



THE DIRECTION(S) OF NOVEL IN ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Abstract

Examined in close relationship with the theories and literary criticisms, which backs up fiction and narration, English novel has evolved with an unprecedented level in the 20th century. In view of literary criticism which is inseparable from the development and analysis of novel, core values and tendencies are as diverse as the number of arguments put forward in any particular literary criticism. They are diverse to the extent of contradicting or negating one another: While some, like Formalism ostracized utility and pragmatic concerns, some others, like New Historicism, has posited that literature and novel cannot be evaluated beyond the scope of political, social and historical concerns. While it might be hard to pinpoint a shared point among these diverging school of thoughts that have directed the course of the evolution of the novel in the 20th century, common ground is observed to be the hostility against Western hierarchies and preoccupation with the significance of language particularly after the 1960s. Starting from Thomas Hardy and exemplifying such modernist novelist as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf and stretching up to William Golding of 1950s and 1960s of Anthony Burgess and shifting to postmodern novelists such as Jeanette Winterson, the present study aims to present a general panorama of directions of novel in English literature in the twentieth century in a linear manner with specific reference to the literary criticisms that have fostered the emergence of the works in question.

Keywords: Literary Criticism, Literature, English Novel in the 20th Century, Modernism, Postmodernism, Panorama.

Introduction

1. Theoretical Background: Twentieth Century Literary Criticism and Its Reflections on Novel in English Literature

Twentieth century literary criticism includes wide range of tendencies, movements and school of thoughts merged with the influences of adjacent disciplines such as sociology, economics and cultural theory. The development of literary criticism owes much to humanistic tradition of the nineteenth century exemplified by such writers as Mathew Arnold and the tradition was maintained by such names as F.R. Leavis and Irvin Babbit in the new century. Twentieth century witnessed the rise of a great many literary theories: New Criticism primarily stepped on the literary stage in the 1920, the influence of which was fully felt in the 1940s. It is argued that New Criticism “became the dominant critical practice in North American and British universities, and it remains influential today” (Cain, 2001, 3). Marxist literary criticism, though it emerged in the preceding age, still exerted its effect in the twentieth century through new perspectives. Nevertheless, it preserved its essential value and “it calls on the writer to commit his art to the cause of the proletariat” (Eagleton, 2006, 18). Psychoanalytic criticism, whose exponents were initially Freud and Jung, laid the foundations of studies focusing on inner thoughts, feelings and hidden psyche of human beings. It has allowed a theoretical basis to analyze what lies behind a literary work and the latent motives and urges that stimulate characters to behave in a certain way in a particular work. Generally, in psychoanalytic literary criticism, the surface level of a literary product, which consists of verbal structure, is often deliberately omitted so as to unearth “Freudian motifs supposedly encrypted in depths” (Ellman, 1994, 2). Formalism rose right after the Russian Revolution and structuralism demonstrated its entire strength in the 1950s, which was indeed formed by the studies of Ferdinand de Saussure and Lévi Strauss. Poststructuralism came out both as the development of structuralism and a reaction to it, which includes Jacques Lacan’s rereading of Freud’s studies. In these prolific atmosphere, in which multifarious movements such as psychoanalytic criticism, structuralism, poststructuralism emerged and Marxist literary criticism revived, there is a vital intersection among poststructuralism, psychoanalytic and Marxist theories in that they are “concerned to challenge the idealist conception of the subject [...] the subject as centered in itself, essentially conscious and 'free' in the sense that it pre-exists social or other determinations” (Brooks, 1995, 197). Lacan’s premises were applied both to the works of modern writers such as D.H. Lawrence and widely

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made use of by subsequent feminist writers and intellectuals. 1960s were the years which were not only rich in political protests, cultural dissatisfaction and social unrest but also these years led to the flourish of literary movements in accordance with the social, political and economic variables. Feminist literary criticism and reader response theory were among these movements. While feminism is accepted “as a kind of literacy, a way of reading both texts and everyday life from a particular stance” and “a political process of resistance” for women (Gamble, 2006, 103), reader response criticism, which in many ways reacted formalism’s excessive preoccupation with text and its exclusion of history, biography and reader, “devotes considerable attention to the act of reading itself [...] in which readers respond to the texts” (Davis, 2002, 50-51). Both movements proved to be prolific in the examination of diversified amount of works which were often ignored as these literary works and particularly novels were not regarded precisely appropriate for analysis in the light of the existing theories at hand. In the 1980s, New Historicism, which posits that literature is the product of a certain historical period, puts forward that any literary work must be read and evaluated within the context of a specific culture and discourse together with its manifold extensions as politics, religion, economics and aesthetics. In the context of literary criticism, late years of the nineteenth century were characterized by humanist tendency which reacted against bourgeoisie culture and its cruel commercialism. The same attitude was maintained in the twentieth century which nurtured authors, such as D.H. Lawrence who resists bourgeoisie culture, as they find it repressive and stultifying one’s potential. Early twentieth century critics supported the emphasis on unconscious and irrationality and they defended that a work of art must be free from moral constrictions and religious strains. They ostracized the overriding concerns such as utility and pragmatic concerns and they preferred the exaltation of aesthetics which favored organic unity. These developments and critique of bourgeoisie culture contributed to the emergence of Formalism and New Criticism and foreshadowed Poststructuralism, Deconstruction and New Historicism.

First World War had a profound impact on modernist writers and poets. Although Pound, Woolf and Lawrence referred indirectly to the catastrophe caused by the war, they achieved to relate the widespread sense of disintegration of values and quest for spiritual regeneration in their works. In terms of literary criticism, modern era benefitted from symbolism which reacted against the realism and excessive preoccupation of the 19th century with science under the banner of positivism. In essence, “symbolism opposed society’s ideas of science and aspired to return to art the priority of the spiritual over the material. Its adherents addressed not scientific logic, but intuition, the subconscious, imagination – the forces inspiring the struggle against the absolute power of matter and laws established by Physics[...]It drew attention to the huge, incomprehensible world surrounding us, asking us to discover the mysterious meaning of being, which is accessible only to a true creator” (Brodskáia, 2012, 28). In accordance with this, symbolism dwelled on the boundaries of language and one’s conscious and self-knowledge, which was very suitable for the subject matter of the modernist authors. Both Eliot in *The Waste Land* and Woolf in *To the Lighthouse* made use of symbolism and tried to relate human experience after the First World War. In the field of criticism, such names as William Empson and particularly I.A. Richardson and his works *Principles of Literary Criticism* and *Practical Criticism* were significant.

During the economic deterioration of the second decade of the 20th century and growing fascism of the third and the fourth decades of the century, Marxism again came into prominence. Marxist legacy in Britain goes back to William Morris who wrote about such issues as labour and alienation of authors from their works. Moreover, Britain is not alien to socialist cause as G. Bernard Shaw, who read Marx’s *Capital* and realized “the moral rottenness and practical inadequacy of commercial civilization” (Griffith, 1993, 25) was one of the leaders of Fabian Society, which was organized to disseminate Marxist ideas and affect government policies. Later on, in artistic field, Socialism was represented by George Orwell who was then frustrated with communist ideals as he portrayed in *Animal Farm*. Apart from George Orwell, important names as W.H. Auden, Stephan Spender and C. Day Lewis were aligned with left-oriented groups and opinions in Britain. Like the representative of New Criticism, F.R. Leavis defended that literary criticism must hold a separate place and through his journal *Scrutiny*, he supported the idea that literature must be evaluated beyond the scopes of political, social and historical concerns. Nevertheless, his insistence on moral and humanist values was what made him distinct from New Criticism. Leavis, who expressed his views on morality and ethical concerns on novel in his essay on Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, argued that “a novel’s ethical power is inseparable from a kind of mimetic adequacy [...] its representation is the sine qua non of ethics in narrative. [...] According to him, “the moral power of fiction is inseparable from moral knowledge, the clarity of its moral categories” (Gibson, 1999, 56).



In the 1950s, structuralism, which reduced the significance of human being and restricted it into linguistic structure, began to thrive. It blossomed out of the efforts by such figures as anthropologist Lévi Straus and narratologist Greimas both of whom were influenced by Ferdinand de Saussure and Formalism. Roland Barthes came out with the idea of “death of the author” the thought which proved quite functional for poststructuralism. The period was marked by outstanding formalists such as Roman Jakobson and Gerard Genette.

After the Second World War in Britain, there was a comparative economic prosperity which gave way to civil right and women movements. Marxism was revived in 1960s and a number of Marxist critics, who gathered around *New Left Review*, such as Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams, E.P. Thomson and Terry Eagleton, became influential in literary and cultural criticism. During the late fifties and early sixties, critics helped to create a cultural Marxist theory. They seemed to have adopted William Morris’ term “society of equals” by which “they accorded a privileged status to culture and the arts, for such practices were integral to human life conceived as a whole and because cultural apparatuses and institutions were playing an increasingly important role in people’s lives” (Dworkin, 1997, 61). Outside of Britain, the revolutionary 1960s witnessed thriving intellectual atmosphere in France where Derrida founded deconstructionist criticism and Lacan revised Freudian hypotheses in accordance with linguistic premises. During the fervor of the 1960s, literary critics challenged the assumptions of Western thought and tried to refute institutionalized binary oppositions which have been embedded in political, social and traditional categorizations and constructions. In the 1980s, New Historicism argued that any literary text must be placed in superstructure, as opposed to the arguments of Marxism, rather than to be situated in infrastructure. Michael Foucault, who elaborated on the interrelationship among discourse, power and knowledge and indicated power’s pervasiveness by stating that “power is everywhere” (Foucault, 1981, 93) had an influential impact on New Historicism. As a literary movement, representatives of the movement are convinced that power is inscribed or embedded in literary texts; therefore, New Historicism has been used as a mechanism to “reveal the systems and operations of power so that we are more readily equipped to recognize the interests and stakes of power when reading culture” (Brannigan, 1998, 8). As for Reader Response and Reception Theory, it attempted to redefine the meaning of a text by putting forward that meaning is determined in accordance with the dialogical relationship between text and the reader. Marxist critics Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson both of whom were affected by Walter Benjamin and Theodor W. Adorno, shed light on such issues as consumerist society and its social extensions which fall under the vast title of postmodernism.

The common point of these literary theories, which developed in the twentieth century and directed the course of novel, is that they are hostile against Western hierarchies, power structures and capitalist culture. The legacy of the critique of Western philosophy and culture was initiated primarily by Schopenhauer and maintained by such precursors as Nietzsche, Freud and Bergson. In the Twentieth century, tradition endured through Saussure, Heidegger and Sartre and it has taken the form of cultural and literary analysis and criticism. It must be remembered that the critical tradition defended by these figures has been outside the mainstream of Western thought represented by British utilitarian J.S. Mill, American pragmatist John Dewey, positivist August Comte and Herbert Spencer. The other common ground among these diverging critical disciplines is that they recognized the significance of language in the construction of everything pertaining to culture, human being and world. Language is accepted to be a fundamental impetus, a responsible agency in every attempt to search for truth whether it is in the domain of literature or philosophy. In other words, reality began to be understood in the context of thought and language. The relationship between past and present, man and women, politics and morality is revised and re-interpreted by centralizing the role of language. In the twentieth century, categories are realized to be non-fixed entities but they change according to the way we apprehend these categories by means of language. In line with this excessive preoccupation with language, In Britain and Europe, modernist authors such as Woolf, Faulkner, Proust and Pound recourse to the literature that suggests focusing on and experimentation with language to relate ideal or transcendental truth.

To sum up, it can be argued that many of the modern literary criticism were founded on the awareness of the elusive nature of language. Representatives of Formalism and New Criticism put forward that poetic language is intrinsic to a particular language and it cannot be translated. Bakhtin, who made use of Formalism and Marxism, conceived language as an instrument of ideological battle. Structuralism focused not only on text but also on culture and it argues that cultural phenomena have been also patterned just as referential value of language has been structured by daily usage. Feminist literary criticism also promoted the analysis of language and suggests that as language conveys the modes of heteropatriarchal oppression; feminine life and experience must be set apart and expressed with a language, which is free from binary



oppositions and unjust hierarchies. It is believed that only in this way can literature and life prove more appropriate to women. While Lacan reinterpreted Freudian theory and argued that unconscious is arranged like abstract language system, Derrida put forward that there is no external reality beyond the domain of language. While Reader-response theory asserts that meaning is bound by the interaction between the dialogical relationship of a text and reader, New Historicism considers literature as a discourse and Foucault and Derrida, who had an impact on the movement, regard that any literary product is the outcome of a certain historical and social period conveying the spirit of the discourse of its time. Almost all these literary and cultural movements accept that human subjectivity arises from language that operates within certain variables such as politics, culture, ethnicity, class, aesthetics and gender.

2. Novels and Novelists of the Twentieth Century in English Literature

The adventure of novel in English Literature in the twentieth century was ignited by Thomas Hardy who is regarded "to be the prime embodiment of Englishness, rendered through his regional novels, with their cohesive national past reaching back into myth and history" (Wilson, 2009, 345). His work *Jude the Obscure*, in which "the religious origins of Wessex are explored [...] and Hardy challenges the identification of Englishness with the Church of England, and undoes the Protestant coherence of Wessex" (Wilson, 2009, 346) foreshadowed an oncoming prolific century in terms of fiction. He was followed by such cornerstone novelists, who were later canonized as modernist authors, as James Joyce and Joseph Conrad. Within the mainstream of realism of the nineteenth century and through new precision coming with a change of attitude towards reality in the new age, Conrad and Joyce along with Henry James were attentive in portraying life as it is as well as paying profound attention to one's inner or psychological word. One can trace this medley of attitude along with the "novel" sensitivity in such works as *Golden Bowl*, *Lord Jim* and particularly in *Heart of Darkness* which is argued to be "psychological odyssey, political satire, symbolic prose-poem, black comedy, spiritual melodrama, and skeptical meditation" (Stape, 1996, s.45). Through his novels, Joseph Conrad, who is both "champion of anti-colonial revolts" (Stape, 1996, 179) and "modernist in his capacity to tear away the surface things and to show certain of his characters hypnotized and fatally becalmed by the falling away of physical appearances" (Stape, 1996, 204) has been remarkably utilized both by modern literary criticism and postcolonial criticism. Since twentieth century was a new age characterized by an unprecedented social, cultural and technological advances, novelists endeavored to relate the uneasiness brought about by these mass changes by new styles and techniques. Among these diverging technics and styles, stream of consciousness is one of the most notable one introduced first by Dorothy Richardson in *Pointed Roof*, and maintained in her autobiographical *Pilgrimage* sequence. It is put forward that "Joyce and Richardson were regularly cited alongside each other as purveyors of the new 'stream-of-consciousness' novel" (Parsons, 2007, 62) the technique of which was later mastered by such novelists as Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence and Marcel Proust. In line with the stream of consciousness technique, through such works as *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love*, which later proved quite fruitful for psychoanalytic literary criticism, D.H. Lawrence delved into the psychology of his characters of which sexuality is an integral part. 1920s were the years which were claimed to be the peak of modernist period in terms of the quality of literary works. Joyce's *Ulysses*, in which Joyce narrates the single day in Dublin through an artistic imitation of Homer's *Odyssey*, has become one of the most emblematic works of the movement. Virginia Woolf, who experimented with stream of consciousness in *The Waves*, *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, was another significant figure of the modernist movement. In addition to her novels, her essays contributed feminist literary criticism. In this perspective, Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* is argued to be "the founding text of the twentieth century feminist criticism" (Parsons, 2007, 82) upon which later feminist critics came up with such terms as *écriture féminine*. In English literature, modernism was also heralded by such novelists as E.M. Forster, Arnold Bennet and John Galsworthy. E.M. Forster, who was both novelist and essayist, and who wrote "his condition-of-England novels" (Cavaliero, 1979, 31) in his fictions, was able to combine Victorian and modernist features in his novels. His main subject matters were imperialism and hypocrisy of English society of his time, the themes of which exemplified in *Passage to India* and *Howard's End*. Rudyard Kipling, who was a short story writer, journalist and poet as well as novelist, contributed to English fiction and remembered mostly by such works as *Kim*, *The Jungle Book* and *White Man's Burden* all of which were examined in the context of postcolonial literary criticism. Through his works, Rudyard Kipling, whom Edward Said in his work *Orientalism* refers as the one who "had sung so memorably of holding dominion over palm and pine" (Said, 1979, 224) was the spokesperson of British colonialism. George Orwell was another remarkable English novelist who proved his literary merit in the 1930s and 1940s. Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which depicts a totalitarian society in a bleak feature and *Animal Farm*, which is a political satire, brought new dimensions to fiction writing. In both of his works,



Orwell “sets out to combat the lure of that power [absolute power], using the satirist’s weapons, exposure and ridicule, while tacitly affirming freedom and justice. He was particularly keen to recognize the importance to the totalitarian mind of the control of language” (Quinn, 2009, X). That’s why Orwell attached great significance to language in his satirical works. Almost in the same league with Orwell, Aldous Huxley came up with his dystopian novel *Brave New World*. In 1930s, Samuel Beckett, who pioneered absurd movement in the 1950s, published his first work *Murphy*. Joyce’s *Finnegan’s Wake*, which is published in 1939 upon its author’s constant study on it over 15 years, was acclaimed as an avant-garde work full of with literary allusions embroidered by non-linear dream plot. The work is referred as a “literary machine designed to generate as many meanings as possible for as many readers as possible” (O’Neill, 2013, 3). *Finnegan’s Wake*, from the same author, is commonly notorious with its experimental style and untranslatability.

Post-war period in English novel was represented by William Cooper, Anthony Powell and Kingsley Amis. While William Cooper, who “seem[s] to live and indeed flourishes outside the literary aura” (Shrapnel, 2002, para.1) came to the forefront with *Scenes from Provincial Life* by which he celebrated the rejection of modernism, Anthony Powell draw attention with his cycle of novels collected under the title *A Dance to the Music of Time* which is indeed “twelve volume comic novel about aristocratic and educated British life” (Pictures in Powell, para.1) by which he examines movements, culture and life in England in the 20th century. As for Kingsley Amis, he is best remembered with his satirical work *Lucky Jim*, in which he criticizes academic milieu and depicts the life in Britain as stifling. Kingsley Amis is claimed to be an “accomplished writer of comedy, which usually has broad farcical overtones” (Swinden, 1984, 181) As for his works, they are “realistic presentation of lower-middle-class heroes in situations that dramatize movements among different social groups within the same waveband of the English class system” (Swinden, 1984, 181). Indeed, the generation of Amis, which also included Iris Murdoch and Angus Wilson, can be regarded as a group of writers who rejected modernist wave of the 1920s and 1930s and demonstrated an inclination of “antimodernist, anti-avant-garde [and] neorealism.” This time is marked by the claim that literary modernism “was already being historicized, defined, monumentalized, given its name and structure; it was longer *avant...* but *arri re*” (Shaffer, 2005, 4) In the 1950s, another significant novelist, who was awarded with Nobel Prize, was William Golding whose works *Lord of the Flies*, *Pincher Martin* and *Inheritors* and *Free Fall* has secured his position as a leading novelist not only in English Literature but also in World Literature. The common themes dealt with in Golding’s novels are good versus evil, one’s connection to culture and life and corruption of ostensible civilization and human nature. Accordingly, William Golding is argued to be “one of the most original contemporary authors of the English novel [...] He is remarkable in terms of the way he deals with his subject matter and the language and style he utilizes. He approaches to mythopoetic position while he is benefitting from ideas and deconstructing them at the same time. Golding avoids omniscient point of view. The point of view he employs in his novels is relative to the character and to the reader. He uses interior monologues, stream of consciousness and flashbacks. [...] Taken all together, in the essence of Golding’s novels, egotism of human beings and exploitation of one another lie behind which ends up with man’s fall, losing his innocence and free will” (Erkan, 1994, 119). Antony Burges, who is the contemporary of William Golding, came into prominence in 1960s with his work *A Clockwork Orange* in which he analyzes freewill and morality. Another Nobel laureate novelist is Doris Lessing who dealt with social issues and authored novels with psychological content. Among them, *The Grass is Singing*, *The Golden Notebook* and *Children of Violence* were the novels she wrote in 1950s and 60s that established her literary career. In view of literary criticism, appreciation of Doris Lessing’s works have greatly changed as “critical attempts to pin her down and label her as 'Marxist', 'feminist' or, more recently, a 'mystic', have been superseded by the evolution of her ideas. It is almost as if by the time she comes to write a novel she has already moved on from the ideological force which motivated it” (Whittaker, 1988, 3). Lessing further investigated the issues of British imperialism, the place of woman in patriarchal society and the devastating effects of racist ideologies on individual psychology. (Zengin, 2013, 259). This tendency resonates her affiliation with the arguments widely discussed by postcolonial literary criticism, which also indicates the reason why her works are evaluated within diverging schools of literary criticism. Salman Rushdie, who has Indian origin, later acquired British citizenship like Doris Lessing. Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*, *Shame* and controversial *The Satanic Verses* usually combine magic realism and his works generally have been evaluated within postcolonial literature, the literature that especially made itself felt in the novel produced by a “generation of writers who have been shaping the novel since the 1960s, those who write back to the centre either from their own countries or from within imperial centres, mostly London” (Geçikli, 2015, 80). In Postcolonial literary criticism, Rushdie’s novels are indicated to “interrogate the fundamental relation



between the essentially unstable and chaotic and the stabilizing institutional forces of self-hood, convention, and national consensus" (Marzec, 2007, 155). In general, Rushdie relates social formation, nationhood and fragmentation through his fiction. Another immigrant novelist and Nobel laureate, who contributed to the development of English novel, is V.S. Naipaul who stepped forward with his works; *A House for Mr Biswas*, *A Flag on the Island*, and *Mr Stone and the Knights Companion*. Naipaul, who have been accused both by novelists and postcolonial critics because of the alleged misrepresentation of the Third World and his contribution to the polarization of the world as civilized, imperialist and colonized, he is still argued to have "focus[ed] on individuals in societies; like the great nineteenth-century novelists, he is interested in how people create themselves and advance in life" (King, 2003, 2). Another significant figure who directed the course of English novel is Kazuo Ishiguro. Ishiguro, who was born in Japan and immigrated to England, deals with such themes as past issues which are narrated through science fiction qualities and alternate world subtleties. *An Artist of the Floating World*, *The Remains of the Day*, *When We Were Orphans* and *Never Let Me Go* demonstrate the qualities of both science fiction and historical fiction. Because of the depth of his novels, they can only be understood by repeated readings as one critic points out "in his novels Ishiguro reaches back and forth in time with later events prefiguring earlier events, so that even to a reader with a highly retentive memory who reads the book at one sitting the significance of what is earlier revealed is not available until a second reading on which the novel will read like a new novel about familiar people" (Wain, 1992, 193). In this respect, Ishiguro resembles modernist novelist Joyce whom American literary scholar Joseph Frank expresses his view of James Joyce that he "cannot be read, he can only be reread" (Frank, 1968, 19). Another literary figure, who is regarded precious for feminist literary criticism, is Angela Carter. She is known for her works which are categorized under the narrative genre of magic(al) realism. For Carter, who makes much use of fantasy and symbolism in her novels, "everything is to be counted, both the material world and the products of our imaginations, and most especially what is uncomfortable: freaks, outlaws, cannibals, fairies, monsters, symbols whatever we normally edit out from reality" (Hart, Ouyang 2005, 143). Among her works, *Shadow Dance*, *Several Perceptions*, *Heroes and Villains*, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* are the most noteworthy novels. Apart from canonized novelists in English literature, there are also popular novelists such as Daphne Du Maurier, W. Somerset Maugham, who wrote *Of Human Bondage*, and in genre fiction Agatha Christie who is notable for detective and crime novels such as *Murder on the Orient Express* and *Death on the Nile*.

Beyond the canonized and *uncanonized* popular novelists, there are also distinguished contemporary British novelists such as Martin Amis, Pat Barker, Ian McEwan and Zadie Smith. The problem of canonization and the effect of the contemporary surge in literature, which has been stimulated further by the interplay among literary value, success and the power of advertisement personified in *The Man Booker Prizes*, also mushroomed innumerable quantity of works and novelists. This widespread increase has also been fostered by the distinction between the concept of "novel in English" and "English novel" which has been also deepened by the categorization of British novel into three overlapping camps. First group includes the novels, the culture of which is a continuation of Britain as in the examples of Scotland and Northern Ireland. Patrick McCabe and John Banville are just two examples of this group. The second group novelists are from the countries emanated from the British Empire such as India, Pakistan Sri Lanka etc. Chinua Achebe, J.M. Coetzee and Nadine Gordimer are just a few novelists among many others. Third group are the novelists whose countries were formerly colonized by Britain and later they migrated to Britain. Wilson Harris and Abdulrazak Gurnah are the first to name into this group. The common features among the last two groups are that these novelists have been profoundly affected by the shrinking role of Britain as an imperial power and novelists have handled the issues of being outsider and cultural residue that has left individuals to be the victims of being torn between diverging cultural milieus. The other common ground among these novelists is the fact that they are awarded with the above-mentioned prizes which have added further layer to the popularity of their works. Another shared peculiarity among these novelists is that in relation to their style they have employed in their novels since the 1960s is that what they are writing can be readily interpreted in the trajectory of postmodern literature. At the same time, English novel through its pure voices with postmodern traits has continued to develop by multifarious themes. Among many, postmodern novelist Janette Winterson has come to the forefront through her novels *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, *Sexing the Cherry* and *Why Be Happy When You Be Normal*. In her novels, Winterson explores imagination, gender issues, sexual identity and historiography all of which have proved functional for feminist literary criticism and gay and lesbian studies. Upon almost thirty years of publication of her works, Winterson's novels are still being discussed and evaluated in different contexts one of which is exemplified in Reina Wan Der Wiel's study titled *Literary Aesthetics of Trauma* in which she examines Winterson and Woolf's



works in relation to culture, literary forms, psychoanalysis and trauma. Winterson's novels particularly "Written on the Body and Art and Lies are discussed as trauma literature" (Van Der Weil, 2014, 12). It is argued that the strength of her novels results from their "difficulty and 'writerliness' which make large demands upon the readership and [...] novels using a playful intertextual reference to fairy tales and other mythic material like the Bible or King Arthur and the Round Table, such as in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Sexing the Cherry*, have been highly popular" (Makinen, 2005, 154) because of the readers' familiarity with these texts and the playful intertextuality that Winterson employed in them.

3. In Lieu of Conclusion: Gaining a Concise Overview

Literary criticism and theories, which have thrived with an unprecedented speed in the twentieth century, have provided us interpretative lens through which we perceive not only literature and novel but also life as a whole. Literary theories and the course of English novel, which are tried to be drawn and exemplified above, were directed by social, political and economic realities of the twentieth century which was, too, deeply affected by two devastating world wars. While some theories such as Marxist literary criticism, which deals with the representation or disguise of social degradation and economic exploitation or Feminist literary criticism, which deals with the demonstration of patriarchal norms and its oppressive connections in novels, are intrinsically political, other literary theories such as New Criticism and Formalism, allegedly approach novel in an apolitical manner treating literary works as the products of solely aesthetic outputs. The emergence of literary theories and in line with their developments in the twentieth century, the direction(s) of novel in English literature seem to have progressed in close interaction with each other "covering ground" from more traditional and predictable theories to modern and surprisingly new postmodern criticism(s).

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