

NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY



**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

**JOSEPH CONRAD AS A NOVELIST
WITH REFERENCE TO
THE SECRET AGENT**

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

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PREFACE



Joseph Conrad, the author of The Secret Agent, was primarily known as the author of sea stories. However, the work that I tried to analyse in this graduation thesis had an entirely different subject matter. It dealt with politics and terrorist activities of the time. In short, the theme was quite different compared to other Conrad fiction. Having studied this novel in the novel course also aroused my interest and made me delve deeper into it.

Owing to the wonderful education I received in the English Department of the Near East University, I had gained the ability to read books from different perspectives. I would hereby like to thank Mr. Roger Simpson for having introduced me to Conrad, and my superior Prof. Dr. Gül Celkan for her assistance in all my studies.

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INTRODUCTION

THE SECRET AGENT is regarded as one of the greatest novels of the 20th century. Joseph Conrad was primarily known as a writer of sea stories in his own time. He was one of the leading influences of the Modernist movement with his novels displaying a masterful narrative technique.

IN *THE SECRET AGENT*, he described a terrorist underworld and a morally corrupt society with ruthless many and black satire. his pessimistic view of life made him write pessimistic, negative, and black novels.

Conrad was a revolutionary writer and *THE SECRET AGENT* is a revolutionary novel.

These were the reasons why I decided to chose Conrad's. *THE SECRET AGENT* do my graduation thesis. By chosing this subject, I have had an opportunity to learn much about late 19th century and 20th century English literature and also British society and certainly Joseph Conrad.

JOSEPH CONRAD (1857 - 1924)

Originally named Jozef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowsky, he was born in Podolia (Ukraine). His parents Apollo Korzeniowsky and E. Bobrowski came from Polish nobility and they were opposed to Russians.

Apollo's involve in political conspiracy against the Russians resulted in exile to the far-northern province of Volgoda (taking their four - year - old son with them) Partly as a result of this hardship, both parents died young, leaving Conrad orphaned at the age of eleven.

It was Conrad's uncle Thaddeus Bobrowski, who acted as his guide in his major decisions in his early life. When he was sixteen, Conrad left Poland for France to fulfill his early ambition to go to sea.

Joining a ship in Marseille, Conrad spent four unsettled years, traveling mainly to and from the west Indies. It is during this time that he was allegedly involved in gun-running, as well as running up huge gambling debts on borrowed money. He narrowly escaped death when he attempted suicide by shooting himself in the chest - the bullet missed his heart.

In 1878 Conrad entered the British Merchant Navy where he remained for the next sixteen years, rising to the position of Master Mariner. His time at sea, traveling widely to Singapore, Australia, the Belgian Cargo (Which later formed the basis of the short story

HEART OF DARKNESS), Bombay and the East Indies, provided rich material for his stories. becoming a naturalized in 1886, Conrad finally settled for good in England in 1894 to devote himself to his writing. His first book ALMAYER'S FOLLY , was published in 1895, the same year as his marriage to Jassie George. He followed this in 1896 with AN OUTCAST OF THE ISLANDS. Conrad's best writing is generally thought to be found in the THE NIGGER OF NARCISSUS(1897, LORD JIM (1900), NOSTROMO (1904), THE SECRET AGENT (1907) and VICTORY (1915).

Although Conrad gained wide popularity after the publication of CHANCE IN 1913, the quality of his later books deteriorated. This was due at least in part, to his increasing ill-health. Jozeph Conrad died in 1924 leaving his last novel SUSPENSE unfinished.

THE SECRET AGENT - 1907

In his 'Authoris Note' Conrad said that *THE SECRET AGENT* arose from 'a period of mental and emotional reaction' following the publication of NOSTROMO (1904).

The novel is set in 1886, but its central incident is based on actual occurrence: the 'Greenwich Bomb Outrage' of 1894. On the evening of 15 February 1894, a young man called Martial Bourdin was found in Greenwich Park on a hill near the Royal Observatory 'in a kneeling posture, terribly mutilated'. There had been an explosion; Bourdin had set it off, and by doing this had killed himself. He had a brother-in-law called H. B. Samuels, who edited an anarchist paper. Samuels was, in fact, like Verloc, a police agent and, again like Verloc, he accompanied his not very intelligent dupe to the park. Bourdin did not stumble (as Stevie did), but in some way set off the explosive he was carrying, which was supplied by Samuels, acting as Agent provocateur. Samuels meant his sister's husband to be arrested for carrying explosive, and probably suggested that he 'experiment' with it in Greenwich Park. Therefore Samuels is a feasible source, but Verloc does not resemble Samuels personally. Anarchists were not responsible for the Greenwich Bomb incident;

they were as frightened about it as they are in *THE SECRET AGENT*.

Conrad mainly known as the writer of sea stories. *THE SECRET AGENT* is his revolutionary novel. It is a subtle study of espionage and anarchy in Victorian Period and also is a depiction of a corrupt society. In the beginning of the 20th century, there was a pessimistic point of view of world and humanity. Conrad sees the world full of madness and almost every novel of him is full of madness and despair. Conrad had a revolutionary purpose of writing *THE SECRET AGENT*. It is in fact a very strange, black, pessimistic and negative novel. There's not a totally happy character in it. Conrad was a pessimistic, complicated, unhappy man, who never knew where he belonged. He was not terribly successful. He did hardly enough earn money by writing. He found life, a kind of struggle. He was a revolutionary character. *THE SECRET AGENT* was a reflection of Conrad's view of world was a bit pessimistic, we see human beings let each other down in the novel. Conrad criticized himself and his early naive view of the world in this book.

CONRAD'S THEME

AND IDEAS IN THE BOOK

The main themes of the book are, Fate (Fatal destiny) and Loyalty. And the novel has three main ideas related to the themes:

- The idea of Madness
- The idea of Despair
- The idea of Anarchy

A part from these three, there are also some other ideas such as:

- The idea that how deceptive appearances are. You cannot know the inside of people.
- The idea that people never really understand with one another and people never really communicate with each other. There is a great gulf between human beings. This is the tragedy in the novel (the story of the novel is a domestic drama even a tragedy). Conrad presented a savage and wounding account of English society. He was a gloomy writer but he never lost hope in a better world, though he had no use whatever for politicians or political theories.

CHARACTERS

One of Conrad's guiding beliefs was that a man must always be faithful to his friends, his fellows and his employers. If there's no faithfulness between man and man, ruin is certain to follow.

Conrad's heroes, rather like Shakespeare's, have within themselves weakness which destroy them if they can.

IN *THE SECRET AGENT*, Conrad's characters are essentially comic caricatures, taken from morally corrupted British society at the time; and one Ossipon, is an evil man.

In Michealis, we see a sympathetic, albeit, pathetic and even ridiculous type. Michealis is more like a Fenian than an anarchist. (Fenians were not anarchists, but violently subversive activists). There had been a Fenian prisoner called Candon, who attempted to escape. In that incident a policeman called Brett was shot. Candon was sentenced to life imprisonment. He told the court that he was sorry for the death of Brett but also that he was sorry that the rescue attempt had failed. For this he was called brutal and cold. Conrad takes Condor's experience in creating Michealis. He wished to present Michealis as a man who would not hurt a fly, and who had

been the victim of unfortunate circumstances, as well as his own honesty.

The professor is indeed a caricature. But he has a desperate purity. He is not in fact an anarchist at all. We cannot be sure whether any of the so-called anarchists in the novel are true anarchists. The professor is a nihilist who does not even believe in the possibility of cooperation. He is fuelled by rage; he mostly resembles one of those proto-Nazis such as Nietzsche's brother-in-law. The professor does not care about being right: he only wants to destroy the weak, without seeing that he is himself pathetically weak.

Ossipon is a coward who thrived on anarchism without either giving anything to it, or even believing in it. Ossipon does not know it, but he exploits anarchism as the best means at his disposal of living off women, and probably being a pimp. Fear is his strangest instinct. He has desire for money. The portrait of Ossipon carries no implicit condemnation of anarchism. But in the portrait of Vladimir we see we see an unmistakable indictment of diplomacy. Both portraits in any case carry serious implications for the human condition itself - that it can produce such creatures. And, more or less, does every other portrait so in this novel.

The Assistant Commissioner is the work of Conrad's own imagination. He is one of the least sympathetic characters in the

novel. In spite of all his shrewdness, the Assistant Commissioner is never moved by humanitarian impulses. He is miserable in England, wants to avoid more trouble from his wife and wants to save his own skin at home, therefore takes the most intelligent and energetic series of actions seen in the novel. But though intelligent, he is in fact corrupt: he only thinks about his own interests. Whatever he does, he only does in order to please a fretful and difficult wife. He is a spiritually dead person.

Sir Elthered, 'the secretary of state' (the home secretary), is the result of Conrad's investigation into the character of a real Home secretary. Sir William Harcourt (1827 - 1904). Harcourt Gladstone's Home secretary from 1880 to 1885, played a conspicuous part in attempting to suppress Fenian activity. Sir Elthered resembles Harcourt in certain respects: he has a very old 'Family tree', he comes from an aristocrat family and he has weak eyesight. Harcourt was huge, pompous and in a way grotesque - as Conrad makes him appear in the figure of sir Elthered.

Heat is created as a character without conscience or feeling, the figure of shrewd stupidity. Conrad created him in order to define his view of the nature of policemen, Keepers of law and order, representatives of honesty to society at large. In the matter of anarchists the Assistant Commissioner is more sophisticated than Heat. He understands the ground better, and does not ask himself awkward questions. Heat's personality was Conrad's invention; but he was not concerned to show the intimate side of it. He was

expressing his idea about the human qualities, or lack of them in senior police officers.

From his experiences at Sea Conrad had learned about the virtues of common loyalty. Here he show a society in which loyalty does not exist. Everyone is ruled by motives of self-interest, except the idiot Stevie, Winnie's wretched mother, the pitiful Michealis, and perhaps Michealis's rich patron. There is no saved character in the novel, except Winnie's and Stevie's unnamed mother. One important element in the book is Conrad's questioning and criticizing himself both as husband and writer. Verloc and objective Correlatives for himself and his own wife, Jessie; and the final verdict - the knife sticking in Verloc, with only his loath - some innocence to blame is more against Conrad himself than against that betrayed lost soul Winnie Conrad as well as telling, is asking an important question which shows his own personal unhappiness: is the role of imaginative writer, the creative person, adequate ? He gives a negative answer to this question, for there is little poetry or beauty in *THE SECRET AGENT*.

Winnie has two roles: wife of Verloc, and Sister of Stevie. She has a heroic love for Stevie. She sacrificed her real love (the butchers boy) and her life for the sake of Stevie and her mother by marrying Verloc. She did never love Verloc. she is simply Stevie's protector. When Winnie learns of Verloc's carelessness which has led to

Stevie's death, she is shocked. She feels the life, the fate and also Verloc has betrayed her. Her heart is so cold that she feels like she is dead. Her sacrifice cost her everything: so that as Verloc's wife she has been dead. Full of hate, Winnie kills Verloc. She thinks that he is nothing, that's why she can kill him so easily. It is a kind of passion. She is now ready to give herself to Ossipon, whom she really hates. Ossipon only interested in possessing her and then her money. Winnie's reactions to her brother's death soon becomes as idiotic as he had been; but lack of any purity. Winnie in a way is the figure of Conrad's own stupid wife, Jessie.

Verloc is a powerful creation, all the more remarkable because he is a dull. Wretched and a amoral man. Conrad, of course, never ever believed himself to be as low, as dull or as self-deceiving as Verloc. But it was into Verloc and Professor that he projected himself in the novel. Verloc is the central character of the book. His habits are indolent. He stays in bed until noon. He moves slowly. But he has energy to run a pornography business, and to subsidize it and protect it from police attention by making Heat's reputation. At anarchist meeting he speaks impressively, but he does not have any belief in what he is saying (He owes a lot to his naturally loud voice). He has served in the French army - army life is seldom convenient to the truly lazy person for any reliably long period of time; he has made the considerable effort of copying secret plans; and he has been discovered through recklessness actuated by some sort of sexual

urgency - we are not given information about whatever he had been in romantic love or was merely suffering from the pangs of an irresistible lust. He is always at risk, and is aware of that. When he is threatened by Vladimir he is plunged into fary fear, and confusion. So Verloc is not quite all that he seems. He works rather harder than he admits to himself. He even managed to arrange an atrocity. It is at home that he acts out the indolent role.

Conrad gives us in Verloc the most negative and self-questioning self-portrait though obviously on a metaphorical level, that it is possible for a writer to give. In Stevie's death, Verloc, in fact, does not want him to be killed; but when he is, Verloc has no sense whatever of loss - he thinks his wife needs no more than a 'good cry'. (In fact this shows that he does not understand her and there's a great gulf between them.)

Verloc is quite pessimistic. In chapter eleven, we see a great irony in Verloc's situation: For the first in his life, he gives trust to Winnie and he starts to think optimistically about the future; but Winnie kills him.

We see the effectiveness of the tragic satire in *THE SECRET AGENT*.

Conrad was greatly influenced by Dickens and Dostoyevsky. He had sympathy for Marxist ideas. 'Darkness' is the key word for Conrad.

You are in darkness about characters and events. He gives information piece by piece, not completely. We never see the whole picture clearly from the view of the omniscient narrator. Things become clear very slowly in Conrad. You can't know anything for certain. The aim of this novel was neither to entertain, nor to judge the feelings of mankind, but to show a period of mental and emotional reaction.

The novel has very modernistic style in dialogue and narrative. Conrad uses colloquial language, old words, adjectives, satire, irony and criticism to convey this very bleak picture of the world.

Conrad was a descriptive writer. We see his idealism, modernism and realism in *THE SECRET AGENT*.

LATE 19th CENTURY BRITISH

LITERATURE

Toward the end of the 19th century (Victorian Period) traditional stabilities began to weaken in English literature. From France came the tradition of the bohemian life which was opposite to the ideas of conservative British society.

The artist was a figure of alienated artist, rejecting and rejected by ordinary society. The growth of popular education as a result of the Education Act in 1870, finally made elementary education compulsory and universal created a large, unsophisticated literary public at whom new kinds of journalism, in particular at the cheap "yellow press" were directed. Newspapers, magazines, and novels became very popular at that time. A public that was literate but not in any real sense educated increased steadily throughout the 19th century, and one of the results of this was the splitting up of the audience for literature into "highbrows", "Lowbrows, and "middlebrows".

The late Victorian world seemed infinitely complex, fragmented, into mutually hostile nations with their separate empires to protect, suspicious classes and political factions, sciences and arts beyond

the grasp of the common man, with human beings alone in a post-Darwinian Universe.

The form of imaginative literature was changing into a shorter and more unforgiving compass. The poems and short fiction of the 1880s and 1890s treated homosexual feeling as it had not been dealt with in literature since the Elizabethan Age. Tennyson, Thomas Hardy and Matthew Arnold were important figures of late 19th Century British literature. The English countryside was an important subject in the late Victorian literature. It should also be remembered that anti - Victorianism - the criticism of the normal attitudes and preconceptions of the Victorian middle classes - first became very violent in the last two decades of the 19th century. Samuel Butler in his novel "The way of All Flesh" (Completed in 1884, published in 1903) attacks Violently the Victorian conceptions of the family, education and religion.

The married Woman's property Act of 1882, which allowed married women to own property in their own right; the admission of women to the Universities at different times during the later part of the century; the fight for women's suffrage, which was not won until 1918 - these events marked a change in the attitude to women and in the part they played in the national life as well as in the relation between the sexes, which is reflected in a Variety of ways in the literature of the period.

The Boer war (1899 - 1902), fought by the British to establish political and economic control over the Boer republics of South Africa, was another event that affected the literature in the end of the Victorian Period.

19th CENTURY NOVEL

The English novels of the 19th century were written at a time of great confidence in British society culture and political organization (affecting not only Britain, but the Empire overseas), and although different novelists presented groups of characters from different levels of society and explored different themes, there was a sense of confidence in the basic structure of society, and the place of people in it, that underlies their work. The novel of the Victorian period had social themes. England was the main scene. Writers mostly saw the world only through one character's eyes. Romanticism was very effective in this period.

Nineteenth - Century Novelists:

Jane Austin "Sense And Sensibility" (1811). Mary Shelly

"Frankenstein" (1818) Edgar Allan Poe "The Fall Of The House of Usher" (1839)

Sir Walter Scott "Ivanhoe" (1819)

Charles Dickens "David Copperfield" (1849-50)

William Makepeace Thackeray "Vanity Fair" (1847 - 8)

Charlotte Bronte "Jane Eyre" (1847)

Emily Bronte "Wuthering Heights" (1847)

George Eliot "Adam Bede" (1859)

Charles Kingsley "Hypatia" (1853)

Anthony Trollope "The Warden" (1855)

George Meredith "The Egoist" (1879)

Robert Louis Stevenson "Treasure Island" (1883)

Anthony Hope "The Prisoner of Zenda" (1894)

Oscar Wilde "The Picture of Dorian Gray" (1891)

Thomas Hardy "Tess of The D'urbervilles" (1891)

PROSE Writers Of The 19 Century British Literature:

In addition to the novels which the century produced, a large amount of good prose set forth the ideas of the time.

Charles Lamb is well known for his "Essays of Elia" (1823 and 1833), essays on various light subjects written in an attractive style.

William Hazlitt, another essayist of the time, was a quarrelsome man. His most important work is probably his literary criticism: "Character's of Shakespeare's Plays" (1817-8), "Lectures On The English Poets" (1818 - 9), "English Comic Writers" (1819), and so on. Thomas Carlyle was another writer of the time whose style was forceful, even violent. His guiding aims in life were truth, work and courage. His famous "History of The French Revolution" (1837) is a picture of passion and flame, for which his style is suitable. Charles Robert Darwin had a high position among scientists. "The origin

position among scientists. "The Origin of Species" (1839) was the result of 20 years of study and enquiries among gardeners and farmers.

John Ruskin was a student of art. He disliked the ugliness of the industrial world at the time. He defended Gothic architecture in "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" (1849). The seven Lamps are sacrifice, Truth, power (the use of shadow), Beauty, life Memory, and Obedience.

Samuel Butler attacked Victorian society with satire. His "Ereuhon" (1872) is a satire on English customs.

19th Century Poetry

Poets of the late 19th century helped the romantic tradition to continue. Romantic poetry believed in youth and freedom. Two main source of romantic poets were love and nature. According to them, poet was the only one who would transmit the mysterious message of the nature to the mankind. The principle of "Art for Art's sake". Was the main principle of the Victorian poets.

Later 19th Century Poets:

Alfred Lard Tennyson "In Memoriam" (1833-50)

Robert Browning "Sordello" (1840)

Matthew Arnold "The Scholar Gipsy" (1853)

Arthur Hugh Clough "Amours de Voyage" (1849)

Algernon Charles Swinburne "Poems And Ballads" (1866)

Elizabeth Barrette Browning "Sonnets From Portuguese" (1855)

20th CENTURY BRITISH

LITERATURE



Important Events:

- 1901 : Death of Queen Victoria.
- 1907 : Kipling first British Winner of Nobel Prize for Literature.
- 1912 : Defeat of the Liberal government's Irish Home Rule bill;
growth of the Labour party.
- 1914 - 18 : World war I
- 1916 : The Easter Rising in Ireland; many protesters against British
Rule were executed.
- 1918 : Gerard Manley Hopkins' poetry published.
- 1922 : Eliot "The waste Land" .Joyce "Ulysses"
- 1928 : W.B. Yeats's "The Tower"
- 1930 : Period of depression and unemployment begins.
- 1939 - 43 : World War 2.
- 1947 : Britain gave independence to India - most of Britain's
overseas possessions became independent in the late 1930s and
1960s.
- 1954 : Golding "Lord of The Flies"
- 1955 : Becket "Waiting For Godot" (first performance in English)

1956 : Osbourne "Look Back In Anger"

1964 - 70 : London became the worldwide capital of youth culture - especially music, clothes and design.

1969 : Becket wins Nobel Prize for literature

1973 : Britain joined the European Common Market (European Union).

1979 : A new conservative party government stressed an economy and culture led by money.

1983 : Gliding wins Nobel Prize for literature.

1989 : End of communism in Eastern Europe; Capitalism begins to extend eastwards.

The end of Victorian Age saw the rise of various kinds of pessimism and stoicism (= the determination to stand for human dignity by enduring bravely, with a stiff upper lip", whatever fate may bring). Edwardian England (1901 - 1910) was very conscious of being no longer Victorian. Edward VII stamped his character on the decade he reigned. In art and literature, the alienation of artists and intellectuals was proceeding rapidly.

20th CENTURY POETRY

The history of English poetry in the 20th century tends to support the frequent remark that poetry is essentially a private art form. Certainly, poets are often influenced by other poets, and those who live through the same social and political events may well share a common outlook on them, but in the end each poet works as a private and separate person who makes his or her own world from his or her own deep concerns. Therefore, it can be said that the story of English poetry in the 20th century is very much a story of individual figures.

Towards the end of the 19th Century nature became domesticated (focus shifted from the grand nature to domestic nature).

In the beginning of the 20th century, there was new change of focus, from the countryside to the city. Poetry was no longer about countryside as in the time of the Romantics. Early 20th century poetry in England was written for and by a metropolitan intelligentsia (sophisticated people who lived in cities). This kind of poetry was anti middle - class. There was rejection of the idea of the poet as a public figure; diluting his poetry to make it intelligible to the middle classed. The result of this idea, that poet's shouldn't write simple

verses for all the people to understand, was that a lot of Modernism had a condensed and difficult quality in poetry, such as the juxtaposition of images, words and ideas in new and sudden combinations. There were esoteric references to foreign literatures and mythology, and also esoteric use of language and imagery.

Modernism:

A term for an, international tendency in the arts brought about by a creative Renaissance in the last decade of the 19th century, and lasting into the post-world war years.

It includes a wide range of artistic movement such as symbolism, Impressionism, post impressionism, dada, expressionism, Futurism, Imagism, Vorticism, Constructivism, and Surrealism. It is originated in cosmopolitan circles in Berlin, Vienna, Munich, Prague, Moscow, London, and Paris. Later it spread to USA, especially New York, and Chicago.

As a concept Modernism is easier to employ than to define. There is no set of forms; old forms are rejected perceptions of reality are uncertain.

Poets turn back to primitive myth to make sense of the chaos of the 20th century experience. The idea of personality is fragmentary and uncertain, rather than substantial and unchanging. The unconscious life of the mind is as important as the conscious.

Contradictions of life are reflected in ironic juxtaposition. One can only say what life is about in some moments and realize in a moment how important something is one can never say everything that is to be said, there's always a new idea to be found in poetry.

Georgian Poetry:

The Georgian Group flourished in the reign of George V, and included Gordon Bottomley, Rupert Brooke, William H. Davies, Walter De la Mare, John Drinkwater, James Elroy Flecker, Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, Harold Munro, T. Sturge Moore, James Stephens, Siegfried Sassoon, J. Rosenberg, and Robert Graves.

The poets of the Georgian Group had a common aim - search for certainty in a world of vague ideas and crumbling foundations.

The Georgian poetry is characterized by a quiet, meditative mood and a music that keeps time to the slow pulse of rustic England.

Beauty, Certainty and Quiteness, those unchangable aspects of civilization, form the most important opart of their subject matter. They were principally concerned with nature, love, leisure, childhood, animals and other noncantroversial subjects. Their syle was characterizedby a lyrical strain and a certain amont of discipline but none of features was intense. Typical Georgian poetry was a poetry of simple statements entirely free from complex attitudes and philosophies which were subject to attack and disintegration. With the beginning of the First world war, some of the Georgian poets

became known as the war poets. These were namely , Rupert Brooke, Siegfried Sasoon, Wildfred owen, and Isaac Rosenberg. All of them fought in the First world war and all were killed except Sasoan.

20th Century Poets:

Apart from the Georgian poets and war poets, there are many other poets of the 20th Century literature such as: W.B. Yeats
"Byzantium"

T.S. Eliot "The Waste Land" (1922)

Group of poets known as the poets of the 1930s: W.H. Auden, Louis Macniece Cecil Day Lewis, and also Stephen Spender.

Poets of the 2nd World war:

Roy Fuller and Dylan Thomas. Ted Hughes, Robert graves, Philip Larkin, and Sir John Betjeman were also important poets of the 20th century English literature.

20th CENTURY NOVEL

The 20th century writers could not share the confidence of the 19th century writers; the change in beliefs and political ideas were influenced greatly by the events of the first world war and by the events across the world that led to the disappearance of the British Empire, but began even earlier.

The novel of Victorian period had social themes; the novel of the 20th century had more personal, individual themes (contrast between 19th and 20th century novel). But at the same time, as the novel examines the problems of the individual of the whole world.

England is no longer the main scene (setting). Many writers use the wider world outside as their setting: often England is seen in contrast with the other countries that are described. Writers began to use different points of view, rather than seeing the world only through one character's eyes - many points of view, various settings, and quick move from one scene to another, all become a part of modern writing. The "Stream of consciousness" was developed in the 1920s as the great new technique used by novelists to present a character's thought and sense, impressions without comment and explanation, ordering /sometimes without syntax or logical sequence. James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, E.M.

Forster, and sometimes Joseph Conrad are the writers who used the stream-of-consciousness technique in their novels.

20th Century Novelists:

Rudyard Kipling "Kim" (1901)

E.M. Forster "A Passage to India" (1924)

H.G. Wells "The First Men on the Moon" (1901)

D.H. Lawrence "The Rainbow" (1915)

James Joyce "Ulysses" (1922)

Virginia Woolf "To the Lighthouse" (1927)

Graham Greene "The Power and the Glory" (1940)

William Golding "Lord of the Flies" (1954)

Joseph Conrad "The Secret Agent" (1907)

Irish Murdoch "The Bell" (1958)

Anthony Burgess "The Malayan Trilogy" (1956 - 59)

Alan Sillitoe "Long - Distance Runner" (1959)

Kingsley Amis "Lucky Jim" (1954)

Evelyn Wough "Decline And Fall" (1928)

George Orwell "Nineteen Eighty Four" (1949)

T - E - Lawrence "The seven Pillars of Wisdom" (1926)

IVY Compton - Burnett "Brothers And Sisters" (1929)

Doris Lessing "The Grass is singing" (1959)

Aldous Huxley "Brave New World" (1932)

Arthur C. Clarke "The City And The Stars" (1957)

20th CENTURY DRAMA

Modern drama begins in a sense with the witty drawing-room comedies of Oscar Wilde. In the work of 20th century English dramatists it is possible to see not only the products of the individual writer's ideas and experience but also several general tendencies.

This does not mean that the writers are members of a group, but that they share enough beliefs and concerns for their work to have several important things in common. One of this loose groupings tries to show on stage some parts of the daily lives of ordinary people in a realistic way, by using social and political criticism. This type of play has a history at least as old as the century. The most outstanding examples of this group are:

John Galsworthy "Justice" (1910)

George Bernard Shaw "Pygmalion" (1912) Sean O'Casey "The Shadow of a Gunman" (1923)

Arnold Wesker "Roots" (1959)

Trevor Griffiths "The Party" (1973)

A second area of concern in 20th Century English drama is that of search of the individual's identity in an unfriendly outside world, and the difficulty and fear of communicating with other people.

Important examples of this group are:

Samuel Becket "Waiting For Godot" (1954)

Harold Pinter "The Birthday Party" (1957)

A third general grouping in modern English drama can be seen in those plays in which language is not only the means by which the feelings and beliefs of characters are expressed but an important part of the party in its own right, particularly when it is used for a witty or comic effect to contrast with the seriousness of the theme beneath.

Major Examples are:

Oscar Wilde: "The importance of Being Earnest" (1893)

Joe Orton "Loot" (1967)

Tom Stoppard "Jumpers" (1972)

J.B. Priestly "An Inspector Calls" (1946)

John Osbourne "Look Back In Anger" (1956)

Peter Shaffer "Equus" (1973)

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BRITISH SOCIETY

The 19th century was the period of inventions, of advances made by mankind in controlling Nature. The railway, the telegraph, the steamship, established inter-communication between the most distant parts of the world. The growth of manufacture, the vast increase in the production of goods, employed ever-increasing masses of goods, employed ever-increasing masses of people, and caused the expansion of numbers which Malthus foretold in his "Essay on Population" (published in 1798). With the growth of material, wealth, and population, came the need for the broadening of political institutions. Thus the 19th century is distinguished by the rise of democracy, to be seen, for instance in the British Reform Acts; and also by 'national' movements - for instance, in the union of Germany and the rise of the Kingdom of Italy. The appearance of the country has been changed. The towns have been transformed out all recognition. Teeming cities have arisen; the busy industrial area of the 'Black Country' has been created; England has become a kind of workshop of the world.

During the reign of Queen Victoria, district progress took place in the moral and material condition of the English people. Her age was not so great in art as the age of Elizabeth. Yet no period has surpassed that of Victoria in the variety and solid worth of its achievement. Notable results were gained by philanthropy, in bettering the lot of the poor; by mechanical enterprises, which conquered Nature through obeying her; in theology, liberal, never extreme; in architecture, which, if not the highest order, was dignified and pleasing; in literature, where the glorious record of the English people in verse and prose was sustained and advanced. The spirit of the people, tried by several severe though comparatively short wars, showed a decline throughout a long period, which was, on the whole, peaceful. Such wars as took place were successfully isolated in their own parts of the world, and never disturbed the general progress of the country.

The Victorian Age (1800 - 1850) was the period of protest and reform. By the period of protest and reform. By the mid-century the population had risen to 18,00,000, and less than a quarter of that population worked on the Land. Large numbers of people continued to work in trades that saw little technical change but the areas of the economy that expanded most rapidly were those in which technological improvement took place and in which the labour force was gathered together in large workplaces.

The industrial revolution brought great wealth. It gave work to the massively increased population. The middle class certainly grew in wealth as well as in size. The emergence of a large industrial and urban working class and a rich and confident middle class was bound to cause tensions and change in 19th century society. Economic distress among the working class produced sporadic violence. There was destruction of machinery by workers who felt their jobs were threatened (they were called huddites). There was destruction of farm property by hungry farm workers in the countryside. There was also the rise of mass working-class movements. Unions were organized, but they collapsed after a short period of time; however the middle class achieved both its political and its economic aims: Parliament was reformed, and free trade and the ending of protection for agriculture were achieved by mid-century.

The shocking condition of life of so many people provoked a response. Reformers, whether moved by religious political motives, demanded change. The middle class constituted a large reading public to which reformers could appeal. Charles Dickens appealed to his readers, sentiments in his novels and served the cause of reform. Victorian Britain saw a considerable revival in religion. The effect of the church was very powerful.

The publication in 1859 of Charles Darwin's "The origin of the species" was the culmination of a series of writings which swept aside the fundamental biblical view of creation and history, substituting for it evolution and natural selection. In the field of education, in the early part of the 19th century, it was believed that the purpose of education was to produce Christian gentleman. With the growth of a middle class, moral and intellectual training became an aim of the public school. With the growth of the Empire in the late 19th century, there was a need for large numbers of well schooled men who could take up posts in the army, the civil service and business. But British work people were not getting enough education. Britain's children did not go willingly to school. Nor when they got there did they learn enough to help them become technically qualified. There was far too little attention paid to education in Victorian Britain. The upper class know little, if any, science. The middle classes who ran industry knew as little, while the lower classes had none of the skills that the foreign workmen learned in a variety of technical schools. Victorians were certainly class-conscious, but the vast wealth produced by the industrial Revolution enabled people of all classes to improve their social position. The prosperity of the 19th century is evident from the great number of buildings erected. Advances in engineering enabled structures to be bigger and more daring than ever before. In all towns a need for civic buildings demanded the construction of town halls, schools, hospitals,

museums and libraries. The Gothic style of building was very popular. Victorian society was very low opinion for women, thinking that they were inferior to men and that their only job was to be wife and a mother. Most Victorian mothers, like their mothers and grandmothers, before them, had large families. In the early 19th century most children had died before reaching the age of five.

Things improved as the century progressed and it was quite common for the Victorian family to have seven or eight children surviving the dangers of the early childhood. In the middle class homes brining up a large family was made easier by the employment of a large number of servants. By 1900 there were over one million domestic servants working and living in the homes of the well - to - do. For many women in the working class life was much harder. Their husbands were often lowly paid and frequently unemployed. Many working class mothers were forced to try to earn a little money, doing whatever jobs they could get. Women wanted to have rights for Votes, and they wanted freedom to have the same sort of education as their brother had. They also wanted freedom to get the same sort of gobs and the same wages as the men got. By the end of the 19th century middle class women had begun to take important steps along the road to freedom and equality. Industrial Working - class culture was a culture which embraced brass bands, outings to the seaside, music halls and hymn singing in Nonconformist chapels. Briefly it was cherry, lively and vibrant and was the culture of the majority of Britons by the end of the century.

20th CENTURY BRITISH

SOCIETY

In 1900 (the time of Edward VII) the economy of England has become mostly industrial . The British Empire included many parts of the world. However the Boer war in south Africa was not a successful war for the British, and colonies throughout the world began to act against Britain. Many countries which were under the control of Britain, began gradually disappear. In 1911, seventy five percent of the 23 million people began to live in cities. The Village way of life have almost disappeared. These were the years of change.

In 1914 began the First world war. The British entered the war with enthusiasm. It was a popular and patriotic war at the start, and there was no need for the conscription of men for the army until 1916- Ordinary soldiers believed that they were fighting tyranny and that the world after Germany's defeat would be a better and more peaceful place. The First world war changed for many people their view of the world. Millions of man, including young soldiers, had been killed. It was a horror for many people who hadn't seen war before. (Millions had died for nothing.) For many people, there was

no reason for the war. Basic religious and political beliefs were questioned by more people. At the end of the war, among many people there was deep disillusion, certainly, the literature of the period, or flowering of poetry by such people as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, was a bitter condemnation of war and military leaders. The scars of the First World War were so deep that there was a revulsion in the following decades against any action that might lead Britain into such a terrible conflict again. The economy of the inter-war period presented the contrast of industrial decay and industrial growth. And in society, there was a marked contrast. There were dole queues (the dole was unemployment pay) and soup kitchens in areas of high unemployment. There were protest marches of by workers, and there was the bitterness of the General strike. But there were also growing signs of prosperity and more varied lifestyles. By the 1930s, there were motor cars and the lorry had taken over from the horse and cart. Every town of any size had a cinema. Around many towns, particularly in the Midlands and the south, suburbs proliferated, often made up of identical semi-detached houses with generous gardens. Consumer goods had made their appearance. Many houses had a radio, electrical fittings and sets of books given away by newspapers to boost their sales. Women's clothes now made out of synthetic fabrics, became easier to look after. Skirts no longer touched the ground, and cosmetics were widely used.

The freedom repressive Victorian conventions was particularly pronounced in literature. D.H. Lawrence wrote explicitly about sex. One of his novels, "The Rainbow" was prosecuted as obscene in 1913, and "Lady Chatterley's Lover" (1928) was not published in unexpurgated form for 30 years. He approved of the irrational and stormy side of life; sober marriage and compatibility with society was not for his characters - nor, in fact, for him. James Joyce's "Ulysses" (1922) treated sexual themes in a way that was considered shocking, and the book could not be bought readily for many years because of the disapproval of the courts. If sexual liberation was championed in literature, so too was social justice. George Orwell condemned the conditions of life of people in mining towns, industrial centres and the corners of the big cities.

Virginia Woolf was at the centre of a group. Their aims were diverse. What brought them together was the association of intellect and generally stylish surroundings. They were unashamedly highbrow. Virginia Woolf's was probably the last of London's literary salons. Their elitism marked the growing separation of writers (particularly poets) from society.

The rise of fascism was the main reason for the second world war. A comparison made between the 1930s and 1970s shows that the last forty years have been years of great change. Partly this change was due to the second world war during which new industries were

developed, old industries brought out of the depression and great social reforms either brought in or planned.

The Labour Party won a majority in the House of Commons for the first time in 1943 and built the modern welfare state on foundations that had been laid by the Liberals and Conservatives. In 1951 the conservative Party came back to power and maintained the modern welfare state - a sign of the growth of the degree of state interference in the nation's life.

From 1945 - 70 both the Labour and conservative governments remembered the high level of unemployment that Britain endured in the 1920s and 1930s.

Governments of both parties tried to carry out policies to ensure full employment. High wages, full employment social security benefits, and mass production of consumer goods in modernised industries combined to create a new society - in which the majority of the people enjoyed a very high standard of living. In the later 1950s most writers, and many of their readers, believed that 'there are no poor now' - so great was the contrast between life in the 1950s and life in the 1930s.

However in the 1960s and 1970s society became less optimistic and more fully aware of the poverty and hardship that still exist in

modern Britain. People also become aware of the two n new problems such as the result of the creation of the two new affluent society almost continual balance of payments crisis as Britain bought more of the world's goods than she was able to pay for. From the post-war period up to the present time, many revolutions took place in many fields such as industry, education, technology, science etc.

British society is on the whole tolerant and considerate . There is a highly developed system of social services. The countryside remains unspoilt. Artistic and cultural life is at a high point.

The quality of present-day life in Britain must render worthwhile, the efforts required to reach harmony and achieve progress in industrial life and thereby the ensure the continuation of this island civilisation.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	
INTRODUCTION.....	
JOSEPH CONRAD (1857 - 1924)	
THE SECRET AGENT - 1907.....	
CONRAD'S THEME AND IDEAS IN THE BOOK.....	
CHARACTERS	
LATE 19th CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE	
19th CENTURY NOVEL	
19th CENTURY POETRY	
20th CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE	
20th CENTURY POETRY	
GEORGIAN POETRY:	
20th CENTURY POETS:	
20th CENTURY NOVEL	
20th Century Novelists:	
20th CENTURY DRAMA	
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY	
BRITISH SOCIETY	
20th CENTURY BRITISH SOCIETY	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	