

**MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND SECONDARY SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

UZBEK STATE WORLD LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY

Elmira Denisovna Muratova

THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LITERATURE

The text of Lectures

Bachelor's Department 5120100-Philology

Tashkent 2006

Ўзбекистон давлат жахон тиллари университети Илмий кенгашининг
2005 йил “___” августдаги йиғилишида муҳокама қилинган ва тасдиқланган.
Баённома №_____

Reviewer: Svetlana A. Glazyrina, Ph.D., Head, Chair of Stylistics

External Reviewer: Vasilya Rakhimova, Ph.D., Head, Chair of Foreign Languages, Institute for Oriental Studies.

ANNOTATION

The course of lectures is designed to acquaint students with the main outlines of English literature and provides an overview of its evolution covering several centuries, from its dawn to modern time. The thematic organization should assist students of Bachelor Departments in their studies. The text of lectures will be an important addition to available sources of information on English literature.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
Theme 1: The Dawn of English Literature. The Anglo-Saxon and Norman Periods.	5
Theme 2: The Literature of the 14th and 15th Centuries.....	10
Theme 3: Renaissance. William Shakespeare’s Work and His Theatre.	13
Theme 4: The Enlightenment and Reflection of its Ideas in English Literature.....	19
Theme 5: Romanticism.	29
Theme 6: Critical Realism.	41
Theme 7: She-writers in English Literature of the 19th Century.	48
Theme 8: English Writers at the Turn of the Century (end of 19th and beginning of the 20th century)	52
Theme 9: English Literature of the 20th Century (1st half).....	60
Theme 10: English Literature of the 20th Century (2nd half).	64
LITERATURE.....	71

INTRODUCTION

English literature is often described as beginning with Chaucer. This would give England six centuries of literature. Actually there were more than six centuries of literature before Chaucer was born. The modern reader can make out the general meaning of a page of Chaucer without difficulty, but if he looks at the earliest English literature he finds that it doesn't read like English. The two most important events in the history of England took place before the Norman Conquest. One of them was the period when Angles, Saxons and Jutes came to England. Literature in the Anglo-Saxon period was recorded in manuscripts, among which is "The Song of Beowulf".

Each art has its own medium: the painter his pigments, the musician his sound, and the writer, words. The difficulty of the writer is that words are used for all everyday purposes, so that they become worn, "like coins rubbed by long use". Modern poetry begins with Geoffrey Chaucer, diplomat, soldier and scholar. Chaucer as a poet is so good that he makes the fifteenth century appear dull. "His imitators are brought on to the stage of literature only to receive cat-calls".

The poets of the century after Chaucer were involved further in the changing nature of the language. The new way in English poetry came mainly through the imitation of Italian models and it brought difficulties of its own. Some poets struggled to render into English the fourteen-line Italian form of the sonnet, which was one of the most popular forms of poetry in the period of Renaissance. Shakespeare also used this form but he was different. Some of his sonnets are addressed not to a woman but to a young man; others are written not with adoration but with an air of disillusioned passion to a 'dark lady'. But his name in English literature is mainly associated with his plays.

It is false to consider the drama merely as a part of literature. For Literature is an art dependent upon words, but the drama is a multiple art, using words, scenic effects, the gestures of the actors, and the organizing talents of a producer. Shakespeare knew that the play must come first, and the words, however brilliant, must be subservient to it. While nothing can explain the genius of Marlowe, or Shakespeare, the changes in the form of the drama can be in part explained by the revival of interest in classical drama. The classical drama gave examples both for comedy and tragedy and the Renaissance imposed a learned tradition upon a English national drama.

The 17th century is in many ways the century of transition into the modern world. It was linked with a generous sentiment towards humanity, and towards movements which drew attention to the great gulf between the wealthy and elegant society of the century and the conditions of those who lived in poverty.

The first thirty years of the 19th century are marked by a cluster of poets whose work differed from that of their predecessors. They all had a deep interest in nature not as a centre of beautiful scenes but as an informing and spiritual influence on life. In the poetry of all romantic poets, there is a sense of wonder, of life seen with new sensibility and fresh vision. This strangeness of the individual experience leads each of the romantics to a spiritual loneliness. They are keenly aware of their social obligations, but the burden of an exceptional vision of life drives them into being almost fugitives from their fellow-men.

Behind English prose, from the Anglo-Saxon period to even the 17th century, is the pattern of Latin. The 16th century had nothing in its prose to match the excellence of the drama, yet scholars had been preparing the way for the acceptance of English as the standard medium of expression. The first half of the 17th century was a period of religious controversy and of the triumph of Puritanism. In the 18th century the subject of study to which man applied himself became more numerous and more systematic, and it was a good fortune of England that prose in that age had become a pliant and serviceable medium. The 19th century prose was to produce many historians among whom W. Scott had his recognized place. To write briefly of 20th century prose is difficult. In style the most interesting developments were in drama and fiction. In between lies a prose of a prolific half century, with style playing a varying part; sometimes the imagination finds alliance with scholarship and criticism, but often the frontiers of literature are left behind as one enters a solely utilitarian world.

Theme 1: The Dawn of English Literature. The Anglo-Saxon and Norman Periods.

Plan:

1. The early history of Britons, their culture and traditions.
 - a) The invasion of the Roman Empire.
 - b) Anglo-Saxon invasion and its impact on the culture of Britain.
2. The epic Anglo-Saxon poem "The Song of Beowulf".
3. The Norman period

The early history of Britons, their culture and traditions

Many hundred years ago (about the 4th cent. before our era) the country we now call England, was known as Britain, and the people who lived there were the Britons. They belonged to the Celtic Race and the language they spoke was Celtic.

In the 1st century before our era Britain was conquered by the powerful state of Rome.

Towards the end of the 4th century the invasion of all Europe by barbaric peoples compelled the Romans to leave Britain. The fall of the Roman Empire followed soon after.

After the fall of the Roman Empire and the withdrawal of the Roman troops the aboriginal Celtic population was again conquered and almost totally exterminated by the Teutonic tribes of Angles, Saxons and Jutes who came from the continent. They settled on the island and named the central part of it England, i. e. the land of Angles. Very few traces of the original Celtic culture can be found in Modern English, its structure and grammar being totally Germanic or Teutonic.

The Anglo-Saxons brought their own folklore from their mother country and therefore early Anglo-Saxon poetry tells of the events, which took place on the continent. For a long period of time the new inhabitants preserved tribal forms of life and remained heathens.

For a very long time the tribes had numerous wars against each other. Then together with the centralization of power feudalism was established. The development of feudal Christianity came and soon it ousted heathenish religions.

Many monasteries were built and many schools were established where Latin was taught, but at the same time common people continued to keep in their memories the songs and epics created by ancient tribes. Only due to the common people we have these ancient songs nowadays.

THE EPIC ANGLO-SAXON POEM “SONG OF BEOWULF”

This is the greatest monument of Anglo-Saxon poetry. There is only one manuscript of it found at the beginning of the 18th century. It consists of 2 parts and interpolation between two parts. The whole epic consists of 3,182 lines. The scholars say that only two parts are of importance, are of scientific value. The whole song is completely pagan (heathen) in spirit while the interpolation must have been added by the Latin scribes.

Part I

The story of the song opens with a description of the Danish king Hrothgar. This king waged many wars against his neighbors, had won many victories in battles and then he decided to build a large hall for himself and his warriors to have feasts in. The hall was built, its walls were decorated. But very soon the hall was deserted

because one night while they were having a feast a sea-monster who lived in a near-by swamp broke the door open and appeared in the doorway. His name was Grendel. He was like a human in appearance but twice as tall and covered with such thick hair that no sword, spear or arrow could pierce. There wasn't a single man who could dare to confront the monster and fight with him.

The news of the disaster which had been fallen the Danes reached the ears of Beowulf - a nephew of king Higelac of Jutes. Hearing the news he took a small band of his warriors and sailed off to the shores of Denmark. When they reached her coast the Danes were at first afraid but when they saw that the Jutes meant no harm they welcomed them and took them to Hrothgar. A great feast was given in honor of Beowulf and when night fell down Beowulf told everybody to go to bed and he himself kept watch. They told him that Grendel always appeared unarmed and he also decided to meet him without any weapons.

In the dead of night the door was broken open and Grendel again appeared. Again he seized the nearest man to him but at the same time Beowulf attacked him. Beowulf grip was so mighty that Grendel could not free himself. And when Beowulf did let him go it turned out that the monster had lost one of his arms. Mourning and screaming with pain he went away to die. The Danes were happy to hear about the victory and another feast was given in honor of Beowulf.

But next night when everyone was asleep and did not expect any harm, monster's mother came to take revenge for her son. She attacked Beowulf and managed to drag him away to her swamp. It was an ugly swamp with stagnant water which was teeming of snakes. Together with the sea-witch Beowulf sank into the water of the swamp. His warriors remained on the bank to wait for him. Many hours had passed before Beowulf appeared. Everybody but his friends had given him up as dead. But this is what happened in the water. When Beowulf found himself there, he suddenly noticed a huge sword hanging on the wall. He grasped it and with its help he managed to cut off the heads of both monsters. But so poisonous was their blood that the sword melted.

Part II

After king Higelac's death Beowulf was elected the king of Jutland. He ruled his country for 50 happy years at the end of which a disaster happened. Not far from the sea, in the mountains there lived a dragon, a firedrake who breathed fire and smoke. The dragon had occupied a cave where warriors in long-forgotten times had put away their treasures. One day a traveler quite by chance discovered the cave and as a firedrake was asleep at that time he managed to get into and escape unharmed, taking away with a jeweled cup. When a dragon discovered the theft he decided to revenge and he rushed down upon the neighboring villages. The people were horrified and fled to their beloved king asking for help and protection.

Beowulf decided it was his duty to save them. He put on his armor and took a shield to protect himself from the fire of dragon and went up the mountains. He went there almost alone, but of all his warriors only young Wiglaf, a brave warrior, had the courage to stand by him. The dragon had three heads which were breathing fire. Wiglaf was standing a little side waiting for his turn. At first it was impossible to see anybody, to make out anything. Everything was covered with smoke. When the smoke dispersed Wiglaf saw the dragon with 2 heads off. The third head was still belching fire and smoke and its terrible swinging tale tried to hurt Beowulf. Wiglaf rushed to help his master and together they succeeded to cut off the third head and the tale. So the dragon was defeated and was lying dead on the ground. But Beowulf was dying himself because the fire entered his lungs.

Beowulf understood that his death was at his hands. So he told Wiglaf to take treasures in the cave. When Wiglaf came from the cave with treasures Beowulf was satisfied that treasures would be with people.

He instructed Wiglaf how to bury his body and how his country must be ruled after his death and besides his last words were devoted to his people. And Beowulf's will was carried out. People built a big bonfire and cremated Beowulf's body, their hero. And then they took all the treasures from the cave and buried them with Beowulf's ashes to show that nothing could compensate them for the loss of their king. Then the people of Jutland composed a song of Beowulf which was called a dirge.

The Norman period of English literature

The Normans invaded England in 1066 and at the battle of Hastings they defeated Anglo-Saxons. As a result of the Norman Conquest the Anglo-Saxon's monarchy fell. It was the disunity of Anglo-Saxon monarchy that made the Norman Conquest easier. The Normans were headed by the leader William Duke who established a very cruel power. Trying to expose the land they cruelly oppressed the population of the country, especially the peasantry who were treated worse than dogs. The Norman language became an official language, while English continued to be spoken only by common people. For about 3 centuries the regime existed until the middle of the 14th century. In spite of this the English language continued to exist and wasn't stamped out. It borrowed many words from French, enriching itself. In 1345 the English language was introduced at schools and became the language of the law. The literature of that time was mainly represented by romances devoted to the king Arthur and the "knights of the round table". The second half of the 14th century in England brought many changes in political, economic and social life and these changes couldn't but be reflected in literature. They began arise in English literature, so this period is called

Summary

Theme 1: The brief outline of the history of the Middle Ages, the impact of several invasions, including of Roman Empire, Angles, Saxon and Jutes, as well as Normans, on the formation of the then English literature.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 1

folklore
to compose songs
sea monster
water witch
to devour
a magic weapon
a huge sword
to sacrifice one's life
glorious youth
to become master of their own destiny
to symbolize
crucial
feast
arrogance
violence
compassion
sinful
to subdue one's passions
plunder

Questions

1. What can you tell about Britons and their language?
2. When was Britain conquered by the Roman Empire and what was its result?
3. Why did Angles, Saxons and Jutes fight with one another?
4. Why is the Anglo-Saxon poem "Beowulf" called the foundation-stone of all British poetry?
5. Name the main heroes of the poem "Beowulf".
6. Characterize Beowulf.
7. Why did Wiglaf put the blame for Beowulf's death on coward earls?
8. What is the merit of the poem?
9. Does the poem "Beowulf" remind you of any Russian or Uzbek epic poems?

Theme 2: The Literature of the 14th and 15th Centuries. Geoffrey Chaucer.

Plan:

1. The preparation for the Renaissance. William Langland – a priest/poet.
2. Geoffrey Chaucer – his life and three periods of his creative work.
3. Chaucer's masterpiece "Canterbury Tales".

The preparation for the Renaissance

A single manuscript of that time preserves four poems written in the North - Western dialect. "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" is the most subtle verse romance in English medieval literature. The romances miss human life and character. "Gawain" supplies the description of hunting and the scenes of Gawain's temptation.

Compared with the romances, the life of the medieval lyric has been strong and enduring.

Outstanding is "The Vision of Pier the Plowman", by William Langland. The poem begins with a Vision, which the poet had on the Malvern Hills, of a "field full of folk". In a strong and complicated succession of scenes he portrays almost every side of fourteenth century life. He sees the corruption of wealth inadequacies of government. To him the only salvation lies in honest labor and in the service of Christ. If he were not a mystic he would be a revolutionary poet. He has written the greatest poem in English devoted to the Christian way of life.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

(1340-1400)

In the 14th century the English language came into its own again. In 1362 it was decided that all the pleadings in law courts should be in English, and Parliament was first opened with an English speech. By the end of the century the poet Chaucer had fixed English as the literary language of the century by writing his "Canterbury Tales" in his own tongue.

Whereas Langland expressed the thoughts of the peasants, Chaucer was the writer of the new class, the bourgeoisie. He was not however the preacher of bourgeois ideology. He was simply a writer of the world. Chaucer was the first who broke away from medieval forms and cleared the way for realism.

He was born in 1340 in London; his father was a wine merchant. Yet Chaucer's parents were far from wealthy. He received, however, what education his parents were able to give him in that city.

Chaucer's writings are divided into 3 periods:

1. The French period. Chaucer's earliest poems were written in imitation of the French romances.
2. The second period of Chaucer's writings was that of the Italian influence. He is justly called the last writer of the Middle Ages and the first of the Renaissance.
3. The third period of Chaucer's creative work begins from the year (1384) when he left behind the Italian influence and became entirely English.

It is for the "Canterbury Tales" that Chaucer is best remembered, the unfinished collection of stories told by the pilgrims on their journey to Canterbury, with the Prologue, the clearest picture of late medieval life existent anywhere. His quick, sure strokes portray the pilgrims at once as types and individuals true of their own age and, still more, representatives of humanity in general. He keeps the whole poem alive by interspersing the tales themselves with the talk, - the quarrels, and the opinions of the pilgrims. The "Canterbury Tales" sum up all the types of stories that existed in the Middle Ages. Some of these stories were known only in Norman-French before Chaucer. Chaucer also used the writings of his near contemporaries as well as the works of the writers of ancient times and distant lands. Various ranks of society pass by Chaucer and he observes them without indignation.

Much in his work shows his taste for medieval literature. He delighted in allegory, and in the sentiments of the courtly lover.

Three works set him apart as a great poet in the history of poetry in general. These three works are: "Troilus and Criseyde" 1385-87, "The Legend of Good Women" 1385 and the unfinished "Canterbury Tales". Of these, the most ambitious as a complete work is "Troilus and Criseyde".

Chaucer was in learning a man of the Middle Ages, but his attitude towards mankind was so universal that his work is timeless. Chaucer doesn't teach his readers what is good or bad by moralizing; he was not a preacher. He merely called attention to the people around him; he drew his characters from life, he saw man

not only as “rich” or “poor” but as belonging to a certain rank of society. Chaucer described the individual features of his characters “according to profession and degree”, so they instantly became typical of their class. When assembled, they form one people, the English people.

The poets of the century after Chaucer were involved further in the changing nature of the language.

Summary

Theme 2: The review of the most important events that this or that way influenced the literary process in the mentioned period. The importance of Geoffrey Chaucer’s creative work for the development of English literature. Chaucer’s masterpiece “Canterbury Tales” and its place in the world literature. The first traces of Renaissance.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 2

religious poetry
conquer
to praise
pilgrimage
prologue
from all ranks of society
shrine
to sum up
serfs
to show a true picture
broad-minded

Questions

1. What do you know about William Langland’s best poem?
2. How many periods can be distinguished in G. Chaucer’s literary work?
3. Why is Chaucer’s famous “The Canterbury Tales” still of great value to the world literature?
4. In what do you see Chaucer’s contribution to literature?

Theme 3: Renaissance. William Shakespeare's Work and His Theatre.

Plan:

1. The history of Renaissance and its philosophy.
2. William Shakespeare – his life and work.
3. W. Shakespeare's best comedies.
4. W. Shakespeare's best historical dramas.
5. W. Shakespeare's best tragedies.
6. W. Shakespeare's importance for the development of the English language, literature and theatre.

The history of Renaissance and its philosophy

Renaissance was a great cultural movement that began in Italy during the early 1330's. It spread to England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, and other countries in the late 1400's and ended about 1600.

The word "Renaissance" comes from the Latin word "rinascere" and means rebirth. The Renaissance was the period when European culture was at its height. At that time great importance was assigned to intellect, experience, scientific experiment. The new ideology proclaimed the value of human individuality. This new outlook was called Humanism. The humanists were scholars and artists who studied subjects that they believed would help them better understand the problems of humanity. These subjects included literature and philosophy. The humanists considered that the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome had excelled in such subjects and could serve as models.

During the Middle Ages the most important branch of learning was theology. Renaissance thinkers paid greater attention to the study of humanity.

The Renaissance in England

During the Renaissance period (particularly 1485-1603) Middle English began to develop into Modern English. By the late 1500's the English people were speaking and writing English in a form much like that used today.

The Renaissance in England is usually studied by dividing it into three parts: the rise of the Renaissance under the early Tudor monarchs (1500-1558), the height of the Renaissance under Elizabeth I (1558-1603), and the decline of the Renaissance under the Stuart monarchs (1603-1649).

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(1564-1616)

The greatest of all English authors and one of the greatest in the world literature William Shakespeare belongs to those rare geniuses of mankind who have become landmarks in the history of world culture. Thus it was Shakespeare who embodied in the immortal images of his plays all the greatest ideas of Renaissance and in the first place the ideas of humanism which means love for mankind blended with active struggle for its happiness. Moreover he was one of the first founders of realism, a master-hand at realistic portrayal of human characters and relations.

No wonder that Shakespeare's works were so cherished by the greatest minds of mankind, who regarded Shakespeare as the "the greatest dramatic genius the world has ever known".

William Shakespeare was born on the 23d of April 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon. His father, John Shakespeare, the son of a small farmer settled in Stratford and entered the trade. At the age of seven Shakespeare was sent to the local grammar school which he attended for six years. Besides reading and writing he was taught Latin and Greek. In 1577 he was taken from school and for some time had to help his father in his trade.

There are reasons to believe that Shakespeare distinguished himself at school for there is a tradition according to which he, in his young years, was a schoolmaster in his place. When still at Stratford Shakespeare became well acquainted with theatrical performances. Stratford was often visited by traveling companies of actors.

In 1582 Shakespeare married a farmer's daughter Anne Hathaway, 8 years elder than Shakespeare with three children. At the time Shakespeare arrived in London the drama was rapidly gaining popularity among the people. Shakespeare is known to have been an actor and playwright in one of the leading companies of players. Later on he became a shareholder of the theatre, which later was called "The Globe".

In his works Shakespeare was always keenly alive to events of contemporary life which made his plays extremely popular. Shakespeare's activity as a dramatist, poet, actor and proprietor lasted till the year 1612 when he retired from the stage and returned to Stratford. Shakespeare died on the 23d of April 1616.

The first complete edition of Shakespeare's works was published by his fellow-players and friends in 1623.

Shakespeare's Work

For more than 25 years Shakespeare had been associated with the best theatres of England. During the 22 years of his literary work he produced 37 plays, two narrative poems and 154 sonnets.

His literary work may be divided into three major periods:

the first period from 1590-1600

the second period from 1601-1608

the third period from 1609-1612

The First Period (1590-1600) Comedies

The first period of Shakespeare's work may be defined as a period of comedies and histories. An exception is "Romeo and Juliet" (1594), one of the tragedies written before 1600. But it preserves many traits of the other plays of this period and remains an apotheosis of youthful and triumphant love. On the whole, the spirit of Shakespeare's early work is optimistic.

Still the plays of this period are based on sharp conflicts. His early comedies already present the mixture of tragic and comic elements – the contrast between the laughable and the serious, or in other words the blending of opposite qualities, which is so characteristic of Shakespeare's realistic art. Thus in the "Comedy of Errors" which is full of fun and merriment one hears sorrowful and even tragic notes.

In the "Taming of the Shrew" Shakespeare's critical tendencies are already distinctly revealed. The plot of the comedy is borrowed. But having taken the old plot, Shakespeare infused a new life into it, created a comedy, humane and progressive in its essence. He gave a new interpretation to the principal characters, introduced new ones for contrast and made the social background stand out with great vividness. The main heroes: Petruchio, Balthasar, Katharina, Bianca.

"Twelfth Night" - the last play of the first period – may be considered an artistic consummation of the best images and ideas of all Shakespeare's comedies. (Sebastian, Viola, Olivia, Orsino). The play is imbued with humanist ideas. It is

devoted to the glorification of faithful love that overcomes the hardest of obstacles. The young girl Viola struggles for her happiness and wins it owing to her love and wit. Love works wonder with people turning the cold and naughty Olivia into a tender-hearted girl and making the Duke marry Viola, a girl who is inferior to him in rank.

As it is always the case with Shakespeare true love is associated with high-mindedness and mutual understanding.

Historical dramas

Shakespeare's interest in the history of his country was one of the manifestations of the patriotic feelings of the common people of England and of the rise of their national consciousness in the latter half of the 16th century.

In his Histories Shakespeare gives a broad panorama of English life. Scenes of private and domestic life alternate with heroic episodes of war and political intrigues. The principal idea of his historical plays is the necessity of the consolidation of the country under the king. The feudal lords who struggle with each other and against the king are doomed, and their fall is inevitable. Like the majority of humanists of his time Shakespeare believed in a wise and humane king who would like to serve his country. But with the only exception of Henry V Shakespeare's treatment of real English kings is extremely critical.

Shakespeare's Histories are political plays. A gallery of characters is presented in Shakespeare's Histories; rich and poor, great and humble, good and evil. We learn not only of kings and lords but also of common people.

Romeo and Juliet (1594)

Romeo, the young heir of the Montagues and Juliet, the beautiful young daughter of the Capulets, fall in love with each other. There is an age-old feud between two families, which serves as insurmountable barrier to the union of the youthful lovers. They plan to escape, but circumstances are against them and both die, victims of feudal despotism of their parents.

Feudalism to W. Shakespeare meant the doom of all genuinely human feelings and of natural human relations. Shakespeare shows us the terrible world of human relations of people who hate one another and are hateful to one another. And the two young men fight against this world of hatred.

Heinrich Heine, the great German poet, in his critical article devoted to Shakespeare's feminine images writes that not only the above-mentioned lovers

are the heroes of the play but love itself is. And though the play is tragic, it is an optimistic tragedy, love defeats hatred.

The Second Period (1601-1608)

Tragedies

Hamlet (1601)

“Hamlet, Prince of Denmark” is the most thoughtful of all Shakespeare’s plays. It tells the story of a Danish Prince (Hamlet). After his father’s death his mother queen married Claudius, Hamlet’s uncle. At midnight the ghost of his father rises and tells Hamlet that murder has been done, that his uncle is the murderer, and calls upon him to revenge his father’s cruel death. To this task Hamlet devotes himself. Hamlet is an intellectual character. In details Shakespeare gives the mental and the spiritual state of Prince Hamlet.

The play is an optimistic tragedy. “Hamlet” contains the most important message of all art-love for mankind, the call to an active struggle for a better future, for the happiness of all people, for the total annihilation of all tyrants and oppressors, for justice.

Othello (1604)

Another great tragedy is “Othello, the Moor of Venice”. This is also a humanist tragedy. Certain elements of the plot were borrowed by Shakespeare from an Italian source, where the Moor of Venice had been depicted as a rather primitive soldier whose dominating passion was jealousy. Shakespeare’s Othello is quite different. Shakespeare’s Othello is a great man and a great warrior, and as many of the really great men he is too noble-minded to mistrust those whom he loves. As A.S. Pushkin said: “Othello is not jealous by nature, on the contrary, he is trustful”. He values sincerity and loftiness of mind above all other human qualities, and he loves Desdemona so dearly just because he finds her to be the very embodiment of these high qualities.

King Lear (1605)

In “King Lear” we have the story of a poor old king who was turned out of house and home and exposed to the fury of a tempest by his ungrateful daughters between whom he had divided his kingdom, foolishly believing that they loved him too dearly to be unkind to him.

At length he becomes crazy in consequence of all he has to endure, and is finally rescued by his youngest daughter who, he had thought loved him best of all. The

two wicked daughters died by violent death, and the third and only good one fell a victim to a heartless wretch who caused her to be killed in prison. This was more than the king could bare and he laid himself down to die beside the body of the daughter who had loved him so fondly.

Summary

Theme 3: The Renaissance in the culture of Europe and England. The importance of W. Shakespeare's activities and creations for the establishment of the English drama and theatre. The brief outline of a comedy, a history and a tragedy in Shakespeare's interpretation. W. Shakespeare on the stage and in the movies.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 3

crafty
curiously
flashy
conference
present wit
to make an important contribution
to invent
sonnet
to be accused
high treason
manage to get free
to be undermined
cruel torture
to bring to perfection
sonnet cycle
Renaissance ideology
to depict characters
to outshine
a leading shareholder
the principal playwright
immortal
dramatic technique
the source of the plot
chronicle

Questions

1. Characterize the period of Renaissance on the whole.
2. What influence did Shakespeare make upon the world literature?
3. What did the great poet have in common with the Globe theatre?
4. What works made Shakespeare immortal?
5. Characterize Hamlet. Why does he delay avenging for his father?
6. Why did Romeo and Juliet's lives end tragically?
7. Who were the main protagonists of Shakespeare's sonnets?
8. What are the Shakespearian sonnets important for?

Theme 4: The Enlightenment and Reflection of its Ideas in English Literature.

Plan:

1. The Enlightenment – its ideals and objectives.
2. Daniel Defoe – his life and work. "Robinson Crusoe".
3. Jonathan Swift – his life and work. "Gulliver's travels"
4. Henry Fielding – his life and work. His best novels.
5. Richard Sheridan – his life and work. "School for Scandal".
6. Robert Burns – his life and work. His best poems.

The Enlightenment – its ideals and objectives

In the 18th century in England, as in other European countries, there sprang into life a public movement known as the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment, on the whole, was an expression of struggle of the then progressive class of bourgeoisie against feudalism. The Enlighteners fought against class inequality, prejudices and other survivals of feudalism. They attempted to place all branched of science at the service of mankind by connecting them with the actual needs and requirements of people. The problem of men comes to the fore superseding all other problems in literature. The Enlighteners prove that man is born kind and honest and if he becomes depraved, it is only due to the influence of corrupted social environment.

Fighting the survivals of feudalism, the enlighteners at the same time were prone to accept bourgeois relationships as rightful and reasonable relationships among people. The English writers of the time formed two groups. The first – hoped to better the world simply by teaching (Defoe). The other – openly protested against the vicious social order (Swift, Fielding, Sheridan, Burns).

DANIEL DEFOE

(1660-1731)

Daniel Defoe (Foe) was born in London in 1660. His father was a well-to-do butcher. Defoe's biography is typical of energetic and enterprising man of that epoch. He tried his luck in many professions, but failed everywhere because he was more interested in politics than in business.

His first political pamphlet was "The True-Born Englishman" (1701) in which he exposes the aristocracy and tyranny of the church. A year later he wrote the pamphlet aimed against the official church. The House of Commons ordered to burn the pamphlet. Defoe was arrested and placed in the public square before imprisonment.

He published political and literary magazine "The Review of the Affairs of France and of all Europe" (1704-1713) which was written entirely by Defoe himself. The figure of an enlightener who stood for the rights of common people rises from the pages of Defoe's best essays and pamphlets published in the magazine. He laid bare the vices of the ruling classes and expressed belief in human reason and knowledge.

The year 1719 marked a new period in Defoe's literary activity. At the age of 60 he published his first novel "Robinson Crusoe" – the book on which his fame mainly rests to the present day. The development of industry and trade brought to the fore men of a new stamp who had to be reflected in the new literature (the story of Alexander Selkirk).

The novel is the first book that glorifies the human creative labor. The image of an enterprising Englishman of the 18th century was created by Daniel Defoe in this book. Robinson is a toiler but a typical bourgeois at the same time. Robinson is the first positive image of a bourgeois in literature. He reflects the progressive role of bourgeoisie in the epoch of its flourishing. If now we perceive the book as an adventurous novel, people of the 18th century perceived it as a work of full great social and philosophical sense. This book was one of the forerunners of the English 18th century realistic novel.

His other novels are: "Captain Singleton" (1720), "Moll Flanders" (1722), "Colonel Jack" (1722), "Roxana" (1724), "A Journal of the Plague Year" (1722).

The principle problem of the Enlightenment – influence of society on man's nature – stands in the centre of all these novels. The writers and philosophers of the Enlightenment believed that man is good and noble by nature but many succumb to the evil environment.

In his novels Defoe also shows with great realism how life and social surrounding spoil people. Poverty breeds crime. Thus in “Colonel Jack” Defoe with warmth and sympathy depicts a poor boy, who being honest and kind by nature, becomes a thief when he is faced with the alternative either to steal or to starve.

Defoe selected secular subject banished allegory, his fictions were easily mistaken for narrations of facts.

JONATHAN SWIFT

(1667-1745)

J. Swift was born of English parents in Dublin. Swift’s father was an attorney by profession. He died a few months before the birth of his son. Circumstances of want, dependence and humiliation were the early impressions of Swift’s childhood.

He studied at a college in Dublin. At the age of 21 Swift went to England and became a secretary in the service of a distant relative of his mother, Sir William Temple, a man of letters and a well-known diplomat of the time. Swift’s intercourse with Temple and other politicians who visited his patron initiated Swift into the contemporary political world, its intrigues and machinations. The two years at Temple’s place were filled for Swift with intense studying and reading. His learning and erudition won him great respect at Oxford where Swift in 1692 took his degree as Master of Arts.

Temple treated Swift a little better than a servant. Finally Swift broke with Temple and returned to Ireland. He took holy orders and went to a little parish church in Ireland. But soon he went back into the employ of Temple, who having realized what a good secretary he had lost, repeatedly invited Swift with a promise of help and promotion.

During the four years of his second stay at Temple’s Swift wrote his famous satires, which were published several years later, “Tale of a Tub” (1697-1704) and “Battle of Books” (1697). After Temple’s death, Swift returned to Ireland where he obtained the vicarage of Laracor, in a small Irish town.

In 1704, Swift wrote his immortal political satire “Tale of a Tub”. It is an allegory in which Swift criticizes various forms of religion and bitterly exposes religious dogmas and superstitions. Different forms of Christian doctrines, theories are compared to rotten tubs which help the whale-hunters divert the attention of the whales (i.e. people) the easier to kill them.

In 1712, Swift wrote “The Conduct of the Allies”. In this pamphlet, Swift raises his voice against the war waged by England on the continent. He showed that war

is a burden for the common people and demanded peace. The pamphlet engaged an unprecedented success. Swift's popularity sprang widely.

Swift's life in Ireland gave him an intimate knowledge of the miserable condition of the people. A desire to serve Ireland became one of his ruling passions. He published "A proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture" (Предложение о всеобщем употреблении ирландской мануфактуры) – a pamphlet where he came out in defense of the Irish rights for free development of their own industries. In 1704, Swift published under a disguise of a common trader a series of letters called Drapier's Letters. In this work he reveals the machination with money in Ireland.

In 1716, Swift's greatest work "Gulliver's Travels" made its appearance. Swift portrays contemporary life satirically. It contains the adventures of a ship surgeon as told by him and is divided into four parts of voyages.

The first part contains an account of Lilliput and its little people. They are less than six inches high. Everything else in the country is in the same proportion. Here the satire is directed to the meanness and conventionality of the morality of politicians and statesmen.

The second part tells of Brobdignag and its giants, they are sixty feet in height. The giants live a simple Utopian life.

The third part tells about Laputa, a flying island. Ladago is a city with an absurd academ'y and so on. Glubbudrib, and Ireland of magicians, and Luggnagg, another island where wretched people continue living.

The fourth part brings Gulliver to the country of the Honyhnhums, where the intelligent creatures are horses, and all the human beings (Yahoos) monsters are reduced to the level of brutes. It is in describing these Yahoos that Swift shows how bitterly he hated society vices. He decides that horses are clever and more decent creatures than men.

Swift did not swim over the surface of contemporary life. Swift penetrated into the depths and saw the social corruption at its worst. Swift died in Dublin in 1745. Bourgeois critics describe Swift as a misanthrope and a sceptic. Nothing is farther from the truth. Swift hated all kinds of oppression – political, economic, religious; but he loved people which found expression in his upholding the defense of the Irish people in their struggle for freedom. Swift, like other writers-philosophers of the Enlightenment, at first believed that an enlightened monarch could give happiness to people. Reality frustrated that belief. Then Swift became a republican. Unlike many other writers of Enlightenment Swift refused to pin his hopes on bourgeois progress.

Political situation in England and in Europe was anything but encouraging: the English revolution was a thing of the past; the “Glorious Revolution” had ended in a compromise between the aristocracy and bourgeoisie; the first risings of the English proletariat as well as the French revolution were yet far to come. Everything around Swift witnessed vice oppression and misery. He failed to see the way that would lead people to freedom and happiness. Swift’s greatness lies in the unparalleled satirical description of the vices of his age. His greatness also consists in the fact that in his famous works, particularly in his pamphlets, he addressed himself to common people.

HENRY FIELDING

(1707-1754)

Henry Fielding was born on the 22nd of April 1707 to an aristocratic family. His father was a General. He was educated at Eton College and the University of Leyden, Holland. But the poverty of the family ran so high that the future writer was compelled to leave the university after a year and a half of studies. He began to make his own living from his very youth.

Fielding began his literary career in 1728 and soon became one of the most popular playwrights in London. In his best comedies “A Judge Caught in His Own Trap” (1730), “Don Quixote in England” (1734), “Pasquin” (1736). Fielding mercilessly exposed England courts of law, the parliamentary system and the cupidity of state officials. He criticized the vices of the bourgeoisie and aristocracy – their hypocrisy, greed and cruelty – and revealed the most striking aspect of contemporary society. Prime Minister Walpole, who had also been victimized by Fielding’s sharp critical satire in one of his plays, took revenge by introducing a censorship of the stage, which put an end to Fielding’s career as a dramatist. Deprived of means of subsistence, at the age of 30 he entered a law school. Fielding studied law and acquired a profession of a lawyer, continuing to write at the same time.

The period from 1741-1751 saw the publication of Fielding’s remarkable novels – “The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews and His Friend Mr. Abraham Adams” (1742), “The History of the Life of the Late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great” (1743), Fielding’s masterpiece “The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling” (1749) and his last novel “Amelia” (1751).

In 1754, he left England for Portugal to recover his health. He arrived in Lisbon and stayed there for some time. The warm climate, however, did not restore his health and he died in October 8, 1754. He was buried in Lisbon.

Fielding's novels

The novel "The History of the Life of the Late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great" is based on the life of a notorious criminal who ended his career on the gallows. Showing Jonathan's thievish activity Fielding likens him to Prime Minister Walpole. Fielding's satire is becoming very sharp when he describes the prison where Jonathan is sitting. Fielding turns this prison into an allegorical description of the English social and political life of that time. It refers to the kind of novels about adventures.

"The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling" (1749) is his principal novel. It contains a picture of life and manners and tells the story of Tom Jones, a generous, open, manly young fellow who gets into all sorts of scrapes.

In his works Fielding strongly criticizes social relations in the contemporary England. Aristocrats and men set in authority embody all the evils; they persecute the heroes and obstruct their every move and action.

The author's positive characters are always people with natural unspoiled feelings. To make them acceptable to the 18th century reader, Joseph Andrews, the manservant, and Tom Jones, the foundling, though of noble origin, still they have nothing aristocratic about them and in their feelings and behavior remain closely related to the common people.

Fielding was the first to introduce into the novel real characters in their actual surroundings. His characters are vivid full-blooded and humane people. In search of happiness they travel about the country, and their various adventures are full of humour and sound cheerfully. Their hearts are open to pure love, virtue and justice. His novels are bright, sparkling and full of the liveliest humor.

Fielding's works display boundless optimism, broad humanity and inexhaustible faith in man. All these features plus the brilliant artistic language of his writings, make Fielding one of the greatest masters of the realistic novels.

Many generations have read "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling" rightly called an ancestor of the modern realistic novel.

The history of literature knows a few writers endowed with such versatile talents as Fielding. He left a rich legacy of novels, comedies, poems, pamphlets and essays. A talented novelist and a playwright of great originality, a master of humor and satire, he was one of the most outstanding figures in that significant period in history known as the age of Enlightenment.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

(1751-1816)

Richard Brinsley Sheridan is the most outstanding satirist in the drama of the Enlightenment. He came of an Irish stock; his father was an actor and his mother an authoress. Sheridan was educated at Harrow. Later on he developed connections with the theatrical world. He was twenty-three when his first comedy "The Rivals" (1775) was staged.

The action of the play unfolds itself within two parallel intrigues. Julia, a girl of quiet temperament, has a jealous and mistrustful lover. His character gives rise to a number of petty quarrels and conflicts, which are happily settled towards the end, when the lovers are united.

The other heroine Lydia is a girl full of romantic fancies. A legitimate marriage seems too prosaic for her; besides she prefers an admirer without social standing. Therefore, Lydia's suitor, Captain Absolute (a sober young man) decides on a trick to capture the girl's fancy – he introduces himself to her in guise of a poor lieutenant. When the deception is discovered, Lydia at first refuses to marry him, but finally agrees to become his wife.

The most interesting characters of Sheridan's art are two comic characters in this play. One of them is Bob Acres, a coward who is forced by circumstances to fight a duel. The resulting scene is highly comical. The second is Lydia's aunt, Mrs. Malaprop. The most characteristic feature of this pretentious woman is her love for long foreign words which she uses incorrectly. For example, she says epitaph instead of "epithet" etc. A funny fondness for high sounding words and their incorrect usage, so wittily ridiculed by Sheridan, has since been given the name of "malapropism". Such personages as Sir Anthony, Bob Acres, and, above all, Mrs. Malaprop, are classic figures in English comedy.

Sheridan's tribute to the vogue of the day was his comic opera "The Duenna" (1775). Its plot shows the influence of Moliere and the Spanish comedy. In 1777 he wrote "The School for Scandal". The latter is the best artistic work of the English drama of the 18th century and one of the best English comedies of all times. In his comedy Sheridan boldly criticizes the bourgeois aristocratic society of England. He created the English social comedy. It exposes the hypocrisy, cruelty and egoism of bourgeois-aristocratic circle in England.

Sheridan discontinued playwriting to become a partner in, and later on a sole proprietor of the Drury Lane Theatre.

In 1780, Sheridan went in for politics and became a famous orator. Some of Sheridan's political speeches delivered within this period are regarded as a classical example of English oratory art. In 1780, he became a member of the English parliament. By turns he filled the posts of undersecretary for foreign affairs, secretary of the exchequer, and, finally, treasurer of the Admiralty.

In 1787, he delivered his famous speech against Hastings, the Governor-General of India. In his speech during the long trial that lasted for six hours, he held to shame the English policy in India.

The second half of Sheridan's life was overshadowed by two misfortunes; the death of his wife in 1792 and the loss of his property – the Drury Lane Theatre – which was burnt to the ground. The catastrophe, however, did not rob Sheridan of his natural cheerfulness. A witness' evidence has it that during the fire Sheridan was calmly drinking wine in a coffee-house opposite and indulging in witticism about the burning theatre. The last years of Sheridan find him in reduced circumstances. He had contracted many debts, and at the same time of his death there were bailiffs at his house.

Byron remarked of Sheridan in these words: "He has made the best speech and written the best comedy, the best opera, and the best farce in the English literature".

ROBERT BURNS

(1759-1796)

R. Burns, the great poet of the Scottish people, was born on the 25th of January 1759 in a small clay-built cottage at Alloway Ayrshire. He was the oldest of the 7 sons of William Burns, a poor gardener.

Robert had great thirst for knowledge. From his teacher he acquired some French and Latin and also a fondness of Shakespeare. From his younger years Burns had an intimate knowledge of Scottish folk-songs.

In 1766, W. Burns rented a patch of land. The whole family moved to a farm near the town of Ayrshire, where they worked in the fields from sunrise to sunset. Robert's schooling was discontinued. The land gave bad crops and the affairs of the family went from bad to worse. In spite of working beyond his strength for the benefit of the family young Burns found time for reading. In 1777 the Burns removed to Tarbolton. But this did not improve the fortune of the family. For Robert Burns those years were full of various intellectual activities. He wrote poetry and organized a society of young people where all kinds of moral, social and political problems were discussed.

The young poet felt deeply the injustice of the world where the landlords owned the best land and the woods. Burns' protest against inequality found its vent in his poems which were circulated in manuscripts. They easily won the hearts of common people appealing to their human dignity and giving them belief in their own strength.

Burns decided to seek his fortune abroad. To raise the passage money he issued in July 1786 a printed prospectus of his poems. The enterprise met with success and a collection of "Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect" made its appearance. The book contained lyrical, humorous and satirical poems written by Robert Burns in the earlier years. Burns' poems were a great success with the public and in April 1787 the book saw a second edition.

In 1786 he was invited to come to Edinburgh. The poet was accepted by the fashionable society of the capital. But it could not appreciate the poetry of Burns. He felt a stranger in this world which looked down upon the ploughman poet. Burns left the capital with a sense of relief and started on a tour about Scotland.

At the end of 1795 Burns contracted a severe illness from which he died. Uneasy was the mind of the dying poet. A few days before his death, he was threatened with imprisonment for having a debt of ten pounds. In a letter to the publisher of his songs Burns asked for a loan of some money promising to send some songs in lieu of payment. The letter contained the following lines: "Cursed necessity compels me to implore you for five pounds".

On the 21st of July, 1796 Burns died.

Burns is the most optimistic poet among the poets of the end of the 18th century. Burns poetry is the bone and the flesh of the Scottish common people. The great poet drew his inspiration from the treasury of the Scotch folklore and his poems in their turn became the people's property. Burns' works are national in their context and form. They express the thoughts and hopes, aspirations of the Scottish peasantry.

Burns always stood for liberty and fought against social inequality. He sympathized with the poor and hated the rich. Burns esteemed people not because of their richness but because of their labor, mind and dignity.

In his Revolutionary Lyric written in the nineties Burns regards the future happiness of common men as the result of revolution. This idea was inspired by the French Revolution which greatly influenced Burns in his poetic work.

About the French Revolution he wrote in the poem "The Tree of Liberty" in 1793.

In this work the poet tells about the Tree of Liberty that symbolized Liberty planted in France and hopes that such a tree will be planted in England too.

Burns widely uses folklore plots, many of his poems are based on folk legends, for instance “Tam O’Shater”. It describes how Shater after a jolly night, when he was drinking with his friends, gets on his horse and sets out for home. The road lies across a dreary place. In the ruined church he is passing he sees witches who are having a night of merriment and dancing. Being discovered Tam gallops as he may. He is saved when he reaches a bridge because the witches are afraid of flood.

“John Barleycorn” is a poem full of humor and cheerfulness. In Burns lyrics we can see wonderful pictures of life of the people, deep feeling of nature and great cordiality and joy. He has many splendid verses devoted to love (“A Red, Red Rose”, “A Fond Kiss”). Many of his poems are written in the form of songs. In his poems Burns glorified a natural man – a healthy, joyous and clever Scotch peasant. Himself poor, he sang honest poor contrasting them to cruel squires, greedy merchants and hypocrites.

Summary

Theme 4: The Enlightenment as a social movement in Europe and England.

Journalism in that period, the best representatives of English Enlightenment –

Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Henry Fielding, Richard Sheridan, Robert Burns.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 4

to perish

to remain faithful to one’s ideas

to rule the universe autocratically

serpent

to persuade

to banish

a life of toil and woe

tyranny

Questions

1. In what way did Defoe begin his literary career?
2. What was Defoe’s satire in verse “The True-born Englishman“?
3. What novels by Daniel Defoe do you know?
4. What suggested the idea for the novel “Robinson Crusoe” to Defoe?
5. What is the main theme of the novel?
6. Speak about the characteristic features of Robinson Crusoe.

7. What helped Robinson to withstand all the calamities of his unusual destiny?
8. Do you think it is possible for a man to spend so many years alone on a wild island?
9. What role did Sir William Temple play in Swift's literary career?
10. What did Swift criticize in his pamphlets?
11. When was Swift's masterpiece "Gulliver's Travels" written and why did it make a great sensation?
12. Whom did Swift mean to ridicule when describing the country of Lilliput and its people?
13. At whom is Swift's satire directed when he describes the flying island and the way taxes are collected from the people?
14. Why did Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" become popular in all Countries of the world?
15. What is depicted in Fielding's "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling"?

Theme 5: Romanticism.

Plan:

1. The peculiarities of English Romanticism: two trends – progressive and regressive.
2. The poets of the "Lake School" – W. Wordsworth, S. Coleridge, R. Southey.
3. George Byron – his life and work.
4. Percy Shelley – his life and work.
5. Walter Scott, a founder of a historical novel – his life and work. His best novels.

The peculiarities of English Romanticism: two trends – progressive and regressive

The Enlightenment, on the whole, was an expression of struggle of the then progressive class of bourgeoisie against feudalism. But fighting the survivals of feudalism, the Enlighteners, at the same time, were prone to accept bourgeois relations as rightful and reasonable relations among people.

The development of bourgeois relations revealed to the most progressive minds of the century the contradictions of the new society. The realization of it led to the crisis of the Enlightenment at the end of the 18th century.

A new literary current came into being at the end of the 18th century during the period of victory and consolidation of capitalist system – Romanticism. It covers the period from the beginning of the French bourgeois revolution (1789-1793) to the parliamentary reform in England (1832). Viewed in its historical aspect Romanticism may be considered to be an expression of reaction against the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and expression of opposition and denial of the capitalist progress.

English romanticism can be regarded as an offspring of two great historical events: 1) the industrial revolution in England and 2) the French bourgeois revolution of 1789. The French Revolution was of great importance not only for France but all over Europe. Under its influence social contradictions in England developed to a great extent. The ruling classes were frightened by the revolution. On the other hand a new class of workers sprang into existence. The working people lived in dire poverty and were mercilessly exploited by the bourgeoisie, so the first workers' rebellions broke out. The workers movement of the Luddites (1810-1811), otherwise called "frame-breakers" naively believed that use of machines was the reason at the bottom of all social evils and expressed their protest against exploitation and misery by breaking machines. But in spite of the fact that the class contradictions were very great at that time, the main contradiction at the beginning of the 19th century was that the movement of the feudal-monarchic society and bourgeois-democratic movement

Romanticism was the reaction of the aristocratic class and the peasants ruined by the agrarian industrial revolutions. Some of the romantic writers reflected the ideology of the classes ruined by capitalism. They protested against new social formation and they found their ideals in the feudal past. These were reactionary or regressive romanticists. Other authors found their ideals in future society free from oppression and exploitation, though they had a very vague idea of this society. These were revolutionary or progressive romanticists.

In contradiction to the rationalistic approach of the enlighteners, the romantic writers concentrate their attention upon spiritual and emotional life of man. Best suited for the expression of all the above sentiments was poetry. Therefore, this genre became predominant in the literature of Romanticism.

The second period in the history of English Romanticism includes the work of two poets of genius George Byron and Percy Shelley. They represent the trend of progressive romanticism. The significant social changes in contemporary England contributed to an increased interest in history. Profound understanding of historical processes is revealed in the prose-work of Walter Scott – the creator of modern historical novel and the last romantic writer.

The poets of the “Lake School”

Reactionary tendencies in English literature found reflection in the activities of the “Lakists” – W. Wordsworth (1770-1850), S. Coleridge (1772-1834), and R. Southey (1774-1843). All of them belonged to the “Lake School”, called so after the Lakeland in the Northern part of England, where the poets spent much time and beauties of the land they described in the poems. Early in their literary carrier the three poets were interested in the burning social problems of contemporary life. In some of their poems they depicted the life of the peasants brought to ruin by the development of capitalism in the country, exposed unjust laws and protested against cruel wars.

They hailed the French Revolution but their sympathy for it was not lasting and eventually the poets came to side with the reactionary policy of the British Government which suppressed all traces of protest at home and declared its hostility to the revolution in France. Nevertheless, most of the poems written by them are great from the stand point of poetic art. W. Wordsworth and S. Coleridge jointly wrote and published the collection of “Lyrical Ballads” in 1798. Many of the poems in the collection were devoted to the position of landless and homeless peasants. Sincerely sympathizing with the poor, they at the same time severely criticized capitalism. But in their criticism they idealized backward patriarchal form of society.

The poets were passionate lovers of nature and the description of lakes and rivers of meadows and woods, of skies and clouds are exquisite. In their poems they, especially Wordsworth, aimed at simplicity and purity of the language, fighting against the conventional forms of the 18th century poetry.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

(1788 -1824)

Byron was a real fighter; he struggled for the liberty of the nations with both pen and sword. Freedom was the cause that he served all his life. Byron hated wars, sympathized with the oppressed people. Nevertheless, definite limitations of the poet’s world outlook caused deep contradictions in his works. Many of his verses are touched with disappointment and skepticism. The philosophy of “world sorrow” becomes the leading theme of his works. Romantic individualism and a pessimistic attitude to life combine in Byron’s art with his firm belief in reason: realistic tendencies prevail in his works of the later period. In spite of his pessimism, Byron’s verse embodies the aspirations of the English workers, Irish peasants, Spanish partisans, Italian “Carbonari” movement, Albanian and Greek patriots.

George Gordon Byron was born in London, on January 22, 1788, in an impoverished aristocratic family. His mother, Catherine Gordon, was a Scottish Lady of honorable birth and respectable fortune. After having run through his own and most of his wife's fortune, his father an army officer, died when the boy was only 3 years old. His mother was a woman of quick feelings and strong passions. Now she kissed him, now she scolded him. These contradictory emotions affected his life, character and poetry. Byron was lame from birth and sensitive about it all his life. But, thanks to his strong will and regular training, he became an excellent rider, a champion swimmer, a boxer and took part in athletic exercises.

Byron spent the first ten years of his life in Scotland. His admiration of natural scenery of the country was reflected in many of his poems. He attended grammar school in Aberdeen. In 1798, when George was at the age of ten, his grand-uncle died and the boy inherited the title of Lord and the family estate of the Byrons, Newstead Abbey, in Nottinghamshire. Now he was sent to Harrow School. At the age of seventeen he entered the Cambridge University and in 1808 graduated from it. George was sixteen when he fell in love with his distant relative Mary Chaworth, and his youthful imagination seemed to have found the ideal of womanly perfection. But she did not return his affection. Byron had never forgotten his love to Mary and it colored much of his writing. In the first canto of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" the poet says that Harold "sighed to many, though he loved but one" and it is a hint to the poet's own life.

While a student, Byron published his first collection of poems "Hours of Idleness" (1807). It was mercilessly attacked by a well-known critic in the magazine "Edinburgh Review". In a reply to it Byron wrote his satirical poem "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers". In that poem Byron criticized the contemporary literary life. In 1809, next year after graduating from the University, the poet took his hereditary seat in the House of Lords. The same year he left England on a long journey and visited Portugal, Spain, Albania, Greece and Turkey, and during his travels wrote the first two cantos of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage".

After an absence of two years the poet returned to England. On February 27, 1812, Byron made his first speech in the House of Lords. He spoke in defense of the English workers and blamed the government for the unbearable conditions of the life of the working people. Later the poet again raised his voice in defense of the oppressed workers, encouraging them to fight for freedom in his "Song for the Luddites". (1816)

In 1812 the first two cantos of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" were published. Walter Scott declared that for more than a century no work had produced a greater effect. The author himself remarked: "I awoke one morning and found myself famous". Between 1813 and 1816 Byron composed his "Oriental Tales": "The Giaour", "The Corsair", "Lara", "Parisina" and others. These tales embody the

poet's romantic individualism. The hero of each poem is a rebel against society. He is a man of strong will and passion. Proud and independent, he rises against tyranny and injustice to gain his personal freedom and happiness. But his revolt is too individualistic, and therefore it is doomed to failure.

A collection of lyrical verses, which appeared in 1815, "Hebrew Melodies", confirmed Byron's popularity. One of the most beautiful poems of the cycle is "My Soul is Dark"

My Soul is Dark

My soul is dark - oh! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again:
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart will burst,
For it hath been by sorrow nursed,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once - or yield to song.

In 1815 Byron married Miss Isabella Milbanke, but it was an unlucky match. Though Byron was fond of their only child Augusta Ada, and did not want to break up the family, separation was inevitable. The scandal around the divorce was enormous. Byron's enemies found their opportunity, and used it to the utmost against him.

On April 25, 1816, the poet left England for Switzerland. Here he made the acquaintance of Shelley, the two poets became close friends. While in Switzerland, Byron wrote the third canto of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage", "The Prisoner of Chillon", the dramatic poem "Manfred" and many lyrics. "The Prisoner of Chillon" describes the tragic fate of the Swiss revolutionary Bonnivard, who spent many years of his life in prison together with his brothers.

In 1817 Byron left Switzerland for Italy. The Italian period (1817- 1823) is considered to be the summit of Byron's poetical career. In Italy he wrote

“Beppo”(1818), a humorous poem in a Venetian setting, and his greatest work “Don Juan”, the fourth canto of “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage”, “The Prophecy of Dante”, the dramas “Marino Faliero”, “Cain”. At the same period he wrote his satirical masterpieces “The Vision of Judgement” and “The Age of Bronze”. Unfortunately, the prudery of Victorian critics obscured these poems from the public, and they have never received their due esteem. Special words should be said about “Don Juan”, one of his great poems, a performance of rare artistic skill. Humor, sentiment, adventure, and pathos were thrown together with that same disconcerting incongruity as they were to be found in life. The style is a clever imitation of idiom and phrasing of ordinary conversation, used with great cunning for satiric and comic effects.

The war of Greece against the Turks had been going on that time. Byron longed for action and went to Greece to take part in the struggle for national independence. There he was seized with fever and died at Missolonghi on April 18, 1824, at the age of 36. The Greeks desired that his remains should be buried in the country for which he had spent his life, but his friends wanted him to be buried in Westminster Abbey. The English authorities refused it, and the poet’s body, already transported from Greece to England, was buried in the family vault near Newstead. His spirit might have flourished better in some world other than the heavy Georgian society in which he grew up. The last episode in Greece showed that he had leadership and courage.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

(1792-1822)

P.B. Shelley was born in 1792 in Sussex. His father, a baronet, was a conservative and narrow-minded man. At Eton College where he was sent in 1804, Shelley was disliked by the teachers for his independent thinking and opposition to fagging.

He studied at Eton College, then Oxford. In 1804 Shelley entered Oxford, where he soon came to sharp conflict with the conservatism and dogmatism of contemporary university life. In 1811 Shelley wrote an anti-religious pamphlet “The Necessity of Atheism” for which he was expelled from the University and disowned. Shelley went on a tour over England. The year 1812 found him in Ireland, whose people exploited both by the Irish nobility and English bourgeoisie, openly revolted against their oppression. Shelley’s proclamations “An Address to the Irish People” and “Declarations of Rights” were intended to encourage the Irish people to stand up for their rights. On his return to England Shelley published his first poem of note “Queen Mab” (1813). “Queen Mab” makes it clear that Shelley is a utopian socialist in his views. He believes that a happy society of the future can be brought about by peaceful means. The strong point of “Queen Mab” is

materialistic philosophy which underlies the poem. The idea of God is rejected by the author. Shelley contrasts knowledge and science to religion.

In 1814-1816 Shelley traveled abroad. During his visit to Switzerland he met Byron and a warm friendship sprang up between them. During 1812-1818 Shelley produced a number of works which testify to a development of his progressive views. One of the most significant of Shelley's early work is "The Revolt of Islam" (1818). Though being romantic and abstract the poem, however, is revolutionary in its essence, for the French revolution of the 18th century is implied in its plot. The poem is permeated with the idea of future liberation of mankind and directed against all systems of oppression and exploitation.

However, in their struggle for freedom the heroes of the poem pin their hopes only on the power of conviction. That testifies to the fact that in the first period of his work Shelley had not yet come to realize the necessity of armed struggle for a better future.

The tragedy is full of dramatic action and the characters are drawn with great realistic force. "The Cenci" marks a definite progress in Shelley's revolutionary outlook. Here the poet for the first time recognizes the necessity of violence as a means of struggle against despotism and evil.

Though far from England, Shelley never ceased to be interested in the affairs of his native country. In August 1819 news reached him that the English government had sent a detachment of soldiers against a demonstration of Manchester workers. This stirred Shelley to devote his poetic genius to political writing. Shelley became a singer of the proletariat at the period of its first mass actions against capitalist exploitation. In the same year Shelley wrote a great lyric "Song of the Men of England". During the Chartist demonstrations the workers marched singing Shelley's songs.

In 1820 Shelley wrote his masterpiece "Prometheus Unbound", a lyrical drama.

Shelley is also known as the author of many lyrical poems devoted to nature and love. Shelley worships nature believing it to be the source of an undying strength, ever capable of re-creation. His philosophical optimism proceeds from his conviction that the world and nature are ever on change ever developing to higher forms. He sings of a love that enables man's soul and demands all his spiritual strength, his whole life.

Unexpected death cut short Shelley's life. On July 8, 1822, while he was sailing across the bay of Spezzia, a sudden tempest struck his boat and he was drowned. His body was cremated and buried in Rome. The inscription on his tomb-stone reads

Percy Bysche Shelley,
Cor Cordium
(The Heart of Hearts)

Shelley as well as Byron has always been loved and esteemed by the English common people, whose aspirations for freedom and happiness inspired their poetic talent.

SIR WALTER SCOTT
(1771 - 1832)

Sir Walter Scott was a Scottish romantic writer, the first great writer of historical novels. He was born in Edinburgh on August 15, 1771. His father was an Edinburgh lawyer and had a large family. Walter, the future writer, was the ninth of his twelve children. When he was about two years old, the boy fell ill with a disease that left him lame. His parents thought country air would be good for him and sent him to his grandparents' farm. It was a place with hills, crags and ruined tower. Walter soon became a strong boy. In spite of his lameness he climbed the hills and rode his pony at a gallop. Walter's grandparents told him thrilling Scottish tales. He learned to love the solemn history of Scotland and liked to recite Scottish ballads and poems.

Scott enjoyed taking trips into the Scottish countryside. These trips gave him profound knowledge of the life of rural people, and provided material for his first major publication, "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" (1802-1803). This book was a collection of popular songs and ballads and consisted of three volumes.

At the suggestion of his father, Scott became a lawyer and practiced for fourteen years. During his business trips he visited the places of famous battles and collected old ballads. Like many writers belonging to the Romantic trend, Scott, too, felt that all the good days were gone. He wished to record all the historical facts he knew before they were forgotten.

At the age of 26 Scott married, and bought a large estate not far from Edinburgh. There Scott built a fine house in the style of a castle. His house became a sort of museum of Scottish history and culture.

In 1805 he began to publish his own romantic poems, which attracted the attention of the reading public. The best were "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" (1805), "Marmion" (1808) and "The Lady of the Lake" (1810). These poems reproduce old legends and combine them with historical material. They were written with great poetic skill and poet became very famous. But when Byron's wonderful poems appeared, Scott, to quote his own words, "left the field of poetry to his rival" who by that time was already a friend of his. He took to writing novels. It

marked a new period in Scott's creative work. He declined the honor of poet-laureate in 1813 because he understood that writing official verses and odes on the birthdays of members of the royal family would interfere with his creative work.

In 1814 Scott published his "Waverley, or 'The Sixty Years Since'". This novel describes a Scottish rebel against England in 1745. As he had an established reputation as a poet, Scott decided to print his first novel anonymously. The book was a great success, and everybody wanted to know who the author was. Scott published many of his novels under the name of "The Author of Waverley". During the next seventeen years (1815 - 1832) Scott wrote more than 27 other novels, four plays and many stories and tales besides. All of his novels were referred to as part of the Waverley series, because the author was identified on the title page as "The Author of Waverley". Scott's authorship was officially revealed in 1827, but it had been known for years.

Despite his success and fame, Scott's last years were sad. They were marked by illness and financial difficulties brought on by the failure of a publishing company in which he had an interest. At that time his health was broken down. His doctors sent him to Italy; but it was too late. Before reaching Italy he had to turn back, and on his arrival at his estate he died.

Literary critics divide Scott's works into three groups:

The first group of novels are those devoted to Scottish history: "Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since" (1814), "Guy Mannering, or the Astrologer" (1815), "The Antiquary" (1816), "Black Dwarf" (1816), "Old Mortality" (1816), "Rob Roy" (1817), "The Heart of Midlothian" (1818), "The Bride of Lammermoor" (1819), "A Legend of Montrose" (1819), "Redgauntlet" (1824), "The Fair Maid of Perth" (1828)

The second group of novels refer to English history: "Ivanhoe" (1819), the best of this series; "The Monastery" (1820), "The Abbot" (1820), "Kenilworth" (1821), "The Pirate" (1822), "The Fortunes of Nigel" (1822), "Peveril of the Peak" (1822), "Woodstock" (1826).

The third group comprises novels based on the history of Europe: "Quentin Durward" (1823), "The Talisman" (1825), "Count Robert of Paris" (1832), "Anne of Geierstein" (1829) and "Castle Dangerous" (1832).

The novel "St. Ronan's Well" (1824) stands in a class by itself. The story is laid at a fashionable health-resort somewhere near the border between England and Scotland. It is the only novel written by Scott about his own time and shows his attitude to contemporary society. It is a precursor of the critical realism of the 19th century.

Scott wrote frequently about the conflicts between different cultures. For example, “Ivanhoe” deals with the struggle between Normans and Saxons, and the “Talisman” describes the conflict between Christians and Muslims. The novels dealing with Scottish history are probably considered to be his best works. They deal with clashes between the new commercial English culture and older Scottish culture. Many critics regard “Old Mortality”, “The Heart of Midlothian”, and “St. Ronan’s Well” as Scott’s best novels.

“Ivanhoe”

The action of the novel takes place in medieval England during the Crusades. The central conflict of the novel lies in the struggle of the Anglo-Saxon landowners against the Norman barons, who cannot come to an understanding.

There is no peace among the Norman conquerors either. They struggle for power. Prince John tries to usurp the throne of his brother Richard, who was engaged in a Crusade at that time. These two brothers back different tendencies concerning their relations with Anglo-Saxons. John wishes to seize all the land and subdue the Anglo-Saxons completely, while Richard supports those, who tend to cooperate with the remaining Anglo-Saxon land-owners. The latter tendency was progressive, because it led to peace and the birth of a new nation.

At the head of the remaining Anglo-Saxon knights is a thane, Cedric the Saxon. He hopes to restore their independence by putting a Saxon king and queen on the throne. He wants to see lady Rowena, who has been descended from Alfred the Great, as the queen and Athelstane of Coningsburgh as a king. But Cedric has a son, Wilfred of Ivenhoe, who destroys his father’s plan by falling in love with Rowena. Cedric becomes angry and disinherits his son. Ivanhoe goes on a Crusade where he meets King Richard, and they become friends. On their return to England, Richard with the help of the Saxons and archers of Robin Hood, fights against Prince John for his crown and wins. At last Cedric understands the impossibility of the restoration of the Saxon power and becomes reconciled to the Normans.

The book is written with the great descriptive skill for which Scott is famous. He was a master of painting wonderfully individualized expressive and vivid characters.

The main idea of the book is to call for peace and compromise. Scott wanted to reconcile the hostile classes. He believed that social harmony possible if the best representatives of all classes would unite in a struggle against evil. This idea is expressed in the novel “Ivanhoe” in the episode when the Norman king Richard, together with Robin Hood and his merry men, attack the castle of the Norman

baron to set the Saxon thanes free. This incident shows how the allied forces of honest men, though from hostile classes, conquer evil.

Summary

Theme 5: The specific trends of English Romanticism – progressive: Byron, Shelley, Scott; and reactionary: the poets of the “Lake School”. The philosophy of Romanticism, the development of poetry.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 5

to go bankrupt
literary career
satire in verse
fiction
to be picked by
inexperienced youth
shipwreck
despondency
to have confidence in
to be supported
anti-religious satire
the spirit of the time
miserable conditions
sensation
famine
to depopulate
unburied corpses
disappointment
to undermine one's health
fictitious travels
under the cloak of
imaginary voyages
convicting
believable
censorship
to expose social evils
genius
to ridicule
to be accused of
corrupting influence
gossip

to mirror
to be haunted by
to mourn
to provide with
burial-place
to enslave
to be spoiled
to keep an eye on all political events
the Lake poets
to be of honorable birth
strong will
mercilessly
criticism in verse
immorality
confirm
anonymously
medieval England
to be focused on
a precursor of the critical realism
profound knowledge
refer to
to interfere with
Crusades
to usurp
archers
subdue

Questions

1. What is the difference between the progressive and regressive trends of Romanticism?
2. Why are some romanticists called the poets of the “Lake School”?
3. What Lakists and what works by them do you know?
4. When was the first collection of poems by Byron published?
5. Is “Childe Harold” an autobiographical character?
6. Why do we consider Shelley to be a real fighter for freedom?
7. Who was the first great writer of historical novels in English literature?
8. What novels by Scott do you know?
9. What is the main conflict of the novel “Ivanhoe”?
10. What social problems did Scott try to solve in his novels?
11. What does “Ivanhoe” deal with?

Theme 6: Critical Realism.

Plan:

1. The basic problems raised by English realists of the 19th century in their works.
2. Charles Dickens – his life and work. His best novels.
3. Problems of childhood and education in his novels.
4. Charles Dickens and America.
5. Other important novels by Charles Dickens.
6. William Thackeray – his life and work.
7. Snobbism according to Thackeray. “Vanity Fair”.

The basic problems raised by English realists of the 19th century in their works

Victoria became queen of Great Britain in 1837. Her reign, the longest in English history, lasted until 1901. This period is called Victorian Age.

The Victorian Age was characterized by sharp contradictions. In many ways it was an age of progress. The Victorian era marks the climax of England's rise to economic and military supremacy. Nineteenth-century England became the first modern, industrialized nation. It ruled the most widespread empire in world history, embracing all of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, and many smaller countries in Asia, and the Caribbean. But internally England was not stable. There was too much poverty, too much injustice and fierce exploitation of man by man.

The workers fought for their rights. Their political demands were expressed in the People's Charter in 1833. The Chartist movement was a revolutionary movement of the English workers, which lasted till 1848. The Chartists introduced their own literature. The Chartist writers tried their hand at different genres. They wrote articles, short stories, songs, epigrams, poems. Chartists (for example Ernest Jones “The Song of the Lower Classes”; Thomas Hood “The Song of the Shirt”) described the struggle of the workers for their rights, they showed the ruthless exploitation and the miserable fate of the poor.

The ideas of Chartism attracted the attention of many progressive-minded people of the time. Many prominent writers became aware of the social injustice around them and tried to picture them in their works. The greatest novelists of the age were Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot.

These writers used the novel as a tool to protest against the evils in contemporary

social and economic life and to picture the world in a realistic way. They expressed deep sympathy for the working people; described the unbearable conditions of their life and work. Criticism in their works was very strong, so some scholars called them Critical Realists, and the trend to which they belonged - Critical Realism. "Hard Times" by Charles Dickens and "Mary Barton" by Elizabeth Gaskell are the bright examples of that literature, in which the Chartist movement is described. The contribution of the writers belonging to the trend of realism in world literature is enormous. They created a broad picture of social life, exposed and attacked the vices of the contemporary society, sided with the common people in their passionate protest against unbearable exploitation, and expressed their hopes for a better future.

As for the poetry of that time, English and American critics consider Alfred Tennyson, and Robert Browning to be the two great pillars on which Victorian poetry rested. Unlike the poetry of the Romantic Age, their poetry demonstrated the conservatism, optimism, and self-assurance that marked the poetry of the Victorian age.

CHARLES DICKENS

(1812-1870)

Charles Dickens is the greatest representative of English critical realism, a classic of world literature. His name stands first in the list of authors belonging to the "brilliant school". Charles Dickens, the great outstanding novelist of the period, was one of the protesting liberals. Himself a member of a bourgeois family, unexpectedly ruined, he knew first-hand the sufferings and hardship of that group.

He was born in Landport, Portsmouth. His father was a clerk in the navy Pay Office. When the boy was ten years old, the family settled in a mean quarter in London. Things went from bad to worse until Dickens' father was imprisoned for debt. The little boy, weak and sensitive, was now sent to work in a blacking factory for six shillings a week. He lived in miserable lodgings and led a half-starving existence. His poverty, however, brought him into contact with the homes of very poor and he saw with his own eyes all the horrors and cruelty in a large capitalist city. He later described this period of his childhood.

When his father's affairs took a turn for the better, Dickens was sent to school where "the boys trained white mice much better than the master trained the boys". In fact, his education consisted in extensive reading of miscellaneous books. After his schooldays, he entered the employment of an attorney and in his spare time studied shorthand writing.

At the end of 19, Dickens became a parliamentary reporter. This work led naturally to journalism and journalism to novel-writing. (At the beginning of the forties Dickens made a journey to the USA after which his faith in the ideas of bourgeois democracy was considerably shaken. The result of the journey came in two works - "American Notes" and the novel "Martin Chuzzlewit").

His first novel "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club" appeared in 1836. This work at once lifted Dickens into the foremost rank as a popular writer of fiction. He followed up this triumph with a quick succession of outstanding novels in which he masterly depicted the life of contemporary society.

"The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club" recounted the droll adventures of the four intimate friends, the representatives of the middle class. Dickens stressed the comedy side of life, people were convulsed with laughter at the droll characters, the comical dialogues and the ludicrous incidents.

Besides its humor the novel was a success as it depicted everyday life and everyday people. On the whole the novel is a humorous and optimistic epopee of the contemporary life though the author touched some social problems: English court and justice, the episode of election and others.

Charles Dickens is famous as one of the world's best humorists, but among his humorous books there is only one that can be called essentially humorous, and that is his earliest novel "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club". Dickens proceeded through novel after novel to create over a thousand characters, no two of whom are alike, all interesting and individual, even if often exaggerated and caricatured.

Dickens' characters - humorous, comic or brutal live in the memory as living types.

As elsewhere the Pickwickians are shown in the novel as men who are utterly unpractical and unable to perform the simplest things, without being assisted or guided. To render the description more humorous Dickens makes his characters behave in the most serious and even solemn manner. This contradicting manner of presentation is one of the most characteristic features of Dickens' style in "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club".

Problems of childhood and education in his novels

His novel "Oliver Twist" published in 1837-9 deals with social problems and is one of the best works of Dickens.

The novel tells the story of a little boy born in a workhouse and left an orphan. Brought up under cruel conditions, the hero runs away from the workhouse to London. The boy kind and honest by nature falls into the hands of a gang of thieves and lives through dreadful hardship. The adventures of the hero boy were used by Dickens to describe the lower depths of London. He makes his readers aware of the inhumanity of city life under the conditions of capitalism.

In the preface to the 3^d edition Dickens proclaimed himself a realist, and in fact he does appear as such in “Oliver Twist”. As Dickens believes in the inevitable triumph of good over evil, it is only natural, therefore, that Oliver Twist overcomes all difficulties and eventually eludes all dangers. The novel ends in a happy issue which has become a characteristic feature of the greater part of Dickens’ works.

With “Oliver Twist” still in hand Dickens began to work on his next novel “Nicholas Nickleby” which describes the awful conditions under which the children of the poor were brought up and exposes the cruelty of the bourgeoisie. “Nicholas Nickleby” appeared in 1838-39. The book deals with another burning question of the day – that of the education of children in English private schools. Nicholas Nickleby becomes a teacher of a typical English boarding school for children of parents of modest means. The half-starved boarders are mercilessly exploited by the master of the schools and his wife who use children for domestic employment. There is no question of real education at the “school” and its pupils are destined to become moral and physical wrecks. Its master, Mr. Squeers, is a total ignorance. He is beastly cruel to the children and his only aim in life is to squeeze as much profit as possible out of his establishment.

Immediately after the publication of the novel Dickens was bombarded with letters protesting the veracity of his statements. But the fact being proved to be true, a school reform was carried out in England.

In 1841 Dickens visited the USA to lecture on his work. Dickens spent in the USA several months visiting different parts of the country. It is with great indignation that he describes the conditions under which the Negroes live in America. The prison system of the USA, the yellow press and a number of other aspects of American life were described by him in a critical manner. The writer’s impression of the USA was summed up in his “American Notes”. He was disappointed in the much-vaunted American democracy: “This is not the republic I came to see, this is not the republic of my imagination. Freedom of opinions, where is it? I see a press more mean..., and silly and disgraceful than in any country I ever knew”.

“Martin Chuzzlewit” is one of Dickens’ satirical representations of the bourgeois society of his days. It was written in 1834-44. The significance of the novel lies in its criticism of both the British and American bourgeoisie. As a novel of social satire it is one of Dickens’ masterpieces. In “Martin Chuzzlewit” Dickens brings to

light the corruption influence of the American bourgeois press on the minds of the public. The Chuzzlewits represent a typical English bourgeois family with great variety of characters. Jones Chuzzlewit – Martin's uncle – is one of the most impressive and at the same time repulsive characters in the novel. Brutal and unscrupulous, he stops at nothing to acquire wealth. His lust of money leads him to criminal actions. He is a typical representative of the bourgeois society of that time. The first word he had learnt was "profit", the second one – "money". His father taught him to deceive everyone and the son finally began to deceive his own father and at last he decided to poison him.

The old Martin Chuzzlewit (the grandfather of the hero) came to the conclusion that money spoiled people. Brother against brother, son against father – that is the picture of the bourgeois society. The plot of the novel is built around the character of young Martin Chuzzlewit. In search of fortune he goes to America. To describe his experiences there, Dickens used his own impression gathered during his trip over the USA. Dickens brought to light the bourgeois reality. At the beginning of this novel the hero is a typical bourgeois but under the influence of his friend he became another person – Dickens saw the way out in moral self-perfection.

In 1847 Dickens began to publish one of his most popular novels "Dombey and Son". The central figure of the novel is Mr. Dombey, a prosperous businessman. Naughtly and selfish, he bends down only before the power of gold and looks upon the natural relations between men from a business point of view only. He and his assistant Carker are typical representatives of the capitalist society. At the end of the novel Carker ruins Dombey but perishes himself. Dombey, now penniless, steps out on the path of reformation. As it always is the case with Dickens, in contrast to the negative characters he introduces positive characters which embody his humanist ideals. Thus we see the striking figure of Mrs. Dombey who breaks off with the world of business, Florence Dombey who is all gentleness and high-mindedness, and others.

In 1850 he wrote "David Copperfield" which is to a great extent, an autobiographical novel. In the character of David Copperfield Dickens disclosed many features of his own life. The hero of the novel is a virtuous young man who lives through hardships and injustices but finally attains well-being. Clinging to the idea that a hard-working and honest man can achieve his little individual happiness in capitalist society Dickens tinges the novel with optimism.

In 1852-53 Dickens writes "Bleak House". The novel is a bitter criticism of England's court of justice and aristocracy. In 1854 Dickens published "Hard Times" – a novel of social criticism directed against the English bourgeoisie and its reactionary ideology. The novel describes an imaginary town Cocktown, an industrial city resembling similar industrial centers of Middle England. It was a town of red brick, a town of machinery and tall chimneys. It had vast piles of

buildings full of windows where there was a rattling and trembling all day long. It contained several large and small people all very like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours to do the same work and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and tomorrow. The population of the town is sharply divided into two classes, the bourgeoisie and the working class.

“Little Dorrit” (1855-57) – is the story of a little girl whose parents are thrown into a debtors’ prison. The complicated plot of the novel serves as a background against which the author lays bare the reactionary essence of the English state system.

Dickens’ next novel “A Tale of Two Cities” (1859) is devoted to the events of the French revolution (1789-94).

Dickens’ genius has created novels and tales which have won a standing in the treasury of the world literature. Dickens naively believed in the moral self-perfection of the wicked classes and did not accept the necessity of struggle of the masses against their oppressors. But in spite of these drawbacks Dickens remains a great humanist and castigator of the vices of the capitalist world. The greatest English realist of the time Charles Dickens with a striking force and truthfulness created pictures of bourgeois civilization of his time. In his works he utters his protest against workhouses, debtors’ prisons, bad schools, the exploitation of children, the rich class. In spite of his sympathy for the poor there are few portrayals of proletarians in his novels, and there are no typical characters of the working class. Dickens never allied himself with the latter even when he worked at a factory for a living. He remains from beginning to end a humane, sentimentally kind petty bourgeois intellectual. His pathos and laughter are means of touching the hearts, especially of the hard capitalists, of whom he had created numerous types in his works. He wants to teach and reform these exploiters rather than stir up revolution among the suffering and exploited. Clinging to the idea that a hard-working and honest man can achieve his little individual happiness in capitalist society Dickens tinges the novel with optimism.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

(1811-1863)

William Makepeace Thackeray was born in the family of a prominent official in Calcutta. In 1817, the boy was sent to England where he went to school and in 1828 entered the Cambridge University. While at the university, Thackeray displayed a talent for drawing and edited a student paper. The stagnant atmosphere of the place irked Thackeray so that finally he left the University. In 1830, he went traveling over Germany, Italy and France, going in for self-education and art studies. On his return to England in 1833, he took up journalism.

In 1846-47, Thackeray published “The Book of Snobs”. The book admirably draws a gallery of English “snobs” from different walks of life. In Thackeray’s view, a snob is a person who fawns upon his social superiors and looks down with contempt upon his inferiors. In his book, the author declares war against snobbism, vanity and selfishness. “The Book of Snobs” may be considered as a kind of prelude to the author’s major work “Vanity Fair”.

In the forties, Thackeray’s creative method as that of a realistic writer becomes firmly established. A brilliant example of this method and one of the greatest masterpieces of literature under critical realism is his “Vanity Fair”, a novel without a hero, published in 1847-48. Along with snobbery, the book treats of a more significant theme – portrayal of the world which is under the influence of money and hypocritical morals.

“Vanity Fair” was the peak of Thackeray’s creative realism.

Similar ideas characterize another work of this period – “Memoir of the Most Respectable Family of the Newcomes” (1833-55). In other two novels “The History of Henry Esmonde” (1852) and “The Virginians” (1857-58) Thackeray turns to historic subjects which he treats with a realistic approach. The action of “Henry Esmonde” is laid in England at the beginning of the 18th century during the reign of Queen Anne. “Henry Esmonde” gives a truthful picture of England of that time. The author vividly portrays the life of English aristocracy filled with debauchery, gambling and dueling. The author shows how unscrupulously the aristocrats trade not only with their honor but with their own country. Henry Esmonde, a man of great and magnanimous heart lives an acute tragedy being a total stranger in an alien world.

The “Virginians”, a sequel to “Henry Esmonde”, tells of the life of Henry Esmonde’s two grandsons in England and America. The portrayal of social life here is rather limited. The greater part of the book deals with young men’s adventures during the American war of independence. The strongest point of the novel is the critical and often comical description of English fashionable life.

During the last years of his life Thackeray worked on the novel “Denis Duval”, which remained unfinished due to the author’s premature death in 1863.

Summary

Theme 6: The basic problems raised by English realists of the 19th century in their works. Social events (Chartist Movement) that had impact on the development of literature. Among the problems highlighted by writers – children, education, rich and poor.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 6

pillar
most-quoted
harsh
widespread
the Chartist movement
unbearable conditions
vices of the society
to reconcile
accusation
street sketches
exaggeration of facts
to unmask
hypocrisy
to draw cartoons
to outlive
prelude
reconciliation
realistic approach
pettifogging
virtuous person
hypocritical world

Questions

1. Name the greatest English critical realists you know.
2. What books belong to Dickens's first period of literary work?
3. What books were written by Dickens between the years 1842-1848?
4. Why is Dickens called the creator of the theatre for one actor?
5. What impression did the novel "Dombey and Son" make on you?
6. What are the greatest merits of Thackeray's works?
7. What classes of society does he show in his novels?
8. Which work of the writer is considered to be a prelude to his masterpiece "Vanity Fair"?
9. What vices of the society are exposed in "Vanity Fair"?
10. Who are the main characters of the novel?
11. Which character embodies the spirit of Vanity Fair?

Theme 7: She-writers in English Literature of the 19th Century.

Plan:

1. Charlotte Bronte and her novel "Jane Eyre".

2. Elizabeth Gaskell – her life and work. “Mary Barton”.
3. George Eliot – her life and work. Her best novels.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE

(1816-1855)

Charlotte Bronte (pseudonym Currer Bell) – a daughter of a clergyman, received her education at a charity school for daughters of impoverished clergymen. The school was a veritable prison. Charlotte gained first-hand knowledge of the kind of training to which future governesses were subjected. Her education completed, Charlotte entered the employ of a wealthy family as a governess where she was treated in a most slighting manner.

Charlotte Bronte’s novel “Jane Eyre” (1847) brought her fame and placed her in the rank of the foremost English realistic writers. She was personally acquainted with Dickens and Thackeray and the latter greatly influenced her literary method. In 1849, Charlotte published “Shirley”, her second big novel which dealt with the life of workers at the time of Luddites. The author’s sympathies are with the toilers. However, Bronte’s realistic portrayal of the conflict between labor and capital is much weakened by her attempting to solve the problem in a conciliatory moralistic way.

Jane Eyre

One of the central themes of the book is education. Bronte’s description of horrors of Lowood charity school is not inferior to Dickens’s strongest passages portraying educational institutions of England of that time. Another problem raised in the novel is the position of a woman in society. The heroine of the novel maintains that women should have equal rights with men.

ELIZABETH GASKELL

(1810-1865)

Elizabeth Gaskell, a clergyman’s daughter, also married a clergyman. Her husband and she made a study of living and working conditions of textile workers in Manchester and her first novel “Mary Barton” (1848) contains a vivid picture of the industrial conflicts which prevailed at that time. It was severely criticized by reactionary critics as a book hostile to the employers while Dickens and other representatives of progressive literature supported the author. Her first novel “Mary Barton” was undoubtedly the best owing to its realistic treatment of the main facts of the social and political life of that period.

GEORGE ELIOT

(1819-1880)

Mary Ann Evans, known under the pseudonym of George Eliot, was born in Warwickshire. She was a daughter of a land agent who gave up his business to take charge of an estate. Her childhood and youth were spent amidst rural scenes and picturesque village locality described in the “*Mill on the Floss*”.

Compelled to leave school at the age of 17 because of her mother’s death Mary Evans took charge of all domestic affairs. But her active mind and strong emotional nature drove her on to study. She put in much reading and became proficient in music and in German, French and Italian languages.

Eliot had been brought up under religious influences, but she early abandoned religious beliefs disavowed church tenets and became a free thinker. From 1844-1855, Eliot translated into English Feuerbach’s “*The Essence of Christianity*” and other philosophical works.

In 1851, she settled in London as an assistant editor of a progressive magazine “*The Westminster Review*”. In 1857, George Eliot wrote her first three stories for a magazine, which were later published in book form under heading “*Scenes of Clerical Life*”. Then followed three remarkable novels which made her famous: “*Adam Bede*” (1859), “*The Mill on the Floss*” (1860) and “*Silas Marner*” (1861). “*Adam Bede*” contains splendid realistic pictures of the English countryside at the turn of the 18th century. Eliot lovingly depicts the patriarchal relations unaffected by bourgeois civilization. Adam Bede, a village carpenter, is the central character of the novel. He is an upright man always ready to help the weak and the suffering. His character is contrasted to a flippant and selfish aristocrat of the place.

The book shows her democratic and progressive sympathetic treatment of common people. At the same time it is affected by the positive philosophy: according to Eliot, the moral principles of men are closely connected with religion, “the religion of the heart”.

“*The Mill on the Floss*” in its first chapters is largely autobiographical. Scenes of rural nature and the life of peasants form the background against which the author traces the fate and the development of a girl whose aspirations ran counter to the philistine narrow-mindedness and incomprehension of those surrounding her.

Summary

Theme 7: Role of women writers in the progress of English realism. Sisters Bronte and their novels about women in the society, domination of money and hypocrisy.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 7

to hinder the development
spiritual degradation
the realm of beauty
cult of beauty
to be preoccupied
to be accused of immorality
innocent man
immoral life
urban manufacturing centers
brevity
social legislation
appreciate
outer form
at all costs
irregular meters
sharply contradicting characters
sarcasm
to expose the vices
human psychology
to breathe life into
the physiological aspects of a person's speech
to bet with
to teach somebody manners
to be introduced into society
social tracts
a forward-looking habit
evil aims
economic breach
to keep up traditions
stagnation of thought
to reveal a similar philosophy
to deal with burning problems of life
to express one's indignation

Questions

1. Charlotte Bronte, her life and work.
2. Elisabeth Gaskell, her life and work.
3. What works by George Eliot do you know?
4. Why did a woman writer, Mary Ann Evans, take a man's name for her pseudonym?

Theme 8: English Writers at the Turn of the Century (end of 19th and beginning of the 20th century)

Plan:

1. Thomas Hardy – his life and work. “Tess of the d’Urbervilles”.
2. Oscar Wilde – his life and work. His best plays and tales. “The Picture of Dorian Grey”.
3. Herbert Wells – his life and work. His best scientific fantastic novels.
4. John Galsworthy – his life and work. “Forsyte Saga” and “Modern Comedy”.
5. “Forsytism” as a phenomenon of the English society.

THOMAS HARDY

(1840-1928)

Thomas Hardy was born in southwestern England, western Dorsetshire. His father, a skilled stone-mason, taught his son to play violin and sent him to a country day school. At the age of fifteen Hardy began to study architecture, and in 1861 he went to London to begin a career. There he tried poetry, then a career as an actor, and finally decided to write fiction.

Hardy's home and the surrounding districts played an important role in his literary career. The region was agricultural, and there were monuments of the past, that is Saxon and Roman ruins and the great boulders of Stonehenge, which reminded of the prehistoric times. Before the Norman invasion of 1066

First, Hardy aimed his fiction at serial publication in magazines, where it would most quickly pay the bills. Not forgetting an earlier dream, he resolved to keep his tales “as near to poetry in their subject as the conditions would allow.” The emotional power of Hardy's fiction disturbed readers from the start. His first success, “Far from the Madding Crowd” (1874), was followed by “The Return of the Native” (1878), “The Mayor of Casterbridge”(1885), and “Tess of the D’Urbervilles” (1891). Hardy wrote about the Dorset country-side he knew well and called it Wessex (the name of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom once located there).

He wrote about agrarian working people, milkmaids, stonecutters, and shepherds. Hardy's rejection of middle-class moral values disturbed and shocked some readers, but as time passed, his novels gained in popularity and prestige. An architect by profession, he gave to his novels a design that was architectural, employing each circumstance in the narrative to one accumulated effect. The final impression was one of a malign. He showed fate functioning in men's lives, corrupting their possibilities of happiness, and beckoning them towards tragedy. While he saw life thus as cruel and purposeless, he does not remain a detached spectator. He has pity for the puppets of Destiny, and it is a compassion that extends from man to the earth-worm, and the diseased leaves of the tree. Such a conception gave his novels a high seriousness which few of his contemporaries possessed.

No theory can in itself make a novelist, and Hardy's novels, whether they are great or not have appealed to successive generations of readers.

In 1874 he married and in 1885 built a remote country home in Dorset. From 1877 on he spent three to four months a year in fashionable society, while the rest of the time he lived in the country.

In 1895 his "Jude the Obscure" was so bitterly criticized, that Hardy decided to stop writing novels altogether and returned to an earlier dream. In 1898 he published his first volume of poetry. Over the next twenty-nine years Hardy completed over 900 lyrics. His verse was utterly independent of the taste of his day. He used to say: "My poetry was revolutionary in the sense that I meant to avoid the jeweled line. ..." Instead, he strove for a rough, natural voice, with rustic diction and irregular meters expressing concrete, particularized impressions of life.

Thomas Hardy has been called the last of the great Victorians. He died in 1928. His ashes are buried in Westminster Abbey, but, because of his lasting relationship with his home district, his heart is buried in Wessex. His position as a novelist is difficult to assess with any certainty. At first he was condemned as a "second-rate romantic", and in the year of his death he was elevated into one of the greatest figures of English literature. The first view is ill-informed and the second may well be excessive, but the sincerity and courage and the successful patience of his art leave him a great figure in English fiction. In the world war of 1914-18 he was read with pleasure as one who had the courage to portray life with the grimness that is possessed and in portraying it not to lose pity. Often in times of stress Hardy's art will function in a similar way and so enter into the permanent tradition of English literature.

OSCAR WILDE

(1854 - 1900)

Oscar Wilde was regarded as the leader of the aesthetic movement, but many of his works do not follow his decadent theory “art for art’s sake”, they sometimes even contradict it. In fact, the best of them are closer to Romanticism and Realism.

Oscar Wilde was born in Dublin on October 16, 1854. His father was a famous Irish surgeon. His mother was well known in Dublin as a writer. At school and later at the Oxford University Oscar displayed a considerable gift for art and creative work. The young man received a number of classical prizes, and graduated with first-class honors. After graduating from the University, Wilde turned his attention to writing, traveling and lecturing. The Aesthetic Movement became popular, and Oscar Wilde earned the reputation of being the leader of the movement.

Oscar Wilde gained popularity in the genre of comedy of manners. The aim of social comedy, according to Wilde, is to mirror the manners, not to re-form the morals of its day. Art in general, Wilde stated, is in no way connected with the reality of life; real life incarnates neither social nor moral values. It is the artist’s fantasy that produces the refined and the beautiful. So it is pointless to demand that there be any similarity between reality and its depiction in art. Thus, he was a supporter of the “art-for-art’s sake” doctrine.

In his plays the author mainly dealt with the life of educated people of refined tastes. Belonging to the privileged layer of society they spent their time in entertainments. In “The Importance of Being Earnest” the author shows what useless lives his characters are leading. Some of them are obviously caricatures, but their outlook and mode of behavior truly characterize London’s upper crust. Wilde rebels against their limitedness, strongly opposes hypocrisy, but, being a representative of an upper class himself, was too closely connected with the society he made fun of; that is why his opposition bears no effective resistance.

The most popular works of the author are “The Happy Prince and Other Tales” (1888), “The Picture of Dorian Gray” (1891), and the come-dies “Lady Windermere’s Fan” (1892). “A Woman of No Importance” (1893), “An Ideal Husband” (1895), “The Importance of Being Earnest” (1895). At the height of his popularity and success a tragedy struck. He was accused of immorality and sentenced to two years’ imprisonment. When released from prison in 1897 he lived mainly on the Continent and later in Paris. In 1898 he published his powerful poem, “Ballad of Reading Gaol”. He died in Paris in 1900.

“The Picture of Dorian Gray” is the only novel written by Oscar Wilde. It is centered round problems of relationship between art and reality. In the novel the

author describes the spiritual life of a young man and touches upon many important problems of contemporary life: morality, art and beauty. At the beginning of the novel we see an inexperienced youth, a kind and innocent young man. Dorian is influenced by two men with sharply contrasting characters: Basil Hallward and Lord Henry Wotton. The attitude of these two towards the young man shows their different approach to life, art and beauty. The author shows the gradual degradation of Dorian Gray. The end of the book is a contradiction to Wilde's decadent theory. The fact that the portrait acquired its former beauty and Dorian Gray "withered, wrinkled and loathsome of visage" lay on the floor with a knife in his heart, shows the triumph of real beauty - a piece of art created by an artist, a unity of beautiful form and content. Besides that, it conveys the idea that real beauty cannot accompany an immoral life.

HERBERT GEORGE WELLS

(1866 - 1946)

The main current of fiction in the 20th century reflected the influence of science on popular thinking. People in general wanted to learn the truth. Scientific facts formed a wonderland, which was introduced into fiction as a fresh source of interest. This direct influence of science is illustrated in the writing of Herbert George Wells.

Herbert George Wells is often called the great English writer who looked into the future. He devoted more than fifty years of his life to literary work. He was the author of more than forty novels and many short stories, articles and social tracts. His novels are of three types: science fiction, realistic novels on contemporary problems and social tracts.

Wells belonged to the world of science. Science played an important part in his best works, but the principal theme, even in these works is not science but the social problems of the day. His creative work is divided into two periods:

The first period begins in 1895 and lasts up to the outbreak of World War I. His famous works of this period are: "The Time Machine", "The Invisible Man", "The War of the Worlds", "The First Men on the Moon".

The second period comprises works written from 1914 up to the end of World War II. His most important works of the period are: "The War That Will End War", "Russia in the Shadows", "The World of William Glissold", "Mr. Blettsworthy on Rampole Island", "Experiment in Autobiography".

Well's best works are his science fiction. They give the reader from the very beginning a forward-looking habit and that is exactly what the writer aimed at. He believed in the great liberation science could bring to man, but he blamed the

existing system because it used scientific achievements for evil aims. His criticism goes along two lines:

1. Scientific progress is more advanced than the cultural level of the people and their moral understanding of how to make use of it. Such being the case, science will sooner be used for destruction than for the good of mankind.
2. The enormous economic breach between the upper classes and the working classes is widened by scientific progress. If this process goes on, it will lead to the degeneration of the human race. In the novels of the second period Wells combines the criticism of society as a whole with the life of an individual. Thus Wells keeps up the traditions of the Critical Realism in the English novel.

“The War of the Worlds”

“The War of the World’s” is H. G. Wells’ fourth science fiction novel. It was published in 1897. The events in the novel supposedly take place at the beginning of the 20th century in London and its suburbs. The story of the war is told by a professor. He says that he was writing an article, when the first cylinder from Mars came down like a falling star onto the southern part of Britain. The inhabitants of the place were attracted by the unusual phenomena and watched the cylinder open. They saw a Martian came out, then another and another. Their bulky bodies, the size of a bear, moved very clumsily, because the gravity of the Earth had increased their weight three times. The public did not understand the danger until the Martians used their heat-ray, killing many people and burning down houses and woods.

The government decided to fight the Martians. When the second cylinder landed, government troops arrived. They hoped to destroy it by gun-fire before it opened. But the gun-fire was nothing for Martians. Eight more cylinders came down from Mars one after another. The Martians had monstrous fighting machines. These machines moved over the ground smashing everything on their way.

When the fifth cylinder landed, the people were already in a state of panic. The Martian fighting machines advanced on London, and in a few days Society, the State and Civilization disappeared. The people were frightened and became violent. They trampled one another in panic. Those who could not escape from the city hid like rats under the ruins of houses so as not to be killed by the Martians.

Wells ends the novel with the defeat of the Martians. They are infected by bacteria against which their constitution is helpless. The writer makes the people of the Earth win, because he loves them and wants them to be strong and better civilized. He does not portray the Martians as a better race. He believes in man and his better future.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

(1867 - 1933)

John Galsworthy is one of the most outstanding realistic writers of the 20th century English literature. His novels, plays and short stories give the most complete and critical picture of British society in the first part of the 20th century. Particularly, he is best known for his realistic depictions of contemporary British society upper-class.

Galsworthy was not young when he started writing. His first notable work was "The Island Pharisees" (1904) in which he criticized the stagnation of thought in the English privileged classes. The five works entitled "The Country House" (1907), "Fraternity" (1909), "The Patrician" (1911), "The Dark Flower" (1913), and "The Freelands" (1915) reveal a similar philosophy. In these works the author criticizes country squires, the aristocracy and artists, and shows his deep sympathy for strong passions, sincerity and true love.

The most popular and important novels written by Galsworthy are those of the Forsyte cycle (the trilogies "The Forsyte Saga" and "A Modern Comedy"). "The Forsyte Saga" consists of three novels and two interludes, as the author calls them: "The Man of Property" (1906), "In Chancery" (1920), "To Let" (1921), "Awakening" (interlude), "Indian Summer of a Forsyte" (interlude).

"The Forsyte Saga" is followed by "A Modern Comedy", also a trilogy, consisting of three novels and two interludes: "The White Monkey" (1924), "The Silver Spoon" (1926), "The Swan Song" (1928), "A Silent Wooing" (interlude), "Passers-by" (interlude).

The trilogy called "End of the Charter", written at a later period, is less critical. The three novels are: "Maid in Waiting" (1931), "Flowering Wilderness" (1932), "Over the River" (1933).

In the first trilogy, which was written in the most mature period of his literary activity, Galsworthy describes the commercial world of the Forsytes, and in particular, the main character, Soames Forsyte, "the man of property". The first part of "The Forsyte Saga" ("The Man of Property") attains the highest point of social criticism. The central characters of the novel are the Forsytes of the first generation and the members of their families. They are shareholders and rich owners of apartment houses in the best parts of London. Their sole aim in life is accumulation of wealth. Their views on life are based fundamentally on a sense of property.

The most typical representative of the second generation of the Forsytes is James' son, Soames, whom old Jolyon called the man of proper-ty. In his nature, views, habits and aspiration he perfectly incarnated all the features of Forsytism. He is firmly convinced that property alone is the stable basis of life. His human relations and feelings are also subordinated to the sense of property. Having married Irene, Soames experiences the greatest pleasure and satisfaction at the thought that she is his property.

The main idea that runs through the novel is the conflict of the Forsytes with Art and Beauty. Irene personifies Beauty and the young architect, Bosinney who falls in love with her, impersonates Art. The conflict between Bosinney and Soames arose in connection with the building of a house at Robin Hill.

In the second part of "The Forsyte Saga" ("In Chancery") the action refers to the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

In the concluding part of "The Forsyte Saga" ("To Let") the action takes place after the First World War.

The Forsyte novels are highly valued for the truthful portrayal of the social and personal life. The cycle is considered to be the peak of the author's Critical Realism.

In his later works, "A Modern Comedy" and "The End of the Chapter", written after the World War I, Galsworthy's criticism becomes less sharp. The old generation of the Forsytes does not seem so bad to the author as compared to the new one. During his progress through six novels and four interludes Soames becomes almost a positive character, in spite of the author's critical attitude towards him at the beginning of the Saga.

Galsworthy's humanitarian concerns also led him to write plays about the social problems of his time. From 1909 he produced in turn plays and novels. His plays deal with burning problems of life. The author describes the hard life of workers ("Strife"), attacks the cruel regime in English prisons ("Justice"), expresses his indignation towards wars ("The Mob"), rejects the colonial policy of Great Britain ("The Forest"), and presents some other aspects of evils and injustice. Galsworthy's plays were very popular. But it is not his dramatic works, but his novels and "The Forsyte Saga" in particular, that made him one of the greatest figures in world literature.

Summary

Theme 8: English literature at the turn of the century. New trend in art “Art for Art’s Sake”. Thomas Hardy and Oscar Wilde with their best works. Scientific fantastic novels written by H. G. Wells. A specific English phenomenon – Forsyism – depicted in the cycle of novels written by J. Galsworthy about the family of Forsytes.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 8

artistic approach
social and political order
to regard as one’s literary teacher
complicated plot
keen observer of life and individuals
mature period
outstanding incidents
to affect
to bring misfortune to
to come in touch with
logically developed
a new generation of realist writers
mythological images
a crime against life and beauty
an extremely gloomy novel
to face an alternative
to prosper at somebody’s expense
to be doomed to poverty

Questions

1. What does the theory “art for art’s sake” mean in literature and art?
2. What is your own opinion on this subject?
3. Who did Thomas Hardy write about in his novels?
4. What popular works by Oscar Wilde do you know?
5. What does Oscar Wilde describe in his “The Picture of Dorian Gray”?
6. What kind of literary works were created at the end of the 19th century and to what literary trends did they belong?
7. What vices in the society of his time does Oscar Wilde expose in his plays?
8. Why do we appreciate Oscar Wilde’s works?

9. Why is H. G. Wells called the great English writer who looked into the future?
10. What is the contribution of Wells to world literature?
11. What was Wells' attitude towards scientific progress?
12. What are the chief characteristics of Galsworthy's works?
13. Why do we call "The Forsyte Saga" a social novel?
14. Comment on the title of the novel "The Man of Property".
15. What is the difference between the novels written by Herbert Wells and John Galsworthy?

Theme 9: English Literature of the 20th Century (1st half).

Plan:

1. George Bernard Shaw – his life and work.
2. Three groups of Shaw's plays.
3. Plays, reflecting historical events.
4. The most popular play "Pygmalion".
5. Literature of the "Lost Generation". Richard Aldington – his life and work. "Death of a Hero".

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

(1856-1950)

George Bernard Shaw is an outstanding English playwright, one of the greatest satirists of the twentieth century. He was born in Dublin in an impoverished middle-class family. Until fourteen he attended a college, and from 1871 was employed in a land agent's office. In 1876 he went to London, where he became a journalist and wrote music and dramatic critics for various periodicals. He was always in the midst of political life in Britain and took an active part in solving human problems. As literary critics state, Shaw's manner of expression is based on real facts and ridicule. He exposes truth through satire and sarcasm.

The creative work of Bernard Shaw began with novels: "Immaturity" (1879), "The Irrational Knot" (1880), "An Unsocial Socialist" (1883), "Love Among the Artists" (1888), but they had little success, and in 1892 the author turned to dramatic writing. His intellectual equipment was far greater than that of any of his contemporaries. He alone had understood the greatness of Norwegian dramatist Ibsen, and he was determined that his own plays should also be a vehicle for ideas. He had, from the first, accepted a burden in his dramas, beyond the presentation of plot and character. He had signed a contract with himself, and with the spirit of Ibsen, that each play should present a problem and discuss it thoroughly. His first

plays he divided into three groups: (1) Plays Unpleasant – “Philanderer”, “Widowers’ Houses” (1893), “Mrs. Warren’s Profession” (1898); (2) Plays Pleasant – “Arms and the Man”, “Candida” (1898), “The Man of Destiny”, “You Can Never Tell”; (3) Three Plays for Puritans - “The Devil’s Disciple” (1901), “Caesar and Cleopatra” (1901), “Captain Brassbound’s Conversion”. Among other plays there are: “Man and Superman” (1903), “John Bull’s Other Island” (1906), “Major Barbara”(1907), “Heartbreak House” (1917), “Pygmalion” (1919), “Saint Joan”(1923), “Back to Methuselah” (1921), “The Apple Cart” (1930), “Too Good to Be True” (1932), “On the Rocks” (1933). In these and other plays Shaw criticized the vices of the existing society. They also reveal human psychology as a product of this society.

Shaw was convinced that modern plays should contain, along with the traditional plot conflict and its resolution, what he called “the discussion”, a consideration of important problems and suggestions for their resolution.

“Pygmalion”

One of Shaw’s best comedies is “Pygmalion”, written in 1912 and first produced in England in 1914. It was adapted into the musical “My Fair Lady” in 1956. The title “Pygmalion” comes from a Greek myth. Pygmalion, a sculptor, carved a statue out of ivory. It was the statue of a beautiful young woman whom he called Galatea. He fell in love with his own handiwork, so the goddess of love Aphrodite breathed life into the statue and transformed it into a really alive woman. The fable was chosen to allow him to discuss the theme he had set himself.

The principal characters of the play are Eliza Doolittle and Henry Higgins. Eliza, a girl of eighteen, comes from the lowest social level and speaks with a strong Cockney (East End of London) accent, which is considered to be the most uncultured English. Eliza’s father is a dustman. Eliza does not want to stay with her father and stepmother. She makes her own living by selling flowers in the streets of London.

Henry Higgins, another main character of the play, is a professor of phonetics. He studies the physiological aspects of a person’s speech, the sounds of the language. One day he sees Eliza in the street and bets with his friend Colonel Pickering that he will change this girl. He will not only teach her to speak her native language correctly, but will teach her manners too. Higgins works hard and before six months are over, she is well prepared to be introduced into society. Higgins wins his bet. When the game is over the girl doesn’t know where to go. She doesn’t want to return to her previous life, but at the same time she is not admitted to the high society as she is poor.

Higgins and Eliza remain friends, but the play is without ending. The dramatist thought it best not to go on with the story. Higgins loves Eliza only as his pupil. But he loves his profession as an artist. He has created a new Eliza. She is the work of a Pygmalion.

“Pygmalion” shows the author’s concern for the perfection of the English Language. Shaw was passionately interested in the English language and the varieties of ways in which people spoke and misspoke it. Shaw wished to simplify and reform English. He has pointed out that the rules of spelling in English are inconsistent and confusing. The text of “Pygmalion” reflects some of his efforts at simplifying the usage of letters and sounds in the English Language. The play also allowed Shaw to present ideas on other topics. For example, he touched the problems of social equality, male and female roles, and the relationship between the people.

RICHARD ALDINGTON

(1892 - 1962)

Richard Aldington was born in Hampshire and educated at Dover College and the University of London, which he left without taking any degree. Richard Aldington began his literary work in the years preceding the First World War. His first poems appeared in the years 1909-1912 and a book of verse “Images Old and New” was published in 1915. By 1916 Aldington was in the army in France, from where he returned with a bad case of shell-shock. For several years, until he recovered his health, he earned a living by translations and literary journalism. In his early poetry Aldington often opposes mythological images of Ancient Greece to unlovely pictures of life in industrial cities. The harmony and beauty of Greek art he sees as an ideal lacking in contemporary reality. The war became a major experience for the young poet. In 1919 he published a new book of poetry “Images of War”. War is shown here as a crime against life and beauty.

In later years Aldington devoted himself more to press and produced several successful novels: “Death of a Hero” (1929), “The Colonel’s Daughter” (1931), “All Men are Enemies” (1933), “Very Heaven” (1937) and some other books.

“Death of a Hero” (1929) dedicated to the so-called “lost generation” is his first and most important novel. (“Lost generation” is an expression widely used about the generation that had taken part in World War I or suffered from its effect.) Aldington’s “Death of a Hero” is regarded as one of the most powerful antiwar novels of the period. The writer shows his deep concern for the post-war “lost generation” in his collections of stories “Roads to Glory” (1930), and “Soft Answers” (1932) as well. He is also the author of several biographies. Among his

last works, the best novel is “Lawrence of Arabia” (1955). Basically his art is strongly linked with the traditions of the nineteenth century critical realism.

Summary

Theme 9: The analysis of the 1st World War and its impact on the world literature. The phenomenon of the “Lost Generation” in literature and its best representatives. Bernard Shaw and his contribution to the development of English drama and theatre. Specific plot of his plays and a well-known method of paradoxes in his works.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 9

the central conflict
quite evident
the democratic layers of the society
to penetrate into
to comprehend
spiritual crisis
to reveal the truth of life
to convince a reader
to remain neutral
to deserve respect
to expose
to wage war
to convey an idea
to take sides
to unravel a crime
posthumously
violence
compilation
perception

Questions

1. What was Bernard Shaw’s attitude towards war?
2. What is characteristic of Bernard Shaw’s dramatic works?
3. How does Bernard Shaw depict common people in his play “Pygmalion”?
4. Where does the title of the play “Pygmalion” come from?
5. Why did the author leave the play without ending?
6. What new form of drama did Bernard Shaw introduce?
7. What problems did Bernard Shaw deal with in his works?
8. What themes dominated in Richard Aldington’s works?

9. What important novels written by Richard Aldington do you know?

Theme 10: English Literature of the 20th Century (2nd half).

Plan:

1. Graham Greene – his life and work. His best novels.
2. Charles Percy Snow – his life and work. “Strangers and Brothers” cycle of novels.
3. Norman Lewis – his life and work.
4. James Aldridge – his life and work.
5. Sid Chaplin – his life and work.
6. Iris Murdock – her life and work.

GRAHAM GREENE

(1904 - 1991)

A great-nephew of Robert Louis Stevenson, Greene was the son of the headmaster of a school in Hertfordshire. Graham attended his father's school, studied at the Oxford University. In the year of graduation (1925) he published a book of poetry “Babbling April”. During the next two years he married, became a journalist (eventually joined the staff of the London “Times” and converted to Roman Catholicism. After the publication of his first novel “The Man Within”(1929) he left “the Times” and became a free-lance writer and reviewer. He had a versatile talent being equally good as a novelist, essayist, short-stories writer and a playwright.

Greene is both a prolific writer and an experienced traveler, and over the years his novels have been set in a number of exotic places: “Stamboul Train” (1932) on the Orient Express; “The Power and the Glory” (1940) in Mexico; “The Heart of the Matter (1948) in Nigeria; “The Quiet American” (1956) in Vietnam; “A Burnt-Out Case (1961) in Central Africa; “The Comedians (1966) in Haity; “The Honorary Consul” (1973) in Argentina.

Two important influences on Greene's writing have been his Catholicism and the cinema. As a Catholic, Greene reflects on his religious convictions and probes the nature of good and evil in both the personal and doctrinal level. Greene has done excellent work both as a film critic and as a screenwriter.

Greene is known as the author of two genres: psychological detective novels or “entertainments”, and “serious novels”, as he called them. Both novels and entertainments are marked by careful plotting and characterization, but in the

“serious novels” the inner world of the characters is more complex and the psychological analysis becomes deeper. The “entertainments” are, for the most part, literary thrillers, such as “A Gun for Sale” (1936), “The Ministry of Fear” (1943), and “The Third Man” (1949). The novels belonging to the “serious” category are: “The Man Within” (1929), “It’s a Battlefield” (1934), “England Made Me” (1935), “Brighton Rock” (1938), “The Power and the Glory” (1940), “The Heart of the Matter” (1948), “The End of the Affair” (1951), “The Quiet American” (1955), “A Burnt-Out Case” (1961), “The Comedians” (1966).

“The Quiet American” is one of Graham Greene’s best works. It marks a new stage in the development of his talent. In “The Quiet American”, the author tells the truth about the war in Vietnam. The book deals with the war waged by the French colonizers against the Vietnamese people, who were fighting for their independence. It also presents the real nature of American diplomacy of that period. The novel conveys the idea that every nation has the right to decide its own future. Besides this, the author tries to convince the reader that no man, no journalist or writer in particular, can remain neutral; sooner or later he has to take sides.

Among his latest works, there are several novels: “Doctor Fisher of Geneva or the Bomb Party” (1980), “Monsignor Quixote” (1982), “Getting to Know the General” (1984), “The Tenth Man” (1985), “The Captain and the Enemy” (1988). Besides, he wrote two volumes of autobiographies: “A Sort of Life” (1971) and “Ways of Escape” (1980).

CHARLES PERCY SNOW

(1905-1980)

Sir Charles Percy Snow was born in Leicester in 1905. By the end of the twenties he graduated from the University of Cambridge and went on working there in the field of molecular physics. Snow’s academic life continued until the beginning of World War II.

Charles Percy Snow began writing in the thirties. “The Search”, the first of his novels, was published in 1934. Six years later, in 1940, appeared his novel “Strangers and Brothers” which then became the title of a whole sequence of novels written in the forties, fifties and sixties. The second novel of the sequence entitled “The Light and the Dark” was published in 1947. It was succeeded by the novels “Time of Hope” (1949) and “The Masters” (1951). Later on “The New Men” (1954), “Homecomings” (1956), “The Conscience of the Rich” (1959) and “The Affair” (1960) were added to it. “Corridors of Power” appeared in 1964. The author himself divided all the books of the sequence into two main groups. The

first group is called “novels of private experience” and includes “Time of Hope” (1947) and “Homecomings” (1956).

All the rest belong to the group of “novels of conditioned experience”. The main hero of all the books is Louis Eliot, a scientist and statesman. English literary critics call them “the Louis Eliot sequence”. In the so-called “novels of private experience”, Snow describes the life of Louis Eliot in his youth (“Time of Hope”) and in the middle age (“Homecomings”), while in other novels the lives of his friends, relatives and acquaintances is seen through his eyes. In general, Snow makes an impressive study of English society in the twentieth century. True to the method of modern critical realism, the writer places the representatives of different classes and social circles in the centre of his artistic attention.

Being a scientist by profession, he manages to create convincing pictures of the relations between intellectuals and the upper classes. And, though Snow is very far from communist views himself, his description of the social and political struggle contains certain points of criticism of bourgeois society. As a realist, Charles Percy Snow mainly gives a generalizing picture of English society of yesterday and today, of its most characteristic and typical trends and features. This does not prevent him, however, from being a master of individual psychology. In some of his works (especially “Time of Hope” and “Homecomings”) the inner life of the characters is brilliantly disclosed. However traditional in descriptions he is, Snow is a subtle and sensitive artist of landscape.

NORMAN LEWIS

(1908-2003)

Norman Lewis was born in 1908 into the family of a Welsh farm worker. At the beginning of World War II he joined the British Armed Forces and was sent to Sicily. After the war he worked as a journalist, and being deeply interested in ethnography, he traveled all over the world. Soon he became well-known as an author of travel books and articles. By the end of the forties Lewis, already a professional author, wrote about eight novels, some of which were masterful and emotional.

In his youth Lewis was a great admirer of 19th century Russian classical literature. Of the modern authors, his writings in both manner and presentation bear the influence of Hemingway. Lewis’ first novel was published in 1949. It was followed by “A Single Pilgrim” (1953) and “The Day of the Fox” (1955). Two years later appeared “Volcanoes above Us” (1957). In the sixties he wrote:

“Darkness Visible” (1960), “The Tenth Year of the Ship” (1962), “The Honoured Society” (1964) and “A Small War Made to Order” (1966).

Norman Lewis belonged to the so-called “anti-colonial” trend in English literature. A convinced realist, he always wrote about the countries he knew and had lived in. Another characteristic feature is his journalistic style of narration. He has written much about movements for liberation and independence in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The action of “A Single Pilgrim” takes place in Laos, while in “The Day of the Fox” we see Spain under Franco’s dictatorship.

“Volcanoes above Us” is a picture of Guatemala after the tragic events of 1954. In this novel the author exposes the American monopolies actively supporting the attempt to overthrow the legal government. The American, Mr. Eliot, one of its characters, is described satirically. “Volcanoes above Us” narrates the dramatic story of the fate of the native population – Indian tribes – condemned to death in reservations. “Samara” and “Darkness Visible” deal with the civil war in Algeria. Lewis’ novel “The Honored Society”, which tells of the criminal activity of the Mafia – an illegal reactionary organization in Sicily –, evoked quite a sensation. Built on documentary data, this novel exposes some of the vices of the contemporary society. Among his later publications it’s worth mentioning “Every Man’s Brother” (1967), “Flight from the Dark Equator” (1972), “The Sicilian Specialist” (1975), “Naples ‘44” (1978), “The German Company” (1979); “The Voices of the Old Sea” (1983), “Jackdaw Cake” (1985) and “The Missionaries” (1987) compose a trilogy.

JAMES ALDRIDGE

(born in 1918)

James Aldridge was born in Australia in 1918. He got his University education in Australia and in 1938 came to England to continue his career as a journalist. He worked for various London papers and became an editor of the “Daily Sketch”. During the years of the Second World War Aldridge visited many countries as a correspondent, among them Norway, Greece, Egypt, Libya, Iran and Russia. His war experience was helpful in writing his first novels. “Signed with Their Honor” (1942), “The Sea Eagle” (1944), and a book of sketches “Of Many Men” (1946).

“Signed with Their Honor” can be characterized as a military, social and psychological novel. In the novel the author describes the invasion and occupation of Greece by the German and Italian fascist armies. These events took place from October, 1940 to April, 1941. The main character is an English pilot named Quayle, who witnesses the heroic struggle of the Greek people against the invaders, and the treacherous policy of Greek government circles. All the events in

the novel are shown through Quayle's eyes, except the last air battle, in which he loses his life.

The personal history of John Quayle becomes closely linked with the Greek people as he falls in love with a Greek girl Helen Stangou. Quayle's contacts with her family and his personal acquaintance with Greek patriots change his views of life. Quayle meets true heroes among the English airmen. They are ready to give their lives in the battle with fascism, and among the Greek soldiers he finds those who do not follow the treacherous policy of their commanders. Aldridge's characters greatly differ from "the lost generation" described in some works of American and English authors, written about World War I. His characters clearly see why they are fighting. The struggle of the Greek people against fascism is the main factor of the novel.

Aldridge's anti-colonial point of view is seen in the novel "The Diplomat" (1949). His later novels are devoted entirely to problems of the Arab people in their struggle for liberation. Among them are "Heroes of the Empty View" (1954), "I Wish He Would Not Die", "The Last Exile", "Mockery in Arms". James Aldridge is also the author of a large number of short stories, of which "The Last Inch" is especially popular with the readers. His play "49th State" is a satirical sketch on the world political situation at the end of the forties. Aldridge's articles in press on the problems of literature are also well-known. Aldridge's activity as a propagandist for peace and friendship among nations deserve the respect of the people of different nationalities.

SID CHAPLIN

(1916-1986)

Sid Chaplin was born in 1916 in the north of England in a miner's family. Having graduated from school when he was sixteen, he began working at the coal mines. Only by the end of the thirties Chaplin managed to renew his studies at the workers' college. Although his books began to appear in the late forties, writing never became his sole profession. Then Sid Chaplin was working in the administration of the coal mines in Newcastle and at the same time was writing novels and articles for newspapers and magazines. Chaplin did not win popularity with his first book. His first publication was a series of short stories entitled "The Leaping Lad" published in 1948. It was followed by three novels: "My Fate Cries Out" (1950), "The Thin Seam" (1951) and "The Big Room" (1960). Widely read and highly appreciated by critics was Chaplin's novel "The Day of the Sardine" which appeared in 1961. The novel "The Watchers and the Watched", published a year later was an equal success. The latest of the writer's novels is "Sam in the Morning" (1965). As a writer, Sid Chaplin belonged to the so-called "working class literature" trend in English literature. This trend included, besides Chaplin

himself, Alan Sillitoe, Raymond Williams, Stan Barstow, David Storey and others. The essential subject of Chaplin's books is the life of the working class youth. The writer deals mainly with the present and the future of the younger generation of the English people. A teenager is always present in his characters.

Arthur Haggerston, the hero of "The Day of the Sardine", is faced with the problem: which way of life to choose? The usual, everyday life with its bourgeois standards and attributes threatens to make "a sardine" of him. The image of a "sardine" is for Chaplin the symbol of a human being absolutely submissive to the power of circumstances. Arthur does not want to become a sardine and chooses an ordinary profession of "the white collar" type. On the other hand, Arthur's protest has no clear direction; like thousands of other teenagers, he is angry at society as such. Becoming involved in a youth gang, the hero is always in danger of committing some crime. At the end of the novel Arthur is helped to get rid of the gang's influence by his grown-up friend Harry Parker, but the old problem of choosing a way of life is never solved. Tim Mason, the main character in "The Watchers and the Watched", finds himself in a similar situation. He is older than Arthur and is married, but his wife, with her conformist views, belongs to the world of "the watchers", the prison-guards of society, while Tim himself is one of "the watched" imprisoned within it. As Arthur Haggerston, Tim Mason protests against the routine of "sardine-like" existence. A possible solution is prompted by his father, an elderly worker, who reminds Tim of the working class movement in the twenties and thus points out to him the way to live and struggle.

IRIS MURDOCH

(1919-1999)

Iris Murdoch was one of the most complex writers in modern English fiction. She was born in 1919 in Dublin. The main theme of her novels is the fate of men and women in modern society, their belief and disbelief. Her heroes are lonely and suffering people. In all her novels we find love as great and mysterious force. It is the inner world of the character that interests Iris Murdoch. Her books arise out of the varied experiences of life.

Iris Murdoch lectured in philosophy from 1948 to 1963 at the Oxford University in England. It influenced her literary career and she became an author of many books on philosophy and philosophical novels. She began her literary career with a critical work "Sartre, Romantic Rationalist" (1953). Her first novel "Under the Net" appeared in 1954 and since then she published a book almost every year.

Her characters face difficult moral choices in their search for love and freedom and are often involved in complex networks of love affairs. Some of Murdoch's novels

expose the dangers of abstract system of behavior that cut out people off from spontaneous, loving relationships. “Under the Net” (1954) and “Fairly Honorable Defeat” (1970) are examples of it. “The Bells” (1958) describes the relationships among the members of a religious commune. In “A Several Head” (1961) Murdoch portrays three couples whose unfaithful sexual conduct illustrates their shallow, self-centered philosophies.

Existentialistic characteristic features of loneliness, anxiety and fear prevail in “The Unicorn” (1963) and “The Italian Girl” (1964). The ninth novel, “The Red and the Green” (1965) is apparently a progressive point in Murdoch’s evolution to realism, but in her next novel, “The Time of Angels” (1966), the writer’s realistic vision is completely suppressed by the old pessimistic approach to the individual and society. The line of evolution of Iris Murdoch’s creative method was, thus, tremendously unstable and contradictory. By the time she began writing, she was a convinced defender of the existentialist trend in philosophy.

Iris Murdoch was always looking for the mysterious in ordinary life. “The Sandcastle” and “The Bell” demonstrate her ability to make usual and even banal situations exciting. A lot of other novels, except “The Red and the Green”, brim with unaccountable horrors, senseless crimes and love affairs. The characters are hopelessly engulfed in the world of evil, their alienation is complete, and the author’s dependence on traditional schemes of existentialism is obvious. The picture of the Irish uprising in 1916 in the “The Red and the Green” is written with a certain sense of realism. Her other novels include an “Accidental Man” (1971), “The Black Prince” (1973) , “ The Sea, The Sea” (1978), “The Good Apprentice” (1986), and “The Book and the Brotherhood” (1988) . Iris Murdoch tried to write in the spirit of realistic traditions in English literature. But her books are characterized by features of Romantic trend.

Summary

Theme 10: New tendencies in the development of English literature in the second half of the 20th century. The 2nd World War in English literature. The protest against establishment, the threat of the new nuclear war, anti-colonial movement. Philosophy of existentialism in the works by Iris Murdock.

Key Words and Expressions to Theme 10

a free-lance writer
a reviewer
a versatile talent
an essayist
religious conviction
a screenwriter

ethnography
narration
condemn
treacherous policy
essential subject
spontaneous
existentialist trend

Questions

1. What do you know about the literary movement the followers of which were called “The Angry Young Men”?
2. What is “the anti-colonial trend” in English literature?
3. What is a “working-class novel”?
4. What is the difference between “entertainments” and “serious novels”, written by Graham Greene?
5. What novels were written by Charles Percy Snow?
6. What problems are James Aldridge’s works devoted to?
7. What do you think, why Iris Murdoch’s novels are considered to be philosophical?
8. What do you know about Iris Murdoch’s philosophy of existentialism?

LITERATURE

1. Амелина Т.А., Дьяконова Н.Я. Хрестоматия по английской литературе XX века. Москва: Просвещение, 1985.
2. Аникин Г.В., Михальская Н.П. История английской литературы. - Москва: Высшая школа, 1975.
3. Аникст А.А. История английской литературы. - Москва: Высшая школа, 1956.
4. Arnold I., Diakonova N. Three Centuries of English Prose. - Leningrad: Prosvesheniye, 1967.
5. Азизов Р., Раюмов О. Чет эл адабиёти тарихи. (18-20 асрлар) - Тошкент: Укитувчи, 1987.
6. Baranovsky L. S., Kozikis D.D. Panorama of Great Britain. 2. Historical Outline. -Minsk:Vysheishaya Shkola Publishers,1990,pp.45-180.
7. Библиотека всемирной литературы. Поэзия английского романтизма. Москва: Худлит, 1975.
8. Дьяконова Н.Я. Английский романтизм. -Москва: Наука, 1978.
9. Chase E.M., Jewett A., Evans W. Values in Literature. - Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965.
10. Diakonova N. Three centuries of English Poetry. - Leningrad : Prosvesh., 1967.

11. Kearns George. English and Western Literature. -The USA: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987.
12. Volosova T.D., Hecker M.I., Rogoff V.V. English Literature. - Moskow: Prosvesheniye, 1974.
13. Hecker M., Volosova T.D., Doroshevich A. English Literature. - Moskow: Prosvesheniye, 1975.
14. Ивашева В.В. Английская литература XX века.- Москва: Просвещение, 1979.
15. Miles Dudley and Pooley Robert C. Literature and Life in England. New York: Scott, Foresman and company, 1948.
16. Ranson House Webster's College Dictionary. - New York, 1990.
17. Guterman N.G. An Anthology of Modern English and American Verse. - Leningrad, 1963.
18. Ступников И.В. Хрестоматия по английской литературе. - Ленинград: Просвещение, 1975.
19. Шайтанов И.Щ. Англия в памфлете. Английская публицистическая проза начала XVIII века. - Москва: Прогресс, 1987.
20. Раюмов О. Чет эл адабиёти тарихи. -Тошкент: Укитувчи, 1979.
21. Pfordresher John, Veidemanis Gladys V., McDonnel Helen. England in Literature.- Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1988.
22. Пуришев Б.И., Колесников Б.И. Хрестоматия по зарубежной литературе. - Москва: Высшая школа, 1970.
23. Пуришев Б.И. Зарубежная литература средних веков. - Москва: Просвещение, 1975.
24. World Book Encyclopedia. – Chicago, London, Sydney, Toronto: A Scott Fetzer Company, 1995, 26 volumes.