

Development And Origin Of English Literature

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ABSTRACT

The 18th century was the novel's golden age as a literary form. Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne are all important writers who shaped the evolution of the English novel. They had an impact on subsequent generations of authors. The novel's meteoric ascent in the 18th century coincided with the advent of the printing machine, a key component of the industrial revolution. Because of the domino effect of the industrial revolution, people's quality of life and standard of living both rose. Because of the growing number of well-educated middle-class individuals, the market for books has soared. The introduction of mobile libraries has helped expand the number of people who read. Members of the mobile library had convenient access to books since they were delivered to their houses.

KEYWORDS English Literature, Development, Novel, Origin.

INTRODUCTION

Germanic culture brought to England by the Anglo-Saxons is where the literary history of the English language starts. Beowulf is the oldest and most read piece of literature from the Old English period. Middle English, which supplanted Old English after the Norman Conquest, was the language employed by Geoffrey Chaucer, the "Father of English Literature," in his masterpiece, The Canterbury Tales. William Shakespeare's renowned plays and sonnets have led to his being hailed as the greatest writer in English literature. In addition, you may get a PDF of the history of English literature and learn more about the fascinating development of the best works of literature that way. Following Alexander's conquest of India, the above narrative suggests, there was close cultural exchange between Greece and India. For their own amusement, the Greeks built theaters in the towns of Ujjain and Kannouj, and it is from them that Sanskrit play derives.

It was assumed by some scholars that since the ancient Greeks and the ancient Indians came into such intimate contact with each other from the 4th century B.C. onwards, and particularly after the invasion of India and the conquest of part of the country by Alexander the Great, it was but natural to expect that Greek drama should influence Indian drama. (Chatterji 7)

Prof. Albrecht Weber, another critic, explains how Greek culture and the Greek military contributed to the development of Indian drama by saying, "... the necessary impetus to creation may have been given by the contact of Greece with India, through the representation of Greek plays at the courts of the kings in Baktria, the Punjab, and Gujarat" (Keith 57). An other piece of evidence that points to Greece as the inspiration for Sanskrit play is the term

yavanika, which translates to "curtain." Curtains are a crucial part of the Sanskrit theatrical experience. According to E. Windisch, an Indian theatre critic, the ancient Indians referred to the Greek invaders as Yavana, and it is believed that the Sanskrit term yavanika is derived from this Yavana. In this sense, the term yavanika has Greek roots and supports the idea that Sanskrit play had Greek roots. However, another explanation of the term yavanika challenges this assertion, suggesting that it is an adaptation of an Old Indo-Aryan or Sanskrit word yamanika, which stemmed from the root word yam, meaning to tie or fix, and was used for a curtain with ropes to secure it. Another piece of evidence contradicts the theory that Greeks were the inspiration for Indian play. There is no mention of yavanika in the plays of the forerunners of Sanskrit theater, such as Bhasa, Bhavabhuti, Sudraka, and Kalidasa. This term was originally used in the 12th century in the works of Rajshekara.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Shankar Kumar (2011) The target audience for this article is post-secondary students, namely those enrolled in undergraduate programs, although it will also be useful to those enrolled in graduate programs. Every such article has to do two things first: provide an overview of the literature's evolution in light of the country's history and culture, and then evaluate the works of the field's most influential writers sympathetically and objectively. To my knowledge, there is no other collection that successfully accomplishes both goals via a selection of writers that is both narrow enough to facilitate clarity and comprehensive enough to include all the necessary information, both biographical and otherwise. A handbook, in my opinion, should provide a logical presentation of the crucial information, allowing the student to devote the bulk of his or her time in class and outside of it to reading and analyzing the works of literature. With any luck, the article will be useful in a wide range of contexts and approaches. As a consequence of students' lack of clear understanding of basic literary concepts, experienced educators recommend a concise introduction to these ideas. The last section, which contains homework and quiz questions, is meant to be considered as open-endedly as possible. I'm included a list of low-cost versions of the most influential writers in the hopes that it would point instructors in the direction of a feasible way to distribute the information, particularly at universities that can afford to purchase several copies. Poets, of course, may be read adequately in volumes of, selections; but to me, at least, a paper of small passages from twenty or a hundred prose writers is an absurdity. It is my opinion that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries should be briskly traversed in order to make as much room as possible for the nineteenth. R. H. F.

DEFINITION AND ORIGIN OF NOVEL

"a fictional prose narrative of considerable length," as defined by The Shorter Oxford Dictionary (quoted in Rees, 1973, p.106), "in which characters and actions representative of real life are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity." Alternatively, "a piece of prose fiction of a reasonable length" is what an anonymous author means when they say a book is. Prose, as defined by both definitions, is the standard, everyday use of language that lacks the meter and rhyme of poetry. There are, however, a few poetry novels, such as *The Golden Gate* by Vikram Seth and *Eugene Onegin* by Alexander Pushkin. The other part of the word has to do with how long something is. The first definition emphasizes "considerable length," while the

second emphasizes "reasonable length" to highlight what makes novels distinct from short stories. Shorter novels are commonly referred to as "novellas" since their durations are comparable to those of short tales.

The Latin term *novellus*, the Italian word *novella* (both of which denoted a little new object), and the French word *novelle* are all thought to have contributed to the development of the English word novel. When Boccaccio began experimenting with writing prose, he coined the word *novella storia* to describe his works. The *Decameron*, a collection of 10 short tales written by Boccaccio in the fourteenth century, is often credited with establishing the genre of the collection of *novella*. However, until the 17th century, the term novel referred to collections of short tales like those penned by Boccaccio. The term "novel" changed its meaning from "short tale in prose" to "prose narrative of considerable length" throughout the 18th century, as noted by The Shorter Oxford Dictionary.

Now that we have established what a novel is, it is important to talk about the conditions of the 18th century that made it possible for the genre to flourish.

A novel, to be more precise, is a long piece of fiction written in the form of a story. It is important to remember that the novel as we understand it now as a literary form developed around the turn of the seventeenth century. This is not to say that no novels were written before the year 1700. On the one hand, the author of the eighteenth century had the medieval romance and its descendants, as well as the courtly novels of Italy, France, and England to work with. Lyly's *Euphues*, Sidney's *Arcadia*, and Green's *Menaphon* were all influential in shaping the literary landscape of the 16th and 17th century. However, the birth of the English Novel was also influenced by the rogue-novels and the Picaresque style. Other influences aided the development of the English novel, including translations of classical works like *The Golden Apple* of Petronius and Boccaccio, as well as the Authorized Version of the Bible. Despite the clear existence of many genres of prose fiction, these works did not depict reality. It took almost a century for stories about actual life to overtake fictional ones. There were several contributing elements to the novel's meteoric rise to popularity in the 18th century:

- One may argue that the emergence of the middle class was made possible by the industrial revolution.
- In addition, it stimulated interest in reading about issues that directly pertain to people's lives.
- The development of philosophical rationalism, or the view that one may learn the truth about the world by relying on one's own senses and observations.
- Later on, Puritanism and Methodism had an impact.
- Novels became more affordable as a result of technological advancements in the printing industry. This resulted in a larger population of bookworms.
- An increase in newspaper distribution coincided with the rise of factual journalism covering current events, helping to expand the readership of the printed word.

- One of the causes and elements that led to the explosion of English novel was the development of the mobile library.
- Women readers were thought to be an important part of the audience base. In the middle and upper classes, women had more free time as a direct result of their increased education.
- Women in particular were shown to increase their book purchases as the middle classes became wealthier. They looked for fiction that addressed issues they were facing and had protagonists they could relate to.
- Novels drew readers in because they presented a new universe and set of characters to explore. Novels' fictitious settings were interesting and credible. Novels' intricate storylines and tangled subplots entangled readers.
- Because they were so involved in the books they were reading, readers started to feel the emotions of the protagonists and other characters.
- Novels also popularized the practice of reading in one's spare time. Later, they spoke with acquaintances, acquaintances, and relatives on the books' storylines, subplots, and characters.
- Books from the 18th century found inspiration in works from the previous century, and "Don Quixote" was no exception.

There was a time of formal experimentation in the early years of the novel's creation. Despite the fact that there was no standard format, fantastical stories from the past continued to inspire authors. There is a great deal of formal and stylistic variety among these writers' works. The majority of literary scholars agree that Daniel Defoe is the progenitor of the English novel. Before the year 1730, he had already published *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moll Flanders*, and *Roxana*, his three masterpieces. In addition to Defoe, novelists like Samuel Richardson (with *Pamela*) and Henry Fielding (with *Tom Jones*, *Joseph Andrews*, and *Jonathan Wild*) are considered to be among of the first. We must also include two more names: the Irish revolutionaries Jonathan Swift and Lawrence Sterne. Both *Gulliver* and *Tristram Shandy*, for example, were written by individuals who would subsequently be recognized as novelists of the highest caliber.

Daniel Defoe His work

To heighten the realism of his works, he often composes them in the style of fictitious autobiography or diaries. There is no overarching story, only a succession of related episodes following the same character across time. The protagonist faces adversity after adversity and must use any means necessary to prevail. The independent hero or heroine in Defoe's work exemplifies the best of both Puritanism and mercantile capitalism. Defoe's characters never change on the inside; they only become worse and worse as the books go on. Defoe's semi-autobiographical books, like "*Jane Eyre*," foreshadow his fictitious memoirs".

Samuel Richardson

Letter books were his specialty. Pamela was his first book, and it started out as a compilation of "model" letters. The letters were written to serve as an example of proper behavior and offered advice for young ladies entering the service industry on how to avoid falling prey to their bosses' advances. Indeed, this describes the scenario in Pamela to a T. In *Clarissa Harlowe*, things work in the other direction. What makes Richardson so significant is that he chose safety over excitement. The protagonists of his stories are regular folks from the middle class, and this is the first time this has ever happened in fiction. He was the first author to delve into the emotional lives of his protagonists and narrate tales of love. His works sparked a discussion on the place of men and women in society that has continued in the works of writers like Jane Austen, Gustave Flaubert, Henry James, etc.

Henry Fielding

The English humorous book may trace its roots back to him. His debut book, a satire called *Shamela*, takes aim at the hypocrisy of Richardson's *Pamela*. In his second book, *Joseph Andrews*, he continued to make fun of Richardson. The omniscient narrator in his works is both amusing and satirical; he makes observations on and criticisms of the protagonists and is ultimately in charge of their fates. In this way, Fielding's books are reminiscent of the structure of traditional epics. In *Tom Jones*, he moved far beyond the episodic, flexible framework of his earlier works by inventing a storyline involving a large cast of people. This allowed him to depict the whole of society, not just a select few people. From Charles Dickens to more modern authors like Jonathan Coe, Fielding has been an inspiration for social and comedy novels.

Jonathan Swift

His primary fields of expertise are journalism and satire. The political climate of his period in England was the inspiration for his magnificent work *Gulliver's Travels*. In a very real sense, "*Gulliver's Travels*" is a journey through a fantastical dreamscape. Swift delves into deep philosophical issues by using the characteristics of his amazing realms. The primary difficulty is figuring out how to satisfy both our mental and physical wants at the same time.

Lawrence Sterne

More so than any other work from the 18th century, Sterne's novel has had a long-lasting impact on modernist and postmodernist authors. Many consider *Tristram Shandy* to be an "anti-novel" due to the fact that it either does not follow or actively subverts the realistic novelistic patterns that were emerging in the 18th century. Sterne is only delving into the novel's intrinsic depths of ambiguity. The stream-of-consciousness techniques of modernist authors like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf may be traced back to Sterne's manipulation of time, which predates them by over two centuries. The book's allusions to its own production and its ludic use of encyclopedic knowledge foreshadow the complex literary games of postmodern authors like Italo Calvino.

To sum up, there were earlier attempts to write novels, but they were not as successful, possibly because of the elements and style of the work, but Defoe and other novelists, with

the help of the reading public, the rise of the middle class, printing, and travel, made the emergence of the novel successful. There's no denying that the emergence of romance and picaresque books contributed to the development of the novel.

THE PLACE OF OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE IN OUR STUDY

Historically, scholars of our language have made a clear distinction between what they called "Anglo-Saxon" and the new language that emerged from the fusion of Anglo-Saxon and the Norman French brought over by the Conqueror to form what we now call "English." Modern authors, however, deny the existence of this break and instead maintain that English is fundamentally a Teutonic language, that the English of the fourteenth century developed from the Anglo-Saxon of the fifth century through a regular course of evolution, and that nothing happened at any stage to disrupt this continuity. This is why "Old English" has mostly replaced "Anglo-Saxon" in popular use.

As a result, there has been a commensurate shift in how literary history is understood. Again, the concept of uninterrupted development is emphasized; just as what was originally termed Anglo-Saxon is now seen to be an early variety of English speech, so, too, what was once called Anglo-Saxon literature is now understood to be an early variety of English writing. This theory suggests that Chaucer is not the origin of the English literary canon. It started long ago with the early history of the English people on mainland Europe, long before bands of them had landed in the little island that would soon become the home of their race.

At this point, I have no intention of casting doubt on the present scientific consensus; nonetheless, it may be possible to acknowledge the practical convenience, if not the scientific correctness, of the earlier position that has been superseded. It's true that Chaucer's language evolved gradually over time from Caedmon's, who employed a kind of Old English some seven centuries before Chaucer was born. However, Caedmon's English differs significantly from Chaucer's in one crucial respect. Even if there are many terms and idioms in Chaucer's Middle English that we do not understand, we recognize it as only an antiquated version of the same tongue that we speak today. However, learning Caedmon's Old English is like learning a foreign language. In the same way, Caedmon's literary style is founded on completely different foundations than our own, whereas Chaucer's literary style is largely built on the same principles as our own poetry.

Even if the history of English literature is continuous from the 5th century to the 20th, we may nevertheless consider the literature produced before Chaucer to be its own sub-field and agree that it is only with Chaucer that modern English literature can be said to have officially begun. Following this line of thinking, we shall treat the middle of the fourteenth century as the true beginning of our story and confine ourselves to the most cursory of overviews of the development of our literary canon previous to that time.

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE NOVEL

An early example of what would become the English novel may be found in the world's oldest piece of literature, the Epic of Gilgamesh, published in 612 B.C. Homer, a man who lived

between 700 and 800 B.C. and was known for penning the classic Greek epics *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, was the first major poet or literary innovator. The epic he developed was characterized by a distinct form and canon of material. John Milton (1608–1744), who wrote *Paradise Lost*, was inspired by Virgil's *Aeneid*, which he read about 900 BC, while he was writing *Beowulf*. Stories of humans' struggles against monsters and heroic acts performed in combat were told in narrative verses known as epics.

The French romances of the 12th century were the next major literary movement after the epics. It was also known as chivalric romance or medieval romance due to its prominence throughout the Medieval Period (about 1000 to 1450 A.D.). The authors veered away from the epic tradition by focusing on themes of valor, honor, adventure, and courtly love while adding magical elements like spells and enchantments to the romances in order to pique the readers' attention. Abrams (1995) states that "Romances were first written in verse, but later in prose as well" (p.22). Malory's prose *Morte d'Arthur* (roughly composed around 1470) recounts the narrative of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table and is often regarded as the finest example of English romance.

Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-400) wrote *The Canterbury Tales* in both poetry and prose (Crompton Rickett, 1995). The prose "Tale of the Melibeus" and "Parson's Tale" are two of the 24 tales in *The Canterbury Tales*. The Knight's Tale, an epic love story, was also featured. But it was in *Troilus and Criseyde*, Chaucer's lengthy poem published about 1380, that new features of literary tradition were added, such as narrative and dialogue. Like the far-fetched reality of romances, the social and religious aspects of life were depicted in Chaucer's works, but he brought "a new turn to fiction" (Roy, 2016, para. 2).

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE RISE OF THE NOVEL

Industrial revolution

The expansion of many sectors has been credited as a driving force for the novel's resurgence in popularity. More time for relaxation and recreation, during which many people read books, was made possible by the invention of technology. It was possible to print several copies at a low cost because to the availability of printing presses. In contrast to the past, when only the aristocracy had access to literature, today's poor may purchase and read as many books as they desire. The widespread availability of printed books, including periodicals, novels, and newspapers, also owes much to the invention of the printing press. As a result of reading more newspapers and periodicals, more and more individuals picked up book reading as a leisure activity. Novels were made more widely available because they appeared in formats other than books, such as periodicals. Hasan (2015) argues that middle-class individuals, who had more time on their hands as a result of the industrial revolution, fueled demand for books. As robots take over more and more manual labor, individuals will have more time to read. In addition, people were interested in reading about "their everyday experiences" (Hasan, para.2), which encouraged writers like Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding to pen prose fictions based on true events.

Decline of romance and drama

It was impossible for romance novels to maintain a following since only members of wealthy, privileged, or noble families could be considered readers. Ordinary people lost interest in romances because of their lack of personal meaning. Furthermore, the tales themselves had lost their appeal since they had been told for generations. The romance novels frequently used exaggerated locations for the tales. Thus, romances as a literary genre began to suffer. The general public began worrying about current events. The books were written in the first person (giving the impression of being "more personal and recent") and featured regular people with whom the reader could identify, setting them apart from romances.

There was a decline in play at the same time as novels were becoming more popular. In the 17th century, when Cromwell was in power, the theaters that had flourished throughout the Elizabethan era were outlawed (Shah, n.d.). On top of that, novels could be read by a wide audience while plays could only be seen by a select few. Even if play had returned with the Restoration period, novels had already established themselves as a dominant literary form.

Rise of the middle class

The middle class expanded as a result of the industrial revolution. The expansion of manufacturing led to a surge in retail and wholesale activity that had never been seen before. The populace as a whole was growing more prosperous, with even the lowest-class members of society able to improve their economic standing. As a result of their newfound position in society, this stratum began demanding access to literature in the same manner as the old-school landed gentry. A higher level of living would also allow more people (male and female alike) to go to school and learn to read. The expansion of the middle class coincided with an increase in women's spare time, and it became fashionable for women of high social standing to maintain their literary interests. In addition, this emerging middle class did not like reading about heroic knights. Middle-class readers "took little interest in the exaggerated romances," as one anonymous article titled "Reasons for the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century" claims on the website of the Naeem Educational Organisation (NEO) (2010), para. 4. Thus, novelists revealed "the psyche of the middle class" (paragraph 4) by depicting everyday people in their works. Readers enjoyed works like *Robinson Crusoe* by Defoe, *Pamela* by Richardson, and *Tom Jones* by Fielding.

Mobile libraries

The introduction of mobile libraries has helped expand the number of people who read. Members of the mobile library had convenient access to books since they were delivered to their houses. Many women profited from the mobile library since they tended to remain at home and swap books with their friends whenever they finished reading one (Shah, n.d.).

Although factors such as the industrial revolution, the loss of romance and theater, the growth of the middle class, and the proliferation of transportable libraries all contributed to the novel's meteoric ascent, it was the quartet of writers known as Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne who brought it to "the highest point of glory".

CONCLUSION

Understanding and getting the overview of the novel's emergence in the 18th century requires looking back to its roots as well as forward or even beyond that time period. This is due to the fact that the audience now lives in the 21st century. Novels have gone a long way from their humble beginnings, and it's important to trace their history in order to appreciate how far they've come. Thus, it is essential to take the concepts from this work and investigate further to improve one's knowledge of the evolution and ascent of English novels.

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