

## Lecture 1: Emergence and Evolution of the Novel

### The Modern Novel

#### The Novel: Definitions and Distinctions

**Genre:** Fiction and Narrative ❖

**Style:** Prose ❖

**Length:** Extended ❖

**Purpose:** Mimesis or Verisimilitude ❖

“The Novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the time in which it is written. The Romance, in lofty and elevated language, describes what never happened nor is likely to happen.”

Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance*, 1785

#### Verisimilitude

Refers to the illusion that the novel is a representation of real life. Verisimilitude results from:

a correspondence between the world presented in the novel and the real world of the reader ❖

Recognizable settings and characters in real time ❖

what Hazlitt calls, “the close imitation of men and manners... the very texture of society as it really exists.”

The novel emerged when authors fused adventure and ❖

romance with verisimilitude and heroes that were not supermen but ordinary people, often, insignificant nobodies

#### Precursors to the Novel

##### Heroic Epics

*Gilgamesh*, Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil’s *Aeneid*, *Beowulf*, *The Song of Roland*

##### Ancient Greek and Roman Romances and Novels

*An Ephesian Tale* and *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, Petronius’s *Satyricon*, Apuleius’s *The Golden Ass*

##### Oriental Tales

*A Thousand and One Nights*

**Medieval European Romances:** Arthurian tales culminating in Malory’s *Morte Darthur*

**Elizabethan Prose Fiction:** Gascoigne's *The Adventure of Master F. J.*, Greene's *Pandosto: The Triumph of Time*, Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*, Deloney's *Jack of Newbury*

**Travel Adventures:** Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, More's *Utopia*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Voltaire's *Candide*

**Novelle:** Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptameron*

**Moral Tales:** Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Johnson's *Rasselas*

### The First Novels

*Don Quixote* ( Spain, 1605-15) by Miguel de Cervantes

*The Princess of Cleves* (France, 1678) by Madame de Lafayette

*Robinson Crusoe* (England, 1719) , *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722) by Daniel DeFoe

*Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (England, 1740-1742) by Samuel Richardson

*Joseph Andrews* (England, 1742) and *Tom Jones* (1746) by Henry Fielding

### Types of Novels

<b>Picaresque</b> <b>Epistolary</b> <b>Sentimental</b> <b>Gothic</b> <b>Historical</b> <b>Psychological</b> <b>Realistic/Naturalistic</b>	<b>Regional</b> <b>Social</b> <b>Mystery</b> <b>Science Fiction</b> <b>Magical Realism</b>
---	--

### ***Don Quixote*** **by Miguel de Cervantes** **(1547-1616)**

First European novel: part I - 1605; part II - 1615 ❖

A psychological portrait of a mid-life crisis ❖

Satirizes medieval romances, incorporates pastoral, picaresque, social and religious commentary ❖

What is the nature of reality? ❖

***The Princess of Cleves*  
Madame de Lafayette**

First European historical novel – recreates life of 16<sup>th</sup> c. French nobility at the court of Henri II ❖

First *roman d'analyse* (novel of analysis), dissecting emotions and attitudes ❖

**The Rise of the English Novel**

The Restoration of the monarchy (1660) in England after the Puritan Commonwealth (1649-1660) encouraged an outpouring of secular literature ❖

Appearance of periodical literature: journals and newspapers ❖

Literary Criticism

Character Sketches

Political Discussion

Philosophical Ideas

Increased leisure time for middle class: Coffee House and Salon society ❖

Growing audience of literate women ❖

**England's First Professional Female Author:**

**Aphra Behn**

**1640-1689**

**Novels**

*Love Letters between a Nobleman and his sister* (1683) ❖

*The Fair Jilt* (1688) ❖

*Agnes de Castro* (1688) ❖

*Oroonoko* (c.1688) ❖

She also wrote many dramas

## Daniel Defoe

- Master of plain prose and powerful narrative ❖
- Journalistic style: highly realistic detail ❖
- Travel adventure: *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719 ❖
- Contemporary chronicle: *Journal of the Plague Year*, 1722 ❖
- Picaresques: *Moll Flanders*, 1722 and *Roxana* ❖

## Picaresque Novels

- The name comes from the Spanish word *picaro*: a rogue ❖
- A usually autobiographical chronicle of a rascal's travels and adventures as s/he makes his/her way through the world more by wits than industry ❖
- Episodic, loose structure ❖
- Highly realistic: detailed description and uninhibited expression ❖
- Satire of social classes ❖
- Contemporary picaresques: Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* ❖

## Epistolary Novels

- Novels in which the narrative is told in letters by one or more of the characters ❖
- Allows the author to present the feelings and reactions of the characters, and to bring immediacy to the plot, also allows multiple points of view ❖
- Psychological realism ❖
- Contemporary epistolary novels: Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*; ❖

## Pioneers of the English Novel

<b>Samuel Richardson</b> <b>1689-1761</b>	<b>Henry Fielding</b> <b>1707-1754</b>
<i>Pamela</i> (1740) and <i>Clarissa</i> (1747-48) Epistolary ❖ Sentimental ❖ Morality tale: Servant ❖ resisting seduction by her employer	<i>Shamela</i> (1741) <i>Joseph Andrews</i> (1742), and <i>Tom Jones</i> (1749) Picaresque protagonists ❖ "comic epic in prose" ❖ Parody of Richardson ❖

## **The Novel of Manners:**

### **Jane Austen**

Novels dominated by the customs, manners, conventional behavior and habits of a particular social class ❖

Often concerned with courtship and marriage ❖

Realistic and sometimes satiric ❖

Focus on domestic society rather than the larger world ❖

Other novelists of manners: Anthony Trollope, Edith Wharton, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Margaret Drabble ❖

## **Gothic Novels**

Novels characterized by magic, mystery and horror ❖

Exotic settings – medieval, Oriental, etc. ❖

Originated with Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764) ❖

William Beckford: *Vathek, An Arabian Tale* (1786)

Anne Radcliffe: 5 novels (1789-97) including *The Mysteries of Udolpho* ❖

Widely popular genre throughout Europe and America: Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* (1798) ❖

Contemporary Gothic novelists include Anne Rice and Stephen King ❖

### **Frankenstein by Mary Shelley 1797-1851**

One of the most famous gothic novels ❖

Inspired by a dream in reaction to a challenge to write a ghost story ❖

Published in 1817 (rev. ed. 1831) ❖

Influenced by the Greek myth of Prometheus ❖

*Frankenstein* is also considered the first science fiction novel ❖

## Novels of Sentiment

Novels in which the characters, and thus the readers, have a heightened emotional response to events ❖

Connected to emerging Romantic movement ❖

Laurence Sterne: *Tristram Shandy* (1760-67) ❖

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) ❖

Francois Rene de Chateaubriand: *Atala* (1801) and *Rene* (1802) ❖

The Brontës: Anne Brontë *Agnes Grey* (1847) Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1847) ❖

## The Novel: A Definition

**According to M.H. Abrams:**

“The term novel is now applied to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose. [...] Its magnitude permits a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plot (or plots), ampler development of milieu, and more sustained exploration of character and motives than do the shorter, more concentrated modes.”

## The emergence of the novel

The emergence of the novel was made possible by many factors.

The most important are:

1. The development of the printing press: which enables mass production of reading material.
2. The emergence of a middle class (“middle station”) with the leisure to read.

When the novel appeared in the late