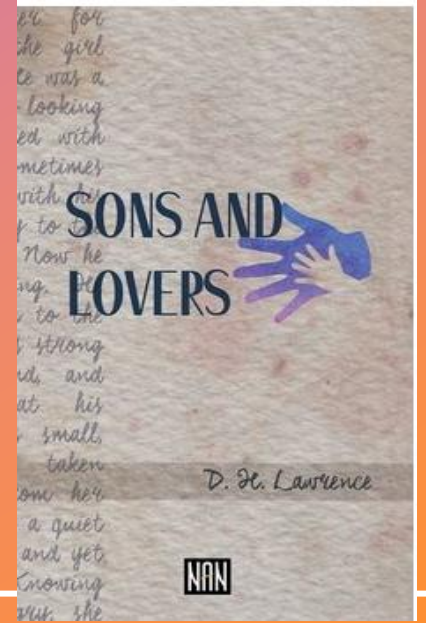
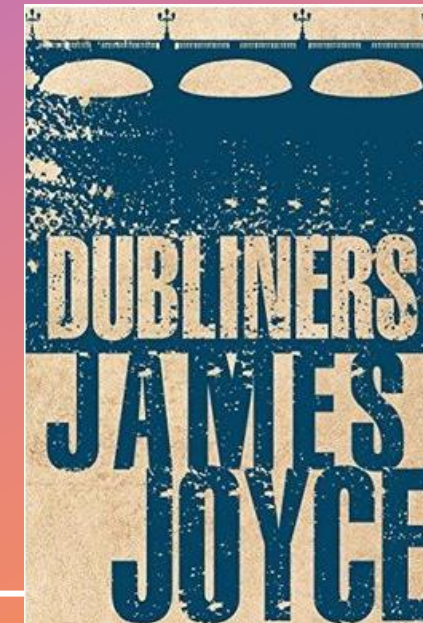
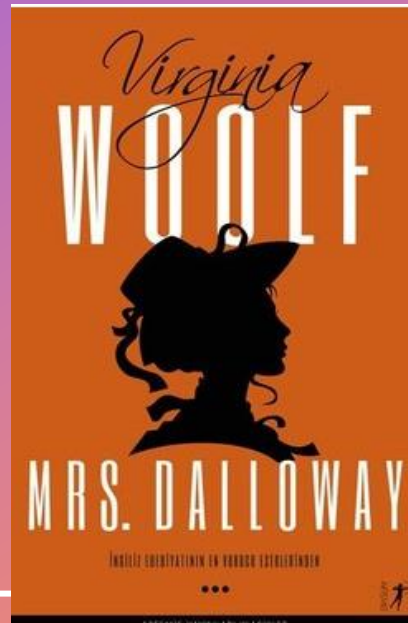
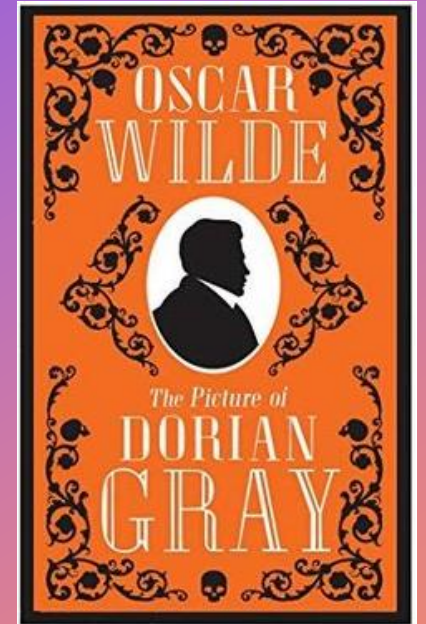
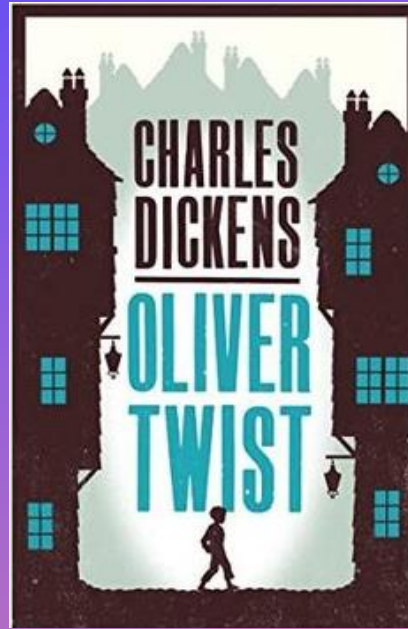


The Transition from Victorian Novel to Modernist Novel

Dr. Nihal TOPCU



Malcolm Bradbury, *The Modern British Novel*

The word “novel” as a form of fictional prose narrative contains infinite variety, many different genres, from reportage and social history to fantasy and romance, and reaches from serious exploration of the narrative frontiers to popular gratification and endless generic repetition. The novel has changed greatly from the eighteenth century, when it became a key form of public expression in British culture, to our own time, when it is everywhere. It developed radically in the Victorian period and became moral lessons, social entertainment, political criticism. Then came the “modern” novel, which was in many respects a reaction against the Victorian novel, questioning everything from its patriarchal morality to its notion of the “real.”





Characteristics of the Victorian Novel

1. **Moral Lessons** (social critique and reform)
2. **Realism** (truthful representation of life)
3. **Naturalism and Determinism** (impact of environment and fate)
4. **Complex Plots and Characters** (intricate [complicated] storylines)
5. **Omniscient Narrator** (transparent and objective)
6. **Linear Narrative** (clear beginning and ending)
7. **Optimism and Progress** (belief in moral integrity and hard work)

Prominent Novelists and Their Works:

Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Emma* (1815)

Charles Dickens: *Oliver Twist* (1838), *Great Expectations* (1861)

Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre* (1847)

Emily Brontë: *Wuthering Heights* (1847)

George Eliot: *Middlemarch* (1871), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860)

Elizabeth Gaskell: *North and South* (1854), *Mary Barton* (1848)

Anthony Trollope: *The Warden* (1855), *Barchester Towers* (1857)

Oscar Wilde: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890)

Thomas Hardy: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895)





Characteristics of the Modernist Novel

1. **Non-Linear Narratives and Ambiguity** (no chronological order)
2. **Focus on Subjectivity** (psychological depth)
3. **Stream-of-Consciousness** (continuous thought flow)
4. **Epiphany** (sudden realization moments)
5. **Themes of Alienation and Uncertainty** (existential anxiety)
6. **Unreliable Narrators** (challenging reader interpretation)
7. **Rejection of Traditional Morality** (lack of clear moral lessons)
8. **Symbolism and Fragmentation** (multiple interpretations, chaotic structure)

Prominent Novelists and Their Works:

Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness* (1899)

Virginia Woolf: *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

James Joyce: *Dubliners* (1914), *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916)

Rebecca West: *The Return of the Soldier* (1918)

D. H. Lawrence: *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *Women in Love* (1920)

E. M. Forster: *Howard's End* (1910), *A Passage to India* (1924)

Ford Madox Ford: *The Good Soldier* (1915)

Jean Rhys: *Voyage in the Dark* (1934)

Samuel Beckett: *Murphy* (1938), *Trilogy* (1951–1953)

Dorothy Richardson: *Pilgrimage* (1915–1938)



Prominent Novelists and Their Works:

F. Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* (1925)

William Faulkner: *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying* (1930)

Ernest Hemingway: *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929)

Gertrude Stein: *Three Lives* (1909), *Tender Buttons* (1914)

Franz Kafka (Czech-German): *The Metamorphosis* (1915)

Marcel Proust (French): *In Search of Lost Time* (1913–1927)

Thomas Mann (German): *The Magic Mountain* (1924)



Philosophical and Scientific Influences on Modernism

Charles Darwin (evolution, flux of change)

Friedrich Nietzsche (nihilism, re-evaluation of morality and power)

Henri Bergson (duration [la durée], subjective experience of time)

Sigmund Freud (unconscious mind, repressed desires)

Carl Jung (archetypes and collective unconscious)

Ferdinand de Saussure (semiotics [signified vs signifier] and language)

Albert Einstein (theory of relativity)

Karl Marx (class struggle and capitalism critique)

World War I (disillusionment and shattered faith in old beliefs)

The Great Depression (economic instability and bleak [hopeless] themes)



Literary “-isms” Inside Modernism

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1. **Expressionism** (inner consciousness, emotional perspective)
2. **Symbolism** (metaphors and abstract ideas)
3. **Impressionism** (relativity of reality, sensory experiences)
4. **Surrealism** (dream logic, unconscious mind)
5. **Dadaism** (chaos, anti-traditional aesthetics)
6. **Cubism** (fragmentation, multiple perspectives)
7. **Futurism** (celebration of speed, technology)
8. **Existentialism** (alienation, search for meaning)
9. **Absurdism** (irrationality, commonplace horrors of war)

Conclusion

The transition from Victorian novel to Modernist novel mirrors the profound changes in society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Victorian novels, with their focus on realism, morality, and progress, gave way to Modernist novels that embraced experimentation, subjectivity, psychological depth, and the complexities of the human experience. This transformation was driven by ground-breaking developments in philosophy, psychology, and science, as well as the social and political upheavals of the time. From Dickens to Woolf, the journey highlights the richness and diversity of literature, evolving in response to the changing world.

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THANK YOU

Dr. Nihal TOPCU

nihalmemis@karabuk.edu.tr