes of the innocent, gullible and immature child - the description of Pip's actions and behavior towards others, especially his ill treatment of Joe and Biddy - we cannot but notice constant feelings of guilt and shame the adult Pip shows while remembering these episodes. In Chapter 9, young Pip compares Miss Havisham and Estella with his family and feels ashamed (*Great Expectations*, pp. 60-61). Soon afterwards, the adult-narrator comments on that day in the following way:

That was a memorable day for me, for it made great changes in me. But, it is the same way with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it, and think how different its course would have been. Pause you who read this, and think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns and flowers, that would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day. (*Great Expectations*, 2000, p. 61)

Pip's narration is used as a means of revealing certain aspects of his character. His narration of certain events and depiction of certain characters are dependent on the way he perceives them. As the narrative develops, it becomes clear that his judgements and convictions turn out to be wrong and foolish. At first, Pip is disgusted by the fact that his secret benefactor is Magwitch, a convict, not Miss Havisham. His disliking of the convict, who is at first described negatively, becomes less intense and his depiction of him becomes more favourable as his affection towards him grows.

Pip's moral development and self-growth are seen the moment he starts valuing other human beings based on what kind of people they are. Throughout the novel, Pip looks down on Joe and Biddy and he easily passes judgements on Magwitch as he is labelled as a criminal and convict from the very beginning. On the other hand, he highly appreciates the people who deserve neither his respect nor admiration – Estella and Miss Havisham. He needs to learn that the human beings cannot be judged on the account of the social class they belong to. It is particularly easy to get confused and make wrong judgements while trying to figure out the true nature of people if you are not able to observe them regardless of their social class and reputation they enjoy in the society. In the eyes of Pip, Satis House used to be a symbol of wealth and status, while their inhabitants presented the embodiment of benevolence, beauty, pure love and innocence. Establishing correlations between love and food in *Great Expectations*, Barbara Hardy points out that “nothing remains of the expectations of Satis House but a gruesome parody of ceremony” (Hardy 1970: 153). The betrayal of love (that of Miss Havisham and of Pip eventually) is symbolically presented as a decaying feast at Miss Havisham's home. At first Pip was unable to discern the true character of Miss Havisham, a representative of the respected upper-class, who turned out not to be his secret benefactor and who instructed Estella to emotionally blackmail him. He eventually learns a hard lesson: morality and humanity have little to do with the social class, status and reputation. Virtues are to be found in people themselves not in their high living standards or gentlemanlike/ladylike conduct.

Estella and Miss Havisham should not be valued above Biddy. A simple but kind-hearted Joe is better person than a snobbish, rich and cruel Bentley Drummle.⁷ Pip begins to realize that he should rely on his own conscience when making judgements on others and acknowledges that the system by which he used to distinguish right from wrong was inadequate.

Pip's cruel treatment of Joe and Biddy enlightens his own immaturity and moral shortcomings. Both Joe and Biddy stand for Pip's repressed conscience. He is ashamed of Joe's simplicity, his unrefined manners, clothes and countryside dialect when he visits him in London. As he later notices, "I had neither the good sense nor the good feeling to know that this was all my fault and that if I had been easier with Joe, Joe would have been easier with me. I felt impatient of him, and out of temper with him; in which condition he heaped coals of fire on my head" (*Great Expectations*, p. 190). Pip's insensitivity becomes evident in his conversation with Biddy (*Great Expectations*, pp. 108-109). Namely, the question he asks her ("I should have been good enough for you, shouldn't I Biddy?") with the emphasis on 'you' is both insulting and cruel. Since he was not good enough for Estella, "more beautiful than ever anybody was", he might have been suitable for someone of a lower rank such as Biddy, the girl he obviously has little romantic interest in (*Great Expectations*, p.108).

In the novel Dickens explores the theme of crime, guilt and innocence through the protagonist's various encounters with the representatives of law enforcement and legal system as well as the people who disobey the law. From the beginning of the novel, we see how much effort Pip puts in trying to distinguish right from wrong. When he is forced to help the criminal, he becomes constantly tortured by the feelings of guilt. He is afraid the police will find out about his 'transgression' any moment and his guilty conscience makes him constantly see the things that point to his dreadful act. He partly helps the convict out of fear and partly out of sympathy and compassion he feels towards him. As the novel develops, Pip becomes more experienced, mature and more sure in his own judgement and inner conscience. Thus, when he helps the criminal for the second time, he does this out of affection he feels for him as well as appreciation of what he did for him. Pip as a young man evokes his pervasive feelings of guilt he had in his childhood for helping the criminal. As he waits for Estella to arrive in London, he reckons:

7 Bentley Drummle was named after Richard Bentley, the owner of *Bentley's Miscellany*, the journal Dickens edited. A rumour has it the two colleagues and friends stopped speaking to each other at one moment and that Dickens's decision to name one of his negative characters after him was his way of revenge.

I was consumed . . . in thinking how strange it was that I should be encompassed by all this taint of prison and crime; that, in my childhood out on our lonely marshes. . . I should have first encountered it; that, it should have reappeared on two occasions, starting out like a stain that was faded but not gone; that, it should in this new way pervade my fortune and advancement . . . I thought of the beautiful young Estella proud and refined, coming towards me, and I thought of the absolute abhorrence of the contrast between the jail and her.

I beat the prison dust off my feet as I sauntered to and fro, and I shook it out of my dress, and I exhaled its air from my lungs. So contaminated did I feel, remembering who was coming, that the coach came quickly after all, and I was not yet free from the soiling consciousness of Mr. Wemmick's conservatory, when I saw her face at the coach window and her hand waving to me. What was the nameless shadow, which again in that one instant had passed? (*Great Expectations*, 2000, p. 236)

Apart from learning that people's inner worth does not depend on people's social status, Pip realizes that people's inner feelings are often incompatible with the standards of moral behavior established by the law.

In *Great Expectations*, the environment determines the character's disposition. Such is the case with Miss Havisham who, dressed in the yellowish garments, sits at - what once used to be - a wedding table, in the yellowing room with its yellowing objects as symbols of former glory. The frozen watch and stopped clock at Satis House stand for Miss Havisham's inability to move beyond her painful past and continue with her life. Satis House, a symbol of visible physical decay, stands for Miss Havisham's spiritual and mental rotting and the upper-class world that Pip idolizes. It is compared to a prisoner ship with iron-barred windows, thus insinuating that those who live within it are captives themselves. Wemmick is another character who is inseparably linked to his environment. While in his office, Wemmick assumes the role of a humorless and tough law clerk. At home, on the other hand, we see him as a kind and generous person who takes care of the aged parent. Bentley Drummle stands for all the snobbishness of the upper class, while Joe and Biddy stand for benevolence, patience, innocence, sincerity and loyalty.

Dickens uses foreshadowing to create the anticipation in the minds of the readers. The convict's second coming is anticipated by the appearance of the strange man with the file in the pub as well as a sudden and violent attack on Pip's sister. Miss Havisham's wedding dress, her wedding-breakfast gnawed by mice, and the bizarre mansion she lives in suggest that there should be more to her life story and her character than it was primarily revealed. The fact that Estella is the convict's daughter is suggested by Pip's observation that she reminds him of someone. The fact that the money Pip received in order to become a gentleman comes from the convict is suggested by the man in the pub who gives him money for no obvious reason.

In addition, Dickens uses weather conditions to emphasize Pip's emotional states, his inner world and his changing outlook on life as well as to foreshadow dramatic events and crucial changes in Pip's life. In Chapter 39, for instance, just before the convict visits Pip and tells him that he is his secret benefactor, Pip observes that the day has been the worst of all, with the weather being wretched, "stormy and wet, stormy and wet; and mud, mud, mud, deep in all the streets" (*Great Expectations*, 2000, p. 267). Such a foul weather anticipates misfortune, as do "gloomy accounts [that] had come from the coast, of shipwreck and death".

Today it has been a little more than two centuries from the birth of Charles Dickens and his popularity does not decline. In 2012 Britain celebrated 200th anniversary from the author's birth. There were many film festivals about Dickens organized all over the country, people walked down the streets in London where most of his novels took place, numerous film adaptations of his novels were played and TV series entitled "Great Expectations" started to broadcast. The day of his birth, February 7, is particularly important for the citizens of Portsmouth, the town in the south of England, where Dickens was born. In 2012 a great street party was organized and Prince Charles and the actor Ralph Fiennes laid wreathes on his tomb in Westminster Abbey. Charles Dickens is the writer whose works, written in the 19th century, managed to survive the 20th century and are still popular in the 21st century, as they offer a ceaseless fight for justice, good humour, excitement and deep emotions. The fact that many scholars, critics and teachers at all levels of education are still interested in reading, analyzing and interpreting Dickens's works is a solid evidence of Dickens's timelessness. The 21st-century educators constantly revisit his works, adapting them to the new forms of media⁸ to meet the needs of digital natives (see Cadwallader and Mazzeno 2017; Nikolić 2017). Dickens succeeded in his attempt to show that the life of an ordinary man could be as interesting as that of the rich one.

8 You can find more information on how new forms of media can be used to read, analyze and interpret Dickens's works, in particular, his *Christmas Carol*, on the following link: <http://www.datadidakta.rs/blog/204/bozic-i-dikens>

Did you know?

1. In the Victorian era, one of the most popular practice was that of mesmerism, a sort of the Victorian version of hypnosis. As a passionate practitioner of hypnosis, Charles Dickens frequently tried his skills on his family and friends. One of them was his wife Catherine, a hypochondriac, who believed she suffered from various illnesses. Dickens tried to reveal the cause of her sufferings by submitting her to the act of hypnosis.⁹
2. 'The Sparkler of Albion,' 'The Inimitable,' 'Revolver' and 'Resurrectionist' were the peculiar nicknames Dickens had invented for himself.
3. As he suffered from a mild form of obsessive-compulsive behavior, Dickens combed his hair many times a day. He would preen it over 100 times on daily basis. In addition, he used to rearrange the furniture in the hotel rooms he was staying while on his lecture tours.¹⁰
4. The adjective "Dickensian" became a standard word in the English dictionary. It means being impoverished, dirty, and degraded, as the Victorian London slums Dickens depicted in his works, particularly, "A Christmas Carol", David Copperfield, and *Oliver Twist*. Dickens found his inspiration in his real-life experience, when he had to work in a factory at an early age in order to provide for the family. However, when he started publishing his first novels, he became financially stable and immensely famous in the public. Since then, his popularity has been always on the rise. When he died, hundreds of his admirers gathered at Westminster Abbey in London. There was a three-day procession of mourners at his burial. As a sort of edifice of his celebrity and popularity with the public, a Dickens World theme park in England was created. In addition, a New Orleans institution called the Pickwick Club was formed as a sort of a carnival organization inspired by Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers*.¹¹

9 Fact 1 adapted from: <https://listverse.com/2017/05/06/top-10-shocking-facts-about-famous-writers/>

10 Facts 2-3 were adapted from: <https://www.wix.com/blog/content-writing/2018/08/fascinating-facts-famous-authors>

11 Fact 4 was adapted from: <https://www.rd.com/culture/fascinating-facts-about-famous-authors/>

5. Dickens had a peculiar hobby. He regularly visited the morgue near Christmas in order to observe the corpses and their wounds. He often joined the Thames River police in their search for bodies. Sometimes he inquired about suicide attempts and conversed with the Waterloo Bridge's toll-taker.¹²
6. Dickens invented a word 'growlery'. The word was first mentioned in his novel *Bleak House* and it stands for a place to retire to when you don't feel well.¹³
7. Dickens perfected the cliffhanger ending. As the novels had been published in monthly installments, first in England and then in America, the readers were kept in suspense while waiting for their next publication. The suspense regarding the circumstances of Nell's life (and death) - the female protagonist from the novel *The Old Curiosity Shop* - was so great that in 1841 the American readers flooded the docks of New York harbor that was welcoming passengers coming from the other side of the ocean in order to check whether they had been familiar with the novel's ending.
8. Dickens had a pet raven named Grip. The raven was introduced as a character in *Barnaby Rudge*. In 1841, the author explained that it had been his wish to create a main character who would be "always in company with a pet raven, who [was] immeasurably more knowing than himself." He further claimed that he had been "studying [his] bird, and [thinking he] could make a very queer character of him."
9. As one of the most imaginative and inventive writer, Dickens coined the following words and phrases: *flummox*, *the creeps*, *dustbin*, *ugsome*, and *slangular*. Also, the more familiar words such as *butter-fingers*, *fluffiness* and the verb to *manslaughter* were first introduced by Dickens.
10. Charles Dickens, the novelist Arthur Conan Doyle and the Irish modernist poet William Butler Yeats were members of the club that used to examine supernatural processes, the acts of possession and hauntings. It was called the Ghost Club.¹⁴
11. Did you know that out of all novels Dickens had written, there was only one in which the word "kangaroo" was mentioned? The word appears in his most autobiographical novel *David Copperfield*. Another word mentioned in only one novel is "beetroot". The novel's title is *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

12 Fact 5 was adapted from: <https://listverse.com/2014/07/07/10-shocking-sides-of-famous-authors/>

13 Fact 6 was adapted from: <https://interestingliterature.com/2015/09/17/100-interesting-facts-about-famous-authors/>

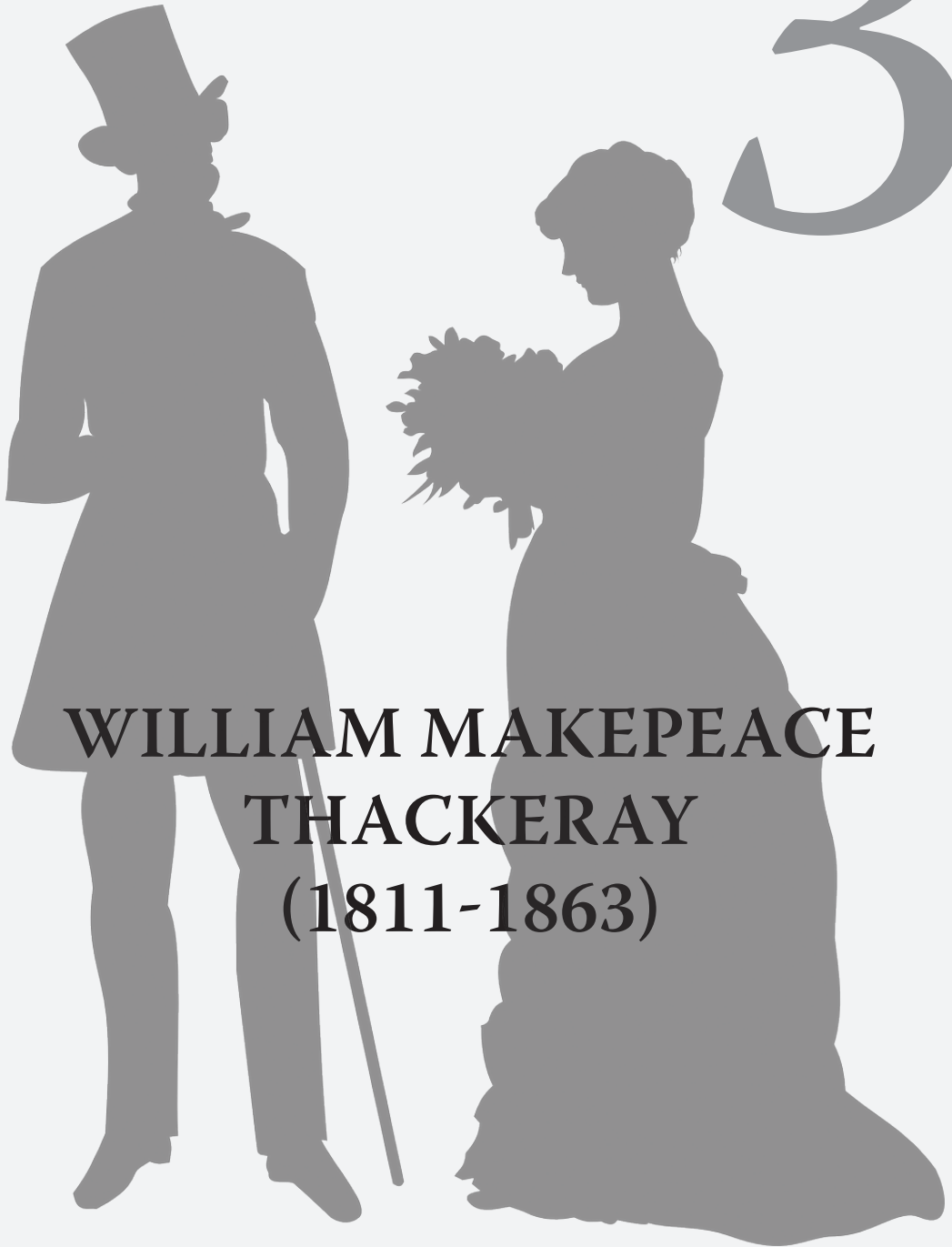
14 Facts 7-10 were adapted from: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/548057/facts-about-charles-dickens>

12. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Dickens coined a total of 247 English words.
13. Dickens's letter opener was made from his favourite cat Bob's claw.
14. Dickens used to touch things three times for luck.
15. He appeared on the British 10 pound note.¹⁵
16. Did you know that of all novels Dickens had written, there is only one without a single scene set in London? It's the novel *Hard Times*.
17. *A Tale of Two Cities* is among the first literary works in which potato chips, or, in Dickens's own words, "husky chips of potato, fried with some reluctant drops of oil", is mentioned.¹⁶

15 Facts 11-15 were adapted from <http://tonsoffacts.com/30-interesting-and-fascinating-facts-about-charles-dickens/>

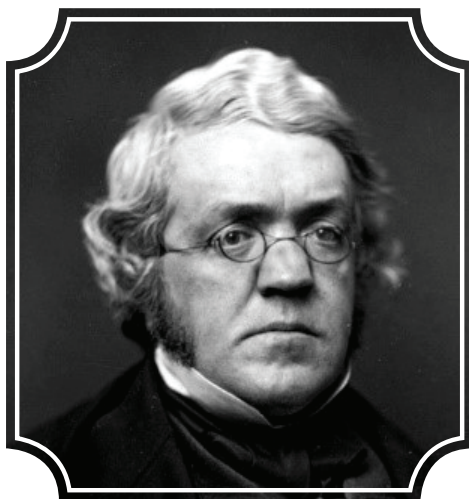
16 Facts 16-17 were adapted from: <https://www.factinate.com/people/42-little-known-facts-charles-dickens/>

Part 3



**WILLIAM MAKEPEACE
THACKERAY
(1811-1863)**

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811-1863)



William Makepeace Thackeray, an English novelist born in India, could not gain popularity and reputation as fast as his colleague writer Charles Dickens, partly because he was not quite sure in his talents, though he was undoubtedly gifted, and partly because he so easily gave in to alcohol, gambling and loose behavior with women. These were the things that prevented him from devoting himself completely to what he knew the best - writing. Although he was aware of his own writing power, he had little confidence that his work would be successful. The fear that his weaknesses would always be more dominant than his personal strengths prevented him from moving forward and advancing faster his writing career. Always doubting his readers, his publishers, his price and even himself, he had a tendency to slip into idleness. At one point he even stated that the readers were getting tired of his novels and when he turned fifty he said that a man at this age should not commit himself to the act of writing a novel (Trollope 1879: 16). This is why his biographer Geoffrey Trollope referred to him as a “literary Bohemian” (Trollope 1879: 17).

Thackeray acknowledged that Dickens's imagination was more vivid and rich than his ever was. He was both Dickens's idol and rival aware of his great writing capacities. Thackeray was fascinated with his contemporary's ability to express atonement, happiness and sorrow in his works – he particularly stressed out the scene in which the death of a little Dombey from *Dombey and Son*, Dickens's novel that appeared in the same period as his *Vanity Fair* (1847), was described (Payne 2005: 65). With the publication of *Vanity Fair*, it became clear that Thackeray was able to present different sides of human nature in a witty and amusing way. By pointing out Becky and Amelia's economic, ethical and psychological differences and inserting a series of historical events into the narrative, Thackeray offered a deeper insight into his characters' personalities and provided the reader with a sort of explanation of his characters' decisions and judgements. David Payne (2005: 67–68) has noticed that Thackeray was able to join a distinguished circle of novelists in the Victorian Age when he started focusing on the weaknesses in Dickens's novels, or, in other words, when he became "Dickens's best critic". Both Thackeray and Dickens started their writing careers the moment they became regular contributors to some of the leading British magazines. Dickens's imagination was the main source in producing his impressive range of characters. His contemporary Thackeray "sought to present social life as he observed it, in its unvarnished reality, creating a touchstone of social realism for novelists like Trollope, and critics like Lewes and David Masson" (James 2006: 141).

Both authors have a tendency to describe their characters through their interaction with one another. However, Thackeray's secondary characters, no matter how unimportant and minor they are, must be at least somehow linked to the plot, while Dickens cares little about whether they have or do not have any function in the plot. Unlike Dickens, Thackeray is exclusively focused on what is considered to be important – if an interesting scene or event has no relevance to the plot, he ignores it. Thackeray's main preoccupation is to meticulously present the way his characters react to the situations and circumstances happening in their surroundings. He tries to find the root of the incidents and explain what caused his characters to behave, think and feel the way they did, but the comments he frequently inserts in his novels weaken the dramatic effect. The biggest Thackeray's drawback is, as Lord David Cecil notices, discursiveness (Cecil 1934). Thackeray has a tendency to employ redoubling as a narrative technique – *The Virginians* being the first with 18 major and 46 minor redoublings, and *Vanity Fair* the second in number of redoublings. According to John Lester (1954: 393), *Vanity Fair* has got 16 major and 44 minor redoublings. Lester believes that Thackeray used redoublings so that he could overcome certain technical issues and camouflage the motivational factors of his characters of which he was not always fully aware (Lester 1954: 394).

On the other hand, most Thackeray's novels begin *in medias res*, whereby the readers' interest is immediately raised as they become at once involved in the story. For instance, *Vanity Fair* opens with Becky Sharp throwing the "Dixon" out of the coach (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 9). The form of Thackeray's works, as well as the narrative technique employed depended on the method of publication – it was a necessity to adapt the narrative for publication in instalments, so his stories had to be shaped accordingly. Very often he ended an instalment with a cliffhanger in order to keep the readers in suspense¹⁷ – as it is the case with the Chapter 32 that ends with the news revealing the tragic fate of George Osborne "lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart" on the field of Waterloo (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 304), or the conclusion of Chapter 14, where Becky, having been proposed by Sir Pitt Crawley, shocks the readers by responding that she has been "married already" (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 133).

This supports Cecil's comment that the real subject of all the author's novels is life in all its diversity: "Vanity Fair as seen in the life of a young man, Vanity Fair as seen in the life of a family, Vanity Fair as seen eternally the same in the life of the past" (Cecil 1935: 85; see also Dodds 1941: 113). The narrative is full of allegoric scenes employed to embody lessons on morality. Each of these scenes is heralded by a generalized comment conveying general truth of character and behaviour, as in Chapter 30: "Rebecca always knew how to conjure away those moods of melancholy" (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 273). Thackeray makes use of the author's commentary in order to help the readers differ the author's attitude from the words uttered by his characters and their actions, especially the negative ones. However, it should be mentioned that the author in Thackeray's novel does not coincide with Thackeray himself, although Thackeray frequently uses it to express his own opinion. He also uses author's digressions and describes the events and characters that are not linked to the plot in order to provide the readers with more diverse view of the society in *Vanity Fair*.

However, these digressions divert readers' attention and often affect the impression of novel's unity and its cohesiveness. The author in *Vanity Fair* does not let himself nor the readers explore inner states of the characters. The tone of the comments often differs. Sometimes the readers have the feeling that the author is very close to his characters, sometimes he acts as someone who is distant and detached, and sometimes he acts as if he was God who passed judgements on them. Modern readers appreciate implicit comments the most, as it is the case in the passage describing the battle of Waterloo: "No more firing was heard at Brussels – the pursuit rolled miles away.

17 Dickens also used cliffhangers in his novels (see Butt, "The Comparison of David Copperfield," *Dickensian*, XLVI /Spring 1950/, 92).

Darkness came down on the field and city; and Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart" (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 304). The author's comments are important since they force the readers to form the opinion of the characters. They also represent a rational layer of the novel, indicating that the characters themselves are not prone to introspection. Thackeray's aim is to show that people in general are selfish, unreasonable, and vicious, always fighting for absurd goals.

As Lester (1954: 408) notices, Thackeray's main concern is not depicting each character and his/her individuality - for instance, he forgets the characters' names, frequently refers to them as 'puppets' and uses stereotyped names for minor characters. His persistent use of comments that contain pieces of worldly wisdoms points to the universal human sentiments and experiences and reveals the timeless traits of human nature. Discerning the worldly wisdom and truth from the scene and reflecting on the essence of the characters and events are far more important for Thackeray than presenting the scene vividly.

Although he was born in Calcutta in India, Thackeray was recognized as one of the most important British novelists of the 19th century. He was also a social critic who gave an accurate description of London's upper-class society, particularly its snobbery, money-loving, vices, hypocrisies and double standards. Due to his Indian origin and early years spent in India, Thackeray included numerous elements of Anglo-Indian culture in his works, as evidenced in the novels *Vanity Fair*, *The Tremendous Adventures of Major Goliath Gahagan* and *The Newcomes*. When his father, an Indian civil servant, suddenly died and his mother remarried few years afterwards, Thackeray left India and went to England to attend a boarding school called Charter House. The Slaughter House in the episodes in *Vanity Fair* and Grey Friars in *The Newcomes* were modelled on the Charter House, where he suffered bullying and other types of abuses that left deep and bitter marks on his childhood experience. Since his father left him large amount of money (17,000 sterling), he did not feel obliged to take up any profession. As a teenager he attended the Trinity College in Cambridge only to leave it after two years. Then he went to Weimar, where he was introduced to Goethe and German Romantic literature and where he started expressing skepticism about religious doctrine. Thackeray's German experiences were described in *Vanity Fair*, in the episodes set in a small German principality called "Pumpnickel". When he came to England to continue his schooling, he was old enough to have the right to inheritance. However, his fortune was spent very fast – some portion of money was lost at cards, some was invested and the rest was spent on launching the magazine with his stepfather, which turned out to be a failure.

All these resulted in his financial ruin. Another unsuccessful try at finding a suitable occupation was his attempt to study Law. The financial crisis he was experiencing made him work harder. He became a journalist and a regular contributor to *Fraser's Magazine*, *The Morning Chronicle* and *The Foreign Quarterly Review*.

While in Paris, he decided to practice painting. There he met Isabella Shaw, a pretty young woman with a beautiful voice. He married Isabella soon afterwards and she became a model for the character of Amelia Sedley in *Vanity Fair*. Isabella became suicidal and mentally unstable after she gave birth to their third child. Though he tried his best to find the cure and took her to numerous spas and sanatoriums, she was unable to fully recover, so she spent the rest of her life in French asylums.

Thackeray became popular only after he started publishing the novel *Vanity Fair* during 1847 and 1848 in the popular *Punch magazine*. The novel was published in 1848 with a new and provocative subtitle, 'A Novel Without a Hero'. Today there are plenty of film and mini-series adaptations of his novel, which speaks of its popularity and relevance. There is also a 1911 black and white silent version of the novel.¹⁸ The novel was written while he was on the staff of the aforementioned periodical. It was completed when he turned thirty-seven. Afterwards he published *Pendennis* (1848-1850), *The History of Henry Esmond* (1852), *The Newcomes* (1853-1855) and *The Virginians* (1857-1859).

Thackeray started publishing *Pendennis* in monthly installments at the same time when *David Copperfield* was released, which resulted in his being compared to Dickens, whose popularity he could not excel. The novel focuses on snobbery and mercenary marriages and contains some autobiographic elements – bullying at the boarding school, troublesome relationship with his mother and London's publishing climate. Many critics agree on the fact that his novel *The History of Henry Esmond* has been the most carefully planned and written of all his novels since it is produced in the form of a book (Dodds 1941: 194, Monsarrat 1980: 285, Lester 1954: 396). It is a novel with a considerable amount of historical research and infused with, as Thackeray comments, "cutthroat melancholy" (Monsarrat 1980: 285). The novel takes place at the early eighteenth century, during the reign of Queen Anne. It caused lot of sensationalism upon publication owing to the novel's unconventional ending. The readers were surprised to find that the novel's protagonist agreed to marry a woman much older than him and who initially used to be his motherly figure.

18 The most recent and one of the best takes on the novel *Vanity Fair* is a 2018 miniseries produced by Mammoth Screen. Olivia Cooke played Becky Sharp, Tom Bateman took the role of Captain Rawdon Crawley, while Michael Palin played the author of the novel. For more information on this subject click on the link <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt7076630/>

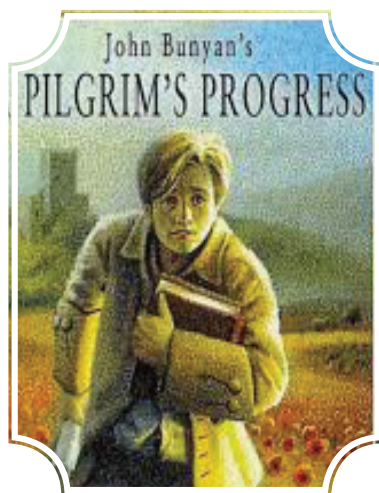
History and past in the novel are not presented in the way they are depicted in Walter Scott's historical novels. In his work of historical fiction, Thackeray uses both imagined and real characters and the combination of the first and the third persons. His main objective was to depict the lives of the upper-middle class and the court and present historical figures as common people in everyday surroundings, dispersing the mythical aura about them. He seeks the cause of their actions in private motives, neglecting the social factor as the main reason of their political maneuver. Swift, Addison and Steele, famous writers whose style he tends to imitate in this novel, particularly Addison's, are presented as common people, engrossed in their everyday activities.

The Virginians is a sequel to *Henry Esmond*, set in the period before and during the American Revolution, with a mild portrait of George Washington and the plot frequently interrupted by numerous narrative intrusions, which resulted in description of the key event – the Revolutionary War - almost at the end of the book.

Thackeray was a well-known social critic particularly sensitive to vanity and hypocrisy, which became the major themes in a satirical work entitled *The Book of Snobs* published in 1847 and in his later novel *Vanity Fair*. Unlike Dickens whose main protagonists were always virtuous and modest, Thackeray chose unvirtuous Rebecca Sharp as a central character for his novel *Vanity Fair* – the novel that helped him to achieve a name and reputation through the country and establish himself in a literary society. As Trollope notices, Thackeray was “always, within his own bosom, encountering melancholy with buffoonery, and meanness with satire” (Trollope 1879: 32).

VANITY FAIR

The title of the novel *Vanity Fair* derives from John Bunyan's allegorical work *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), in which two pilgrims, Christian and Faithful, are diverted on their journey towards salvation by the sights and sounds of *Vanity Fair*. The title itself has multiple symbolic meanings. The metaphor of the world as a huge fair has its origin in medieval literature. William Langland used it in his poem generally known as *Piers Plowman*, an allegory with a variety of religious themes written in one of the Middle English dialects. In Renaissance Ben Jonson used the same metaphor in *Bartholomew Fair*, a Jacobean comedy in five



acts set in Smithfield, a site of slaughterhouses and public executions, which qualified for a fitting place for a summer fair that was part commerce and part spectacle. Buying and selling goods and commodities is the key concept in *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Vanity Fair*. A shocking thing about Thackeray's novel is the fact that the objects for sale include human beings who are transformed into merchandise. By choosing such a symbolic title for his novel, Thackeray offers a deeper picture of the world that goes beyond the mere presentation of the English society described in his novel. It is suggested in the novel's title that the characters aspire for the things that are desirable but transient. It also shows how wrong and futile it is to appreciate the things that can be bought and sold more than the qualities such as patience, modesty, sympathy, or honesty. The title suggests that the novel's plot and characters are embodiments of human temperament. The protagonists of Bunyan's novel manage to overcome the limitations of the places they go to and move from and learn from their deceptions. Thackeray's protagonists, on the other hand, are unable to do so despite various trips they take. The word 'vanity' refers to people's worshipping the false values. Therefore, it could be said that exposing the weaknesses and fallacies of the people that worship false values is the novel's primal theme.

Thackeray was of opinion that people's actions were fueled by their selfish needs. This is why the quest for material gain and greed are in the core of the novel. Hence, it is not difficult to understand why Thackeray's novel is actually a *Novel Without Hero*.

The chief protagonist is, as it is the case with all Thackeray's novels, the society itself. There is no heroic conduct in any of the characters, and the vicious and the absurd are more thoroughly depicted than the benevolent. There is also little soul-searching and we know little about the characters' private thoughts and dilemmas. We learn about them through their actions and the author's comments pointing to the characters' duplicity and dishonesty. The characters, wandering around the market-place, only pretend to be friendly, cordial and kind to each other. We often hear an ironic "Our poor [Emmy]", or "Our darling [Rebecca]" from the author when he addresses his female protagonists. The author's intention is to mock his characters' actions and behaviour, to stress their fascination with money and social status and to point to the fact that most of them try to hide their real motives – getting money, position or advantage – under the guise of doing good. Thackeray's mocking Chapter 34 entitled "How to Live Well on Nothing a Year" serves as a sort of a manual with tips on how to become rich and successful. Thackeray believed that it was easier and more efficient to get some moral messages across by bringing to light the people's vices, foibles and deceptions than by displaying their virtues. Moreover, people resembling Rawdon Crawley are more likely to be encountered in reality than such as Captain Dobbin. However, his characters are not embodiments of moral extremes – even the vicious and the sinners are endowed with a redeeming trait, that is, some little trait of humanity. The characters that cherish human relationships and do not stoop to false values of Vanity Fair are Amelia, Captain Dobbin, and Lady Jane. It is also suggested that the next generation, the children Georgy and little Rawdon, may grow up into better people than their grandfathers used to be.

Rebecca Sharp, born a pauper, knows she does not stand a good chance of marrying someone above her social status. She is a young, clever and charming woman, who is scheming for self-advancement. In order to get money and jewels, she will do whatever it takes, even if it means seducing such a person as Joseph Sedley, Amelia's fat and awkward brother, or abominable and old Lord Steyne. She uses lies, charm and witticism to ensnare men and is compared to Circe and Clytemnestra. She does not change as the narrative unfolds – though she experiences suffering, she stays utterly false, selfish and covetous, unable to love anyone but herself, which becomes evident in her treatment of her son. On the other hand, her friend Amelia, though benevolent and sympathetic, does not impress the audience. She lacks independence, assertion and activity. Her passivity and narrow-mindedness make her unconvincing and uninteresting in comparison to Becky's vivacity, readiness to please, witticism, viciousness and metamorphosis. The fact that Becky uses and outwits most of the people she comes into contact with makes them look as if they were not better than her, only more stupid.

Her vicious actions mostly affect those who have the same qualities as her. Captain Dobbin is excluded since he was neither hypocrite nor snob. Becky wins the sympathy of the readers partly because they understand she is living in a world that put money before everything else. Intelligent and capable as she is, Becky is well aware of her options – one of them is to marry above her status and have others to serve her, the other is to remain at her current position – always in need of money and at someone else's disposal. As a social outsider, Becky plays by the rules dictated by the world and wins because she has the capacity to do so. As the concept of marriage market was one of the conventions in the Victorian Age, the lower-class members (women in particular) were not left with much choice. Becky, with no financial support and family inheritance, does everything in her power to provide better living conditions for herself. She does not deceive herself that she is better than she is, as many in *Vanity Fair* do. She is lively and worships life. She embodies Darwinian principle of the survival of the strongest, which leads us to the crucial question in the novel – does the author insinuate that the only way to survive in the world governed by money and possessions is to assume the role of a predator?

The narrator constantly reminds the readers that he himself belongs to the world of *Vanity Fair* and that he has no right to pass judgements on Becky. Sometimes the narrator, as being an inseparable part of *Vanity Fair* himself, acts as a “Manager of the Performance” in total control of his players on the stage. He also admits that, on some occasions, his role is limited to standing by the side and witnessing the foibles of the inhabitants of *Vanity Fair*. Thus, the narrator in *Vanity Fair* should not be confused with the author of the novel. When Thackeray presents himself as this character, the comments he makes may not be objective and accurate and they do not need to coincide with the author's. The narrator is Thackeray's fictional creation. He is masking the real author who “knew he must not retreat too far”, as Geoffrey Trollope remarks (Trollope 1963: 61); he is, as I. M. Williams notices, Thackeray's ‘created showman’ (Williams 1992: 183-184). Some critics, however, claim that Thackeray depicted the character of Becky with sympathy (Rintoul 2003: 60). At some point in the novel Becky considers the idea of being moral and concludes that she “could be a good woman if [she] had five thousand a year” (Thackeray 2001: 406). Becky's view of morality dependent on economic situation is supported by the author's prevailing depiction of the inhabitants in *Vanity Fair* as those who put possessions before human values. If morality can be treated as a category dependent on money, one cannot but wonder whether it is easier to be moral if you are rich or if you are poor. However, as Dickens's biographer John Forster notices, vice and folly are never made alluring in Thackeray's novel though they possess some sort of charm in themselves (Forster 2003: 57).

Foster claims that Becky's victims are made so mainly by their own faults, vices and follies: for instance, Dobbin and Amelia's unsuspecting virtue and innocence, Sir Pitt Crawley's inherent vice, Rawdon's ignorance and uneducated nature, Joseph Sedley's selfishness and his feeble and degrading nature, and George Osborne's heartlessness and acting without proper consideration (Forster 2003: 57). It seems that the novel celebrates Becky's potential for transformation and her ability to reinvent herself in an unyielding world that worships false values.

In the novel history is made alive by means of many short and distinctive images. Unlike many Victorian writers whose aim was to present English history as heroic and divine – one of them being Thomas Carlyle in his book entitled *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841) – Thackeray did not have a tendency to romanticize it. The chapters describing the Battle of Waterloo (27-32) expose the true consequences of war and call into question the concept of hero in war history. In the Battle of Waterloo, the two opposing parties were the forces of the Duke of Wellington and those of Napoleon. Thackeray chooses a few dramatic scenes that take place at the battlefield to sum up the outcome. Amelia stands for all misfortunate widows, a wounded young man Stables is a symbol of the bloodshed and the image of dead George Osborne with his face down and the bullet in his heart, is the climax of the war, its brutality and mercilessness. There is no sentimental hero-worship and military glory. The narrator wisely observes that, throughout history, poetry “has always chosen soldier for a hero” and asks whether men “admire bravery so much, and place military valour so far beyond every other quality for reward and worship” because they are “cowards in hearts” (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 283). This rhetoric question seems to point to the fact that people are more fascinated with the noisy clamour of arms than with a subtle act of kindness. Why is the act of heroism often identified with the act of fighting and blood-shedding?

Also, human wishes seem vain when facing death. At one point of the novel, when old Mr. Sedley dies, the narrator addresses the readers and asks questions that reach the depths of one's conscience and soul: Is it better to “die prosperous and famous, or poor and disappointed? To have, and to be forced to yield; or to sink out of life, having played and lost the game?” (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, pp. 587-588).

The novel offers a wide range of characters that are members of different social classes, and can be regarded as an accurate social document pointing to the period when the British Empire was the leading world's power. The position and power in the novel are presented in depicting the lives of the aristocracy (the Steynes and the Crawleys), the city merchants (the Sedleys, the Osbornes, the Dobbins), and the representatives of the people that earned their money in colonized countries (Miss Shwarz, Joseph Sedley, Boggley Wollab).

The novel is set in turbulent times, when the process of industrialization and urbanization resulted in the emergence of big merchant companies, the increasing power of the East India Company, intense public interest for capitalism, and potential for investment, speculation and stock market trading. On the other hand, a high rate of trading and speculation brought about a financial downfall to many families in the Victorian Age. One of the major financial crisis occurred between 1816 and 1825. In the novel, the Sedleys face financial difficulties as the head of the family, Mr. Sedley - the wealthy owner of a merchant company - loses everything while trading in stock markets. Another way of wealth acquisition is embodied in dealings of the aristocratic family Crawley. Focusing on their aristocratic line and inheritance issues, Thackeray shows how inherited money and properties allow the family members illegitimate privilege and power. Apart from aristocratic lines, inheritance and lucrative trading business, wealth and social position can be acquired through a successful marriage-market. Most of the single and respectable middle-class women were forced to seek financial security through arranged marriages. The marriage agreement between the two households, as the one between the Osbornes and the Sedleys, is bound to be broken when the Sedleys lose their fortune.

The novel is rich in symbols. Becky's gradual social advancement links her to a spider. For instance, Becky is compared to a spider and Greek goddess Clytemnestra to stress out her power and capacity of destroying someone's life. Just as the spider uses web to entrap its victims, Becky entangles Joseph Sedley and eventually destroys him by sucking his money, vitality and personality from him. Becky is also compared to Clytemnestra, Agamemnon's wife, who was plotting her husband's demise. Becky metaphorically does the same first to Joseph, whom she seduces and manipulates and is about to kill, and then to her husband Rawdon. Namely, in Chapter 67, we learn that Jos is living in fear of Becky, who has taken control of his financial affairs (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 655). When Dobbins offers Jos to take him away, he replies that they "mustn't say anything to Mrs. Crawley", since she would have killed him if she had known it (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 656). We then learn that Jos died after three months under dubious circumstances and that Becky received his insurance money. It is also insinuated in the novel that Becky is suspected of some "infamous conspiracy" (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 657). The fact that Becky's lawyers 'Messrs Burke, Thurtell & Hayes' got their names after the three actual Victorian murderers supports the idea that there is a strong possibility that Becky committed a crime. 'Becky's Second Appearance as Clytemnestra' – a caption that accompanies this chapter – exposes Becky as a potential murderess. She is standing behind the curtain with what might be a poison while Jos and Dobbin are having a conversation.

Due to the ambiguous ending of the novel, many scholars have speculated about whether or not Becky was capable of murdering Joseph Sedley for his money.¹⁹ This brings us to another parallel between Becky and Circe – a Greek goddess famous for her vast knowledge of potions and herbs and her ability to transform her enemies to animals. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Circe is the archetype of a predatory female, a sexually free woman and enchantress who lures and manipulates the men.

Another symbol in the novel are the Iphigenia Clocks in the Osborne household. The clocks symbolize the family's preoccupation with money and social position. The story of Iphigenia, Clytemnestra and Agamemnon's daughter who was offered as a human sacrifice in war, is echoed in Old Osborne's attempt to force George to marry for money.

The story from the Bible about Hannah who gives up her son to the Lord has been used ironically in *Vanity Fair*. Namely, Amelia decides to separate from her son and send him to Old Osborne's household, so that he could use all the benefits of the people belonging to the upper class.

Thackeray satirizes the upper-class society living in *Vanity Fair* by choosing symbolic names for his characters, employing irony and creating humorous situations. Sometimes the author uses names that suggest death or the act of killing such as Lance (the surgeon), Sir Thomas Coffin (the celebrated judge), Quill (a cashier), Pestler (the apothecary), etc. Thackeray also uses names to portray characteristics such as Mrs. Highflyer (a social climber), Mr. Smirk, Mr. Crisp, Lord Methuselah (an old man), Lord Steyne, Becky Sharp, the Crawleys (crawl up the social ladder), etc. The names of the places have symbolic meaning such as Gaunt House, Lord Steyne's property, symbolic of his empty existence despite a luxurious lifestyle and a fashionable mansion.²⁰

Although Thackeray is sentimental and emotional, he does his best to repress his romantic feelings and give way to irony and satire. His satire is directed toward discrepancy between people's possibilities and appetites, their imagination and reality. It focuses on the irony of life, where the villains are rewarded and the just punished, the irony of the fact that the vices are interesting and virtues boring, and finally, the irony of man's aspiration to equality and his shallow admiring of the titles and positions. The author's final comment in the end of *Vanity Fair* is summed up in two words - "vanitas vanitatum". He goes on asking rhetoric questions that reveal his opinion of the world we live in:

19 For further information see John Sutherland's book *Is Heathcliff a Murderer?: Puzzles in Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 1998. Namely, Sutherland argues that Becky is innocent, but the ambiguous ending leaves the room for exploration of the circumstantial evidence provided in the text.

20 Further reading and discussion: find the examples of Thackeray's ironic comments on life and society in general.

Which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire? Or, having it, is satisfied? – Come, children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out (*Vanity Fair*, 2001, p. 657).

Did you know?

1. William Makepeace Thackeray cried when he read the novel *Jane Eyre*. His butler witnessed his tears.²¹
2. Leslie Stephen, father of Virginia Woolf, was first married to Minie, the William Makepeace Thackeray's daughter.²²

21 Fact 1 was adapted from: <https://interestingliterature.com/2015/09/17/100-interesting-facts-about-famous-authors/>

22 Fact 2 was adapted from: <https://booksonthewall.com/blog/10-interesting-facts-10-famous-authors/>

Part 4



SISTERS BRONTË

SISTERS BRONTË

(1818 – 1848)



EMILY BRONTË

(1818 – 1848)

Emily Brontë spent her childhood and most of her life in a county in northern England, on the Yorkshire moors, a part of the country her fictional land of Gondal was modelled on. Her parents, Maria and Reverend Patrick Brontë, had six children: five daughters (two of which died in childhood) and a son Branwell. Emily and her two surviving sisters, Charlotte and Ann, had been attending a boarding school at Cowan Bridge, a place that her sister Charlotte used for creating fictional Lowood in her immensely popular novel *Jane Eyre* (1847). After two of her sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, got sick and died, Emily decided to come back and stay at her native Haworth until her death. She had also worked as a governess in Yorkshire before she went to Brussels with her sisters Charlotte and Anne to improve her proficiency in French. The sisters came to idea to start their own school at home. However, the school had no pupils and they had to close it.

When their father gave them a box of wooden soldiers, Charlotte, Emily, Anne and their brother Branwell started playing with them, and when they grew up, they began writing about imaginary lands they created in their childhood and which they called Angria, Gondal, Gaaldine and Oceania. They noted down the stories they invented in small notebooks they made themselves and which were found at the beginning of the 21st century. The process of inventing stories was crucial for an improvement of their narrative capabilities. The fiction written by sisters Brontë resulted from the fact that they had been leading secluded lives in an isolated and remote part of England. It is not surprising then why it is said for Emily that she “become introverted, self-divided and ill-at-ease with most other people” in her teenage years (Chitham 65). The family grew up in a rural environment where the latest cultural innovations could not be felt. Perhaps this was the reason why they were more focused on describing nature in their works than the problems emerging from the process of industrialization that the people living in a city were well aware of. Love of nature and spiritual freedom were crucial elements of their fiction. They were indifferent to social snobbism and Victorian stereotypes. Their writing differed from the writings of other authors as they were less burdened by moral conventions and more concerned with the position of woman and her emotional life. All of them were bookworms – they were fond of historical novels written by Sir Walter Scott and the poems of Lord Gordon Byron. Apart from that, they were into philosophy and natural sciences owing to their father’s love of reading and his huge home library. The sisters were very talented, and their creativity was also expressed in various paintings and sketches they made. They were particularly fascinated by John Martin, a popular English painter, who was known for depicting fantastic visions of vast landscape and presenting religious motifs on his paintings. His cataclysmic panoramas were widely popular and appreciated in Brontë’s family (James 2006: 106-107).

Charlotte was the first to discover Emily’s talent for writing. She accidentally found Emily’s manuscript of *Gondal* verses, which she described as being “not at all like the poetry women generally wrote” since they were “condensed and tense, vigorous and genuine” (Jack 1988: 359). Emily’s manuscript prompted her to work on publishing *Poems* – the sisters’ mutual collection of poems published under their male pseudonyms of Currer (Charlotte), Elis (Emily) and Acton (Anne) Bell in 1846. The following year the sisters published three novels under the Bell pseudonyms: *Jane Eyre* (Charlotte), *Agnes Gray* (Ann) and *Wuthering Heights* (Emily). *Wuthering Heights* had been released under the author’s real name two years after Emily’s death. Charlotte edited the novel and initiated its publication.

In 1848 Charlotte and Anne revealed their true identities to their publishers. In the same year Anne Brontë published *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. It was during the same year that their brother Branwell, a drug addict and an alcoholic, died. Emily died shortly afterwards of tuberculosis at the age of 30, so *Wuthering Heights* (1847) remained the only novel she had written during her lifetime. As one of the scholars has noticed, "Emily Brontë wrote so little in her short life that it is difficult to appraise her work with any surety. One point is generally agreed upon: that in both her prose and poetry there is, in spite of minor faults, a rare power" (Lieder 1938: 287-288). Such was the case with *Wuthering Heights*, a novel with a romantic plot and tragic ending, that became a work of classic in both the English and world's literature. The novel that deals with romantic relationship between the novels' protagonists, Catherine and Heathcliff, springs from the courtly love traditions of the twelfth century. However, it is important to point out that the novel goes beyond the description of romantic love - it heralds a new model of love and family by introducing the second generation of characters. By transplanting some flowers from Thrushcross Grange to *Wuthering Heights*, Catherine Linton, the deceased Catherine Earnshaw's daughter, manages to initiate the change that can break the transgenerational repetition chain and establish more functional and 'healthier' family relationships.



CHARLOTTE BRONTË (1816 – 1855)



The works of Charlotte Brontë, who has been the eldest of the surviving sisters and the substitute for the dead mother, differ from those written by her sisters Anne and Emily, since they reflect Charlotte's wider and more intense contacts with the outer world. While communicating with the publishers and going to London on many occasions, she had an opportunity to meet with various distinguished writers, among which was Elizabeth Gaskell, who published Charlotte's first biography entitled *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* in 1857. The biography written by Gaskell contributed to a creation of the myth dealing with the novelist as a tragic heroine and Charlotte's novel *Jane Eyre* had served as a perfect way in (Showalter 2004: 221). Gaskell's biography took on the properties of a cult and women novelists in both England and America found the book intensely interesting and significant. Most of Charlotte's novels rely on her experience and they are rich with autobiographical elements: her life as a governess at the Clergy's daughter's school at Cowan Bridge was recalled in *Jane Eyre* (Jane's experience in Lowood); her observations of the textile industry and her father's recollections of the Luddite riots²³ served as a background for her novel *Shirley* (1849); the time she spent in Brussels polishing up her French

23 The Luddites were a secret organization of textile workers in the 19th-century England that fought against textile machinery as a form of protest against manufacturers who used machines as a part of standard labor practices. They thought the machines would replace them in manufacturing. Nowadays, the term is used to refer to someone who is opposed to industrialization, automation, computerization, or new technologies in general.

provided her with the material for the novels *Vilette* (1853) and *The Professor* (1857). It was in Brussels where she experienced a feeling of unrequited love as she became infatuated with her French Language Teacher M. Heger who had already been married.

As Elaine Showalter (2004: 220) has noticed, Charlotte Brontë appreciated “a volcanic literature of the body as well as of the heart, a sexual and often supernatural world”. Charlotte was perceived as a romantic type of an artist whose subjective experience served as a basis for her novels. The reality in her novels is blurred due to her poetic imagination. The depiction of nature and real-life characters makes her a successful realist. The romantic emphasis on the Gothic and the supernatural permeates her fiction. Most of her novels are variations on the Cinderella theme. Her childhood fantasies set in the imaginary land of Angria are reworked into her novels, whose lonely, passionate, sensitive and doomed heroines are projections of herself, as it is the case with Lucy Snow (*Vilette*) and Jane Eyre (*Jane Eyre*). Lucy Snow is a lonely heroine who, thrust into unlucky circumstances, early faces social injustice. As she leaves her native village for the sake of seeking better future elsewhere, we come into contact with the heroine who is ready to trade her security and comfort zone that her familiar environment offers her with the life full of uncertainty, fear of the unknown and loneliness. As she struggles to adapt to new environment, a new school and new life in the dorms of Mrs. Beck in the Continent, she becomes the embodiment of all emigrants and refugees who face similar problems on every day basis. Charlotte vividly depicts life in the modern capitalistic city and the feelings of estrangement, isolation and loneliness.

Charlotte’s most popular novel that exerted revolutionary influence on Victorian heroines was *Jane Eyre*. Also, the novel had been frequently rewritten by twentieth-century women novelists who provided different alternative versions of the original story by adding different endings and perspectives. For instance, in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) the story of *Jane Eyre* is told from Bertha Mason’s point of view (Rochester’s first wife who was locked in the attic). Doris Lessing’s *The Four-Gated City* (1969) is a story of a young girl who develops romantic feelings towards the master of the house in which she works and whose mad wife lives in the basement. The story of *Jane Eyre* is also reflected in Margaret Atwood’s novels *Lady Oracle* (1976) and *Alias Grace* (1996) (see Nikolić 2018). The main protagonist of *Lady Oracle* is a writer fascinated by gothic stories featuring a young, naïve and fearless heroine who falls in love with a dark Byronic hero, so the stories she writes are variations of the original story of *Jane Eyre*, while the heroine of Atwood’s *Alias Grace* is an orphan working as a housekeeper in the house whose master is presented as a seductive man.²⁴

24 For further information, see Nikolić, Z. Milena’s doctoral dissertation entitled *Fiction and Reality of Female Characters in the Works of Margaret Atwood*, Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade, 2018.

Brontë's eponymous and unconventional heroine with remarkable personality is considered to be the first financially independent woman in an English novel. It provides the reader with the information about how it was like to be a woman in the Victorian Age and explores a wide range of women's perceptions of the real world in particular, their personal experiences, as well as the challenges they needed to tackle (Showalter 2004: 225). She is depicted as alive, active, vital and real-life character who is unwilling to view herself as a victim of the unlucky circumstances, the whims of a man and the environment. Her character is admiring and unpredictable and her actions are not always considered logic or normal. The strength of Jane's personality is seen through the way she tries to deal with harsh realities and strange coincidences of fate. The first part of the novel depicting her harsh childhood and the relationship between child and adult is more successful than the second as it is stripped of sentimentality and melodrama. A child is depicted as a real human being that feels and reacts to love and hatred depending on the environment or the circumstances he or she has been thrust into. The central relationship in the novel is that between Jane and Rochester, a sort of a dark Byronic hero caught between fantasy and reality. It is a symbolic story about eternal clash between love and limitations set by the society, which brings about numerous doubts and provokes internal conflicts within the protagonist.

The novel is permeated with Gothic elements such as mysterious sounds and apparitions in the mansion, a mad woman in the attic and an identity reversal (when Rochester transforms into a gypsy). Rochester is an unconvincing character but the energy he possesses is enchanting even if it is depicted as immoral. Self-respect does not let Jane become Rochester's lover. The author advocates the equality between men and women and is determined to fight against the prejudice that puts women in subordinate position in relation to men. The author is repelled by the fact that woman could not receive the same education as man and could not live up to her potentials since she is denied freedom of overtly expressing her feelings. Rochester and Jane marry at the end of the novel but the happy ending is shadowed by Rochester's accident that leaves him blind and crippled.

The plot follows the form of a Bildungsroman, as we witness Jane's emotional, spiritual and physical growth. It tracks the protagonist's life from early childhood, covering the years of her schooling and her first working experience, to more mature years (the time spent at Gateshead, Lowood, Thornfield, Morton and Marsh End). During this period, we closely follow her experiences that incite her growth to adulthood and her reunion with and marriage to Rochester.

These experiences eventually helped her gain more wisdom and insight. Like Dickens's Pip, she recalls the events from her childhood and teenage years with time distance. The heroine's psychological development is represented in dramas, hallucinations, and visions. The process of her emotional, physical and spiritual maturation is presented through different sorts of allusions originating from myth, the Bible and other literary works Charlotte was fond of. The heroine's sexual experiences are expressed through frequent depiction of rooms and houses (Showalter 2004: 226). If we apply the feminist reading of *Jane Eyre*, we cannot but notice that other two female characters in the novel - Helen Burns (Jane's only true friend in Lowood) and Bertha Mason (the violently insane first wife of Rochester whom he locked in a room) – function as the elements of Jane's own psyche, or to put it in Showalter's terms, they stand for "the division of the Victorian female psyche into its extremes", which is regarded by many critics as Brontë's most profound innovation (Showalter 2004: 226). As such they represent the embodiments of mind and body, the two polar personalities that should be literally and metaphorically destroyed in order to give way to the creation of an individual with a high level of self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

Charlotte became a respectable literary figure in London literary circles after the success of her novel *Jane Eyre*. Only then did she start publishing novels under her real name. The novel *Shirley* was published in 1849 and *Villette* in 1853. In 1854 she married the Rev. Arthur Nicholls despite her father's objection and the fact that she did not love him. However, her marriage lasted less than a year. She caught pneumonia and died while expecting at the age of 39.

WUTHERING HEIGHTS



A narrative technique Emily Brontë employed while writing her only novel heralded the innovative way of telling a story that was later accepted and developed by modernist writers. Instead of using the all-knowing narrator whose divine presence was constantly felt throughout the novel and who, by adopting the role of God and a moral arbitrary, as James Joyce used to say, superiorly observes the characters' actions and reveals as much as he considers it is enough for the readers to know, Emily Brontë makes use of the point of view of two characters - Nelly Deane and Lockwood - the two objective and down-to-earth narrators who struggle to under-

stand the nature of the main characters' relationship. As Frederick Karl (2004: 149) has remarked, the Lockwood-Nelly Deane frame offers a "solid anchor in reality", providing a "norm for the behavior of the interior characters", and a standard for moral judgement. The insertion of Catherine's diary entries also contributes to the story's innovative narrative technique. Nelly and Lockwood's narratives disperse chronological order in presenting the main events of the story since they stand for two different perspectives from which the reader can learn about the plot. However, it is not difficult to trace the chronological order of the events narrated. Nelly, three years Catherine's senior, is an objective narrator who spent almost two decades of her life at Thrushcross Grange and who was present in all crucial moments of Catherine and Heathcliff's lives. The predominant emotion accounted for all the characters' mishaps, struggles, rivalries and incidents is Catherine and Heathcliff's passion. As well aware of this fact, Nelly does not take sides in their conflict. She condemns their uncontrollable emotional outbursts. Both Nelly Deane and Mr. Lockwood, a stranger who rents a room at Thrushcross Grange and learns about Heathcliff and Catherine's love story from Nelly and Catherine's diary entries, make the story stay within the realistic frame, that is, somewhere in between physical and metaphysical, or surreal and real, by trying to offer a rational explanation to everything that threatens to blur the reality. By introducing the two, emotionally reserved and somewhat objective narrators who cannot fully grasp Heathcliff and Catherine's love story, the author tries to underline the fact that the nature of love and the amount of passion existing between Catherine and Heathcliff cannot be understood and explained by using the conventional and rational criteria.

The novel is composed of two stories told in succession. The first part of the novel, which is more vivid and dramatic, focuses on Catherine Earnshaw's relationships with Heathcliff and Edgar Linton, while the second part, which is far less dramatic, deals with young Cathy's relationships with her cousins, Linton Heathcliff and Hareton Earnshaw. Many critics find the first part of the novel more interesting than the second one, since it is assumed that the events in the first generation determine those in the second generation. On the other hand, Lévi-Strauss (1968: 212) offers a different approach regarding the patterns governing the novel. It is suggested that the two stories occurring in the novel belong to the same kind of fictional reality. Namely, this approach assumes that the novel tells one story on two different but closely interconnected levels of fictional representation: "What if patterns showing affinity, instead of being considered in succession, were to be treated as one complex pattern and read as a whole?" (1968: 212). *Wuthering Heights* and *Trushcross Grange* become less tense places in the second part of the novel with the development of another love story – this time between young Cathy and Hareton, whose ability to change and accept each other's shortcomings suggest better future and a happy ending. Namely, at first Hareton is depicted as a savage and illiterate young man who over time becomes Cathy's loyal friend. Although she is repelled by his strange and uncivilized manners, she manages to change her attitude towards him and tries to help him overcome his limitations by teaching him how to read.

Catherine and Heathcliff's tragic fate lies in the fact that they are unable to change over time. Heathcliff nurses the same grudges over many years. His strong will power makes him appear likeable and somewhat heroic, while his running emotions and uncontrollable passions draw him towards the tragic end as they are seen as his major flaw and weakness. Catherine's wild nature, identical to his, is the cause of all her sufferings and her tragic mistake delivered the final blow. As Frederick R. Karl has remarked, Heathcliff cannot be identified as a tragic hero due to his "ignobleness and disagreeableness; he is not sympathetic, unless we confuse his strength with virtue" (Karl 2004: 154-155). Although he is "closer to a melodramatic hero than a tragic protagonist", we admire "his defiance of what will eventually doom him" (Karl 2004: 155). Catherine is afraid to embrace uncertain future with Heathcliff and seeks a more genteel life guaranteed by marrying Edgar. Being young and immature, she naively believes that by choosing Linton over Heathcliff, Linton will financially support Heathcliff and thus help him to resist Hindley's cruelty. She makes a tragic mistake in choosing her life partner and is doomed to a miserable life. All this time, however, she is ignoring Edgar and is reluctant to accept her wife's responsibilities. At one moment she dares to declare "*I am Heathcliff*", just as Heathcliff announces when she dies that he can no longer live without his "soul" and asks to be "haunted" by her:

“Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest in peace as long as I am living! You said I killed you – haunt me then! The murdered do haunt their murderers, I believe” (Brontë 1994: 148). Their love, romantic and asexual as it is, denies differences and changes crucial for a healthy relationship and as such is determined to end tragically. Conversely, the strength of their love is such that it transcends death and continues to live long after their main protagonists cease to exist.

The two families depicted in the novel, the Lintons and the Earnshaws, stand for the shifting nature of social status and lots of difficulties members of the upper middle class faced in order to prove their gentry status. Although they possess servants and relatively large estates, their social position is fragile. However, the Linton’s gentry status is relatively firm in comparison to that of the Earnshaws with no carriages, less land and a relatively modest house. Heathcliff is a typical example of a person whose status is subject to change: he is at first homeless, then is made a young gentleman-by-adoption, shortly afterwards he is turned into a common labourer by Hindley, only to rise to a position of a gentleman again under dubious circumstances.

Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange stand for the two totally different worlds. They embody the two opposing set of values. The Earnshaws, like the property they occupy, symbolize wilderness, passion, uncontrollable emotions and untamed nature. The Lintons stand for civilized manners, culture and refinement. The landscape consisting of moors – wide, wild and infertile expanses with potentially dangerous waterlogged patches – symbolizes the nature’s unpredictability and randomness. The moors also stand for the protagonists’ romantic love affair as the two lovers used to play there during their childhood and continued to feel strong bonds with the land to the very end of their lives.

The Lintons and Thrushcross Grange, on the other hand, stand for culture, refinement, civilized manners and conventions. We are introduced to the family living at the Thrushcross Grange when Catherine is bitten by the Lintons’ dog in Chapter IV. At that very moment the Lintons’ property seems peaceful and orderly in comparison to the turmoil already happening in the Wuthering Heights due to Hindley’s cruelty. As Lord David Cecil (1934: 164) notices, the opposition between two families is expressed by the “children of storm” and the “children of calm”. However, peace and order are soon replaced by chaos as the inhabitants of Thrushcross Grange become interwoven into Catherine, Heathcliff and Hindley’s drama. Thus, Brontë’s novel may be interpreted as a story about man’s attempts to ‘comprehend’, ‘tame’ and defeat nature. On the other hand, it is also important to point out that the author does not let the reader create the impression that more civilized characters should be more appreciated than the wilder ones or that one should privilege culture over nature or vice versa.

Heathcliff's subjective world is stronger than Linton's. On the other hand, Linton's materialistic world defeats Heathcliff's, since Linton is a perfect embodiment of Victorian values, principles and financial stability. Catherine is torn between these two worlds and she keeps choosing one over the other not knowing that she cannot have both. Her tragic mistake stems from the fact that she seeks financial stability with Linton who is rational, principled and level-headed but she is simultaneously dragged towards wild, passionate, uncontrollable, strong-willed but financially unstable Heathcliff. The two opposing life principles symbolically reflected in Heathcliff and Linton do not need to come into conflict. However, Catherine, as a catalyst, brings them together and triggers a terrible conflict. Heathcliff is a tyrannical figure who threatens the innocent female characters: Catherine Earnshaw-Linton is physically abused by Heathcliff (Chapter 27), while Isabella Linton becomes the target of Heathcliff's verbal abuse (Chapter 14). More civilized characters are depicted as ideals of civility, weak, passive, indecisive and rational and the reader cannot fully identify with them. For instance, a kind and civilized Edgar Linton, married to a woman who is obviously in love with someone else, is not a disagreeable character. When Heathcliff comes back to Wuthering Heights as a rich gentleman and visits Catherine, Edgar finds himself in a difficult position and is unable to do anything to make his situation less embarrassing. Unlike strong-willed Heathcliff, he proves weak and ineffectual and as such unable to win Catherine's heart and mind. Her love for Edgar seems frail and mild, "like the foliage in the woods: time will change it [...] as winter changes the trees", while what she feels for Heathcliff "resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight, but necessary" (Brontë 1994: 82).

The novel is permeated with Gothic elements that create an atmosphere of suspense, mystery, horror and fear. Lockwood, who sleeps in the room that belonged to the deceased Catherine, has got peculiar dreams triggered by Cathy's scribbles in the Bible and the book he finds on the night table. Lockwood is never sure whether he is awake or asleep and his melodramatic reactions intensify the atmosphere of suspense and fear. On one occasion he even thinks he 'sees' a ghostly waif outside the window and 'hears' Catherine's voice responding to his question. The scene in which an ice-cold hand grasps his is typical of Gothic tales (Karl 2004: 150). Heathcliff fits into the category of a protagonist of Gothic fiction – he is moody, whimsical, mysterious and unpredictable and can be a hero and a villain at the same time. The dark diction reflects Gothic elements that point to dramatic otherworldly events such as seeing and encountering ghosts and many inexplicable events that evoke the feelings of terror and fear.

However, the author treats these elements in such a way that it remains ambiguous whether they really exist. For instance, in Chapter 3 Lockwood thinks he saw Catherine's ghost knocking on the window pane and whispering the words "Let me in"²⁵ (Brontë 1994: 36) but its existence in reality could be explained by his having nightmares due to the general atmosphere in the property that appeared even more sinister during a stormy night, his learning about Catherine and Heathcliff's story and the mere appearance of Heathcliff wandering the moors frantically and behaving awkwardly. Also, another ghostly appearance in Chapter 34 - the villagers' claim they saw Heathcliff's ghost - may be dismissed as superstition (Brontë 1994: 278). Be that as it may, the ghostly apparitions in the novel symbolize the way memory and the past influence people's lives in the present.

The elements of romanticism are widely felt throughout the novel. The basic elements of romanticism present in the novel are sensitivity, subjectivity, and the opposition between human morality and the Victorian morality imposed upon people. The Victorian world, on the other hand, is accepted as a necessity and something that the most powerful characters such as Heathcliff cannot fight against. Another important romantic dimension in the novel is the relationship between nature and man and his or her subjective world. The function of nature in the novel is ambiguous: it has a healing power but it also makes devouring elements within man more intense. The inhabitants of Thrushcross Grange had lost the bond with the nature and they surrendered themselves to the luxury and material prosperity. They cannot survive in the world of nature, just as they cannot cope with the natural impulses they cherish deep within themselves, and therefore, they are prone to suppressing their feelings. Conversely, the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights co-exist with the nature, and such coexistence makes them stronger. They live, suffer, rejoice and die as if they were part of natural life cycles, so we are bound to believe that the death of some of them at the end seems only temporary and that the process of restoration has just begun.

A realistic description of nature and physical objects and a depiction of human relationships based on Brontë's imaginative concept of human emotional life and its relation to action places *Wuthering Heights* on the list of the best world's literary classics. Emily Brontë thoroughly explored human nature and the origin of dark impulses within her characters. By presenting the characters' social, emotional and psychological maturation and growth, Brontë triggered many psychological approaches to the novel.

25 The echo of Charlotte Brontë's novel can be found in Atwood's *Alias Grace*, when the heroine hears the same words and believes they were said by her dead friend Mary, whose presence appears to haunt her (see Nikolić 2018).

Many critics adopted Freudian theory while interpreting the characters of both Catherine and Heathcliff and exploring their dark passions and energies (Moser 1962, Hoffman 1967, Gilbert 1993). Also, many critics were fascinated with Brontë's meticulousness and her awareness of the socio-historical context of the novel. Arnold Kettle depicted the novel as "a vision of what life in 1847 was like" (Kettle 1960: 141), and Lord David Cecil (1934: 178, 154) has noted that "[d]uring a great part of *Wuthering Heights*, the characters are children: and very realistically-drawn children". Cecil also points out that the deeds and passions of these young people in the future "spring from thwarted impulses" (Cecil 1934: 178, 154). Brontë's depiction of Catherine and Heathcliff's childhood, Catherine's difficulties to come to terms with the adolescence and their transition to adulthood point to the author's attempt to understand the complexity of her main characters' behaviour.

As the novel deals with the basic human emotions and principles without unnecessary sentimentality it is still regarded as a literary classic. Although various film adaptations that appeared after the novel had been published beautifully hint at a general atmosphere of the novel, such as a black and white version of the novel with Laurence Olivier as Heathcliff, many aspects of the novel are impossible to evoke. A subjective impression of the novel that each reader acquires while reading the novel cannot be replaced by somebody else's version of events presented on the screen no matter how vivid, touching and deep it may be.

Did you know?

1. When Emily Brontë died in 1848, her dog Keeper, followed the coffin to her gravesite. Afterwards, it had whimpered for weeks.²⁶
2. Serious fans of Brontë's sisters can travel to the Brontë Parsonage Museum, where they can book the "Brontë Treasures and VIP Tour for very special people & occasions", which allows up to 12 visitors monthly. The visitors are allowed to see the possessions of sisters Brontë, such as their jewelry, tableware, paintings, and books.²⁷
3. Having read some of Charlotte's early works, the poet laureate Robert Southey advised her to give up writing, as literature was not a woman's cup of tea. However, such a reply had not discouraged a sixteen-year old Charlotte. It had quite the opposite effect – she was more than ever eager to see her name in print.²⁸
4. Emily was the tallest of her sisters, while Charlotte was the shortest. Charlotte's clothes that could be found in the Brontë Parsonage Museum would fit a child. George Smith, her publisher and close friend, said she would give up her genius for beauty.
5. William Makepeace Thackeray was one of Charlotte's favourite writers. She dedicated the first edition of *Jane Eyre*, published under the pseudonym of Currer Bell, to him. Ironically, there were certain similarities between her Rochester and Thackeray. Both of them kept mad wives confined within their home. London's literary circle assumed that the author of *Jane Eyre* must have modelled Rochester on Thackeray. Charlotte felt very embarrassed upon discovering the truth, while
6. When Charlotte used the name Shirley for her female protagonist (*Shirley*, 1849), the name became extremely popular as a girls' name. In the past, Shirley used to be considered solely as the name given to boys.
7. There was no 'madwoman in the attic' in *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte's Bertha Mason was confined to the room below the attic.²⁹

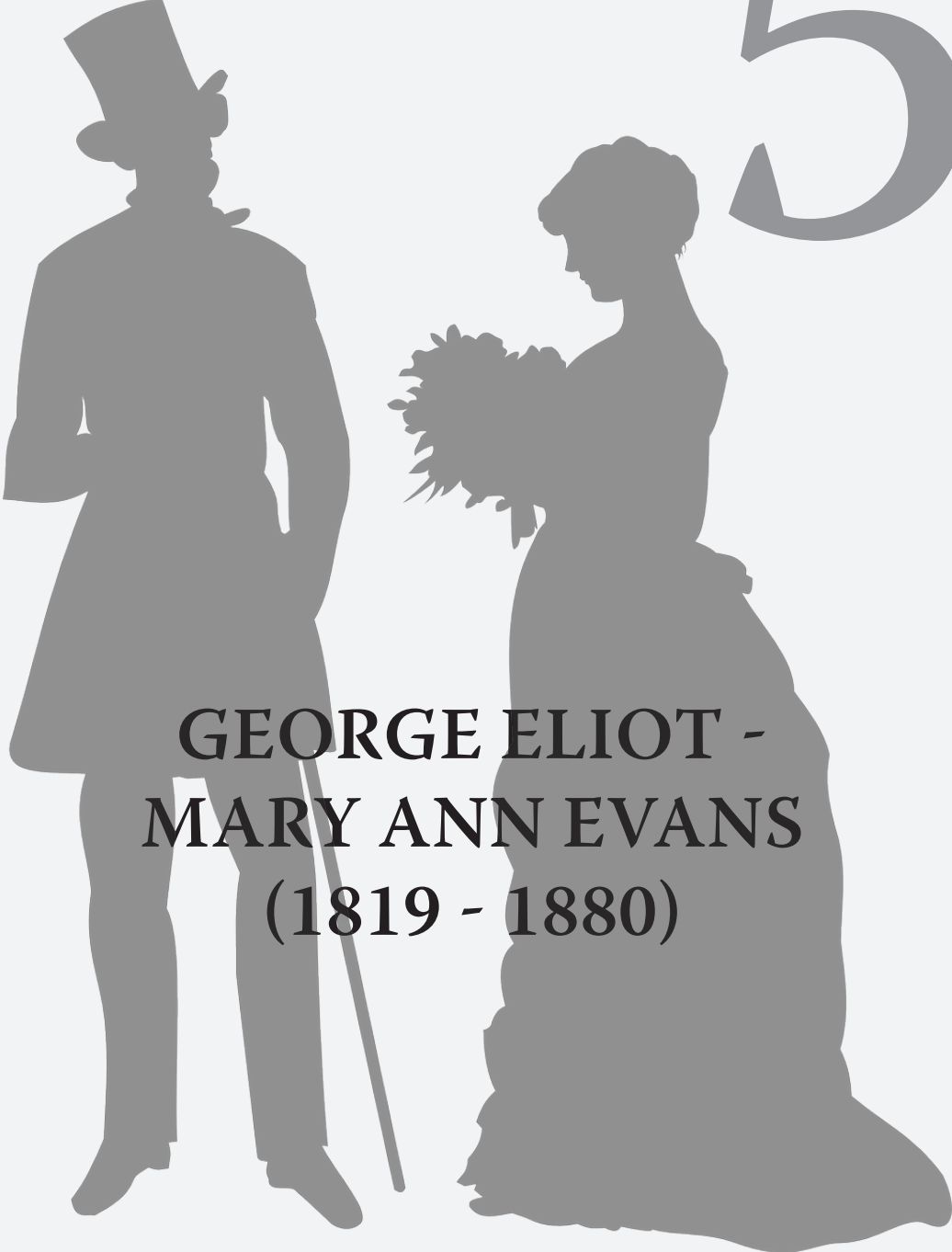
26 Fact 1 was adapted from: <https://booksonthewall.com/blog/10-interesting-facts-10-famous-authors/>

27 Fact 2 was adapted from: <https://www.rd.com/culture/fascinating-facts-about-famous-authors/>

28 Facts 3-6 were adapted from: <https://www.annebronte.org/2017/03/19/10-fascinating-facts-about-charlotte-bronte/>

29 Fact 7 was adapted from: <https://interestingliterature.com/2014/04/five-fascinating-facts-about-the-bronte-sisters/>

Part 5



**GEORGE ELIOT -
MARY ANN EVANS
(1819 - 1880)**

GEORGE ELIOT - MARY ANN EVANS (1819 - 1880)



Mary Ann Evans alias George Eliot is considered as one of the most influential female literary figures of the Victorian period, and most of her novels are nowadays considered classics. According to some historians, Eliot heralded a new, modern epoch of English novels that celebrated realism, individualism and psychological insights of the characters. It is with her works that literature has acquired a more dignified role. The novelist ceased to be a mere entertainer of the public. Eliot made the novel intellectually respectable without losing its qualities of liveliness or entertainment. Since Eliot believed that art and real life were interwoven, her aim was to focus on the observed truths about the human condition in literary works by depicting the psychological motives of the characters in an unbiased and non-judgmental manner. Her idealism and agnosticism derived from her own intellectual inquiries into moral and religious questions. She was too intelligent to tackle moral problems through the glasses of sentimentality. The depiction of psychological actions and reactions of Eliot's characters are result of the writer's constant awareness of historical, social and cultural circumstances that shaped the lives of the people. For instance, the Tullivers' act of facing financial problems in *The Mill on the Floss* reflects some of the basic characteristics of the

time the novel was written – the society's growing concern for physical comfort, the need for acquiring wealth and material possessions and their frequent getting into debt.

Eliot was born in Astley near Coventry, a rural Warwickshire that served as a model for her imaginary land depicted in most of her works. Under the influence of her school mistress, she became a devoted Evangelical who favoured Calvinism. Eliot's wide-ranging intellectual engagements influenced her works of fiction. As Eliot's father was a conservative who wanted his daughter to adopt Christianity, they moved to the town close to Coventry, which was, at that time, known for spreading the ideas of religious conformity. There she met a group of intellectuals who studied the Bible from the historical perspective. Her encounter with this group of people and her own reading of religious works - *An Enquiry into the Origins of Christianity*, among others – made her refuse to attend Anglican Church and search for some less rigid forms of expressing religious thoughts. She replaced her Evangelicalism with belief in humanity. Despite her religious skepticism, she was supportive of any formal religion that offered comfort and alleviation of people's grief.

After her father's death and a successful English translation of the German book *Life of Jesus, Critically Examined* (1846) – a rational reexamination of some Bible sections and the story of an untraditional life of Jesus written by David Friedrich Strauss – she moved to London and started working for a quarterly British journal of philosophical radicals entitled *The Westminster Review*. She also translated from German Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* (1854), which was the only book where she did not use her pseudonym. As the magazine's regular contributor and later its assistant editor, she became a well-known literary figure in London who was regularly seen in the company of many distinguished writers and poets. This is how she met Herbert Spencer, who became her close friend and whose ideas influenced her work (Byatt 1979: 22), and a distinguished literary critic George Henry Lewis, her emotional partner with whom she lived in an open marriage until his death in 1878. Her common-law relationship with Lewis caused a scandal since he had already been married. The wife had abandoned him for an extra-marital affair and moved out with three children. Eliot was rejected by her friends and family due to the affair and since then she started to face personal, intellectual and artistic struggles. The rejection by family and friends, and a complex relationship with her father and brother in particular, are reflected in her novel *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), where the heroine's brother (Tom) rejects her sister on the account of her emotional relationships with other male protagonists.

Another interesting information is that Maggie and Tom were born in the same year as Isaac and Mary Ann Evans (Haight 1968: 5). Lewis was the first to encourage her to write fiction. It was Lewis who edited her novels and helped her find a suitable material for her writing. The first work of fiction published in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1857 was entitled *Scenes from Clerical Life*. It is a collection of three short stories released under her male pseudonym. The stories are set in the fictional town in the British Midlands in the early nineteenth century.

John Stuart Mill's major works that Eliot came into contact with were the first to influence her intellectual life that shaped her fiction (Fleishmann 2010: 59). More precisely, Eliot's scientific realism that lies in the core of her literary works is in large part inherited from Mill (Fleishmann 2010: 68). However, the influence of certain Mill's ideas regarding his humanistic version of Utilitarianism on Eliot's works, as Fleishmann endeavors to show, should be taken with reserve. Namely, Eliot championed the belief that moral judgements could not be made in the abstract and that they required a situation-specific information – an idea rejected by Mill.

According to Fleishmann, tragedy is a key to understanding her novels. Eliot is depicted as "the first tragic novelist" whose tragic perceptions of life spring from her belief that human beings have a tendency to act in egoistic ways despite the possibility of genuine progress (Fleishmann 2010: 9, 56). *The Mill on the Floss* focuses on the tragic act of limiting a potentially cultivated and creative young woman, while *Romola* deals with the tragic clash between the purity of high ideals and the stern demands of reality.

Eliot's main preoccupation in her works is to explore the impact of environment on the individual. In order to be more convincing she tends to depict the setting of her novels more realistic and believable through paying attention to detail and using dialects. Barbara Hardy points out that Eliot's novels are "social tragedy" because she shows tragedy as common experience (Hardy 1959: 1). Her characters are neither good nor evil. She examines them in depth and employs chance as a key factor in human life. Her stories do not have conventional plots and entirely happy endings. According to Nancy Henry (2015: 11), Eliot's fictional development is much influenced by her biography. Eliot insists on the differences between the actual facts and creative use of such facts when writing a work of fiction. On the other hand, she uses biographical models to develop her characters and interpret the various overlapping of their individual and social life. Eliot is in full control of her narrative and she carefully chooses what to reveal about her characters. As Henry (2015: 12) notices, Eliot's works become more "dense and allusive" and "less autobiographical" as they move towards "aestheticism and Modernism".

By depicting the characters' daily activities and the relationships into which people are brought, Eliot provides a realistic context for the changes and the crises that occur within the novel and out of which moral meaning emerges.

Adam Bede, her first novel that established her as a powerful writer, was published under her pen name in 1859 as she wanted to make sure that the public should read her works and form their judgement about its content and quality objectively. Namely, one of the most frequent stereotypes of the Victorian era was the fact that female writers were associated with romantic novels with trivial themes. The main character of the novel, Adam Bede, is based on her father, Robert Evans, the Warwickshire estate agent. The novel supports Eliot's idea that the artists should draw their inspiration from life. According to Barbara Hardy, Adam Bede is the "generalized ordinary man, and, moreover, the ordinary man of ability, integrity and growing sensibility" (Hardy 1959: 25). The main idea of the novel is that the only way of achieving happiness is through demonstrating humanity – one should be tolerant, sympathetic and sensitive to other people's needs. The characters Adam Bede and Dinah Morris are embodiments of such qualities. The fact that the main character Adam is caught in a love triangle and that he chooses between two women, a beautiful and vain country girl and a conservative and saint-like Methodist preacher, triggers moral dilemmas and opens questions of faith and morality. Happiness was granted to the main protagonist after he had gone through a series of illusions and sufferings. However, Adam Bede is too static character with no tendency to slip into sins and thus unconvincing. It is difficult to imagine that such a devoted Christian as he is can suffer or even love that much. There is no warmth in his love towards the country girl, since all his actions are fueled by his sense of duty. The Methodist preacher is Adam Bede's female counterpart. Her character is far more appealing since Eliot's aunt served as a model. However, he is depicted as such an extraordinary woman that she seems utterly unconvincing. It is again difficult to imagine that such a woman with qualities above average can exist in reality, and that she can fall in love or perform everyday tasks typical of an ordinary woman. Adam and Dinah's reunion and marriage is a symbolic act that conveys somewhat idealistic notions. Eventually, virtue triumphs over vice in the society where the dignity of work and the capacity to fit in happily in the environment can bring about orderliness and peace.

In the centre of her next novel, *Silas Marner*, published in 1860, is a story about redemption and rediscovery of the innocence. The story focuses on the moral dilemma that a weaver Silas, the main male protagonist faces. Namely, after the injustice the weaver experiences (the woman he was expected to marry breaks their engagement and marries his best friend), he gets himself isolated with the feeling of hatred towards the human kind.

He soon finds solace in the accumulation of gold. Though the novel contains several mythical and fairytale elements indicative of stark symbolic moral meanings, there is nothing fantastic within the narrative. The physical and social environment are realistically depicted. The main character has got moral qualities but he is also prone to making mistakes. The novel is set in the rural part of England. Realistic depiction of rural environment and its people that meet in an inn – The Rainbow – indicate that Eliot was a great connoisseur of rural life, its dialects, morality and way of thinking. The environment is no subject to change regardless of the spiritual awakening that occurs within an individual. Such is the case with the main protagonist whose spiritual transformation is triggered by the appearance of Eppie, a two-year-old girl with a golden hair that symbolizes love and a possibility of commencing a new and better life. Silas learns how to accept good and evil in human nature. The main idea of the novel lies in the belief that it is possible to find goodness and humanity within every human being and that personal redemption can be achieved through love.

Eliot's novel *Romola* – published during 1862 and 1863 – is her first historical novel set in Florence in the period of Italian Renaissance during the fifteenth century. It describes several actual historical events and includes several notable figures from Italian history. Romola is a virtuous and intelligent Florentine girl who falls in love with a shipwrecked stranger Tito whom she eventually marries. As she gradually realizes his true character, their relationship wanes. Romola's vulnerability stems from her relationship with her father which prevents her from discovering her own independent worth. Tito conceals both his true character and Tessa from her. Tessa is depicted as a young and ignorant Florentine girl whom he married in a mock wedding ceremony. This action has its parallel in *Silas Marner* and the character of Nancy, a morally and socially respectable young woman who is deceived by her husband as regards his past, and *The Mill on the Floss* and its heroine, who loses her chance of true happiness when interacting with Stephen Guest. All three novels, therefore, focus on a negative influence of male characters (father, brother, husband, partner) on a female character – a recurrent theme in Eliot's novels that is present in *Middlemarch* as well.

Felix Holt, the Radical, published in 1866 and set in a small English town, is a social novel about political disputes and elections during 1832 and the passing of the First Reform Act. The novel is an accurate social document of change occurring in rural towns across England as a result of politics. The story shows how private life could become influenced by the public. It also reveals women submission and male dominance, as seen in the characters of Mrs. Transome and Mrs. Holt, whose personal despair and helplessness resulting from their insensitive sons' actions are vividly depicted.

The novel *Middlemarch*, published in eight instalments during 1871 and 1872, is considered to be Eliot's masterpiece. It is set in a fictional town called Middlemarch between 1829 and 1832 - the years marked by rapid economic and industrial progress, the beginning of railways, the working-class protests, political elections and the 1832 Reform Act. However, these historical events serve as a framework and have little to do with the protagonists of Eliot's novel. In the heart of the novel are moral situations explored through the presentation of the characters' interaction with one another. It is a story about moral discovery since the characters learn the truth about themselves as a result of the situation they face. Dorothea Brooke, a pious young girl endeavored to achieve something big, beautiful and good, makes the wrong choice and marries an old and shallow Reverend Casaubon, whom she regards as the embodiment of high intellect and her own idealistic pursuits. Disappointment and disillusionment come slow. It is difficult for her to admit that she was mistaken. When her husband dies, she becomes a wealthy and respected widow who is given a chance to achieve something big and good. However, she does nothing in this respect. Her idealism has no purpose whatsoever and does not take a clear form. At the beginning George Eliot compares Dorothea to Mother Theresa, but as the narrative develops it becomes apparent that she can never be worth of such a comparison. With the appearance of a young intellectual Will Ladislaw she eventually manages to find solace. Rev. Casaubon is a selfish clergyman whose intellectual, physical and emotional deficiencies are gradually developed within the novel. He is obsessed with his scholarly research that turns out to be outdated and thus purposeless. The strongest part of the novel is Dorothea's marriage with Casaubon, whose ambitions are larger than his capabilities, while the weakest is her love towards Will since both of them are depicted as asexual human beings. When Dorothea learns about the true character of Casaubon and what he lacks as a man, she also learns about herself and what she needs as a woman.

Daniel Deronda, first published in 1876, is the only novel set in the contemporary Victorian society of her day. The novel's main protagonists are Daniel - a young gentleman of mysterious birth who has a tendency to help others at a cost to himself - and Gwendolyn - a beautiful and young girl who acquires moral character through suffering. She decides to marry a wealthy old man when her family faces financial ruin. The novel is a mixture of a social satire and moral searching with the elements of identity seeking and Jewish Zionism ideas. The moment Daniel discovers that he is a descendant of the Jews he believes that it is his destiny to reunite his ancient people. The depiction of the Jews in the novel differs from the one in Dickens's novel *Oliver Twist*. The rejection of Jewish parts in this novel are usually aesthetic rejections.

However, they sometimes express “Gwendolyn’s casual and ‘civilized’ anti-Semitism (Hardy 1959: 17). There are several film adaptations of Eliot’s novel, as well as one adaptation for the theatre stage.

All novels written by George Eliot after *Adam Bede* (*Silas Marner* excluded) have in its focus a tragic heroine and her difficulties with coming to terms with the concept of being a woman. Such a handicap plays a large part in determining the quality of the tragic suffering and redemption (Hardy 1959: 47). Most of her tragic heroines lack proper education although they are depicted as the ones who are prone to reading on their own (Maggie, Dorothea, Gwendolen, etc.). They have all intelligence, sensibility, imagination, and the power to speak for themselves. However, what makes them tragic is partly their sensibility which is depicted as a specific flaw or suffering. Namely, according to Hardy (1959: 52), George Eliot “uses her heroines to demonstrate both the importance of sensibility and the tragic problem of the break between feeling and reason”. Hardy further notices that “Maggie has passionate capriciousness and energetic self-abnegation; Romola is calm and passive; Esther has her exaggerated finicky sensibility — the excessive good taste which makes her shrink from real issues; Dorothea, at war with Esther’s kind of propriety, has her blundering and blinding— and, for some readers, endearing—moral ardour; Gwendolen has an arrogant reliance on her own undefined powers, and her strong almost superstitious fears” (Hardy 1959: 53).

THE MILL ON THE FLOSS



The novel *The Mill on the Floss* is a story about life of Maggie Tulliver, an intelligent, ambitious, and creative young woman whose potentials cannot be fulfilled due to the prejudices against women that existed in the Victorian period. Eliot wanted to point to various problems that women faced. By choosing Maggie for the main protagonist, she managed to promote woman's role and her potentials. Namely, Maggie is neither evil nor a mere decoration in the novel as it used to be the case with many female protagonists. Paradoxically, Maggie is depicted through her relationships with the male characters: her father Mr. Tulliver, her brother Tom, her first love

Philip Wakem, and her second love Stephen Guest. The bonds between Maggie and her father, and Maggie and her brother, are the strongest. Maggie faces moral dilemma: she is torn between her emotions towards Philip and Stephen and her sense of duty and moral obligation towards her father and brother. Her moral responsibility towards Tom and her cousin Lucy is stronger than the passion she feels for Stephen. Tom is considered to have the most formative power over Maggie. He has a negative influence upon her sensibility. Tom discourages Maggie's meetings with Philip Wakem and keeps reminding her of her failure to fulfill her duty. From that very moment Maggie is constantly troubled by her inner conflicts and is unable to reconcile the love she feels towards a man with the love towards her family members. Throughout the novel Maggie longs for the past, particularly for the time when she and her brother were children. When they were children, Tom made her dependent on his love by successively giving her love and denying it at the same time. The final scene of the novel, in which Maggie desperately tries to save her unforgiving brother at the cost of her life, supports the fact that Tom had the key influence on Maggie's character development.

The novel is a social document about Victorian society, its ideas, stereotypes, way of thinking and the social, political and economic changes caused by the process of industrialization in the first five decades of the nineteenth-century England. As Elaine Showalter points out, this novel "sympathetically analyzes the unfulfilled longings of an intelligent young woman in a narrow and oppressive society, but nonetheless elevates suffering into a female career" (Showalter 2004: 234).

It also offers a realistic picture of the period in which money is easily gained and lost and in which the rigid categories determining one's social status were no longer fixed and unnegotiable. Eliot depicts lives of the middle classes and their struggle to harmonize their social status with material wealth, as it becomes evident with the Deanes – the representatives of nouveau riches. Owing to her husband who is well aware of innovative changes, such as the steam engine and trade business, Mrs. Deane becomes the most successful Dodson sister. In this she succeeds Mrs. Pullet, a representative of the old way of slow saving. Maggie's father, Mr. Tulliver, is an embodiment of the period marked by the old ways of local provincial relations that slowly disappear. He has difficulties to adapt to a new way of living and new economic order. Maggie's family loses Dorlcote Mill when it is faced with financial difficulties. Tom's entrepreneurial abilities help the Tullivers to win it back. Since the hierarchy within the classes became blurred, the young people were able to marry above or below their actual social status —Stephen, a member of the upper-class could marry a lower-class girl Lucy Deane or Maggie Tulliver, while Philip's father could accept his son's marriage with Maggie.

It is believed that out of all novels Eliot had written, *The Mill on the Floss* has the greatest amount of autobiographical elements as it is mostly based on the author's childhood memories and her relationships with her father and older brother Isaac. Eliot's conversion to Evangelicalism in her childhood was similar to Maggie's spiritual conversion she started experiencing when she was introduced to the book of Thomas à Kempis. The novel's characters are open to the influence of the past. The first part of the novel depicting Maggie and Tom's childhood is the strongest and the most convincing. Maggie's childhood memories and her constant reference to that time influence her decisions and actions in the present. Maggie's obsession with the past times and childhood memories makes her unable to evaluate her present situation. On the other hand, Stephen Guest exemplifies dangers of neglecting the past, which is reflected in his rapid mood swings, emotional instability, potential loneliness and the whims of the present moment.

The central element of the novel is establishing connections with others through compassion and sympathy. In the core of such feelings should be, as Eliot suggests, moral obligation and the sense of duty which is the basis for religious sentiments. The parable of St. Ogg – the town's saint and protector - mentioned at the beginning of the novel functions as a reminder of such an idea. The St. Ogg scene is eventually recreated towards the end of the novel, when Maggie is compared to a ferryman Ogg while trying to save her brother from the flood.

Namely, Ogg, a Floss ferryman, felt pity for a woman and her child and agreed to take them across the river during a stormy night. According to the legend, the woman turned out to be the Blessed Virgin who later claimed that whoever used the boat would be safe in it. While on the boat with Stephen, Maggie had a strange dream. In her dream, she could see Tom and Lucy together in the boat passing next to them. Symbolically, Tom stands for St. Ogg and Lucy for the Blessed Virgin. The symbolism of her dream lies in the fact that Maggie blames herself for the lack of sympathy towards other people demonstrated in her act of eloping with Stephen. However, Maggie's final act of trying to help her brother and save his life on the account of sacrificing hers grants Maggie a place next to St. Ogg.

Eliot believed it was possible to trigger the readers' capacity of sympathy by putting her real-life characters in realistic circumstances. Unlike Maggie, Philip and Lucy, Tom and Stephen have no capability of sympathizing with others. Tom is an embodiment of the rising entrepreneur concerned about his own standing. Stephen Guest is depicted as a shallow and egoistic person who puts himself before others and who privileges his own emotions over that of others. His selfishly-motivated attempts to talk Maggie into running away with him point to the fact that he ignores other people's emotions (Lucy's, Tom's, Philip's and even Maggie's). Lucy and Philip's sympathy is the feeling that rises above the tragic circumstances of the novel.

The novel also deals with different types of knowledge (practical and uncanny), the challenges of education, the women's limiting access to education (as it is evident with Maggie) and men's unlimited access to formal classical education (Tom's, in particular). Eliot draws attention to the dangers of miseducation and the importance of educating young people according to their gifts and needs. Tom's knowledge about the world is practical and as soon as he starts to cherish it, he managed to survive and become successful in the fast-changing entrepreneurial world. In Chapter V of Book First we learn that he "knew all about worms, and fish, and those things; and what birds were mischievous, and how padlocks opened, and which way the handles of the gates were to be lifted" (Eliot 2005: 47). Conversely, he is stumbling through his lessons at sixteen – he is obliged to learn Latin, a subject he finds strange and purposeless. When his family faces financial ruin, it becomes clear that Tom's schooling does not provide him with the practical knowledge needed for the task he is about to undertake - his education cannot be of any help while struggling to overcome financial crisis. He is forced to attend evening lessons that will provide him with more practical skills. He asks his uncle Mr. Deane for help in finding a job and confirms the statement that he is, above all, 'a man of business'.

On the other hand, Maggie is fascinated with classical culture which brings about her entire intellectual potential as a woman. However, her access to books is so limited that she reads whatever comes to her hands. Maggie has attended a local school at St. Ogg's for a year but this does not prove to be particularly beneficial to her. With no books to read at home, Maggie is doomed to read a dictionary. Her scarce education left her unequipped to forge her own way in life. Her love for books, genuine inquisitiveness and constant awareness of the fact that fictional worlds do not resemble reality, where happiness is not so easily granted indicate that she should have received the education intended for her brother. Since she is denied formal education, she is unable to fulfill her potentials and develop into a creative, skilled and successful young woman. Tom's practical skills have given him priority over others, especially over Maggie, and his skills help him to succeed in the modern entrepreneurial world. Tom's miseducation under the thumb of his teacher Mr. Stelling makes him incapable of showing any patience for the modes of knowledge other than his. The novel, however, celebrates Maggie's intellectual curiosity and wider vision and regards Maggie as Tom's superior.

Eliot's realism is depicted by establishing interrelations between the characters and the community (the effects of social and economic factors on people's lives) and exposing the characters' moral dilemmas. Although Eliot puts emphasis on socio-economic factors as important driving forces in determining one's life and manner of conduct, it is never the society alone that affects the novel's characters most. Maggie's internal competing impulses, and her constant conflict between the sense of duty and running emotions, have tremendous influence on her life choices and tragic outcome. Eliot describes each community in great detail (for instance, St. Ogg's, Dorlcote Mill, etc.). Her awareness of economic advances of the time she lived in and changes in the ways of production caused by the Industrial Revolution was expressed in depicting the circumstances surrounding the lives of several families facing financial crisis in the novel. By introducing two competing families, the Dodsons and the Tullivers, and contrasting their economic standing, shared beliefs and common values, Eliot shows the manner in which they affected Maggie and Tom's upbringing and formation. Tom is associated with the Dodsons – the representatives of the 'new money' who gain social respect due to their entrepreneurial skills, while Maggie is associated with the Tullivers who are affectionate and emotional and have no entrepreneurial abilities.

Music is important motif in the novel. It indicates Maggie's springs into the world of fancy and the moments of her profound understanding or discovery. Maggie's reading of Thomas à Kempis is closely connected to music. While she reads the book she feels as if she was exposed to "a strain of solemn music". Music also symbolizes Maggie's vulnerability, her sensibilities and sensitivity. Stephen Guest's singing in Chapter 7 of Book VI creates an "emotion that seemed to make [Maggie] at once strong and weak: strong for all enjoyment, weak for all resistance" (Eliot 2005: 503). Music seems to stimulate Maggie's emotional intelligence and her sensitivity.

Eliot makes use of various literary figures to express human nature. Various references to animals in the novel serve to point to characters' capability of showing affection and their unwillingness to conform to the generally accepted standards and norms of social conduct. Moreover, animal imagery is used to depict the relationship between human beings - especially children - and animals. In Chapter V of Book First entitled "Tom Comes Home", the narrator compares Maggie and Tom to "young animals" that still act upon their instincts unlike the adults who "no longer approximate in [their] behaviour to the mere impulsiveness of the lower animals, but conduct ourselves in every respect like members of a highly civilized society" (Eliot 2005: 46).

Maggie's uniqueness is emphasized by the motif of darkness of her skin, her dark curly hair and dark eyes. She is often compared to her blond cousin Lucy Deane, a beautiful girl with fair hair and lighter skin. Lucy's fair appearance makes her a perfect embodiment of a typical heroine that appears in traditional plot lines with happy endings, which Maggie finds particularly frustrating. Maggie's dark skin is seen as something strange and unlikeable as such looks do not fit into a Victorian image of female beauty. Paradoxically, as the narrative unfolds, it turns out that the male characters are attracted to Maggie owing to her 'unnatural' and rare looks.

Maggie's eyes contribute to her unusual beauty and it is her eyes that men notice first when looking at her. Bob Jakin observes that Maggie has "such uncommon eyes, they looked somehow as they made him feel nohow" (Eliot 2005: 291). To Stephen Guest Maggie's eyes are "defying and deprecating, contradicting and clinging, imperious and beseeching - full of delicious opposites" (Eliot 2005: 493). Philip Wakem notices that her eyes "remind him of the stories about princesses being turned into animals" since they are "full of unsatisfied intelligence, and unsatisfied, beseeching affection" (Eliot 2005: 213). What they see in Maggie's eyes mirrors the nature of their relationship with her.

Her eyes also symbolize her inner feelings, the depth and power of her emotion and need for love. Maggie's deep and unpredictable emotion also links her to the Floss – a deep and unpredictable river, with a tendency to flood. The fact that the river's paths cannot be traced stands for the unforeseeable path of Maggie's destiny.

Due to the fact that the novel's central protagonist is a girl who struggles to survive in the society marked by narrow views, conventions, male domination and prejudices against women, *The Mill on the Floss* can be regarded as a feminist novel. Maggie is denied university education despite her obvious intelligence, interests in acquiring knowledge and intellectual superiority over Tom. The male characters in the novel both ignore and devalue her cleverness and discourage her from reading the books. Tom is aware of the fact that he has right to treat her as his inferior. When Maggie offers to help him with the lesson, Tom exclaims scornfully that girls "never learn such things" because they are "so silly" (Eliot 2005: 173). Mr. Riley, the auctioneer, identifies Maggie with the protagonist of the book Maggie is reading, and which happens to be Daniel Defoe's *History of the Devil*, as soon as he sees its title (Eliot 2005: 20). Namely, the book is about the drowning of an innocent and poor woman suspected of being a witch. Maggie's bold interpretation of the book made her father listen with "petrifying wonder", as it provoke in him a mixture of pride and anxiety (Eliot 2005: 21). He observes that "a woman's no business wi' being so clever; it'll turn into trouble" but adds that Maggie is capable of reading the books and understanding them "better nor half the folks as are growed up" (Eliot 2005: 20). Mr. Riley immediately exclaims that it is "not quite the right book for a little girl" and demands that she should read "some prettier books" (Eliot 2005: 21).

Maggie's subordinate position is further supported by Mr. Stelling, an Oxford-educated minister, whose comments on mental capacities of women sum up the society's prejudiced view of women. When Tom asks him whether girls can do Euclid, he answers that women possess "a great deal of superficial cleverness; but they couldn't go far into anything. They're quick and shallow" (Eliot 2005: 180). Maggie suffers a great deal due to the hypocritical morality of the society as well as the unfair treatment she experiences while interacting with her family and friends. Although she occasionally manages to do opposite of what is expected from her, most of the time she is unable to act independently. As Elaine Showalter (2004: 237-238) notices, she is "the progenitor of a heroine who identifies passivity and renunciation with womanhood, who finds it easier, more natural, and in a mystical way more satisfying, to destroy herself than to live in a world without opium or fantasy, where she must fight to survive". Maggie's brief

periods of enlightenment and acute awareness of the fact that reality is harsh and difficult to deal with contribute to the fact that she is an intelligent young woman who wishes to stand up for herself and rebel against the oppressive world. However, in the end we see that her tragic outcome is partly a result of the emotions she cannot control. She is the “heroine of renunciation” who suppresses her anger and creativity (Showalter 2004: 225), and eventually, she develops a self-destructive personality owing to which she would rather die than face the reality of adulthood and maturation that include taking responsibility for making hard decisions.

A tragic outcome of the novel is mostly a result of Maggie’s inadequate education that was intended to make her fit into the Victorian image of a good and chaste woman and her subordinate position in the society. In such a society woman is only a passive onlooker robbed of her intellectual potential and discouraged from the ability to govern herself and successfully deal with challenges and difficulties she faces. Some critics claim that the tragic ending of the novel resulted from the author’s inability to reconcile with her own past and her brother Isaac’s rejection. As Byatt notices, “Maggie’s powers and frustrations have less to do with Tom for us than for George Eliot” (Byatt 1979: 39). However, this sort of interpretation stems from establishing too close relationship between the author and her protagonist. More accurate are the interpretations that focus on Maggie’s self-denial that leads to a modern form of martyrdom – in the final act of trying to save her brother at the flooded mill, she redeems both her brother and herself (Ermarth 1974: 429, Yeoh 2009: 5). As the embodiment of a person stifled by the artificial social roles, Maggie becomes a tragic heroine whose divine potential and high intellectual power cannot be fully realized.

Did you know?

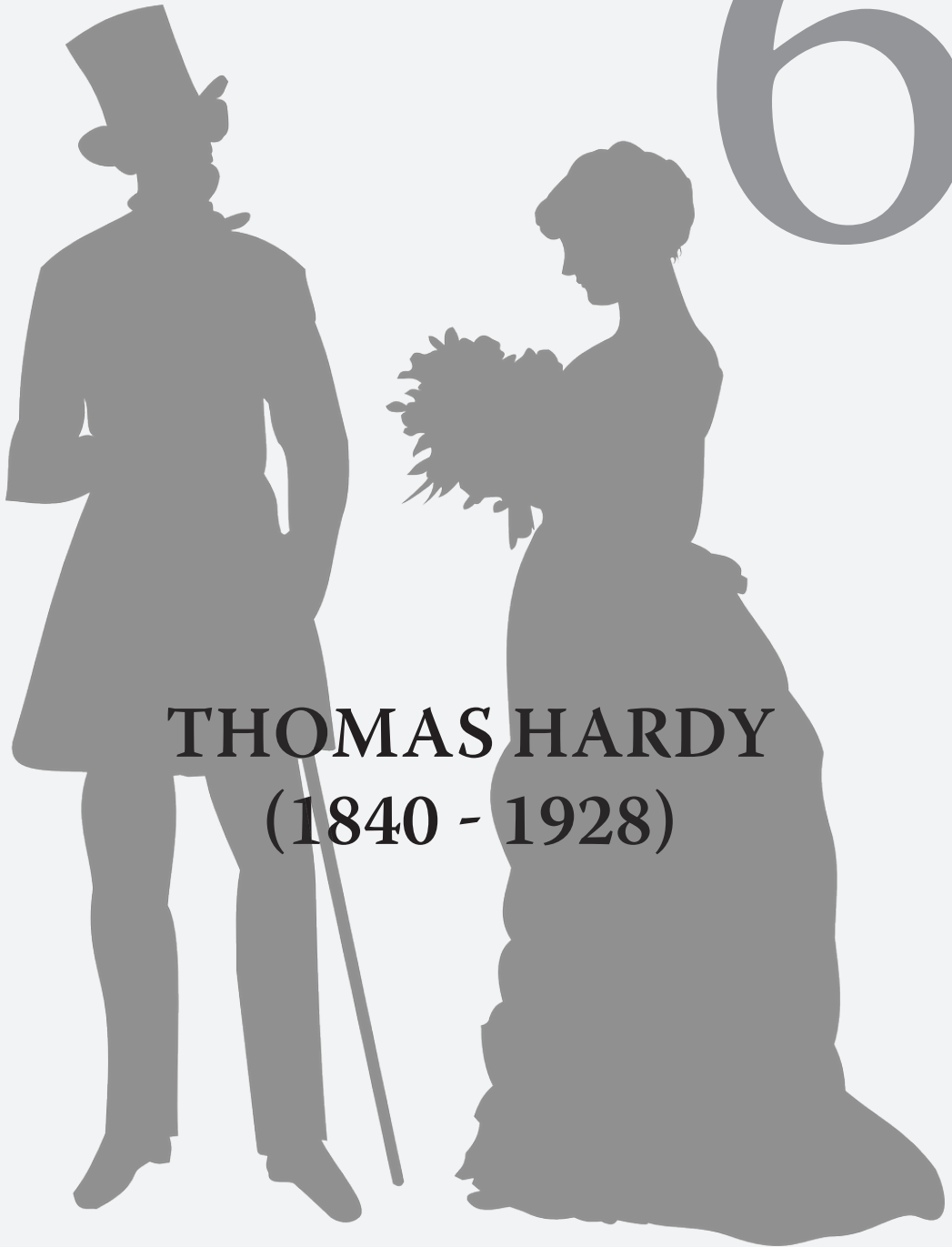
1. George Eliot was physically unattractive. According to Henry James, the novelist, Eliot was “magnificently ugly, deliciously hideous”. He referred to her as the “horse-faced” writer with a “vast pendulous nose” and bad teeth.
2. Mary Ann Evans took the pseudonym of George Eliot as George was the first name of her emotional partner Lewis. According to some historians, “Eliot” is obtained from “To L(ewes), I owe it.”
3. After Lewes’s death, at the age of 60, Eliot married John Cross, who was 20 years her junior. As newlyweds they went to Venice and Cross informed his sister in letter that they had a wonderful time together. Apparently, he was feeling not feeling well. He fought with depression and faced weight loss. While Eliot was conversing with the doctor, Cross jumped off the balcony into the Grand Canal. Luckily, he survived as a hotel worker rescued him. Why had he jumped? Was it a suicide attempt? It was speculated that he might have had a history of mental illness. Inspired by George Eliot’s honeymoon in Venice, Dinitia Smith published a novel entitled “The Honeymoon” in 2016.
4. Eliot coined the word pop. The term first appeared in 1862 when Eliot was telling her friend in a birthday letter about the music event they had gone to: “We have been to a Monday Pop. this week to hear Beethoven’s Septet, and an amazing thing of Bach’s played by the amazing Joachim. But there is too much ‘Pop.’ for the thorough enjoyment of the chamber music they give.”
5. The word *browser* in a broader sense (i.e. a person searching for something) first appeared in Eliot’s novel *Romola*, a historical novel in which she described few characters as “amiable browsers in the Medicean park”. Until then, the meaning of the term was limited to “a person who cuts the leaves and twigs of trees to use as food for animals in winter”. Hereafter, the word was used to denote an animal that searched for leaves and twigs to eat.
6. According to a 2015 BBC poll of 82 book critics from around the world, *Middlemarch* was listed as the greatest British novel of all time. Contemporary British writers Julian Barnes and Martin Amis also listed Eliot’s *Middlemarch* as one of the greatest English novels ever written.
7. The house Elliot grew up has been now turned into a steakhouse and hotel, featuring a pond, gardens, and a playground.³⁰
8. Eliot was the first to use the term lawn tennis. The term appeared in 1878.³¹

30 Facts 1-7 were adapted from: <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/538298/facts-about-george-eliot>

31 Fact 8 was adapted from: <https://interestingliterature.com/2015/09/24/five-fascinating-facts-about-george-eliot/>

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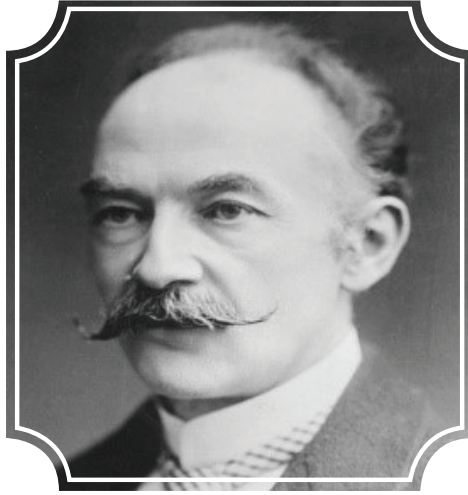
6



THOMAS HARDY
(1840 - 1928)

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(1840 - 1928)



Thomas Hardy was an English novelist and a poet. He was born in the village near Dorchester, in the South West England, a part of the country that would serve as a model for his fictional Wessex – a county that got its name after one of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and where most of his novels are set. He was not the only one who chose this part of the country for a setting of his novels. George Eliot and Emily Brontë did the same. However, Hardy's descriptions of rural Wessex are realistic and devoid of any romantic or idealistic sentiments. It is believed that his depictions of wild nature are as powerful as Emily Brontë's and as such are said to be among the most successful in Victorian literature. Hardy's fictional world seems realistic due to his ability to faithfully depict the ambient and the bond between his characters and nature. When he started publishing his first novels, the critics immediately became aware of some pessimistic elements in them. Some of the key influences that shaped Hardy's outlook on life and his mainly pessimistic attitude were the following: the philosophy of Schopenhauer and his teaching in the core of which was will as the inner essence of everything, and where the world was seen as the objectification of the will; the ideas expressed by his good friend Horatio (Horace) Moule, whose religious skepticism became Hardy's leitmotif both in life and literature; the events from his personal life such as the unhappy marriage with his wife Emma Lavinia Gifford due to

her virtual insanity, the conviction that she married below her parental status as well as her unexpected death; and Darwin's theory of evolution and the survival of the strongest – Hardy's plots mirror the view that all events are determined by external causes and his characters are the embodiments of such an idea. His protagonists are the victims of their environment and capricious forces of nature. All these considered, it is no wonder why the main idea expressed in his works relies on his belief that a guiding principle of the Universe is chance that stands for an incarnation of blind forces that control human destiny (Cecil 1954: 24-30). Hardy rejected the label that he was pessimistic, nihilistic and depressed, and declared to be a meliorist who advocated the idea that the world had tendencies to get better and the future might be brighter.

However, he believed that the human feeling of misery originated from the fact that people's aspirations and life expectations were in constant clash with reality. The people's desire for life conditions and circumstances they cannot have in reality is what makes them feel miserable on the first place. As John R. Reed has noted, Hardy depicted man as "an incompetent antagonist against fate, whose few successes were brief and limited" (Reed 2004: 270). His perception of human fate was a subject of many discussions. He was no longer a truly devoted Christian and he kept changing his views and beliefs as he changed his opinion about the philosophies he followed. Among the poets, Shelley was the one who influenced him mostly. Modern science and philosophy, of which Schopenhauer's philosophy had the greatest negative impact on him, influenced him to the extent that his intuitive understanding of reality became blurred and unsolid. His understanding of the world was a result of his supporting of various philosophies, notably pessimistic and materialistic in nature. What Hardy, however, did recognize regarding his outlook on life, was the fact that the world of Wessex was bound to collapse. This is why his sense of alienation he discerned in such a world was soon transmitted to the whole human kind. His Wessex, however small and secluded, reflected much larger process affecting the whole world – fading of a rural way of life which long used to be the only way of life and which, all of a sudden, was about to cease to exist. In Hardy's Wessex, the workers and countrymen are isolated, since they are partly affected by 'money making' and mechanization. However, they are still unable to adapt to such way of living, which has for an effect their evil fate. His Wessex is not an ideal place for living since its inhabitants are destined to live in poverty, respecting the customs and rituals of their society. Conversely, Wessex stands for attachment, a sense of belonging, closeness to nature and biological instincts and passions. There is a certain amount of strange beauty in its customs and unspoilt nature, since its moors reflect the glow of harmony instilled in people from rural areas.

In most of Hardy's works the blind forces seem to favor certain characters over the others, making the hapless even more miserable. Although he was Agnostic who expressed skepticism in religious practices, he remained the prisoner of a religious way of thinking. Instead of God and God's will, he believed in omnipresence of certain natural forces indifferent to man. This is why he could no longer see any good in the world he lived in, though he believed that 'good' existed as a transcendental category. Hardy thought that it was in human nature to be malicious. Such thinking made him observe the world from its ugly side, therefore, the characters in his novels were bound to fall victim to merciless fate. His pessimistic mood influenced the way his narrative unfolded, which predominantly resulted in producing a sad and unhappy ending. By doing so, he brought into question the mere concept of free will, typical of novel as a literary genre. Rarely did he allow his characters to be successful in overcoming some of their life difficulties.

As he was immensely sensitive to whatever could make the human fate tragic – such as people's passions and coincidences – he named his collection of short stories *Life's little ironies*. Also, he saw and felt social injustice based on rigid conventions and the power of the rich. Therefore, most of his novels express a bleak view of life devoid of illusions and contain the basic weakness – his tendency to depict the tragic lives of his characters, which convincingly results from the workings of both, his protagonists' nature and the environment, as a mere blend of coincidence and evil fate. Such an idea is developed on the basis of the gap between Hardy's intuition and reason, his intuitive and rational interpretation of the world. Forced interpretation deteriorates and weakens his literary works. In all of his novels, tragic is only the main protagonist, not necessarily all the characters, as it is the case with Shakespeare's characters. Fatalism emerges as a key feature in Hardy's works. An individual - a natural being with basic instincts - cannot fit into such a society. Such an individual loses the game in the money-fueled world supported by conventions. The personalities of his heroes and heroines fall apart in such a world - they become contradictory and beaten by external and internal forces which they cannot control. Hardy's protagonists, therefore, are not happy neither in Wessex nor out of it. Although they strive to reach more and do their best to make their lives better, the power of fate ruled by money and social conventions steps in to oppose their efforts.

As he worked as an architecture apprentice he started publishing his first texts about architecture in *Chamber's Journal*, a magazine of architecture. In 1861 he went to London and soon became a member of the Royal Academy of British artists. Hardy was a novelist and a poet who heralded the themes and motives that were about to become relevant in the literature of the 20th century,

such as double standards and moral hypocrisy. Hardy classified his novels into the following groups: 'Novels of Characters and Environment', 'Romances and Fantasies' and 'Novels of Ingenuity.'

'Novels of Characters and Environment' are the most numerous and the most important since they elaborate on his philosophy of meliorism – if people tried hard enough, they could turn the world into a better place to live in - and his rather pessimistic outlook on life based on superstitions, coincidences and chances that humans have no control of. *The Return of the Native*, published as a whole work in 1879, belongs to this group. The novel – though tragic in its conception - is considered a sensationalist work of fiction dealing with love and blasphemous relationships. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, published in 1866, is regarded as Hardy's most successful novel. It deals with uncontrollable passions and vices, such as alcoholism, that leads the main character Michael Henchard to his doom. As Reed has remarked, Henchard is responsible for his own miseries due to his tendency to "locate the source of his trouble outside himself" (Reed 2004: 294). The main character has no characteristics of a tragic hero but he seems convincing as he possesses the qualities of a real-life person.

Hardy was well aware of both the natural forces that were in line with a downfall of a certain character (i.e. Michael Henchard's ruining is fueled by bad weather conditions) and a social factors (i.e. the society plays a tremendous role in the character's life and is responsible for his or her downfall by imposing both its conventions and superficial values on the individual and the new age's stress on efficacy). The novels belonging to this group are fatalistic in their essence. They usually include social events, where people gather for celebrations and other sorts of communal entertainments. These events are permeated with the elements from Greek tragedies and Shakespearean drama, as it is the case with *The Return of the Native* and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, where we witness the realization of bonfire and "Skimmington ride".

Another novel belonging to this category is *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874). Unlike other Hardy's novels tragic in their conception, this novel contains the elements of Shakespearean comedy. Though relatively neglected in the past, the novel has recently begun to gain more attention from the contemporary critics. The main protagonist is Bathsheba Everdene - a strong, independent, capricious woman unable to think rationally. We see her as a financially stable young woman who owns a farm and who tries to define her relationship with men who are romantically engaged with her. She is trapped between her desire to marry and her wish to keep her individuality and independence. Hardy's treatment of Bathsheba with a fond irony reveals his personal equivocal attitudes towards women,

which were primarily based on his personal experience and marriage to Emma Lavinia Gifford. Most of Hardy's subordinate female characters are often depicted as meek creatures of mercurial moods, while his main heroines are mostly projections of his own notions of the feminine ideal. On the other hand, we cannot but notice Hardy's awareness of the oppression of women, his sensitiveness to the problems the women faced in the society marked by a strict stereotypical division between 'male' and 'female' roles and his persistent praising of female endurance, strength, passion, and sensitivity in most of his novels.

God, fate or the very nature of things control human lives and render people powerless. Such belief permeates the novels *The Woodlanders*, published in 1887, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, published in a literary magazine *The Graphic* in 1891, and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Under the Greenwood Tree*, Hardy makes use of a wheel of fortune, coincidence and chance. They function as literary devices and they all contribute to the novel's plot (i.e. Angel returns from Brazil to seek Tess approximately at the same time when she marries Alec; Dick Dewey attends a friend's funeral on Fancy Day's first day at work as a church organist; Michael Henchard's transition from rags to riches, his struggling with a drinking problem, ability to become the town's leading figure and inability to end his life as a distinguished mayor all contribute to the conception of life as a fortune wheel with no possibility to control).

Jude the Obscure, last novel written by Hardy, was published in this period. The novel is regarded as obscene due to the manner in which the author presented human nature and the mixture of crime and passion it involved. As Reed (2004: 296) has noticed, the novel contains dark and pessimistic undertones with little prospects of happiness as it is permeated with frustration and suffering. The novel is set in an urban area and is based on the hypothesis that people, no matter how talented they are, cannot become successful if they are trapped in poverty. The main character Jude is prevented from reaching his goals and receiving university education since he is poor. A social factor in the novel seems very convincing unlike his internal impulses that drag him towards Arabella, a girl who does not deserve his love. The tragic event in the novel is depicted as God's response to the characters' sins.

The second category of Hardy's novels are 'Romances and Fantasies', such as *The Well-Beloved* (1897) and *The Trumpet-Major* (1880). While the former, thematically different from Hardy's previous novels, can be perceived as the artist's quest for the feminine ideal and his exploration of the relationship between romantic love and art with the elements of the author's personal quest (Harvey 2003: 111, Thomas 2013: 145), the latter goes under the umbrella of historical and pastoral novels set in Hardy's Wessex during the Napoleonic Wars.

The critics' opinions are divided regarding *The Trumpet Major*. While some of them concerned with the novel's flaws criticized its relatively weak and simple plot (a country girl is courted by three suitors) and dismissed it as one of his worst novels (Guerard 1949: 39), others praised Hardy's style, his representations of characters and its "enchanted descriptions" of the English countryside in anticipation of Napoleon's invasion (Hardy 1954: 173).

The Well-Beloved, though criticized for its triviality (Guerard 1949: 68), has recently begun to gain more favourable reviews. As Barbara Hardy (2000: 15) has noted, it is a novel about professional artist's career and imagination, where a "specialized story of art [is linked] with a love story". The main protagonist is a sculptor who seeks to find an incarnation of a perfect beauty in three generations of women. Eventually, he realizes that his quest is a futile undertaking. Namely, his failure stems from his futile attempts to harmonize his notion of feminine beauty as a product of his artistic imagination with the femininity of a real-life woman. As Barbara Hardy (2000: 16) has remarked, "Hardy fails to fuse concept and art", and "the admission of fantasy in an obviously stylized and self-conscious genre does not make the artist-hero and his impossible object of desire either lucid or plausible", which has as its consequence the fact that in Hardy's novel the "elusive ideals in art and life stay separate" making the author unable to make imaginative compromises between art and life similar to those found in James Joyce's *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*.

'Novels of Ingenuity' belong to the third category. These novels with inventive and complex plots are the weakest since they are the closest to the trivial and populist literature. The artist-novel *The Hand of Ethelberta* published in 1876 belongs to this group. Robert Gittings examines the role of the notion 'hand' in the biography entitled *Young Thomas Hardy*, and Barbara Hardy in her book on Hardy's fiction and prose observes that the 'hand' may symbolically refer to the artist: "Ethelberta's is a composite Muse and she can put her hand to everything. Like her author, she first writes poetry [...] but needs to support herself and better her family so moves on to more lucrative public story-telling" (Hardy 2000: 9). The novel's central character, Ethelberta, is a witty and charming lady who manages to conceal her lower-class origins and flourish as a very popular professional story-teller. When her popularity starts to wear off, she decides to marry an old viscount and thus secure her future and maintain her high social position. Although she is perceived as an opportunist, she never stops to think of others or support her large family. Most critics agree that the novel is one of the weakest Hardy's novels (Cox 1979: 178, Duffin 1962: 15, Hardy 1954: 147, Webster 1947: 113).

Conversely, later critics who focused on the novel's allusions and multiple plots, found the novel surprisingly self-reflexive (Widdowson 1989: 157) and self-conscious due to its numerous parodies of the conventions it employs (Harvey 2003: 100). Barbara Hardy interprets the novel through the relationship between art and reality claiming that by presenting the stages in Ethelberta's career, the writer's aim is to "theoretically relat[e] fiction to art and art to fiction but the relationship is never made performative" as the novel's art fails to show the artist (Hardy 2000:12).

In his novels Hardy criticized the harsh conditions the labourers faced and was sensitive to the position of women, inequality between the sexes and the Victorian double standards regarding morality. His frankness and openness when depicting relations between the sexes (i.e. Alec's seduction of Tess, or the sexual transgression and murder of a child in *Jude the Obscure*) shocked and offended the public. Modern readers can barely notice the element of Alec's sexual abuse of Tess in the "Chase" scene since Hardy dealt with delicate themes in an indirect way. Although most of his female characters are led by emotional impulses instead reason and control and as such are depicted as temperamental and capricious (Fancy Day, Eustacia Vye, Bathsheba), the character of Tess rises above them all owing to her inner strength, strong spiritual power and self-respect.

Man's struggle with fate and forces larger than life are best reflected in *The Return of the Native*, *Jude the Obscure*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. In "Thomas Hardy's Tragic Hero", Ted R. Spivey thoroughly explores Hardy's characters and points out that their 'tragedy' stems from their "paralysis of the will". This is what makes them different from Aristotle's tragic heroes who suffer due to their fatal errors in judgement. Spivey further claims that Hardy's characters do not possess universal traits detected in Shakespearean heroes – they lack imagination, vivacity, higher intellect and creativity. However, they are still "souls capable of great feeling, souls capable of exultation" and "nobility of passion" (Spivey 1954-5:182). All things considered, the elements of tragedy in the novels of Hardy are reflected in "the defeat of the romantic hero's desire to reach a higher spiritual state" (Spivey 1954-5:188-9). Hardy's protagonists readily accept their tragic fate caused by the evil forces in their surroundings. Their defiance, inner strength and endurance trigger our sympathies, "and we experience a feeling that someone of great worth has been lost when we see them destroyed" (Spivey 1954-5:183).

Although Hardy is predominantly regarded as a prominent Victorian novelist, he thought of himself primarily as a poet. He is regarded as a forerunner of T. S. Eliot's poetry. He found his inspiration for the poems he wrote in the history of southern England with Stonehenge as its key edifice, as well as in the ancient and medieval ruins that testify about the Napoleonic Wars. His war poems influenced modern poets like Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon. His fascination with the past and history are evident in the poem "The Shadow on the Stone" and a poetic drama *The Dynasts* (1908), while his well-known war poems speak about terrible consequences of the war (primarily, the Boer War and the First World War). "Drummer Hodge" and "In Time of the Breaking Nations" are mostly written in colloquial style, where Hardy often assumed the point of view of an ordinary soldier. *The Dynasts* is a poetic drama written in a new kind of verse that is "neither a poem, nor a play" but "a shooting-script", as John Wain has noticed in his introduction to the poem's St. Martin's Press edition (1965). The poem contains parts of Hardy's interviews with soldiers who had fought in the Napoleonic Wars. The poem explores his theory of "evolutionary meliorism", the idea that improvement is possible through human action. The tone of Hardy's poetry is darker than in his novels. A strong opposition of the war is expressed in his poem "The Man He Killed", while "The Darkling Thrush" and "The Oxen" are strong and remarkable poems that offer a glimpse of hope for better future and faith in humanity despite their dark and bleak atmosphere.

As a long-lived poet who witnessed numerous wars, battles, deaths and social changes triggered by advances in science, technology and human thought, Hardy was not a mere Victorian poet and novelist whose works were social documents of the time during which he lived and created his literary works. Hardy lived in a time when England was undergoing a process of transition triggered by the Industrial Revolution. The consequences of industrialization became apparent in rural areas that witnessed innovative ways of cultivation and land management. The appearance of the middle class and "new money" - businessmen and entrepreneurs - changed the social milieu of the country and caused "old money" (the nobility and the aristocrats) to lose power. Hardy's works represent a blend of tradition and innovation as he was observant to the past and history, aware of the present (Victorian conventions, stereotypes and gender inequalities) and sensitive to the future (modernization, decadence of Victorian values, modernist tendencies). At the verge of the 20th century, Ezra Pound considered Hardy as a contemporary poet, and D. H. Lawrence acknowledged his innovations and modernist techniques in his *Study of Thomas Hardy* (1914). Having examined the works of Hardy from the postmodernist perspective, Peter Widdowson (2010: 76) has noted that it is a "critical truism to say that Hardy is a 'transitional' writer".

Widdowson (2010: 76) goes on to claim that Hardy was a Modernist owing to his "innovative anti-realism and self-conscious modernity of much of his fictional oeuvre". Taking into account the 20th criticism of Hardy's works (i. e. "didn't make it to F. R. Leavis's Great Tradition; always 'flawed' by contingency, melodrama and improbability; neither securely 'Victorian' nor 'modern'; uncertain whether he is primarily novelist or poet"), we may conclude that Hardy has never really been made to fit in any genre, which qualifies him, as Widdowson (2010: 76) has wisely remarked, as a postmodernist.

TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES: PURE WOMAN FAITHFULLY PRESENTED

Upon its publication in 1981, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* received negative reviews especially from the readers who could not accept the novel's main idea that a family history and the family's aristocratic origins started to lose their meaning and power in the time of emergence of "new money" and the country's process of transition from an agricultural to an industrial nation. A great majority of readers found the novel scandalous due to its quite open dealing with sexual hypocrisy. Women were considered as angelic figures, pure and unspoiled by external influences, and they were shunned or cruelly punished for committing any sexual transgressions whatsoever. In case of the novel's heroine Tess, however, transgressions were wrongly imposed on her, so her tragic outcome was a result of the Victorian hypocrisy and double standards of the society. Therefore, the novel demonstrates Hardy's criticism of rigid Victorian morality and his sympathy for rural women who most fiercely felt the consequences of such rigidity.



The novel was published in the magazine *The Graphic* with a subtitle *Pure Woman: Faithfully Presented*. The subtitle is indicative of the fact that it is difficult to properly define her character as she is perceived differently by the individuals and the society in general: Angel sees her as an ideal woman – pure, chaste and angelic, Alec objectifies her in accordance with his sexual appetites, the society

sees her as a rather extravagant woman, the church shuns her, while the narrative voice is sympathetic towards her. Recent critics go even further to state that Tess "*has no character at all*: she is only what others (most especially the author) construct her as; and so she is herself merely 'a series of seemings' or 'impressions'" (Widdowson 2010: 84). The fact that Tess is presented as a 'pure' woman does not strip her character off the irony involved in the novel's subtitle. The society's double standards are to be blamed for Tess's fatal outcome. Moreover, Tess is depicted as a convincing character who immediately captures the readers' attention and wins their sympathies. She is naturally noble and dignified, and the strength of her personality makes her stand out in the crowd. On the other hand, she is closely attached to her environment and cannot be defined without taking into consideration the environment's contribution to her mental and moral development. Therefore, she is what both the society and writer's own understanding of life have made from her – a victim of "her imagination" as Reed (2004: 289) has noted, a victim of coincidence, and the principle of fatalism. The readers can easily accept the tragedy of Tess's life but not a series of coincidences that interfere and contribute to her downfall, imposing upon her the misfortunes greater than we can normally expect. This is why it is said that Tess emerges as a victim of both the society and the writer himself.

As the novel shows some elements of literary naturalism, it can be classified as a naturalistic novel. The writer focuses on more details from everyday life of the characters, making the scene seem as natural and realistic as possible with the focus on determinism, whereby the characters are depicted as victims of the circumstances. The narration is in the third person singular with the omniscient narrator who has an insight into characters' thoughts. The narrator is usually objective and does not take sides, but in the novel the writer often speaks through the narrator and expresses his own views. The environment and family ties appear as key features in shaping the human beings' development. Cuthbert and Felix Claire in *Tess* are representatives of this principle since they adopt their father's views and continue their father's profession. Angel Claire, on the other hand, shows more independence when it comes to choosing his future career and lifestyle and manages to get rid of his father's influence. His upbringing, however, makes him incapable of facing Tess's past and accepting her the way she is. Once again the family views prove to be more dominant than his gained self-independence and he decides to leave her.

Most of the events occurring in the novel happen in the southwestern part of England, in Wessex, particularly in Marlott, a fictional place where Tess lives, four kilometers far from London by the carriage. In Chapter 41 the setting of the novel is Brazil, the city that brings on sobriety to Angel Claire and his countrymen upon realization that the stories of earning money are false. In Chapter 58 the centre of events becomes Stonehenge in England.

In *Tess*, as it is the case with other Hardy's novels, the protagonists are in constant interaction with the nature. The scenes of nature depict the characters' moods and emotions and the general atmosphere of the novel. The allusions to nature as well as the comparisons between the protagonists and nature are made in the novel for the purpose of creating a link between the characters' fate and their environment. For instance, in Chapter 19, Tess's fate is suggested by the author's referring to nature. Here, Tess compares her rather modest mental standpoint to Angel's by referring to the Andean altitude (*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, 2000, p. 111).

In other words, in this paragraph, a metaphor and hyperbole 'Andean Altitude' – a reference to the mountain range in South America and its high altitude – stands for Angel's intellect. Such a comparison indicates that Tess's perception of things and people is in close attachment to the nature. It is evident that not only her emotions but also her way of thinking is inseparable from nature.

Hardy was fond of paganism of the past times but he could not entirely detach himself from his family's Christian beliefs. This is why his religious skepticism is widely felt in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Christianity fails in this novel as it provides little comfort, release from suffering and hope for justice. Alec, a newly-converted Christian who initially brought upon Tess's doom, does his best to convince people that sinners can also enter the kingdom of heaven. However, his preaching and faith are not convincing enough – they appear to lack depth, meaning and sincerity. It seems as if justice, as an ultimate goal of Christianity, existed as an abstract term in Hardy's fictional world. The novel is permeated with pagan injustice and lots of pre-Christian rituals that appear futile and meaningless. Human life is ruled by the forces that cannot be controlled or predicted, while the gods in the novel are neither just nor fair but whimsical. There is no catharsis or a sense of feeling that 'justice was done' in the novel's ending. All that is left is a feeling of deep sympathy and sorry for the tragic heroine.

There is no wonder why fatalism represents one of the novel's greatest themes. Hardy depicts a world ruled by the circumstances beyond Tess's control, such as happiness, coincidence and natural forces. It seems as if all of them worked together to bring upon Tess's downfall. Tess's poverty, the horse's death, the argument with Car Darch (the woman that used to be Alec's favourite), the encounter with Alec in the woods, her pregnancy, her father's death, debts, the loss of her house, etc. all seem to weave a net around Tess, ensnaring her eternally. The theme of fatalism is suggested by the narrator in Chapter XI when the actual act of Alec's seduction/abuse of Tess occurs. The scene is summed up in few words: "It was to be" (*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, 2000, p. 65).

The novel embodies the idea that social class can no longer be defined and evaluated by the existing standards of value. Namely, in the Victorian Age, money matters more than lineage. The Durbeyfields, Tess's family, have the purity of blood, but their aristocratic lineage is of no importance whatsoever. They live below the poverty line, work hard and barely have enough to make the ends meet. On the other hand, the Stokes, the family of entrepreneurs, purchased a noble family name for a considerable amount of money and became the respected Stoke-d'Urbervilles. Further confusion about the class is created by Angel, the most promising son of the Stokes, who decides to become a farmer and marry below his class, despite his Cambridge education and the privileges it brings.

Hardy's perception of women's submissiveness and their subordination by men is demonstrated through the characters' relationships to each other. Therefore, male domination and sexual abuse of woman is another great theme explored by Hardy. The 19th century was marked by the expectation of woman to fulfill her role imposed by the society. After John Durbeyfield's death, his wife and children were forced to leave the house since women had no privilege of taking care of the property. Tess's rejection of Alec and his seduction of Tess lasted for a short period of time. Despite Alec's awareness of the pain he is inflicting on Tess by seducing her, he does not want to put an end to that. After his persistent molestation of Tess, he eventually wins her. His act of abuse, that caused all future misfortunes to Tess, is motivated by his own pleasure and his own selfish needs.

Another example of inequality between man and woman is demonstrated through the relationship between Tess and Angel. Namely, in spite of Angel's love of Tess and his marriage to her, he is adamant to leave her when he hears about her intercourse with Alec. The fact that he had an affair with a woman before marriage does not put him off from deserting her. It seems that he believes that men are allowed to have affairs before marriage.

His lack of empathy for Tess when she recounts the events from her past, his decision to leave her and go on a sudden trip to Brazil caused her more suffering than she deserved and eventually drove her towards the murder of Alec d'Urberville. Also, Angel's domination over females is subtler than Alec's but not less severe and serious. His revelation that he prefers Tess over other women working in the farm had serious consequences. Namely, one of the girls, called Retty, attempts suicide, while the other, Marian, becomes an alcoholic. Retty and Marian stand for all passive girls dominated by a desire of a man unconscious of their interest in him. Also, Angel's treatment of Tess is even more unsettling. He keeps referring to her as "daughter of nature" or "Artemis", which are symbolic of an idealized notion of purity and chastity. Namely, Angel's mental image of Tess, idealized in its nature and thus unreal, does not match the one embodied in a real-life woman. By doing so, he denies her true self and refuses to get to know her true nature and her own true worth.

Another novel's great theme is prejudice. When Angel Clare suggests that he and his brother Felix take part in May-Day Dance organized by the inhabitants of Marlott, Felix responds: "Dancing in public with a troop of country hoydens – suppose we should be seen!" (Hardy 2000: 12). Also, Mercy Chant's anti-Catholicism is clearly seen when Angel informs her about his plan to go abroad and mentions a cloister as a possible destination: "Why, you wicked man, a cloister implies a monk, and a monk Roman Catholicism. And Roman Catholicism sin, and sin damnation" (Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 2000, p. 233).

The novel is rich in symbols. The accident in which Tess's horse Prince dies after she falls asleep, is a powerful plot motivator. This event foreshadows all the negative things that are about to happen to Tess: her encounter with Alec, Alec's sexual abuse of her and Tess's revenge on him. Her attempts to stop Prince's bleeding reflect the futility of all her future attempts to stop her tragic fate. The drops of blood that appear on her face and skirt as she tries to save Prince (26) as well as the sharp rod that caused him a deadly wound foreshadow Tess's stab in Alec's heart. The elements of violence stand in contrast to perfect calmness of the nature. The birds' pleasant singing and gleaming of sun rays in a pool of blood indicate the nature's indifference to the human suffering. Also, there are two symbolic scenes of Tess's plight, at the beginning and in the end of the novel. The first happens after the day Tess spent with Alec in Chase, when she lies asleep on the dry leaves in the wood while Alec watches her. Similar atmosphere is evoked in the novel's end, when Tess peacefully sleeps at Stonehenge and the approaching policemen do not wish to wake her up. They watch her sleep as Alec did in the woods. Conversely, the novel's tragedy is made less severe by depiction of the atmosphere that surrounds the sleeping Tess.

Throughout the novel Tess emerges as a young woman with enormous inner strength owing to which she is capable of standing up for herself without crumbling under pressure. After the priest rejects to christen her baby since it was born out of the wedlock, she does it herself. When she buries the baby, she is heartbroken but manages to collect herself and move on as a stronger woman. We witness how hard she is on herself for letting herself become a victim of Alec and cannot but feel sorry for her. Tess is a fatalist who nevertheless struggles for happiness and fulfilment in a world bent on denying her both. Her upbringing and social pressures limit her choices and affect her life decisions. She simultaneously struggles against the past and holds firmly to it. The belief that she has power to control the past and overcome it and inability to leave it behind makes her a tragic heroine worthy of our sympathy. As Barbara Hardy (2000: 45) has noted, Tess “grows away from impulsive uncontrollable sexuality and from religion, into an able and occasionally confident recognition of the self in nature”. Being familiar with pagan and Christian rituals, she is able to rise above them. Tess questions Christianity in the act of her innovative baptizing of the baby. By her imaginative remaking of the Christian ritual she restores authority and rises as a “woman re-imagining herself as priest, and as Adam” (Hardy 2000: 45).

Did you know?

1. The word “cliff-hanger” first appeared in Hardy’s *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. The novel’s protagonist, Henry Knight, is depicted by Hardy as hanging off a cliff.³²
2. Gertrude, a young woman who played Tess at a local theatre, was the granddaughter of a milkmaid whom Hardy used as a model for his Tess. Hardy became obsessed with her as he believed she was an ideal embodiment of his heroine.
3. Hardy’s heart was buried at Stinsford Church in Dorset, where his parents and wife were buried, while his ashes were interred in Westminster Abbey in London, where his tomb can be visited today.³³
4. Hardy’s literary precursor was William Wordsworth.³⁴
5. Hardy was nominated eleven times for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

32 Fact 1 was adapted from: <https://www.eng-literature.com/2016/06/28-most-interesting-facts-about-thomas-hardy.html>

33 Fact 3 was adapted from: <https://blog.bookstellyouwhy.com/five-facts-about-thomas-hardy>

34 Facts 4-5 were adapted from: <http://manoflabook.com/wp/fun-facts-friday-thomas-hardy/>

Part 7



OSCAR WILDE
(1854 -1900)

OSCAR WILDE

(1854 - 1900)



Oscar Wilde was an Irish writer, playwright and a poet born in Dublin. He attended Trinity College in Dublin and then continued his education at Oxford University in England. He was well known for his infamous arrest and homosexual inclinations and his works best sum up the last two decades of the Victorian period marked by decadence movement and aestheticism. As he died at the beginning of the 20th century, his literary works (mostly poems and plays, together with his only novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*) heralded modernist literature that would cast off all Victorian conventions both in life and art in general. His bourgeois and respected family - a distinguished father William Wilde who was a surgeon knighted for his work and mother Lady Jane Francesca who was a revolutionary poet, translator, advocate of women's liberation and agitator for Irish Independence – created for their bright and bookish son a stimulating environment, where he could have the opportunity to sit among the best Dublin's artists, writers and other intellectuals who frequently visited his parents' house.

Just before he left Oxford, where he enjoyed the company of John Ruskin who was fetching books for his father and who worshipped the Middle Ages and moral medievalism, and Walter Pater, whose love of Renaissance that permeated his literary accomplishments placed beauty and subtlety the highest, Wilde won the Newdigate Prize for a poem "Ravenna".

Wilde and Pater edited Mahaffey's books. The influence of Pater and his engrossment in Mahaffey's books prevented Wilde from attaching himself to Roman Catholicism (Coakley 1995: 170). After his graduation from Oxford, he moved to London to continue his writing career. His first book of poetry (*Poems*), published in 1881, received modest reviews and established him as a budding writer who would soon embark on a United States lecture tour and meet some of the literary figures he admired most, among whom was Walt Whitman. Upon his arrival, he began another lecture tour, this time across England and Ireland, which helped him to establish himself as one of the chief figures in advocating the aesthetic movement based on a theory of art and literature that promoted the principle of 'art for art's sake'. Namely, he was of opinion that art in general should be stripped of any political, social, moral or instructive viewpoints. We all should focus on the pursuit of beauty for its own sake in an artwork, instead of searching for moral lessons.

He married Constance Lloyd, a wealthy Englishwoman of mediocre intelligence, more a child than an adult, who bore him two sons, whom he ignored most of his life. A year after his wedding, he became an editor of *Woman's World* magazine, which he revitalized by expanding its coverage. At the time he became its editor, the magazine started dealing with what women thought and felt, apart from what they wore (*Complete Letters*, pp. 297). He also transformed the magazine by including the "women's opinions on all subjects of literature, art, and modern life" (*Complete Letters*, pp. 297).

In 1888 he published a collection of children's stories entitled *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*, while in 1889 he wrote an essay "The Decay of Lying – An Observation", in which he defended a lie as more beautiful than the truth and promoted the idea that art influenced nature, not vice versa. A significantly revised version of the article was published in his collection of essays inspired by aestheticism entitled *Intentions* (1981). In the longest essay belonging to this collection entitled "The Critic as Artist", Wilde expresses his opinion that art that should be freed from any moral or social responsibility or its characteristic to reflect reality, and promoted the idea that true critical writing was superior to painting and sculpture. In an essay published in 1891 under the name "The Soul of Man Under Socialism", Wilde defended socialism and criticized charity. Namely, he argued that many people wasted their lives while trying to deal with the issues capitalism had brought about. He claimed that the people were committed to "the task of remedying the evils that they see in poverty but their remedies do not cure the disease: they merely prolong it". In the same year Wilde published *Salome*, a tragedy originally written in French and translated in English three years later, *A House of Pomegranates*, a collection of fairy tales,

and his first and only novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, that deals with a young man Dorian who befriends the devil so that he could stay forever young and beautiful. Both *Salome* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* interrogate “the modern and Victorian dilemma between personal individuation and social good”, as they stand for the assertion of personal preference over social values (Gagnier 1997: 24).

Before setting to write the novel, Wilde considered the idea of telling a story in the form of a cautionary tale, or perhaps a riddle, “to his male admirers” (Maxwell 1938: 97). Although he denied spending much time writing the story, a thorough research has showed quite the opposite. It has been determined that he invested a lot of care and attention to detail while creating the final version of the story (Gide 1951: 29). In the novel’s *Preface* published in the revised edition of the novel, Wilde defended his philosophy of aestheticism, claiming that the artist should treat both vice and virtue as artistic materials and should make use of them in the process of creating his work of art. “All art is at once surface and symbol,” he says in the *Preface* to the novel. “Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril. Those who read the symbol do so at their peril. It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors. Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex and vital” (*Preface*, p. 3). According to Richard Ellmann (1987), Wilde’s biographer, aestheticism and its implications were not a creed but a problem to Wilde and the story of Dorian Gray should be read as the author’s attempt to solve it. The novel was published in *Lippincott’s Monthly Magazine*. Upon its publication, it received negative reviews. The critics described it as immoral. This prompted Wilde to include a preface explaining his philosophy of art with the revised edition of the novel. In order to understand Wilde’s ‘art for art’s sake’ argument, one should understand the socio-historical and cultural context, that is, the time in which the writer lived. Victorian sensibility regarding art and morality were inflexible and strict. All art, including literature, should deal with ethics and should be directed towards instructing people how to behave and live according to social conventions. In the core of the aesthetic movement was the idea that the only purpose of art was to offer beauty and as such it should be freed from any ethical, social or political responsibility. The proponents of this movement expressed a contempt for the hypocritical bourgeois morality. The forerunner of the aesthetic movement was the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood which included numerous English painters, poets, and art critics who defied Victorian standards of beauty.

In 1892 Wilde published his first play entitled *Lady Windermere's Fan*. As the play received positive reviews and became immensely popular, Wilde became more and more interested in perfecting the literary form of playwriting. Soon he produced other satirical, imaginative and witty comedies of manners such as *A Woman of no Importance* (1893), *An Ideal Husband* (1895) and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895). The latter play deals with hypocrisy – the protagonist uses two identities in order to enjoy social benefits. It has for its main idea the fact that we should talk about serious matters in a trivial way and vice versa. The play criticizing the Victorian society ends happily. The main focus is on conversation which is immensely witty, full of ironic paradoxes, and unexpected turns that bring about laughter. The public and readers are more interested in the dialogue itself than in the characters or a specific situation. Lady Bracknell, an elderly woman, is one of the most remarkable characters. She is honest and direct and does not alter her attitudes. Most of Wilde's characters have the author's characteristics: they are all members of the upper class, have aristocratic upbringing, and are well-educated. Also, when engrossed in conversation, they rarely show surprise and are always ready to give a witty answer. Dark and serious undertones of Wilde's comedies make them memorable pieces of art that continue to be relevant in modern times.

Wilde's immersion in the supernatural, evident in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, was attributed to his mother who was interested in Irish superstition and myth, his uncle Charles Maturin who pioneered horror-fantasy genre publishing a Gothic novel entitled *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), and Bram Stoker, the author of *Dracula*, who regularly visited his parents. Oscar Wilde's eccentricity was obvious in his physical appearance (he used to wear a scarab ring on his little fingers and carry flowers while lecturing; he also wore his hair long and used to dress colorfully) and the bold statements he put in the mouth of his remarkable character Lord Henry such as "Faithfulness is to the emotional life what consistency is to the life of intellect - simply a question of failure" (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapter 4).

When his fame reached its peak, he became deeply engrossed in homosexuality and Platonism. For Wilde, homosexuality belonged to no man's land, placed between its philosophical formulation in Plato and other writers and its formulation as crime in English law. When his popularity was beyond question, Wilde commenced a very close relationship with Lord Alfred Douglas, a charming and temperamental undergraduate at Oxford, whose father, the Marquis of Queensberry, after stalking the writer and collecting evidence about his homosexual affairs, left him an accusatory note calling him 'a somdomite' (a misspelling of sodomite).

His decision to sue Douglas's father for libel cost him his life. Namely, on the basis of the homoerotic passages found in his literary works and love letters he sent to Douglas, Wilde was arrested on charges of 'gross indecency'. Afterwards, he was sentenced to two years in prison. According to the judge in charge of his case, Wilde had been "the centre of a circle of extensive corruption of the most hideous kind among young men" (Ellmann 1987: 448). While in prison, he wrote *De Profundis* (1897), a letter in which he describes his relationship with Douglas and luxurious lifestyle, and a description of his spiritual progress to religious insight, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), a poem based on his prison experience, and few articles dealing with the miserable conditions of prisons in England. At the time when he left the prison, he was physically, emotionally and spiritually drained. His poor financial status led him to exile in France, where he was bound to live in cheap hotels as he was rejected by most of the people who had admired him in his better days. The death came two years later while he was in a lonely hotel room in Paris. Wilde's literary works received unbalanced criticism. As an author he was both underappreciated and over-appreciated. He was less popular in Ireland, his home country, than he was in England and the rest of Europe. His poetry was mild as he was struggling to find the adequate literary expression that would shape his literary identity. He was a genius with interesting and often paradoxical ideas which he stated with a sort of elegance and style unique to his personality. As Merlin Holland has noted, we must accept the fact that "our view of Wilde must always be a multicoloured kaleidoscope of apparent contradictions in need not of resolution but of appreciation" (Holland 1997: 16).

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY



The Picture of Dorian Gray is one of the most read and discussed 19th-century novels and its popularity and relevance are supported by the fact that it has been regularly included in many school/English language course syllabi. Language and literature teachers find it as a highly adaptable work, particularly in modern learning environments³⁵, as it can be efficiently interpreted by means of online tools and other sources of digital media (Škobo 2020). It has a clear affinity with the Faust story presented in the play written by Christopher Marlowe *Doctor Faustus* (1592) and Goethe's tragedy in two parts *Faust* (1808). Dorian and Faust agree to sell their

soul in order to get knowledge (Faust) or eternal youth and beauty (Dorian). The parallels can be also found in R. L. Stevenson's novella *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), the story that explored the theme of a double life or a doppelgänger - a mysterious, exact double of a living person. Also, the story of Dorian echoes H. Rider's novel *She* (1887), in which an immortal Egyptian priestess of extraordinary beauty and supernatural powers urges her lover to accept the gift of eternal youth, only to be reverted to her true age with the loss of her life-preserving powers. The portrait of young and beautiful Dorian that Basil Hallward, a painter and his deeply moral friend, makes out of deep infatuation with him, starts to exhibit the characteristics of a real human being who ages and sins. Namely, in a moment of despair and under the influence of Lord Henry's words that praised his youth and beauty, Dorian utters the words that would come true – he acknowledges that he cares more for his good looks and young age than his soul and makes a pact with the devil: "If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! For that I would give everything! Yes, there was nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that!" (Wilde 2001: 24). At that very moment, as if by the use of a magic stick, his wish is fulfilled. He remains young and beautiful while his behavior deteriorates with years. His numerous sins, a life of debauchery, actions with fatal consequences (a suicide and a murder) and guilty conscience are mirrored in the changes on his portrait – a reminder of the effect each act has upon his soul - which he then decides to hide from the eyes of the public, covering it with the rag and locking it in one of the rooms in his house.

35 If you want to know how Facebook can help you to acquire a better understanding of Wilde's novel visit: <http://www.datadidakta.rs/blog/180/fejsbuk-u-nastavi-jezika-i-knjizevnosti>

The story of *Dorian Gray* deals with the double nature of things and persons. Apart from the doubling of a person and a painting, there is a doubling of the book - the one that Lord Henry introduces Dorian to and the one Oscar Wilde wrote. As John Paul Riquelme (2011: 77) has noted, Basil Hallward and Lord Henry function as doubles – they are perceived as embodiments of different versions of Dorian. Moreover, both of them contribute to the production of the painting: Basil is an artist who idolizes his own work of art, while Lord Henry is “an avatar of Victor Frankenstein, who produces an ugly, destructive double of himself”. Another parallel might be drawn between Dorian and Sybil Vane/Basil, as Dorian stands in relation to the young actress and the painter as Lord Henry does to him. Dorian destroys both, Sybil and Basil, just as Lord Henry destroys him.

The story exhibits the elements of moral allegory, where the protagonist personifies the double standards and hypocrisy of the Victorian society blinded by its love of surfaces. Namely, though beautiful, Dorian shows the characteristics of a selfish, evil and insensitive young man indulged in the hedonistic lifestyle. Wilde directs the readers’ attention away from the workings of the magic spell that make Dorian’s wish come true by focusing on the consequences of such wishful thinking. Dorian does not bother himself by determining the affinity between the portrait alteration and his soul. He ignores the question whether such a relation is the result of a good or an evil power (Wilde 2001: 77, 86). When Basil eventually sees the portrait, exclaiming, “It has the eyes of a devil”, Dorian’s reply echoes Milton’s Satan in *Paradise Lost*, “Each of us has Heaven and Hell in him” (Wilde 2001: 125). Art, life and suffering are carefully weaved in the narrative that integrates Christian theories of sin with classical principles of action, both of which are subjected to style and general atmosphere of the novel.

Apart from exposing the hypocrisies of the 19th century England, the novel explores controversial themes of homosexuality and double life in a subtle way, bearing in mind Wilde’s philosophy of aestheticism and his own lifestyle. The character of Lord Henry Wotton, whom Dorian meets at Basil’s house and whose worldview and ideas he chooses to adopt, is an embodiment of the theory of New Hedonism that cherishes beauty, fulfillment of senses and the idea that art makes a basic component of life. Wilde was influenced by his Oxford professor Walter Pater who believed in *carpe diem* motto and turned his life into some sort of an artwork. In the character of Lord Henry are contained most of Wilde’s life theories. Lord Henry is a hedonist and an aesthete whose influence on young, naïve and impressionable Dorian has a fatal outcome. Following Lord Henry’s advices, Dorian starts committing himself to a hedonistic lifestyle, seeking pleasure and live out his fantasies.

Early in the novel Henry introduces Dorian to the philosophy of New Hedonism in the core of which lies seeking out earthly pleasures and doing whatever makes one feel good regardless of the fact whether it is morally right or wrong. According to Lord Henry, Dorian, as a “visible symbol” of Hedonism (Wilde 2001: 21) should always be searching for new sensations and the world would be happier and more ideal if everyone were to follow pleasures instead of conventions set by the society. At one moment he even warns Dorian that he should use the full potential of his beauty and youth to enjoy life, as they would not last forever (Wilde 2001: 21-22). Prompted by Lord Henry’s words, Dorian utters his wish and his life takes a completely different turn. Dorian is a sort of a psychological experiment’ in Lord Henry’s hands. Lord Henry sees Dorian as a perfect candidate for living out his philosophy of hedonism. He is amused by leading a young man down the path of passion and destruction. He is a cynical aesthete who abhors conventional morality and adores beauty. In Chapter 11, Lord Henry’s ideas are reflected in Dorian, as he speaks about the importance of New Hedonism in society (Wilde 2001: 103-116). In the world engrossed in puritanism, there should be people who seek the finest of the pleasures, material objects and experiences. Lord Henry’s influence on Dorian is profound and primarily negative. In such a relationship, Dorian acts as Faust and Lord Henry as Mephistopheles. However, as an advocate of individualism and the idea of living one’s life boldly and freely, Lord Henry cannot be fully responsible for Dorian’s tragic end. Dorian’s devotion to the content of the yellow book and Lord Henry’s influence is voluntary. Dorian is willing to fit into Lord Henry’s vision of a ‘perfect’ man living the life of pleasures on the account of sacrificing himself. On the other hand, Lord Henry never puts in practice what he preaches. Prone to philosophic contemplation, he is more willing to talk and think than to act. It is sufficient for him to experience his theory of Individualism and New Hedonism through Dorian. Thus, what he says is the opposite of what he does in terms of morality. He continues to promote the principles of aestheticism and hedonism even when he witnesses the effects of such philosophy embodied in the protagonist’s downfall.

The notion of the ‘homosexual’ in the novel is handled simultaneously with eloquence and reticence. It is both present in the text at an intellectual level and physically absent. The homoerotic bonds in the novel are suggested in the relationship between the male characters: Basil and Dorian (Basil’s affection for Dorian and his infatuation with his beauty have the qualities of romantic love), Lord Henry and Dorian (Lord Henry’s desire to influence and seduce Dorian which is supported by seductive language patterns – Lord Henry would seek to “dominate him” /Wilde 2001: 32/), and Alan Campbell and Dorian (Dorian urges Alan to help him dispose of Basil’s body by threatening to send an incriminating letter informing on the indiscretion of a homosexual nature /Wilde 2001: 135-136/).

The mutual friendship among people who spend lots of time together has its roots in a larger context of Wilde's aesthetic values. In order to justify his lifestyle and present homosexuality as a sign of a refined culture, Wilde promoted the idea that beauty and youth - as highly appreciated notions in the works of Plato, Michelangelo and Shakespeare - could be reflected through depicting a physical relationship between men. On the other hand, the notion of homosexuality has not been directly addressed within the novel, considering the fact that such a book would be censured on the basis of the Blackmailer's Charter, the passage of a sodomy law that forbids homosexual acts.

We cannot but notice that Wilde's male characters contain reflections of the author's personality and preferences. When discussing his characters, Wilde writes in *Letters*: "Basil Hallward is what I think I am, Lord Henry what the world thinks of me, Dorian what I would like to be - in other ages, perhaps" (352). As Terence Dawson³⁶ notices in his essay on the character of Dorian Gray, Basil and Lord Henry's preoccupation with Dorian reflects "Wilde's obsession with a young dandy whose evasiveness and pseudo-aestheticism symbolize his own unconscious fears". It may also be suggested that the painter and Lord Henry are embodiments of different aspects of Wilde's personality. Wilde's obsession with Lord Alfred Douglas is reflected in Basil's adoration of Dorian. Basil's idolatry of Dorian mirrors Wilde's idolization of Douglas, as it can be seen in the letter addressed to Douglas in which he writes: "I shall be eternally grateful to you for having always inspired me with adoration and love" (*Complete Letters*, p. 397). Lord Henry, as a cynical aesthete concerned with promoting his own views, mirrors Wilde's extravagant personality and wit. As John Paul Riquelme has noted, "by blurring the distinction between the observer and the subject being observed, Wilde participates in the book's logic of doubling and reversal" (Riquelme 2011: 83).

Though the statement that Wilde's personality has been present in all three characters have always fascinated his biographers and critics, we cannot but take it with reserve. If we examine closely Wilde's letter addressed to one of the first editors that was about to publish his novel, there is no indication whatsoever that Wilde saw in the above mentioned characters any positive aspects of himself or of his public image:

36 See Terence Dawson's full essay on the character of Dorian Gray by visiting the link: <http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/wilde/dawson16.html>

Basil Hallward, worshipping physical beauty far too much, as most painters do, dies by the hand of one in whose soul he has raised a monstrous and absurd vanity. Dorian Gray, having led a life of mere sensation and pleasure, tries to kill conscience, and ... kills himself. Lord Henry Wotton seeks to be merely the spectator of life. He finds that those who reject the battle are more deeply wounded than those who take part in it. (*Letters*, p. 430).

Namely, Wilde believed that a personality of the character, as one's identity, is plastic because it is made up of appearances and style, and that the authoritative self is decentered. A decentering of the authoritative self indicates that there could be both positive and negative aspects of the author himself alternately living the multiple lives of his heroes.

Beauty, as the utmost feature of art, permeates Wilde's novel. It revitalizes the wearied senses, as it is the case with Lord Henry who is deeply affected by the beauty of Basil's painting, and offers a sort of escapism (i.e. Dorian distances himself from his devious actions by studying beautiful things such as music, jewels and rare tapestries). The society in Wilde's novel is founded on a life of surfaces as it places too much value on youth and physical attractiveness. Therefore, it is little wonder why there is no distinction between ethics and physical appearance in the novel. In conversation with Basil on the first pages of the novel, Lord Henry compares Dorian to Narcissus: "Why my dear Basil, he is a Narcissus, and you—well, of course you have an intellectual expression, and all that. But beauty, real beauty, ends where an intellectual expression begins. Intellect is in itself a mode of exaggeration, and destroys the harmony of any face" (Wilde 2001: 142). The purity of the face equals the purity of the soul. Dorian is taken for granted on the basis of his good looks. He remains part of the elite social circles for a long period of time despite his wrongdoings. When Dorian looks into his painting, he becomes fascinated with his own beauty. With time, his painting functions as a mirror on which his soul is reflected. His fascination with good looks gets replaced by his growing ugliness that he recognizes within himself.

In Wilde's novel, there are two works of art: Basil's painting, and the book bound in yellow paper, probably a nineteenth-century French novel written by Joris-Karl Huysman and entitled *À Rebours*³⁷ (*Against the Grain or Against Nature*) featuring a pleasure-seeking protagonist, that Lord Henry gives Dorian. The portrait functions as a mirror showing Dorian a physical dissipation of his own body and the state his soul has been fallen into, while the yellow book symbolizes a sort of a road map whose instructions Dorian follows on his way to destruction and moral degradation. At one point in the novel, Dorian notices that "the whole book seemed to him to contain the story of his own life, written before he had lived it" (Wilde 2001: 102). The portrait, 'the most magical of mirrors', reminds Dorian that he has been spared from burdens of age and sin. The portrait stands for Dorian's insatiability, "escalation of wants and formal equivalencing of all desires" as it constantly records the "shame of his consumption" (Gagnier 1997: 22). Dorian is able to set his conscience aside and focus on a constant achievement of pleasure. As the portrait asserts itself as his conscience, he starts to acknowledge his crimes: the cruelty he showed to Sybil Vane that led to her suicide and the act of murder of Basil Hallward. Dorian's immoral behavior that lasts over the course of nearly two decades was also encouraged by the composition of the yellow book and Lord Henry's hedonism. Dorian buys a dozen copies of the yellow book and tries to adapt his life and actions to its content. The price one (Dorian, Basil) has to pay for sacrificing oneself to other people's vision (Lord Henry) or a work of art (the portrait, the yellow book) is exceedingly high. Basil's fascination with Dorian led to the painter's death, just as Dorian's dependence on Lord Henry's views brought upon his death. Basil lacks the emotional detachment of a true artist and becomes a symbol of Victorian conformity that Lord Henry despises. The artist himself is reluctant to exhibit the painting as he believes it might reveal his feelings towards Dorian as his subject of idolization. Such a belief instilled in Basil supports Wilde's philosophy elaborated in the novel's *Preface* that warns that "those who read the symbol do so at their peril" and that "it is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors" (*Preface*, p. 3). In other words, all art ought to be unconscious, aloof and abstract. In this context, the novel functions as a cautionary tale warning about the price that should be paid if we advocate the theory according to which the work of art points to the author's life and his own convictions or teaches us morality.

37 Wilde claimed during the libel trial in 1895 that the yellow book was a novel written by Huysman (*Letters*, p. 524). For Wilde, the book has dual power – to poison and to make perfect. When a version of his novel published in the Lippincott's magazine was labelled 'poisonous', Wilde replied that his story was "a decorative art . . . It is poisonous if you like, but you cannot deny that it is also perfect, and perfection is what we artists aim at" (*Letters*, p. 436).

Taking this into consideration, we cannot but notice that such a statement is paradoxical since it represents, in itself, a moral lesson. Also, at one point, Dorian observes that the imagination invests life with meaning. How can then art as the fruit of imagination be devoid of meaning?

In the novel's *Preface*, Wilde says that "there is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book" and that "books are well written, or badly written", implying that there is no morality in art (Wilde 2001: 3). According to the main principles of aestheticism, the only thing we should look for in art is beauty or the absence of it, since the artistic expression needs to be freed from being ethical or instructive. The instructive nature of the yellow book "poisoned" Dorian and contributed to his downfall. On the other hand, Lord Henry asserts that the book is not responsible for someone's conduct. What someone sees within the book is reflected in the eyes of the beholder (the reader). And this is precisely what Dorian does: he allows himself to be poisoned by the content of the yellow book. However, one cannot but wonder whether there are books stripped of any sort of moral implications or didactic messages, which is evident in the novel's ending. Namely, with time handsome and beautiful Dorian Gray becomes tormented by spiritual blindness and inability to develop his soul. The moment he destroys the portrait that stands for both his body and soul, becomes the moment of self-destruction. The magical bond between the portrait and the man is reversed. The dead man's knife points to the heart, as a symbol of the soul he had irretrievably lost. Soon it becomes clear that the portrait remained intact and the protagonist - transformed into an old and wrinkled monster - dead by his own hand. There is nothing left of him but the golden rings on his fingers, as the symbols of superfluous values he used to worship, that will eventually help in the identification of his dead body.

Did you know?

1. As a dedicated follower of fashion and passionate lover of interior design, Wilde lived in an eccentric house located in the heart of Victorian bohemia. His drawing room had a blue ceiling with painted dragons. The walls in the room were decorated with peacock feathers.³⁸
2. Wilde's favourite drink was absinthe. His second best drink was champagne. When on the deathbed and in pain, Wilde used a mixture of opium, chloral and champagne. In a state of delirium, he produced the line "And now I am dying beyond my means."³⁹
3. Wilde's mother, an Irish nationalist and poet, invited various famous people to their house. Among others, the visitors were Bram Stoker, the author of *Dracula*, and a celebrated beauty and socialite Florence Balcombe. It was believed Wilde was in love with Florence. When Stoker and Balcombe got engaged, Wilde sent a letter to her informing her that he was leaving Ireland forever.⁴⁰
4. Wilde's Tite Street home was sold for \$1.8 million in 2012.
5. The original album cover by the Beatles entitled *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* features Oscar Wilde. It shows Wilde peering over the shoulder of John Lennon.
6. In a promotional film inspired by the Rolling Stones' song "We Love You", Wilde's libel trial was mentioned. Mick Jagger played Oscar Wilde.
7. After leaving prison, Wilde was in a very bad physical, emotional and financial condition. He spent last years of his life moneyless in Paris. He didn't see his children again.
8. Wilde was buried in Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, France. His tombstone, designed by the sculptor Jacob Epstein, was inspired by Wilde's poem "The Sphinx". It shows the Sphinx, a figure with vertical wings, symbolizing a poet as messenger and his sensual life choice.
9. Do you know why a glass barrier was added to the Wilde's tombstone? Because Wilde's fans, who were making pilgrimage to Paris to visit his grave, kissed the tomb after they put lipstick to their mouth. With the glass barrier, the monument became "kiss-proof".

38 Fact 1 is adapted from: <https://www.factinate.com/things/42-peculiar-facts-famous-writers/>

39 Fact 2 is adapted from: <https://www.shortlist.com/news/drinking-habits-of-famous-authors>

40 Facts 3-9 were adapted from: <https://www.biography.com/news/oscar-wilde-facts-and-quotes>

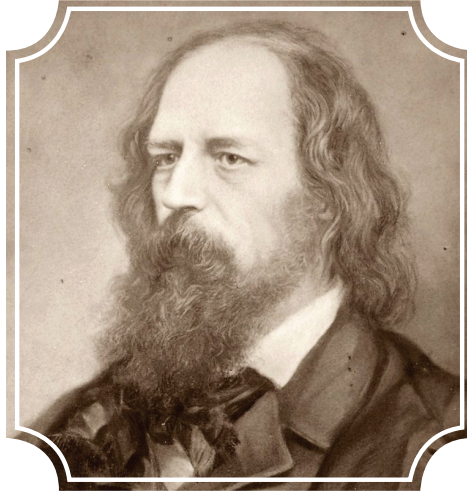
Part 8



**LORD ALFRED
TENNYSON
(1809 – 1892)**

LORD ALFRED TENNYSON

(1809 – 1892)



Alfred Tennyson was a son of George and Elizabeth Tennyson. He was born as the fourth of twelve children. As several men in his family, including his father and brother Arthur, had a mild form of epilepsy and a drinking problem, and his brother Edward was hospitalized due to mental issues, Tennyson had a lifelong fear of mental illness. When he turned 18 he left his home to attend Trinity College at Cambridge, where his two older brothers had already gained popularity by having published a collection of poems entitled *Poems by Two Brothers* (1827). In 1829 he joined *The Apostles*, a club of undergraduate students who regularly organized discussions where they exchanged their philosophical thoughts and views on various social problems. One of the club members was Arthur Henry Hallam, a young man who would become his best friend and his sister Emily's fiancé. Their close friendship was interrupted by Hallam's sudden death from illness four years later, when he was only 22. Tennyson expressed his sorrow for the deceased friend and paid him a tribute by producing the poems fueled by his grief such as *In Memoriam*, "The Passing of Arthur", "Ulysses", and "Tithonus". As he suffered from extreme short-sightedness, most of his poetry was composed in his head. His friends from the undergraduate club prompted him to write them down.

The first version of “The Lotos-Eaters” was transcribed by Arthur Hallam. In *Memoriam*, an elegy inspired by the death of his college friend and the poet’s grief, aroused similar opinions about Tennyson’s expression of emotion. In a letter to Elizabeth Gaskell, Charlotte Brontë wrote that despite the fact that the poem was beautiful and mournful, there was something ‘false’ in it (Bloom 2010: 167). Her assumption was based on the fact that grief was chaotic and wild, whereas Tennyson’s verse was structured and articulated. Similarly, Sara Coleridge stated that the poem lacked ‘truth’ and ‘force’ and that it did not flow naturally (Bloom 2010: 166).

Mixed reception of his collection of poems published in 1832 (*Poems*) deterred him from writing for another ten years. Only with his 1842 *Poems* which contained many of the poems that appeared in his first collection such as “The Lotos-Eaters” and “The Lady of Shalott” had his popularity begun to rise. Few years later he received a government pension and in 1850 he was appointed Poet Laureate and became the most popular Victorian poet and a regular visitor of Queen Victoria’s court. Prince Albert’s adoration of his poetry contributed to his ensuring the position of a national poet and publishing of *The Idylls of the King*, a group of twelve narrative poems about the rise and fall of Arthur’s kingdom, which the poet dedicated to the memory of Prince Albert’s visit to his house. He married his fiancée Emily Sellwood when his popularity and fame reached its peak. After 1850 he wrote engaged poetry that was claimed to be of lower value. He died at the age of 83. Despite the fact that the Edwardians and Georgians mocked his poetry, Tennyson is nowadays considered as one of the most influential Victorian poets and one of the most distinguished literary figures in the field of English poetry. His innovative approaches to metrical form contributed to his popularity.

There are two phases in Tennyson’s writing: romantic and mystical. The former refers to the poems inspired by the ideas expressed by the Romanticists (Byron, Shelley and Keats). The main characteristic of the Romantic Period displayed in the poems written by Tennyson is his experimenting with metrics. The poems inspired by the works of Alexander Pope and Spencer also belong to this phase. The second phase refers to the poetry written after 1845 (the poem entitled “The Silent Voices” belongs to the mystical phase).

“THE LADY OF SHALOTT”

The poem inspired by the Arthurian legend and the story of the *Maid of Astolat* in Thomas Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485) first appeared in the collection of poems (*Poems*) in 1832. It is divided into four parts with stanzas of equal length - nine lines with the rhyme 'aaaabcccb', where the 'b' stands for Camelot or Shalott respectively. The ballad is based on the old Italian poem "Donna di Scalotta" from the collection of poems *Le Ciento Novelle Antiche*. The central conflict in the poem is the one between art and life, that is, the artist's desire for both social involvement and social exclusion or isolation. It deals with eternal dilemma of the artist who doubts whether his or her commitment to ordinary life activities would prove to be worth of the effort for someone dedicated to art. The embodiment of the contemplative artist is the Lady who weaves the scenes she sees in the mirror and sings her song in an isolated and secluded tower that separates her from the outside world. The Lady of Shalott weaves the images she sees in the mirror facing the window (i.e. the reapers working in the field, the knights in full armour passing by, etc.). When she decides to leave the web and gaze down on the real world, the mirror breaks symbolizing the curse that befalls on her, that is, her tragic death.⁴¹



The first part of the poem deals with the way how the outside world sees the Lady – she is a woman isolated from the outside world. The height of the tower and the water surrounding it makes her dwelling inaccessible. The reader is only familiar with her works of art that represent the reflections of the real world she sees in the mirror, while her interior world is hidden from us.

The second part of the poem describes the world from the Lady's perspective. It becomes evident that her imprisonment and alienation are the result of a strange curse that forbids her to look out on Camelot. She sees different types of people in the mirror, from the people engrossed in physical labour to the armed knights who "come riding two and two". We also learn that she often sees a funeral or a wedding, which are indicative of the fact that love and death are intermingled in art and real life. Symbolically, the moment she falls in love with a handsome knight Lancelot is the moment that brings upon her own death.

41 You can listen to Loreena McKennitt's adaption of the poem "The Lady of Shalott" on the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRIH3r3Pxhc>

The third part of the poem deals with the knight whose appearance makes the Lady face the world. The knight in question is a legendary knight of King Arthur's Round Table who was suspected of having an affair with the Queen Guinevere. Sir Lancelot is depicted as a "red-cross knight" with "coal-black curls" dressed in a "silver bugle" and adorned with the shield that "sparkled on the yellow field" as he passes through "blue unclouded weather" and the "purple night". However, it is not the sight of Lancelot and his rich visual details that make the Lady transgress the boundaries but his "Tirra lira" - the song she hears him sing while riding the horse.

The fourth part of the poem brings about gloomy and dark atmosphere that has already been suggested by the weather change from the dazzling sunlight to the "low sky raining". When the Lady decides to break free and terminates her artistic isolation, her creativity draws to an end. The ending of her creativity symbolizes the end of her life: "Out flew the web and floated wide" (line 115). The final lines of the poem suggest a sense of triviality expressed in Lancelot's reaction to the Lady's affection that prompted her to leave her artistry and face her doom. All what she gets for her sacrifice is the remark that "she has a lovely face". By abandoning her art, the Lady turns into an art object that can only offer an image of a "dead-pale beauty".

“THE LOTOS-EATERS”

This poem, originally published in Tennyson's 1832 *Poems*, is based on the story of Homer's *Odyssey*. It consists of a descriptive narrative (lines 1 to 45) written in nine-line Spenserian stanzas⁴² with the rhyme scheme 'ababbcbcc' (the first eight lines are written in iambic pentameter and the final line in an Alexandrine /a line of six iambic feet/) and eight stanzas with varying length (lines 46 to 173).

Homer's epic poem deals with the travails of king of Ithaca – Odysseus – and various adventures he experiences while on the seas or in the war. Tennyson's poem was inspired by the episode dealing with his journey home to Ithaca. As he was with his mariners on his way home from Troy to Ithaca, he was caught in a severe storm and was forced to embark on the Land of the Lotos (i.e. lotus). Homer describes without providing much detail how Odysseus and his mariners reached the land of Lotos-eaters on the tenth day of their voyage and how they explored the land and its people while being there. Despite the fact that they have been warmly welcomed by the inhabitants of this secluded island and offered to taste the lotus, Odysseus orders his fellow-mariners to embark on the ship and start their journey back to their homeland before they eat the lotus as it will deter them from travelling. What Homer does not describe in his twenty-three-line long episode is the island itself, its inhabitants, and the effects the lotus flower produces after it is consumed.

The flower lotus is a plant that causes the sailors to lose their strength after its consumption and abandon their journey home. The plant has a hypnotic power on the mariners who, upon tasting it, wish to remain on the island and experience a life free from toil that promises peacefulness, rest, and even death. Odysseus's task is very hard – he needs to convince his mariners to resume their journey back to their homeland and leave the land that resembles the land of pleasure in Milton's "L'Allegro" and Andrew Marvell's "The Garden". The choric song following the Spenserian stanzas represent the voice of the mariners who, tired of travelling and fighting, wish to stay in the land that offers peace and rest.



42 These stanzas were employed by Edmund Spenser in his epic poem *The Faerie Queene* first published in 1590.

Each stanza in the choric song justifies the mariners' decision to stay on the island. At one point they even ask themselves why the men "who are the first of things" - who stand for the pinnacle and apex of creation - should be condemned to hard labour to the very end of their lives. Descriptive parts of the Land of Lotos that stands for an artificial paradise are intermingled with the mariners' thinking about their homeland and the futility of their fighting and coming back.

However, the Land of Lotos symbolizes the mariners' escaping the real world and living in the world of appearances that offers a seductive and distorted vision of reality. Although such a land that seemingly offers life free from hard labour is tempting, it creates a sense of discomfort within the reader familiar with the broader context of the poem. Namely, at one point, the mariners claim that it is annoying and uncomfortable to "war with evil". We cannot but ask ourselves whether we should give in to the carefree life of pleasures and embrace laziness and empty existence that will eventually strip our life off any meaning and rule out any attempt and potential for heroic accomplishment. Is there happiness if there are no challenges to be tackled and no passion within a man to make the world a better place?

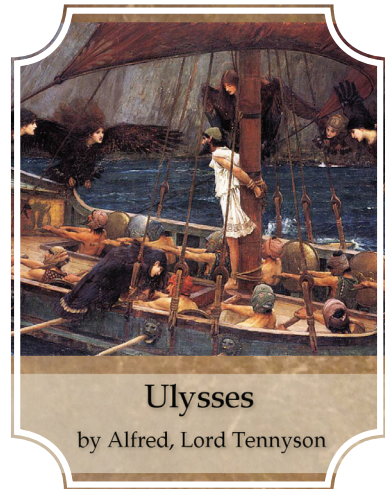
Unlike Homer's Odysseus, Tennyson's hero does not have that strength and power to make his mariners abandon the island and set sail. It is not suggested in the poem that they will leave at some point in the future. The poem can be perceived as a critique of the English society and its nobility and their unwillingness to confine themselves to hard labour. It is also stressed out in the poem several times that the lotus-eaters are idle. Furthermore, they avoid accepting responsibility (Nagler 2007). "Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?", ask the mariners. The Land of lotus is a sort of escape from hard labour and life of "enduring toil" so typical of the industrialized British society. At one point the mariners call into question the historical legacy:

What is it that will last? All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcel of the dreadful Past...
The minstrel sings/ Before them [their sons] of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things. [IV.45-47; VI.77-80]

As Nagler (2007) notices, Tennyson expressed dissatisfaction of common Englishmen who started expressing doubts in the ideals and social conventions promoted by the British Empire. They started questioning themselves whether conducting themselves to hard work for the rest of their lives for the sake of the country's economic and political growth had any sense at all. It was easy for a legendary and distinguished figure such as Odysseus to justify hard work - what does a faceless mariner have to say about it?

“ULYSSES”⁴³

The poem “Ulysses” was written in 1833. Its revised version appeared almost ten years later, in 1842. The poem consists of four sections resembling paragraphs. It follows the form of a dramatic monologue – a poetic form in which the speaker, whose identity and the aspects of his/her character are revealed by his/her own words, describes a particular situation or series of events. The lines – many of which are enjambed⁴⁴ – are written in unrhymed iambic pentameter (blank verse) – in order to make the poetic persona’s speech similar to the real person’s. The poem represents Tennyson’s reworking of



Ulysses

by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Ulysses, a legendary hero of Homer’s *Odysseus* and Dante’s *Inferno*. In Scroll XI of *Odysseus* Homer’s Ulysses learns from a prophecy about his future actions. After he kills his wife’s suitors, he embarks on a final sea voyage. In Canto XXVI of *Inferno* Dante describes the details of this sea voyage and Ulysses’ insatiable hunger for experience and knowledge. Dante’s tragic hero dies during his final sea voyage. Tennyson’s poem is set in the period after Ulysses returns to Ithaca and resumes his duties and before he goes on a final journey.

Tennyson’s own personal journey is reflected in the poem, as it was written as an elegy for his deceased college friend Arthur Hallam. At one point in the poem, Ulysses observes that despite the fact that “death closes all” (line 51), there is still “some work of noble note” that “may yet be done” (line 52). Unlike *Odysseus*’s mariners who, tired of travelling, claim that they will “no longer roam”, Ulysses asserts that he is “always roaming with a hungry heart” (line 12) and that he “cannot rest from travel” and worldly experiences (line 6). Ulysses’ restlessness equals the one experienced by Coleridge’s ancient mariner who cannot stop talking. His hunger to explore the untraveled world surpasses his old age although he is aware of its limitations. He claims that despite the fact that he is not now “that strength which in old days/Moved earth and heaven” (line 66-67), he is still “strong in will/To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield” (lines 69-70).

43 “Ulysses” is the Roman form of the Greek “Odysseus”.

44 Enjamment means that a thought does not end with the line-break.

These powerful and inspiring lines in the end of the poem symbolize a personal self-assertion, determination, affirmation, and a revolt against a monotonous daily routine and conformity. It also offers a sort of solace for grieved Tennyson who, by putting the words of optimism and hope in his character's mouth, tried to cheer himself up.

Conversely, we also learn from Ulysses' life-asserting monologue that he is a selfish person whose wishes come before his family's and his country's. As he freed himself from the responsibility to rule the country and take care of its people for his own selfish ends, we cannot but notice that he is an incompetent ruler who prefers his own potential quests to his present responsibilities. This is why the two thirds of the poem are "devoted to his zeal for adventure and his own strivings (26 lines), 11 lines to his son Telemachus whom he left to rule the country while he was away and only two words to his "aged wife" Penelope.

TENNYSON'S OTHER WORKS AND LATER POETRY

In his later poetry, which is more narrative than lyrical, Tennyson tackles the issues of current national concern, mythology, history, mythological past, and personal memory. Namely, as it was expected from a Poet Laureate to represent a literary voice of the nation, many of Tennyson's poems bear some political messages or speak of the heroism of the British soldiers, as it is the case with a poem describing the battle in the Crimean War entitled "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (1854). The story of King Arthur and his knights is traced in twelve narrative poems written in the form of a blank verse. The collection of poems entitled *Idylls of the King* (1842-1885) was dedicated to Prince Albert. The poems are Tennyson's recounting of Sir Thomas Mallory's stories about King Arthur and his knights. The book is regarded as Tennyson's attempt to cast romantic material into a Victorian mold. His first collection of poems after becoming Poet Laureate was entitled *Maud and other stories*. The poem "Maud" from this collection was Tennyson's own favourite. It is a monodrama that deals with a love affair blasted by a tragic accident. The chivalric style of the love poem is combined with a contemporary cynicism. By an intermingling of life and death in the poem, Tennyson subtly brings into focus the notion of afterlife. In the long narrative poem entitled *The Princess* (1847) Tennyson tackles the problems of education and women's emancipation. Tennyson's sonnet *Montenegro* is inspired by the political climate in the Balkans.

It deals with the Ottoman Empire covering the period from 1850s to 1900s and expresses the poet's siding with the people living in the Balkans in their arguments against the Ottoman's Empire.

The history of the nation and its mythological past are also traced in the poems set in medieval England ("*Lady of Shalott*", *Idylls of the King*), the poems inspired by the legends (*Oenone* is a poem in the form of a dramatic monologue that deals with the female protagonist of the same name whom Paris deserts after he wins the love of beautiful Helen; the poet focuses on Oenone's despair and feeling of loss; his descriptions of nature contribute to the general atmosphere of the poem), or the poems representing his reworking of great classical literary works of Dante, Homer and Virgil ("*Ulysses*" and "*The Lotos-Eaters*" are based on Homer's *Odyssey*, while his ode "*To Virgil*" alludes to Virgil's *Aeneid* and the fall of Troy).

Tennyson's personal past is evoked in the poems inspired by the death of his dear twenty-year-old friend Hallam – the tragic event that caused him a great emotional blow. Such is a collection of poems entitled *In Memoriam* (1850), that deals with evolutionary history and the memories of the time the poet spent with his college friend. Another poem describing Tennyson's feelings of loss is an elegy "*Break, Break, Break*" published in 1842. The dominant feelings in the poem are those of isolation and loneliness as the poetic persona stands on the coast and looks at the sea waves breaking against the stones. The "cold gray stones" of the sea project the poet's mood and his isolation from the outside world. In a short lyrical poem written in unrhymed stanzas and entitled "*Tears, Idle Tears*", Tennyson uses the nature imagery to create the mood of loss and nostalgia. "*A Farewell*" is a poem inspired by Tennyson's personal feelings of sorrow and nostalgia as he left his parents' house in which he spent his childhood, while the poem entitled "*The Palace of Art*" written as a dramatic monologue deals with sacred, secular and irreligious themes. The dominant mood in the poem which puts artistic values before morality is that of melancholy. It is an allegory expressing the need of art to deal with ordinary life and place humble people in its core. Tennyson, as other Victorian poets, experimented with stanza forms and used them more freely than the eighteenth-century poets to express the general mood. Thus, in the poem "*Marianna*" the four shorter lines that stand as a refrain are used to suggest the feelings of loss, regret and weariness.

Tennyson lived in the time of great scientific discoveries and inventions in various fields, the most notable of which is Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859). The importance of this book lies in the fact that it seriously questioned the established premises in Victorian society's worldview.

The new discoveries challenged the Victorian view of humanity, people's faith in God and their personal beliefs concerning their position in the world as well as the purpose of their existence. As he expressed his concerns about the impact of Darwinism on the moral imagination, Tennyson's mission was to reconcile new science with the old faith. *In Memoriam* contains many of Tennyson's messages addressed to readers to keep their faith despite the latest scientific discoveries: "Strong Son of God, immortal Love/ Whom we, that have not seen they face, / By faith, and faith alone, embrace / Believing where we cannot prove."

Did you know?

1. Do you know who called Tennyson “the boss”? The author of *Leaves of Grass*.
2. Tennyson was short-sighted. He used a monocle when he ate because he could not see his food.
3. It is speculated that Tennyson was homosexual, as some of his works point to the notions of homosexuality.⁴⁵
4. The author of *The Waste Land* described Tennyson as “the saddest of all English poets”. According to Eliot, Tennyson’s exceptional technical abilities served as a “surface” beneath which lied his poetry’s hidden “depths, to the abyss of sorrow”.⁴⁶
5. A popular phrase ‘better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all’ appeared in Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* (1850). However, a similar phrase appeared more than a century ago in William Congreve’s play *The Way of the World* (1700): ‘Say what you will, ‘tis better to be left than never to have been loved’.⁴⁷
6. According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, Tennyson holds 9th place.⁴⁸
7. When Queen Victoria first met the poet, she described him as a “peculiar looking” and “oddly dressed” man.
8. Virginia Woolf’s play *Freshwater* (1923) was inspired by Tennyson’s life and work.
9. Thomas Edison, a famous American inventor and one of the leading businessmen enabled the aged poet to record sound. He recorded Tennyson reading some of his best poetry, such as “The Charge of the Light Brigade”.
10. In the episode ‘Sacrifice of the Angels’ of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, Miles O’Brien and Julian Bashir recite the verses from Tennyson’s “The Charge of the Light Brigade” as their Starfleet prepares to enter a battle.
11. Iron Maiden’s ‘The Trooper’ was inspired by “The Charge of the Light Brigade”.
12. Virginia Woolf’s novel *To the Lighthouse* (1927) contains allusions to “The Charge of the Light Brigade”.

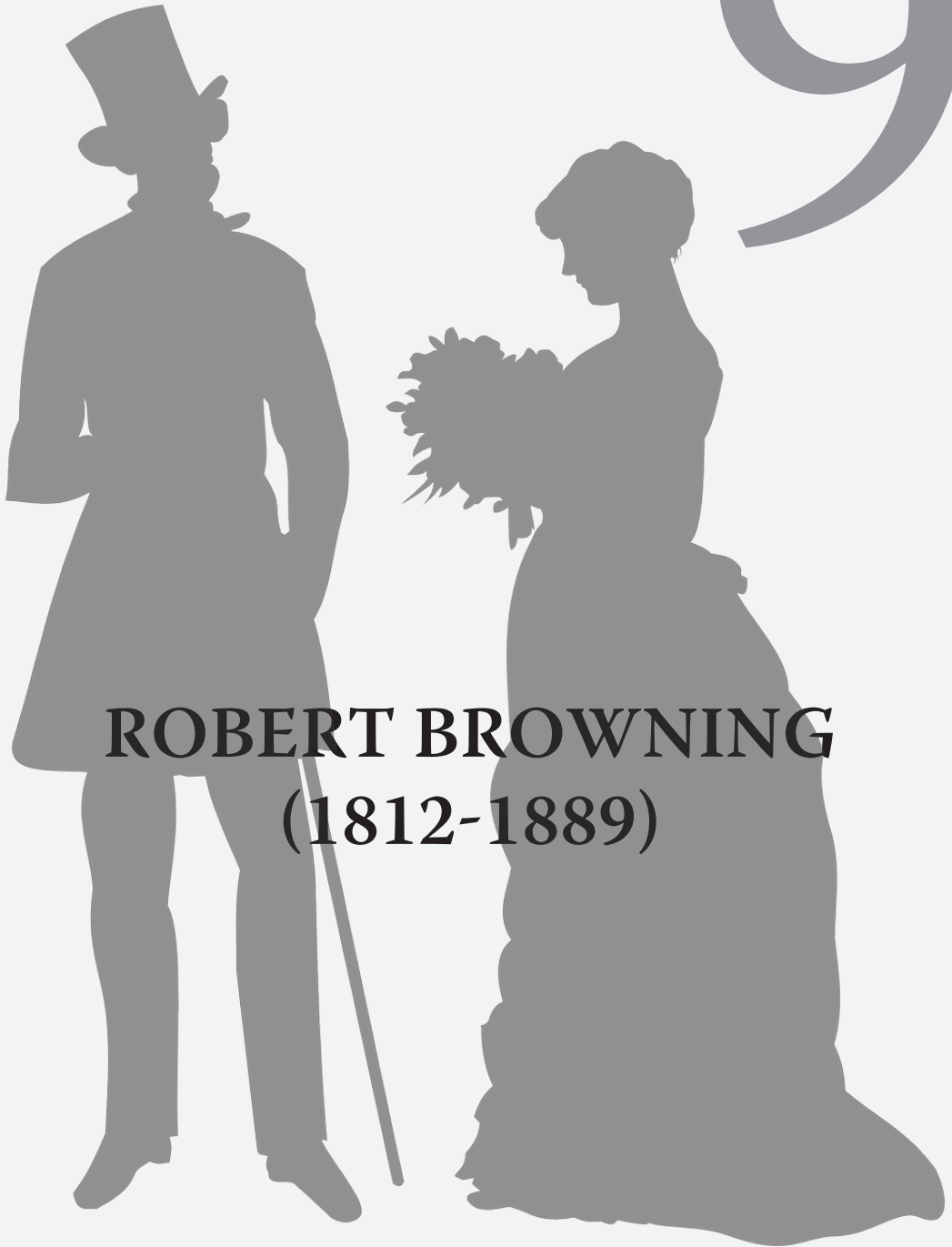
45 Facts 1-3 were adapted from: <http://lit213tennyson.blogspot.com/2013/04/10-interesting-facts-about-alfred-lord.html>

46 Fact 4 was adapted from: <https://www.10interestingfacts.com/facts-about-alfred-lord-tennyson.html>

47 Fact 5 was adapted from: <https://interestingliterature.com/2015/08/five-fascinating-facts-about-alfred-lord-tennyson/>

48 Facts 6-10 were adapted from: <https://blog.bookstellyouwhy.com/five-facts-about-alfred-lord-tennyson>

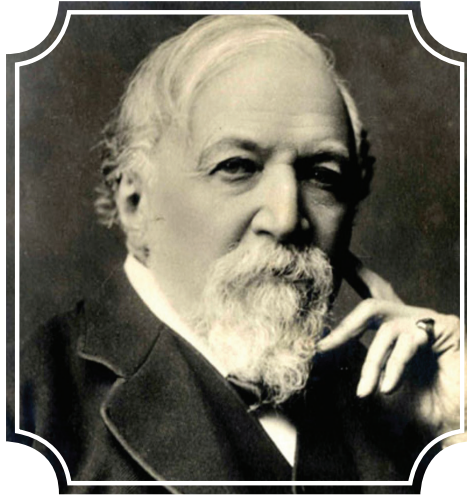
Part 9



ROBERT BROWNING
(1812-1889)

ROBERT BROWNING

(1812-1889)



Robert Browning has been regarded as an English playwright and one of the foremost poets of the Victorian period, known for his deep psychological insight that was made apparent in characterization of his poetic personas. He was born in Camberwell, a middle-class suburb of London, as a son of Robert Browning, a well-read clerk in the Bank of England, and Sarah Anna Wiedermann Browning, a religious German-Scotch pianist. His mother's piety and love for music and his father's devotion to his education at home had an immense influence on the poet's development. Owing to his father, he had an opportunity to learn Latin, Greek, French, and Italian at home and he became familiar with an English translation of the *Illiad* by Alexander Pope. Robert Browning Senior's unusual approaches to schooling were recalled in his poem "Development" published in *Asolando: Fancies and Facts* (1889). Due to his extensive but idiosyncratic education, the allusions and references he inserted into his works seemed obscure to the readers. Since his father had to relinquish his own artistic and scholarly dreams as his family was in need of an extra financial support, he was more than willing to help his son to pursue his dream of becoming a poet.

An encounter with an actor William Macready in the 1830s can be said to be a starting point for his writing career as he began producing verse drama for the stage and poems for children. His short poem “The Cardinal and the Dog” and a narrative poem “The Pied Piper of Hamelin” were created to entertain Willie, a son of the actor, who asked Browning to give him something to illustrate as he was lying sick in bed. The former poem, containing fifteen lines, is inspired by Nathaniel Wanley’s *The Wonders of the Little World*⁴⁹. It is about Cardinal Crescenzo who, upon the apparition of a huge black dog, falls seriously ill. Critics did not find this poem particularly successful and it is nowadays regarded primarily as a warm-up to “The Pied Piper”. The later poem was included in *Dramatic Lyrics* and it represents the reflection of Victorian morality and its conventions. When John Foster wrote a positive review of the poem in *The Examiner* a critical attention started to shift to the other poems of the volume that would later contribute to his becoming a distinguished poet and a role model of many modernists. Some of Browning’s poems were included in children school texts. For instance, a narrative poem “How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix”. It is a part of the collection of dramatic monologues entitled *Bells and Pomegranates No. VII – Dramatic Romances & Lyrics* (1845). It is about three riders who are dispatched from the Belgium city of Ghent to carry an important message to the German city of Aix-la-Chapelle. Only one of the riders – the third one – manages to successfully complete the mission and pass the message, which true content – the one that goes beyond that of securing freedom of the German city – has never being revealed.

Elizabeth Barrett particularly liked Browning’s collection of poems *Dramatic Lyrics* and in one of her poems entitled “Lady Geraldine’s Courtship” (1844) she compared him to Wordsworth and Tennyson – the two poets that marked the history of English poetry. When Browning came across Elizabeth Barrett’s collection of poems (*Poems*), he immediately wished to organize a meeting with her. They fell deeply in love and decided to marry and elope to Italy despite her father’s disapproval. They spent a few marvelous years in Florence together. Their love and affection for each other were expressed in her *Sonnets from the Portuguese* and his *Men and Women*. During the marriage Browning wrote little due to the family’s frequent moving from one place to another, Elizabeth Barrett’s frail health and his taking the responsibility of his son’s education.

49 The book lists all peculiarities, deficiencies, deformations and capacities of the human kind observed by the 17th century Leicester clergyman.

At the beginning of his career, Browning tried to find a poetic form that best suited him. His first poetic production *Pauline: A Fragment of a Confession* (1833) did not achieve much critical regard. After publishing *Paracelsus* two years later and receiving more encouraging reviews, he started to show greater interest in a dramatic monologue, the form in which a single character tells a story that reveals his true character to the reader without his realization that he is doing so.

The shifting views on art and morality in Browning's time are analogous to the shifting in priorities. Traditional and more didactic forms of art were losing favour, so Browning aspired to redefine the aesthetic mostly by using unpoetic language and rough metres. A frequent use of colloquial speech, inarticulate sounds and rough metre in his poems served as a proper tool for depicting the inner conflicts of his characters who resembled people living in the real world.

Browning's shorter lyrical forms were more successful than the longer ones. In his collection of poems entitled *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842), *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics* (1845), *Men and Women* (1855) and *Dramatic Personae* (1848), Browning managed to develop his characteristic poetic expression. The dominant themes of the poems are love, fascination with Italy and its people, particularly the Renaissance, philosophical and religious problems in general, and art as a creative process. His lyrical poems are considered to be important, especially his short poem "Meeting at Night", which describes a meeting of two passionate lovers. Other poems based on his love and marital experiences are "Parting at the Morning", "Love among the Ruins", "Two in the Campagna", "Any Wife to Any Husband", "A Lovers' Quarrel", etc. These poems are highly suggestive and authentic, permeated with fierce spiritual and sensual feelings, and it is no wonder why hope, despair, doubt, fulfillment and disappointment are subject to constant alteration. Browning's works are, however, more appreciated by the critics than the readers. As his poetry is permeated with the elements of naturalism, Browning is regarded as a precursor of modern poets of the 20th century. It is fragmentary and hermetic, but it also contains the elements of romanticism.

Women in the Victorian era stand for home and domesticity, family and traditional values. They are mostly depicted as angelic creatures - pure and gentle, devoid of sexual impulses, and with delicate feminine nature. In Browning's poetry women are often depicted as sexually open. Sexuality is often associated with violence that may stand for the struggle between aesthetics and morals in Victorian art. The conflict lies in the fact that woman serves as both a symbol of values unaffected by the outside world and a symbol of art (an artist's muse), where she is often presented as a sexually open ideal of beauty. Such a conflict was believed to be resolved by controlling women, or even physically abusing them.

Destroying women in such a manner was thought to be one of the most effective ways of preserving the image and reputation of a society that had already been changed beyond recognition.

By analyzing Browning's poetic techniques in the book entitled *The Poetry of Experience* (1957), Robert Langbaum concludes that the dramatic monologues written by Browning reveal the personality of the character and his or her own (distorted) perspective of certain problems and situations, thus avoiding the universal truth. This is why in Browning's dramatic monologues there are many strange, violent, jealous, grotesque, lecherous and subtly monstrous male characters whose passion for dominating and taming women turns into an act of gruesome crime (i.e. the character of Duke in "My Last Duchess", or the character of a young man who strangles his beloved in "Porphyria's Lover"). The Victorian society's need to mold the behaviour of individuals is reflected in Browning's "Porphyria's Lover" and "My Last Duchess". Both women in these poems are presented as objects of man's desire to get control of female sexuality. Browning's characters are eager to speak and reveal their own beliefs, convictions and misconceptions. They passionately believe in their own ideas and judgements, which makes them similar to real human beings whose misconceptions and misjudgments can be larger than life.

Browning's dramatic vision of life is reflected in his lyrics that represent a world composed of people caught in a moment of spiritual crisis or fervor (as caught by Browning's friar and painter Filippo Lippi in an 1855 dramatic monologue *Fra Lippo Lippi* which first appeared in his collection *Men and Women*). As David Daiches has remarked in his book *A Critical History of English Literature* (1963), Browning's characters were represented in the moment when they were unaware of the fact that they had been observed. The central element of Browning's poetry is the emphasis on a human soul, or, a tension between the human's "infinite passion" and "finite heart", that is, a conflict between eternal human yields (dreams, desires, fantasy) and man's objective achievements (reality) as stated in Browning's poem "Two in the Campagna":

*Just when I seemed about to learn!
Where is the thread now? Off again!
The old trick! Only I discern –
Infinite passion, and the pain
Of finite hearts that yearn.*

The Ring and the Book (1868-69) is one of the Browning's most ambitious works, which appeared when his popularity reached its peak. It is a long dramatic narrative poem consisting of 21, 000 lines, where numerous characters speak about the same event – the crime in Rome at the end of 17th century committed by Guido Franceschini, the process of trial and Guido's punishment for murdering his innocent wife. The title of the poem is symbolic, as it refers to the old book Browning bought in the antique shop in Florence, and the ring that metaphorically stands for the artist's work. Nowadays, the poem is more important for its historical references than its poetic qualities.

Browning has also introduced the genre of fairy tales such as *Cinderella*, *Puss in Boots*, *The Little Red Riding Hood*, *Sleeping Beauty*, etc. He recorded oral tales for the adults Brothers Grim edited some of his tales. The story of a Bluebeard, which has many similarities with Browning's poem "My Last Duchess" is perhaps one of the most popular Victorian fairy tales. Once upon a time there was a wealthy man with a blue beard, which scared people very much and made them avoid him. Blue colour stands for coldness, and unnatural and inhumane qualities. On the other hand, blue colour also possesses magical characteristics – it is a symbol of power and monstrosity within a human being. He is a gentleman, an aristocrat and an Italian Duke. In his neighborhood there is a woman with three marriageable daughters. He wanted to marry one of them although he had already been married several times in the past. No one, however, knew what had happened to his ex-wives. He tends to present his wealth as a product of his diligence and hard work. The younger daughter got greedy and consented to marriage with the duke. After the marriage he tells her that he needs to embark on a six-week-long journey. He advises her to have fun while he is away and tells her to take care of the keys of his house. By giving her the small key and telling her not to use it he sets up a trap. The key is a symbol of his true nature, and the closet keeps his dark secret. The frequent use of the word "my" symbolizes his jealousy, selfishness and domineering nature (he 'gives commands' and 'forbids' and everything is 'his', as it is the duke's 'last duchess'). The wife promises him that she will not use the key. However, she is curious and decides to open the closet. At first she could see only darkness, but then she sees that the floor is covered in blood. She also sees the bodies of his wives. Out of fear she drops the key and runs into her room to calm down. There is a bloody spot on the key she could not wipe, since the key is magic. The husband returns from the trip and she pretends that she is happy he came back earlier than he was supposed to. He asks for the keys and notices her hands are trembling. He realizes what has happened. She bids him forgiveness and truly repents for her disobedience (in the 18th and 19th century, she was believed to have betrayed her husband, so the effects of a female curiosity were supposed to be felt). However, he is unwilling to forgive her. In the end, her brothers save her by killing the duke.

Towards the end of his life Browning witnessed a creation of the Browning Society founded by F. J. Furnivall in 1881. It is formed to discuss, write about, interpret and critically analyze the poet's work, explore his philosophical thought and stage his plays. Such societies used to appear after the author's death. The Browning's Society, however, was formed twelve years before his death. Its primary concerns were promotion of Browning's literary achievements. The Society published reading guides and book reprints at low costs. Despite the fact that he was not so fond of the society, Browning acknowledged that its promotion of his works made him popular and widely recognized by the public.

Although his works had a significant influence on modern poetry, Browning was dismissed by some of the most influential figures of modernism. For instance, T. S. Eliot dismissed his poems, despite the fact that Ezra Pound, whose influence on Eliot is evident, regarded Browning as one of his literary fathers. Pound appreciated Browning's love for truth as the main principle of the artistic creation and his sharp analytical power. Therefore, in one of his poems entitled "Mesmerism" from the collection of poems *Personae of Ezra Pound*, Pound addresses the poet in the following way:

*True to the Truth's sake and crafty dissector,
You grabbed at the gold sure...*

After the WWII, however, the second generation of critics detected the poet's failings but also acknowledged that many modernists were inspired by his poetic forms and ideas conveyed in his poetry. Today Browning's dramatic monologues are considered very important due to their subjectivity which is seen as a modern means for character development. Browning is believed to be one of the most original English poets, as he was relatively different from his contemporaries, especially Tennyson. His poetry bears some resemblance to the poetry of John Donne and the 20th-century poets. His originality is seen in a variety of characters similar to those found in the works of Chaucer and Shakespeare, use of colloquial language and a creation of the poetic form which he perfected – a dramatic monologue.

However, the fact that he persistently tried to express himself by using a longer, monumental form and that his reputation was predominantly established upon short lyric forms led to Browning's own dissatisfaction and inability to comprehend himself and the time he lived in. This initiated mixed critical reviews of his works. Browning's longer works were believed to be unsuccessful due to their poetic form.

Tennyson's melodiuousness and attempts to imitate certain features of the poetry of the Romanticism were regarded as a norm and whatever contradicted it was considered inadequate. This is why George Santayana (1863-1952) – a Spanish-American philosopher, humanist, poet and one of the most influential thinkers in the last century – has noted in "The Poetry of Barbarism"⁵⁰, one of the sections of his book entitled *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900), that Browning, besides Walt Whitman, was a "barbarian" poet whose poetry was fragmentary. According to Santayana, Browning lacks both the totality of vision and ability to comprehend reality. Only with the beginning of the 20th century that witnessed the appearance of the modernists were some of the aspects of Browning's poetry (his highly intellectual modern consciousness and vocabulary) given the adequate treatment. Today Browning is seen as an artist of the great potential and modest achievement. According to Percy Lubbock (2016: 40), Browning was "a spiritual adventurer born out of due time". Furthermore, Lubbock claims that "if ever there was a time resembling in this respect our old-fashioned idea of the Renaissance, that would have been the moment for Browning as for no other poet since Shakespeare" (Lubbock 2016: 40). Browning died in 1889 in the Italian town of Venice. He was buried in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey in London, among other influential poets and writers. He was recognized as one of the most distinguished literary figures and thinkers whose works reflected the period in which he lived and created.

50 The entire essay can be found at <https://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/whitman-per-santayana.html>.

“MY LAST DUCHESS”



The poem “My Last Duchess” is inspired by Alfonso II d’Este, the Duke of Ferrara, whose multiple marriages and controversy surrounding his life prompted Browning to create a poem whose speaker would resemble this historical figure. Browning came across the Duke’s biography when he visited Italy. Browning was fascinated by the Italian Renaissance as it represented a perfect blend of religion, morality, art and humanity. The historical and temporal setting of the Browning’s poem was a fruitful ground for exploring sex, violence and aesthetics. The Duke married Lucrezia de’ Medici whom he deserted while she was on her deathbed. Due to

the fact that the Duke had multiple marriages and no children, some historians speculated that he was a homosexual. In Browning’s poem, a poetic persona is the Duke who shows the palace to an emissary whose reason for visiting the Duke was another marriage negotiation. While entertaining the emissary, the Duke stops in front of the portrait of his deceased wife and then starts recalling the time the portrait has been made and the Duchess herself. In the first part of the poem it seems as if the Duke spoke about the portrait as the piece of art itself. Then it becomes clear that he brings into relation the piece of art with his deceased wife. The personality of the deceased Duchess is revealed from the perspective of her husband. The Duke claims she flirted with everyone, smiled at everyone and looked at everyone the same way she looked at her husband. He stresses that she did not value enough his “gift of a nine-hundred-years- old name” and that her heart was “too soon made glad, / Too easily impressed; she liked whate’er/ She looked on, and her looks went everywhere”. This is what made him nervous, so now when she is dead, he decides to put a curtain across the portrait and be the only one who can look at her whenever he wants. The Duke’s words reveal not only the true character of the Duchess but also her husband’s. He is a jealous controlling performer aware of his intellectual capacities. The terrible story he is telling seems less horrifying as he has a way with words. It goes without saying that the story about the Duchess’s misconduct has been a product of his own imagination. His desire to control stems from his incapability to comprehend and face an increasingly complex modern world.

To take control means to stabilize and conserve. Therefore, it will be proper to state that the Duke stands for the Victorian society in general as the similar controlling impulses can be detected in its members. The Duchess is beautiful, young and naïve. The Duke wants to get control of her sexuality and further claims that she “thanked men” a lot whenever she got a gift and that she ranked his gift with anybody else’s. His pride did not let him reprimand her so his anger accumulated: “This grew; I gave commands; /Then all smiles stopped together”. As his monologue continues it becomes clear that the Duke caused his wife’s demise. Having made the final remark about the Duchess, he returns to his business of arranging another marriage. It is apparent that his potential spouse is another young girl coming from another powerful family. The Duke tells the emissary that he is not interested in the girl’s dowry but her personality. As they pass the portrait, the Duke shows the emissary other works of art in his collection that come into view.

The poem consists of rhyming pentameters and the lines use enjambment. The poem is written in a form of a dramatic monologue and the poetic persona /the Duke /is not the poet himself /Browning/. The speaker is telling a story to the imaginary audience and his real character is revealed as the narrative unfolds. The poem engages readers on a psychological level as they need to bring the pieces of the story themselves in order to understand it. The readers are forced to question the Duke’s remarks, reasons, and suggestions. Moreover, they are forced to question their own response to the subject portrayed. The poem is praised for the power of dramatic expression and its beautiful stylistic elements. A parallel could be drawn between Browning’s poem and Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, as they both feature the portrait as a work of art. Both literary works (the poem and the novel) pose a question whether art has a moral component – as the horror of both the Duchess and Dorian’s fates is interwoven into their beautiful portraits – or whether it is merely an aesthetic exercise.

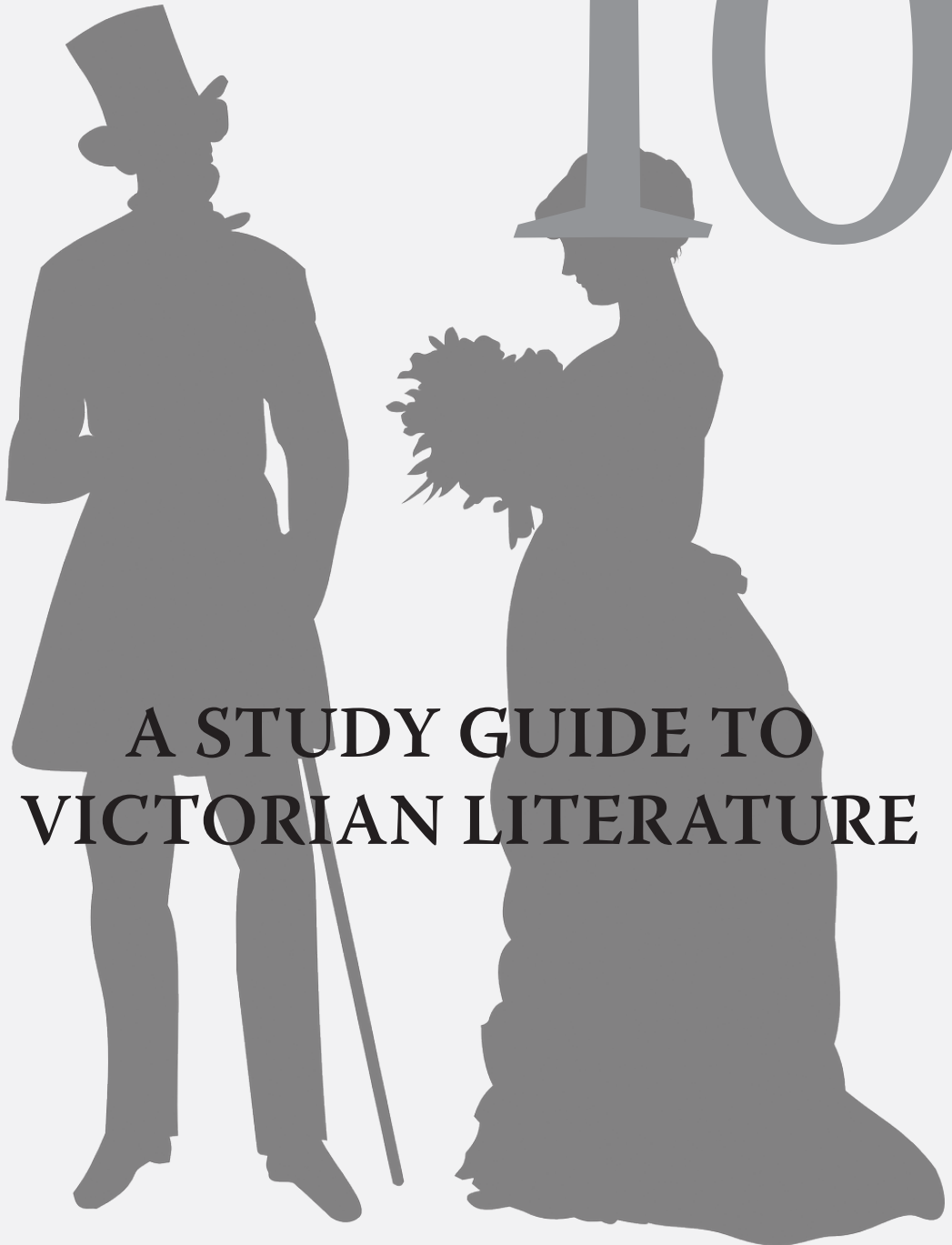
Did you know?

1. Browning found his inspiration for the poem "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came" in Shakespeare's *King Lear*.
2. Stephen King's *The Dark Tower* series were inspired by Browning's "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came". King's protagonist is named Roland, most of the action is set in the Dark Tower. King's characters of Cuthbert and Giles also appear in Browning's poem.
3. King's *The Dark Tower* series, however, has also inspired other authors to produce poems, novellas, books, and even certain British TV programmes (i.e. *Doctor Who*).
4. Browning feared public speaking. This is why he decided to record himself while reciting "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix" using an Edison cylinder phonograph. The recording can be found online.⁵¹
5. A cause of many disputes between Browning and his wife was spiritualism. Elizabeth Barret Browning believed in it, while Robert Browning considered it a scam. Once they attended a séance organized by a popular Scottish medium. During the séance, the medium produced an apparition and told the Brownings that it had been the ghost of the son they had lost. It goes without saying that they had never lost a son. The apparition turned out to be the medium's bare foot. However, the scam was not enough to make Browning's wife stop believing in spiritualism.
6. Browning's poem *The Ring and the Book* is composed of 20,000 lines. Also, the film *Get Carter* opens with a quote from this poem: "That's all we expect of man, this side the grave: his good is – knowing he is bad".⁵²

51 Facts 1-5 were adapted from: <https://blog.bookstellyouwhy.com/five-little-known-facts-about-robert-browning>.

52 Fact 6 was adapted from: <http://manoflabook.com/wp/fun-facts-friday-robert-browning/>

Part 10



A STUDY GUIDE TO VICTORIAN LITERATURE

CHARLES DICKENS

Oliver Twist

EXCERPT FROM *OLIVER TWIST*

The room in which the boys were fed was a larger stone hall, with a copper at one end, out of which the master, dressed in an apron for the purpose, and assisted by one or two women, ladled the gruel at meal-times. Of this festive composition each boy had one porringer, and no more – except on occasions of great public rejoicing, when he had two and a quarter ounces of bread besides. The bowls never wanted washing. The boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again; and when they had performed this operation (which never took very long, the spoons being nearly as large as the bowls), they would sit staring at the copper, with such eager eyes as if they could have devoured the very bricks of which it was composed; employing themselves, meanwhile, in sucking their fingers most assiduously, with the view of catching up any stray splashes of gruel that might have been cast thereon. Boys have generally excellent appetites. Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the tortures of slow starvation for three months: at last they got so voracious and wild with hunger, that one boy, who was tall for his age, and hadn't been used to that sort of thing (for his father had kept a small cookshop) hinted darkly to his companions, that unless he had another basin of gruel *per diem*, he was afraid he might some night happen to eat the boy who slept next to him, who happened to be a weakly youth of tender age. He had a wild hungry eye, and they implicitly believed him. A council was held; lots were cast who should walk up to the master after supper that evening, and ask for more; and it fell to Oliver Twist.

The evening arrived; and the boys took their places. The master, in cook's uniform, stationed himself at the copper; his pauper assistants ranged themselves behind him; the gruel was served out; and a long grace was said over the short commons. The gruel disappeared; the boys whispered to each other, and winked at Oliver, while his next neighbours nudged him. Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery. He rose from the table; and advancing to the master, basin and spoon in hand said; somewhat alarmed at his own temerity.

"Please, sir, I want some more."

The master was a fat, healthy man; but he turned very pale. He gazed in stupefied astonishment on the small rebel for some seconds, and then clung for support to the copper. The assistants were paralysed with wonder; the boys with fear.

"What!" said the master at length, in a faint voice.

"Please, sir," replied Oliver, "I want some more."

The master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle; pinioned him in his arms, and shrieked aloud for the beadle. The board were sitting in solemn conclave, when Mr Bumble rushed into the room in great excitement, and addressing the gentleman in the high chair, said,

"Mr Limbkins, I beg your pardon, sir! Oliver Twist has asked for more!" There was a general start. Horror was depicted on every countenance.

"For *more*!" said Mr Limbkins. "Compose yourself, Bumble, and answer me distinctly. Do I understand that he asked for more, after he had eaten the supper allotted by the dietary?"

"He did, sir," replied Bumble.

"That boy will hang," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat. "I know that boy will be hung."

Nobody controverted the prophetic gentleman's opinion. An animated discussion took place. Oliver was ordered into instant confinement; and a bill was next morning pasted on the outside of the gate offering a reward of five pounds to anybody who would take Oliver Twist off the hands of the parish.

(Oliver Twist, Chapter II, pp. 11-14)

Vocabulary notes:

to hint – to suggest; gruel – a mixture of oatflakes and water or milk; to cast lots – to choose by chance; to nudge – to push somebody with your elbow.

ACTIVITIES

I. Find the meanings to the underlined words. Provide their synonyms and antonyms where possible. Find their noun/verb/adjective/adverb form.

II. Answer the following questions.

1. What does the noun 'master' suggest about the man running the orphanage? How would it be different if he were called by his name?
2. Dickens says: "The gruel disappeared". What does the verb 'disappeared' suggest about how they ate?
3. Which words suggest that the other boys were encouraging Oliver to go up? What impression do they give you about the other boys? What does this tell us about how Oliver is regarded by others?
4. What do you think the word 'temerity' means and why?
5. List three things that happened which shows the master is shocked.
6. What does the word 'paralyzed' suggest about the atmosphere?
7. How does Dickens use language to present conditions in the workhouse?

III. Choose the best answer:

1. The best title for this extract is:
 - a) Difficult Time at the Orphanage
 - b) A Horrible Food
 - c) A Frightening Master
 - d) A Rebellious Child
2. The children are not happy because:
 - a) The food they are given is really bad and they can't eat it.
 - b) They are not given enough to eat and they are very hungry.
 - c) One of the boys is a bully who terrorizes them and eat their food.
 - d) The master is a terrifying man that terrorizes them.

3. Why did Oliver Twist go to speak to the master?

- a) He was the bravest boy.
- b) He was afraid of the other boys.
- c) He was elected by the others.
- d) He was chosen by chance.

4. What was the master's reaction?

- a) He was very exasperated.
- b) He was admiring the boy.
- c) He was really shocked.
- d) He was serene.

5. What did the master do?

- a) He complained to the Director.
- b) He gave the boys some more food.
- c) He punished Oliver for his temerity and reported to the Director.
- d) He asked the Director for permission to give the boys more food.

6. What was the Director's reaction?

- a) He was completely indifferent to the situation.
- b) He admired Oliver's attitude.
- c) He was horrified by Oliver's attitude.
- d) He was horrified by the master's attitude.

7. What was the board's opinion about Oliver's future?

- a) They thought he was promised to a great future.
- b) They thought he would end up being a criminal.
- c) They thought he would become very rich and influential.
- d) They thought he would be very poor and stupid.

IV. Vocabulary – POVERTY, MONEY

a) Poverty and hunger are the themes that Dickens thoroughly exploited in *Oliver Twist*.

1. What does the phrase “sucking their fingers most assiduously” say about the orphans?

2. Find other phrases in the text that create a picture of the food and how short in supply it is:

3. Find phrases in the text that give the reader strong impressions of the characters:

b) Here is some useful vocabulary.

Look at the following words related to being rich/poor. Are they positive/negative? Find out their meaning.

destitute, rolling in it, poverty-stricken, beggar, a fat cat, hard-up, needy, on the rocks, penniless, well off, broke, prosperous, stinking rich, impoverished, well-heeled, a tycoon

c) Circle the words that best collocate with each other:⁵³

1. contribute/bank on/donate/give MONEY
2. set aside/hoard/supply MONEY
3. make/earn/bring in MONEY
4. THE STARTING cost/price/charge
5. get out/remove/withdraw the MONEY
6. charge-/price-/cost-EFFECTIVE
7. THE ADMISSION charge/cost/fee/price
8. bargain/low/reasonable/exorbitant/cost PRICE
9. come down in/vary in/slump PRICE
10. close/settle/pay the BILL
11. added/priceless/valuable/actual administrative COST

V. WORD FORMATION

*Fill in the gaps with the correct word form in the following text about Dickens. All of the words require negative prefixes.*⁵⁴

Dickens and his world

When the *Pickwick Papers* first appeared in 1836, young Dickens enjoyed an _____ (PRECEDENT) popularity with the public and the readers that eagerly expected his new literary work. He magnificently _____ (PROVE) a theory that his popularity would _____ (APPEAR) as fast as it had appeared. His death did not prevent him from remaining _____ (DENY) the most prolific and renown writer the British people had ever been familiar with.

The British public, as well as the English-speaking world globally, displayed _____ (SATIETY) appetite for his works. Moreover, most of his works witnessed _____ (NUMBER) dramatic adaptations. Unfortunately, Dickens was _____ (CAPACITY) of harmonizing the happiness he felt in regard with his popularity in the public with the proper level of satisfaction and enjoyment in the real life.

53 Adapted from *Advanced Language Practice*, p. 217.

54 Adapted from *Proficiency Masterclass: Student's Book*, p. 84.

Namely, he was _____ (ABILITY) to keep his intimate relationships strong and successful. Almost all his endeavours to maintain long-lasting relationships with women ended in _____ (FAIL). However, out of his needs and fears, his disappointment and his longings, Dickens created a great number of _____ (FORGET) female characters that embodied the principles of good and evil, virtue and vice. They are still present with us, almost a hundred and fifty years after the _____ (DIE) of their _____ (CREATE), in all their strangeness and distinctiveness, _____ (LIKE) any other female characters created by Victorian novelists, no matter how well they may have understood women.

Answer the following questions from the novel *Oliver Twist*:

1. Analyze the two types of thievery in the novel: the one committed by the criminal Sikes against the Maylies, and the other committed by the “respectable” people, Mrs. Mann and Mr. Bumble, against the poor. How are they different? What do they have in common?
2. Dickens was often accused of expressing anti-Semitic attitudes in *Oliver Twist* based on his depiction of Fagin. To what extent does the text support this view? Find the elements that may point to antisemitism in Dickens’s novel. Does Fagin stand for all Jews?
3. Oliver is presented as incorruptible in the novel. Find the examples in the novel that point to Oliver’s incorruptness.
4. What kind of effect is achieved by the death of Agnes and Nancy?
5. How are the members of Fagin’s gang depicted? Are they sympathetic figures and why/why not?
6. How did Dickens present female characters in the novel?
7. How did Dickens present the poor/the rich in the novel? Are they genuinely good/bad?
8. Describe the character of Bill Sikes. What can be learnt about his character from his reactions and behaviour following the murder of Nancy? How is he different from a female murderer Tess in Hardy’s novel.
9. What is the purpose of Rose Maylie’s illness? How does this episode affect the novel’s plot?
10. Compare and contrast the characters of *Oliver Twist* and Pip from *Great Expectations*.

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION – CRITICAL THINKING

Choose one of the following topics, do a research, analyze and present it. The presentations are limited to 10 minutes each. Also, think of the following questions before the exercise classes (when the excerpts from the novels are being analyzed) and actively participate in discussion that follows.

1. Analyze the female characters in the novel: how are they similar/different from the female characters in *Great Expectations*?
2. Provide the examples of poverty in the novel. How is vice connected to poverty? Are vice and poverty treated as hereditary traits?
3. Discuss the way Dickens depicts moral values in *Oliver Twist*. Provide the examples from the novel.
4. The concept of marriage in *Oliver Twist*. Identify and discuss the married couples in the novel.
5. What is, in your opinion, the most successful passage/dialogue in *Oliver Twist*? Why? Single out the passages/events based on real-life situations bearing in mind the novel's socio-historical context.
6. "The relation between a writer and the society, in general, indicates various degrees of involvement or concern with the world." Discuss this statement. Discuss the role of literature in solving the social problems.
7. Industrial Revolution brought about dramatic changes. Explain this statement by mentioning two positive and two negative points to support your answer.
8. Discuss the phenomenon of Child Labour.
9. What do we learn from Dickens's depiction of criminal justice system in *Oliver Twist*?
10. After considering the issues that Dickens has tackled in his novels, what is your opinion about him as a writer?

A. Roman Polanski Film *Oliver Twist*⁵⁵

The Plot

Put the events into chronological order (1 to 12) as shown in a film:

- ____ Oliver gets shot while robbing Mr. Brownlow's house.
- ____ Noah Claypole tells Oliver's mother name.
- ____ Nancy is murdered by Sikes.
- ____ Oliver tries to rob Mr. Brownlow on the street.
- ____ The Artful Dodger dodges Nancy when she informs Mr. Brownlow.
- ____ Mr. Sowerberry takes Oliver as his apprentice.
- ____ Oliver runs away to London.
- ____ Oliver asks for more food in the workhouse.
- ____ Nancy and Sykes kidnap Oliver from the street.
- ____ Fagin teaches Oliver how to be a pick-pocket.
- ____ Sikes dies when trying to escape the police and an angry mob.
- ____ Oliver visits Fagin before his execution.

55 Roman Polanski directed a film based on Charles Dickens novel in 2005. The film received mixed to positive reactions.

1. CHARACTERS.

Who is who? Put the names from the box into the gaps.

Noah Claypole	Nancy	Fagin	Monks
Mr. Sowerberry	Mr. Brownlow		Mr. Bumble
Bill Sikes		Rose	

_____ is a mean guardian at the workhouse.

_____ is an undertaker who buys Oliver from the workhouse and makes him his apprentice.

_____ is Mr. Sowerberry's first apprentice. He is jealous of Oliver because Mr. Sowerberry favours him.

_____ is the Jewish head of the group of young thieves that work in London.

_____ is a London criminal who helps to kidnap Oliver.

_____ is a prostitute and Sikes's girlfriend who helps Oliver.

_____ is the main protagonist's aunt.

_____ is Oliver's benefactor in London.

_____ is a mysterious criminal who forces Oliver to burgle Mr. Brownlow's house.

Great Expectations

EXCERPT FROM *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

My young conductress locked the gate, and we went across the courtyard. It was paved and clean, but grass was growing in every crevice. The brewery buildings had a little lane of communication with it, and the wooden gates of that lane stood open, and all the brewery beyond stood open, away to the high enclosing wall; and all was empty and disused. The cold wind seemed to blow colder there than outside the gate; and it made a shrill noise in howling in and out at the open sides of the brewery, like the noise of wind in the rigging of a ship at sea.

She saw me looking at it, and she said, "You could drink without hurt all the strong beer that's brewed there now, boy."

"I should think I could, miss," said I, in a shy way.

"Better not try to brew beer there now, or it would turn out sour, boy; don't you think so?"

"It looks like it, miss."

"Not that anybody means to try," she added, "for that's all done with, and the place will stand as idle as it is till it falls. As to strong beer, there's enough of it in the cellars already, to drown the Manor House."

"Is that the name of this house, miss?"

"One of its names, boy."

"It has more than one, then, miss?"

"One more. Its other name was Satis; which is Greek, or Latin, or Hebrew, or all three—or all one to me—for enough."

"Enough House," said I; "that's a *curious* name, miss."

"Yes," she replied; "but it meant more than it said. It meant, when it was given, that whoever had this house could want nothing else. They must have been easily satisfied in those days, I should think. But don't loiter, boy."

Though she called me “boy” so often, and with a carelessness that was far from complimentary, she was of about my own age. She seemed much older than I, of course, being a girl, and beautiful and self-possessed; and she was as scornful of me as if she had been one-and-twenty, and a queen.

We went into the house by a side door, the great front entrance had two chains across it outside—and the first thing I noticed was, that the passages were all dark, and that she had left a candle burning there. She took it up, and we went through more passages and up a staircase, and still it was all dark, and only the candle lighted us.

At last we came to the door of a room, and she said, “Go in.”

I answered, more in shyness than politeness, “After you, miss.”

To this she returned: “Don't be ridiculous, boy; I am not going in.” And scornfully walked away, and—what was worse—took the candle with her.

This was very uncomfortable, and I was half afraid. However, the only thing to be done being to knock at the door, I knocked, and was told from within to enter. I entered, therefore, and found myself in a pretty large room, well lighted with wax candles. No glimpse of daylight was to be seen in it. It was a dressing-room, as I supposed from the furniture, though much of it was of forms and uses then quite unknown to me. But prominent in it was a draped table with a gilded looking-glass, and that I made out at first sight to be a fine lady's dressing-table.

Whether I should have made out this object so soon if there had been no fine lady sitting at it, I cannot say. In an arm-chair, with an elbow resting on the table and her head leaning on that hand, sat the strangest lady I have ever seen, or shall ever see.

She was dressed in rich materials,—satins, and lace, and silks— all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparkled on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table. Dresses, less splendid than the dress she wore, and half-packed trunks, were scattered about. She had not quite finished dressing, for she had but one shoe on, —the other was on the table near her hand— her veil was but half arranged, her watch and chain were not put on, and some lace for her bosom lay with those trinkets, and with her handkerchief, and gloves, and some flowers, and a Prayer-Book all confusedly heaped about the looking-glass.

It was not in the first few moments that I saw all these things, though I saw more of them in the first moments than might be supposed. But I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white, had been white long ago, and had lost its lustre and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose had shrunk to skin and bone. Once, I had been taken to see some ghastly waxwork at the Fair, representing I know not what impossible personage lying in state. Once, I had been taken to one of our old marsh churches to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress that had been dug out of a vault under the church pavement. Now, waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved and looked at me. I should have cried out, if I could.

"Who is it?" said the lady at the table.

"Pip, ma'am."

(Great Expectations, 2000, Chapter 8, pp. 47-49)

ACTIVITIES

I. *Find the meaning to the underlined words in the excerpt. Provide their synonyms and antonyms. Find their noun/verb/adverb/adjective form.*

II. *Match the words to their meanings:*

Blacksmith	metal workshop
Churchyard	metal tool
File	church cemetery
Forge	a person making and repairing things in iron by hand
Pantry	an area of wet land
Marsh	a place for storing food
Hulk	thick black liquid
Tar	prison ship

III. *Dickens's characters can be identified by what they say. Who says this? To whom?*

„I'm just busy looking about me.”

„Love her, love her, love her.”

„What rough hands he has, this boy! And what thick boots!”

„I'm wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off the marshes.”

„You must know that I have no heart, no sympathy, no feelings.”

„I love her, I love her, I love her.”

„You have been crying till you are half blind and you are near crying again now.”

„I am to have a carriage and you are to take me.”

„You can't get to be uncommon through lying.”

„Break their hearts, my pride, my hope.”

IV. Dickens uses dichotomy as a concrete reminder that there is usually more to people than initially appears on the surface. Discuss the following dichotomies found within characters:

- a. Describe Wemmick's dual life _____.
- b. Miss Havisham is wealthy, but _____.
- c. Estella is beautiful, but _____.
- d. Joe is illiterate, but _____.
- e. Biddy is a poor orphan, but _____.

Use the following words to help fill in the blanks above.

haughty
miserable
wise
respectable/respected
insensitive
impertinent

V. Crime Vocabulary

a) Complete the gaps by inserting the right verb forms of ROB or STEAL.⁵⁶

- 1. On Monday a street gang _____ the gas station. They _____ \$5000.
- 2. His wallet _____ at the park two days ago.
- 3. Every month plenty of banks _____.
- 4. He's been accused of _____ from his company.
- 5. The insurance company have provided a courtesy car because hers was _____.
- 6. Katja _____ of the opportunity to stand for president.

⁵⁶ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use*, 1994, p. 111.

b) *Types of crime. Write down how the person committing a crime is called, fill in the verbs associated with the crime and provide the definition of the crime. Add your own examples.*⁵⁷

Crime	Criminal	Verb	Definition
Murder			
Shoplifting			
Pickpocketing			
Smuggling			
Burglary			
Arson			
Kidnapping			
Terrorism			
Blackmail			
Drug-trafficking			
Forgery			
Assault			
Mugging			

Your examples:

⁵⁷ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use*, 1994, pp. 110-111.

c) *Fill in the gaps with one of the verbs connected to crime.⁵⁸ Choose from the following verbs and add a suitable particle if necessary:*

commit, accuse, accomplice, charge, steal, plead (not) guilty, defend, prosecute, remorse, pass verdict on, sentence, acquit, fine, release, to be tried

One of the two accused women _____ (1) at last week's trial. She was _____ (2) stealing the large amount of money from the post office. Despite the fact that her lawyer _____ (3) her quite successfully, the jury reached a unanimous decision on her guilt. This is why the judge _____ (4) her to three years in prison. She showed no _____ (5). She'll probably _____ (4) after a year and a half. The other accused woman was luckier. She denied having been the accused's _____ (6) in the robbery. He _____ (7) and left the courtroom smiling broadly.

VI. Law Vocabulary

a) *Insert the word from the box to fill in the blank.*

<i>perjury</i>	<i>embezzlement</i>	<i>indictment</i>			
<i>impeachment</i>	<i>deterrent</i>	<i>police</i>	<i>enforce</i>	<i>contravene</i>	
<i>impeached</i>	<i>detering</i>	<i>indictable</i>			

1. According to some people, capital punishments act as a _____, therefore, our approach to _____ terrorism should include taking more rigorous actions.
2. U.N. says mass Egyptian death sentences _____ international law. (=violate)
3. President Trump is the third U.S. President to be _____ and removed from office. Through the _____ process, the House of Representatives charges an official for "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors."

⁵⁸ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use*, 1994, p.110.

4. A Chief Executive Officer of the company was accused of fraud, tax evasion and _____ of company funds.
5. A better way to make sure people tell the truth in court is to make _____ the most serious of crimes.
6. An _____ offence is one that can be heard at a crown (high) court. The act of a magistrate sending a case to be heard at crown court is called issuing an _____
7. The job of the _____ is to _____ the law.

b) Choose the correct answer (CRIME and LAW)

1. Maria was _____ of murdering her ex-husband's lover.
 - a) Charged
 - b) Sentenced
 - c) Accused
 - d) Arrested
2. Under the general's _____ regime, thousands of people were imprisoned without trial.
 - a) Depressive
 - b) Defensive
 - c) Offensive
 - d) Repressive
3. John is a _____ unto himself, as he ignores all the office regulations and appears at work whenever he wants.
 - a) Rule
 - b) Principle
 - c) Law
 - d) Authority

4. The attorney has _____ the contract recently. He will show it to you tomorrow.
- a) Drawn on
 - b) Drawn in
 - c) Drawn up
 - d) Drawn out
5. Your rich cousin has been _____. Her partner isn't the owner of the company she invested the money in.
- a) Drawn in
 - b) Put off
 - c) Put out
 - d) Taken in
6. It came as a shock to me that such a _____ businessman has been part of the Italian-American Mafia.
- a) Respective
 - b) Respectable
 - c) Respecting
 - d) Respectful
7. With the new law in place, the police will really crack _____ on illegal software copying and distribution.
- a) Down
 - b) Up
 - c) Into
 - d) Out
8. It is a cruel law of nature that _____ the fittest survive others have to die.
- a) Since
 - b) While
 - c) Yet
 - d) Conversely

9. She _____ of the lawyer's decision to take legal action against the journalist over a scandalous text he had published about her on the blog.
- a) Consented
 - b) Assented
 - c) Approved
 - d) Accepted
10. She lost her _____ in a heated argument and hit her neighbour violently.
- a) Wits
 - b) Mind
 - c) Edge
 - d) Temper
11. Going by the _____ of the law, you could be charged with the obstruction of justice, but the police have agreed to overlook it.
- a) Sign
 - b) Letter
 - c) Character
 - d) Signature
12. In some countries people are imprisoned for refusing to do military service because they are conscientious _____.
- a) Protesters
 - b) Demonstrators
 - c) Critics
 - d) Objectors

13. He considers that the school is _____ upon his rights as a parent by punishing his son in that way.
- a) Violating
 - b) Infringing
 - c) Repressing
 - d) Quashing
14. Which is the odd word out: a(n)
- a) Verdict
 - b) Sentence
 - c) Testimony
 - d) Conviction
15. The right to free _____ is fundamental to democracy.
- a) Fall
 - b) Charge
 - c) Criticism
 - d) Speech
16. They _____ the money out of the grandma's purse and disappeared.
- a) Clutched
 - b) Snatched
 - c) Gripped
 - d) Withdrew
17. She _____ fire to nearly 700 acres of forest by accident.
- a) Lighted
 - b) Caused
 - c) Put
 - d) Set

18. The burglars _____ the books, pencils and documents all over the cabinet in their search for valuables.
- a) Disseminated
 - b) Scattered
 - c) Spread
 - d) Stretched
19. There is no apparent _____ for the murder of an old woman in a suburb of Belgrade.
- a) Cause
 - b) Purpose
 - c) Motive
 - d) Incentive
20. The official inquiry into the accident _____ the captain of all responsibility.
- a) Freed
 - b) Released
 - c) Cleared
 - d) Relinquished
21. The prisoner made his escape under _____ of darkness.
- a) Protection
 - b) Shelter
 - c) Cover
 - d) Disguise
22. The family of the murdered criminal offers a _____ to whoever reveals any information regarding the circumstances of the murder.
- a) Award
 - b) Reward
 - c) Prize
 - d) Price

23. You can't trust anyone in this prison – the only law here is the law of the _____, and only the strongest survive.
- a) Town
 - b) Jungle
 - c) Bush
 - d) Council
24. It was the brilliant forensic work of the pathologist that eventually _____ to the arrest of the criminal.
- a) Produced
 - b) Resulted
 - c) Brought
 - d) Led
25. Just because he is rich and had powerful and influential friends, he thinks he is above the _____ and can do whatever he wants.
- a) Rule
 - b) Authority
 - c) Legislation
 - d) Law
26. The newspaper had been tipped _____ about the infamous criminal's arrival and immediately sent a photographer to the shopping mall.
- a) of
 - b) up
 - c) in
 - d) on
27. When the distinguished artist _____ that she had produced and sold hundreds of fake works of art, panic immediately spread throughout the art world.
- a) Acceded
 - b) Declaimed
 - c) Confessed
 - d) Affirmed

28. His cousin was prosecuted for forgery, but charges against him were _____ on grounds of his mental condition.
- a) Pressed
 - b) Dropped
 - c) Rejected
 - d) Denied
29. The police collected _____ regarding the murder of a notorious criminal before presenting it in court.
- a) Proof
 - b) Evidence
 - c) Clue
 - d) Argument
30. Her cousin was persecuted for his political beliefs in Columbia and was forced to seek political _____ in Bolivia.
- a) Protection
 - b) Asylum
 - c) Shelter
 - d) Escape

c) *Use the attenuating adjectives that best collocate with the following nouns:*

_____ theft
_____ cash
_____ offence
_____ commodity

Answer the following questions from the novel Great Expectations:

1. What social class is the criminal, and how can you tell?
2. Pip was given a chance to become a gentleman. Describe his experience in this process.
3. Describe the relationship between Pip and Joe. Why is Pip so fond of Joe? Why did Pip change his behaviour towards Joe and when did that happen exactly?
4. Discuss the meaning of the title of the novel to its content. Identify Pip's "great" expectations.
5. How would you describe marriage between Joe and Pip's sister? What kind of person is she? How does she behave towards Joe/Pip?
6. How has Pip's character developed after interacting with Estella?
7. Why did Miss Havisham insist on "employing" Pip? What was her initial plan? Could you tell from the beginning of the novel that she had had bad intentions? Why/Why not?
8. How does Pip behave towards Magwitch at the beginning of the novel? How did his attitude towards the convict change as the novel was developing? What is the main reason for such a change? Support your statement by referring to the specific situations within the book.
9. Describe the novel's two endings. What is the official version and what is the one Dickens chose not to publish? What are the true reasons that lie behind Dickens's decision to change the original ending?
10. Compare the character of Estella as a girl and a young woman. Has her character developed throughout the novel? If yes, please specify in what way. If not, give your reasons for stating so.

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION – CRITICAL THINKING

Choose one of the following topics, do a research, analyze and present it. The presentations are limited to 10 minutes each. Also, think of the following questions before the exercise classes (when the excerpts from the novels are being analyzed) and actively participate in discussion that follows.

1. How does Pip's dual role (that of a narrator and a protagonist) affect the novel's development? To what extent is Pip objective as a narrator?
2. Examine the role of social class in the novel. Explain the concept of gentleman with regard to socio-historical context in which the novel was written.
3. What is the role of guilt in the novel? Identify the main symbols of justice in the novel.
4. Symbolism of the novel's title. Pip's great expectations and his disillusionment.
5. Discuss the character of Miss Havisham. What is the main reason for the grudge she has got towards men? Describe her relationship with Pip/ Estella.
6. The concept of morality in *Great Expectations*? In what way is Dickens's novel didactic? What kind of moral lessons can the readers draw from it?
7. Discuss socio-cultural and historical perspectives in the novel. In what way are the characters the embodiments of social conventions of the Victorian age? Provide the specific examples from the novel to support your opinion.
8. Compare the film version of *Great Expectations* (1946 version) to the novel. Your comparison should focus on one of the following aspects: characterization, plot, relationships, etc. Your thesis should summarize the similarities and differences and either provide the reason for them or state the effect of those differences and similarities.
9. What causes characters in *Great Expectations* change? Use these examples to explain Dickens's view of human nature.
10. What does Dickens believe cause human degradation? Use examples from the novel to support your answers.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

Vanity Fair

EXCERPT FROM *VANITY FAIR*

EXCERPT 1

The observant reader, who has marked our young Lieutenant's previous behaviour, and has preserved our report of the brief conversation which he has just had with Captain Dobbin, has possibly come to certain conclusions regarding the character of Mr Osborne. Some cynical Frenchman has said that there are two parties to a love transaction: the one who loves, and the other who condescends to be so treated. Perhaps the love is occasionally on the man's side; perhaps on the lady's. Perhaps some infatuated swain has ere this mistaken insensibility for modesty, dullness for maiden reserve, mere vacuity for sweet bashfulness, and a goose, in a word, for a swan. Perhaps some beloved female subscriber has arrayed an ass in the splendour and glory of her imagination; admired his dullness as manly simplicity; worshipped his selfishness as manly superiority; treated his stupidity as majestic gravity, and used him as the brilliant fairy Titania did a certain weaver at Athens. I think I have seen such comedies of errors going on in the world. But this is certain, that Amelia believed her lover to be one of the most gallant and brilliant men in the empire: and it is possible Lieutenant Osborne thought so too.

He was a little wild: how many young men are; and don't girls like a rake better than a milksop? He hadn't sown his wild oats as yet, but he would soon; and quit the army now that peace was proclaimed; the Corsican monster locked up at Elba; promotion by consequence over; and no chance left for the display of his undoubted military talents and valour; and his allowance, with Amelia's settlement, would enable them to take a snug place in the country somewhere, in a good sporting neighbourhood; and he would hunt a little, and farm a little; and they would be very happy. As for remaining in the army as a married man, that was impossible.

Fancy Mrs George Osborne in lodgings in a county town; or, worse still, in the East or West Indies, with a society of officers, and patronised by Mrs Major O'Dowd? Amelia died with laughing at Osborne's stories about Mrs Major O'Dowd. He loved her much too fondly to subject her to that horrid woman and her vulgarities, and the rough treatment of a soldier's life. He didn't care for himself – not he; but his dear little girl should take the place in society to which, as his wife, she was entitled: and to these proposals you may be sure she acceded, as she would to any other from the same author.

Holding this kind of conversation, and building numberless castles in the air (which Amelia adorned with all sorts of flower-gardens, rustic walks, country churches, Sunday schools, and the like – while George had his mind's eye directed to the stables, the kennel, and the cellar), this young pair passed away a couple of hours very pleasantly; and as the Lieutenant had only that single day in town, and a great deal of most important business to transact, it was proposed that Miss Emmy should dine with her future sisters-in-law. This invitation was accepted joyfully. He conducted her to his sisters'; where he left her talking and prattling in a way that astonished those ladies, who thought that George might make something of her; and he then went off to transact his business.

In a word, he went out and ate ices at a pastry- cook's shop in Charing Cross; tried a new coat in Pall Mall; dropped in at the Old Slaughters', and called for Captain Cannon; he played eleven games at billiards with the Captain, of which he won eight, and returned to Russell Square half-an-hour late for dinner, but in very good humour.

(Vanity Fair, 2001, Chapter XIII, pp. 109-111)

EXCERPT 2

It was nine o'clock at night. He (Rawdon) ran across the streets, and the great squares of Vanity Fair, and at length came up breathless opposite his own house. He started back and fell against the railings, trembling as he looked up. The drawing-room windows were blazing with light. She had said she was in bed and ill. He stood there for some time, the light from the rooms on his pale face.

He took out his door-key and let himself into the house. He could hear laughter in the upper rooms... He went silently up the stairs... Nobody was stirring in the house besides – all the servants had been sent away. Rawdon heard laughter within – laughter and singing. Becky was singing a snatch of a song of the night before; a hoarse voice shouted "Brava! Brava! – it was Lord Steyne's.

Rawdon opened the door and went in. A little table with a dinner was laid out – and wine and plate. Steyne was hanging over the sofa on which Becky sate. The wretched woman was in a brilliant full toilette, her arms and all her fingers sparkling with bracelets and rings; and the brilliants on her breast which Steyne had given her. He had her hand in his, and was bowing over it to kiss it, when Becky started up with a faint scream as she caught sight of Rawdon's white face. At the next instant she tried a smile, a horrid smile, as if to welcome her husband: and Steyne rose up, grinding his teeth, pale and with fury in his looks.

He, too, attempted a laugh – and came forward holding out his hand. "What, come back! How d'ye do, Crawley?" said he, the nerves of his mouth twitching as he tried to grin at the intruder.

There was that in Rawdon's face which caused Becky to fling herself before him. "I am innocent, Rawdon," she cried; "before God, I am innocent." She clung hold of his coat, of his hands; her own were all covered with serpents, and rings, and baubles. "I am innocent. – Say I am innocent," she said to Lord Steyne.

He thought a trap had been laid for him, and was as furious with the wife as with the husband. "You innocent! Damn you," he screamed out, "You innocent! Why every trinket you have on your body is paid for by me. I have given you thousands of pounds which this fellow has spent, and for which he has sold you. Innocent, by - ! You're as innocent as your mother, the ballet-girl, and your husband the bully. Don't think to frighten me as you have done others. Make way, sir, and let me pass;" and Lord Steyne seized up his hat, and with flame in his eyes, and looking his enemy fiercely in the face, marched upon him, never for a moment doubting that the other would give way.

But Rawdon Crawley springing out, seized him by the neckcloth, until Steyne, almost strangled, writhed, and bent under his arm. "You lie, you dog!" said Rawdon. "You lie, you coward and villain!" And he struck the Peer twice across the face with his open hand, and flung him bleeding to the ground. It was all done before Rebecca could interpose. She stood there trembling before him. She admired her husband, strong, brave, and victorious.

"Come here," said he – She came up at once.

"Take off those things." – She began, trembling, pulling the jewels from her arms, and the rings from her shaking fingers, and held them all in a heap, quivering and looking up at him. "Throw them down," he said, and she dropped them. He tore the diamond ornament out of her breast, and flung it at Lord Steyne. It cut him on his bald forehead. Steyne wore the scar to his dying day.

(Vanity Fair, 2001, Chapter LIII, pp. 505-507)

ACTIVITIES

- I. *Find out the meaning of the underlined words/word phrases/expressions. Provide their synonyms and antonyms. Find their noun/verb/adjective/adverb form where possible.*

II. *Money Vocabulary*

- a) **MONEY vocabulary. Fill in the gaps with the words that fit best.**⁵⁹

1. How can I _____ money from my PayPal account?
 - a) refund
 - b) lend
 - c) withdraw

2. Sheila's parents ____ 30% of their monthly income in order to book a room with the sea view in one of the most luxurious hotel in the world.
 - a) invest
 - b) exchange
 - c) save

3. How can I get a personal _____ with no hidden fees?
 - a) loan
 - b) interest rate
 - c) commission

4. The bank plans to cut _____.
 - a) charges
 - b) taxes
 - c) interest rates

59 To check the answers visit the page <https://www.ecenglish.com/learnenglish/lessons/business-english-money-vocabulary>. Keep in mind the fact that the exercises in this course book were modified and that they cannot be found in the original form.

5. You can use _____ converter to calculate foreign exchange rates.
- a) rate
 - b) currency
 - c) money
6. How can I _____ money from one bank account to another?
- a) send
 - b) get
 - c) transfer
7. Before reaching a decision to _____ money in small business, you need to make sure you understand your attitude to risk.
- a) save
 - b) invest
 - c) commit
8. In our country people usually _____ over the price of things, especially in the market.
- a) deal
 - b) squabble
 - c) haggle

b) **Look at the following words /phrases and match them with their meanings. Try to find their Serbian/ Bosnian equivalents:**⁶⁰

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| a) haggle | 1. have great costs |
| b) nest-egg | 2. use money carefully |
| c) high expenditure | 3. let people borrow |
| d) be in debt | 4. be paid upon completion of a task |
| e) be thrifty | 5. bargain |
| f) be paid on commission | 6. have a high income |
| g) lend money | 7. owe money |
| h) earn a lot | 8. an increase in the amount you are paid |
| i) a raise | 9. savings |

III. *Business expressions*

Complete the following expressions by choosing the right word from the box:

around	bankrupt	bulk	cash	down	golden
duck	even	stock	good	credit	share

1. Something worth buying – a _____ buy.
2. Apply oneself seriously to a task – knuckle _____.
3. Compare goods or services before buying – to shop _____.
4. A business, investment, or product that provides a steady income or profit – a _____ cow.
5. Make neither profit nor loss – to break _____.
6. The largest part of something – the lion's _____.
7. Buy large quantities at a cheap price – to buy in _____.
8. An unsuccessful person, thing, or organization – a lame _____.
9. Not available at the moment – out of _____.
10. A payment made to an employee when they leave their job as a reward for a long or good service in their job – a _____ handshake.
11. When a business fails – it goes _____.
12. To delay payment of goods by agreement – to buy on _____.

60 Adapted from *Advanced Language Practice*, 2003, p. 216.

IV. Circle the word that best fits in the gaps (MONEY and TRADE)

1. Unfortunately, the item you want is _____ at the moment. We'll be receiving a new order next week.
 - a) in stock
 - b) out of stock
 - c) on the stocks
 - d) stocked

2. In legal contracts that deal with the sale of property, the person who is selling his property, is known as the _____.
 - a) merchant
 - b) dealer
 - c) trader
 - d) vendor

3. The Redfords finally _____ an agreement with the company.
 - a) had
 - b) reached
 - c) accomplished
 - d) drew up

4. Everyone should learn how to _____ their own living.
 - a) gain
 - b) cash in
 - c) earn
 - d) get

5. Someone who lends money to people who are usually in a difficult life situation and charges interest at a very high rate is called a _____.
 - a) Lone dog
 - b) loan shark
 - c) fat cat
 - d) lion's share

6. Brokers in the Corn _____ reacted swiftly to news about crop failure in North America.
- a) exchange
 - b) market
 - c) wall
 - d) mall
7. This factory sends all its _____ to the warehouse where they are automatically checked by a computer system.
- a) produce
 - b) productivity
 - c) goods
 - d) commodities
8. On her retirement Sheila was given a _____ handshake of a fat cheque in recognition of her many years of loyal service to the company.
- a) silver
 - b) gold
 - c) golden
 - d) green
9. After the business went bankrupt, I had to pick _____ and start again.
- a) up the pieces
 - b) their way
 - c) a fight
 - d) on
10. The chairman of the committee has come in for heavy _____ in the press for his inability to properly address the financial crisis.
- a) repression
 - b) objection
 - c) criticism
 - d) review

11. Most people who _____ in the stock market are not professionals but ordinary people, helping to make a profit.
- a) deal
 - b) trade
 - c) dabble
 - d) sell
12. He was financially _____ when his business collapsed.
- a) crashed
 - b) damaged
 - c) devastated
 - d) ruined
13. One of the greatest software company did a hostile _____ of a small private company.
- a) takeover
 - b) overtake
 - c) taking over
 - d) overtaking
14. He _____ a sum of money out of the drawer and vanished into thin air.
- a) clutched
 - b) snatched
 - c) gripped
 - d) withdrew
15. Hristina _____ \$50 every week for a house refurbishment.
- a) puts away
 - b) takes apart
 - c) moves about
 - d) sets aside

16. War was followed by many years of austerity and life was never going to be free and _____ again.
- a) open
 - b) fast
 - c) easy
 - d) fine
17. Sophia is selling a flat and she has offered her colleague Andreas _____ refusal on it.
- a) first
 - b) prior
 - c) last
 - d) early
18. They have got married recently and they can afford to buy a new cooker by making regular payments each month for two years, therefore they will buy it on _____.
- a) hire purchase
 - b) agreement
 - c) sale
 - d) approval
19. The landlord told my neighbour to get out of the flat at once because she never pays her _____ on time.
- a) fee
 - b) rent
 - c) rate
 - d) tax

20. The stock market took the news very badly, and shares have been in _____ fall.
- a) quick
 - b) dangerous
 - c) free
 - d) slight
21. Martin didn't _____ the prospect of telling her mother that he had spent all the money.
- a) rejoice
 - b) envy
 - c) desire
 - d) relish
22. Mila's parents bought their luxurious vehicle on the _____ plan.
- a) credit
 - b) borrow
 - c) instalment
 - d) deposit
23. The loyalty club members are not required to pay an admission fee and can get tickets to all tennis matches free of _____.
- a) fee
 - b) pay
 - c) charge
 - d) rate
24. My cousin _____ his rent until the landlord agreed to remodel an entire bathroom.
- a) downheld
 - b) withheld
 - c) upheld
 - d) withdrew

25. You can tell that his business is very _____ considering the amount of money he invests in house refurbishment.
- a) affluent
 - b) lucrative
 - c) precious
 - d) surplus
26. Their family lost a lot of money due to the illegal business of some of their members. They are now as poor as _____.
- a) church cats
 - b) church mice
 - c) door mouse
 - d) black cats
27. They are lucky! They are born with a _____ spoon in their mouth.
- a) golden
 - b) silver
 - c) pink
 - d) green
28. My father's no expert, but he occasionally _____ in stocks and shares just for fun.
- a) fluctuates
 - b) goes for
 - c) spreads
 - d) dabbles
29. Her plan was to buy new curtains on _____ and get the money back if she didn't like them.
- a) agreement
 - b) hire purchase
 - c) sale
 - d) approval

V. READING COMPREHENSION

a) **Decide whether these statements about Thackeray are true or false. Then check your answers and correct the false statements.**

1. William Makepeace Thackeray was an Indian writer.
2. The author led a difficult life because his family was not very rich.
3. Thackeray went to a famous but bad school.
4. He graduated from Cambridge University.
5. He became a very respectable young man.
6. He edited a newspaper and became an artist in Paris.
7. Thackeray and his wife, Isabella, didn't have any children.
8. Isabella suffered from mental illness.
9. Thackeray was overweight and he had poor health.
10. He became a very successful politician.

b) **Vanity Fair is set in nineteenth-century England and focuses on 'high society'. Find information about high society in nineteenth-century Europe (use both the novel and Internet as sources) and compare it with 'high society' in the twenty-first century in terms of:**

- a) How they spent money
- b) Family background
- c) Employment
- d) Men
- e) Women
- f) Reputation
- g) How they addressed each other

c) Take the quiz on Vanity Fair:⁶¹

What does Amelia Sedley tell William Dobbin when he confesses his love for her? (from Chapter 58)

- a) She wants to marry him right away.
- b) That she loves him like a sister.
- c) That she wants to marry him.
- d) None of the above.

Who is the woman Rebecca Sharp successfully wins over? (from Chapter 48)

- a) Amelia Sedley
- b) Lady Steyne
- c) Lady Gaunt
- d) Maria

What item does Becky Sharp sell to get money? (from Chapter 32)

- a) Rawdon Crawley's items
- b) Jewelry
- c) Horses
- d) Clothing

Which of the characters dies in the war? (from Chapter 32)

- a) Joseph Sedley
- b) George Osborne
- c) Rawdon Crawley
- d) William Dobbin

What is the hip new thing that people of that time are doing at the parties? (from Chapter 50)

- a) Playing poker
- b) Waltzing
- c) Charades
- d) Playing cards

⁶¹ For further questions and the answer key visit the page <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-vanityfair/free-quiz.html#gsc.tab=0>

What is Becky's main preoccupation at the moment her beloved husband Rawdon Crawley was going to the war? (from Chapter 30)

- a) Her parties and balls
- b) Her finances, if he dies
- c) About George Osborne
- d) About William Dobbin

What happens to Lord Steyne? (from Chapter 64)

- a) He is promoted to a higher rank.
- b) He dies.
- c) He is on his deathbed.
- d) None of the above.

Which character in chapter 31 appears quite tragic because of his efforts in trying to fit in with the military crowd? (from Chapter 30)

- a) George Osborne
- b) Rawdon Crawley
- c) William Dobbin
- d) Joseph Sedley

What does Pumpnickel stand for? (from Chapter 62)

- a) Name of a hotel
- b) A casino
- c) A town
- d) Name of a cottage

Which character is living as very boring life, as seen in the beginning of chapter 42? (from Chapter 42)

- a) William Dobbin
- b) Mrs. Osborne
- c) Amelia Sedley
- d) Mr. John Osborne

Answer the following questions:

1. Identify the autobiographical elements in Thackeray's novel *Vanity Fair*.
2. What are said to be the main weaknesses of the novel?
3. What is the novel's subtitle and how does it fit into the general idea of the novel?
4. Identify the main conflict in the novel. What is the novel specifically about? How is the novel's main theme explored within the plot?
5. What is the main concern of the society described in *Vanity Fair*? How is this similar to Wilde's novel?
6. Describe the character of Becky, her flaws and virtues, if any. Illustrate her acting ability.
7. How can it be said that Rebecca mistreats those who are humble?
8. Describe the marriage between Becky and Rawdon. What is bad about it?
9. What is the main reason for Becky's downfall?
10. What is Amelia's greatest weakness? Is she a convincing character?

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION – CRITICAL THINKING

Choose one of the following topics, do a research, analyze and present it. The presentations are limited to 10 minutes each. Also, think of the following questions before the exercise classes (when the excerpts from the novels are being analyzed) and actively participate in discussion that follows.

1. Compare and contrast Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley.
2. Provide the examples from the novel that illustrate the author's attitudes towards women.
3. Compare and contrast Becky and Amelia.
4. How does poverty/wealth change a character within *Vanity Fair*? Illustrate.
5. In what way are George Osborne and William Dobbin similar/different?
6. How does Thackeray satirize upper-middle class in his novel? Provide the examples that support your argument.
7. Illustrate how Thackeray's definition of gentleman applies to William Dobbin.
8. Most names in *Vanity Fair* are symbolic (for instance, Becky "Sharp", the "Crawleys", etc.). What was the author's purpose of such symbolism?
9. Is there any character evolution as the narrative unfolds? Provide the examples from the novel.
10. Identify the novel's main themes. How are these themes presented, explored and developed within the novel?

GEORGE ELIOT

The Mill on the Floss

EXCERPT FROM *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

EXCERPT 1

Poor Mrs Tulliver had in her hands a small tray, on which she had placed her silver teapot, a specimen teacup and saucer, the castors, and sugar-tongs.

"See here, sister," she said, looking at Mrs Deane, as she set the tray on the table, "I thought, perhaps, if you looked at the teapot better: it makes beautiful tea, and there's a stand and everything: you might use it for everyday, or else lay it by for Lucy when she goes to housekeeping, I should be so loath for 'em to buy it at the Golden Lion," said the poor woman, her heart swelling, and her tears coming, "my teapot as I bought when I was married, and to think of its being scratched, and set before the travellers and folks, and my letters on it – see here, E. D. – and everybody to see them."

"Ah, dear, dear!" said aunt Pullet, shaking her head with deep sadness, "it's very bad – to think o' the family initials going about everywhere – it never was so before; you're a very unlucky sister, Bessy." [...]

"As to the disgrace o' the family," said Mrs Glegg, "that can't be helped wi' buying teapots. The disgrace is, for one o' the family to ha' married a man as has brought her to beggary. The disgrace is, as they're to be sold up. We can't hinder the country from knowing that." [...]

"Then, aunt," he (Tom) said, looking straight at Mrs Glegg, "if you think it's a disgrace to the family that we should be sold up, wouldn't it be better to prevent it altogether? And if you and my aunt Pullet," he continued, looking at the latter, "think of leaving any money to me and Maggie, wouldn't it be better to give it now, and pay the debt we're going to be sold up for, and save my mother parting with her furniture?"

There was a silence for a few moments ... Uncle Glegg spoke first. "Ay, ay, young man – come now! You show some notion of things. But there's the interest, you must remember; your aunts get five per cent on their money, and they'd lose that if they advanced it – you haven't thought o' that."

"I could work and pay that every year," said Tom promptly. "I'd do anything to save my mother from parting with her things."

"Well done!" said uncle Glegg, admiringly. He had been drawing Tom out, rather than reflecting on the practicability of his proposal. But he had produced the unfortunate result of irritating his wife.

"Yes, Mr Glegg!" said that lady with angry sarcasm. "It's pleasant work for you to be giving my money away, as you've pretended to leave at my own disposal. And my money, as was my own father's gift, and not yours, Mr. Glegg; and I've saved it, and added to it myself, and had more to put out almost every year, and it's to go and be sunk in other folk's furniture, and encourage 'em in luxury and extravagance as they've no means of supporting; and I'm to alter my will, or have a codicil made, and leave two or three hundred less behind me when I die – me as have always done right and been careful, and the eldest o' the family; and my money's to go and be squandered on them as have had the same chance as me, only they've been wicked and wasteful. Sister Pullet, *you* may do as you like, and you may let your husband rob you back again o' the money he's given you, but that isn't *my* sperrit."

"La, Jane, how fiery you are!" said Mrs Pullet. [...] "I'm sorry for Bessy and her children – I'm sure I think o' nights dreadful, for I sleep very bad with this new medicine: but it's no use for me to think o' doing anything, if you won't meet me half-way." [...]

"Why do you come, then," she (Maggie) burst out, "talking and interfering with us and scolding us, if you don't mean to do anything to help my poor mother – your own sister – if you've no feeling for her when she's in trouble, and won't part with anything, though you would never miss it, to save her from pain? Keep away from us then, and don't come to find fault with my father – he was better than any of you – he was kind – he would have helped *you*, if you had been in trouble. Tom and I don't ever want to have any of your money, if you won't help my mother. We'd rather not have it! we'll do without you."

(The Mill on the Floss, Book III, Chapter III, pp. 190-193)

EXCERPT 2

"Maggie! Dearest! If you love me, you are mine. Who can have such a great claim on you as I have? My life is bound up in your love. There is nothing in the past that can annul our right to each other: it is the first time we have either of us loved with our whole heart and soul." [...]

"No, – not with my whole heart and soul, Stephen," said she, with timid resolution. "I have never consented to it with my whole mind. There are memories, and affections, and longing after perfect goodness, that have such a strong hold on me; they would never quit me for long; they would come back and be pain to me – repentance. I couldn't live in peace if I put the shadow of a wilful sin between myself and God. I have caused sorrow already – I know – I feel it; but I have never deliberately consented to it: I have never said, "They shall suffer, that I may have joy." It has never been my will to marry you: if you were to win consent from the momentary triumph of my feeling for you, you would not have my whole soul. If I could wake back again into the time before yesterday, I would choose to be true to my calmer affections, and live without the joy of love." [...]

"Good, God!" he burst out at last, "what a miserable thing a woman's love is to a man's! I could commit crimes for you – and you can balance and choose in that way. But you *don't* love me: if you had a tithe of the feeling for me that I have for you, it would be impossible to you to think for a moment of sacrificing me. But it weighs nothing with you that you are robbing me of *my* life's happiness." [...]

"No – I don't sacrifice you – I couldn't sacrifice you," she said as soon as she could speak again; "but I can't believe in a good for you, that I feel – that we both feel is a wrong towards others. We can't choose happiness either for ourselves or for another: we can't tell where that will lie." [...]

"Dearest," he said, in his deepest, tenderest tone, leaning towards her and putting his arms round her, "you *are* mine now – the world believes it – duty must spring out of that now: in a few hours you will be legally mine, and those who had claims on us will submit – they will see that there was a force which declared against their claims." [...]

"... I can't argue any more – I don't know what is wise; but my heart will not let me do it. I see – I feel their trouble now: it is as if it were branded on my mind. I have suffered, and had no one to pity me; and now I have made others suffer. It would never leave me; it would embitter your love to me. I *do* care for Philip – in a different way: I remember all we said to each other; I know how he thought of me as the one promise of his life.

He was given to me that I might make his lot less hard, and I have forsaken him. And Lucy – she has been deceived – she who trusted me more than any one. I cannot marry you: I cannot take a good for myself that has been wrung out of their misery. It is not the force that ought to rule us – this that we feel for each other; it would rend me away from all that my past life has made dear and holy to me. I can't set out on a fresh life, and forget that: I must go back to it, and cling to it, else I shall feel as if there were nothing firm beneath my feet."

"Good God, Maggie!" said Stephen, rising too, and grasping her arm, "you rave. How can you go back without marrying me? You don't know what will be said, dearest. You see nothing as it really is."

(The Mill on the Floss, Book VI, Chapter XIV, pp. 426-428)

ACTIVITIES

I. *Find out the meaning of the underlined words/phrases/expressions in both excerpts. Provide their synonyms and antonyms. Find their noun/verb/adjective/adverb forms.*

II. *The Weather and Climate*

a) Find the collocations by matching the words (1-13) to the words in the box.⁶²

1. wind 2. rain 3. sun 4. heat 5. water 6. gale
7. over 8. thunder 9. hail 10. down 11. snow 12. thunder 13. torrential

fall stones spout drift storm sock sun warning rain wave cast pour cloud

b) *CLIMATE METAFORS.*

The word 'climate' can describe a general atmosphere or a social situation. Here are some examples:

It is difficult to change **the political climate** in our country.

Given the current **cultural** and **social climate**, some of the ideas to improve the working conditions are less realistic.

Can you think of words that collocate with climate in the social sense?⁶³

62 Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use*, p. 65.

63 Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use (Advanced)*, pp. 86-87

c) Find collocations for the following words:

prevailing	_____
a frosty of	_____
to cloud	_____
the winds of	_____
gales of	_____
tempest of	_____
a hail of	_____
a flood of	_____
frozen	_____

d) Do climate and weather have metaphorical meaning in your mother tongue? Illustrate.

e) Circle the letter next to the right answer (NATURE AND WEATHER):

Choose the odd one out from this list of words connected with the weather.

- f) Close
- g) Mild
- h) Boiling
- i) Receding

Which of these words does not refer to the hot weather:

- a) Scorching
- b) Stifling
- c) Blustery
- d) Boiling

Which of these words does not refer to the wet weather:

- a) Downpour
- b) Drought
- c) Drizzle
- d) Torrential rain

The winter is usually mild, although we sometimes get a cold _____ in the late autumn.

- a) Wave
- b) Interval
- c) Spell
- d) Term

The city park has been _____ since the landscape gardener broke his ankle.

- a) Neglected
- b) Disregarded
- c) Mistreated
- d) Deserted

More _____ in temperature have been officially recorded since the beginning of this year.

- a) Modifications
- b) Fluctuations
- c) Changes
- d) Adjustments

I think Mark's been feeling a bit _____ these days. Perhaps he is getting cold.

- a) Blue
- b) Down
- c) Under the weather
- d) Out of the weather

One of the most important factors affecting crop _____ is soil fertility.

- a) Harvest
- b) Yield
- c) Product
- d) Amount

How do you call an unusually great flood accompanied by heavy rainfall that causes inundation such as that which affected Noah and his ark?

- a) Drought
- b) Plague
- c) Holocaust
- d) Draught

How do you call the fall of a mass of snow or ice down a mountain slope?

- a) Avalanche
- b) Snowdrift
- c) Earthquake
- d) Plague

How do you call a strong and violent wind but of less force than that of a storm or tempest?

- a) Drizzle
- b) Gale
- c) Subsidence
- d) Draught

The whole forest area was devastated by _____.

- a) Plague
- b) Famine
- c) Insanity
- d) Conflagration

The ship's masts were all destroyed in the strong_____.

- a) Deluge
- b) Famine
- c) Gale
- d) Eruption

The heavy rains and the floods _____ the valley.

- a) Picked up
- b) Swept through
- c) Ripped out
- d) Swept away

The fires were so strong and hard so many acres of forestland were completely _____.

- a) Swept through
- b) Caved in
- c) Wiped out
- d) Ripped through

All the reports about swine flu are a storm _____ - it's not as dangerous as they say.

- a) Coming
- b) Approaching
- c) In a bottle
- d) In a teacup

The atmosphere at work is terrible. It feels like there's a storm _____.

- a) Weather
- b) Brewing
- c) Port
- d) Teacup

Well, you know what they say, 'any _____ in a storm'.

- a) Kick
- b) Brew
- c) Weather
- d) Port

Don't overreact and try not to _____ up a storm.

- a) Kick
- b) Brewing
- c) Port
- d) Teacup

We'll have to _____ the storm until the situation improves.

- a) Port
- b) Kick
- c) Brew
- d) Weather

III. Relationships 1

a) Match the following expressions (a-o) with their meanings (1-15).⁶⁴

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| a) the nuclear family | 1. a more specific and formal way to say that you are 'just friends |
| b) adults | 2. people who have just got married |
| c) black sheep of the family | 3. all the people living together in the same area |
| d) a community | 4. a person from your immediate family |
| e) relative | 5. be inherited (as a trait) by multiple members of the family |
| f) contemporaries | 6. people who are no longer teenagers |
| g) flesh and blood | 7. people born and living at about the same time |
| h) the extended family | 8. a person who is rejected from home or society |
| i) a household | 9. the people in a family who live together under the same roof |
| j) outcast | 10. person of aristocratic background |
| k) a platonic relationship | 11. a person connected by blood or marriage |
| l) newlyweds | 12. a person who financially provides for the family |
| m) nearest and dearest | 13. someone from your family |
| n) blue blood | 14. the entire range of relatives in one family |
| o) run in the family | 15. parents and children |
| p) breadwinner | 16. doesn't fit into the family |

64 Adapted from *Advanced Language Practice*, p. 221.

b) Fill in the gaps with the right word from the box.⁶⁵

abandoned	criticized	neglected	quarreled	separated		
adopted	punched	humiliated	made it up	offended	retired	get

1. Alex's parents _____ her badly when she was two.
2. Sasha was being _____ by his parents for coming home late.
3. Tom truly _____ Maggie by ignoring her after she 'eloped' with Stephen.
4. My brother _____ me in the face.
5. Talia _____ when she wanted to get married again.
6. Maria is not his real mother; He was _____ by her when he was small.
7. Matea and Stevan are _____ and their marriage is on the verge of collapsing.
8. Our nanny _____ with her boyfriend but they _____ in the end.
9. My great-grandmother _____ on her 83rd birthday and received her pension.
10. Luke's stepmother _____ him for getting a tattoo on his back.
11. Leo spent all his life in an orphanage as his mother _____ him when he was an infant.
12. Nick's supervisor utterly _____ him in front of his most loyal clients, so he decided to leave the job.

⁶⁵ Adapted from *Advanced Language Practice*, p. 221.

c) Replace the underlined phrases with those in the box.⁶⁶

grew up	got on well with	kept in touch	ran away from
got on like a house on fire	let him down	turned him down	went out together
struck up a relationship	see eye-to-eye	well-matched	settled down
got to know	fell out		

1. So, did he ask you to marry him, then?
2. Mina communicated regularly with most of her ex-boyfriends.
3. So, when are you two going to get married?
4. Like most married couples, we've experienced a mixture of good and bad things.
5. Hristina spent her childhood years in Belgrade.
6. Look, how similar they are! They are likely to have a successful relationship!
7. My closest friend Angel and I started a relationship at college and had a very good and healthy relationship until he suddenly disappeared from my life.
8. Selena's parents dated for six weeks before getting married.
9. My sister's friends don't agree with me about the arrangements.
10. Sue quarreled with her boyfriend so much that they finally decided to break up.
11. Luna and her sisters don't agree with each other.
12. Nina left home when she was only fifteen.
13. Victoria disappointed her father when she failed to keep the promise.
14. I no longer communicate with Maya – she has no scruples!
15. She started living in her boyfriend's flat when he proposed to her.
16. I grew friendly with his sisters when we played in the park together.

66 Adapted from *Advanced Language Practice*, p. 222.

IV. *Global problems*

WORD FORMATION. Complete the table with the missing words. Write dash (-) where necessary.⁶⁷

VERB	NOUN: THING OR IDEA	PERSON/PEOPLE
POLLUTE		
	INJURY	
DESTROY		
STRIKE		
	DAMAGE	
STARVE		
	PRESERVATION	
		SURVIVOR
CONTAMINATE		
	EXPLOSION	
		THE POOR
FLOOD		

⁶⁷ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use*, p. 77.

Answer the following questions:

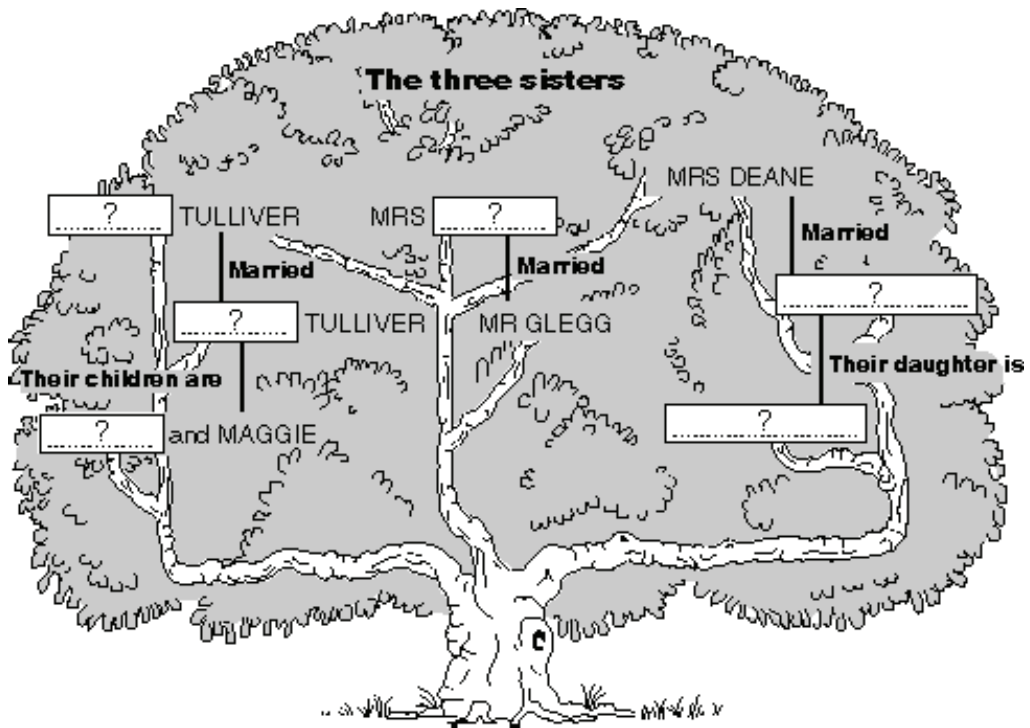
1. How does Tom behave toward his aunts and uncles? How does he behave towards his mother/his sister? How does Maggie react?
2. How do the families of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver react upon hearing about Tulliver's loss of the mill and their financial ruin? What does this tell you about family relations in the novel?
3. What do we learn about the differences between Maggie and Tom (chapter 5)?
4. Describe Maggie's dream when she fell asleep on the boat. What does the dream warn about?
5. What motives prompt Maggie to return home after her boat trip with Stephen at the end of Book 6 (Chapter 14), and what emotions does she continue to feel towards him?
6. How is with legend of St. Ogg's related to the plot?
7. Is Stephen a villain for betraying his engagement vows or is his position as rather complicated? Illustrate.
8. Why does Maggie decide to reject Stephen? In what way is she self-destructive? How does her restrictiveness affect her decisions and contribute to her tragic fate?
9. What is the significance of the book that Maggie shows Mr. Riley (Defoe's *History of the Devil*)?
10. What is the significance in Maggie's sewing in the novel?
11. Is Mr. Tulliver a tragic character? Is his tragedy the result of class or his own heroic nature? Illustrate.
12. Describe the nature of family relations within the novel by referring to the text.

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION – CRITICAL THINKING

Choose one of the following topics, do a research, analyze and present it. The presentations are limited to 10 minutes each. Also, think of the following questions before the exercise classes (when the excerpts from the novels are being analyzed) and actively participate in discussion that follows.

1. Describe Maggie's relationship with the three men in her life - Philip, Stephen, and Tom. If you are to choose one word that the most accurately describes each of these relationships which one would that be?
2. Discuss the symbolism of music in Eliot's novel.
3. How does Eliot use water imagery? What does the Floss symbolize?
4. How does the character of Maggie develop as the narrative unfolds?
5. Discuss the ending of the novel. How does Maggie's death affect the novel's themes?
6. Choose one of Maggie's childhood conflicts and explain how it foreshadows her greater troubles about life.
7. How does the novel represent the 19th Century-Victorian England?
8. Discuss gender roles in the novel.
9. Discuss the internal conflicts of the characters in the novel.
10. The concept of guilt in the novel.

Here is a family tree. Fill in the names of the characters.⁶⁸



⁶⁸ The image is taken from <http://www.macmillanreaders.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Mill-on-The-Floss-Worksheet.pdf>.

EMILY JANE BRONTË

Wuthering Heights

EXCERPT FROM *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

EXCERPT 1

This time, I remembered I was lying in the oak closet, and I heard distinctly the gusty wind, and the driving of the snow; I heard, also, the fir bough repeat its teasing sound, and ascribed it to the right cause: but it annoyed me so much, that I resolved to silence it, if possible; and, I thought, I rose and endeavoured to unhasp the casement. The hook was soldered into the staple: a circumstance observed by me when awake, but forgotten. 'I must stop it, nevertheless!' I muttered, knocking my knuckles through the glass, and stretching an arm out to seize the importunate branch; instead of which, my fingers closed on the fingers of a little, ice-cold hand! The intense horror of nightmare came over me: I tried to draw back my arm, but the hand clung to it, and a most melancholy voice sobbed, 'Let me in—let me in!' 'Who are you?' I asked, struggling, meanwhile, to disengage myself. 'Catherine Linton,' it replied, shiveringly (why did I think of *Linton*? I had read *Earnshaw* twenty times for Linton) — 'I'm come home: I'd lost my way on the moor!' As it spoke, I discerned, obscurely, a child's face looking through the window. Terror made me cruel; and, finding it useless to attempt shaking the creature off, I pulled its wrist on to the broken pane, and rubbed it to and fro till the blood ran down and soaked the bedclothes: still it wailed, 'Let me in!' and maintained its tenacious grip, almost maddening me with fear. 'How can I!' I said at length. 'Let *me* go, if you want me to let you in!' The fingers relaxed, I snatched mine through the hole, hurriedly piled the books up in a pyramid against it, and stopped my ears to exclude the lamentable prayer. I seemed to keep them closed above a quarter of an hour; yet, the instant I listened again, there was the doleful cry moaning on! 'Begone!' I shouted. 'I'll never let you in, not if you beg for twenty years.' 'It is twenty years,' mourned the voice: 'twenty years. I've been a waif for twenty years!' Thereat began a feeble scratching outside, and the pile of books moved as if thrust forward. I tried to jump up; but could not stir a limb; and so yelled aloud, in a frenzy of fright. To my confusion, I discovered the yell was not ideal: hasty footsteps approached my chamber door; somebody pushed it open, with a vigorous hand,

and a light glimmered through the squares at the top of the bed. I sat shuddering yet, and wiping the perspiration from my forehead: the intruder appeared to hesitate, and muttered to himself. At last, he said, in a half-whisper, plainly not expecting an answer, 'Is any one here?' I considered it best to confess my presence; for I knew Heathcliff's accents, and feared he might search further, if I kept quiet. With this intention, I turned and opened the panels. I shall not soon forget the effect my action produced.

(...) I obeyed, so far as to quit the chamber; when, ignorant where the narrow lobbies led, I stood still, and was witness, involuntarily, to a piece of superstition on the part of my landlord which belied, oddly, his apparent sense. He got on to the bed, and wrenched open the lattice, bursting, as he pulled at it, into an uncontrollable passion of tears. 'Come in! come in!' he sobbed. 'Cathy, do come. Oh, do—*once* more! Oh! my heart's darling! hear me *this* time, Catherine, at last!' The spectre showed a spectre's ordinary caprice: it gave no sign of being; but the snow and wind whirled wildly through, even reaching my station, and blowing out the light.

There was such anguish in the gush of grief that accompanied this raving, that my compassion made me overlook its folly, and I drew off, half angry to have listened at all, and vexed at having related my ridiculous nightmare, since it produced that agony; though *why* was beyond my comprehension. I descended cautiously to the lower regions, and landed in the back-kitchen, where a gleam of fire, raked compactly together, enabled me to rekindle my candle. Nothing was stirring except a brindled, grey cat, which crept from the ashes, and saluted me with a querulous mew.

(Wuthering Heights, Chapter III, pp. 36-39)

EXCERPT 2

‘Nelly, do you never dream queer dreams?’ she said, suddenly, after some minutes’ reflection. ‘Yes, now and then,’ I answered.

‘And so do I. I’ve dreamt in my life dreams that have stayed with me ever after, and changed my ideas: they’ve gone through and through me, like wine through water, and altered the colour of my mind. And this is one: I’m going to tell it—but take care not to smile at any part of it.’

‘Oh! don’t, Miss Catherine!’ I cried. ‘We’re dismal enough without conjuring up ghosts and visions to perplex us. Come, come, be merry and like yourself! Look at little Hareton! *he’s* dreaming nothing dreary. How sweetly he smiles in his sleep!’

‘Yes; and how sweetly his father curses in his solitude! You remember him, I daresay, when he was just such another as that chubby thing: nearly as young and innocent. However, Nelly, I shall oblige you to listen: it’s not long; and I’ve no power to be merry to-night.’

‘I won’t hear it, I won’t hear it!’ I repeated, hastily.

I was superstitious about dreams then, and am still; and Catherine had an unusual gloom in her aspect, that made me dread something from which I might shape a prophecy, and foresee a fearful catastrophe. She was vexed, but she did not proceed. Apparently taking up another subject, she recommenced in a short time.

‘If I were in heaven, Nelly, I should be extremely miserable.’

‘Because you are not fit to go there,’ I answered. ‘All sinners would be miserable in heaven.’ ‘But it is not for that. I dreamt once that I was there.’

‘I tell you I won’t hearken to your dreams, Miss Catherine! I’ll go to bed,’ I interrupted again. She laughed, and held me down; for I made a motion to leave my chair.

‘This is nothing,’ cried she: ‘I was only going to say that heaven did not seem to be my home; and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth; and the angels were so angry that they flung me out into the middle of the heath on the top of Wuthering Heights; where I woke sobbing for joy. That will do to explain my secret, as well as the other. I’ve no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn’t have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now; so he shall never know how I love him: and that, not because he’s handsome,

Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same; and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire.'

Ere this speech ended I became sensible of Heathcliff's presence. Having noticed a slight movement, I turned my head, and saw him rise from the bench, and steal out noiselessly. He had listened till he heard Catherine say it would degrade her to marry him, and then he stayed to hear no further. My companion, sitting on the ground, was prevented by the back of the settle from remarking his presence or departure; but I started, and bade her hush!

(...)'He quite deserted! we separated!' she exclaimed, with an accent of indignation. 'Who is to separate us, pray? They'll meet the fate of Milo! Not as long as I live, Ellen: for no mortal creature. Every Linton on the face of the earth might melt into nothing before I could consent to forsake Heathcliff. Oh, that's not what I intend—that's not what I mean! I shouldn't be Mrs. Linton were such a price demanded! He'll be as much to me as he has been all his lifetime. Edgar must shake off his antipathy, and tolerate him, at least. He will, when he learns my true feelings towards him. Nelly, I see now you think me a selfish wretch; but did it never strike you that if Heathcliff and I married, we should be beggars? whereas, if I marry Linton I can aid Heathcliff to rise, and place him out of my brother's power.'

'With your husband's money, Miss Catherine?' I asked. 'You'll find him not so pliable as you calculate upon: and, though I'm hardly a judge, I think that's the worst motive you've given yet for being the wife of young Linton.'

'It is not,' retorted she; 'it is the best! The others were the satisfaction of my whims: and for Edgar's sake, too, to satisfy him. This is for the sake of one who comprehends in his person my feelings to Edgar and myself. I cannot express it; but surely you and everybody have a notion that there is or should be an existence of yours beyond you. What were the use of my creation, if I were entirely contained here? My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff's miseries, and I watched and felt each from the beginning: my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished, and *he* remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger: I should not seem a part of it. — My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff! He's always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being. So don't talk of our separation again: it is impracticable; and—'

(*Wuthering Heights*, Chapter IX, pp. 79-82)

ACTIVITIES

I. Find the meaning of the underlined words in both excerpts. Provide their synonyms and antonyms. Find their noun/verb/adjective/adverb form.

II. 1. Listen to Kate Bush's song "Wuthering Heights" and fill in the blanks.⁶⁹

(1) _____ the winding windy **moors**

We'd roll and fall in green

You had a _____, like my (2) _____

Too hot, too **greedy**

(3) _____ you leave me

When I needed to _____ you?

(4) I _____ you, I loved you, too.

Bad _____ in the night

You told me I _____ lose the _____

Leaving behind my **wuthering**, wuthering

Wuthering Heights.

⁶⁹ Taken from: https://www.eslprintables.com/cinema_and_television/movies/drama_movies/wuthering_heights/WUTHERING_HEIGHTS_BY_KATE_BUSH_480838/

CHORUS:

Heathcliff, it's me, I'm Cathy, I've _____ home

I'm so cold, let me in your window

Heathcliff, it's me, I'm Cathy, I've _____ home

I'm so _____, let me in your window

Oh, it gets dark, it gets **lonely**

On the other _____ from you

I **pine** a lot, I (9) _____ the lot

Falls through without you

I'm (10) _____ back love, _____ Heathcliff

My one dream, my only master

Too long I **roam** in the night

I'm coming back to his side to put it right

I'm (11) _____ home to wuthering, wuthering

Wuthering Heights.

(CHORUS)

Oh, let me have it, let me **grab** your soul away (x2)

You know it's me, Cathy

(CHORUS)

2. Match the words in bold from the previous exercise to their corresponding definitions:

- (1) _____ to move about without purpose or plan; wander
- (2) _____ a Yorkshire word indicating turbulent weather
- (3) _____ the act of catching, especially a sudden taking and holding; catch, seizure
- (4) _____ without companions; alone, solitary
- (5) _____ acquisitive, avaricious, grabby
- (6) _____ to grieve or moan for (archaic); intensive longing (strong desire) or grief; ache; mental anguish or pain caused by loss or despair.
- (7) _____ a broad area of open land, often high.

III. *Matching*

a) **Match the characters to the right description.**

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Catherine | a) an orphan whom Mr. Earnshaw adopted |
| 2. Edgar Linton | b) Mr. Earnshaw's daughter |
| 3. Frances Earnshaw | c) he is almost the ideal gentleman, well-bread but rather spoiled as a boy |
| 4. Hareton Earnshaw | d) a servant of both estates and the main female narrator in the novel |
| 5. Heathcliff | e) the frame-narrator of the novel and Heathcliff's lodger |
| 6. Hindley Earnshaw | f) Catherine's nephew and the son of Hindley and Frances |
| 7. Isabella Linton | g) Heathcliff's son by Isabella. |
| 8. Linton Heathcliff | h) Catherine's brother |
| 9. Lockwood | i) Edgar Linton's sister |
| 10. Mr. Earnshaw | j) Hindley and Cathrine's father |
| 11. Mr. Linton | k) Hareton's mother who dies after delivery |
| 12. Mrs. Linton | l) Edgar and Isabella's father |
| 13. Nelly Dean | m) Edgar and Isabella's mother |

b) Match the adjectives to the following characters:

Nelly Dean (1)	Catherine (2)	Lockwood (3)	Linton Heathcliff (4)
Heathcliff (5)	Hareton Earnshaw (6)	Edgar Linton (7)	

- _____ revengeful, powerful, fierce, and often cruel
- _____ free-spirited, beautiful, spoiled, and often arrogant
- _____ tender, constant, but coward
- _____ a sensible, intelligent, and compassionate woman
- _____ a somewhat vain and presumptuous gentleman
- _____ illiterate and quick-tempered
- _____ weak, snivelling, demanding, and constantly ill

IV. Relationships 2

a) Certain phrases and idioms given below are mixed up and given in the opposite form (do not correspond to the sentence's meaning). Make the necessary corrections.⁷⁰

1. Joe's father and Mick's mother don't get on eye to eye with each other.
2. We haven't made any friends yet but we're under nodding terms with our neighbours.
3. I fell up with my nephews two days ago. The blame is on them, not me!
4. She is too beautiful! She's definitely out at my league.
5. We had a quarrel but now we've made it well.
6. My younger sister used to be head on hills with my best mate.
7. Don't you think Sara and Jack are making an affair? They seem fishy.
8. They see very well with all their neighbours living in the St Martin's street.
9. The children should learn to respect their elders.
10. Tiffany is a nice-looking girl, but her partner turns me up completely.

⁷⁰ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use*, p. 71.

b) Match the following words to complete the expressions related to love relationships. Upon completing the task, fill in the gaps with the expressions that best fit into the sentences.⁷¹

Love	cousin
Nodding	friend
Head	it off
Love-hate	pals
Bosom	over heels in love
Fair-weather	terms
Kissing	relationship
Hit	spirits
Kindred	at first sight

1. You guys talk like _____!
2. The moment Anthony met Christine it was _____
3. I thought Den would always stick by me, but when I got into trouble, he turned out to be _____.
4. My mum and dad have totally identical outlook on life. They're _____.
5. I have had another _____ with my second husband for at least 20 years.
6. After their business trip to France, my sister and her cousin have been _____.
7. I'm only on _____ with her sister, so I can't ask her for a favour like that.
8. It was obvious that Thomas and Martha had fallen _____.
9. The moment Harry met Sally, they momentarily _____.

⁷¹ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use (Advanced)*, p. 46.

Answer the following questions:

1. Describe Catherine's love for Heathcliff in Chapter 9 (Excerpt 2). Why does she say "I'm Heathcliff"? Why does she choose to marry Edgar then? Do you sympathize with her? Why? Why not?
2. Describe the nature of Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship and analyze their behaviour towards each other by providing the evidence for your arguments.
3. Describe the relationship between Hindley and Heathcliff. What motivates the struggle between them?
4. Why does Catherine choose to marry Edgar Linton? Did she make a good choice? Why/ Why not?
5. Contrast Lockwood and Heathcliff. What does this reveal about Heathcliff?
6. Why does Heathcliff consider marrying Isabella in Chapter 10? Describe the issue of revenge.
7. Why does Catherine become mad? Describe her temperament.
8. Why is Heathcliff often described as a devil or demon? How does he take his revenge?
9. What does Heathcliff's treatment of Isabella's dog reveal or foreshadow?
10. Do you feel any sympathy for Hindley? Why?

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION – CRITICAL THINKING

Choose one of the following topics, do a research, analyze and present it. The presentations are limited to 10 minutes each. Also, think of the following questions before the exercise classes (when the excerpts from the novels are being analyzed) and actively participate in discussion that follows.

1. Discuss the symbolic nature of names in the novel. What kind of effect is achieved by doublings of names? How does this correlate to the novel's theme?
2. Explain the narrative structure of the novel. To what extent are the narrators objective? What is achieved by the novel's double framing?
3. The role of social class in the novel. To what degree does the characters' social position affect their upbringing and well-being?
4. There's a thin line between love and hate. How is this statement supported by the novel's theme? Explore the nature of love and hate/revenge in *Wuthering Heights*.
5. How does the novel's setting affect the story? Discuss the symbolism of the moors. In what way are the moors related to the main protagonists' personalities and emotions?
6. What is, in your opinion, the main theme of the novel? What kind of feelings dominate the novel? Is the novel's key focus on love or it goes deeper into exploring the complexities of human's emotions and relationships?
7. What kind of character is Edgar Linton? How is he depicted in the novel?
8. Describe the Wuthering Heights. How is the Earnshaws' estate different from that of the Lintons' (Thrushcross Grange)? Refer to the text to support your statement.
9. Identify the supernatural elements in the novel and explain their role in the novel? How do they contribute to the main atmosphere of the novel?
10. How is the novel different from its 1939 film version featuring Laurence Olivier as Heathcliff and Merle Oberon as Catherine?

THOMAS HARDY

Tess of the d'Urbervilles

EXCERPT FROM *TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES*

EXCERPT 1

[Abraham] leant back against the hives, and with upturned face made observations on the stars, whose cold pulses were beating amid the black hollows above, in serene dissociation from these two wisps of human life. /.../

"Did you say the stars were worlds, Tess?"

"Yes."

"All like ours?"

"I don't know; but I think so. They sometimes seem to be like the apples on our stubbard-tree. Most of them splendid and sound—a few blighted."

"Which do we live on—a splendid one or a blighted one?" "A blighted one."

"'Tis very unlucky that we didn't pitch on a sound one, when there were so many more of 'em!" "Yes."

"Is it like that *really*, Tess?" said Abraham, turning to her much impressed, on reconsideration of this rare information. "How would it have been if we had pitched on a sound one?"

"Well, father wouldn't have coughed and creeped about as he does, and wouldn't have got too tipsy to go on this journey; and mother wouldn't have been always washing, and never getting finished."

"And you would have been a rich lady ready-made, and not have had to be made rich by marrying a gentleman?"

"O Aby, don't—don't talk of that any more!"

Left to his reflections Abraham soon grew drowsy. Tess was not skillful in the management of a horse, but she thought that she could take upon herself the entire conduct of the load for the present and allow Abraham to go to sleep if he wished to do so. She made him a sort of nest in front of the hives, in such a manner that he could not fall, and, taking the reins into her own hands, jogged on as before.

Prince required but slight attention, lacking energy for superfluous movements of any sort. With no longer a companion to distract her, Tess fell more deeply into reverie than ever, her back leaning against the hives. The mute procession past her shoulders of trees and hedges became attached to fantastic scenes outside reality, and the occasional heave of the wind became the sigh of some immense sad soul, conterminous with the universe in space, and with history in time.

Then, examining the mesh of events in her own life, she seemed to see the vanity of her father's pride; the gentlemanly suitor awaiting herself in her mother's fancy; to see him as a grimacing personage, laughing at her poverty and her shrouded knightly ancestry. Everything grew more and more extravagant, and she no longer knew how time passed. A sudden jerk shook her in her seat, and Tess awoke from the sleep into which she, too, had fallen.

They were a long way further on than when she had lost consciousness, and the waggon had stopped. A hollow groan, unlike anything she had ever heard in her life, came from the front, followed by a shout of "Hoi there!"

The lantern hanging at her waggon had gone out, but another was shining in her face—much brighter than her own had been. Something terrible had happened. The harness was entangled with an object which blocked the way.

In consternation Tess jumped down, and discovered the dreadful truth. The groan had proceeded from her father's poor horse Prince. The morning mail-cart, with its two noiseless wheels, speeding along these lanes like an arrow, as it always did, had driven into her slow and unlighted equipage. The pointed shaft of the cart had entered the breast of the unhappy Prince like a sword, and from the wound his life's blood was spouting in a stream, and falling with a hiss into the road.

In her despair Tess sprang forward and put her hand upon the hole, with the only result that she became splashed from face to skirt with the crimson drops. Then she stood helplessly looking on. Prince also stood firm and motionless as long as he could; till he suddenly sank down in a heap.

By this time the mail-cart man had joined her, and began dragging and unharnessing the hot form of Prince. But he was already dead, and, seeing that nothing more could be done immediately, the mail-cart man returned to his own animal, which was uninjured.

"You was on the wrong side," he said. "I am bound to go on with the mail-bags, so that the best thing for you to do is bide here with your load. I'll send somebody to help you as soon as I can. It is getting daylight, and you have nothing to fear."

He mounted and sped on his way; while Tess stood and waited. The atmosphere turned pale, the birds shook themselves in the hedges, arose, and twittered; the lane showed all its white features, and Tess showed hers, still whiter. The huge pool of blood in front of her was already assuming the iridescence of coagulation; and when the sun rose a hundred prismatic hues were reflected from it. Prince lay alongside, still and stark; his eyes half open, the hole in his chest looking scarcely large enough to have let out all that had animated him.

"'Tis all my doing—all mine!" the girl cried, gazing at the spectacle. "No excuse for me—none. What will mother and father live on now? Aby, Aby!" She shook the child, who had slept soundly through the whole disaster. "We can't go on with our load—Prince is killed!"

When Abraham realized all, the furrows of fifty years were extemporized on his young face.

"Why, I danced and laughed only yesterday!" she went on to herself. "To think that I was such a fool!"

"'Tis because we be on a blighted star, and not a sound one, isn't it, Tess?" murmured Abraham through his tears.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, Chapter IV, pp. 24-27)

EXCERPT 2

It was a typical summer evening in June, the atmosphere being in such delicate equilibrium and so transmissive that inanimate objects seemed endowed with two or three senses, if not five. There was no distinction between the near and the far, and an auditor felt close to everything within the horizon. The soundlessness impressed her as a positive entity rather than as the mere negation of noise. It was broken by the strumming of strings.

Tess had heard those notes in the attic above her head. Dim, flattened, constrained by their confinement, they had never appealed to her as now, when they wandered in the still air with a stark quality like that of nudity. To speak absolutely, both instrument and execution were poor; but the relative is all, and as she listened Tess, like a fascinated bird, could not leave the spot. Far from leaving she drew up towards the performer, keeping behind the hedge that he might not guess her presence.

The outskirt of the garden in which Tess found herself had been left uncultivated for some years, and was now damp and rank with juicy grass which sent up mists of pollen at a touch; and with tall blooming weeds emitting offensive smells—weeds whose red and yellow and purple hues formed a polychrome as dazzling as that of cultivated flowers. She went stealthily as a cat through this profusion of growth, gathering cuckoo-spittle on her skirts, cracking snails that were underfoot, staining her hands with thistle-milk and slug-slime, and rubbing off upon her naked arms sticky blights which, though snow-white on the apple-tree trunks, made madder stains on her skin; thus she drew quite near to Clare, still unobserved of him.

Tess was conscious of neither time nor space. The exaltation which she had described as being producable at will by gazing at a star came now without any determination of hers; she undulated upon the thin notes of the second-hand harp, and their harmonies passed like breezes through her, bringing tears into her eyes. The floating pollen seemed to be his notes made visible, and the dampness of the garden the weeping of the garden's sensibility. Though near nightfall, the rank-smelling weed-flowers glowed as if they would not close for intentness, and the waves of colour mixed with the waves of sound. The light which still shone was derived mainly from a large hole in the western bank of cloud; it was like a piece of day left behind by accident, dusk having closed in elsewhere. He concluded his plaintive melody, a very simple performance, demanding no great skill; and she waited, thinking another might be begun. But, tired of playing, he had desultorily come round the fence, and was rambling up behind her. Tess, her cheeks on fire, moved away furtively, as if hardly moving at all.

Angel, however, saw her light summer gown, and he spoke; his low tones reaching her, though he was some distance off.

"What makes you draw off in that way, Tess?" said he. "Are you afraid?"

"Oh no, sir—not of outdoor things; especially just now when the apple-blooth is falling, and everything is so green."

"But you have your indoor fears—eh?"

"Well—yes, sir."

"What of?"

"I couldn't quite say."

"The milk turning sour?"

"No."

"Life in general?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ah—so have I, very often. This hobble of being alive is rather serious, don't you think so?" "It is—now you put it that way."

"All the same, I shouldn't have expected a young girl like you to see it so just yet. How is it you do?"

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, Chapter XIX, pp. 108-109)

ACTIVITIES

I. **Find the meaning of the underlined words/phrases/expressions in both excerpts. Provide their synonyms/antonyms. Find their noun/verb/adjective/adverb form.**

II. **Vocabulary in Use:**⁷²

a) **Explain the difference between 'fate' and 'destiny'.**

b) **Order the following development stages in the process of life creation.**

conception delivery fertilization labour pregnancy

c) **The following sentences are incorrect. Find the mistakes and correct them.**

1. This region is in morning after the sudden death of the Prime Minister's.
2. My cousin prefers his dust scattered at sea.
3. Sometimes a brush of death forces us to re-evaluate our priorities in life.
4. Her boss's extinct grandmother was a company owner all her life.
5. He keeps taking risks. It's almost as he has a death desire.
6. I regret to inform you that your great grandfather has just passed off.
7. My neighbour's black Mercedes is on its last leg.
8. Charles Dickens used the phrase 'live as a doornail' at the beginning of *A Christmas Carol*.
9. My uncle inherited me old valuable coins in his will.
10. When the old girl finally kicked the sofa there was no mention of 'yours truly' in the will.
11. Mrs. Moodie looks as if she has been at death's pond for years.
12. More than ten thousands of butterflies were perished in the early autumn.
13. It is a miracle to that there has been no fatality after another strong earthquake hit Croatia.
14. Her stepmother left her a request of ten thousand euros in her will.
15. We're now in a live-and-death situation. We have to be very careful.

72 The exercises from b) to e) are adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use (Advanced)*, p. 59.

d) Rewrite the following sentences by using the word in brackets. You may need to change the form of the word given.

1. Frida's relative from Canada was unable to conceive within a reasonable period of time so she needed to take some pills. (FERTILITY)
2. Most of his elderly relatives had a long healthy life. (RIPE)
3. Margaret Atwood is 80 but she is still able to think and react quickly in a complex or dangerous situation. (WITS)
4. Christine and Marianne, my boyfriend's cousins, are pregnant now. (EXPECT)
5. I'm afraid that my rich cousin has died without leaving a legal will. (INTESTATE)
6. Sarah gave 2,000 dollars to every single homeless person she had come in touch with. (BEQUETHED)
7. Triples were born to Beyoncé four years ago. (BIRTH)

e) Complete these two short texts with words from the box. Change the word form if necessary.

deceased	bequest	bequeath	fatality
inherit	slaughter	perish	pass away

Two days ago terrible things happened in the eastern part of Europe. Eighteen people _____ (1) in the earthquake. In addition, there were two train accident _____ (2) in the Balkans and three more were _____ (3) in a bank robbery in Serbia. One of the _____ (4) was the country's singer who was popular across the entire region .

I'm very sad to have to tell you that my grandfather _____ (5) last night. He was very kind and _____ (6) each of his grandchildren quite a large sum of money. I'd love to spend some of the money I _____ (7) on visiting you. He also left a very large _____ (8) to the university where he worked for most of his life.

III. *Conditionals*

a) *Form sentences by using the Third Conditional.*

1. If Alec (not meet) Tess, she (not have) such a miserable life.

2. If Mr. Durbeyfield (not find out) about his aristocratic roots, he (not send) Tess to the d'Urbervilles.

3. If Tess (be) rich, she (not work) so hard.

4. If Angel (be) in love with Marian, she (not turn) to drinking.

5. If Angel (have) feelings for Retty, she (not attempt) suicide.

6. If Tess (not tell) Angel the truth about her past, he (not leave) her.

7. If Reverend Clare (not convert) Alec, he (not come) to ask Tess for forgiveness.

8. If Tess (not kill) Alec, the police (not go) after her.

9. If Tess (not fall asleep), Prince (be) alive.

10. If Tess's baby Sorrow (not die), Tess (feel) less miserable.

b) *Translate the following sentences into English:*

1. Da li bi Tesa krstila dete u crkvi da je imala dovoljno novca?

2. Alek se ponaša kao da je vlasnik najboljeg imanja.

3. Čim je Tesa doživela nesreću sa konjem, pozvala je roditelje.

4. Da Tesa nije zaspala u šumi, ne bi je zadesila ta sudbina.

5. Da je Ejndžel odmah oprostio Tesi, živeli bi srećno do kraja života.

6. Čim je Tesa zaspala, opkolila ju je policija.

7. Da Tesa nije ubila Aleka, ne bi je osuđivali.

8. Da je Tesina porodica bila bogata, okolina bi je bolje prihvatila.

9. Da se Alek nije promenio, ne bi tražio Tesin oproštaj.

10. Kad bih bila na Tesinom mestu, ne bih bila toliko naivna.

IV. *Take the Quiz* ⁷³

1. When was *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* first published:
 - a) In 1890
 - b) In 1891
 - c) In 1893

2. What activity is Tess engaged in when she first meets Angel Clare?
 - a) Needlework
 - b) Milking
 - c) Dancing

3. What is the name of the ageing horse owned by the Durbeyfield family?
 - a) Prince
 - b) Duke
 - c) Dobbin

4. In which rural area had Tess been born?
 - a) The Vale of Blackmoor
 - b) The Vale of Blackwell
 - c) The Vale of Blackheath

5. Where does Tess first meet Alec d'Urberville?
 - a) At a country market
 - b) At his family home
 - c) At a local inn

6. What fateful event takes place in The Chase?
 - a) The death of Prince
 - b) Alec's seduction of Tess
 - c) Tess meets Angel again

⁷³ Quiz on Hardy's novel was adapted from <http://www.online-literature.com/quiz.php?quizid=820>. In order to check the answers, visit the website given.

7. What is the name of the dairyman who employs Tess?
 - a) Crick
 - b) Crock
 - c) Crook

8. What are the names of Tess's dairymaid friends?
 - a) Rita, Matilda and Izzie
 - b) Retty, Marian and Izz
 - c) None of the above

9. Who did Angel's family expect him to marry?
 - a) His cousin Mary
 - b) Izz Huett
 - c) Mercy Chant

10. What happens to the letter that Tess sends to Angel?
 - a) It gets trapped underneath the carpet
 - b) It gets blown out of the window
 - c) None of the above

11. Why do Angel and Tess separate shortly after their marriage?
 - a) Tess does not love him enough
 - b) Angel is already married
 - c) Tess tells Angel about her relationship with Alec

12. Which country did Angel travel to after their separation?
 - a) Australia
 - b) Brazil
 - c) South Africa

13. Described as “a starve-acre place”, where did Tess find employment after her separation from Angel?
- a) Flintcomb-Ash
 - b) Talbothays
 - c) Marlott
14. What was Alec doing when Tess encountered him in the village of Evershead?
- a) Fighting
 - b) Swimming
 - c) Preaching
15. Complete Alec's famous description of Tess- “You temptress, Tess; you dear damned witch of ...”
- a) Eden
 - b) Babylon
 - c) Hades
16. Where were Tess and Alec living when Angel returned from Brazil?
- a) Egdon Heath
 - b) Shaston
 - c) Sandbourne
17. What was the name of the landlady at ‘The Herons’ boarding house?
- a) Mrs Brooks
 - b) Mrs Barker
 - c) Mrs Brown
18. How was Alec's murder discovered?
- a) His screams woke the landlady
 - b) Tess confessed to the police
 - c) The landlady noticed blood-staining on the ceiling

19. Where did Tess and Angel spend their last night together?

- a) In a railway carriage
- b) At Stonehenge
- c) In a prison cell

20. Who does Tess ask Angel to marry if anything should happen to her?

- a) Liza-Lu
- b) Marian
- c) Mercy Chant

Answer the following questions.

1. What or who brought about the Tess's downfall? To what extent did Tess contribute to her miserable life and her tragic end?
2. Why did Tess's parents insist on her going to the d'Urbervilles? How has this visit changed her life? Why did she agree to go at all?
3. Analyze the character of Angel Clare. Specify the ways in which his behaviour, opinion and attitudes change throughout the novel. What is the cause of the change?
4. "Once victim, always victim: that's the law." How does this statement fit into the general atmosphere of the novel? Who do you think this statement refers to and in why?
5. To what degree and in what way does the society shape Tess's character, her perception of herself and outlook on life? To what extent does social class determine the characters' behaviour in the novel?
6. How is Mr. Durbeyfield portrayed in the first chapter? Discuss his relationship with Tess.
7. Describe the circumstances under which Angel and Tess see each other for the first time.
8. What is the role of nature in the novel? How is the concept of nature linked to Tess?
9. The crucial events of the novel take place in different, often symbolic, locations. To what extent do they give rise to the novel's themes? Identify the novel's themes.
10. How does Tess die?

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION – CRITICAL THINKING

Choose one of the following topics, do a research, analyze and present it. The presentations are limited to 10 minutes each. Also, think of the following questions before the exercise classes (when the excerpts from the novels are being analyzed) and actively participate in discussion that follows.

1. What does Stonehenge stand for in the novel? Describe the symbolism involved. Can you identify other symbols that appear in the novel?
2. The subtitle of the novel is "A Pure Woman, Faithfully Presented". To what extent does Tess fit into the role of a pure woman? What does this say about Hardy's opinion on the status of women in the nineteenth century?
3. How does Hardy present the old style of life and modern tendencies in the novel? Discuss the novel's socio-historical context.
4. Hardy's novel deals with different forms of oppression. Identify some of them and provide the examples from the text to support your argument.
5. Identify the elements of superstition in Hardy's novel. What is the role of superstition within the novel?
6. How are the author's outlook on life and his philosophy reflected in Tess? Identify the sections in the novel representative of Hardy's pessimism and fatalism.
7. "In her relations with both Alec and Angel, Tess is the victim of her own conscience rather than of male cruelty and censure." Do you agree/disagree with this statement? Back up your opinion by referring to the text.
8. How angelic is Angel and how diabolic is Alec? Do they embody moral extremes? Why / Why not?
9. How does the character of Tess fit into the moral categories and social conventions of the Victorian age? Why is she a tragic heroine despite the murder she committed? How does Hardy presents the ongoing changes in regard with the perception of the social class in Victorian England?
10. Examine the role of religion in Hardy's Tess. Does it appear as a functional system in the novel? Why/ Why not?

OSCAR WILDE

The Picture of Dorian Gray

EXCERPT FROM *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*

Yet he was not really reckless, at any rate in his relations to society. Once or twice every month during the winter, and on each Wednesday evening while the season lasted, he would throw open to the world his beautiful house and have the most celebrated musicians of the day charm his guests with the wonders of their art. His little dinners, in the setting of which Lord Henry always assisted him, were noted as much for careful selection and placing of those invited, as for the exquisite taste shown in the decoration of the table, with its subtle symphonic arrangements of exotic flowers, and embroidered cloths, and antique plate of gold and silver. Indeed, there were many, especially among the very young men, who saw, or fancied they saw, in Dorian Gray the true realization of a type which they had often dreamed in Eton or Oxford days, a type that was to combine something of the real culture of the scholar with all the grace and distinction and perfect manner of a citizen of the world. To them he seemed to be of the company of those whom Dante describes as having sought to 'make themselves perfect by the worship of beauty.' Like Gautier, he was one for whom 'the visible world existed'.

And, certainly, to him Life itself was the first, the greatest, of the arts, and for it all the other arts seemed to be but a preparation. Fashion, by which what is really fantastic becomes for a moment universal, and Dandyism, which, in its own way, is an attempt to assert the absolute modernity of beauty, had, of course, their fascination for him. His mode of dressing, and the particular styles that from time to time he affected, had their marked influence on the young exquisites of the Mayfair balls and Pall Mall club windows, who copied him in everything he did, and tried to reproduce the accidental charm of his graceful, though to him only half-serious, fopperies.

(...)

The worship of the senses has often, and with much justice, been decried, men feeling a natural instinct of terror about passions and sensations that seem stronger than themselves, and that they are conscious of sharing with the less highly organized forms of existence.

But it appeared to Dorian Gray that the true nature of the senses had never been understood, and that they remained savage and animal merely because the world had sought to starve them into submission or to kill them by pain, instead of aiming at making them elements of a new spirituality, of which a fine instinct for beauty was to be the dominant characteristic. As he looked back upon man moving through History, he was haunted by a feeling of loss. So much had been surrendered! and to such little purpose! There had been mad wilful rejections, monstrous forms of self-torture and self-denial, whose origin was fear, and whose result was a degradation infinitely more terrible than that fancied degradation from which, in their ignorance, they had sought to escape. Nature, in her wonderful irony, driving out the anchorite to feed with the wild animals of the desert and giving to the hermit the beasts of the field as his companions.

Yes: there was to be, as Lord Henry had prophesied, a new Hedonism that was to recreate life, and to save it from that harsh, uncomely puritanism that is having, in our own day, its curious revival. It was to have its service of the intellect, certainly; yet it was never to accept any theory or system that would involve the sacrifice of any mode of passionate experience. Its aim, indeed, was to be experience itself, and not the fruits of experience, sweet or bitter as they might be. Of the asceticism that deadens the senses, as of the vulgar profligacy that dulls them, it was to know nothing. But it was to teach man to concentrate himself upon the moments of a life that is itself but a moment ...

But he never fell into the error of arresting his intellectual development by any formal acceptance of creed or system, or of mistaking, for a house in which to live, an inn that is but suitable for a sojourn of a night, or for a few hours of a night in which there were no stars and the moon is in travail. Mysticism, with its marvellous power of making common things strange to us, and the subtle antinomianism that always seems to accompany it, moved him for a season; and for a season he inclined to the materialistic doctrines of the Darwinismus movement in Germany, and found a curious pleasure in tracing the thoughts and passions of men to some pearly cell in the brain, or some white nerve in the body, delighting in the conception of the absolute dependence of the spirit on certain physical conditions, morbid or healthy, normal or diseased. Yet, as has been said of him before, no theory of life seemed to him to be of any importance compared to life itself. He felt keenly conscious of how barren all intellectual speculation is when separated from action and experiment. He knew that the senses, no less than the soul, have their spiritual mysteries to reveal.

(The Picture of Dorian Gray, Chapter XI)

ACTIVITIES

I. *Find the meanings of the underlined words/phrases/expressions. Provide their synonyms/antonyms. Find their noun/verb/adjective/adverb form.*

II. *Translate the following sentences into your native language and choose your favourite Oscar Wilde's quote.*

1. "Whenever people agree with me I always feel I must be wrong."
2. "Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months."
3. "I can resist everything but temptation."
4. "Work is the cure of the drinking classes."
5. "Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes."
6. "There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about."
7. "Some people cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go."
8. "I have nothing to declare except my genius."
9. "Those who see any difference between soul and body have neither."
10. "Only the shallow know themselves."
11. "Pleasure is the only thing one should live for. Nothing ages like happiness."
12. "To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance."
13. "Wickedness is a myth invented by good people to account for the curious attractiveness of others."
14. "All women became like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does. That is his."
15. "Nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing."
16. "Journalism is unreadable and literature is not read."
17. "Women are meant to be loved, not to be understood."
18. "We should treat all the trivial things of life very seriously, and all the serious things of life with sincere and studied triviality."
19. "Life is far too important a matter to be taken seriously."
20. "It is only by not paying one's bills that one can hope to live in the memory of the commercial classes."

III. *Activities related to the novel*

1. Are these statements true (T) or false (F)?

- a) The Yellow Book was written by Lord Henry. _____
- b) _____ is a young actress who wants to use Dorian's social position and money to become recognized.
- c) Sybil's brother realized that Lord Henry had instigated Dorian to leave Sybil. _____
- d) Lord Henry thinks Sybil is a bad actress and mocks her in Dorian's presence. _____
- e) Dorian was embarrassed about Sybil's acting and behaviour. _____
- f) Dorian learns about Sybil's death from newspapers. _____
- g) Dorian's portrait has changed upon Sybil's death because he was partly responsible for what had happened. _____

2. Form the correct sentences by putting the words in the right order. The sentences are taken from the *Preface to The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

- a) all useless quite art is

- b) creator things artist of is the beautiful the

- c) himself accord when with the disagree in artist critics is

- d) aim the reveal to and artist art's art conceal is

- e) art really it not, life the mirrors spectator that is and

3. Who says what? Lord Henry, Dorian or Basil? Write the name next to the statement.

- a) "I'm very sorry for you, Alan."
- b) "Because to influence a person is to give him one's own soul."
- c) "Don't tell me that you are going to be good."
- d) "The train doesn't go until twelve fifteen and it is only just eleven."
- e) "I love scandals about other people, but scandals about me myself don't interest me."
- f) "You have a wonderful influence. Let it be for good."
- g) "The aim of life is self-development. To realize one's nature perfectly – that is what each of us is here for."
- h) "Now and then, however, he is horribly thoughtless, and seems to take a real delight in giving me pain."
- i) "There is no such thing as a good influence (...). All influence is immoral – immoral from the scientific point of view."
- j) "I choose my friends for their beauty and my enemies for their intelligence."
- k) "I will stay with the real Dorian."
- l) "What odd people you painters are!"
- m) "He has certainly not been flattering to me. Perhaps this is why I don't believe anything he has told me."
- n) "I'm jealous of everything whose beauty does not die."

IV. Arts Vocabulary

a) Determine the branch of the arts in question⁷⁴

1. 'My favourite one stands in a beautiful park in Vienna and it is called *Mariensaule*.'
2. 'Those that combine live action and animated elements are pretty much engaging – tell me your top 5 please.'
3. 'You need to synchronize the steps and body movements if you want to follow the rhythm.'
4. 'If it contains a catchy rhyme, you can memorize it easier.'
5. 'In my opinion, oil paints are much more vibrant and pigmented than most watercolors.'
6. 'Zaha Haddid is surely my favourite one! Did you know that The London Aquatics Centre was originally designed by her?'
7. 'As she was reading them, she was thinking of what they'd be like on stage.'
8. 'Have you read all chapters or just a few? The more you read the better it gets.'
9. 'The third act was a bit monotonous – definitely not my cup of tea!'

b) Match the idioms/phrases about art to their meanings:

- a) Blank canvas
- b) Con artist
- c) Drama queen
- d) Fine art
- e) Get the picture
- f) Poetic justice
- g) Paint something with a broad brush
- h) Under canvas
- i) Flimflam artist
- j) Be no oil painting

74 Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use (Upper-Intermediate & Advanced)*, pp. 84-85.

1. not good-looking
2. no content, such that it can be easily filled with completely new things
3. understand the situation without the need for more explanation
4. a person who tends to react to every situation in an exaggerated way
5. describe something in general terms, without specific details
6. a swindler, especially one who goes after a big game and prepares for it carefully
7. something requiring highly developed techniques and skills
8. a person who makes a living by swindling people
9. be in a tent
10. a punishment or a reward that one feels is proper

c) Fill in the gaps with the correct article (a/an, the, /)⁷⁵

1. Is _____ British Museum is located near _____ Thames?
2. His father excelled in _____ art at college.
3. Our country needs to invest more money in _____ arts.
4. My teacher once told me that _____ art of composing a good poem boiled down to making the reader immediately become engaged with it.
5. It is wrong to assume that the obscurity of _____ modern poetry should be regarded as its primal flaw.
6. My nephew Stephen holds a diploma in _____ ballet from _____ Performing Arts Academy.
7. I finally managed to get 2 tickets for _____ opera. I had been waiting in front of the ticket office in _____ King Street for hours!

⁷⁵ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use (Upper-Intermediate & Advanced)*, pp. 84-85.

d) Read the following sentences (1-4) and match the underline phrases (a-d) to their meanings:

1. Mary always dreamt of sailing around the world in a yacht but that's just building castles in the air.
2. They didn't have to tell us everything she said and did at the conference for us to get the picture.
3. Sally burnt her bridges when she told her boss off before handing in her resignation.
4. Hristina tried to resolve the misunderstanding with her brother but it was like talking to the brick wall.

- a) To do something which destroys your chances of returning to earlier state
- b) Used for somebody that does not listen or react when spoken to
- c) To have plans, hopes or dreams that have very little chance of happening
- d) To understand a situation

e) Fill in the gaps with the most suitable word⁷⁶

THE VICTORIAN MUSIC HALL

A favourite place of entertainment in Victorian Britain was the music hall. Music hall is a type of British _____ (1) entertainment that was popular from the early Victorian era, beginning around 1850. These large areas resembling halls were initially built to (2) _____ the audience that was continually getting bigger and more diverse. Shows were full of songs of all kinds, in which the audience joined in the chorus. Between 1900 and 1910, however, music halls (3) _____ a dramatic change in character and (4) _____ their emphasis on eating, drinking and singing, to variety shows, where family parties went to see, among other acts, great (5) _____ like Roman chariot races or driving contests. Although temporarily (6) _____ by the 1914-18 war, the music halls were to (7) _____ their popularity for many years after this. It faded away after 1918 as the halls (8) _____ their entertainment as variety. As many music hall performers failed to make transition, they were (9) _____ old-fashioned. However, the advent of radio was to have an increasingly damaging effect on live entertainment and a further (10) _____ was dealt to the concept of live entertainment with the arrival of the cinema.

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. performance | 2. music | 3. theatrical | 4. cultural |
| 2. receive | 2. accommodate | 3. accept | 4. manage |
| 3. subjected | 2. underwent | 3. submitted | 4. underlined |
| 4. rearranged | 2. fluctuated | 3. relocated | 4. shifted |
| 5. spectacles | 2. parades | 3. exhibitions | 4. displays |
| 6. obstructed | 2. halted | 3. terminated | 4. checked |
| 7. retain | 2. absorb | 3. grasp | 4. reserve |
| 8. rebranded | 2. reinvented | 3. remarketed | 4. restored |
| 9. alleged | 2. esteemed | 3. defied | 4. deemed |
| 10. setback | 2. disaster | 3. blow | 4. crash |

⁷⁶ Adapted from *Proficiency Masterclass: Student's Book*, p. 162.

f) Find the mistakes in regard with the usage of words about the arts in the following examples and write down the suitable ones⁷⁷

1. In my opinion, Oxford University Press would definitely be my choice. Has your teacher suggested that you try with another editorial?
2. 'The Lady of Shalott' is just not my cup of tea – It is hard for me to understand verses that explore the ways in which art mirrors life.
3. Marina Abramovic is not one of the most popular Serbian pop sculpture but a performance artist.
4. Alice Munro's collection of short novels entitled *Too Much Happiness* is so deep and engaging!
5. Have you been to any expositions at Nikola Tesla Museum lately?
6. Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* consists of only two stages.
7. The upcoming plays in the National Theatre in Belgrade include *Eugene Onegin*, *Othello* and *Orlando*.

g) Choose the correct option:

1. After being under construction for well over a decade, the much _____ opening of New York City's Brooklyn Bridge finally took place on 24 May 1883.
 - a) Regulated
 - b) Formulated
 - c) Anticipated
 - d) Elaborated
2. The Eiffel Tower became one of the most _____ features of the Paris skyline, and it remains so today.
 - a) Lavish
 - b) Striking
 - c) Viable
 - d) Designated

⁷⁷ Adapted from *English Vocabulary in Use (Upper-Intermediate & Advanced)*, pp. 84-85.

3. The installation of CCTV across the city will hopefully act as a strong _____ to anyone tempted to commit vandalism.
- a) Boundary
 - b) Restriction
 - c) Deterrent
 - d) Constraint
4. Oddly, the movies are _____ by year of release rather than genre.
- a) Diversified
 - b) Testified
 - c) Classified
 - d) Specified
5. The message conveyed through his sculptures is often unclear and open to _____.
- a) Rejection
 - b) Interpretation
 - c) Disruption
 - d) Depiction
6. We were thinking of _____ a couple of rooms because the paint is getting shabby and the furniture is looking worn.
- a) Refurbishing
 - b) Building
 - c) Constructing
 - d) Reinforcing
7. The new building they're _____ adjacent to the town hall will serve as the headquarters for a telecommunications company.
- a) Renting out
 - b) Erecting
 - c) build
 - d) Evacuating

8. The castle was _____ in the 14th century to resist any attacks.
- a) Demolished
 - b) Destroyed
 - c) Fortified
 - d) reinforce
9. To the _____ eye, the flaws in the painting are obvious.
- a) Discerning
 - b) Observant
 - c) Distinguishing
 - d) Distinctive
10. The committee is happy to report that it has no _____ to the proposal of our most popular architect in regard with designing the new city square.
- a) Criticism
 - b) Objection
 - c) Censure
 - d) Reproval
11. The pianist's excellent performance _____ the audience.
- a) Captivated
 - b) Captured
 - c) Enslaved
 - d) Appalled
12. There is a(n) _____ of Byzantine art at the museum.
- a) Exhibition
 - b) Display
 - c) Presentation
 - d) Show

13. There is a Jazz _____ playing tonight.
- a) Concert
 - b) Group
 - c) Band
 - d) Throng
14. There was an interesting _____ on the television last night.
- a) manifest
 - b) Interval
 - c) Show
 - d) Exhibit
15. The company is putting on a _____ of the popular musical 'Camelot'.
- a) Show
 - b) Exhibit
 - c) Display
 - d) Performance
16. Greg is a talented _____ who works mainly in stone.
- a) Painter
 - b) Sculptor
 - c) Writer
 - d) Prompter
17. The singer received great _____.
- a) Clapping
 - b) Ovation
 - c) Cheering
 - d) Applause

18. She didn't win, but as a _____ prize they gave her a rosette.
- a) Consolation
 - b) Compensation
 - c) Conciliation
 - d) Peacemaking
19. These two _____ by Hockney would sell for \$ 1, 500, 000.
- a) Palettes
 - b) Colours
 - c) Canvasses
 - d) Oil pastels
20. The film received some good _____ and some bad ones.
- a) Critics
 - b) Reviews
 - c) Criticism
 - d) Marks

Answer the following questions.

1. Is Sybil Vane a poor actress? How would you explain the reasons for her bad performance in front of Dorian, Lord Henry and Basil? How is Dorian feeling at that moment? Why is he cruel to Sybil?
2. Describe the character of Lord Henry. How does he influence Dorian Gray?
3. Discuss the relationship between Basil and Dorian. Why doesn't Basil want to exhibit the painting? What does he say about Gray's good looks?
4. Identify the moment when Dorian became obsessed with his looks.,
5. What is the role of the "yellow book"?
6. How has the portrait changed?
7. Identify Dorian's deeds and actions that preceded each change in his portrait.
8. What prompted Dorian to destroy his portrait? What has the portrait taught Dorian? Has he become aware of his wrongdoings?
9. How does Wilde establish Lord Henry as the novel's dandy?
10. What is the overall theme in the novel?

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION – CRITICAL THINKING

Choose one of the following topics, do a research, analyze and present it. The presentations are limited to 10 minutes each. Also, think of the following questions before the exercise classes (when the excerpts from the novels are being analyzed) and actively participate in discussion that follows.

1. Identify the Gothic elements and discuss their role in the novel?
2. Explore the duality of art and youth in Wilde's novel.
3. How does Wilde present art and life in the novel? To what extent are they compatible?
4. Hedonism in Wilde's novel.
5. Discuss the author's representation of the upper-class Victorian society by providing the evidence for your statements within the novel.
6. The role of society in the construction of individual identity in Wilde's novel.
7. 'There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book'. What does this mean? To what extent Wilde's novel supports this idea?
8. Identify the people with homoerotic relationships in the novel. What is the author's perception of homoeroticism?
9. Discuss the contagious influence of ideology in the novel.
10. Define the nature of relationship between: Dorian and Basil; Henry and Dorian; Dorian and Alan. Are they true friends? Why? Why not?
11. Specify the ways in which Lord Henry manipulates Dorian.
12. Explore the ways in which Wilde's novel parallels the story of Faust.
13. How is the theory of Aestheticism reflected in Wilde's novel? Support your argument by referring to the text.
14. Discuss the connection between the painting (Dorian's portrait) and Dorian as a living work of art.
15. In what ways do Aestheticism and morality stand on opposite sides in Wilde's novel?

LORD ALFRED TENNYSON – selected poems

*The Lady of Shalott (1832)*⁷⁸

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

78 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45359/the-lady-of-shalott-1832>.

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed:
"I am half sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
 As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
 Beside remote Shalott.

PART IV

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,

As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,

As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.

Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks
complaining,

Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance –
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right –
The leaves upon her falling light –
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott."

*The Lotos-Eaters (1832)*⁷⁹

"Courage!" he said, and pointed toward
the land,

"This mounting wave will roll us
shoreward soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land

In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the languid air did
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the
moon;

And like a downward smoke, the
slender stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall
did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a
downward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,
did go;

And some thro' wavering lights and
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam
below.

They saw the gleaming river seaward
flow

From the inner land: far off, three
mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd: and, dew'd with
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above
the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low
adown

In the red West: thro' mountain clefts
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow
down

Border'd with palm, and many a
winding vale

And meadow, set with slender
galingale;

A land where all things always seem'd
the same!

And round about the keel with faces
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-
eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof
they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of
them,

79 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45364/the-lotos-eaters>.

And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;

And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no more";
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

CHORIC SONG

I

There is sweet music here that
softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on
the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters
between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down
from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved
flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep."

II

Why are we weigh'd upon with
heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp
distress,
While all things else have rest from
weariness?
All things have rest: why should we
toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another
thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy
balm;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should we only toil, the roof and
crown of things?

III

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the
bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes
no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing
over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and
hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and
become

Portions and parcels of the
dreadful past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can
we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward
the grave
In silence; ripen, fall and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death,
or dreamful ease.

V

How sweet it were, hearing the
downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder
amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush
on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on
the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy
spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded
melancholy;
To muse and brood and live again in
memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an
urn of brass!

VI

Dear is the memory of our
wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of
our wives
And their warm tears: but all hath
suffer'd change:
For surely now our household hearths
are cold,
Our sons inherit us: our looks are
strange:
And we should come like ghosts to
trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the
minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in
Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten
things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile:
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There is confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out by
many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on
the pilot-stars.

VII

But, propt on beds of amaranth and
moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us,
blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelid still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

To watch the long bright river drawing
slowly
His waters from the purple hill –
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twin-
ned vine –
To watch the emerald-colour'd water
falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath
divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off
sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
beneath the pine.

VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren
peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding
creek:
All day the wind breathes low with
mellower tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of
motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted
his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with
an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie
reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless
of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the
bolts are hurl'd

Far below them in the valleys, and the
clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled
with the gleaming world:
Where they smile in secret, looking
over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and ear-
thquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns,
and sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music cen-
tered in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an
ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the
words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men
that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest
with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and
wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer – some,
'tis whisper'd – down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in
Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of
asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet
than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean,
wind and wave and oar;
O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not
wander more.

Ulysses (1842)⁸⁰

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these
barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete
and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and
know not me.

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: All times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both
with those
That loved me, and alone, on shore,
and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy
Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry
heart
Much have I seen and known;
cities of men
And manners, climates, councils,
governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd
of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my
peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;

Yet all experience is an arch
where thro'
Gleams that untravell'd world whose
margin fades
For ever and forever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled
on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something
more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it
were
For some three suns to store and
hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human
thought.

Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make
mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the
good.

80 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45392/ulysses>

Most blameless is he, centred in
the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I
mine.
There lies the port; the vessel puffs
her sail:
There gloom the dark, broad seas.
My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and
thought with me –
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and
opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads – you and I
are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his
toil;
Death closes all: but something ere
the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet
be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove
with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from
the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon
climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come,
my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my
purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and
the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash
us down:
It may be we shall touch the
Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom
we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides;
and tho'
We are not now that strength which in
old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which
we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but
strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to
yield.

*Tears, idle tears (1847)*⁸¹

Tears, idle tears, I know not what
they mean,
Tears from the depth of some
divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the
eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are
no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering
on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the
underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below
the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are
no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark
summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a
glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are
no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses
after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless
fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with
all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are
no more!

81 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45384/the-princess-tears-idle-tears>

ACTIVITIES

Lady of Shalott

I. Check how familiar you are with Camelot, King Arthur and his knights by doing the following quiz.

1. King Arthur is a figure from:
 - a) Metafictional novels
 - b) The early British novels
 - c) Legend
 - d) History

2. The name of King Arthur's Queen was:
 - a) Camelide
 - b) Guinevere
 - c) Igraine
 - d) Gorlois

3. King Arthur's wife is secretly in love with:
 - a) Modred
 - b) Galahad
 - c) Lancelot
 - d) Gawain

4. Excalibur was:
 - a) King Arthur's crown
 - b) Camelot's defense wall
 - c) King Arthur's sword
 - d) King Arthur's famous knife

5. The name of King Arthur's knight that fought with the Green Knight was:
- a) Modred
 - b) Bors
 - c) Galahad
 - d) Gawain
6. Merlin was:
- a) Arthur's father
 - b) The castle
 - c) The wizard
 - d) The knight
7. Who designed the Round Table?
- a) Merlin
 - b) King Arthur himself
 - c) Uther Pendragon
 - d) Igraine Pendragon
8. When does Arthur become King?
- a) When he wins the most important battle
 - b) When Merlin helps him
 - c) When he pulls the sword from the stone
 - d) When Merlin died
9. What does the Holy Grail represent in Arthurian Legend?
- a) Battlefield
 - b) The magic cave
 - c) The sword passed from generation to generation
 - d) The cup Jesus drank from at The Last Supper

10. Who found the Holy Grail?

- a) Lancelot
- b) Galahad
- c) Percival
- d) Sir Gawain

11. What are the names of the knights that travelled together to see the grail?

- a) Bedivere, Gawain, Galahad
- b) Galahad, Lancelot, Bors de Ganis
- c) Percival, Bors de Ganis, Galahad
- d) Bors de Ganis, Galahad, Gatheris

12. Where was King Arthur taken after the final swordfight?

- a) To Elysian Fields
- b) To Avalon
- c) To Camelot
- d) To Ithaca

13. How did King Arthur die?

- a) He is said to be killed by Modred in the battle
- b) He died in his sleep
- c) He is believed to be killed by Lancelot in the battle
- d) He died of heart attack

14. Who wrote *Morte d'Arthur*?

- a) Lord Alfred Tennyson
- b) Sir Thomas Malory
- c) Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
- d) Matthew Arnold

15. What is the meaning of a quest?
- a) a challenge set before the Court
 - b) specific missions/journeys/adventures knights went on
 - c) a literary work
 - d) a mythological creature
16. The story of King Arthur dates from the period before the death of Jesus:
- a) Yes
 - b) No
17. One of the modern descriptions of Camelot, the Arthurian castle, can be found in the work of:
- a) Matthew Arnold
 - b) Lord Alfred Tennyson
 - c) Robert Browning

II. *Tennyson put to music: Canadian singer Loreena McKennitt adapted the poem "The Lady of Shalott" to music. Listen to her performance (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80-kp6RDI94>) and write down your first impressions.*

III. *Answer the short questions about the poem "The Lady of Shalott".*

1. What is Shalott? How is it described in Tennyson's poem? What does it symbolize?
2. What do we learn about the lady in the first part of the poem?
3. How does the society perceive the lady?
4. Why does the lady live the way she does? To what extent is her isolation linked to the conventions imposed on her by the society?
5. Find a quotation that supports the statement that the Lady is not allowed to face the window.

6. Describe the scenes of everyday life she sees by looking at the mirror. What is the role of the mirror in the poem?
7. Describe the room inside the tower. Describe the Lady's feelings.
8. Identify the rhyming scheme of the poem. Why does the rhythm become slower in the final part of the poem?
9. What is the role of repetition in the poem? What does it suggest? How does it contribute to the general atmosphere of the poem?
10. Contrast the townspeople's point of view of the Lady in Part I with the descriptions of her in Part II. How do these different points of view create tension in the poem?
11. What does the Lady weave? How is this connected to her way of life?
12. Why is the last line of the first verse in Part IV in italics?
13. What kind of song does the Lady sing?
14. How does she die?
15. Describe Sir Lancelot. What does he say at the end of the poem?
16. Identify the main themes of the poem. Establish parallels with modern society by exploring the main ideas suggested in the poem.
17. How does the poem's setting relate to the theme of loneliness? Illustrate.
18. The Lady is "half sick of shadows" and only seeing life from a magic mirror in an island. Did she make the right choice by risking the curse and leaving the tower? Why? Why not?
19. Identify the types of conflicts the lady experiences in the poem. Explain your choices by referring to the text.
20. What is the role of the artist in the Victorian period?
21. Having in mind the theory of mimesis, provide the examples of the ways in which art may mirror life?
22. What are the temptations, inner conflicts and challenges of the artist of the 21st century?
23. How can mental/spiritual/moral/emotional conflicts of the 19th-century artists be compared and applied to those experienced by the artists of the modern age?
24. In what way do the artists in general manage to properly address and overcome the difficulties they encounter while creating their works of art?
25. Compare the art's role in "The Lady of Shalott" and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

The Lotos-Eaters

I. Fill in the brackets with the correct tense.

For nine days Zeus _____ (send) winds to toss Odysseus' ships across the rough sea. Then they _____ (reach) the land of the Lotus Eaters and two men _____ (be) sent to look for food. Happening upon a sunny glade, the two Greeks _____ (come) across the Lotus Eaters, who _____ (give) them the delicious honeyed plant to eat. The taste of Lotus Blossom _____ (drive) all thoughts of duty and home from their minds and they _____ (relax) contentedly in the sunshine. Odysseus _____ (have) to go in search of his companions and use force to return them to their ships. If Odysseus _____ (not clap) them in irons, they _____ (swim) ashore.

II. Answer the following questions:

1. Provide the historical background to the poem "The Lotos-Eaters".
2. Can you tell how different "The Lotos-Eaters" is from the episode described in the Odyssey?
3. Identify the poem's rhyming scheme. How is the specific stanza in question called?
4. The poem opens with the word 'courage'. Why do the sailors need courage in the first place?
5. What is the poem's main theme? What is the meaning of the Choric song?
6. What are the dominant feelings in the poem? Support your answer by providing the evidence from the poem.
7. The role of religion in the poem – its presence/absence.
8. Identify the sailors' reasons for their passivity, melancholy and idleness.
9. Compare the sailors' perception of death to the one experienced by Ulysses.
10. Give examples of onomatopoeia. What is the role of sensuous imagery in the poem?

11. What are the effects of eating the lotus blossom?
12. Why did Odysseus have to tie up his men to get them to leave the land of the Lotos-Eaters?
13. Compare and contrast this poem with "Ulysses". In what way these two poems present conclusions thematically antithetical to one another? What conclusions might both support?
14. Do you think that Tennyson implies that the world of oblivion is better than the real world? Support and justify your answer.
15. Identify at least two figures of speech in the poem.
16. In your opinion, does the poem condemn or justifies the hedonistic lifestyle?
17. What does the Land of Lotus symbolize?
18. Why do the lotos eaters want to be godlike?
19. Explore the positive and negative aspects of people's passivity and their need for rest.
20. Position the Tennyson's poem within the context of the story of Homer's *Odysseus*.

Ulysses

I. **Circle the correct answer:**

1. Who is Ulysses also known as:

- a) Pantheon
- b) Orpheus
- c) Odysseus
- d) Homer

2. "Ulysses" is the example of a(n):

- a) Epic
- b) Sonnet
- c) Elegy
- d) Dramatic monologue

3. What classic work most influences "Ulysses"?

- a) Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*
- b) James Joyce's *Ulysses*
- c) Euripides' *Hecuba*
- d) Homer's *Odysseus*

4. The poet wrote "Ulysses" in response to what major biographical event:

- a) Becoming England's Poet Laureate
- b) The death of his best friend
- c) The death of his father and brothers
- d) Having to quit college to take care of his family.

5. The name of Ulysses' son is:

- a) Teleportus
- b) Telemachus
- c) Teletantus
- d) Teleranek

6. Odysseus feels annoyed with
 - a) His wife
 - b) His people
 - c) Demons
 - d) His enemies
7. Odysseus fought in the Trojan war:
 - a) False
 - b) True
8. Who wrote the poem "Ulysses"?
 - a) James Joyce
 - b) Lord Alfred Tennyson
 - c) Homer
 - d) Robert Browning
9. The situation in this poem involves:
 - a) Odysseus' issues with staying home
 - b) Ulysses' problems with his wife and son
 - c) Ulysses' fear of travel
 - d) Odysseus' issues with ruling the country
10. What is a prominent subtext of the poem?
 - a) Diocese
 - b) Mortality
 - c) Greek Gods
 - d) Wine
11. Ulysses is the king of what island?
 - a) Greece
 - b) Ithaca
 - c) Icaria
 - d) Troy

12. Odysseus is (multiple answers)

- a) growing old
- b) a hero
- c) a king of Ithaca
- d) a ravenous fiend

II. *Answer the following questions.*

1. Who does Ulysses address when he says “a savage race”?
2. Why is Ulysses unwilling to stay in his country and finally take a rest from travels?
3. Why does Ulysses decide to leave his kingdom to his son? How does he treat his son? Why isn't he happy in the role of a king?
4. Identify the differences and similarities between the poems “The Lotos-Eaters” and “Ulysses.”
5. How does Ulysses refer to his wife in the poem? What does this tell you about his treatment of her?
6. How does Ulysses perceive the concept of aging? Support your statement by referring to the specific lines in the poem.
7. What is Ulysses' attitude towards death? Identify the lines in the poem pointing to it.
8. What makes Tennyson's poem a dramatic monologue?
9. Why is Ulysses in favor of an adventurous life?
10. Who does Ulysses refer to as a savage race?
11. Does Ulysses' zeal for travels stem from his heroism or selfishness? Support your argument by referring to the poem.
12. How do you understand the line “For always roaming with a hungry heart”? What does the phrase *a hungry heart* mean?
13. How is Tennyson's Ulysses different from and similar to Homer's Odysseus? How does the poem reflect the Victorian era (Victorian conventions, stereotypes, etc.)?
14. Identify the poem's themes, symbols and motifs.
15. How do you understand the final line of the poem “To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield”? Who does Ulysses address? How does he describe his fellow mariners?

16. What are Ulysses' feelings about aging?
17. In what way is Tennyson's poem an apology for taking risks?
18. Does Tennyson sympathize with his hero? What was the main event that initially inspired Tennyson to write this poem?
19. In what way is Ulysses similar to Faust?
20. What do we learn about the speaker of the poem from what he says? What type of person is he? A hero?

ROBERT BROWNING – selected poems

*My last Duchess (1842)*⁸²

Ferrara

That's my last Duchess painted on
the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà
Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she
stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her?
I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured
countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest
glance,
But to myself they turned (since none
puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if
they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not
the first

Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir,
'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called
that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek:
perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her
mantle laps
Over my Lady's wrist too much," or
"Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the
faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat";
such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause
enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart – how shall I say? – too soon
made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked
whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went
everywhere.

82 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43768/my-last-duchess>.

Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at
her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in
the West,
The bough of cherries some
officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the
white mule
She rode with round the terrace –
all and each
Would draw from her alike the
approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,
– good; but thanked
Somehow – I know not how –
as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-
old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to
blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech – (which I have not) – to
make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say,
"Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you
miss,
Or there exceed the mark" – and if
she let

Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made
excuse,
– E'en then would be some stooping;
and I chose
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled,
no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed
without
Much the same smile? This grew;
I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together.
There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise?
We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your Master's known
munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I
avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, Sir! Notice Neptune,
though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in
bronze for me!

*Meeting at Night*⁸³

I

The grey sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

II

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

83 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43766/meeting-at-night>.

ACTIVITIES

I. Answer the following questions:

1. What is the poem "My Last Duchess" basically about?
2. What words are used to describe the 'Duchess' and what impact does each word have?
3. What is the portrait a metaphor for? How do we know this?
4. What does the Duke say about his 'Last Duchess'?
5. How is the theme of power and control presented in this poem?
6. How successfully does Browning create allusions to men with power and authority?
7. What techniques are used in this poem?
8. What effects do these poetic techniques have on the reader?
9. How effectively does the poet engage with his reader through his use of poetic techniques and vocabulary?
10. To what extent does the treatment of women in the Victorian age coincide with the Duke's perception of his late wife? Identify the reflection of Victorian stereotypes regarding women in Tennyson's poem.

II. Fill in the gaps with the words in *italic* given below.⁸⁴

acquisitions, annoyed, duke, duchess, downstairs, offended, expect, displeasure, himself, little, politeness, revere, compliment, marriage, curtain, portrait, commands, cordially, freak, possession, controlling, count, beautiful, derive, negotiating, gaze

In this poem the speaker, the _____, is addressing a second character, and agent of an unnamed _____ whose daughter the duke plans to marry. The count does not get to speak because the duke is _____. The Duke behaves _____ enough, asking his guest if he would like to _____ at the painting - a _____ of his first wife. In Duke's opinion, she was a _____ young woman with too _____ pride. The Duke found this particularly upsetting. He felt _____ by her _____ to other men belonging to the lower rank, and he was convinced that she was too easily pleased by a _____ from a servant or any other man that approached her. The duke believed that she was supposed to _____ pleasure only from _____. The duke could not _____ to tell her what she did that _____ him. Instead, he took action, or "gave _____". It seemed she failed to sufficiently _____ the name and family she married into. We are left to wonder what kind of commands the Duke gave in particular. What is certain is that the _____ is absent, most likely dead. Now the duke is _____ the terms of a new _____ agreement. He tells the count's agent about his _____ with his belated wife to make sure that his future wife understands what type of person he wants his spouse to be and what sort of conduct he will _____ from her. As the poem ends, the two men turn away from the portrait and go _____ to join the rest of the company. The final lines of the poem display the Duke showing off another of his artistic _____. The duke can be seen as a _____, he couldn't stop her smiling at everyone when she was alive but now he can because he has a _____ which controls who gets to see the picture. Also the fact he calls her 'my duchess' and then calls her a 'piece' shows he sees her as his _____.

⁸⁴ Adapted from: <http://hbmessayinf.web.fc2.com/paper/page-1857.html>

OTHER VICTORIAN POETS – selected poems

*Dover Beach*⁸⁵

BY MATTHEW ARNOLD

The sea is calm tonight.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast
the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of
England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the
tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the
night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-
blanched land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw
back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round
earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle
furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast
edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which
seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor
light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for
pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of
struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

85 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43588/dover-beach>

SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE 43:

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING⁸⁶

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

86 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43742/sonnets-from-the-portuguese-43-how-do-i-love-thee-let-me-count-the-ways>

*The Garden of Proserpine*⁸⁷

BY ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Here, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

87 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45288/the-garden-of-proserpine>.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
 Crowned with calm leaves, she
stands
Who gathers all things mortal
 With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
 From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
 She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
 The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
 And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
 The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
 And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
 And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
 Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
 In an eternal night.

Pied Beauty

BY GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS⁸⁸

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

88 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44399/pied-beauty>

*Remember*⁸⁹

BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you plann'd:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

89 Link to the (audio) poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45000/remember56d224509b7ae>

*The Blessed Damozel*⁹⁰

BY DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The blessed damozel lean'd out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters still'd at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seem'd she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
... Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she lean'd o'er me--her hair
Fell all about my face
Nothing: the autumn-fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remember'd names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bow'd herself and stoop'd
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she lean'd on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

90 Taken from: <https://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/blessed-damozel>

From the fix'd place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still
strove

Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curl'd moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearken'd? When those bells
Possess'd the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not pray'd in Heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is cloth'd in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirr'd continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hush'd and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abash'd or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-rang'd unnumber'd heads
Bow'd with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:--
Only to live as once on earth
With Love,--only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he."
She gaz'd and listen'd and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,--
"All this is when he comes." She ceas'd.
The light thrill'd towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes pray'd, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

Prose – selected works

MATTHEW ARNOLD

The Function of Criticism at the Present Time⁹¹

Many objections have been made to a proposition which, in some remarks of mine [22] on translating Homer, I ventured to put forth; a proposition about criticism, and its importance at the present day. I said: "Of the literature of France and Germany, as of the intellect of Europe in general, the main effort, for now many years, has been a critical effort; the endeavor, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." I added, that owing to the operation in English literature of certain causes, "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature is just that very thing which now Europe most desires, —criticism"; and that the power and value of English literature was thereby impaired. More than one rejoinder declared that the importance I here assigned to criticism was excessive, and asserted the inherent superiority of the creative effort of the human spirit over its critical effort.

(...) Wordsworth was himself a great critic, and it is to be sincerely regretted that he has not left us more criticism; Goethe was one of the greatest of critics, and we may sincerely congratulate ourselves that he has left us so much criticism. Without wasting time over the exaggeration which Wordsworth's judgment on criticism clearly contains, or over an attempt to trace the causes, —not difficult, I think, to be traced, —which may have led Wordsworth to this exaggeration, a critic may with advantage seize an occasion for trying his own conscience, and for asking himself of what real service at any given moment the practice of criticism either is or may be made to his own mind and spirit, and to the minds and spirits of others.

(...) The grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition, not of analysis and discovery; its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when it finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and attractive combinations, —making beautiful works with them, in short.

91 Taken from: <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/12628/pg12628-images.html>

But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not so easy to command. This is why great creative epochs in literature are so rare, this is why there is so much that is unsatisfactory in the productions of many men of real genius; because, for the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment; the creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control.

(...) both Byron and Goethe had a great productive power, but Goethe's was nourished by a great critical effort providing the true materials for it, and Byron's was not; Goethe knew life and the world, the poet's necessary subjects, much more comprehensively and thoroughly than Byron. He knew a great deal more of them, and he knew them much more as they really are.

(...) In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety. Wordsworth cared little for books, and disparaged Goethe. I admire Wordsworth, as he is, so much that I cannot wish him different; and it is vain, no doubt, to imagine such a man different from what he is, to suppose that he *could* have been different. But surely the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is, —his thought richer, and his influence of wider application, —was that he should have read more books, among them, no doubt, those of that Goethe whom he disparaged without reading him.

(...) It is noticeable that the word *curiosity*, which in other languages is used in a good sense, to mean, as a high and fine quality of man's nature, just this disinterested love of a free play of the mind on all subjects, for its own sake, —it is noticeable, I say, that this word has in our language no sense of the kind, no sense but a rather bad and disparaging one. But criticism, real criticism, is essentially the exercise of this very quality. It obeys an instinct prompting it to **try to know the best that is known and thought in the world**, irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind; and to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best, without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever.

(...) It is of the last importance that English criticism should clearly discern what rule for its course, in order to avail itself of the field now opening to it, and to produce fruit for the future, it ought to take. The rule may be summed up in one word, — *disinterestedness*. And how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from what is called "the practical view of things"; by resolutely

following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas.

The Study of Poetry⁹²

"The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay. There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve. Our religion has materialized itself in the fact, in the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact, and how the fact is failing it. But for poetry the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea *is* the fact. The strongest part of our religion today is its unconscious poetry." [63]

Let me be permitted to quote these words of my own, as uttering the thought which should, in my opinion, go with us and govern us in all our study of poetry. In the present work it is the course of one great contributory stream to the world-river of poetry that we are invited to follow. We are here invited to trace the stream of English poetry. But whether we set ourselves, as here, to follow only one of the several streams that make the mighty river of poetry, or whether we seek to know them all, our governing thought should be the same. We should conceive of poetry worthily, and more highly than it has been the custom to conceive of it. We should conceive of it as capable of higher uses, and called to higher destinies than those which in general men have assigned to it hitherto. More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us. Without poetry, our science will appear incomplete; and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry. Science, I say, will appear incomplete without it. For finely and truly does Wordsworth call poetry "the impassioned expression which is in a countenance of all science" [64] and what is a countenance without its expression? Again, Wordsworth finely and truly calls poetry "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge": [64] our religion, parading evidences such as those on which the popular mind relies now; our philosophy, pluming itself on its reasonings about causation and finite and infinite being; what are they but the shadows and dreams and false shows of knowledge? The day will come when we shall wonder at ourselves for having trusted to them, for having taken them seriously; and the more we perceive their hollowness, the more we shall prize "the breath and finer spirit of knowledge" offered to us by poetry.

(...)

92 Taken from: <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/12628/pg12628-images.html>

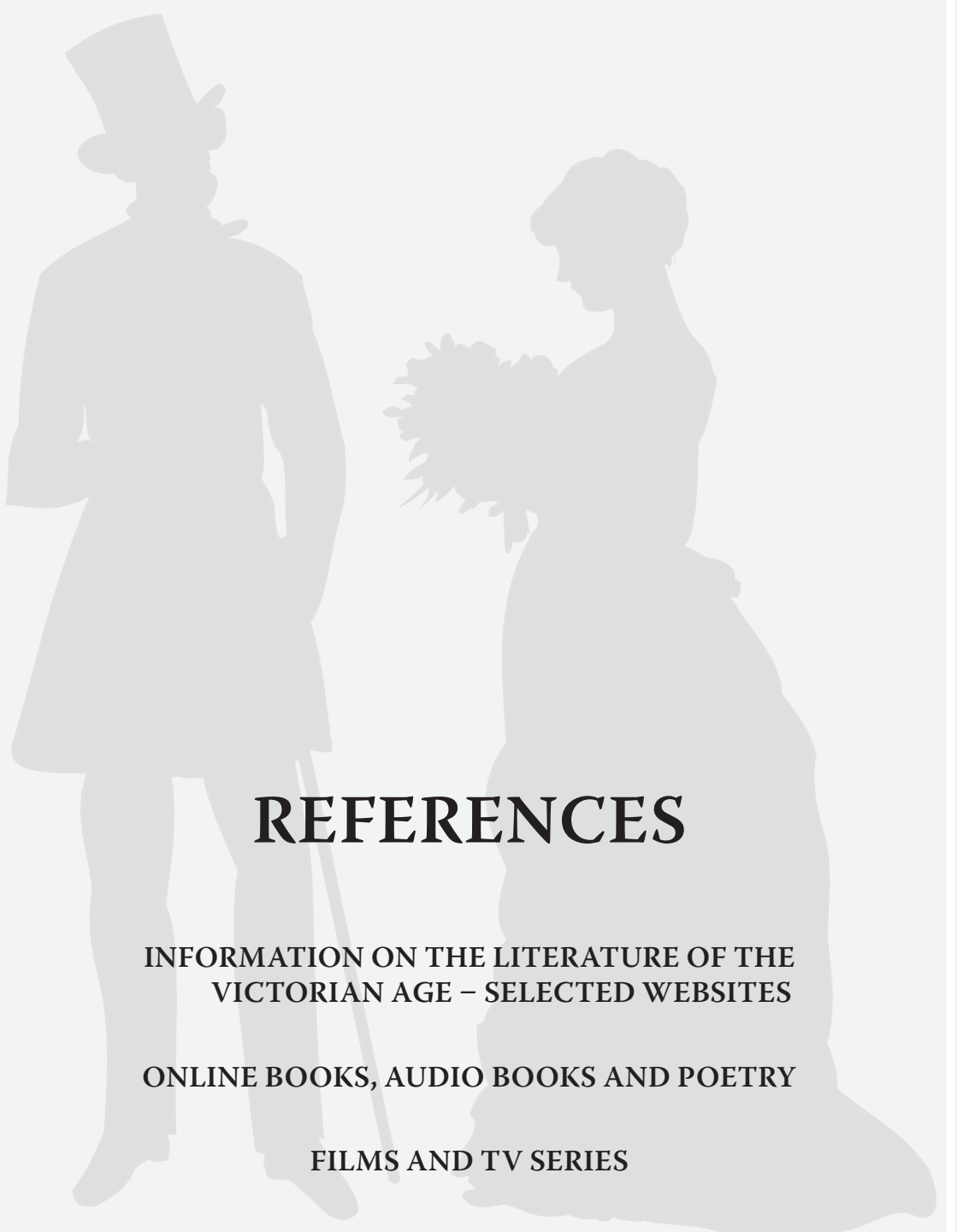
The course of development of a nation's language, thought, and poetry, is profoundly interesting; and by regarding a poet's work as a stage in this course of development we may easily bring ourselves to make it of more importance as poetry than in itself it really is, we may come to use a language of quite exaggerated praise in criticising it; in short, to over-rate it. So arises in our poetic judgments the fallacy caused by the estimate which we may call historic. Then, again, a poet or a poem may count to us on grounds personal to ourselves. Our personal affinities, likings, and circumstances, have great power to sway our estimate of this or that poet's work, and to make us attach more importance to it as poetry than in itself it really possesses, because to us it is, or has been, of high importance. Here also we over-rate the object of our interest, and apply to it a language of praise which is quite exaggerated. And thus we get the source of a second fallacy in our poetic judgments—the fallacy caused by an estimate which we may call personal.

(...) To trace the labor, the attempts, the weaknesses, the failures of a genuine classic, to acquaint oneself with his time and his life and his historical relationships, is mere literary dilettantism unless it has that clear sense and deeper enjoyment for its end. It may be said that the more we know about a classic the better we shall enjoy him; and, if we lived as long as Methuselah and had all of us heads of perfect clearness and wills of perfect steadfastness, this might be true in fact as it is plausible in theory. But the case here is much the same as the case with the Greek and Latin studies of our schoolboys. The elaborate philological groundwork which we require them to lay is in theory an admirable preparation for appreciating the Greek and Latin authors worthily. The more thoroughly we lay the groundwork, the better we shall be able, it may be said, to enjoy the authors. True, if time were not so short, and schoolboys' wits not so soon tired and their power of attention exhausted; only, as it is, the elaborate philological preparation goes on, but the authors are little known and less enjoyed. So with the investigator of "historic origins" in poetry. He ought to enjoy the true classic all the better for his investigations; he often is distracted from the enjoyment of the best, and with the less good he overbusies himself, and is prone to over-rate it in proportion to the trouble which it has cost him.

(...) The substance of Chaucer's poetry, his view of things and his criticism of life, has largeness, freedom, shrewdness, benignity; but it has not this high seriousness. Homer's criticism of life has it, Dante's has it, Shakespeare's has it. It is this chiefly which gives to our spirits what they can rest upon; and with the increasing demands of our modern ages upon poetry, this virtue of giving us what we can rest upon will be more and more highly esteemed. A voice from the slums of Paris, fifty or sixty years after Chaucer, the voice of poor Villon [96] out of his life of riot and crime, has at its happy moments (as, for instance, in

the last stanza of *La Belle Heaulmière* [97]) more of this important poetic virtue of seriousness than all the productions of Chaucer. But its apparition in Villon, and in men like Villon, is fitful; the greatness of the great poets, the power of their criticism of life, is that their virtue is sustained.

To our praise, therefore, of Chaucer as a poet there must be this limitation: he lacks the high seriousness of the great classics, and therewith an important part of their virtue. Still, the main fact for us to bear in mind about Chaucer is his sterling value according to that real estimate which we firmly adopt for all poets. He has poetic truth of substance, though he has not high poetic seriousness, and corresponding to his truth of substance he has an exquisite virtue of style and manner. With him is born our real poetry.

The background of the page features faint, light-gray silhouettes of a Victorian-era man and woman. The man on the left is standing, wearing a top hat and a long coat, holding a cane. The woman on the right is seated or kneeling, holding a large bouquet of flowers. The entire page is framed by a decorative white border with rounded corners.

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- <https://wordmint.com/> (bingo, crossword, puzzle, wordsearch)
- <https://studylib.net/doc/8174399/great-expectations>
- <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-vanityfair/free-quiz.html#gsc.tab=0> (quiz on Thackeray's Vanity Fair)
- <https://www.ecenglish.com/learnenglish/lessons/business-english-money-vocabulary>
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Information on the Literature of the Victorian Age – selected websites

Victorian Britain: The British Library <https://www.bl.uk/victorian-britain>

The Victorian Literature Studies Archive <http://victorian-studies.net/concordance/anderson/>

The Victorian Web <http://www.victorianweb.org/>

The Workhouse <http://www.workhouses.org.uk/>

At the Circulating Library: A Database of Victorian Fiction, 1837-1901
<http://www.victorianresearch.org/atcl/>

British Literature: Victorian Era (Credo Reference)

<http://credoreference.libguides.com/c.php?g=139737&p=915318>

Victoria Research Web <http://victorianresearch.org/>

The Dickens Project <https://dickens.ucsc.edu/>

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Oliver Twist (2005), a film by Roman Polanski <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0380599/>

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Milena Škobo

A GLIMPSE INTO

VICTORIAN LITERATURE

WITH A STUDY GUIDE

A Glimpse Into Victorian Literature with a Study Guide is a study book with a detailed representation of the key characteristics that marked cultural, literary, economic, and historical epoch of the 19th-century Britain, known as Victorian Age. The first part of the book offers a thorough description of the issues relating to socio-historical context. It then builds on from the representation of lives and works of the main literary figures of the Victorian period (C. Dickens, W. M. Thackeray, G. Eliot, the Brontë sisters, T. Hardy, O. Wilde, A. Tennyson and R. Browning), their observations in regard with the time in which they lived and worked, the changes and challenges that brought about industrialization and urbanization, to an accurate account of the Aesthetic and Decadent movements in late Victorian Britain. The study tackles gender issues, the identity of the British Empire, and a wide range of ideologies (i.e. political, social, philosophical, artistic), which provided the epoch with its distinctive features. Special attention is drawn to the ideas and works of W. Pater, W. Morris, J. S. Mill, C. Darwin and M. Arnold, whose ideologies and critical insights changed people's perception of the world and the text. The second part of the book deals with the variety of interactive activities that test the interpretation and understanding of the works selected, trigger critical thinking and improve students' language skills.

