

Petru GOLBAN

**THE VICTORIAN
BILDUNGSROMAN**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has as its starting point my doctoral thesis entitled *The Victorian Bildungsroman*, conceived and defended some years ago at 'Al. I. Cuza' University of Iasi, Romania. Following a number of changes in its content, due to the need to make it useful in the students learning process, the thesis is now ready for publication in the book form. The study would meet the requirements of a teaching aid, yet it also represents an attempt of academic research in literary criticism in general, and in English and Comparative literature in particular, along with my belief that from the final incompleteness of bibliographical assistance I have progressed to certain interpretative modalities of analysis of my own, which consider the wholeness and complexity of the fictional system of Victorian Bildungsromane. These interpretative arrangements receive ultimate practical argumentation through the contextual approach to narrative and thematic perspectives of certain Victorian novels of formation, and they have been also reified by my teaching experience.

This book is also aimed at meeting the needs of students of English in their literature classes, and I hope that my attempt will be useful to anyone concerned with, first of all, Victorian fiction studies, but also to those interested in theoretical perspectives of modern fiction studies in general, as well as in certain aspects of Western literature as a developing tradition, the period of English Romanticism, and that of Victorian literary production in general, the 20th century novel, experts and novices alike, university or high-school students and the more general reader who feels that his readings in English and World literature would be enriched by the present book.

Though a cliché, I would like to express my indebtedness to my colleagues and students at universities in Romania, Moldova and Turkey for many ideas and perspectives of analysis, as well as for allowing the premises of believing in my specific commitment and in the validity of my theoretical and critical arrangements.

Above all, I am grateful to Prof. Ștefan Avădanei for the understanding and support I received in my work, and I am deeply indebted to his intellectual assistance and scholarly advice.

I am also grateful to my former lecturers in English Literature at the University of Suceava, Romania, Mr. Liviu Martinescu and Miss Cornelia Macsiniuc, who initiated me in literary studies and greatly enlarged my understanding of the English literary phenomenon; and especially to the late Mr. Mihail Iordache, the former Dean of the Faculty of Letters at Suceava, who nurtured in me the impulse of making literature a professional career. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Sergiu Pavlicencu, the chief of the Department of World Literature at Moldova State University, and Mr. Ceyhun Aksoy, the chief of the Department of Western Languages and Literatures at Dumlupinar University, Kutahya, Turkey, whose support and encouragement were most helpful.

My thanks are also addressed to the faculty staff at Moldova State University and that at Iași University, Romania, whose well-aimed remarks and suggestions assisted me in the process of preparation of this work, and whose language skills contributed corrections and saved me from many errors, some of which would have been humiliating.

My final thanks and gratitude are to Mr. Guner Once, the Rector of Dumlupinar University of Kutahya, Turkey, who actually made possible the appearance of the book by accepting and financially supporting its publication.

CONTENTS

Preliminaries. Towards a Vector of Methodology	7
1. Bildungsroman Development History: The Rise and Consolidation of a Literary Pattern.....	20
1.1 Antiquity. The Beginnings and First Elements	20
1.2 The Middle Ages. The Contribution of French and English Romances.....	27
1.3 The Renaissance. The Rise of the Picaresque Novel: The Rise of the Pattern	31
1.4 The Seventeenth Century. The Continuation of Picaresque Fiction: The Pattern in Development	34
1.5 The Eighteenth Century. Further Evolution and Consolidation of the Pattern	37
1.5.1 The Rise of the English Novel: The Assimilation of Picaresque Writing and First Elements of the Pattern in English Literature	38
1.5.2 Bildungsroman Elements in French and German Fiction	42
1.5.3 The Theme of Formation as a Literary Concern in <i>Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre</i>	44
2. Romantic Impulse in the Victorian Bildungsroman	49
2.1 The English Romantic Movement and the Concern with the Individual and the Experience of Childhood	49
2.2 Voices of Innocence and Experience in William Blake's Poetry.....	51
2.3 William Wordsworth and His Concern with the Growing Human (Poetic) Mind	59
2.3.1 <i>The Prelude</i>	60
2.3.2 <i>Tintern Abbey</i>	66
2.3.3 <i>Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood</i>	70
2.4 John Keats' Insights of Infantile Experience in <i>Letters</i> and Poetic Practice	75
2.5 Hypostases of the Byronic Hero and the Byronic Hero in Development	77
2.6 Sir Walter Scott's <i>Waverley</i> as the Novel of a Young Man's Education	88

3. The Victorian Bildungsroman and the Rhetoric of Fiction	92
3.1 Rhetoric, Narratology, Structuralism, and Their Applicability to Fiction Analysis.....	92
3.1.1 Rhetoric and Its Interrelationships with Narratology	92
3.1.2 Narratology, Structuralism, and Their Importance in Approaching the Novel	93
3.2 The Condition of Victorian Fiction	97
3.2.1 Realism and Realistic Writings	101
3.3 Narrative Perspectives in the Victorian Novel	104
3.4 Victorian Fiction as Bildungsroman.....	109
3.4.1 The Representation of Personality as Its Formation.....	116
3.4.1.1 The Actual Childhood and the Archetypal Image of the Child	122
3.4.1.2 The Larger Society and the Experience of Urban Life	127
3.4.1.3 Formation as Success and Failure.....	132
3.4.2 Biographical Substratum and the Novel.....	135
4. The Victorian Novel as Argument	145
4.1 Gender Distinction 1: Artistic Individualization and Maturation of the Male Characters.....	145
4.1.1 The History of Penderennis: History of Self and History of the Age	145
4.1.2 Charles Dickens and the Double Vision of Formation.....	150
4.1.2.1 The Circular Journey of David Copperfield: Formation Achieved.....	157
4.1.2.2 The Linear Journey of Pip: Formation Ambiguous.....	160
4.1.3 George Meredith: The Intrusion of Tragedy	168
4.1.4 Thomas Hardy: The Obscurity of Formation.....	173
4.1.5 Samuel Butler: Looking Back in Anger at the Formative Process.....	176

4.2 Gender Distinction 2: The Power and Extent of Female Individual Consciousness in Development	180
4.2.1 Emily Brontë: The Romantic Side of Development and Formation	181
4.2.2 Charlotte Brontë: Emotional Symbolism vs. Rational Control.....	189
4.2.3 George Eliot: The Incompatibility of Romantic and Realistic Analyses of Development as Formative Failure.....	201
4.2.4 Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Genre and Gender Perspectives of the Formative Process	207
4.3 20 th Century Connections of the Pattern.....	214
Concluding Reflections. The Typological Circle of the Bildungsroman.....	231
Bibliography	249
Index.....	265

*There cannot be a system of existence.
(...) When we speak about system we speak about
a closed world, yet existence is precisely the
opposite. (...) To think about existence,
systematic though must think of it as suppressed,
that is different from what it actually is.*

Sören Kierkegaard

PRELIMINARIES. TOWARDS A VECTOR OF METHODOLOGY

This study considers the Victorian Bildungsroman, its history of consolidation as a literary tradition, certain characteristic features, principles and devices (thematic and narrative), and a number of structural elements correlated within one literary model.

The interest in such an approach is provided by the remarkable amount of interpretative attention given in the 20th century to the analysis of the Victorian novel, which is being continually reevaluated according to new experiences in literary theory and criticism.

The starting point of this research is my primary belief that among the worlds of Victorian fiction, the one which belongs to and represents the aesthetic value of Bildungsroman has definitely entered the literary tradition of novel writing and is nowadays quintessential to the modern critical (scientific) and popular (of the wider, non-trained public) cognizance of the Victorian cultural background, along with its importance and individual place in the general context of Victorian studies.

I also believe that the novels I intend to discuss in this study are free from the danger of not surviving years from now in the human cultural depository, or of becoming a handful of dust in a remote corner of an old forgotten library. The criterion is provided here by critical, public and market demand. Today the concept of literacy—an essential principle of their survival—comprises many types of mass communications and theories of mass culture. According to this media-culture perspective, during the last years a number of worrying reports have been produced in Western countries on the decline of literacy and the future of imaginative literature. One reason, perhaps, would be the modern exaggerated confidence in computers, TV or cinema. People often watch television instead of reading books, use tapes for learning languages or compact discs for getting acquainted with Dickens. I agree, yet I ask: are books the only reliable vehicle for cultural communication, improvement of modern thought or acquisition of information? The problem, I believe, consists rather in the general illiteracy caused by the deformed vision of the literary truths from the past, the insufficient exposure to books and rather to a form of visual illiteracy of the media. The computer screen, Internet, communication through E-mail display more alphabetic letters than images. Moreover, the

invention of television and the computer has not decreased the printing of books. The problem is not to oppose visual and written types of cultural communication. It is that, though the whole of image-oriented culture and media reifies a new form of literacy, they are still unable to satisfy all the intellectual needs of humans.

'Do not fight against false enemies', says Umberto Eco in vindicating the role of imaginative literature, because, first of all, *'we know that books are not ways of making somebody else think in our place; on the contrary they are machines which provoke further thoughts. Secondly, if once upon a time people needed to train their memory in order to remember things, after the invention of writing they had also to train their memory in order to remember books. Books challenge and improve memory. They do not narcotize it. This old debate is worth reflecting on every time one meets a new communicational tool which pretends or appears to replace books'* (1995: 89-90).

The novels of the Victorian age do satisfy the intellectual needs of the modern man; moreover, they stimulate them despite the changing rhythm of human existence at the turn of this century and millennium, and despite the complexity of new cultural alternatives.

The argument in this study is that literary texts that form the basis for my analysis are not merely a category that needs to be included in an overall literary system of world culture, especially of Victorian fiction for the sake of rendering its completeness and aesthetic validity. It is rather that they are different in kind, unique and representative of a type of literary discourse which should be studied as a system in itself, and which may perform the function of breaking down the existing conceptions and theories about the Victorian novel in particular and fictional discourse in general, reorganizing them, and suggesting new ones.

This may appear as the result of indulging into wishful thinking, characteristic perhaps to every critic, but these two elements represent actually the main concern of my study and two factors of novelty that I intend to provide.

At the same time, being aware of the difficulty and risks of such an attempt—given the huge amount of often-contradictory theoretical and critical contributions on the present level of development of Anglo-Saxon literary history and criticism, and on the general level of world literary conception—I intend to establish a vector of methodology. That is to say, an interpretative modality which determines the direction of analysis and which consists of a set of methods, an ordered system of principles of research used for study in such a particular subject as the Victorian Bildungsroman.

Such an interpretative modality would be helpful in my attempt to select theoretical conceptions and critical ideas most applicable to this

research, hoping to achieve pluralism and to conclude with new theoretical and critical suggestions of my own.

They will receive practical argumentation through the contextual analysis of a number of Victorian novels that would eventually reveal—although they differ as sharply as the lives they reflect—certain common, typical features which may suggest a unique approach according to some principal elements that can reveal a unique literary structure of Bildungsroman.

The Victorian novels discussed in the present study are among the best works of English fiction and as independent entities they have received much criticism from different points of view. Few, however, have been regarded with direct reference to the conventions of Bildungsroman in its diachronic or synchronic development. Even so, no special critical efforts were made to consider the analysis of Victorian Bildungsroman within the framework of a generic study aimed to suggest and maintain the correlation between theory and practice, and between its narrative and/or structural elements and its thematic perspectives.

I hope to overcome this handicap, especially by attempting to admit a methodological complexity of theoretical points of view, which would confer pluralism and synchronization to this study, yet selecting those mostly applicable to my approach and hoping to conclude with new ones. It is this aspect that represents another factor of novelty I intend to provide.

Victorian writers and novels have been also approached as practical means of rendering the theoretical background of a number of trends and schools in literary theory and fiction studies. As it is, even here the conceptions and ideas were different and subject to controversy.

Even the definitions given to Bildungsroman have been many and often confusing, and, as it often happens in the field of literary history and theory, and in so far as writing about writing (literary criticism) is concerned, the word has become a term of abuse, vague and flexible, and often misleading. Bildungsroman is virtually synonymous with autobiographical novel, developmental novel, apprenticeship novel, confessional novel, *Entwicklungsroman* ('novel of development'), *Erziehungsroman* ('novel of education'), *Künstlerroman* (novel of development of a writer or artist), all of them being derived from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, but Bildungsroman is currently the more fashionable.

The standard definition regards Bildungsroman as a novel, frequently autobiographical (or pseudo-autobiographical), dealing with the development of a young protagonist, usually from adolescence to maturity. Most of the times a long, extended narrative, this form of fiction recounts the childhood, emphasizes the youth and young adulthood of a highly sensitive character who attempts to learn the essence of living, to discover

the meaning and pattern of the world, acquiring the 'art of living' and a philosophy of life.

Following the interpretative strategy of Jerome Hamilton Buckley (1974), and as it will be suggested in my study, I consider a number of possible terminological choices, several possible synonyms and substitutes, which may help to better comprehend the term.

However, if the term ultimately escapes precise definition or interpretation, then, do doubt, its meaning should emerge more or less clearly from the critical analysis of the Victorian novels and writers whose literary discourses constitute the basis for analysis of the present study, and which are recognizable within the general pattern of Bildungsroman in spite of any vivid differences in manner and matter, and the fact that each of them in turn has its own distinctive artistic style and narrative substance.

I believe that the literary discourse of Victorian Bildungsroman represents a well-structured literary pattern, as well as an ordered and definite system of aesthetic values within the larger system of the novel; the latter, as a system in itself, belongs, along with other literary genres and types, to the system of literature. Literature, in turn, is a system framed within the general system of culture, and should be approached in relation to other cultural systems. Such an analysis should take into consideration the national peculiarities of a literary system (here English), its relation to world literature, as well as the interrelations between national culture and the world cultural phenomenon in general. The problem of such an approach consists of a proper correlation of the elements and principles of each system, given their central and peripheral nature. In Y. N. Tynyanov's opinion ([1927] 1977: 270-281), literature is a system in which a battle is going on between central and peripheral elements, and the mutations happening on the level of whatever element provide and determine the mutations on the general level of the system.

The system of the Victorian Bildungsroman itself has a generic nature, consisting of a number of literary systems. This aspect is actually the starting point of my interpretative arrangements that I intend to use in my study.

The argument of such an interpretative modality—which stipulates the validity of my vector of methodology—arises from my specific apprehension of Victorian Bildungsroman as a fictional system whose elements are also the elements of other minor fictional systems (individual Victorian Bildungsromane, both male and female) that constitute its general patterned system.

What I mean is that each Victorian male writer of Bildungsroman frames his novel as a literary system within a more general fictional system of Victorian male authorship of Bildungsroman, each minor system being expressed through an individual fictional discourse. The Victorian male

writers of Bildungsroman, now a literary wholeness, reveal a complex system of thematic and narrative elements within the general fictional system of Victorian Bildungsroman. The elements of this system are interrelated and correlated among them as they are correlated with apparently different literary perspectives of Victorian female authorship.

To follow the theoretical conception of Y. N. Tynyanov (*ibid.*), the correlation between the elements of a literary work (itself a system), in my case that of a male author, and the elements of another literary work (another system), say, of a female writer, within the same, general literary system, implies the existence of a literary principle regarded as performing a 'constructive function'. This function represents one of the many principles of existence of a literary work, and of literature in general, but, foremost, it determines the evolution of the literary phenomenon.

My argument, founded on Tynyanov's theoretical contribution, is applicable to linguistics (as language itself is a system), translation studies, cultural studies, comparative studies in literature, including the reception theory (the study of the process of reception of a literary phenomenon—as a system—by and within other literary phenomena or cultural background, themselves considered as systems).

In terms of my approach, I hypothesize that each individual fictional system of individual Victorian writers contains thematic and narrative elements whose characteristic features—when they reveal a similitude and certain common aspects with other Victorian novels—determine actually the existence of Victorian Bildungsroman as a distinct fictional typological system, and reifies its literary significance.

I apply this conception diachronically and synchronically. Diachronically, it would reveal the rise, evolution and consolidation of Bildungsroman as a literary tradition. Synchronically, it would eventually reify what I have suggested at the beginning of this introductory chapter as being the main concern of my study: through contextual analysis of certain Victorian writers and novels to show the complexity of the hero's psychological and physical experience as a process of development leading to the formation of his personality; and to argue that these novels disclose the existence of a number of certain narrative and thematic devices, as well as certain structural elements correlated within one literary model, so as to demonstrate the development, consolidation, and literary validity of Bildungsroman in the Victorian age as a type of literary discourse which should be studied as a system in itself.

The peculiarity of Victorian Bildungsroman as a literary system implies my interpretative consideration of the following elements:

1 author (because Bildungsroman is an autobiographical type of fiction)

- 2 language (as a means of reification of the text and expression of the authorial point of view)
- 3 text as literary discourse (I mean narrative arrangements of the process of development and formation)
- 4 text as literary work (I mean thematic arrangements of the process of development and formation, including characters, motifs, symbols, etc.)
- 5 reader (because Bildungsroman is intended to be representative of the human condition),

as well as a number of others which may come into view in the process of analysis, such as the narrator or narrative point of view, for instance, which occur when approaching discourse.

Their correlation in my study corresponds approximately to Paul Ricoeur's ([1986] 1995: 94) hermeneutic perspectives of the textual arrangement and text analysis with regard to the human experience considered diachronically:

- 1 the implication of language as discourse
- 2 the implication of discourse as a structural literary work
- 3 the relation between verbal and written form in the discourse and structured literary work
- 4 structured literary work/discourse as the projection of another world
- 5 structured literary work as the projection of the authorial life, which is transfigured through the discourse
- 6 structured literary work as the self-comprehension of reader.

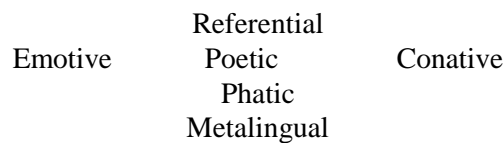
Although they resemble the interpretative arrangements of certain modern theories and schools, these elements and their correlative perspectives do not determine in any way a critical limitation to, say, narratology or hermeneutics, or to the structure and structural approach of the Victorian novel as Bildungsroman. What I mean is that all these elements represent the 'world' of the literary system of Victorian Bildungsroman, as well as the key-elements of my analysis, and should be equally treated in the process of analysis according to the above-stipulated vector of methodology.

The origins of my interpretative modality are founded on my primary and elementary apprehension of Bildungsroman as a cultural phenomenon that represents a specific type of literary discourse framed within a specific type of communicative situation. The multitude of linguistic theories provides a multitude of theories in other studies and disciplines, among which those concerned with the approach to literature, and particularly to fiction. Roman Jakobson identifies six elements in communication:



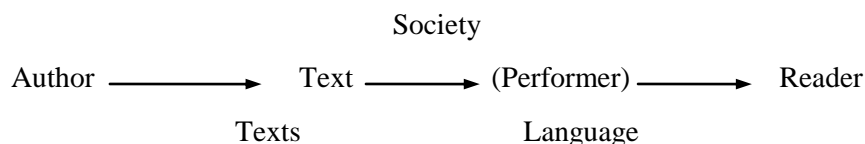
- the sender (not necessarily the same as the addresser)
- the receiver (usually but not necessarily the same as the addressee)
- the context (the referent or information)
- the message (the particular linguistic form)
- the contact (the medium or channel)
- the code (the language).

Corresponding to each element of this taxonomy is a particular function of language:



- the emotive (to communicate inner feelings and states)
- the conative (to attempt to determine/affect the behavior of the receiver)
- the referential (to carry information)
- the poetic (to focus on linguistic form)
- the phatic (to open the channel for practical or social reasons)
- the metalingual (to focus on the language or dialect in order to clarify them or change them).

The system of Bildungsroman also represents a literary discourse as to be communicated to the reader; in other words, it is involved in a literary communicative situation. The structure most relevant to my argument, though simple, is provided by Guy Cook (1995: 128):



Corresponding to each category are the following theories:

Author	literary scholarship and biography
Text	linguistics, formalism, stylistics
Performer	acting theory

Reader	psychoanalysis, feminism, reception theory, reader response theory, post structuralism
Society	Marxism, feminism
Texts	structuralism, post-structuralism, deconstruction
Language	linguistics, stylistics.

Literature may be also approached through other theories and principles of research, for instance those provided by Bakhtinian criticism, semantics, poetics, rhetoric, hermeneutics, narratology, phenomenology, pragmatics, schema theory, and others.

Among these schools and conceptions, a congenial basis for my research is provided by M. M. Bakhtin ([1937-1938] 1975: 234-407). Bakhtin himself makes in his work frequent reference to Dickens and Goethe, among other writers, and especially Dostoyevsky. He does not, however, discuss in particular the novel of character development and formation, though it is known that one of his lost works is a study of Bildungsroman. I propose to pick out those principles and ideas of Bakhtin's theoretical conception that seem most fruitful when discussing the rise, evolution and consolidation of Bildungsroman in world literature and the Victorian Bildungsroman, especially with regard to his principle of chronotope.

My aim, however, is not simply to add another theory or basis for research to the list, which could be developed from a simple compilation of different elements of these known and widely disseminated categories of literary theory. I rather believe that from this multiplicity of schools and approaches, rendering a loose structure of complex and often contradictory theories that may thwart one's attempt to provide new conceptions and ideas, it is possible to pick out threads of thought which contain principles and ideas applicable as elements of a set of methods to the analysis of Victorian Bildungsroman.

I hope to show that these conceptions and ideas can contribute to a valid analysis of Victorian Bildungsroman, for, though it seems that they belong to different and often incompatible schools, they would eventually reveal similar and mutually efficient principles of research.

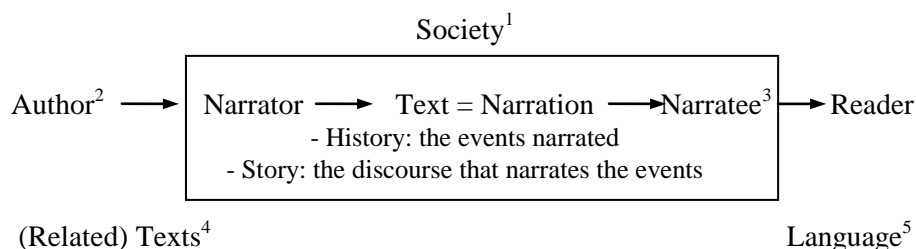
I thus seek to emphasize the dangers of such a rigid categorization, while also using it as a guide to describe and approach the Victorian novel of formation. That is to say, I hope to conclude that compartmentalization of the existing conceptions and schools is important in the implementation of any analysis, along with its contribution to attempting a selection from the existing theories and schools of those elements and ideas which are most applicable to the research undertaken in the present study.

Above all, I consider the importance of focusing on some particular literary texts, because any theoretical contribution has no validity and

efficiency unless it is well rooted in the reality of the fictional discourse that would eventually provide its practical argumentation. I also understand that the principle of tradition in culture, for instance, implies the truth that everything is first of all tradition and then within the tradition new revolutionary trends and movements aimed to challenge and supply the established norms and conventions, accepted as general truths, appear. The one who says only new things, as a kind of manifestation of some satanic vanity to speak, says actually nothing: the true novelty, effective and valuable in every cultural and scientific context, has its roots in tradition and does not scorn what has been created before.

In this respect, my approach will be determined to cyclically move from theory (the existing theoretical categories of literary analysis) to practice (the direct approach to Victorian Bildungsromane following the appropriate conceptions and points of concern according to specific features of the chosen texts), and then again to theory, or rather new theoretical arrangements which I hope to suggest.

Furthermore, I regard Bildungsroman as a narrative discourse of the narrator who mediates the events representation within the story, the latter being determined by the history consisting of a succession of events. In this respect, I consider the following correlation of fictional elements:



¹ I understand it as performing the function of creating and maintaining social relationships (say, author - reader, writer - native/foreign reading public) within this literary communicative situation, including certain perspectives of cultural context (say, the condition of Victorian novel, the romantic attitude, the consolidation of realism as a literary tradition, and so on).

² I consider Author as the real author, that is the actual producer and sender (addresser) of the literary text in the form of a narrative discourse (narration). He possesses a point of view that is transmitted to the reader (the real reader as the actual receiver/addressee of the fictional message) through the voice of the narrator. The latter may be also identified with what Wayne C. Booth terms the implied author: always present in the narrative, he is always a creation, an idealized version of the real author, who presents the message of a literary discourse to the reader.

³ The term was coined by Gerald Prince to describe a kind of person, different from the reader, who is addressed by the narrator. It reveals a similitude with the implied reader (a concept coined by Wolfgang Iser) who has his roots in the structure of the text; he is thus a construct and should not be identified with the real reader.

⁴ I see them as possessing the function to create and maintain inter-cultural and/or inter-literary, that is intertextual, relationships (synchronically and diachronically): Victorian literature - Ancient literature, for instance, English novel - picaresque novel, Victorian Bildungsroman - German Bildungsroman, Victorian male Bildungsroman - Victorian female Bildungsroman, *Great Expectations* as Bildungsroman - *Jude the Obscure* as Bildungsroman, and so on.

⁵ The function to produce and determine the existence of the literary text.

In terms of the above suggested structure, and in terms of Cook's communication model, my primary interest is the author, narrator, character, reader, narrative fictional discourse, a number of narrative categories (say, narrative point of view, narrative time vs. narrated time, chronotope, narrative distance concerning the relationship between author, narrator, character and reader), and related texts, and the issue of whether these elements are valid and efficient in approaching Victorian Bildungsroman.

For this reason, and for reasons of space, I shall pursue to a lesser degree linguistics, stylistics, deconstruction, semantics, poetics, phenomenology, pragmatics, and schema theory. The exclusion of some of these schools does not imply that they have had no contribution to the founding of my approach, nor does it imply that they are theories which disregard the relationship author - literary text - reader, or that they do not focus on a particular type of literary discourse—in other words, systematized or patterned types of literary texts, one of which I consider is Bildungsroman. I shall avoid the approach to Victorian Bildungsroman through heavy reliance on biographical analysis, which may simply lead to biographical fallacy—even though the Victorian novel of formation is highly autobiographical. I shall also pursue less those theories whose interest is primarily in the relation of the literary discourse to its historical, social and political context (Marxist, feminist, and psychoanalytic approaches)—even though, especially with regard to Victorian novel of formation, no author, reader, and literary discourse can be entirely separated from their historical and social context, simply because they exist in it and through it, and it is more or less rendered in the process of literary communication.

Not for reasons of descriptive convenience, but for the sake of keeping the unity of theoretical and critical approaches undertaken in the present study, I consider a number of major concerns which would eventually disclose the complex nature of Bildungsroman as a literary tradition, and which are presented as chapters and subchapters.

Firstly, I believe that the Victorian Bildungsroman established itself as a fictional system diachronically, passing, hypothetically speaking, as its own literary concern reveals—the process of evolution and formation of a human personality—through the stage of beginnings and then those of development and consolidation as a literary pattern. In this respect, my study glances at the Continental antecedents of the genre: first elements in Antiquity; French and English romances; Spanish picaresque novel of Renaissance and its continuation in the 17th century European literary background; assimilation of the picaresque tradition in the 18th century French fiction; first elements of the novel of formation in English literature of the 18th century; and the consolidation of the literary tradition of Bildungsroman in German literature with Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters*

Lehrjahre (1794—96), as the prototype of the form. In order to cover the area of rise, development and consolidation of Bildungsroman as a literary pattern/tradition, the study follows the works of Heliodorus, Apuleius, Longus (Antiquity); Sir Thomas Malory (Middle Ages); François Rabelais, Miguel de Cervantes, Mateo Aleman, Thomas Nashe, and *Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* (Renaissance); Francisco de Quevedo, Luiz Velez de Guevara, Charles Sorel, Paul Scarron, François de Fenelon, Hans Iacob von Grimmelshausen, John Bunyan (17th century); Alain-René Lesage, Jonathan Swift, Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, Cristoph Martin Wieland, Johann Wolfgang Goethe (18th century). For the reason of avoiding a mere presentation of the rise and development of novel writing in world literature, I consider a number of motifs and themes, as well as a number of narrative strategies in the works of these authors, which will eventually become elements of the literary system of Victorian Bildungsroman, and recognizable within its fictional model.

Secondly, this study explores the romantic impulse in Victorian fiction in so far as a number of English romantic writers (William Blake, William Wordsworth, George Byron, John Keats, Sir Walter Scott) reveal in their works (both poetry and prose) a number of certain common motifs, emphases and methods that would represent the major concerns of Victorian writers of Bildungsroman, thus anticipating its consolidation. Mention should be made, to give an example, of the concern with human evolution through three biological stages, their interdependence and specific features; or the concern with the experience of childhood and its lasting importance in the process of development of a mature personality, as well as in human existence in general.

In Chapter 3, which renders directly the main concern of my study, I attempt to interpret and describe the label Bildungsroman and to affix it to a remarkable sequence of English fiction from Dickens to Hardy. This goal is better achieved through at least a brief and general approach to the narrative techniques and structural elements of Victorian fiction with regard to Bildungsroman. In this respect, I center my study on mainly theoretical issues by discussing a number of theories and schools—among which narratology—and their interrelationship in the study of fiction. I then focus on the condition of prose during Victorian times, emphasizing a number of characteristic features of the Victorian novel in general but which may help my discussion of Bildungsroman. I consider, for instance, the presentation of realism as a literary tradition, which is mirrored by and which influenced the narrative strategies of the Victorians, and the realistic elements in the novels of this age, as important aspects of my research. Finally, I suggest a possible narrative approach to the Victorian fiction, with special regards to the tradition of Bildungsroman in general, its definitions and narrative

perspectives, its typical narrative pattern and a number of major idiosyncratic features.

At this point, my final Chapter 4 concentrates, through gender distinctions, on the direct approach to some of the most representative writers and novels of the Victorian age as a practical argumentation of the ideas and conceptions stated in the present study. My critical enterprise assumes the position of a contextual analysis and brings into discussion the problem of development and consolidation of Bildungsroman in Victorian England by following closely a number of authors and their narratives: William Makepeace Thackeray's *The History of Pendennis* (1848—1850), Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1849—1850) and *Great Expectations* (1860—1861), George Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh: A Poem in Nine Books* (1856), George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1896), Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* (1903).

Finally, my study glances at the 20th century English literary connections with standard early-modern (modernistic, experimental fiction) and early-contemporary (traditional, conservative fiction) examples, especially the novels of Herbert George Wells (*Tono-Bungay*, 1909), David Herbert Lawrence (*Sons and Lovers*, 1913), William Somerset Maugham (*Of Human Bondage*, 1915), James Joyce (*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, 1916), Virginia Woolf (*Jacob's Room*, 1922).

The present study discovers the relationships and influences between one author and the next along with the presentation of the development and of the main aspects of Bildungsroman.

My approach to the issues under discussion is thus rendered both diachronically and synchronically, and the theoretical background which I develop is at all times combined with the practical analysis of a certain number of Victorian novels, namely those whose unity of narrative and thematic concern reveals their alliance to the tradition of Bildungsroman.

Though each of the literary writings discussed in the study attains its own strength and integrity, I have chosen both to approach each work separately—as an object to be measured in itself, which may help explain the method, concern, distinguishing features, narrative devices and strategies, and difficulties of each, yet setting the works chronologically in a developing tradition (the practical aspect of my study)—and to arrange my materials structurally and thematically, in a kind of generic study aimed at explaining the peculiar thematic and narrative strategies of Bildungsroman as a definite literary tradition in English fiction (the theoretical aspect of my study).

Because of the huge amount of critical attention given to Victorian novel in general, and because of the multiplicity of theoretical perspectives to be applied to its analysis, my first concern will be to trace theories that characterize deviant and/or patterned types of fiction, among which I consider the Victorian Bildungsroman.

For these reasons, and for reasons of space, but mostly because of my personal awareness of making this study more than a simple compilation, I seek to avoid the unquestionable adoption and applicability of all existing and widely disseminated critical and theoretical categories. Instead of heavily borrowing ideas and providing quotations from critical and theoretical studies, in an attempt to relate and apply them to the analysis of the Victorian novel of formation, I rather consider the essence of different conceptions, modifying it according to my research, and especially following the interpretative perspectives provided by the contextual analysis of Victorian fiction as Bildungsroman (hence perhaps the small amount of references and quotations from critical and theoretical books), finally hoping to provide points of view and ideas of my own.

The existing references and ideas borrowed from other studies may seem redundant to the academic reader, but the reason for their presence is that the book is also to be considered as a teaching aid aimed at meeting the needs of students of English in their literature classes.

1. BILDUNGSROMAN DEVELOPMENT HISTORY: THE RISE AND CONSOLIDATION OF A LITERARY PATTERN

1.1 Antiquity. The Beginnings and First Elements

The ancient period is firstly approached when reasoning of the possibility of existence of some literary elements in prose, which will be later detected in the novels of different centuries, finally culminating as aspects of a typical Bildungsroman literary pattern.

In the process of development of the Bildungsroman from Antiquity until its consolidation as a literary tradition in the 18th century with Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, the most important role was played by the picaresque mode of writing. Yet in Antiquity I can detect some aspects of the novel in general and in its incipient stage, which are significant for the essence of this study: for example a masterful delineation of characters who represent moral qualities and vices; realism in the observation of human behavior; representation of the progress of the hero through the complexity and variety of the contemporary world; biographical or autobiographical elements; the tendency of the narrator to speak *in propria persona*; the spirit of adventure interludes with a travel scheme of the narrative form; the character's experience of life as a gradual self-discovery and gaining of knowledge and a satisfactory philosophy of life; the harmonious love of hero and heroine; comical effects produced while picturing different social media through which the main character moves in his general search for a way of living where action counts more than welfare.

The list may seem too long or loose, as it happens when approaching the term 'novel' itself. It has indeed a variety of meanings and implications at different stages, and no other literary form has attracted more writers, or more people who are not writers, and it continues to do so despite the repeated affirmation that the novel is dead. Also no other literary form has proved so pliable and adaptable to a seemingly endless variety of topics and themes, and no other form has been so susceptible to change and development, and one who approaches it at once finds himself confronted with a wide range of sub-species or categories.

Because of the complexity of the fictional phenomenon which is considered diachronically, I think one must stick to a certain number of attributes and principles, elements and devices, which become fictional canons, in both form and content, in order to avoid a mere presentation of the evolution of prose writing from Antiquity to the Victorian Age, for instance, as it may happen in the case of my study.

In this respect, to follow an interpretative arrangement representing combined viewpoints and conceptions by V. B. Shklovsky (1963) and Y. Lotman (1968), the novel as a literary work uses written language as its

instrument and material. The written language influences diachronically the essence of any cultural system, hence literature and fiction in particular. In turn, the written language is also indispensable from the instability and dynamics of historical and cultural circumstances.

I thus hazard to claim that the aesthetization of written language, that is to say, its consideration as a device in the literary act of communication, would become possible by a means of a set of canons (literary elements and devices) which would eventually make things unique and complicate the form of a work of art in order to increase the difficulty and time of perception as this process in art is an end in itself and must be protracted (Shklovsky 1963: 27).

I believe that 'experience', 'journey', 'ordeal', 'adventure', 'personal history', 'remembrance' are (1) key-canons that would make language perceived as artistic and conceived of with a range of aesthetic values within the literary system of Bildungsroman; (2) key-devices that help the creation of the literary work which is Bildungsroman; as well as (3) key-elements in my attempt to render the rise, evolution and consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a literary pattern.

I also consider that the principle of 'formation' becomes a definite literary concern not until Goethe's novel, and then, in the Victorian Bildungsroman, it represents a thematic category that determines and reifies the artistic reality of Bildungsroman as a fictional system.

In this respect, the Bildungsroman history, from Antiquity until its consolidation as a literary tradition at the end of the 18th century, reveals a concern with the representation of events that sink in the rendering of the experience of life of the fictionalized human agency, that is, the literary character. Things that happen, however, have little impact on his psyche and identity. They provide him with adventurous situations, he experiences them, and he is a good observer of these things. Observation and adventure, and especially experience represent the modes applicable existentially to the life of the protagonist.

Experience, when relevant to the condition of both the author and the character, becomes the means of temporal representation of actual perceptions, memories and imaginings. It articulates literarily a personal history and corresponds to a self-conscious narrative category.

My interest is in the process of experiencing, which transforms the hero's psyche and changes his inward rather than his exterior status within the social medium. This process is thus one of character evolution and development, and it is aimed at achieving the formation and completeness of his consciousness.

I focus my study on the hero's life-time, which implies, at least until the consolidation of Bildungsroman as a literary tradition at the end of the

18th century, the hero's experience of life to which the above mentioned elements are applicable.

The analysis of the 'whatness' and 'howness' of the experience, as offering premises for the literary reality of the Victorian Bildungsroman, should also consider its structural alliance to the author's imagination, remembrance and introspective representation of the fictional discourse, and to the presentation of the character in a process of transition from childhood to maturity.

This process is the main literary concern of the developmental fiction that focuses on rendering the evolution of the hero's personality. It is true that '*the point of the developmental novel is to achieve a verbal account of the process of mediation by means of which one (...) stage changes into the next*' (Westburg 1977: 40). It is a pseudo-change, for it means only a change of outer and not inner qualities, a change in quantity and not quality.

I thus consider the above suggested elements and principles, which are related to the process of the evolution of character and which are viewed diachronically from Antiquity until Goethe's novel, as aspects of the developmental novel—not the novel of formation—which represents, in turn, the premises and the basic fictional substratum of the Bildungsroman.

The primary reason is that these aspects are static and allow for static stages of the character's experience of life (except for biological evolution), as well as for the change of exclusively his outer condition, and for the writer's social portrayal and attitude expressed in the literary work.

In turn, although it also may be concerned with both individual and society, regarding the former, however, the Bildungsroman implies a consideration of both static stages and crises leading to psychological revelation, both the continuity and the difference of these stages in a process of change and reconfiguration of the hero's inner structure, that is the formation of personality, which is actually the very essence of every Bildungsroman.

Yet one may argue, with references to Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, for example, that the character's desire for new things and knowledge of magic, as well as the reevaluation of 'metamorphosis' not as a tragic change of a character into a natural object (as in Greek mythology, which is the fictional material for Ovidius, for instance), but, as in Egyptian mythology, as a personal, individual practice of man, which justifies the fantasy and imagination of the narrator, and the comedy of adventure (Roznoveanu 1983: 315), provide the personality with frustration, search and inner change, tracing the movement (which does imply any references to man's biological development from childhood to maturity) from instinct to rationalism, idea and spiritual revelation.

In modern terms, these fictional perspectives (along with certain notes of verisimilitude; metamorphosis as a narrative device of identification

between author/narrator and character; confessional and retrospective representation of adventurous chronotope; ethical and didactical components of character's experience of life and of his initiation; and others) would reveal thematic and narrative organization of the fictional system of Bildungsroman as the novel of formation of a human personality.

In other words, the formative process is expressed and assessed through the voice of a narrator who verbalizes and correlates '*the moral and aesthetic time of the creative act and the time of the human existence of his character who is being modeled by the duration of metamorphosis*' (ibid.: 319).

That is to say, it seems that the novel of Antiquity already suggests the fact that the external perspectives of the character's change (as in later picaresque novel, for example) are intermingled with internal states of evolutionary process.

Generally, however, I argue that it was not until Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* that the formation of personality was considered a literary concern in fiction, at the same level or even higher than the concern with the representation of human existence against the social background or as being determined by it.

As it is, the rise and evolution of fiction writing from Antiquity until the end of the 18th century, through the artistic reality of a number of devices and elements of the literary discourse, which have developed and changed diachronically in the history of novel writing, provide the Victorian Bildungsroman with a number of narrative and thematic aspects, thus proving the aesthetic validity and continuity of a literary tradition.

Although these aspects are of primary importance when describing the rise and development of the literary pattern of the Bildungsroman, one should consider the applicability of other thematic and narrative categories that involve an interpretative strategy.

The character, especially, is my ultimate concern, that will be viewed in his process of evolution and development according to the narrative categories of time and space. *Cronos* and *topos* will thus play a significant role as counterparts of one single mechanism of literary approach to the development of the Bildungsroman in general and its protagonist in particular.

Fiction in its incipient form in Antiquity already provides some clearly marked types of the novel, their elements being in a state of interdependence and reciprocity, and characterizing one or another principle of character developmental process. Diachronically these principles change as does the novel itself in its general historical and cultural development, just as they will mark the importance and dominance of one upon the other.

The protagonist of Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, for example, as to follow Mikhail Bakhtin's assumption ([1937-8] 1975), reveals a character

formation principle linked to the ‘novel of travel or wandering’. The main hero is a moving point in space, with no definite characteristic features and of no real literary importance for the author, narrator and reader. His spatial movement does not situate him in the center of the writer’s attention, but his wanderings and adventures enable the author to render through his narrator the world’s spatial and social multiplicity (countries, cultures, different social levels and their specific ways of living, and so on). This multiplicity is clearly static and provides a static conception of the universe; the character is static and does not change; the world—a static coexistence of contraries; life experience—is an alternation of contrasting situations: say, success - failure, happiness - grief, victory - decline.

The time category is less fixed: no historical time of the epoch, nor even the biological time of the character—his age, his movement from childhood through maturity to old age—are definitely determined, or sometimes they are actually completely absent. The ultimate interpretative consideration regards the existence of contraries and the absence of any narrative relationship, as well as the absence of any sense of unity of the social-cultural phenomenon. Hence the approach to alien social systems, social groups, ways of living, mores. Hence the static outlook of the narrator and the static presentation of the character. Hence the static background in which the character is involved, a background divided in strange, exotic, different, reciprocal but contrary things, phenomena, and events. The formation and even a clearly conceived development of a protagonist do not belong to this kind of novel, for he does not change as a human being while wandering, even if his condition—in terms of welfare, for example, or social position—may change.

To travel and to wander suggests passing through adventure, and the adventurous time is the only existing form in many novels of Antiquity. This temporal representation is revealed through a narrator who grasps a line of adjacent interconnected temporal moments—seconds, hours, days—as parts of the general, united temporal process. Temporal peculiarities are linked to a certain background (spatial reality, consisting of, say, home, roadway, city streets, and so on) of the adventurous action (fight, robbery, escape) and mark different temporal realities (for instance ‘day’, ‘morning’, ‘night’, ‘next hour’, ‘a minute later’, ‘an hour before’, ‘on the next day’).

To travel and to wander also suggests passing through a trial of life, an ordeal provided by alien forces in order to test the character’s fidelity, wit, courage, and purity. The ‘novel of trial or ordeal’ is thus another type of the novel that discloses a new, important principle of character evolution. The principle of trial is conceived of and engaged as a fictional device in, for example, Heliodorus’ *Ethiopian History*, Apuleius’ *Golden Ass*, or Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe*. It is later artistically assessed in medieval romances, picaresque novels, and even much later—even nowadays,

although I argue that it becomes an important literary element of thematic consideration in the general system of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

Bakhtin reasons of the existence of two different variants of this type of the novel: the first one is revealed by the ancient Greek novel BC and the second is linked to the early Christian lives of saints, especially martyrs.

The first variant marks the trial of fidelity in love and the purity of the idealized hero and heroine. The characters' experience of life (consisting mainly of adventures) is important in so far as it provides the stimuli beyond their inner existence that attempt to thwart this love. Again, the static and unmodified psychic representation of the characters and their abstract idealization exclude formation, education, initiation and development, for their experience of life provides no material for the characters' inner change or their general formation of the inward and the outward.

In other words, the character's experience of life is psychologically associated neither with the conception of external action as adventure nor with any inner motion as ordeal of the soul that would eventually produce the mental and spiritual change, and consequently the formation of personality.

The novel of trial/ordeal renders thus a static character, who is 'given' by the narrator, and whose features are unmodified but tested and checked. Yet this type of novel, if compared with the 'novel of travel or wandering', reveals a rather complex and difficult image of the human being. The aesthetic, fictional image provided is unique but again static.

In Bakhtin's opinion, this image is linked to a kind of 'rhetorical-juridical conception of man', deeply rooted in Greek 'rhetorical casuistry'. The protagonist is viewed through different juridical categories—guilt, chastity, court, felony, merits, and others—and becomes the subject of a trial, prosecution, or defense, in other words, the bearer of felony or merits, human vices or values.

The second variant of the 'novel of trial or ordeal' (describing early Christian lives of martyrs) reveals a more complex picture of the characters, their inner existence being highly emphasized and presenting the idea of trial through suffering and temptation (its elements are also to be found in, among others, Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, Bunyan's work and Charlotte Brontë's Bildungsroman).

Although the trial experienced by the character is considered thoroughly, and the adventurous aspect seems to be psychologically determined, the general experience of life is expressed from the point of view of a ready and dogmatically received ideal. Hence the characteristic static features of the hero, whose trial is far from being a formative life experience and an agent of change.

The narrative organization of this type of novel is deeply rooted in the deviation from the normal course of human existence, and in the events and

situations different from a typical, common human biography. In other words, the 'novel of trial or ordeal' has its origins where the deviation from the normal social and biological process of existence starts, and ends with life entering its normal course.

That is why the way events are represented in the novel creates neither a new kind of human existence nor a new human biography. The action in the Greek novel of Antiquity is linked to what usually does not happen between—or separates—two closely linked moments of biography (engagement and wedding, for example).

This aspect curbs the normal course of life, but does not change it: the hero and heroine will be finally united, and the biological evolution and physical life of the characters will continue outside the narration. This aspect brings the idea that narrative time is deprived of a real biographical duration, especially because of the thematic importance of incident, chance or fate in the novel of Antiquity (as well as in later fiction of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and that of the 17th and 18th centuries).

The peculiarity of the plot—consisting of deviations from the normal biographical course of life—transfigures the category of time: it lacks real historical and biographical values, historical localization, events and circumstances, and it is linked to adventurous time, unlimited and perpetual.

The 'novel of trial or ordeal' also produces what Bakhtin calls 'psychological time', which is subjectively felt and extended by the character (when facing danger, or expressing feelings, expectations, unextinguished infatuation), yet it lacks again any definite location in the individual's experience of life.

The 'novel of trial and ordeal' differs from the 'novel of travel or wandering' in that it centers on character; the surrounding world is important in so far as it provides temporal and spatial realities for the trial of the static characters who have no power to shift their own inner perspectives of existence, to modify the world, and they certainly are not changed by it—there is thus no reciprocity or any visible relationship between subject and object, character and external world.

Finally, Antiquity provides the basis for a 'biographical form' of fiction—ancient biographies, autobiographies, and confessions—with a new character developmental principle linked to a biographical arrangement of the character and the novel structure.

The 'biographical novel' of Antiquity differs from the previous two types in that it lays the emphasis on some of the most typical and important elements of human life: birth, childhood, youth, marriage, work, death, and so on, that is the moments which may be said to exist before the beginning and after the end of the 'novel of travel or wandering'.

This type of novel is important for further development of the literary pattern of Bildungsroman, even though the characters are not presented in

their general growth, development or formation. Moreover, the inner life of the hero is static and the novel renders the experience of the character's life as a process through which what is actually formed and changed are his external life and personal destiny.

The category of time determines here a kind of 'biographical time' unit, which is linked to the wholeness of human existence, coloring it with the realism and singularity of a man's life. Moments, hours, days, nights—representing lines of adjacent interconnected temporal moments—almost lose their significance in the 'biological novel', which is concerned with longer periods of time, say, childhood or youth, as aspects of the general process of life and as being governed by the 'biographical temporal reality'.

In such narrative circumstances the third-person strategies lack the adventurous aspect and the hero's experience of life is not determined by trial. Instead, he attempts to attain personal achievements according to his human nature consisting of positive and negative features. These features are given as static and unmodified from the very beginning, hence the character is static too, and the experience of life marks an evolution and consolidation not of man's spiritual components but of his destiny and external condition.

Antiquity provides thus the fictional substratum for further development of the literary pattern of Bildungsroman, with special regards to the narrative techniques and thematic perspectives of the representation of the character and his range of fictional involvement. Elements and aspects of this artistic substratum will diachronically change along with the development of fiction writing, yet they will also reveal the consolidation of the literary tradition of the Bildungsroman and will be of primary importance when approaching the Victorian novel of character formation.

1.2 The Middle Ages. The Contribution of French and English Romances

The period, as a historical and cultural phenomenon, is approached in the study in so far as it produced the remarkable sequence of European literature known as romance, in which I may detect some elements that are important for Bildungsroman history.

Deeply rooted in the lyrics of the troubadours (with their intense passion addressed to women, making her sole inspirer of all that was good in her lover, idealizing her as something superior and all but unapproachable, laying emphasis on the extra-marital tie between men and women, thus romantic love, that is to say, must be adulterous; and with their interest in the daily life of castles), the romance emerged in the 12th century as long romantic verse narratives composed in Central and Northern France, in the French of England, and later in English and in prose. The stories were called

romances because they were first cultivated in a Romance language as contrasted with Latin. Very soon however the word assumed the sense of unreal fantasy in story form, with love as a main motive and chivalric persons as main characters.

Very many of the Medieval love romances use the court of King Arthur as a background, and it has been said that the '*stories of determined Celtic resistance to the Saxons in the sixth century, a resistance directed by a prince claiming imperial authority, were later associated with the largely mythological exploits of the fabled King Arthur*' (Sanders 1994: 17).

The heroes are Knights of the Round Table who spend much time and energy rescuing ladies from dangers such as capture, siege and oppression, attacks by robbers, incursions by monsters or the evil doings of sorcerers. The rescuers go to all sorts of lengths in their services, and patiently endure whatever trials or humiliations the ladies impose on them.

One of the first writers of extant Arthurian romance is the French Chretien de Troyes, whose romances, among other French creations of this type, spread to England and were imitated there as in many other countries. At first they were cultivated in the Anglo-French language, under the direct stimulus of Queen Eleonor of Aquitaine. One of the first offspring may be said to be *Le Roman de Troye* (c.1160), written by a certain cleric named Benoit de Sainte Maure, a long romanticized account of the Trojan war, which inserted a new story of a secret, chivalrous love connecting Prince Troilus with a Trojan lady Briseida.

Other important steps in the literary evolution of the romance are provided by the interest of the writers in romanticized history, including the legend of King Arthur, which is expressed, for instance, in the French *Roman de Brut* by Wace, and the later English version by Laymon; in the short *lai* depicting a single adventure as a short, closely connected series of them, focused on a single problem of courtly behavior, but generally also about Arthurian knights and their ladies. Not all of the romances composed in Anglo-French concern King Arthur and his knights, as some of them—*Horn et Rimel* (c. 1180) and *Haveloc* (c. 1190), for example—deal with princes exiled from their patrimony and regaining it by deeds of arms, and demonstrate the interest of the French-speaking British aristocracy in the native materials, settings and themes.

English romances are interested in the service of ladies less than in pure adventure, but they also lay emphasis on the inner conflict and delicate nuances of feeling. They imitate French plots and adopt the French technique of versification, yet, in turn, attempt to supply the greatest number of their plots, whether directly or indirectly, from sources ultimately classical, Oriental, Celtic and Germanic, thus making use of a supra-national fund of romantic fiction (the European form especially was influenced by *The Arabian Nights*).

English romances use the same literary mixture—warlike adventure, whether in the form of internal feuds, crusades against Saracens or encounters with supernatural forces; love and chivalrous service performed for noble ladies; complications of personal relations such as false accusations, the separation and reunion of families, quests for information or revenge, for magic talismans—but their treatment of the love motif avoid the over-refined analyses of sentiment and behavior which were typical, for instance, of predecessors like Chretien de Troyes in French. Instead, they more often stress action and adventure; they also concentrate less often on elegant adultery and more often have the stories culminate in the ‘happy ending’ of a conventional marriage.

The spirit of adventure, of initiation, and of trial is important for the development of the Bildungsroman, even if the characters are not presented in their general growth or as changing while gaining experience (they are, as in Antiquity, mainly static), and, moreover, even if the escape from reality, or the idealization of it, represent chief values desired by the authors of romances.

Much of the action has its mainspring in an enchanted world where everyday reckonings do not have to be made. Only occasionally does a hero in trouble—like Havelok during his exile, for example—establish a kind of contact with reality by engaging in useful labor. Even when the plot itself depends but little on magic and supernatural, the tone and motivation remove it from reality.

Yet the same character of Havelok, of *The Lay of Havelok the Dane* (c.1300), dispossessed and seeking refuge in England, is at first obliged to carry on a humble existence, but a mystical light that shines over his head twice reveals his noble origins. Havelok returns to Denmark with his bride, kills his usurping guardian and regains his rightful throne. The story dwells on details of ordinary life and labor and shows a hero who is prepared to defend himself with his fists and a wooden club as much as with his sword.

A more realistic delineation of the character is to be noticed in *King Horn* (c.1225), the earliest surviving English poem to have been categorized as a romance. It tells the story of a prince who, matured both by adventure and by love, is happily matched by a woman equal to him in fidelity, wit, and courage.

Maturity here does not imply, as it usually does in a Bildungsroman, the final stage of a gradual biological development from childhood through adolescence and youth, or as revealing the success of the formative process with regard to spiritual and mental wholeness, but considers a unilateral self-accomplishment of a personality through challenges of life.

The idea of challenge and trial is of primary importance in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, together with the motif of quest and that of initiation, as Gawain does when attempting to find the Green Knight and the

Green Chapel, and that of the resistance to temptation in terms of Christian knighthood.

Actually Christian elements can be found throughout almost all of the English romances, which coexist with pre-Christian elements, as in *Sir Gawain* the beheading myth is obviously of pagan, Celtic origins. Where in later novels and in most Bildungsromane Christianity as a religion and its institutions are satirized or not taken into consideration (with some exceptions, of course), in romances it is valued, while their protagonists perform deeds, apart from the matter of a noble lady, for glory of God and Christianity, and in defense of it. This aspect is more vivid in English romances categorized as being the 'matter' of France: tales and stories about Charlemagne and his knights, and concerned with the struggle against the advancing Saracens.

Other subjects of English romances, dealing with different types of historical material, can be categorized as the 'matter' of Rome (that is, classical legend) and the 'matter' of Britain (Arthurian stories, or tales dealing with later knightly heroes). Despite the variety of subject, setting, and treatment of many earlier English romances, none seriously challenges the sustained energy, the effective patterning, and the superb detailing of the already mentioned *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the later Sir Thomas Malory's masterpiece *Le Morte Darthur* (1485).

The character of Sir Gawain is important because it allows an already old-fashioned chivalric, gentlemanly ideal, in which personal integrity is linked to feudal and communal loyalties, to coexist with human failure, as the protagonist fails to give up a girdle presented to him by his hostess. Gawain's valor remains undoubted, and his quest becomes a trial not of his valor but of his chastity.

This aspect is important because it may be for the first time that a protagonist discovers in an act of failure his fullest humanity and reveals the most important aspect of a human personality: its individuality.

A highly individualized character is also Malory's Arthur, whose story is traced from the King's begetting, birth, education, and assumption of power to his and his court's tragic decay. Between these determining poles the author gives long sections over to the careers of Lancelot, Gareth, and Tristram, to the pursuit of the Holy Grail, and to the adulterous love of Lancelot and Guinevere—all these being traced from a considerable variety of French and English sources translated into a remarkable prose epic. It begins with the optimism associated with the unknown prince who '*lightly and fiersly*' pulls the sword out of the stone; it ends with the fearful decline of Arthur's greatness and his death, the end itself being haunted—by means of the recurring phrase '*the noble felyshyp of the Round Table is brokyn for ever*'—by a sense of the mutability of all human values.

Malory, the greatest prose writer of the 15th century, was composing a prose elegy to the dying age of aristocratic chivalry, and, in particular, it marked the death of the English romance.

English romances are thus influenced by the ‘novel of travel or wandering’ of Antiquity, but they mostly continue the ‘novel of trial and ordeal’ with its static protagonists whose features are tested; along with their concern with Christian and chivalric values; their adventurous time, to which a ‘fabulous time’ is added as a result of the influence provided by the oriental tales, revealing, at the same time, a clear deviation from the normal time category.

Romances thus offer a series of incredible adventures constructed on trite formulas, and their literary devices are to be detected in later Renaissance in the poems of Ariosto and Tasso, in Spenser’s *The Fairie Queene*, in Sidney’s *Arcadia*, in some drama of the time, particularly romantic comedy, and even much later in the Victorian Age, with influences on the writers of a *laudator temporis acti*. Romances also influenced the development of the novel in that they suggest—leaving apart their elements of fantasy, improbability, extravagance and naïveté—aspects of a narrative of love, adventure, the marvelous and the mythic, the travel and the quest, the test of life and initiation, even the everyday, the social and domestic.

1.3 The Renaissance. The Rise of the Picaresque Novel: The Rise of the Pattern

The Renaissance, viewed in terms of the development of the fictional form of writing, is governed by the French Francois Rabelais, the author of *Gargantua et Pantagruel* (1532, 1534), and by the picaresque novel (Sp. *picaro* ‘rogue’), originating in 16th century Spain, the earliest example being the anonymous *Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554). The most important Spanish authors of picaresque novels are Mateo Aleman, who wrote *Guzman de Alfarache* (1599, 1604), Francisco de Quevedo, who wrote *La Vida del Buscon don Pablos de Segovia* (1626), and Luis Velez de Guevara, the author of *El Diablo Cojuelo* (1644). These four works, and a number of other minor writings which were produced between 1600 and 1646, form actually the nucleus of the Spanish picaresque tradition.

At the time of the Renaissance Spain was ahead of the rest of Europe in the development of the novel form. Along with the picaresque fiction, the greatest of all Spanish novels is Cervantes’ *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1605, 1615), containing a number of picaresque elements, satirizing chivalry and some of the earlier novels. But besides being a satire, it is unquestionably the principal work to display the narrative and thematic discrepancy of romance. It does so by a humorous outlook on the conventions of chivalry and by contrasting them with the realities of

ordinary life, and thus tending to concentrate on everyday routine. The novel assimilates the picaresque narrative of adventure, its travel scheme, its motifs of trial and quest, but only in some of his *Novelas ejemplares* is Cervantes the closest to the picaresque mode of writing.

The picaresque novel influenced the fiction writing of centuries to come. It uses elements reminiscent of the novel in Antiquity, but also reveals some new aspects of the third-person strategies in terms of his process of development and evolution and thus provides, in both content and form, new steps in the artistic consolidation of the literary pattern of Bildungsroman.

The picaresque novel has its origins in an epoch of instability at different levels and changing human values. A mixture of virtue and impudence, spirit of adventure and of revolt, the character of the anonymous *Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* or Mateo Aleman's *Guzman de Alfarache* always changes his condition and social position: he is almost all the time servant to different masters, beggar, soldier, robber, merchant, passing through different social media and meeting in his wanderings all sorts and conditions of man.

The narrator of the picaresque novel can reveal a pessimistic view on the human condition, as in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, but always with a mixture of understanding, humor and criticism. The narrator of the picaresque novel may be unable to render characters with moral qualities, as Mateo Aleman, but he will always identify himself with the protagonist, providing long moral speculations and thus fusing the moral with the picaresque.

The novel of the Renaissance continues—both in terms of structure and theme—the ancient narratives of wandering, biography or autobiography, and those of trial. The trial is committed to wandering and implies the principle of the development of character with many biographical or autobiographical elements; it is also more complex and provides a deeper insight of the narrator into human psychology and inner existence, a concern with the character's physical and intellectual evolution, his gradual self-discovery amid the complexity of the external world.

The elements of both tradition and novelty mark the different, specific features of the novel of development: autobiographical form; didactic and moral values; adventurous vs. provincial in character rendering; the road as the axis of narrative structure; the adventurous aspect of the plot; the trial of life; quest as trial of the character's moral validity; childhood, youth, and maturity as biological steps of the character's evolution; change in the character's condition along with the change of his inner perspectives (which is, as a literary concern, in its incipient stage) while gaining life experience.

The last feature is particularly important in so far as the character is no longer regarded as static and as moving through the narrative structure by means of time and space categories, with certain changes only in his

condition, destiny, and social position. The aspect of change and loss of the static feature provides the image of man in his evolution and development with the rising problem to apprehend the moment of the character's real change of consciousness on both the level of concrete reality (the passing from one social stratum into other, meeting all sorts of human condition, and so on) and that of, let's say, moral and philosophical speculations (suggested by the character's experience of life and consisting of an impressive theory of living).

These general aspects have their direct representation in the picaresque writings of the Renaissance and in the novel of Francois Rabelais. *Gargantua et Pantagruel* has remained popular until the present day and can be classified—besides being a novel which satirizes romance—as a work of fantasy, or mythopoetic. The novel reveals the writer's attempt to create a realistic novel of character evolution and development within the framework of folk time, as, indeed, folklore provides a stable basis for the novel's narrative structure and organization of thematic elements.

Other forms of the time category are adventurous time (due to its aspect of travel or wandering), the psychological time of the 'novel of trial or ordeal', biographical time (Gargantua's birth, for example, his childhood and deeds).

Of primary importance in the novel is also a certain pedagogic idea revealing the pedagogic process of character formation and education. The external world is viewed in terms of schooling and education, through which the protagonist has to pass in order to change and develop. The evolution of the character allows the exclusion of his static features; yet the world becomes almost unmodified and definite, but, at the same time, subject to a rich complexity of contrasting aspects.

The dynamic feature of the character is also to be noticed in a remarkable sequence of Spanish literature, which is the picaresque novel. The literary concern with the character's experience of life representing a developmental/formative process reveals here, as in Rabelais, its incipient stage: it has already become a matter of narrative and thematic organization, but there are still the adventurous time and travel scheme that dominate the fictional perspective.

Travel suggests an experience of life as a temporal and spatial movement through different components of social setting, which provides both a realistic and a satirical outlook based on action, analysis and self-analysis of the main character. Travel is also governed by the *picaro*'s need to support his living and by the spirit of adventure; the latter, actually, dominates the narration, and suggests that for the particular kind of character formation as expressed in picaresque fiction action counts more than welfare.

The picaresque way of writing uses also the autobiographical form, and this is another premise/principle of the developmental process. A first-person narration tells and assesses the experience of life of a character from childhood through youth and maturity to old age, and sometimes along with different changes of his inner life: for instance from idealism and indulging in wishful thinking in youth to reason and pragmatism in old age.

The development of the character is thus linked to both biological growth and the evolution of human mental and sentimental activities, the latter as a result of a great number of changing and often contrasting circumstances and events, stimuli and conditions from beyond the hero's inner existence.

The narrative organization of the picaresque novel consists of a succession of different events-adventures—encounter, arrest, separation, escape, sudden acquisition and waste, robbery—as well as institutionalized education, professional initiation, love affairs, ordeal by love, and others, which are colored with both pure humor and irony, and often revealing the more or less explicit critical outlook of the *picaro* (sometimes the same as narrator, but almost always identified in point of expressed outlook with the author) on the external world.

The picaresque mode of writing originated in Spain and influenced a significant number of writers of Renaissance, who belong to different cultural backgrounds. In England, for example, it influenced the fiction of Thomas Nashe, which tends to exhibit a style that experiments with the effects of lexical novelty, violence, and disconnection. He allows his various narrators to express themselves in styles appropriate both to their condition and to the often-disorienting circumstances in which they find themselves.

The Unfortunate Traveller. Or the Life of Jacke Wilton (1594) is a precursor of the picaresque novel with certain experiments in realism. Jack Wilton's account of his adventures as '*a Gentleman at least*' looks back to the reign of Henry VIII, the patron of chivalry, and the promoter of military enterprise. Although the novel glances with nostalgia at a faded age, the reader's view of manners and events is controlled by Jack's vigorous and varied first-person narration and by his generally unsycophantic observation. It is not just what Jack sees, but how he sees, and especially what points he makes when recording events; moreover, how they condition the development of personal perspectives on existence.

1.4 The Seventeenth Century. The Continuation of Picaresque Fiction: The Pattern in Development

The 17th century continues the brilliant tradition of the picaresque novel: in Spain—Francisco de Quevedo's *La Vida del Buscón don Pablos de Segovia* and Luis Velez de Guevara's *El Diabolo Cojuelo*, but this kind of

fiction is also spread over other cultural areas: in France—Charles Sorel's *Histoire Comique de Francion* (1623—1633), Paul Scarron's *Le Romance Comique* (1651), Francois de Fenelon's *Les Aventures de Telemaque* (1699), in Germany—Hans Jacob von Grimmelshausen's *Simplicius Simplicissimus* (1668), in England—John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678).

Thus, as a result of the translation of the four main Spanish picaresque novels in French, German and English, they began to emerge in other cultural backgrounds of the 17th and 18th centuries and gave types of national picaresque fiction. In this respect, Richard Bjornson argues that each '*of these novels is a unique fusion of existing conventions and an imaginative response to specific historical circumstances, but within the novel writing traditions of their respective countries, they all performed similar functions. By breaking down the traditional separation of styles and expanding the range of acceptable subject matter to include the morally serious treatment of nonaristocratic characters, they constituted one of the most important stages in the transition between earlier literary prose and the modern novel, which itself became the dominant mode of fictional expression in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe*' (1979: 3).

In general, they represent novels of travel, adventure, trial, and even life-novels; and provide new steps in the general process of development and consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a literary tradition.

Their characters' experience of life consists mainly in pilgrimages, both physical and spiritual, which culminate in their changed exterior condition and sometimes the inner existence of the characters. These novels are often the equivalents of the Renaissance conduct books insofar as one of the recurrent themes is the making of the gentleman. But in a complex and busy existence the gentlemanly ideal is difficult to discover; and the struggle for survival in the contemporary world is also hardly conducive to good manners and quiet consideration of others.

In terms of the general pattern of picaresque fiction, the character's experience of life consists of a long journey from home into the crowded and exciting background of contemporary society, which represents an agent of fulfillment of the character's desire for adventure and action, but also the source of corruption.

The narrator follows carefully his character's evolution (also biological) as it becomes more complex, and presents his experience at the same time with the influences of the medium. The character's adventures and wanderings provide the narrator with the possibility of rendering the spatial (social) multiplicity which is chiefly static and consists of the contraries of human existence as socially determined.

Some of the 17th century novels which continue the picaresque tradition are centered on the pedagogic idea governing the pedagogic

process of character formation, for example Fenelon's *Les Aventures de Telemaque*; others, for instance Sorel's *Histoire Comique de Francion* and Scarron's *Le Romance Comique*, form a burlesque design on the basis of the picaresque tales of adventure, bringing together—and also satirizing—the travel scheme and the adventurous form of the picaresque and the pastoral elements.

Scarron, on the one hand, satirizes the false intellectual and spiritual values of his contemporary social environment, and tells, at the same time with a remarkably colored picturesqueness and humor, the story of two lovers who find refuge among some itinerant actors.

Sorel, on the other hand, when his character becomes a shepherd and lives for a while among simple people, praises the pastoral values and creates an image of an uncorrupted existence away from the court and town, from 'getting and spending'. Thus Francion's passionate quest for Nays, whom he truly loves, is mingled with his yearning for a lost innocence, for a pre-Fall paradisiacal life in which man existed in harmony with nature. Sorel's critical outlook on reality, the same as Quevedo's and Guevara's, transfigures the external world that becomes less interesting in itself and is turned towards comicality and caricature.

Sorel's novel follows closely the picaresque mode of writing: its protagonist passes through different social media and meets different sorts and conditions of man, and he is presented in his general evolution from childhood to the age of maturity; its narration consists of events which succeed each other and which are united by the thematic implications of initiation and education of the main hero who experiences adventures and trials; its structure is thus a linear movement with no special or distinct narrative levels of the general narrative framework.

The same thematic and structural perspectives of literary organization are more or less preserved in Grimmelshausen's novel, which marks the continuation of the picaresque tradition and provides a new step in the consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a literary tradition. The aspect of novelty represents the fact that the character formation principle in the novel is linked to the changes that take place in the external world.

That is to say, the character's evolution and development take place at the same time with the evolution and consolidation of the world. The world's foundation changes and the character has to change with it; the hero thus loses his private features and becomes subject to such issues as reality and human possibilities, freedom and the problem of creative initiative.

The character's evolution and change are placed on a moral level, as Simplicius himself reveals a gradual movement from youth's naïveté and idealism, through a dissolute life, to the final moral regeneration and desire to leave the world full of injustice and cruelty and to become a hermit.

An account of a more personal spiritual pilgrimage is John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a direct development from a previous work, *Grace Abounding* (1666, an autobiographical representation of the awakening of his soul to sin, his conversion, and his later ministry).

Christian's progress, accompanied at first by the martyred Faithful and latterly by the redeemed Hopeful, represents that of the individual believer blessed by the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. He is also blessed with a certainty of his election to eternal salvation and he forges a way forward aided simply by his understanding of Scriptural promises.

The novel is actually an allegory, tracing the progress of Christian through the world in search of salvation. It is thus an interesting departure from Bunyan's earlier work in its allegorical illumination of spiritual experience, which makes it an allegory drawing on biblical images, Christian typology, popular retellings of stories of righteous conduct.

It is also a continuation of the picaresque tradition, and in this almost picaresque story, characters are intended to represent moral qualities and vices and their names are only moral tags—Christian, Faithful, Obstinate, Hopeful, Madam Wanton—but the striking thing about it is that they actually acquire individuality through speech. The naturalness of the dialogue makes the allegory deeply rooted in the actual and the familiar and such scenes as those of the 'vanity' and the trial of Christian and Faithful are fully compatible with those that the Victorian writers of Bildungsromane were to emphasize in the rendering of their protagonists' process of development.

Actually, with its masterful delineation of character and realism in the observation of human behavior, *The Pilgrim's Progress* influenced a huge body of the 18th and 19th century English novel to come, and marked a new and important step in the further development of the fictional pattern of the Bildungsroman.

1.5 The Eighteenth Century. Further Evolution and Consolidation of the Pattern

In the 18th century the highly influential works still remained to be the Spanish picaresque novels, which marked the literary activity of Alain-Rene Lesage in France, and Swift, Defoe, Fielding, Smollett in England, who assimilated the picaresque elements and at the same time reified the literary validity of some definite thematic and narrative elements of Bildungsroman; and Wieland and Goethe in Germany, the latter actually reifying, through his novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, the consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a fictional pattern and as a literary tradition in world literature.

1.5.1 The Rise of the English Novel: The Assimilation of Picaresque Writing and First Elements of the Pattern in English Literature

In terms of the rise and development of novel writing in the English literary background, the 18th century is, among other things, the 'Age of the Novel', and, in the context of the epoch, the novel emerged more like a plebeian genre, a minor form, with no classical models and no established code and system of norms. No doubt because the novel form was in an embryonic state, and there were few if any rules for it, the range and variety of the 18th century English fiction is remarkably complex.

Its literary antecedents, however, are multiple and extremely diverse, going as far back as Heliodorus' *Ethiopian History*, or Petronius' *Satyricon*, or Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, or Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*: such ancient narratives were imitated during the Italian and Spanish Renaissance, and inspired Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe during the English Renaissance. Other sources would be Medieval romances and Spanish picaresque fiction, especially the latter's masterful strokes of character delineation and remarkable amount of realism in the observation of human conduct as being socially conditioned.

The English novel, intruding upon established genres and gradually replacing them, enjoyed a steady flourishing and an extraordinary success in a relatively short period of time. My interest in how the English novel of the 18th century assimilates the picaresque elements and reveals the initial aspects of the Bildungsroman should follow the consolidation of the novel as such, as the 18th century writers were entirely conscious that what they were writing was something totally new and completely different from the romance (the ideas expressed by Richardson and Fielding in the Prefaces to their novels, comparing to Samuel Johnson or Oliver Goldsmith who failed to see any difference between the novel and the romance).

Clara Reeve drew a more elaborate distinction in 1785: '*the romance is a heroic fable, which treats of fabulous persons or things. 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. The novel gives a familiar relation to such things as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, or to ourselves; and the perfection of it is to represent every scene in so easy and natural a manner, and to make them appear so probable, as to deceive us into persuasion (at least while we are reading) that all is real, until we are affected by the joys or distresses of the persons in the story as if they were our own*'.

Reeve's definition may be useful to any attempt of finding a common feature in apparently such different works as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moll*

Flanders, *Joseph Andrews* or *Tom Jones*. Critics usually call it realism, that is the concern with the real, familiar world around, with characters who share their condition with that of the reading audience, the turning of attention from the general and the abstract to the concrete and the particular—all as a result of the whole rationalized cultural context of the age.

The century began with a 'literature of intelligence', which celebrated the joy of thinking, of understanding and of making others understand, and was governed by an empirical method in the investigation of the world (founded by great philosophers of the previous century: Francis Bacon, John Locke, Thomas Hobbes): all knowledge a man can possibly get comes from human senses, from perceptions, which are the basis of reflection for the human intellect; truth can be discovered by the individual also through his senses—the individual experience is then a major test of truth.

The beginning of English fiction is almost symbolic of the new ways of literature: the new prose style is plain, simple and devoid of aesthetic ornamentation, clear and direct, and serves a clear thinking and an interested eye cast upon the surrounding world. This aspect is also noticed in the rendering of the character: he is governed by reason and efficient action (to say nothing about Robinson Crusoe's experience on a deserted part of the world).

Ian Watt (1974) remarks that the method of the 18th century novel—of its realism actually—is the study of the particulars of experience by individual investigation, having as its primary criterion truthfulness to individual experience. If the novel sets out to deal with individual experience, its language has to serve the purpose of representing a source of interest in its own right and to establish a closer correspondence between word and life and their phenomena.

The double dependence of the novel on language and on reality makes it very difficult to classify it morphologically. The first novels tried hard to assume some other identity ('memoirs', 'true histories', collections of letters, found manuscripts, and so on), that is to say, any form compatible with revealing a particular, circumstantial view of life. One may talk actually about a lack of recognizable form rather than about the 'newness' in form paralleled with the 'newness' of concern, as the individual experience is always unique and therefore new, because one often finds the same novel under several headings: *Moll Flanders*, for example, is an autobiographical novel, but also a picaresque novel; *Joseph Andrews* is a comic novel, or a parody, or a picaresque novel; *Pamela* is a sentimental novel, epistolary novel or confessional novel; Fielding's *Tom Jones* is a novel of manners, but an important part of it is in the picaresque mode, and so on.

As a continuation of 17th century fiction, the 18th century also marked an increase in fictional autobiography that can be credited to a concomitant

interest in self-analysis and individual experience. It was a form of self-expression open to both men and women and it was one that later led to experiments with fictional first-person narratives.

Moll, the character and narrator of Defoe's famous novel (written in 1722), born in prison, practically recounts her dubious liaisons with husbands, lovers, and seducers, and her progress through thievery to transportation to Virginia and final financial and emotional happiness. Her social and moral progress is difficult, and her memoirs—unlike those of Richardson's Pamela, which are private and immediate and whose reader becomes something of an intruder into her confessions—are ostensibly public and instructive, and suggest a rather too meticulous retrospection on a period of personal disorder. The character of Moll, before discovering the virtue of religion, honest financial achievement and marriage, possessed no sense of virtue or religion, and reveals Defoe's special insight into feminine psychology. His restless book receives many of the qualities of an adventure story and shows the influence of the picaresque mode of writing, still strong in the first half of the 18th century, as well as a number of certain thematic and narrative elements of the literary system of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749) is also influenced by the picaresque novel, and it also reveals an autobiographical (biographical) type of the novel that focuses on the process of formation and development of personality. The biographical time is a typical individual time category and provides the basis for character evolution, initiation, and formation. The evolution is thus the result of change in all life circumstances and events, activities and actions. The destiny of a man is formed together with his inner perspectives of existence—in other words, the evolution and perspectives of the character's life, his external condition and personal destiny are interrelated, as well as determined by the evolution and consolidation of sound spiritual components.

In this respect, Fielding's novel '*is a tour-de-force of patterning, an assertion of the ultimate tidiness and proportion of the universe, and a working-out of a representative human destiny*' (Sanders 1994: 312), and finally a literary work which expresses neoclassical principles and which contains within itself a number of comments and evaluations on other 18th century forms, such as satire, pastoral, comedy, picaresque. The omniscient narrator often disrupts the representation of events, and the representation of Tom's progress towards a triumphant moral vindication of his developmental process, with authorial interpolation of varied stories, his comments on his narrative methods, his ideas about philosophy, literary criticism, and the works of Cervantes, Rabelais, and others.

Yet the novel is close-packed, complex and dependent on the protagonist's journey. The narrative is divided into eighteen books that may

be regarded as well-structured narrative stances: the first six assess Tom's supposed origins, his education, and his fall from grace; the next six trace his journey to London, a journey paralleled by that of Sophia; the last six bring all the characters together amid the chaotic life of the city, and provide the resolution of an implied conflict. Tom makes mistakes, though he is also misjudged, his perspectives on life are often frustrating, and his journey complex and difficult. The journey is both physical and spiritual, and it represents both a biological development and a psychological consistency (which appears, however, static throughout the entire narrative) leading to personal triumph best acquired through a personal experience of life.

Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) has as its hero a well-born and educated Scot whose personality is exposed to and suppressed by the cruelty of the external world.

I believe the best critical comment on the hero's experience of life as expressed by the author is provided by Andrew Sanders, who claims that *'Roderick is often aggressive and combative; he is affectionate and sexually inquisitive; he is also a victim who, through singularly devious paths, fights his way back to money and respectability. Despite being a wronged and disinherited heir and a stranger in his wandering, he never emerges as the kind of rebel and romantic outsider that later novelists might have made of him. Much of the 'randomness' had of course been implied by the title, but the novel's true originality lies in its inclusion of scenes of contemporary warfare as clear alternatives to the fantasy battles of earlier romances. (...) Roderick is present at the disastrous siege of Cartagena of 1741 and later in the story, as a soldier in the French army, he fights at Dettingen in 1743. (...) The novel is centered on a wandering hero who even as a boy has shown 'a certain oddity of disposition'. Peregrine maintains this oddity as an adult, exhibiting a violence, an imprudence, a savage coldness, and an arrogance which both alienates sympathy and attracts retribution. At various times he is imprisoned in the Bastille in Paris and in the Fleet prison in London where he languishes as 'the hallow-eyed representative of distemper, indigence, and despair'. His repentance, which coincides with rescue from prison and an inheritance, allows for a happy marriage and retirement to the country beyond the pull of metropolitan temptation'* (ibid.: 315).

The novel shows thus many common elements with the picaresque fiction, particularly Lesage's *Gil Blas*, which Smollett translated into English in 1749, and many of the fictional elements, in both form and content, recognizable within the general system of the Victorian Bildungsroman, except for the principle of formation which is still disregarded as a literary concern.

Smollett adopted the picaresque tradition both to suit his contemporary English taste for realism and in order to describe a

recognizably contemporary world. Moreover, the interested look the novelist cast upon everyday life going on around him has a remarkable quality—it is critical, linked to a kind of universal ‘indignation’ and criticism reified with respect to ethics, politics, philosophy, literature, social life and human existence in general.

The same critical outlook is displayed in Jonathan Swift’s literary works, whose mind takes to satire, and whose skepticism about intellectual pretensions, struggle against contemporary meanness and indignation at the English treatment of Ireland made critics present him as a proto-socialist.

His greatest satire, *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726), appears to be a novel of adventure, yet the simple picaresque representation of events and involvement of the protagonist in an incredible journey through several countries are altered by the extraordinary authorial use of allegory, imagery, symbol, along with an apparent realism and reasonableness in order to express satirical aims and moral attitudes.

In some of these respects, Swift’s novel discloses elements intrinsic to the tradition of Bildungsroman, say, adventurous spirit, chronotope of roadway, concern with human characterization, moral insights into human existence, insights into the hero’s inner conditioning of personal experience of life, moments of internal crisis and revelation as premises for psychic change, or possible identification of protagonist and author: at the end of the narrative, when Gulliver returns home after staying with virtuous horses, he understands the disgusting habits of the human race, which he can no longer tolerate—this position of the protagonist, for instance, is taken as an image of Swift’s own relation to humanity.

1.5.2 Bildungsroman Elements in French and German Fiction

The critical outlook of the writer represents a common aspect of the 18th century English novel, as well as of the European novel in general, along with the continuation of the picaresque form. Lesage reveals, in his best novels *Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* (1715, 1724, 1735) and *Le Diable Boiteux* (1707), a dynamic narrative movement that goes over different social media, with characters whose main features are clearly and definitely rendered, even if the author fails in the psychological aspects.

Gil Blas, in the tradition of the picaresque novel, as hero-narrator, tells his own life, coloring it with the presentation of the other characters’ lives, as well as with many personal reflections and points of view on events, people and things he meets in his both physical and spiritual pilgrimage. Born in a provincial town in a family of lower-class parents, educated by a rich uncle, Gil passes through different adventures consisting of a remarkable experience of life: trap, abduction, escape, pursuit, penal

servitude, servant to several masters, ordeal, love encounters, financial success, collapse, final triumph.

The design is clearly reminiscent of the picaresque tales of adventure, and the hero is also showing individual development from childhood to manhood in the Bildungsroman tradition, which is being in the process of consolidation.

Gil's experience of life is important in so far as it allows premises of change of the inner existence of the protagonist, together with his condition, destiny and social position. The changes in Gil's inner life and personality are determined by his self-understanding, the apprehension of moral values, of a sense of right and wrong. A robber, he saves donna Mencia and escapes the oppressive atmosphere of the thieves' community; a servant to doctor Sangrado, he leaves the town in painful soul searching that he may have killed people by his medical attendance; a servant to don Matias de Silva, he is an aspiring dandy, learning '*to speak non-sense*' in order to express personal worthiness and glamour, yet he understands the worthlessness of such a perspective of life; a servant to Arsenia, he is attracted to theatrical life, yet he becomes tired of '*the dissipation of actors' lives*'; a secretary to Duke de Lerma, he achieves financial success and popularity, yet money changes his character for the worse, making him a snob who turns away from his parents and friends; and then, again, another failure and final triumph of the changed hero (after many other adventures and turns of fate, fortunes and misfortunes: happy marriage with Antonia and her death, a new job as the secretary to don Gaspar de Guzman, the new prime-minister, and his death, and the final happy marriage to Dorotea) who appears capable of reconciling the outward and the inward, and to reveal—as in Goethe's Bildungsroman—how a high social position and money can also contribute to the character's true enrichment of spirit.

Gil Blas is in some respect the equivalent of the Renaissance conduct book, tracing the process of the making of a gentleman; a picaresque story of adventure; and, as a continuation of 17th century fiction, less a psychological study than a representation of the character's development and evolution at the same time with the influences of the medium.

Wieland, in his picaresque *Die Geschichte des Agathon* (1765—6), also proposes to describe a contemporary world and life, but in doing so he glances at Antiquity, fusing it with the contemporary background, that is relating a historical past to contemporary realities. Wieland's novel renders the character formation principle closely linked to the gradual development of the protagonist from youth's idealism to the reason that governs a mature mind; it approaches the external world of the character in terms of education, in order to make him act and pass through it and achieve the final accomplishment and a stable place amid the complexity of the world.

The novel is on the way to the 19th century Bildungsromane in that it raises the problem of real human possibilities and creative resources in the way in which an ancient Greek youth moves towards accomplishment through a difficult process of moral development. Wieland's narrative is directly related to the pseudo-biographical novel of character evolution and development, such as Fielding's *Tom Jones* (a novel which influenced the German writer mostly), and to the fiction of character formation, such as Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*.

1.5.3 The Theme of Formation as a Literary Concern in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*

Goethe's novel (published between 1794 and 1796 as a reworking of *Wilhelm Meisters theatalische Sendung*, begun and abandoned some years earlier) marked the consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a literary tradition in the late 18th century and became the most familiar model for 19th century Victorian writers of Bildungsromane.

For reasons of space, and because it represents a concise critical analysis which is also congenial to the main concern of this chapter, that is to trace the fictional antecedents of the Victorian Bildungsroman, I give Buckley's interpretation of Goethe's novel. Like Buckley, I consider *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* as the prototype of the 19th century novel of character formation, and it indeed discloses a remarkable number of thematic and narrative arrangements of fictional elements typical of the Bildungsroman literary system.

Among other things, Buckley reasons, '*it is Wilhelm's object to seek self-realization in the service of art: as actor and later manager of a stage company, he will make of the German theater a primary agent of cultural change. In the finished novel this aim must compete with many other intentions and values. The Lehrjahre consequently is a curios medley, without center or consistency; dull exposition and prosy asides jostle lively scenes from Bohemian life among the itinerant troupers; wit collides with sentiment, short dramatic ballads with long irrelevant interpolated tales and large tracts of cloudy occultism. Scattered throughout the whole are many details and impressions adapted from Goethe's own experience: a childhood delight in puppets (Wilhelm's account of which is so circumstantial that it puts his mistress to sleep), the tension between visionary son and hard-headed practical father, efforts at amateur acting and first hand observation of the vagaries of fellow-players, response to esoteric rituals of freemasonry, even the aimless, lovesick wandering through the streets by night (where the fictional Mariana substitutes for the actual Lili Schonemann as the object of troubled affection). And in more scenes appears Wilhelm himself, sometimes the protagonist, more often the spectator or auditor, a young man whom*

Goethe viewed with marked ambivalence, now as simply a poor dog (“ein armer Hund”), now as his own true likeness (“mein geliebtes dramatisches Ebenbild”).

(...) Wilhelm, nonetheless, is in many respects a weak and indecisive hero (...). Yet (...) Wilhelm does have an active mind, and he speaks it often and at length. Goethe undercuts with irony some of his long sententious speeches, but the ideas in them are frequently Goethe's own and therefore to be heard with respect. Wilhelm is self-conscious, almost to the point of absurdity, in his quest for self-culture; he carefully weighs his obligations to himself, as when he decides to join the players on their visit to the count's castle, “(...) where he expected to obtain much insight into life, into himself, and the dramatic art”. Like the young Goethe's, his is the artistic temperament, eager to achieve independence and self-expression, impatient with his father's mercantile mentality and contemptuous of all deadening devotion to Commerce (...).

Nonetheless, Wilhelm's “apprenticeship” to the stage eventually proves, like Goethe's own dream of a vacation in the plastic arts, a quite misdirected ambition. (...) soon after his production of the play, he is willing to abandon the stage altogether in the belief that his histrionic talents are strictly limited. And the theater he rejects suddenly becomes an allegory of all the illusions of troubled youth. The true apprenticeship, we then see, is spiritual rather than professional. When he has served his term, he is formally released; through many dark passages, he has been led into the light; and a mysterious abbe salutes him, “Hail to thee, young man! Thy Apprenticeship is done: Nature has pronounced thee free.” For the agency of his salvation, he learns, is a veritable *deus ex machina*, a secret society, emissaries of which, sent out from mountain fastnesses, have watched over and guided him since his boyhood. Wilhelm, who has known himself guilty of willful error, has actually been predestined to succeed; he is now prepared to move from conscious self-culture to a spontaneous understanding of life, and accordingly is ready for his initiation into the brotherhood of the elect. But as the novel follows him through new snarls of relationships and much windy rhetoric, it sacrifices most of its appealing realism to an abstract and unconvincing philosophy (...) [which] most later readers have found it unsatisfactory’ (1974: 9-12).

Despite whatever structural weakness or ambiguity of tone, **Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre** has established itself in literary history as a prototype of Bildungsroman, although it differs sharply in manner and matter from the Victorian Bildungsromane that were to follow.

I argue that it was not until Goethe's novel that the formation of personality was considered a literary concern equated to the rendering of social background and of character's development amid the complexity of

social considerations and perspectives of his both spiritual, inner and physical, exterior progress.

It is Goethe's novel that broke the pattern of a pure developmental fiction and a more or less pure developmental process of the protagonist, especially through the breaking of the static nature of his inner life.

The process of development and evolution becomes thus also a process of character formation (in this sense, the maturation and consolidation of spiritual perspectives of life experience) through newly reconsidered concern with inner life and the mutations happening on this level of human existence: the division of psyche and an attempt to reestablish its wholeness through certain painful and frustrating moments of spiritual activity, self-revelatory change of moral perspectives, the importance of psychological completeness and stability in the general well-being of the individual, an attempt to correlate the instinctive action with a more rational consideration of passionate and emotional drives.

As it is, and as I have attempted to show, the development of world fiction, particularly the picaresque novel, from Antiquity until Goethe's *Bildungsroman*, is no less important in the consolidation of the fictional system of Victorian *Bildungsroman*; moreover, it suggests at least interesting, although revelatory, interpretative perspectives and modalities of the analysis of the 19th century English novel of character formation.

Ultimately, it provided the Victorian *Bildungsroman* with a number of fictional elements and principles of literary organization in both form and content.

I believe that these thematic and narrative perspectives of structural organization would represent certain thematic and narrative elements as literary counterparts within one definite fictional universe of a certain novel, and of different Victorian *Bildungsromane* as definite hypostases of one literary pattern, that is of different minor fictional systems within a larger fictional system of Victorian *Bildungsroman* as a whole.

Among those elements that are highly revelatory of the narrative structuring of the Victorian *Bildungsroman* in general I should mention the identification between author and narrator, author and character, sometimes narrator and character, due to the autobiographical substratum and confessional manner of the narrative; the linearity of the narrative movement determined by the logical succession of events within a cause-and-effect narrative perspective; the chronotope of home, that of roadway and city; the introspective and retrospective representation of events and states of the character's mind, as well as their omniscient assessment; the ethical component of the narrative distance between author and character, and between narrated events and reader; and the implication of the reader in the process of apprehension and delineation of the meaning and significance of the literary discourse, especially that of the picaresque fiction.

The novel from Antiquity until the end of the 18th century—especially the Spanish picaresque fiction and the picaresque novels that emerged in the cultural systems of the 17th and 18th centuries—also allowed the consolidation of a remarkably rich complexity of thematic principles and perspectives of fictional organization. Among them, I should consider first of all those that regard the character's experience of life as representing a gradual process of internal and external development of the protagonist through three biological stages of evolution, that is childhood, youth and maturity.

Mention should be made thus, among others, of ethical principles of personal conduct; physical and spiritual trial by social environment and human interrelationship; ordeal by love, spirit of adventure; search for a stable place within social background, that is social integration and social success; an attempt to correlate the social anticipation of success with the spiritual fulfillment and psychic completeness and stability.

These thematic elements, as applied diachronically from Antiquity until Goethe's *Bildungsroman*, suggest evolution and development rather than formation of personality, yet representing the very fictional substratum of the later, which is Victorian, *Bildungsromane*.

Among other things, the analysis of the representation of personality in the picaresque fiction is important for my study in so far as it discloses certain particularities of the third-person strategies that would be eventually helpful in rendering the character typology in Victorian *Bildungsroman*.

Having not considered these particularities as having any links to the literary pattern of *Bildungsroman*, Richard Bjornson considers them as providing important distinctions among the picaresque novels: thus some of them *'portray character as a process during which picaresque hero's personality emerges; others depict character as a function of the protagonist's inherent nature. Some create fictional worlds in which the picaresque hero can plausibly attain wealth and psychological well-being; others situate "picaros" in worlds where they cannot possibly escape a "double-bind" situation in which they are compelled to choose between survival and integrity'* (1979: 3).

Goethe and his Victorian followers would transfigure the literary essence of these thematic, as well as narrative, elements so as to concentrate on the protagonist's inner life and to reveal special insights into human psychology in the process of evolution and development, and, of course, would add a number of many more fictional elements with regard to *Bildungsroman* in its essence as a literary work and literary discourse.

What I mean is that these elements, especially in the Victorian *Bildungsroman*, would represent mainly a change of the inner life, a shift in mental and emotional perspectives which may determine the hero's formation in the sense of a stable consolidation and maturation of his

personality in matters of both spiritual and socially determined experience of life (in spite of the fact that the desired stage of completeness and fulfillment may sometimes end in tragic failure or be rendered ambiguously).

At this point in my approach, however, the narrative and thematic principles and elements presented in the fiction of different centuries from Antiquity until the end of the 18th century, and in Goethe's novel, and considered as more or less governing diachronically the rise, development and consolidation of Bildungsroman in general as a fictional system within the larger system of imaginative prose and that of world literature—and the developmental process of character in particular—are important for the further approach to and understanding of the Victorian Bildungsroman, as they indeed prepared the way for the consolidation and flourishing of this form of the novel in the 19th century English fiction.

Although critics often consider Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* as having direct influences on Victorian writers of Bildungsroman, I think that within the British cultural background, the Victorian Bildungsroman was also anticipated and in some respects influenced by a number of literary concerns of the English romantic poets, whose contributions to the consolidation of the Victorian Bildungsroman are quintessential and require separate analysis.

2. ROMANTIC IMPULSE IN THE VICTORIAN BILDUNGSROMAN

2.1 The English Romantic Movement and the Concern with the Individual and the Experience of Childhood

Although in matters of form it differs from the fictional correlation of the Victorian Bildungsroman in terms of narrative organization of its literary discourse, in matters of thematic perspectives of the Bildungsroman literary system the English Romantic Movement has anticipated and influenced the consolidation of Bildungsroman in Victorian fiction in so far as I detect in the Victorian novel of character formation the continuation of the romantic artistic conception and spirit, as well as a number of certain thematic elements which will eventually become parts of the general system of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

With respect to the latter aspect, English romantic writers attempted to reveal a major concern with psychological issues, their special insights into the inner human existence, placing the accent on the individual and the experience of childhood, all of them being artistically intermingled with a number of other literary concerns, to say nothing about the concept of imagination, or the importance of natural objects and phenomena (as both actual appearance and promotion of pantheism).

These elements combined represent a generic aspect, which is actually another major characteristic feature of the romantic trend in literature, which reveals a new kind of sensibility closely linked to the new kind of environment that man was in the process of creating for himself, or to the changed relation between the artist and what is beyond his artistic concern. If the human personality was, due to industrialization, on the way to being regimented and was losing individuality, then poets and artists began to seek to balance the scale by attributing the greatest value to individual consciousness, and in doing so they praised feelings and imagination, the latter as the noblest of human faculties. It seems that once again poets foresaw the threat posed by the growth of a mass-society with its inevitable regimentation of the individual, or at the very least its heavy pressure towards spiritual and intellectual conformity. Hence the romantic emphasis placed on the individual as distinct from man, on personal values, the interest in human psychology, as opposed to behavior, in the human being as an individual man. Hence the rise of the Romantic Hero, and the multiplicity of its hypostases. Hence the figure of the Solitary—a specifically romantic creation: the Wanderer in Wordsworth's *The Excursion* is a Solitary, also his lyrical I in *The Prelude* or *Tintern Abbey*; Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is on one level a psychological study, but also is about a Solitary; *Dejection: A Letter*, another of Coleridge's works, which may also be read as a piece of profound

self-analysis, shows that the poet himself in the hypostasis of the lyrical I can be a Solitary; in Shelley the Solitary is the Outcast or the Misfit, and is to be identified with the poet in *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*; the protagonists of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Manfred*, his Rebel in *Cain* may be said to be different facets of the same figure. Hence the romantic concern with the experience of childhood, its special insights into children's psychology, realizing the vital and lasting importance of early, infantile experience, of childhood impressions—'*spots of time*' in Wordsworth, especially of natural objects and forces, for the whole development of human mind and the formation of a mature personality.

In John Clare's poetry, for instance, who himself notes apologetically that '*childhood is a strong spell over my feelings*' and who reveals the same concern with the experience of childhood, as in the writings of other English romantic poets discussed in the study, immaturity (or the failure to adopt the conventional manner of maturity) merged with his close and sensitive attention to natural objects, the wild things, the flowers, and the simpler human pursuits of the countryside he knew. The poet enjoyed them for their own sake rather than for any moral or spiritual meaning to be read into them. As a boy and a young man he found them unquestionably valuable, but he went through the experience, common and distressing in later life, of seeing that their vivid significance had faded. But, if compared to Wordsworth for example, who reveals stronger psychological insights into human personality, Clare's distress is linked to some external changes, his acute nostalgia and the sense of loss arise from having to leave the native village, but they count for less than his inner loss of the sense that the pleasure he took in natural things was intensely important.

It seems that in the poetic discourse of Wordsworth, as well as those of other romantic authors, the temporal principle is rendered as consisting only of two '*spots of time*': the present and the past, the latter viewed from the positions of the present and represented in the form of its detailed analysis.

The purpose of the present chapter is to trace the development of the theme of childhood (motifs, attitudes and ideas) during English romantic period, which represents an important part of a more general development of the image of childhood in English literature, and the many aspects of the way romantic writers presented in their literary productions any vivid interest in the human personality as growing and forming, which represents the basis of a typical Victorian Bildungsroman thematic organization. I thus attempt to argue that there are certain perspectives of thought in the literary and theoretical works of a series of English romantic writers which reveal a constant and permanent concern with the experience of childhood and the formation of personality (or rather this concern is mingled with a larger and more complex range of approaches and preoccupations—the growth of a

poet's mind, the inner existence and the external world, the relationship between man and divinity, the importance of imagination, memory and nature, and others), especially some of the notions and principles implied in verses by William Blake (in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*), William Wordsworth (*The Prelude, Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*), George Gordon, Lord Byron (*Don Juan*), as well as in John Keats' *Letters*, Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley*, and other writings. The works and their authors are studied separately, as an object to be measured in itself, yet arranging the writings chronologically in a developing tradition.

2.2 Voices of Innocence and Experience in William Blake's Poetry

The artistic voices of innocence and experience in William Blake's poetry are those belonging mostly to children, and, as a poet, Blake is approached in my study in so far as he revealed in a number of poems from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul* (1794) an intense conviction of the importance of childhood in the general development of human personality, a special concern with the universe of childhood, the condition of the child, his place in a world governed by mature principles, all these in close relationship with the writer's attempt to touch on the problems of religion, the relationship between man's religious attitude, power of knowledge, and his 'Poetic or Prophetic' capacity (a concept introduced by Blake in *There Is No Natural Religion*, 1788), the last three aspects being actually explored to a greater or lesser extent in all his work.

The volume of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, as most of Blake's poetry, was not published by ordinary print, but engraved or etched by Blake himself on copper plates, with accompanying designs. Design and text were cut in relief, stamped on paper, and then colored by hand. The *Songs of Innocence* were first engraved in 1789; the *Songs of Experience* in 1794. The *Songs of Experience* was never issued separately, but always with the *Songs of Innocence*, the two collections having the subtitle: *Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*. Many of the *Songs of Innocence* have counterparts in the *Songs of Experience*, the relationship being indicated either by a common title, as with *Holy Thursday*, *The Chimney Sweeper*, and *Nurse's Song*, or by contrasting titles, as with *The Lamb* and *The Tiger*, *The Divine Image* and *The Human Abstract*, *Infant Joy* and *Infant Sorrow* (many poems from the *Songs of Experience* represent comments on *Songs of Innocence*; they are, eventually, satires on the latter set, and many of the poems in both sets are symmetrical and set

against each other not only in their thematic implication, but also in language and stanza form).

The poems in the volume are contrary, not opposite, and highly interrelated; they show the state of man before the Fall (the Edenic state) and the state after the Fall, but the '*two contrary states of the human soul*' suggest '*not only a falling away from Edenic innocence to experience, but also the possibility of progress towards a Christ-inspired 'higher' innocence and a future regain of paradise*' (Sanders 1994: 353). 'Innocence' is the ideal or Paradisal world of protection and peace that the child assumes in the world he is born into; 'experience' is the actual world. During childhood the innocence is prolonged, children and young men become characters in Blake's poetic enterprise, the poet himself answers a request from a child '*on a cloud*' to write the songs:

*And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water dear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.*

The first set of poems '*is an evocation of that paradise which Milton declared lost*', and Blake located innocence and purity of humanity not in the childhood of the race, '*but in the individual's childhood*' (Rogers [ed.] 1990: 280). The lyrical I from *The Little Black Boy* is a child who lives in a world of colonial expansion and becomes the exponent of that part of the world to which England brought civilization. England is seen as the greatest colonial empire in the world, as a factor of progress spreading civilization: '*And I am black, but O! my soul is white*'. The civilized world makes a difference between white and black, good and evil, and the little black boy has been taught by his mother about the differences between them (one may comprehend here the implication of the abstract notion of maternal nature in a concrete representative of the human race, because the physical mother would eventually belong to the mature, corrupt world, which Blake disregarded). He has also learned that '*there God does live*' in the East, that the earthly existence is limited and '*we are put on earth a little space*', which is time, and the human experience of life in material bodies is transitory and prepares man for an eternal, spiritual existence. In this case the body is nothing but a cloud that is shadowing the soul that will be released to immortality: '*The cloud will vanish we shall hear his voice*' (it implies death, but without any note of tragedy, for death is transition from one state to another). The equation of God with the sun suggests tacit ties between the two basic principles of life: the existence of the soul, that is spiritual, and physical, material, fleshly existence, both embodied in the entity of Man '*put on earth*' that he '*may learn to bear the beams of love*', but attaining joy only by the end of human earthly life impregnated with

experience. The symbol of the sun and its counterparts—day, light, morning, beams, golden tent—are scattered all over the poem, spreading away the radiant energy of the desire to live, even if self-sacrifice (the complex of inferiority or the posture of the human-slave of the little black boy) would be the price for that:

*I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our father's knee;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me.*

The same tone of confidence is preserved in *The Chimney Sweeper*, yet again one can detect the drama of childhood experience: the boy's mother died when he was very young and his father, unable to support him, put him in a work-house to the care of officials. The poem may be viewed as a protest against the way children were treated and bereaved of childhood (at that time in England children were employed as sweepers—they were cheap and small, and 'weep' is actually 'sweep', for the little boy couldn't talk properly, and Blake is ironic here). Also, the same interplay of the two colors (concepts) is implicitly prompted in the poem: soot, '*coffins of black*', darkness in the morning—the concept of the conventional real existence—are opposed to '*white hair*', '*white children*', '*bright key*'—representing the concept of a dream-like, visionary, non-real existence. The chimney sweepers are '*locked up in coffins of black*' (that is to say, the close space of the chimney, prison, symbol of death, also this image could call to any textual minds Herman Melville's *Bartleby, the Scrivener*), but Tom's vision changes the life of children, for only imagination and the refuge provided by a subconscious need for escapism materialized in dream can compensate for the misery of reality and offer spiritual joy. Imagination, for Blake, is '*the real and eternal world of which this vegetable universe is but a faint shadow, and in which we shall live in our eternal or imaginative bodies when these vegetable mortal bodies are no more*' (*Jerusalem*, 77).

The dream, passing through the child's mind, leaves its print in his consciousness, thus forming an illusion of an ideal reality (sleep is a superior form of existence, says, among others, Lucian Blaga). But it seems that Blake is drawing a clear demarcation line between the two seemingly equal notions—the ideal and the dream: the first is to be never attained, touched or grasped, thus representing a highly abstract transformation of thought/idea, the second, being abstract as well, inclines to a more concrete realization, in other words, the mental fulfillment on the conscious level of the human psyche of a hidden and obsessive wish, and the later relief: '*Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm*'. The boy's 'sight' may also be viewed as a simple manifestation in sleep of a story he

may have been told about a better life after death, or one can hazard to say that it represents a major experience of *descendere ad infernus*.

In spite of the fact that the author mentions a number of children alluding to the more numerous group ('*That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,*'), one cannot help apprehending the theme of solitude that dominates in the poem.

The child may be a limited reasoner, he may not be entirely aware of his miserable life, as the reading audience is, but he can see angels and possesses a direct way of access to the world of God. It is to be noticed that Blake, even if he reveals some special insights into the experience of childhood and the psychology of children, or his lyrical I takes the posture of a child and his poems are utterances not of the author but of the characters he created, looks at them from a grown-up point of view and mentality, hence the last moralizing note: '*So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm*'. However, one may regard it as being ironic, given Blake's attitude of disgust towards what he viewed as a fallacious system of morality perpetuated by the false church of the fallen world, the great error of religion (in *The Human Abstract* this aspect has its symbol in the Tree of Mystery, which is the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), and it seems that he does not shape expressively the indivisible unity, as in Wordsworth, of God, Nature and Human/Child.

Yet in another poem from this set, *Holy Thursday*, with its solemn, ceremonious verse, showing how pure children are brought to the ceremony of the fortieth day after the resurrection of Christ at St. Paul's cathedral, the lyrical I urges to cherish pity, to welcome any stranger, who might be a missionary from heaven, '*lest you drive an angel from your door*'.

An ironic comment on *Holy Thursday* is provided by the poem with the same title from the *Songs of Experience*, which shows that people profit either materially or spiritually by capitalizing on their charity. It seems that the lyrical I passed through experience: for him the Edenic season is spring, the sun—a symbol of imagination and light, the rain and the rainbow—hope for a better world, different from the earthly human way of life, with its poverty, man's dependence on the material needs, a place where '*sun does never shine*' and '*fields are bleak and bare*'; instead, he is seeking a better place for children, which will be like heaven:

*For where-e'er the sun does shine,
And where-e'er the rain does fall,
Babe can never hunger there,
Nor poverty the mind appal.*

The poems from the first set represent a vehicle for the author to proclaim eternal love, hope and joy for everyone, but the succeeding *Songs of Experience* on the contrary declare such dreams as utopian and childish

(one should be aware of the existence of an explicit distinction between the childish and the childlike, the latter, as an adjective, referring to the good qualities of childhood, while 'childish' implies a derogatory meaning). Blake is aware of the terror and hostility of the conventional adult society in the face of some features of the child's outlook, for the child and the young adult are impeded by social and religious oppression, with a sickly conscience of it. The illustrations accompanying the poems show death, weeping, menace and desolation; also the tone is more varied: it may be one of angry protest, as in *Holy Thursday*, or of cynical reasoning, typical of the world of experience, as in *The Human Abstract* or *The Chimney Sweeper*. The latter, set against the poem with the same title from the *Songs of Innocence*, is essentially a dialogue, in which the degree of tragedy is extended ('*A little black thing among the snow*', '*They closed me in the clothes of death*'), but the idea that a child is pure and innocent, his misery is the way of access to heaven, and that he needs no earthly institutions of God—church, priest, king (while his parents, who got the experience, have to pray for this access), is preserved.

Innocence is equated with purity, saintliness and can be regarded as the spiritual, dream-like existence; experience, with its abstract rationality and firm general principles, even if inferior to innocence as a state of being, is a necessary aspect of human personality, be that human a child or a grown-up (the latter idea clearly stands in front of other ideas in the above mentioned *The Chimney Sweeper* from *Songs of Experience*, a poem with a far greater satirical, even sarcastic, edge). Thus Blake's lyrical hero is far from contemplating the scene of misery, he is indignant and revolts at the unjust and undeserved destiny, condemning regimentation and exploitation, all these being linked to the immense change in his mind and way of perceiving the external world, which compelled the transformation of his attitudes. Now an experienced observer, and not the small chimney sweeper, starts the first stanza of the poem, uttering the striking words of truth at the end of it, words that are coming out of a child's mouth and are linked to his mental conviction of the illusion of a better existence, thus rejecting his own universe of escapism:

*And are gone to praise God and his Priest and King,
Who make up a heaven of our misery.*

It also seems that Blake rejects in this poem a contemporary conception according to which children were regarded as 'small sinners', the aim being to give them the steadiness and wisdom of adults as soon as possible (a conception materialized in the moral and puritanical stories of the time). More than that, a statement like '*So your chimneys I sweep*' can express the idea that a child with its innocence and purity represents the way

of access of the human to divinity, for the phrase can be read as ‘so your sins I redeem’.

The same change in the speaker’s mind is to be noticed in *Holy Thursday* from the same set, where the name of God the Creator, with his power to reverse the darkness and to renew and control, is not even mentioned. Like Byron, it seems that Blake doubts the good in God’s creation, as he does in *The Lamb* and *The Tiger*, when contrasting the mercy of God and the wrath of God. Man, Blake suggests, having gained experience and thus having raised onto another stage of the human life, further from innocence, ‘*now can see no more*’ (Wordsworth) the things that he has seen before. Blake might have also suggested God’s incapability to fit innocence into the appropriate entourage, where with time it would not lose its utmost plain complexity, for childhood will never eliminate from the mind what perpetually projects the actions of present maturity onto the past experience. Extended interpretation raises doubts and spawns a diversity of opinions, but it generally seems that the two outlooks are mutually corrective and are kept in balance, though Blake’s contemporaries, as well as a huge range of modern reading audience, considered most of his works too obscure for an adequate understanding of ideas and symbols implied. About this, in one of his letters, Blake writes: ‘*But I am happy to find the Great Majority of Fellow Mortals who can Elucidate my Visions and Particularly they have been Elucidated by Children, who have taken a greater delight in contemplating my Pictures than I ever hoped. Neither Youth nor Childhood is Folly or Incapacity*’.

Despite their hymn-like simplicity and their nursery-rhyme rhythms, their simple language and their relatively direct utterance, Blake’s *Songs* reveal a remarkably complex range of meanings, symbols and poetic devices sparked off by again plain and common poetic material which consists of descriptions of the condition of children, the contact and conflict of the old with the young. In this respect—and also being conscious of the fact that the poems from both sets escape the limited universe of childhood due to their comprehensive nature of meanings and symbols, some of which are beyond children’s comprehension, for a child is not able to understand or understands them improperly—one may mention for instance the poem *Infant Sorrow* from the *Songs of Experience*, for instance, which renders the protest of the child at birth, its first experience of danger and violence of the exterior mature world:

*My mother groan’d! My father wept.
Into a dangerous world I leapt:
Helpless, naked, piping loud:
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.*

Struggling in my father’s hands,

*Striving against my swaddling bands,
Bound and weary I thought best
To sulk upon my mother's breast.*

A further interpretation will reveal that for Blake parents were the true exponents of the adult, corrupt world, as well as nurses, priests—the wisdom of the old and the calculating force of human reason that serve to limit what once was innocent and that is equated with oppression. Especially the father was viewed as a figure of oppression, jealousy and terror ('*And my father sold me while yet my tongue / Could scarcely cry 'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!'*'—**Chimney Sweeper** from *Songs of Innocence*), the mother being obliged to join him in his terrifying and tyrannous control of the child. But statements like '*My mother bore me in the southern wild*', '*My mother taught me underneath a tree*', '*She took me on her lap and kissed me*', '*Thus did my mother say, and kissed me*' from **The Little Black Boy**; '*I thought best / To sulk upon my mother's breast*' from the above mentioned **Infant Sorrow**; or '*When my mother died I was very young*' from the same **Chimney Sweeper**, in which a 'loving son' intentionally 'kills' his mother in order to exclude her from the corrupt world of grown-ups, may suggest other new and interesting, this time psychoanalytical, interpretations.

Also, though the poems from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul* should be read as being a definite part from all of Blake's literary work, many of the recurrent symbols and motifs (especially in later **Prophetic Books**, in which myths are created or recreated, with an uncommon mythopoetic imagination of the author, within a framework of a four-dimensional universe—governed by 'the four Zoas', in which contraries coexist and are necessary to each other) are already present in this volume and are, too, beyond a child's understanding: the Lamb and the Tiger (the mercy of God vs. the wrath of God, Soul and goodness vs. Reason and revolt, the outburst of energies), the Tree of Mystery and other enigmatic symbols of psychological states presented in a single image (the rose and the worm which suggest sexual symbolism in **The Sick Rose**, and the implied loss of virginity which suggests loss of innocence and entrance into the stage of experience in the same poem (a Romanian reader may think of Heliade-Radulescu's **Zburătorul**—see Blake's '*The invisible worm / That flies in the night*'), for example, or, as in **Ah! Sunflower**, some psychological states like inhibition and sexual frustration which are the expression of the mortal being's confinement within the senses, its enrootment in the flesh, corporeality, in the material world, with the death wish expressed as the only solution of escapism).

Most explicitly the theme of childhood is rendered by Blake's own conviction that the child is primarily an aspect or possibility of every human

personality. The greater part of his writing bears witness to the individual testing of the wisdom, morality and theology of his time, sometimes the author being amused when regarding the church—the dwelling place of God on earth—as the shortest distance between the Holy Spirit and innocence, sometimes rendering the value of strong emotion, notably anger, as the tool or weapon of a healthy mind.

The latter aspect clearly stands in front of others in the poems in which Blake renders the way children are bereaved of childhood, and, without any parental guidance, they become intellectually weak (for instance when no one can answer their questions that are linked to their own attempt to discover the world). Blake himself reveals his own need to focus on the mental type of starvation, which, if not dealt with, may lead to retardation, and a tragic waste of human potential. His child characters seem to be disturbed in their early life, thus having difficulties in coping with other people, especially when concepts (principles) of their specific thinking met with in daily existence become more abstract, as does their thinking. Children's early life and an important means of gaining knowledge consist of play. It is not difficult to answer what play is, it is more difficult to define it: like life or love, play is a concept that cannot be defined because it is a process, and, as every process, it continually exists, develops and changes, and never becomes totally complete or finalized (the opposite to this is the product which is possible to see and define). However, it is possible to describe play and its functions: the way children play forms the basis for their adult lives; play helps understand one's own experiences; it helps children cope with and understand their surrounding world; by playing, a child discovers its strengths and weaknesses, abilities and interests. Play also enables a child to develop socially (development of social skills), emotionally (training the ability to have empathy, feelings of intimacy, as well as the development of a reflective feeling, a curiosity which can continue the whole life through), physically (physical development), and intellectually (intellectual development of discovering, analyzing and experimenting with the world around). Therefore, play is central for children, but also for adults and the entire society they live in, for play is a function of culture, one of civilization's foundations, entirely universal and integrated in the lives of both people and animals. The children of Blake's poems are bereaved of play, but their wish to play can be fulfilled only in dream, in an existence close to God, where 'down a green plain leaping laughing they run' and 'rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind' (*The Chimney Sweeper* from *Songs of Innocence*).

The children in *Songs of Innocence* experience effortlessly a vision; they enjoy it against the attempt of rational adulthood to thwart it. In the same way Wordsworth, especially in *Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*, as well as Coleridge in *Christabel*,

employs such an image of the child as a polemic response to the excessive morality and rationality of the 18th century. Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge anticipate thus the concern of Victorian writers of Bildungsroman to consider the visionary experience of children as answers to adult methods of frustration and moral determinism. The Victorian Bildungsroman in general presents the image of the child as an archetype rendering the wholeness of human psyche, which is set up against the divisions of mind and feeling, excessive rationality and emotion, morality related to rationality and instinctive action. The latter aspect is conceived as plot determinants especially in *David Copperfield*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, where a systematizing father tries to frustrate the child's potential by excessive morality and rationality which divide action from instinct and mind from feeling.

'*The man of mist and fire*', as Swinburne called him, William Blake ranks today with the names of Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton, and holds a special place in the history of literature and that of painting. Like Wordsworth, Keats, Byron and other English romantic writers, Blake felt the significance of childhood experience, but unlike Wordsworth-participant with stronger psychological insights into the experience of childhood, for instance, Blake-contemplator pictures to the reader a number of aspects of the experience of childhood without suggesting focusing the reader's attention on the sharp psychological conflict in individual minds. What Blake's poem does is allow the reading audience to contemplate with him the facts in their emotional intensity, or the conflict between innocence and experience, and to share his complex attitude towards terror, sorrow, admiration or inquiry. He is also dealing with the psychological and moral problems of all humans, those that are inescapable in family life and in the contact of the mature mind with the infantile one.

These problems and their effects on human personality are the ultimate material of his symbolic *Prophetic Books* too, but in the short poems of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul* they receive a clearer statement.

2.3 William Wordsworth and His Concern with the Growing Human (Poetic) Mind

Though Wordsworth claimed that poetry's concern should be simple, rustic existence, his best literary production centers on the development and workings of his own mind, the complexity of his own personality, with pregnant autobiographical allusions, rendering the principles governing the formation of individuality—especially as in *The Prelude*—which is actually the major concern of later, Victorian Bildungsromane.

2.3.1 *The Prelude*

The poem, written between 1798 and 1805, representing the first major version that Wordsworth refused to publish, was continually revised during several decades, culminating in the 1850 version, published posthumously. It is viewed as a surviving fragment of imposing magnitude of a *magnum opus* that was to be *The Recluse*, which Wordsworth started planning in 1798, along with the first book, called *The Recluse* (1800), and *The Excursion* (composed between 1797 and 1814). *The Recluse*, ‘a philosophical poem containing views of Man, Nature and society (...) having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement’, and with admiration anticipated by Coleridge as ‘the great philosophical poem in existence’, was to employ Wordsworth’s energies for the next 17 years, but it was never completed.

The Prelude clearly expresses Wordsworth’s gift for, what Keats remarkably called in a letter dated October 27, 1818, the ‘egotistical sublime’, for it seems that Wordsworth constantly writes himself into it and his comprehension of the universe is purely subjective. The poem renders the growth of the poet’s own consciousness, and its subtitle clearly indicates this: *Growth of a Poet’s Mind. An Autobiographical Poem*. One can say that Wordsworth began modern poetry—the poetry of the growing inner self, for after him, the poets’ main subject was their own subjectivity.

Wordsworth himself, speaking of *The Prelude* on its completion in a letter of May 1, 1805, declared that it was ‘a thing unprecedented in literary history that a man should talk so much about himself. It is not self-conceit that has induced me to do this, but real humility. I began the work because I was unprepared to treat any more arduous subject, and diffident of my own powers.’ The introduction to Book I probes the diffidence in some detail, the ambition to produce a great epic, the fear of confusing the grand and the grandiose, and the too easy rationalizing of inactivity; also the object of the poem is soon made explicit: ‘to fix the wavering balance of my mind’ by reviewing the whole past, its defeats and merits, disappointments and moments of exaltation. By the end of Book XII in the earliest version, Wordsworth had achieved, partly in the actual process of writing, the ‘healthy’ imagination of his maturity and was ready to begin his epic. That is at the time he could hardly have suspected that *The Prelude* was actually already that major work, not merely a preliminary exercise but itself the deed accomplished.

The poem follows the main events of the poet’s life: Book First and Second describe his childhood and school-time, and the next books successively trace his residence at Cambridge, a Summer Vacation, the return to Cambridge and his Alpine tour, his residence in London, his stay in

France and his experience of the French Revolution, the disillusionment and final restoration.

The poem is thus a highly personal work, an extended confession or apologia, and as such indeed ‘*a thing unprecedented*’ in English poetry. But like every autobiographer, Wordsworth deliberately selected his materials, rejected what he had no need or wish to use, and laid particular stress on the themes of most importance to him or to the self-portrait he chose to paint. For example, when preparing a convincing record of his political sentiments in France, he passed over in silence his French love affair with Annette Vallon—the one who regards this relationship as crucial in the poet’s development, or later repression and sublimation, may find *The Prelude* gravely weakened by a studied hypocrisy.

But this aspect should not alter the essential appeal of the poem, for the work has its own integrity and speaks to the reader in its own aesthetic terms: its chronicle of character formation seems neither false nor evasive, its argument is coherent and self-sustaining, and one can enjoy reading it when possessing the knowledge of some facts not revealed here. Yet the final estimate of *The Prelude*, like that of the autobiographical novels that were to follow (including the Victorian Bildungsroman), is revealed by the author’s capacity to make his development seem representative as well as idiosyncratic.

That is the ‘*egotistical sublime*’, or the consciousness of being different and possessing a special sensibility and dedication, renders the assumption that the lyrical I may speak for all humanity and that a painful account of the growth of his own mind will necessarily reveal much of what is characteristic to the mind of man.

In *The Prelude*, Wordsworth is answering to John Locke’s theories expressed in *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) which reject the doctrine of inborn ideas or knowledge, maintaining that the source of knowledge is experience; Locke’s concern is also about the origin and extent of man’s knowledge; he also examines the nature and limits of knowledge, and the working of the human mind and the association of ideas (Locke’s conceptions are no longer valid in the modern philosophical context, but at the time they were highly influential).

The evolution of the mind has three main stages, says Locke and Wordsworth closely follows this idea throughout his poetry. The first of the three ages of man is infancy (childhood), a time of absolute sensation, and he tells the reader that his life began to the sound of the river Derwent:

*Was it for this
That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice*

*That flowed along my dreams? For this, didst thou,
O Derwent! winding among grassy holms
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts
To more than infant softness, giving me
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves.*
(**The Prelude**, 1850, Book I, ll. 269-81)

Wordsworth recalls his years of childhood and schooling as very happy—he enjoyed perfect liberty and a paradisiacal surrounding where he could roam at will and which had a definite formative influence on his upholding mind:

*Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear,*

but the whole framework of the poem reveals a more subtle progress, a search for lost time, a journey to seek a remembered world (which eventually turned out to belong to imagination), and the poet can only find it again by returning to a perception which was also creation, to a way of thinking which was a way of recognition.

Wordsworth began the tracing of the ‘*growth of a poet’s mind*’ with recollections of early childhood on the assumption, psychologically acute, that the child was the father of man, that is to say the defined attributes of the child’s character would somehow build a bridge over the troubled currents of adolescence to a more stable maturity. Memory serves as the principal agent of integration, for a past emotion intensely remembered serves a present purpose:

*So feeling comes in aid
Of feeling, and diversity of strength
Attends us, if but once we have been strong.*
(**The Prelude**, 1805, Book XI, ll. 326-328)

The deepest strength sparks, like an epiphany, from sudden insight, ‘*spots of time*’ (that is to say, some vital impressions offered by the objective world in the process of growth) scattered throughout the whole of existence, most frequently from the self-unconscious childhood: these are moments when the soul, being far from an immediate selfish concern, catches a brief intimation with some ultimate pattern or the natural world.

The second stage in the evolution of the human mind is youth, a time when the wonder and fear of childhood begin to weaken, as the sensation is pondered and translated into simple ideas. Hence the possibility to enter

with a fuller understanding into the experience familiar to him from childhood, in which sense merges with spirit: '*Bodily eye and spiritual need*' seem now to have become '*one great faculty*', and the self-consciousness increases.

But this is also the stage of passionate intuition rather than of intellectual response, even if the vital impressions that become the '*spots of time*' and which provide shocks to the moral being of the young man, especially the disillusion and despair attendant upon the collapse of the liberal cause in revolutionary France, are to be understood intellectually, as the logical consequence of responses to events in time. The memory of such impressions and perceptions is the '*natural piety*' that links the poet's days to each other, the child to the youth and the youth to the mature man. Following this interpretation, the '*spots of time*' acquire a religious significance; each is a true epiphany, a warranty of the soul's belonging to a larger life; each seems almost '*a leading from above, a something given*', sent by a special act of grace '*from some far region*'. The epiphany, or revelation, though involuntary (as in James Joyce), comes to the prepared sensibility of an artist, for the poem traces the '*growth of a poet's mind*', and the harmony that it establishes is no less aesthetic than religious.

The final stage, maturity, in which '*the mind is lord and power*', represents a synthesis of the process leading from sensation to feeling and from feeling to thought, and then creating a union of all these faculties in God. The simplicity of infantile responses grew to have a moral and religious dimension that is an essential part of the function of nature in his poetry. The means of communication between God and man is nature in her sensuous forms, and Wordsworth's term for the spirit, which speaks through, is Presence (the word emphasizes the vitality of his conception of '*living Nature*' and suggests the immediacy with which he can apprehend forms as symbols). The importance of the natural forms rises also from their contribution to making up a man's soul:

*Ye Presences of Nature in the sky
And on the earth! Ye Visions of the hills!
And Souls of lonely places! can I think
A vulgar hope was yours when ye employed
Such ministry, when ye, through many a year
Haunting me thus among my boyish sports,
On caves and trees, upon the woods and hills,
Impressed, upon all forms, the characters
Of danger or desire; and thus did make
The surface of the universal earth,
With triumph and delight, with hope and fear,
Work like a sea?*

(*The Prelude*, 1850, Book I, ll. 464-75)

The lyrical I turns to nature to find his own image—‘*what he has, what lacks / His rest and his perfection*’. But maturity is also the stage when the poet knows that he is now wholly apart from nature, his mind having risen above the objects it contemplates, for the individual mind ‘*(...) keeps her own / Inviolable retirement, subject there / To Conscience only, and the law supreme / Of that Intelligence which governs all*’.

Portraying the reciprocal influence of nature itself and the mind as a part of the nature it perceives, Wordsworth also welcomes an overflow of descriptions of rural scenes. In this respect, one may mention that he and other romantic poets were able to believe that an important part of valuable human experience was lost in the sophisticated urban civilization, that is why the life of villages and farms as Wordsworth presented it sustained the exploration of real possibilities in human experience and gave an effective means of defining human value.

The growth of the mind is governed by another of Locke’s theories, according to which the human psyche is built up of sensations (that is why Wordsworth stresses in his work on the lasting importance of infantile experience, as it is almost entirely characterized by pure sensation), from what a man gets from the outside, the greatest part of human mental life consisting of reflections on personal ideas. No two succeeding sensations from the same object can be the same, because the later sensation reaches a mind already modified by the earlier sensation. Wordsworth’s poetry attempts to explore the interchange between the external and internal world, between mind and nature, the perpetual reciprocal modification of mind and sensation (notice that Wordsworth actually portrays the mind itself as part of the nature it perceives, and this connection, sensed through what he calls Joy, gives up confidence in the reality of ourselves and the external world).

The growth of the mind is governed by another concept that Wordsworth borrowed from Locke, that of ‘associationism’, only that with Wordsworth (as well as Coleridge) associations take place ‘*not through the ideas or manifest content of an experience, but through the affective tone, which can then be communicated to experiences with quite different manifest contents*’. According to Wordsworth, this affective tone is ‘*a feeling of infinity which connects the individual mind with the Great Mind and cannot be entirely accounted for by the present, or even recollected experience*’:

*Thence did I drink the visionary power;
And deem not profitless those fleeting moods
Of shadowy exultation: not for this,
That they are kindred to our purer mind
And intellectual life; but that the soul,
Remembering how she felt, but what she felt
Remembering not, retains an obscure sense*

*Of possible sublimity, whereto
With growing faculties she doth aspire,
With faculties still growing, feeling still
That whatsoever point they gain, they yet
Have something to pursue.*

(The Prelude, 1850, Book II, ll. 311-22)

The instrument of associative as well as transforming power is memory, and recollection and recognition are actually the key words in understanding Wordsworth's philosophy. In a passage from *The Prelude*, for instance, he expresses his delight to move backward down through the corridors of memory, from forms through sensations to the recovery of a vision of light at the point where conscious memory fades out, with the still open question about whether Wordsworth believed that his comprehension of spirit came from outside or from inside, whether he was a Lockean empiricist or a Platonic believer in innate ideas (it seems that at his best, he uses a blend of the two doctrines in order to evoke the mystery of life, vitality, organic connection):

*Meanwhile, my hope has been, that I might fetch
Invigorating thoughts from former years;
Might fix the wavering balance of my mind,
And haply meet reproaches too, whose power
May spur me on, in manhood now mature
To honourable toil. Yet should these hopes
Prove vain, and thus should neither I be taught
To understand myself, nor thou to know
With better knowledge how the heart was framed
Of him thou lovest; need I dread from thee
Harsh judgements, if the song be loth to quit
Those recollected hours that have the charm
Of visionary things, those lovely forms
And sweet sensations that throw back our life,
And almost make remotest infancy
A visible scene, on which the sun is shining?*

(The Prelude, 1850, Book I, ll. 619-34)

The Prelude also touches upon the concept of imagination, to which Wordsworth constantly refers as a power, explicitly defining it and giving it the name of 'imagination' only in Book VI, when he recounts an instance of disappointment with the natural world (crossing the Alps with his friend and having 'hopes that pointed to the clouds', they were told by a peasant they met that they had to return to their starting point and follow a stream down instead of further climbing—an incident recorded in the poem):

*Imagination—here the Power so called
 Through sad incompetence of human speech,
 That awful Power rose from the mind's abyss
 Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps,
 At once, some lonely traveller. I was lost;
 Halted without an effort to break through;
 But to my conscious soul I now can say--
 'I recognise thy glory': in such strength
 Of usurpation, when the light of sense
 Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed
 The invisible world, doth greatness make abode,
 There harbours; whether we be young or old,
 Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
 Is with infinitude, and only there;
 With hope it is, hope that can never die,
 Effort, and expectation, and desire,
 And something evermore about to be.*
 (*The Prelude*, 1850, Book I, ll. 592-608)

It seems that at the very moment of composition, which was some 15 years later after crossing the Alps, the poet was suddenly overpowered by a feeling of glory (see James Joyce's 'epiphany') to which he gave expression in the above rapturous lines and which confirmed his final admission that the imagination, although usurping '*the light of sense*', is that human faculty which sustains the soul morally with the hope of its immortality and feeds the mind with '*perfect thoughts*' (the poetic creative act).

Thus imagination, as a power, redeems the blindness to the external world, which is the tragic and necessary condition of a mature man (poet), but also constitutes a measure of independence from the immediate external world, which a human mind gets in its process of growth and development. Imagination closes the gap between man and nature, when the estrangement between them, at the time when man reaches the stage of maturity, has occurred (Wordsworth would also prove that man's soul and nature have the same divine origin, hence the idea that imagination allows the divine current to run unhindered through the triad Man - Nature - God).

2.3.2 *Tintern Abbey*

The same concern with nature, memory, imagination, the experience of childhood and the development of the human (poetical) mind in general is revealed in *Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey* (1798), which can be regarded as a shorter version of the longer *The Prelude* and as a materialization in poetic practice of Wordsworth's theoretical conception on the origins and nature of the creative act of poetry.

Again, Wordsworth displays the three stages in the evolution of man's life and touches on the problem of childhood, as the first stage in the evolution of a man captured by the '*beauteous forms*' of nature, characterized by pure sensation and where man has no consciousness of being apart from it, but here he refers only parenthetically to infancy as

*(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)*
(*Tintern Abbey*, 1798, ll. 73-4)

The poet cannot state how he was then; his verse is first of all intuition that comes from a feeling of unity experienced in early childhood.

Wordsworth the child is always to be taken as a part of Wordsworth the mature man since he views life as an unbroken continuity of human experience of which the second stage is '*thoughtless youth*'. Nature stimulates passionate wishes and instinctive sympathies in youth, for a young man sees it as feeling, and the relationship between them still has a vivid importance:

*These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye;
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure.*
(*Tintern Abbey*, 1798, ll. 23-32)

By the time the stage of maturity comes man loses the invisible ties with nature at the cost of accumulating more and more experience, emerging into '*many wonderings*' about the mysteries and depths of real life. In the poem appears a violent desire to restore the relationship with natural objects, but the problem is that man has not only lost these ties, he also realizes how difficult it would be to restore them—real life-experience, '*the dreary intercourse of daily life*' stands in-between.

The relationship with nature is restored in the poem only by looking into the past, that is childhood, and the gap between mature man and nature is filled by the workings of the poetic imagination.

Thus in the stage of maturity, a tragic and most complicated one, which is that of thought and where the lyrical I makes the distinction between pure sensation, feeling and thought (knowledge), man is conscious of being distinct from nature, which brings fear to his spirit (the use of his

sister in this poetic experience is a way of showing how the poet himself felt five years ago, when he was in the stage of youth—which is strange, for she was only one year and a half younger than he—and he prays God and nature for her not to feel the same disappointment when becoming conscious of the separation from nature), yet, even if

*That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur, other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue.*

(Tintern Abbey, 1798, ll. 83-93)

Here the love of nature led to love of man, where nature was the guide of all his ‘*moral being*’ (Wordsworth speaks of nature in terms of human being and religious faith, identifying it with a holy spirit).

The enthusiastic romantic affirmation of nature, which cannot be more than stated, nor can the objects of it be more than described, represents a kind of organic dialogue, a quintessential specimen of romantic symbolism which unites the concrete and the universal, a ‘cosmic unity’ of Man, God and Nature.

Romantic poets, especially Wordsworth—‘*a worshipper of Nature*’—having passed the most impressionable years of childhood and early youth among the mountains and lakes of England, could draw from their own reminiscences of wild nature (when being children they roamed the hills and moors, amused themselves with rowing and angling, when there was nothing but light breath-taking and sense-impressions) some important, strong and much valuable ideas about man and nature, sometimes approaching nature and the countryside as mere romantic sentimentalists, presenting their philosophy of nature in a mature form, revealing in their verse what is called pantheism, or to say primitively the idealism of nature, looking at nature as something eternal and holy, where nothing disappears completely, but changes. Nature as the object of the poet’s perception and as ‘presence’ reveals a special influence upon man’s state of mind, which is described as:

*for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts,*

(*Tintern Abbey*, 1798, ll. 125-8),

and which confirms the unity of man's mind and nature, showing their indivisibility at the early stage of one's life, thus forming the basis of existence for one who, matured and gaining experience, will face 'evil tongues', 'rash judgments', 'the sneers of selfish men', 'greetings where no kindness is', or the 'dreary intercourse of daily life'.

Thus Wordsworth's philosophy of the maturation of the human mind is closely linked to man's attitude towards nature. In the poem the lyrical I comes to visit the same place after five years (when he was a young man of 23, but now he is matured by his life experience), to behold and once again to experience that moment, to contemplate the scene which is now familiar to the poet, the contemplation of the landscape being important for his further meditation and expression of his idea in verse form (poetry). In order to meditate, to enjoy and to pour out his feelings the poet is looking for tranquility, which again, as contemplation, can be provided only by nature, thus creating a special kind of poetic mood. Also, which is very important, the poet is a mature man now, governed by the workings of his mind: it helps to perceive the knowledge offered by nature, but mind is first of all memory, recollection of past experiences, and it seems that the idea of 'remembered memory' clearly stands in front of all the ideas detected in *Tintern Abbey*. Five years ago the poet was a young man, he experienced a huge range of feelings which are now recollected due to the mature abilities of his mind—it seems that this aspect clearly reveals in poetic practice Wordsworth's own ideas on the nature of the creative act: 'I have said that Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind and in whatever degree, from various causes is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will upon the whole be in a state of enjoyment' (*Preface to Lyrical Ballads*, 1802).

Moreover, in *Tintern Abbey* Wordsworth points at the way memory operates upon a man's sensations: 'The picture of the mind revives again' means that the lyrical I views the present landscape through his mental picture of the landscape as it was five years earlier. In other words, a man associates a present perception with all previous perceptions that he experienced not only from the outside, but also from the inside, the idea being that a human possesses experience, rather than sensation. The lyrical I becomes conscious of the pattern of his life by linking together his

apparently disparate days (in other words, by discovering continuity in the disparate pictures through the principle of growth). The sense that he will acknowledge his remembrance in the future, just as he did in the period of the intervening past five years, is indeed a part of the experience. The human soul and/or mind is a spiritual storehouse of memory, filled with the 'rememberable things' that '*the earth / And common face of Nature spoke to me*', a fountain where from the poet drinks his '*visionary power*'. The lyrical I develops his sense of identity along with the process of the growth of his mind, as he identifies himself more and more with the places which reveal the existence of some significant experiences. *Topos*, by Wordsworth, because it represents the repository of memory, becomes a spatial projection of the psyche; *Cronos*, which implies the process of growth and development of human personality, becomes a continual travel back to the beginning and an eternal reassessment of man's life.

2.3.3 *Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*

In the famous *Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* (1803-6), Wordsworth exploits further the concern with the experience of childhood, which takes new and interesting perspectives, the poet himself confessing that '*this poem rests entirely upon two recollections of childhood: one that of a splendor in the objects of sense which is passed away; and the other an indisposition to bend to the law of death, as applying to our particular case.*'

The poem opens with the expression of the poet's acute sense of having forever lost the visionary capacity which children have been noted to have—'*The things which I have seen I now can see no more.*' It seems that the vividness of the poet's ordinary perception is still strong (notice the use of the present tense in the description in the second stanza), but he is entirely aware of the fact '*That there hath past away a glory from the earth*', and a further description of the natural objects of his senses prompts the obsessive question, or rather rhetorically a kind of *ubi sunt* formula:

*Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?*
(IV)

One answer to this question is rendered by the poetic use of the Platonic notion of pre-existence:

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,*

*And cometh from afar:
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home:
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.*

(V)

These truths are denied to man at birth, and he tries, in his desperate attempt to recapture them, to resist change and turn back with nostalgia to the stage of childhood that he is leaving. The child is pathetically called 'best Philosopher', 'Eye among the blind'; he alone can read 'the eternal deep, / Haunted for ever by the eternal mind'. He is also a 'mighty Prophet' of the soul's infinity—the sense of that infinity may be lost, but through the vision and image of the child it can be recaptured:

*Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A Presence which is not to be put by;
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!*

(VIII)

The poem thus also reveals the idea that the process of growing up has its equivalent in man's sense of mortality, for his first day after birth is the first step towards death. Hence another answer given to the above

question (apparently a counterpoint to the mentioned Platonic idea and a rather primitive one)—the acceptance of growth, for man's progress to death means fulfillment and development, by choosing what is difficult, painful and necessary. It seems that Wordsworth achieved a subtle blend of these two apparently contradictory doctrines by stressing on the healing virtues of memory, described as

*Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!*

(IX)

Also through memory:

*(...) in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.*

(IX)

It seems that, if the problem between the two doctrines exploited by Wordsworth is whether a man gains or loses spirituality by living, he suggests that men grow spiritually by conferring spirituality upon the world.

To follow Carl Jung's conception of child as archetype, the human state of infancy is unconscious and represents the pre-conscious essence of man; maturity provides an anticipation of life after death, also unconscious but representing his post-conscious essence—this idea, Jung points out, expresses the spiritual and intellectual wholeness of man (1969: 178).

However, in Wordsworth's poem, the sense of earlier 'glory' (in childhood) leads to a sense of future glory not necessarily in an afterlife but in certain moments of the evolution of personality and, as mentioned above, in certain states of mind, especially of pain and frustration.

I believe that this aspect constitutes one of the most important elements of romantic impulse in Victorian Bildungsroman within the general assertion of childhood's importance in the development of a mature personality, for it anticipates the concluding moments of self revelations (epiphany) which could eventually determine the formation of character.

As in *Tintern Abbey* and *The Prelude*, the frustrations of a mature mind regarding the loss of vision and of the spiritual link with nature are compensated here by the power of the '*philosophic mind*' (mature, reflective mind) to connect man to nature on another, more superior level, that of the communion with '*the human heart by which we live*' (the entire mankind), and, Wordsworth concludes, stressing the idea that maturity offers rewards no less precious than childhood and youth:

*Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.*

(XI)

As it is, Wordsworth's vision of the child renders its image as a symbol, or rather an archetype that presupposes the psychic completeness of man, a cyclical temporal movement from birth to the anticipation of a new life after death.

In this respect, it seems that Wordsworth rejects in a way—that is, perhaps, a subconscious drive—the conception of John Locke stating that experience is the only and ultimate source of knowledge and personal development.

Similarly, Victorian writers of Bildungsroman found in their fictional representation of the experience of childhood a possibility to realize their own wholeness through a temporal reality covering childhood, youth and early maturity, and through conceiving as a whole reason and emotion, mind and feeling, rational speculation and instinct, moral determinism over action and instinctive action.

As in Wordsworth, the Victorian protagonists, entering upon maturity and upon the final stages of their formation, attempt to revive the image of childhood, their vision of the child being one infinite potential to reevaluate and recapture the infinity of the inward and to realize themselves as a whole. In most of the cases, this aspect becomes the primary factor for the formation of their personalities.

In the Victorian Bildungsroman the process of evolution and development that leads or should lead to the formation of character is rendered through the principle of chronotope, whose spatial and temporal components reveal a complexity of narrative perspectives.

It seems, however, that in the poetic discourse of Wordsworth, as well as of other romantic authors, the spatial reality is conceived primarily as a factor (say, nature and countryside) that mirrors special states of the poetic mind and determines a congenial medium for their expression in the poetic discourse. Similarly, I consider the temporal component as consisting only of two 'spots of time': the present and the past, the latter viewed from the position of the present and made in the form of its detailed analysis.

Among the great variety of means how to get into one's past that different authors have, there is one through hearing a sound of a singing bird, whose song reminds them of childhood, as in *To the Cuckoo*:

*The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to, that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways,
In bush, and tree, and sky.*

The bird's song equated with the insights of childhood is viewed as denominator of the whole human life, but at the same time the song remains to be '*but an invisible thing, a voice, a mystery*', the human mind, behavior, reactions are '*mystery*' too: '*What though art we know not / What is most like thee?*' (Shelley, *To a Skylark*).

Perhaps the most imaginative and the most idealistic of all English romantic poets, Shelley has his own unique way of pursuing the stages of human life and the inevitability of the cycle of human existence, though emphasizing them as the necessary condition of the artist and his life experience:

*There was a Poet whose untimely tomb
No human hands with pious reverence reared,
But the charmed eddies of autumnal winds
Built over his mouldering bones a pyramid
Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilderness:—
A lovely youth,—no mourning maiden decked
With weeping flowers, or votive cypress wreath,
The lone couch of his everlasting sleep:—
Gentle, and brave, and generous,—no Lorna bard
Breathed over his dark fate one melodious sigh:
He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude.*
(*Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*, 1815, ll. 50-60)

In *Ode to the West wind* Shelley follows Wordsworth's ideas about the ability of a child to be part of nature ('*If even / I were as in my boyhood, and could be // The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven*'), and, like Wordsworth, Shelley apprehends the separateness of the mature man and nature with an acute sense of despair, hence his last rhetorical question

suggesting either a hopeful exaltation or a painful acceptance of the inevitable:

(...) *O, Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?*

2.4 John Keats' Insights of Infantile Experience in *Letters* and Poetic Practice

John Keats is another English romantic poet, who also gave prolonged and serious attention to each stage of imagination, to childhood, youth, maturity, and the relations between them, thus contributing to the romantic impulse in Victorian Bildungsroman.

In the Preface to *Endymion* he described the work as a product of immaturity and inexperience, 'a feverish attempt rather than a deed accomplished', yet the long-drawn, tortuous poem, which by allegory depicts the awakening of the sympathetic imagination, marked, the poet being conscious of that, a necessary phase in his growth as an artist.

Like Endymion, who at length finds the ideal enclosed in human and earthly love, or like Wordsworth, who reveals the acceptance of growth as man's means for fulfillment and development, Keats too would eventually achieve a calm and steadying acceptance of life's frustrating perspectives.

Meanwhile, this is how he explained in April 1818 his bewilderment and troubled sense of confusion:

The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of man is healthy; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted (...)

A month later, in the famous letter to his friend John Hamilton Reynolds, dated May 3, 1818, Keats developed the metaphor of a many-chambered mansion, to account for his own present state of mind and the general malaise of youth:

(...) I compare human life to a large Mansion of Many Apartments, two of which I can only describe, the doors of the rest being as yet shut upon me—The first we step into we call the infant or thoughtless Chamber, in which we remain as long as we do not think—We remain there a long while, and notwithstanding the doors of the second Chamber remain wide open, showing a bright appearance, we care not to hasten to it; but are at length imperceptibly impelled by the awakening of the thinking principle—within us—we no sooner get into the second Chamber, which I shall call the Chamber of Maiden-Thought, than we become intoxicated with the light and the atmosphere, we see nothing but

pleasant wonders, and think of delaying there for ever in delight: However among the effects this breathing is father of is that tremendous one of sharpening one's vision into the heart and nature of Man—of convincing ones nerves that the World is full of Misery and Heartbreak, Pain, Sickness and oppression—whereby This Chamber of Maiden Thought becomes gradually darken'd and at the same time on all sides of it many doors are set open—but all dark—all leading to dark passages—We see not the balance of good and evil. We are in a Mist—We are now in that state—We feel the 'burden of the Mystery', To this point was Wordsworth come, as far as I can conceive when he wrote 'Tintern Abbey' and it seems to me that his Genius is explorative of those dark Passages. Now if we live, and go on thinking, we too shall explore them.

It seems that Keats reveals in his letters the same concern with the experience of childhood, as in Blake, and its importance for the general progress of a man from boyhood to the stage of maturity, as in Wordsworth.

The child lingers in '*the infant or thoughtless Chamber*' as long as he remains content with simple sensations and impressions; all too soon, however, the assertion of the thinking principle drives him into the second room, where his new-found delight in ideas, in the joyous liberty of speculation, is shadowed by his perception of the world's misery and pain, an awareness which gradually darkens the bright chamber and at the same time opens new doors '*leading to dark passages*'; his perspectives all lost, the young man now can see no balance of good and evil, no real harmony or purpose in his life.

In his poetic practice Keats reveals the same concern, *The Human Seasons*, for example, representing in a concise form the philosophical approach towards human life and the transformational growth of the human mind: the four seasons of the year (spring, summer, autumn and winter) are childhood, youth, maturity and death, which show the unity of nature and man, taken as being similar not only in their outlook and external succession but also in their inner quality of circulating matter:

*He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's hoey'd and of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto Heaven: quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.*

Keats shows the inevitable obedience of the human mind to the forces that impel all things and objects, and '*mortal nature*' is a natural consequence of the development. The poem represents a short survey of the mind's general life and workings, though it would be of essential importance to speculate upon the first and the most significant stage, that is childhood.

Infancy is the time of contemplating beauty, which in his famous *Odes* is viewed as truth, and as a source of joy and happiness in *Endymion*—'*A thing of beauty is a joy for ever*'; it is the most important stage in the evolution of a human personality, a state of innocence whose principles give no possibility to man's mind to forget or deny them.

Keats' poetry and letters help illuminate this state, and his interest in what transpires in the '*Chamber of Maiden Thought*', in the transition from childhood to maturity, and the darker space between, anticipates the concern of a considerable number of Victorian and later writers of prose fiction—the creators of Bildungsroman (with necessary changes, of course, for in the Victorian novel the imagination of a child, for instance, seems not to be entirely 'healthy').

2.5 Hypostases of the Byronic Hero and the Byronic Hero in Development

Don Juan, especially, where Byron adopts 'ottava rima' as a new form for his new voice, presents the Byronic hero in development, that is a distinct aspect, or hypostasis, of what it is usually called the 'Byronic Hero'.

Yet one may notice that there is a number of certain characteristic features of the Byronic hero in general which may suggest a number of thematic elements of the Victorian Bildungsroman: to mention only the autobiographical substratum; the identification between the author, narrator and character; the dissatisfaction with the present state and an attempt to escape it in order to achieve spiritual fulfillment within other spheres of existence (either real or imaginary); and many others. In this respect, a brief presentation of the hypostases of the Byronic hero is needed, especially with regard to their literary contribution as a romantic impulse in Victorian Bildungsroman.

The Byronic hero and the hypostases of the Byronic hero represent actually the first thing that anyone would normally think of when critically approaching the literary activity of Byron.

The creation of the Byronic character is to be regarded as being directly connected to and dependent on the rise of the Romantic hero in general, which is another important aspect of this artistic movement. In their writings, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and especially Shelley have already anticipated the main features of this type of character.

Byron, in turn, creates a number of characters who become protagonists in a number of literary works, and whose vivid but distinct characteristics at once permit their labeling as hypostases of the same hero, and allow—due to some common features—their bringing together under the generic name of the Byronic hero.

The character Byron created is often not far removed from the poet, and, like the hero, the poet is the most antithetical of men: a handsome young person, he was born half-lame; of impressive aristocratic origin, he rejected and was rejected by his own class; a misfit and outcast in relation with any social environment, and a Solitary concerned with separating from humanity and seeking solitude, knowledge and worlds of escapism created or re-created by his own imaginative resources, he was actually unable to keep completely distanced from the temptations of everyday life; a rebel and radical by the English standards of his day, he was passive and skeptical regarding the benefits of either reform or revolution; an active revolutionary in Italy and Greece (Byron financed, trained and led the Greeks in their rebellion against the Turks, being regarded the martyr-hero of the Greek Revolution), he despised modern Greeks for their loss of ancient greatness; romantically ironic and critical towards the social environment and the human condition as ‘herd’, his criticism is actually closer in spirit to what constitutes the neoclassical tradition and doctrine of the 18th century neoclassicists like Johnson and Pope (in his poetry, however, Byron is closer to the sentimentalism, the Ossianic legends, the poetry of the Graveyard School, the Gothic tales, the revival of the old popular ballads, in other words, those elements of the 18th century which oppose neoclassicism); apparently a radical in connection with religion and a reformer of Christianity, he secretly sympathized with Catholicism; acclaimed as a libertine and a great lover, he was actually passive towards women and became early disgusted with erotic experience.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is the first version of the general literary pattern of the kind of protagonist Byron created and of what later came to be the characteristic Byronic hero. The first two Cantos were first published in 1812 and the hero's pilgrimage covers much of the ground of Byron's recent tour in southern Europe (the Iberian Peninsula and East Albania and Greece), which lasted two years and provided the material for the work (Byron's journals contain descriptions of the beautiful nature and his personal responses to it, as well as meditations on human existence, history, destiny and decay of the former great nations, and the call of the poet to the now degenerate people to arise and recover their lost greatness of the ancient glorious past—all being elements contained and artistically rendered in the poem).

The publication of these first Cantos made Byron famous overnight, the public identifying the poet with the hero. Modern criticism still holds

strong the opinion that the character is the projection of the author, which Byron himself denied, but certain aspects show that they have indeed a lot in common. Childe Harold ('Childe' is an archaic title of courtesy once given to a nobleman's eldest son, and also a reference to the ballad tradition), like Byron, is an aristocrat by birth and in spirit, sensitive, libertine, highly imaginative, intelligent and generous-minded, but also disillusioned, lonely and unloved, rejecting the human community.

In point of technique, the omniscient narrator intrudes in the narrative progression in order to provide poetic unity to the fragmentariness of the narrative (a modern device, anticipating, among others, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's verse Bildungsroman), to the ambiguity of tone and of the narrative distance between author and hero, and to the ever changing frame of the work, which sometimes is arbitrary and sometimes even episodic.

However, the confusion and ambiguity of the poem's movement seem to serve the method: the voice of the poet alternates with that of the character and it is sometimes difficult to separate one from the other; the events and incidents from the hero's experience are mingled with events from the poet's own experience and with events from the historical past, but almost always with a powerful lyric tension.

In comparison with the first two Cantos, Canto III reveals a greater intensity of feeling and a deeper understanding of existence while recalling local historical events and contemplating human and natural life. The tone of the poem is rendered by the poet's own exploitation and manipulation of his moods, often egocentric and egotistical, and becomes more assured and steadier. Towards the end of Canto III it is clear that the speaking voice is Byron's, and the poem's progress is now more direct and flexible, and this aspect is again revealed through the process of character presentation.

Harold has become the type conceived of as the Byronic hero: a real outcast from his social class, proud but lonely, trying to assume the position of an observant, detached and keeping aloof from other people.

However, his 'guarded coldness' cannot protect him from the vortex of life and its temptations of fame and ambition, when to exist means to chase time, yet this trip is different from his previous pilgrimages in so far as it offers him a more distant relationship with people, and provides him with a nobler goal:

*But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor seek
To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb?
Harold, once more within the vortex, roll'd
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,*

Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.
(Canto III, stanza XI)

Harold knows that he is '*the most unfit / Of men to herd with Man; with whom he held / Little in common*'; hence the search for some possible universes of escapism which will fit the desires and needs of his soul.

A possible escapism is provided by the process of traveling itself, for, moving from place to place, one seems not to belong to a certain spatial reality.

Another is given by the romantic attitude towards nature and its elements. The forms of nature are disclosed to the lonely spirit who lives a life in itself, without mankind, or rather the powerful unity of these forms. With romantic writers, nature has a language of its own, and only Harold understands it and finds it to be much more meaningful than that of his fellows:

*Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.*
(Canto III, stanza XIII)

Another form of refuge is presented in the next stanza, where '*Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars, / Till he had peopled them with beings bright*': Harold is here the artist, whose visionary capacity and power of imagination allows the freedom of the creative act to separate the hero from the rest of humanity, lifts him above the human condition ('*and earth, and earthborn jars, / And human frailties, were forgotten quite*'), like in Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*, for instance, and, like in Shelley:

*Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.*
(Canto III, stanza XIV)

Similarly, the hero of Victorian Bildungsroman will find in certain moments of imaginative flight certain moments of delightful refuge from the frustrating perspectives of existence.

In the case of Byron, the moment of internal and external crisis of the character (*'But in Man's dwellings he became a thing / Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome'*) provides a trial to overcome it and the only escape is to continue the pilgrimage:

*Self-exil'd Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of hope left, but with less of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 'twere wild—as on the plunder'd wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doom
With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck—,
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.*

(Canto III, stanza XVI)

Harold continues his pilgrimage with the same sort of skepticism and irony, for he was given the epiphanic realization and the knowledge of the absurdity of human condition (one may notice how often the word 'herd' is used in the poem when applied to the description of people), the consciousness of living in vain, that the values of life, knowledge and science do not account for his own desires, becoming a passive spectator and finally being excluded from the narrative (it seems that Byron understands the incompatibility of his own aspirations and those of the hero, the latter owing much to his passiveness and being unable to fulfill the poet's inner drives, hence the critics' claim that Harold has become a caricature of Byron and the final separation between the author and his character, even if Byron gives another explanation in the Preface to Canto IV).

Canto IV was written in 1817 and first published in 1818. Byron uses his travels in Italy as poetic material without resorting to the fictional hero, Harold. In his Preface to Canto IV Byron states that it

*was in vain that I asserted, and imagined I had drawn, a distinction
between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this
difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed
my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it
altogether—and have done so.*

Indeed, the voice now is that of Byron only, and there is no more confusion between them, for the author has completely dropped the device of the pilgrim, turning, instead, to the expression of his own views as meditations on art, time, history (for example the meditations on Venice, which are sparked off by his own contemplation of the present state of the city, along with the nostalgic evocation of its glorious past, as well as the

meditations on Petrarch, Boccaccio, Florence, Rome and their great men). The work ends with the evocation of loneliness and refuge in nature, the final image being dominated by the eternal symbol of the sea, which unmistakably links Byron to the other romantic writers.

The *Oriental Tales*⁶ were written as a result of the success of the first two Cantos of *Childe Harold*, and were inspired by Byron's own travels and experiences in that mysterious and practically unknown to the English eastern lands (Greece, Turkey, Albania), but whose exoticism both attracted and fascinated him.

Usually an aristocratic youth of impressive beauty, the protagonist of these tales is more than Harold a born rebel, at odds with human existence, seeking independence from this material world. His nature embodies both the demonic and the angelic, but the prevalence of the former creates a sinful and corrupt creature, suffering from a sickly pride. His inadaptability is active, making him to be detached from the common moral norms, building his own superior consciousness, but his sense of superiority and his extraordinary imaginative capacity and power of will bring only misfortune and solitude, while the human aspect in him creates impediments to the aspirations of his soul, making him mix up good and evil, right and wrong, thus leading to a moral ambiguity and spiritual arbitrariness.

Another humanizing aspect of his personality is usually his love for an angelic woman, or just her memory, or sometimes the power of his passion causes the death of this innocent being (like the Giaour, for instance), leading to a feeling of remorse and awareness of his sin which create pathetic atmospheres. In this respect, the mixture of love and alienation, displayed as heroism and passion in exotic settings, leads inevitably to dramatic endings.

The *Oriental Tales* often represent the Byronic hero with his satanic component, because the character's very presence is at once the agency of death and destruction, for the force of his passion and later suffering exceeds the normal human proportion. Though the story may be told from a number of different perspectives (the hero's, that of a witness, or finally that of the author himself who often comments on the already complicated intrigue of the narrative), it is normally ambiguous, the reader being kept in permanent suspense and a sense of mystery resembling the Gothic tales.

Manfred represents a further development of the Byronic hero, the author adding to this hypostasis new dimension of a superman, halfway between gods and mortals. Like other protagonists created by Byron,

⁶ They consist of a series of verse tales rendering other versions of the Byronic hero, perhaps even a more spectacular development of the same kind of protagonist, confronted with Byron himself, as is to be found in *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos* (1813), *Lara* and *The Corsair* (1814), *The Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina* (1816). Though sometimes loose and negligent structurally, these tales are based more or less on a single pattern, a common structure centered on the creation of the character's image which is formed by a mixture of contradictions applied to his nature and the reactions he produces.

Manfred is an outcast from society, a proud soul, skeptical, inadaptably, seeking solitude, and with an immense capacity for suffering. He is actually completely separated from humanity, living in estrangement from ordinary people, alone in a castle in the Alps.

But he is more than that, for his alienation, his negation of the whole existence, the intensity of his mental frustration, coming from the sickly sense of despair, make him different from other hypostases of the Byronic hero in that his inadaptability is a passive one, and, resisting the spirits and the Abbot with an extreme lucidity, he becomes a sort of passive rebel who struggles with his own ambiguous nature which, being equally of the godlike and the mortal, reveals that abnormality which characterizes the Romantic hero in general.

Byron describes Manfred as '*half-dust, half-deity*', making him the romantic prototype of the exceptional individual, possessing an unusual sensitivity and impressive intellectual capacity. The romantic attributes of the work are also to be found in the character's alliance to the sense of universal melancholy, the feeling of inevitable grief and suffering.

As with other romantic heroes, Manfred is caught between the world of spirits, a superior form of existence, for whom he is no more than 'a mortal' (though he expresses an offending pride and refuses to kneel before Arimanes), and the real world of men, among whom he feels alone as the lion, refusing to mingle '*with a herd, though to be a leader*'. Manfred is often regarded as a Faustian figure, but certain characteristics of the work and the hero point to a repudiation of the Faust story. Faust is at the beginning an ordinary mortal who, applying to the powers of the supernatural, will obtain the supreme knowledge and escape the old age, which leads predictably to death, by maintaining his youth (the final stage will thus consist of becoming a superman).

Manfred, however, is shown from the very beginning a mystic, superhuman character, wholly dissatisfied with the knowledge, science and philosophy he has acquired, and, being tortured by the memory of a never clearly named guilt/sin (possibly an incestuous love as the cause of the death of his sister Astarte), all Manfred thirsts for is self-oblivion, forgetfulness and death (that is to say, some common human attributes). He unsuccessfully attempts to find oblivion in madness, imagination and knowledge; overcoming the fear of death, he attempts suicide, but is saved by a solitary hunter; summons the spirits of the universe, but they offer him everything except forgetfulness; applies to the powers of the Witch of Atlas, but she denies him his request. Making use of his own mystic, supernatural powers, Manfred enters the Hall of Arimanes, Master of all Spirits, who raises his sister from the dead: her phantom appears only to announce to him that he is to die the following day.

Manfred's end represents also a negation of the Faust story in that the hero dies in complete solitude, rejecting the Abbot (who tries to convert his spirit to orthodox piety and help him redeem his lost soul by prayer) and the Spirit's claim upon him, both disputing his soul. However, like in the Faust story, one may notice the collision of the supernatural forces, the desire of the hero to escape his condition, his destructive nature that causes the death of an innocent being, and the absence of God's grace upon a soul which seems irremediably lost.

Cain also constitutes a further development of the Byronic hero, the author adding the titanic dimension to the demonism of Lucifer, making him the characteristic romantic rebel. The same stratagem is applied in the treatment of the title-hero, whose active version of the inadaptability, like Lucifer's, makes him a rebel as well, both of them illustrating the Byronic hero in the last stage of his development.

The element of revolt introduced in the presentation of characters is deeply rooted in Byron's own personality, who, interpreting the *Bible*, will emphasize the revolt and rebellion following the realization that the human condition is absurd, presenting and interpreting it, but who eventually will understand the proper limits of rebellion, as Cain finally feels sincere remorse for his rebellious murder (not *hubris*, that is excessive pride, ambition and arrogance, leading to a final ruin of the character), and consciously praises the value of love, which seems to be the only sure basic human faculty in the world of irrational conflict and loss of equilibrium.

At the beginning, Cain is the only revolted and unhappy human living outside the walls of Eden. It seems that he is also the only member of Adam's family who is given the knowledge of the tragic consequences of his parents' original sin. His rebellion, if compared to that of Harold, for instance, who is passive in expounding his disgust regarding human condition ('*I don't like what I see*', without taking any measures of changing the situation), is active, finally materialized in killing Abel in the anger at and revolt against God's thirst for blood, and, what is most important, has an intellectual basis ('*why I don't like what I see and how I can change it?*'). Moreover, is the search for knowledge a sin, which must be so cruelly punished? Why have I to atone for a sin that is not mine? By choosing the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge instead of that of the Tree of Life, Adam and Eve condemned the rest of humanity to death. Hence the idea of the incompatibility of the short life and the absolute nature of knowledge, the essence of this dilemma being fully realized by Cain, who refuses to pray to God, and whose doubts are strengthened, becoming a conviction, by the arrival of Lucifer. Cain believes that knowledge without eternal life is the source of unhappiness, and he is eager to know what death is.

Lucifer takes Cain, a Faust-like figure in search of knowledge, on a trip through the ethereal spaces (a cosmic flight interpreted as a dream of an

inhibited person), where he is presented the past and the future worlds. The goal of his search is to '*learn to anticipate*' his immortality, that is the knowledge of death, for death itself '*leads to the highest knowledge, / And being of all things the sole thing certain, / At least leads to the surest science*', but he cannot be taken further than the '*Gate of Death*'.

However, as the result of his dream, Cain gets rid of his fear of death (because he has not known it yet), the given subjective knowledge raises his self esteem, and he becomes everything he wanted to be: a proud and indifferent person, capable of asserting his personality by killing his brother. The murderous act seems to be a result of the character's own confusion between the dream/vision and reality (two different planes governed by different laws), because to him the dream is reality, or rather the continuation of the former into the real world, and he is not able to distinguish between these two levels. The confusion is later indicated by his bewilderment at seeing his dead brother: '*Death is like a sleep?*' or '*Is silence death?*'. By exorcising his fear of death and murdering Abel in rebellion against God, Cain chooses knowledge without love, which is only death.

Love means togetherness and is the source of happiness (different from Adam's love of God, which consists of worship and fear of divinity). The loss of Paradise resulted in gaining the inner hell and the unhappiness of the character, but finally Cain is happy because in his wanderings he is together with his wife and children. Being together with those whom he loves, is the supreme source of happiness, and this is actually the poem's greatest thematic reversal. '*Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise? / Can we not make another?*', asks Adah, Cain's sister and wife, who possesses the firm instinct that one should choose love, reaffirming the essence of love as the most basic human value, and foreseeing the possibility of building a new Eden. Answering Lucifer's question: '*And thou couldst not / Alone, thou say'st, be happy?*', she says: '*Alone! Oh, my God, / Who could be happy and alone or good? / To me, my solitude seems sin*'.

The problem of happiness/unhappiness is underlined in the poem also in connection with the second main character, Lucifer. In this respect, he is unhappy because he remains alone. His condition is similar to that of God: the latter is not happier, because he is also alone. '*He is great, but in his greatness / He is alone*', says Lucifer about God, but loneliness means unhappiness for both of them. Lucifer is the opponent of God, characterized as an '*Omnipotent tyrant*' who '*makes but to destroy*', both representing the two mysterious principles ruling the world, two antitheses necessary to each other in the universal dialectical essence. Lucifer is also a Faust-like figure, at the level of divinity, acquiring his power, independence and courage to defy God through the knowledge he has managed to gain: '*And I, who know all things, fear nothing, / This is true knowledge*'. Adah feels a strange

attraction towards Lucifer, this '*immortal thing*', giving her a '*pleasing fear*'.

Milton, earlier, in *Paradise Lost*, had already interpreted and revised the Biblical material by reconsidering the status of the Biblical Satan, turning him into a myth of revolt and rebellion, energy and self-reliance. Similarly, Byron presents his character as a symbol of revolt, a romantic solitary hero, an active rebel, and a symbol of the intellectual power:

*a shape like to the angels
Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect
Of spiritual essence,*

Both Lucifer and Cain are rebels against God, both are proud and indifferent, but their arrogance is a sin that extends the dramatic tone, giving them the status of two remarkable tragic heroes (to notice that Cain is impartial in his relation to Lucifer, worshipping neither God nor Lucifer).

The major themes of Byron's work are theologically subversive, even more dangerous than atheism, for the author does not question the existence of God, but he dares judge God, doubting, through the character of Cain, his justice and questioning his goodness. However, both Lucifer and Cain are used by the author and Cain are used by the author, so close to the romantic spirit of self-assertion, and to render Byron's own protest against the existence of evil in a world created by God.

In order to achieve his aim, Byron undertakes a process of cultural transfer, almost unique in world literature, applying the huge range of literary possibilities, provided by the *Bible*, to his own literary activity.

The *Bible*, though consisting of a number of specific literary values and forms of its own, offers to the diachronical development of the literary phenomenon a complexity of literary motives and images, events and themes, ideas and characters, themselves established as distinct hypostases of a well-defined cultural medium, but which were extended, in the process of cultural transfer, over other cultural media, belonging to and becoming important elements of other artistic trends and ages, transfiguring these artistic traditions, but, in turn, being themselves transfigured, changed, remodeled both by the medium and the artistic power of the artist (writer) himself.

Byron, as I have attempted to show, like other representatives of the English Romantic Movement, is capable of achieving his own cultural transfer by concentrating on Biblical material, but transforming it according to the inner laws of his own artistic enterprise, and changing its meanings by changing the relationships between its components.

It seems that the four possible modes of reading and understanding the *Bible*, which are highly interrelated (the first level of reading represents

the adventure story; the second level reveals the mythical aspect of the book; the third level helps to perceive the immensity and existence of the universals within the shortness and relativity of human existence; the last level of reading provides the idea of God, and is linked to Christian faith and the re-discovery of the image of divinity in the human condition), find their natural applicability to Byron's work, especially the first two: one emphasizing the idea of the *Bible* belonging to the literary domain and being one of the most important products of world literature, and the other regarding the *Bible* as a depository of certain fundamental, primordial myths, events and prototypes.

Is it in this respect, when every literary work represents the re-writing of other previous books, that the *Bible* is one of the main sources of all literary products, offering or suggesting a number of themes, ideas, motives, principles, prototypes, archetypes, which are to be found later within the general, diachronically developed literary phenomenon, and in a number of writings belonging to different authors, as well as literary trends, traditions and epochs?

My next interest is in Byron's *Don Juan*, a work which, like the writings of Blake, Wordsworth and Keats discussed in this study, but in a quite different way, also anticipates the Victorian autobiographical novel of character formation, for it also follows a young man in his progress from boyhood to the threshold of poised maturity.

A sort of comic counterpart to the solemn *The Prelude*, for example, Byron's masterpiece is, though in some respects iconoclastic in attitude and reductive of all ideals, more conventional and less 'unprecedented' than Wordsworth's: its 'form looks back to the sprawling epic medleys of the Italian Renaissance. The conduct of its narrative derives in part from the picaresque tradition. The satiric technique owes not a little to the examples of Dryden, Pope, and Swift. The unheroic hero is the ingenu like Gulliver or Candide, eventually sophisticated by his travels through a corrupt society' (Buckley 1974: 7).

In spite of that, the poem is a new and original work, highly personal and subjective, and to a degree even autobiographical. In this respect, Buckley's interpretation is most clarifying: 'Byron himself appears in the poem, from the beginning, as [omniscient] narrator, the controlling voice, humorous, sardonic, sentimental on occasion, confiding and concealing, learned, infinitely digressive, altogether inexhaustible' (ibid.: 7-8).

But Juan of course is not Byron, and he shouldn't be, for, to follow Bakhtin's assumptions, the best piece of literature is the one in which the voices of Byron the man, Byron the creator and Byron the character are entirely separated and have distinct features, while in a non-important work these three aspects coincide. Yet Juan's mother seems to be drawn from Byron's wife, his early reading seems more remembered than invented, and

the local color of the Greek and Turkish Cantos may be traced to his tour of 1810. Apart from these biographical considerations relating Byron to Juan and his adventures, and *'though Juan is certainly no poet, the narrator, self-depicted, gives us a portrait of the artist concerned with politics and war and women but also with art itself, the logic of burlesque, the morality of satire, the relation of truth to poetry, and the inadequacy of the critics who have misconstrued his intention. This Byron, or Byronic persona, finds an irony of detachment rather than a natural piety as the surest perspective in which to view his hero, his younger self, and the world he has intimately known. By the last cantos Juan has begun to approximate the maturity of the narrator; he is becoming the ironic eye turned upon the follies of an English aristocracy'* (ibid.: 8).

The narrative/prose poem has an open ending, and it seems that it ends before moving in a new direction. The final appeal of the work is that Byron in another age, Victorian perhaps, might have been a master of prose fiction, an analyst of the English society comparable to Dickens or Thackeray. Among other representatives of the English Romantic Movement, Byron expressed the major romantic attitude of the *mal du siècle*, that is a painful consciousness of living in a world of constraints and universal suffering, consciously assuming it, but, compared to the others, who were rejected or isolated by the rest of their generation, Byron's personality was earlier and better understood, and his work, which exceeded any other notoriety or influence of any other romantic writer not only in England but on the whole continent, was to be identified in Europe with the essence of romantic literary tradition.

Due to a special concern with the process of character formation from boyhood to maturity, as well as the special insights into human psychology and its relations to the social environment, Byron's work anticipates, and in some respects influences, a number of later Victorian literary concerns, especially those which will be recognized as rendering the thematic and narrative pattern of Bildungsroman.

2.6 Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* as the Novel of a Young Man's Education

As a more immediate influence of the English Romantic Movement on the development of the Bildungsroman in 19th century English fiction, many critics expect it to be Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), which has been relatively recently described as *'not a romantic novel at all but an ironic novel of a young man's education'* (Johnson 1970: I: 524). *Waverley*, Scott's first novel, is also often regarded as the first historical novel ever written and the tradition of the historical novel owes its supreme literary relevance to the work of Walter Scott, who, if he did not invent the

‘historical fiction’, certainly established it as a genre. Besides establishing the form of the historical novel, some critics argue (for instance V. S. Pritchett), he also established the form of the short story (with *The Two Drovers* and *The Highland Widow*).

Sir Walter Scott, along with Robert Burns, turned the Scottish literature of the epoch to English and ensured to it a definite place within the general British literary phenomenon. The former, especially, displaying a deep interest in folklore and history (mainly Medieval), a strong sense of Scottish history and nationhood, and a peculiar attitude to the past and the present, which derives from a unique Scottish experience, took the English literary production triumphantly into the 19th century.

Scott, as mentioned above, established the form, the literary pattern, even the convention or the literary tradition of the historical novel⁷, a novel set in a period before the birth of the author, but with a real and serious attempt on the part of the writer at accuracy and credibility. The term implies a literary discourse and a literary process of creation in which history is fictionalized, this kind of writing often containing both fictional and historical events and/or people. In *Ivanhoe*, for instance, the first novel in which Scott adopted a purely English subject, besides a huge range of imaginary/fictional characters and events, the author described the days of Richard I, real historical battles, other real historical persons, which formed the basis of the story: Ivanhoe, the disinherited Saxon hero in a Norman world, and also a fictional protagonist, participates in actual events and moves among actual characters.

This is actually the classic formula for the historical novel, as expressed by Scott in his many prefaces and introductions to his own novels, which points to an age when two cultures are in conflict, and into this cultural conflict fictional characters and events are introduced. Scott himself followed this formula, while others attempted to depart from it, having forgotten the necessity to develop a serious view of history before a serious historical novel could develop. One tendency was the ‘costume romance’, in which history is merely a background for adventurous or sexual exploits; the other represented the ‘novel of character’, in which the setting and the age were secondary to the representation of the characters (as in Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, for example).

Scott established a convention of fiction writing which included a historical event that made a change in the course of affairs, historical or non-historical characters and a local situation which fitted the general pattern, verisimilitude in matters of language, costume, place and historical events. Verisimilitude (Tzvetan Todorov’s *vraisemblable*) is loosely synonymous

⁷ In England the form of the historical novel developed largely from La Fayette’s *Princesse de Cleves* (1678) through the Gothic novel to M. Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* (1800) and J. Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), culminating in Scott’s *Waverley*, which established the form.

with realism, but, while the latter emerged in the Victorian cultural background as a means of rendering fidelity to actuality in its representation, implying a synchronical representation of the contemporary to its practitioners everyday life, verisimilitude, diachronically, can concentrate on other spatial and temporal realities, as in Walter Scott's historical novel, for instance. Verisimilitude becomes the concentrated expression of the relation between the literary text and the social, cultural and literary intertext; in this respect, to remember Paul Valéry's affirmation, every work is the work of many things besides the author, and the novel becomes a process of integration, usually unconscious, of some alien discourses.

Also, in the tradition of the historical novel, the thematic organization is based on the conflict between two opposed types, the conflict which is applicable to a more or less the same fictional pattern (design): pursuit, abduction, escape, and then, time and again, another trap and escape. The positive characters triumph over the evil ones in the end, but this optimistic mood, coming from the sentimentalist novel of manners, is seriously disturbed by a note of romantic sadness, a definite touch of nostalgia. This sense of ruin, as well as the tendency to turn away from reality, includes Scott's novels into the formula of romance, and the general tradition of the romantic writings. Scott also emphasizes in his novels the action as the unifying structural principle that determines the collision between good and mean characters, and the unity of the narrative process.

As a historical novel, *Waverley* looks back over a century, assessing the story of Edward Waverley who fights for the Jacobite forces in 1745. As a Bildungsroman in its incipient form, *Waverley* focuses on an idealistic character who departs from his family and develops to self-knowledge and the knowledge of the world through adventures and experiences of love ordeal, military career, accusation of fomenting mutiny, possibility to redeem himself in battle, and so on.

Scott begins his narrative with a brief family history and with an autobiographical account of his hero's early readings, he presents no special psychological insights into Edward's experience of childhood or any clear artistic impression of the growing boy—it seems that Scott '*is concerned merely to show a danger which he feared he himself might not wholly have escaped*', argues Buckley (1974: 8).

Later the autobiographical component vanishes, the novel revealing no authorial effort to develop significantly the theme of initiation, development or formation of Edward's personality. Buckley again: '*His growth is little more than the vacillation his name suggests, and his maturity brings him a possible respite from bemused indecision but no real perspicacity or depth of insight*' (ibid.: 9). The narrative continues with young Captain Waverley's setting off to join his regiment, and henceforth his mental and moral development and evolution are far less important to us

than the places he visits, the men and women he meets, and the historical events he finds himself taking part in. Yet these elements, as well as the hero himself, though scarcely an engaging character (he is naïve, low-spirited and driven only by circumstances and action; and, although like a romantic character he seeks to impose his mental ideas on the real world, his idealism does not provide the circumstances for its fulfillment), make the novel memorable and the author a successful writer.

As it is, Walter Scott, among other English romantic writers discussed in this study, revealed a willingness to explore the less conscious aspects of feeling and thought which was accompanied by a more serious concern with the experience and insights of childhood and that of a human developmental process than many previous periods would have thought reasonable.

Sir Walter Scott's influence as a novelist was incalculable; he was widely read and imitated throughout the 19th century, not only by historical novelists, but also by writers who treated rural themes, contemporary provincial life, regional speech and moors. He was highly acclaimed abroad, for instance in America, where J. F. Cooper, taking over the convention from Scott's historical romance, and its narrative technique, was called an 'American Scott' (only partly justifiable). However, Scott's reputation gradually declined (perhaps due to the critics objecting to his stylized elaboration of the dialogues, to their crowded, improbable plots, to his flat, one-dimensional characters, and his inability to portray heroines otherwise than sentimental) until there was a revival of interest from some European critics in the 1930s who interpreted his novels in terms of historicism.

Scott's historical novels reconstruct history and re-create it imaginatively; they build a bridge between the contemporary world and the historical past, between the fragments of actuality and the fragments of existence in the previous centuries, fragments that form the essence of a civilization.

3. THE VICTORIAN BILDUNGSROMAN AND THE RHETORIC OF FICTION

3.1 Rhetoric, Narratology, Structuralism, and Their Applicability to Fiction Analysis

The rhetoric of Victorian fiction will eventually disclose the possible system of the narrative organization of literary discourses belonging to writers of the Victorian age, particularly to those of Victorian Bildungsromane. I believe that in this respect a brief presentation of rhetoric, narratology, structuralist approach, and their interrelationships would be appropriate (the theoretical background), as well as the rendering of the condition of prose during Victorian times and the presentation of the realistic elements in the novels of this age, and, finally, a possible narrative approach to Victorian fiction, with special regards to the tradition of the Bildungsroman in general, its narrative perspectives, its typical narrative pattern, and a number of major characteristic features.

3.1.1 Rhetoric and Its Interrelationships with Narratology

Traditionally, rhetoric is regarded as a corpus of principles embodied as the art of discourse structuring combined with a theory about the discourse. Its system, although its essence changed diachronically from Antiquity through the Middle Ages and Renaissance, generally represents a concern with language, style and structure of the discourse in their connection with communication and argumentation. From the 'creation of persuasion', for Aristotle, Cicero and others, that is the domain of philosophy, it became *ars* or *scientia bene dicendi*, for Quintilian for instance, that is closer to the literary domain. Later, during the Middle Ages, as *ars ornandi*, the final literarization of rhetoric was produced (the art of distributing the ornamentation in a literary discourse, which constitutes a major principle of discourse structure), this phenomenon being comprehensively described by Vasile Florescu (1973). Because of the modernity of its system and the principles formulated, rhetoric is widely applied nowadays to different spheres of human activity and thought: marketing, advertising, political and religious propaganda, linguistics, literary theory, narratology, and so on.

The story, novel, fiction, a literary or non-literary text in general represent the continuity of a communicative situation that does not lack the argumentative principle. To approach rhetorically a text of fiction is to analyze it as a discourse meant to be communicated to the reader, the latter being involved in a universe of meanings and conceptions built by the writer who, through argumentation, will sustain (or impose, as it happened perhaps

in the Victorian novel) his point of view. In this respect, rhetoric becomes the theory (rather than art) of communication with the reader and the way the writer builds his discourse to be communicated. However, this simplest way of rendering the link between rhetoric and narratology as the analysis of the narrative structure characteristic to a work of fiction is based on the well-known principles that constitute the scheme of every act of communication, for instance the famous one proposed by Roman Jakobson in the study *Linguistique et poétique* (1963), which points to the existence of the formula Sender - Message, Context, Contact, Code - Receiver. In this respect, the Sender, as the author of imaginative literature, creates a Message (literary discourse) that traverses a code, and addresses the Receiver (reader) who understands the message.

My main interest is in the rhetoric applied to fiction analysis, or to the discourse of narration (narratology), following the ideas of W. C. Booth ([1961] 1976) about the rhetorical dimension of literary texts and of fiction in particular, operating with such concepts as discourse, communication, persuasion, argumentation, sender/receiver, delivery of message, organization of the material into sound structural form, style and language, text and context, and others. Such concepts supply the theoretical background of both disciplines, rhetoric and narratology, hence their interrelationship and a possible juncture when approaching the narration in literature (of course the concern of my study is chiefly with the analysis of narrative/narration in Victorian fiction, hence the appropriateness of using concepts and terms belonging to the domain of narratology).

3.1.2 Narratology, Structuralism, and Their Importance in Approaching the Novel

The notion of ‘narratology’ was put forward by Tzvetan Todorov ([1969] 1975) to argue for the necessity of a theory of narration that could be applied to various fields it could belong to (myths, films, imaginative literature, folk literary productions), calling it ‘*a science that does not exist yet*’, ‘*the science of story*’⁸. Now it is widely regarded as the ‘*theory, discourse or critique of narrative/narration*’ (Cuddon 1992: 570).

The antecedents of such an approach are found in Antiquity, where Plato (*Republic*, III) and Aristotle (*Poetics*, Chapters 5, 24, 26) generally render the existence of the opposition between dramatic poetry and narrative poetry, or the dramatic mode (*mimesis*) and the narrative mode (*diegesis*), these modes belonging to and representing means of telling a story, or *lexis* for Plato, as opposed to *logos*, representing everything that is to be told. The difference between the two scholars is that Plato distinguishes three modes of poetic discourse: *mimesis* (the drama, that is the construction of the

⁸ My translation from Romanian.

dramatic representation within stage conditions), pure *diegesis* or narrative form (represented by the dithyramb, a Greek choric hymn describing the adventures of Dionysius), and the mixed mode (the epic, where the author tells the story in his own name, that is the pure narrative form of the story, combined with the imitative principle of drama, that is the direct rendering of events by the poet who assumes the role of the character and speaking in his name (Homer's dialogues, for example), while Aristotle hypothesizes about the existence of only two, ignoring the pure form. Yet, both of them have a common point in showing the opposition between the dramatic (more imitative) and narrative mode of a literary discourse as story.

The later rise and consolidation of novel and fiction writing didn't reveal any serious attempt at approaching the narrative issues, and it was not until the second half of the 19th century that the ancient distinction took new and interesting perspectives. In the Anglo-Saxon world, it was Henry James, in a series of Prefaces (1883) to his novels, and especially P. Lubbock (*The Craft of Fiction*, 1921) who, influenced by James, made the distinction between two different modes of events representation in novels, or 'points of view': the 'dramatic' viewpoint, reminiscent of the classical *mimesis*, that of 'showing', characterized by the absence of the author, the discourse and its events being directly presented to the reader, and the second, called 'panoramic', following the ancient *diegesis*, that of 'telling', where an omniscient author controls the events and mediates their comprehension by the reader. The first technique concentrates on the importance of the discourse as text and its relation to the receiver, as for Lubbock for instance, while the second revives the importance of the author, as for E. M. Forster and W. C. Booth. Later, distinctions will be made between narrator and author, while the mode, or point of view, will be opposed to 'voice'.

A further contribution to the development of theoretical studies on narration was provided by French scholars, in the 1960s, especially by Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov and Gerard Genette, whose conceptions originated in the Russian Formalism and were prefigured by the rise of linguistic studies at the beginning of the century and, later, structuralism and its theoretical contributions. From then on, even if they proposed to define a unique model of structural analysis of the story, based on linguistics' deductive method, aimed at building a unique pattern for the multiplicity of discourses/stories having narration as their main principle, they supplied a multiplicity of often contradictory approaches, terms, principles and opinions, which may threaten one's attempt to define, as in my case, the essence of fiction belonging to a certain historical period and cultural background (synchronically).

Firstly, Barthes, for instance, stresses on the importance of approaching functions, actions and narration (or the manner in which the story is told), and proposes the multiplicity of story forms (myth, painting,

drama, dialogue, etc.) as the object of study, while Todorov emphasizes the programmatic concern with story as history and story as discourse, and concentrates on the literary, verbal story. Secondly, given the fact that narratology is the study of story, or narration as history (T. Todorov), the latter being crucial and indispensable for the existence of the former and generally implying the temporal succession of events, each resulting from the previous one, opinions regarding the concepts of story and history have been raised: T. Todorov sees history as a sufficient factor for the existence of the story, in which case narratology approaches the universe rendered by the discourse, or the content of the story; others stress on the story as narrative discourse (G. Genette), the story as verbal (use of language) representation of history, that is the study of the text and/or the form of the story.

Yet, though they are all different, distinct, and often contradictory, one may notice some common features across all approaches, chiefly because of the (relative) unity of concerns and the object of study that make narratology a distinct theoretical discipline. In my case, however, narratology, either concerned with the content of the discourse or with the discourse as text, will attempt to describe the literary relations which mark the existence of narration in fiction, or novel—an aspect that can offer the possibility of turning from highly general to more particular issues. Thus, the novel should be regarded as a narrative discourse containing a story that can be analyzed as a mode of history (events, actions) representation. The narrative (narration or story) consists of events that are narrated, and the discourse becomes the factor that narrates them. The distinction between narrated events and the narrating discourse made possible a series of formulations that marked the inner structure of the narrative in literature. Russian Formalism made the distinction between *fabula* (the sequence of events, or history, as they apparently happened in the story) and *syuzhet* (narrative ordering of the plot, or story itself), while one of its major representatives, Vladimir Propp ([1928] 1970), pointed out the existence of seven ‘spheres of action’ and thirty-one ‘functions’ or elements of the narrative; the functions are structured in a logical sequence and are the basic units of the narrative ‘language’ and refer to the actions constituting the narration.

One may also point out that Russian Formalism prefigured the structuralist analysis of the narrative belonging to Claude Levi-Strauss (*Anthropologie Structurale*, 1958), who provided an interesting theory about myth, advancing the idea of the unity of myth structures due to the recurrence of some certain universal and constant themes, some relations underneath the surface of their narrative, or the existence of basic individual units, called ‘mythemes’. Bearing in mind the Russian Formalism’s distinction between *fabula* and *syuzhet*, A. J. Greimas (*Semantique*

structurale, 1966) proposes instead of 'sphere of action' the term *actant*, a structural unit that makes possible the semantic approach to sentence structure. He distinguishes six actants, or roles, which are not types of narrative or characters, placed in binary oppositions and corresponding to three basic patterns of the narrative: (1) subject/object corresponding to desire or search, (2) sender/receiver of communication, and (3) helper/opponent of auxiliary support or obstacle.

Yet the most accessible and famous theory is Genette's, who, in *Narrative Discourse* (1972), distinguishes between *histoire/recit/narration*, terms which follow the distinction between narrated events and the narrating discourse, and which correspond, respectively, to the sequence in which events occur/the chronological order of events in the narrative/the act of narrating or producing the discourse. He then discusses various categories of narrative analysis: time, mode and voice, the first two being linked to the relation of the story to history, and the last corresponding to the relations narration - story and narration - history. Also, each of these three categories consists of a number of subdivisions, such as order, duration and frequency for time; distance and perspective for mode; time of narration, narrative levels and narrative persona, or narrator, for voice. Genette's approach is thus rather relational, regarding the narrative as a product of the interaction of its various levels and of all aspects of the narrative as dependent units. The problem of time, for instance, which concentrates on the distinction between the time of history and the time of story, will approach the relations between the order of the narrated events and the order of their presentation (narration), the relations between the duration of narrated events and the duration of the story they belong to, and the relations between the frequency (number) of the event occurrences and the number of its narrations within the story. On the other hand, the problem of voice is linked to the relations between author, narrator and characters. In this respect, Genette provides an interesting approach to the narrator (the one who tells the story or narrates, but distinct from the author), the kind of voice he uses, the relationship of narrator to narratee (the one to whom the narrator addresses the discourse, but distinct from the reader), and the position of the narrator in relation to his story (the viewpoint, or the outlook from which the events are related or perceived). The narrator, in Genette's opinion, is of three kinds: the 'heterodiegetic' (absent from his own narrative), the 'homodiegetic' (the narrator is inside the narrative, the story being told in the first-person), and the 'autodiegetic' (the narrator is inside the narrative and the main character).

However, the complexity of this theoretical background of the structuralist approach presents some clear weaknesses regarding the lack of rigor in the grammars to which structures are supposed to be analogous, in other words, *'there is often a marked arbitrariness in the choice of an object*

of study—a set of texts for example—as well as in the definition of units, the rules of combination, and the selection of significant features’ (Cook 1995: 146), to which I can add the failure to combine theory with practice (or the reality, as in my case, of fiction in its literary productions), making possible the existence of some difficult, often ‘monstrous’ conceptions about narrative situations which do not even exist, or the description of some phenomena which lack stable forms or equivalents in reality.

Hence the necessity to follow a number of other, besides structuralism and linguistics, modern disciplines and modern trends in criticism and literary theory—say, formalism, the theory of Bakhtin, psychoanalysis, Marxism, feminism, reader-response, narratology, post-structuralism, hermeneutics, deconstruction, phenomenology, stylistics, and so on—in order to select those conceptions and principles which are most applicable to the approach of the reality of narration, in other words, which are applicable to the analysis of the Victorian Bildungsroman as novel, literary work and narrative discourse. Even the Artificial Intelligence and its schema theory, claiming that a new experience is understood by comparison with a stereotypical version of a similar experience held in memory, may be helpful. The schema theory explains omission and inclusion in terms of events essential to the plot, for they may provide new meanings and interpretations even if not mentioned (for instance what happens to Heathcliff after leaving Wuthering Heights and returning later to revenge).

Hence the importance of focusing on some particular literary texts, as well as the use of appropriate conceptions and points of concern (from those briefly stated above) according to specific features of the texts chosen. In this respect, Victorian fiction as Bildungsroman can be better approached by concentrating on its narrative structure, the narrative strategies applied and expressed by Victorian novelists, narrative point of view, narrative time vs. narrated time, or the narrative distance concerning the relation between author and narrator, narrator and literary discourse (narration), narrator and character, the relation between characters, narration and reader, narrator - character - reader (relations which are defined by the principles of ethics, intellect, religion, space and time—Bakhtin’s chronotope), and other issues belonging to the domain of narratology and making the unity of approach possible.

3.2 The Condition of Victorian Fiction

According to the ideas stated briefly above, the approach to Victorian fiction may take new, interesting perspectives, and I believe that a brief review of the condition of the novel in this period is necessary for and explanatory of the essence of my both theoretical and practical attempts to describe it.

The Victorian Age is a complex, often paradoxical phenomenon, lacking any precise, definite terms or attempts at labeling. In literature, for instance, it is quite wrong to call this age generically the period of realism, as it usually happened in Marxist criticism, given the continuation and persistence of the romantic mode of writing throughout the entire 19th century, the later rise and consolidation of Aestheticism, Symbolism, and other artistic trends: it is often claimed that the realistic period in English literature manifested between 1870 – 1914. For the sake of keeping the unity of concern, this epoch is named the Victorian Age, the term Victorian literally describing things and events during the reign of Queen Victoria, like the Elizabethan Age. Also, like Elizabethan England, Victorian England was a second English Renaissance: it saw great expansion of wealth, power, and culture, and, in point of literary form, the Victorian novel paralleled Elizabethan drama in terms of both popularity and literary achievement.

Queen Victoria (1819—1901) reigned from 1837 until January 1901: she was probably the greatest queen after Elizabeth and gave the name to an epoch that appeared to mark the apogee of national and imperial glory, to improve standards of morality, an age of stability, peace, imperial expansion and increasing prosperity. However, the Victorian standards, beliefs, and social and personal values—hard work, moral strength, religious orthodoxy, sexual reserve, family virtues, confidence in personal and historical development—have often been challenged by criticism for the epoch's unquestioned acceptance of authority and orthodoxy, its great amount of hypocrisy, conscious rectitude, deficient sense of humor, and a self-indulgence engendered by the increase of wealth.

The Victorian Age was not unified, as one may think, given Victoria's reign that lasted so long that it comprised several periods. Above all, it was an age of paradox and power: the Catholicism of the Oxford Movement, the Evangelical movement, the spread of the Broad Church, and the rise of Utilitarianism, socialism, Darwinism, Freudism, and scientific Agnosticism, were all in their own ways characteristically Victorian; as were the prophetic writings of Carlyle and Ruskin, the criticism of Arnold, and the empirical prose of Darwin and Huxley; as were the fantasy of George MacDonald and the realism of William Thackeray and George Eliot. More than anything else, what makes this age Victorian is its immense sense of social responsibility (remarkably expressed in the novels of George Eliot, for instance), a basic attitude that obviously differentiates it from the romantic attitude, its immediate artistic predecessor.

However, the Victorian Age is generally one of dynamic change and assiduous activity, fermentation of ideas and recurrent social unrest, great inventiveness and expansion. In this period, England was caught in a whirl of social, economic, and religious changes. Like all major periods of transition, this one did not come easily: the first part of the Victorian Age

(1832 – 1848) was one of tumult, where a rapid industrial expansion and the laissez-faire economic system allowed for the justification of horrible working conditions, especially for children, together with high tariffs on grain, which caused food shortages. It also caused the early 1840s' depression, but, by the middle of the Victorian period, the situation changed to some extent: tariff and labor reforms helped to bring back general economic prosperity and contentment. The second half of the 19th century is also to be regarded in relation to the revolutions of 1848 on the Continent; Chartism and its failure; the development of science applied to practical purposes: telephone, telegraph, photography, the steam engine, electricity; the great discoveries in natural sciences.

However, controversy was not dead; it had merely shifted from social and economic conditions to religion. In this respect, the Utilitarians, reflecting on what they considered to be the basic human needs, decided that a society that listened to the voice of reason had no need for religion. The Utilitarian views distressed the religious conservatives, who argued that the Victorian Age, with its excesses and social problems, was in dire need of the stability and comfort offered by traditional Christianity. In religion, thus, the Victorians experienced a great age of doubt, the first to call into question institutional Christianity on such a large scale.

In science and technology, the Victorians invented the modern idea of invention, in other words, the notion that one can create solutions to problems, that man can create new means of bettering himself and his environment.

In ideology, politics, and society, the Victorians brought astonishing innovation and change: democracy, feminism, unionization of workers, socialism, Marxism, and other modern movements took form. In fact, this age of Newton's mechanics, Darwin's evolution, Comte's view of society, Marx's view of history, Taine's view of literature, Freud's view of human psyche appears to be not only the first that experienced modern problems but also the first that attempted modern solutions, in other words, the age can be taken to express the rise of the modern.

In literature and the arts, the Victorians attempted to combine the romantic emphases upon self, emotion, and imagination with neoclassical ones upon the public role of art and a consequent responsibility of the artist. Modern artists who were trying to free themselves from the massive embrace of their predecessors often saw the Victorian writer chiefly as repressed, over-confident, and thoroughly philistine.

In this age of print, the novel stands as the dominant literary form of the Victorian age. It was created by the new profession of 'novelist', which now included women as well as men; it was printed quickly and inexpensively on the new steam-powered printing press and distributed efficiently over the kingdom on the new railway system; it was welcomed as

a source of moral and social instruction as well as of delight and entertainment by the newly expanded reading public.

For Victorians, the modern distinction between literary novel and popular bestseller had not yet come into existence. The novels of Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, and Thomas Hardy were read not merely by a literary elite, but widely throughout the expanding middle class and, particularly in the case of Dickens, by the working class as well. This wide readership was aided by new methods of presentation and distribution. Early in the century, Dickens pioneered publication in inexpensive separate numbers with *Pickwick Papers*, and the practice was followed throughout the century with, for example, William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. Then, novels usually appeared in three-volume editions, 'three-deckers', that readers borrowed from private lending libraries, of which the most famous was Mudie's. Eventually, the 'three-deckers' were made available in less expensive form, 'cheap editions' and 'railway editions', the equivalent of modern paperbacks, distributed through national chains of booksellers, as well as in more expensive collected editions.

However, the Victorian fiction is undoubtedly a complex, aesthetically valuable literary phenomenon, and, like the age itself, expresses its own paradoxical status: there is the same worship of independence and of individual self-assertion, the same overwhelming self-confidence, along with the same contradiction between morality and the system, the same belief in institutions, democracy, organized religion, philanthropy, sexual morality, the family and progress.

After the death of the romantic writers, a shift in the cultural background was produced; this manifested itself on the level of technique, style and artistic concern. Thus if the English Romantic Movement was a great period of poetry, in which writers presented a cultural and aesthetic vision on human existence and the world in verse form, the Victorian period was a great age of fiction in English literature, for indeed the prose was then the dominant literary form, and actually the majority of the readership was a prose-reader. The English novel in the 19th century originated as a literary discourse of the growing middle-class audience (still uneducated, uncultivated, not ready to receive or/and perceive the artistic message), and it became the logical reading-matter for this social level. The Victorian audience sought and found in contemporary novels instructions for living amid the complexity and change of the social background, instructions closely linked to a number of topics of special interest to them—family relationships and marital virtues, religion and morality, social change and reform, and many others. In turn, novelists made sense out of their enormous variety of experiences and choices, appealing to their audience with the semblance of the real world. The novel itself, unburdened by tradition, was

flexible—hence adaptable to the portrayal of the multitude of changing situations in Victorian life. To an era of existential uncertainties and frustrations, commercialism and chaotic industrialism, escapism, especially in poetry, has become a psychological necessity, and realism—especially in prose and as a kind of justification for the conscious reader as escapism—was the actual satisfier of his unconscious needs.

Furthermore, realism can be regarded as the ultimate product of middle-class art, and it finds its chief subjects and characters in its own life and manners, surface details and common actions, avoiding situations with tragic or mysterious implications, and applying a tone of humor, irony, often satire. Hence another essential characteristic feature of the Victorian novel—its concern, often obsession, with character: most characters are middle-class, hence most settings are middle-class, the typical preoccupations are middle-class, and the general tendency is an acceptance of middle-class ethics and mores. Thus it is for the middle-class character to achieve emotional perfection, and, when praiseworthy acts are performed by lower-class representatives, it is either accidental or curiously and strongly implied to be the result of middle-class conformity (also the patronizing notes reserved for lower-class personages made possible exotic grotesque postures, which probably increased the sense of security of the Victorian middle-class audience), while the upper-class protagonists were viewed with a mixture of envy and scorn.

In the Victorian novel the emphasis is also placed on social aspects, thus the shift from rendering the inner experience and exploring the psychological states of the character made possible new interesting approaches to the narrative discourses of Victorian writers, especially regarding the relationship author - character - reader. The character's personality is important for the Victorian author, although it often seems that the characters function within a highly organized and structured society.

3.2.1 Realism and Realistic Writings

Realism emerged in the Victorian cultural background as a means of rendering fidelity to actuality in its representation, thus defining a literary method and a particular range of subject matter, and being loosely synonymous with verisimilitude. Realism also implies a synchronical representation of the contemporary everyday life, while verisimilitude can concentrate on other spatial and temporal realities, as for instance in Walter Scott's historical novels.

The antitheses of realism are the fantastic, the unreal, the fanciful, the improbable, imaginative flights, invented dream worlds, and so on. Though it seems that fantasy is opposite to and even parasitic on realism, there cannot be realism without fantasy. In Victorian fiction the realistic mode, or

the world of physical materiality (the spiritual or philosophical ideas, according to this philosophic materialism, such as life, soul, self, are also reduced to matter), is often infused by a literary motive of the world of fairy that appears totally out of realistic style. Or, at least, realism precedes fantasy and provides its point of departure. In other words, fantasy is needed for the existence of realism, they remain joined, for, though realism requires and relies upon verifiable, accurate, physically existing things and objects, it necessarily employs and requires the description and/or representation of things. The works of literature function by means of language (symbolic forms which contain certain meanings in the statements about physical reality), and literature is not the thing but the statement about the thing, the nature of language that describes or represents something within the literary discourse must necessarily choose the aspects of the thing to be discussed in the created statements—hence the logical assumption about the abstract nature of language, for in the process of selection something must be left out. Combined with other aspects of the creative act, this process leads to originality and deviation, sometimes to fantasy itself—however, as a paradox which needs to be measured by the critics, realistic literature is not characterized by fidelity to actuality and physically existing things in their representation since it ideologically chooses and controls what is chosen as representative of the real.

Realism opposes idealism and nominalism, but asserting that only ideas are ‘real’, it seems idealistic; when ideas are only names, as in the case of nominalism, they confusingly may be regarded as realistic. It also opposes romanticism and naturalism, and where romantic writers transcend the immediate to find the ideal, and naturalists take the actual or superficial to find the scientific laws that control the actions, realists ‘*center their attention to a remarkable degree on the immediate, the here and now, the specific action, and the verifiable consequence*’ (Holman, Harmon 1992: 392). In other words and in this respect, they move towards a pragmatic theory of art, because, on the one hand they seek to find a relativistic truth associated with consequences and verifiable by experience, and on the other hand they are unusually interested in the effect of their work on the audience (this aspect is analyzed in the study on the narrator’s omniscient point of view). Realistic writers also tend to a mimetic theory of art, for the materials they select to describe (common, everyday, usual) are imitated, and they concentrate mainly on rendering the closest correspondence between the representation and the subject.

As will be suggested later in the study, Victorian fiction, as the embodiment of aspects of realism, follows the traditional patterns of novel writing, concerning itself mostly with ethical issues (French realism is more scientific, while Russian religious and mysterious), the necessity of selecting and presenting these issues being accurately implied. In this

respect, realism reifies, besides the exterior aspects of the environment and the characters easily recognizable in real life, the fidelity at the level of technique of the narrative discourses. Human existence and the existence of the environment, as perceived by realism, lack symmetry and the coherence required by a narrative discourse; fiction, truthfully reflecting existence or life as it is, must avoid symmetry and coherence. Then, in Dickens' case, for instance, the failure to provide any unity or symmetry to his literary discourse comes from his truthful representation of reality, rather than from his intellectual weakness, as I will attempt to argue in the present study, making him more realistic than, say, the Brontë sisters, whose fiction reveals the romantic impulse and continuity of the 19th century literary background. Yet all of them have a common point in praising the individual and valuing the characterization as the center of the novel, but, while Thackeray and Eliot render in their fiction socially representative types, the Brontë sisters stress on the inner existence of the protagonists and their spiritual universe, often concerning themselves with psychological issues and expressing special insights into human consciousness. In other words, Dickens, Thackeray and especially George Eliot are linked to the concept or principle of correspondence, which implies the fact that the external world can be understood by scientific research, documentation and definition, requiring a referential language and an objective point of view—these writers are considered realistic. Charlotte and Emily Brontë, otherwise, link their narratives to the principle of coherence, which suggests that the external world is knowable by insight and intuitive perception, requiring a subjective language and a subjective point of view—they are more romantic than realistic. However, given the mixture of realistic and romantic elements in the fiction of all these writers (except for Thackeray, perhaps, widely regarded as the proponent of realism and even as a subtle fighter against romantic literary tradition—in this respect, Amelia Sedley can be regarded as a parody of the Romantic hero), as well as the inter-penetration of languages and viewpoints, it is difficult to draw absolute divides.

One can just suggest that some novels are more realistic than others, only if he possesses the ability to apprehend the general characteristic features and understand at least the basis of this cultural phenomenon. As it has been said, realism is the picturing of life with fidelity, without the idealization of things, neither rendering them the way they are not, nor presenting something supernormal or transcendental. In the domain of literature, realism emerged as a recognizable and conscious movement in the 19th century, which began in France in the 1830s, becoming during the latter part of the century a definite trend in European literature. It emerged as an anti-romantic movement which concentrated on everyday events, the environment, the social and political realities, and even the hero had to be an ordinary man (an idea suggested by Champfleury in *Le Realisme*, 1857, the

work which actually became a manifesto of the new doctrine, even though the author himself disapproved of the term, and, as others, regarded the movement negatively or rejected it as undesirable). At the moment when Champfleury produced his essays, the movement was already very apparent in the novels of Stendhal and Balzac, and in the same year, 1857, Flaubert produced *Madame Bovary*, which was acclaimed as a great work of realism. Later, also due to developments in philosophical thought—notably by Auguste Comte’s *Cours de philosophie positive* (1830), which made possible the appearance of the science of sociology, and the conceptions and inquiries of Feuerbach, Darwin and Marx—realism and realistic elements made the prime scene in the fiction of Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, and, outside France and England, in the works of Tolstoy, Gogol, Turgenev in Russia, and in America in the novels of William Dean Howells and Mark Twain. In England, the tradition was kept alive in the 20th century by such authors as John Galsworthy, H. G. Wells, Graham Greene, and others (or even later, the so-called ‘new social realism’ in the novels of the ‘angry young men’ of the 1950s).

Realism against the Victorian cultural background has thus established itself as a definite trend, rejecting romanticism, as well as classicism and the doctrine of art for art’s sake, and is of primary importance in one’s attempt to render the condition of prose during this age and some of its major aspects and, according to my research, in the representation of the general narrative strategies of Victorian writers and of those characteristic to the Bildungsroman.

However, realism in fiction is at best only approximate, and the successful Bildungsroman must not suggest what the novelist feels, or what he represents, as being constrained by the literary conventions of his time.

3.3 Narrative Perspectives in the Victorian Novel

Though undoubtedly important for the understanding of Victorian fiction in general and some of its most representative novels in particular, the brief presentation of the condition of the novel in the Victorian age and the huge amount of theoretical perspectives in the study of its narrative should concentrate on some particular areas of concern, according to the essence of my general approach. Thus, though complex and often contradictory in its theoretical implications, narratology, as a possible approach to the Victorian literary discourse as fiction, may focus, for the sake of keeping the unity of concern, on the Victorian novel as Bildungsroman, that is to say, on the artistic process of rendering the characters’ personalities as growing and forming within certain spatial and temporal realities from childhood to maturity.

In this respect, the novel, as the most characteristic literary form of the 19th century, represents a story, a series of connected events and incidents combined to form a connected whole. As stated above, the Victorian novelist is concerned with character, the amount of character development varying according to the type of the novel, yet I may point out that in Bildungsroman the author is concerned with both the portrayal of the character and the plot, for this type of novel usually concentrates on the hero's adventures and incidents happening in his life against a complex social background along with the presentation of his general growth and development.

The idea of the formation of a personality is thus chosen to express a point of view aimed at making the reader recapture the events as they had revealed themselves to the author's experience or imagination. *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, *Pendennis*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Mill on the Floss* and others constitute literary discourses about what happens when a child is brought up according to a preconceived system of values, their authors often using the device of exaggeration and expending their artistry in the creation of atmosphere (through skillful use of words and images or vivid descriptions of objects and emotions, for instance the stylistic devices of black and white in *Great Expectations*, where Dickens opposes the darkness of Miss Havisham's house and the marshlands to the light radiating from Joe) in order to make their viewpoints clear to the receiver of the artistic message. These novels differ as sharply as the lives they reflect, and a number of them, or actually all of them, are among the best works of English fiction and, as independent entities, they have received much criticism from different points of view, but few have been regarded with reference to the conventions of the Bildungsroman in its diachronic or synchronic development. I attempt to argue that there are certain characteristic features which provide an approach to these novels according to some principal elements that may reveal a unique narrative structure to the Bildungsroman, and which will be discussed later in the study, for a brief presentation of the narrative perspectives of a more general aspect in Victorian fiction is not less important.

The Victorian novel is a narrative discourse opposed to the dramatic mode in so far as it constitutes the literary discourse of a narrator who mediates the events representation of the story. Discourse implies the reality of the literary text or the narrator's use of language, while narrative implies the existence of a story marked by a history consisting of a succession of events. In Victorian fiction in general and Bildungsroman in particular, the succession of events is determined especially by the 'cause-and-effect' ('effect-and-cause') structure of the narration controlled by the authorial omniscient point of view reified through his narrator's voice.

The actual Victorian author acts self-consciously as narrator, or rather an all-knowing maker or 'omniscient narrator' whose point of view (or viewpoint as a technical aspect of fiction which is important for the critical comprehension of the work's issues and meanings) allows the freedom to recount the story and comment on the meaning of actions, to move in both time and space, to shift from the exterior world to the inner selves of the characters, knowing, seeing and telling everything.

This kind of narrator can be considered 'fallible' or 'unreliable'—as opposed to the 'reliable' type—the reader questioning the statements of fact and judgment, even if it seems that in Victorian fiction the narrator's perception and interpretation of the told story coincide with the opinions of the author who is the controlling force in the narration. The narrator is often the main character, of the type that Genette calls 'autodiegetic', like David, Pip, or Jane, for instance, such a character being the first-person narrator telling the story as he or she experienced it. Some of these narrators in Victorian fiction can be called 'naïve', or 'immature narrators', for sometimes they do not comprehend the implications of what is told (in this case they become unreliable, for their incomprehension of the things described makes the reader not only question the statements but also leaves him without the guidance needed to make judgments). The unreliable narrator, hence naïve or immature, usually belongs to the literary works of the 'self-effacing author', yet I believe that the Victorian author is less objective in his narrative point of view, and often speaks in his own person, intruding into the narrative and not being merely an impersonal and non-evaluating agent through whom the story is told.

In other novels, for example in *Wuthering Heights*, the author assumes the voice and position of another, minor character (the sympathetic Lockwood who tells the story of the mysterious Heathcliff, this artistic rendering of the point of view representing an important narrative technique in 19th century fiction—also in *Moby Dick* or the detective stories about Holmes); and can introduce other characters who, in turn, have their voices and may narrate (Nelly Dean), thus the point of view being restricted to a marginal character within the story. Also, as in *The Mill on the Floss*, the author can start telling the story in her own voice, then becoming merely a witness and allowing her characters the (relative in Victorian novel) freedom to speak in their own voices. Also, the author can tell the story in the third-person, presenting it as understood by a single character, whose 'limited point of view' restricts the information to what this character sees, hears and thinks (restricting to the personal interior responses of a 'point of view character', which may result in interior monologue); the author may then 'panoramically', through a method of narrative exposition, present events in summary rather than in detail, or, *vice versa*, the author may present the actions and conversations in detail objectively, with little

authorial comment, such a (method of) viewpoint's employment in a narrative being called 'scenic' (with the self-effacing author as its typical device).

The applicability of point of view to fiction analysis was remarkably discussed by Y. Lotman (1970) in the light of semiotics and in abstract scientific terms, and by B. A. Uspensky (1970) in terms of the structuralist approach, offering a typology of point of view of the artistic text. In their opinion, the relation of point of view vs. text (literary discourse) appears as a relation of creator (author) vs. his creation (including characters, events, etc.). In other words, to follow Uspensky's conception, the point of view is the position of the author from which he perceives and evaluates the world of his vision, hence the multiplicity of the points of view employed in a literary discourse, the relationships between them, and possible transitions from one to another.

The Victorian narrator expresses a complex or mixed system of possible points of view of the Victorian author-realist, who attempts to achieve verisimilitude of the text with the real world, yet generally he assumes the position of a reporter (not creator) who recounts external events and records speeches of his characters. However, he also reifies a narrative voice talking not to himself or nobody, but addressing an audience, ready to control it as he often controls the character, and to impose his own system of values (it seems that Dostoyevsky is the first 19th century writer who tried to withdraw from the narrative discourse, introducing in novels dialogue and the polyphonic construction, and perhaps George Eliot in *Middlemarch*).

The reader, or the person to whom the story is addressed, also represents a number of distinct types, such as the 'virtual reader', whom the narrator has in mind while composing the discourse; the 'ideal reader', who understands everything that is said; the 'implied reader/actual reader' who responds to a text in different ways and at different levels of consciousness, producing meaning or modifying it by his own experience and knowledge; as well as contemporary, fictitious, hypothetical, informed, and intended readers. Distinction should also be made between reader and narratee, the latter being the person who is addressed by the narrator.

The reader as the receiver (addressee) of the literary text introduces an extra-value of meaning in it, when the text performs a didactic function; similarly, when the text performs an aesthetic function, it allows the reader the interpretative initiative, thus helping its process of functioning (Eco [1979] 1991: 83). In other words, Umberto Eco reasons, a literary text considers its own receiver as an indispensable condition of its capacity of concrete communication and of its potentiality of meaning and significance embodied in the message—that is to say, the reader is the persona for whom the text is produced and aimed at being communicated so as he would

actualize its literary universe in spite of the fact that the reader may not be someone concrete or exist empirically.

Generally the reader is involved in the literary discourse, but he has also to be detached from it, for only if distanced the text can be appreciated aesthetically and not confused with reality. This theory of the aesthetic distance between reader and work of art (a novel, say) implies, according to Hans Robert Jauss, the existence of the 'horizon of expectations' of the reader, and the degree to which a work departs from it constitutes the measure of its literary value: one may say, for instance, that Dickens' novels, after reading, were less enjoyable than someone had expected, thus the myth of Dickens in English literature being destroyed by one's individual psychological relationship with novels, or the attitude of a person to works of fiction, which is actually the essence of aesthetic distance.

The reader may also be 'passive' in his responses to a novel, or 'active'. The Victorian novel, as the realistic or classic one, can be termed—following R. Barthes' distinction between two basic kinds of text, which he stipulates in *S/Z* ([1970] 1987)—'readerly' (*lisible*), in which the reader's response is more or less passive, for this kind of text renders a recognizable world with easily recognizable characters and events, the reader accepting the meaning without any much effort. The second type is termed 'writerly' (*scriptible*), which focuses on how the text is written, especially through the use of language, as J. Joyce's *Ulysses* or V. Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, making the reader into a producer, who has to work things out, look for and provide meaning.

A relationship is thus established between author, narration, and reader, which may possibly guide one's attempt to understand and interpret the universe of Victorian fiction. Regarding the form of the narrative in the Victorian novel one should not consider it a simple one, but rather a complex narrative with plot, in which the events narrated are not only chronologically recounted, but are arranged more or less according to a principle determined by the nature of plot and the type of story intended. The Victorian plot structure is conventional and traditional, it consists of a huge range of incident and action; has a beginning, continuity of the narrative movement, climax involved in the narrative, and often an ending; its concern is also with the representation of characters (or portrayal of individuals) and their relationships; and deals with problems of time (the time of infancy or that of maturity, or the relation between narrative time and narrated time, the latter aspect often providing in Victorian novels different deviations and digressions on the narrative level), space (provincial background or urban environment, for example), description (the picturing of a scene or setting).

3.4 Victorian Fiction as Bildungsroman

At this point, a further attempt to describe the narrative perspectives in Victorian fiction is to consider that a large part of it follows the typical thematic and narrative structure of what has been labeled Bildungsroman. In this respect, I will provide a description of the term, as well as its narrative construction, the rendering of characters, the plot structure, and other aspects characteristic to the Bildungsroman. This is to be linked to the final stage of my attempt to render the narrative perspectives in Victorian fiction, which is likely to concentrate on individual authors and works, with regard to the tradition of the Bildungsroman, stressing the importance of the author, his narrator, the rendering of characters, the reader's response and his strategies regarding his relationship to the text—an aspect required by rhetoric's interest in literary discourse as an act of communication addressed to the reader.

This type of novel, or genre, as Anglo-Saxon critics name it, is characteristic to a number of major Victorian novels, such as *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, *Pendennis*, *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *The Way of All Flesh*, *Jude the Obscure* and others. The terminological labeling given to the Bildungsroman (German: 'formation novel') have been many and often confusing. In its pure form, Bildungsroman has been defined by Sussane Howe, for example, as the '*novel of all-around development or self-culture*' with '*a more or less conscious attempt on the part of the hero to integrate his powers, to cultivate himself by his experience*' (cf. Buckley 1974: 13). Jerome Hamilton Buckley, perhaps the best critic who ever approached this type of novel, is '*struck by the awkwardness of the German term as applied to English literature*', and, '*for the sake of convenience and variation*', he renders several possible definitions: '*the novel of youth, the novel of education, of apprenticeship, of adolescence, of initiation, even the life-novel.*' (Buckley 1974: vii-viii), where education can be understood '*as a growing up and gradual self-discovery in the school-without-walls that is experience*' and youth can imply '*not so much a state of being as a process of movement and adjustment from childhood to early maturity*' (ibid.: viii). I may add, addressing the Victorian literary production, that Bildungsroman is also the novel of evolution, growth and formation of a character in his development against the background of different social environments, sometimes picturing the epoch. That is to say, the narration concentrates on the story of a single individual's growth and development within the context of a defined social order. The growth process, at its roots a quest story, may indeed be described as an apprenticeship to life, but also as a search for a meaningful existence within society.

Although the term was not in common usage until late in the 19th century, and the genre itself became popular in Germany among the

romantic writers and in England by the time of the early Victorians⁹, the origins of its characteristic hero can be traced to a number of conventions and traditions, especially to the hero of ancient narratives (Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, or Heliodorus' *Ethiopian History*, or Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*) and to the picaresque hero who in his travels meets all sorts and conditions of men. Buckley points out that in Germany the Bildungsroman produced several clearly marked variants: the *Entwicklungsroman*, a chronicle of a young man's general growth rather than his specific quest for self-culture; the *Erziehungsroman*, with an emphasis on the youth's training and formal education; and the *Künstlerroman*, a tale of the orientation of an artist. In England, reasons Buckley, '*these categories have been far less rigid; the pursuit of self-culture has hardly ever been so deliberate or programmatic, and the process of education, though schooling may play a major role in it, has seldom begun or ended with prescribed courses of study*' (ibid.: 13). Thus the Victorian Bildungsroman can be regarded as a mixture of these variants, while Buckley stresses that, in English literature in general, it has also frequently been a kind of *Künstlerroman*, for its hero often emerges as an artist: a prose writer like David Copperfield, an artisan and aspiring intellectual like Hardy's Jude, and, later, a poet like Stephen Dedalus, a painter like Lawrence's Paul Morel or Maugham's Philip Carey. In such novels—studies of the inner life of the artist in his progress from early childhood through adolescence, and given the fact that they are highly autobiographical—the artist '*is often not far removed from the novelist, or at least from the novelist as he remembers himself to have been in his formative youth*' (ibid.: 14).

If the term ultimately escapes precise definition or neat translation, as it actually does, its meaning should emerge more or less clearly from an account of the novels themselves and the recurrence of some certain common motifs and principles. Buckley renders then a typical Bildungsroman plot pattern, elements of which are to be found in many of the Victorian novels, but it is not of course precisely followed by all of them due to the obvious differences in manner and matter: '*A child of some sensibility grows up in the country or in a provincial town, where he finds constraints, social and intellectual, placed upon the free imagination. His family, especially his father, proves doggedly hostile to his creative instincts or flights of fancy, antagonistic to his ambitions, and quite impervious to the new ideas he has gained from unprescribed reading. His first schooling, even if not totally inadequate, may be frustrating insofar as it may suggest options not available to him in his present setting. He therefore, sometimes*

⁹ In comparison, the Bildungsroman attracted much fewer novelists in the 19th century France than in England or Germany. For a better understanding of its literary perspectives in French fiction one should consider Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir*, especially with regard to its autobiographical substratum and focus on the inner motivation of the hero.

at a quite early age, leaves the repressive atmosphere of home (and also the relative innocence), to make his way independently in the city (in the English novels, usually London). There his real 'education' begins, not only his preparation for a career but also—and often more importantly—his direct experience of urban life. The latter involves at least two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing, one exalting, and demands that in this respect and others the hero reappraise his values. By the time he had decided, after painful soul-searching, the sort of accommodation to the modern world he can honestly make, he has left his adolescence behind and entered upon his maturity. His initiation complete, he may then visit his old home, to demonstrate by his presence the degree of his success or the wisdom of his choice.' (ibid.: 17-18). At this point, I believe, the asymmetry of departure and return implies the process of development of the self, while the meaningful correlation between these two in terms of past and present represents the validity of the formation of a mature personality.

Though no single novel follows this pattern precisely, one cannot ignore the fact that there are certain elements in narratives that answer the requirements of the genre and thus are, both in technique and content, recognizable within the Bildungsroman. Certain common motifs and themes (childhood, the conflict of generations, provinciality, formal education, self-education, the larger society, alienation, ordeal by love, the search for a vocation and a working philosophy, initiation and final accomplishment while entering upon maturity) may suggest a common approach to Victorian fiction according to some principal elements that reveal a unique pattern for the Bildungsroman.

Having as its basis the narrative structure of the adventure story¹⁰, and the autobiographical novel, among others, Bildungsroman includes some form of loss or discontent which makes the hero or heroine start at an early stage their journey away from the home or family setting.

The process of maturation they are passing through is long, arduous, and gradual, consisting of repeated clashes between the protagonist's needs and desires and the views and judgments imposed by an unbending social order. Eventually, the spirit and values of the social order become manifest in the protagonist, who is then accommodated into society. The novel ends with an assessment by the protagonist of himself and his new place in that society.

¹⁰ I should make the distinction between the Bildungsroman and the adventure story (novel), since they primarily differ in matters of thematic construction—whereas the unifying theme of the Bildungsroman narrative pattern is formation, that of the adventure novel is initiation which may, indeed, provide an organizing principle to the Bildungsroman literary construction. Initiation in the Bildungsroman is thus an important element, yet among others. The Bildungsroman and the adventure story differ also at the level of technique and narrative organization, for example according to the correlation of structural elements in their fictional discourses (about structural organization of adventure story see Guy Cook 1995: 142-3).

This form, typical of the German novel of evolution, is thus centered both on the character's general growth and nature and on the influences of the cultural and social environments on his inner development in order to form a set of effective spiritual components combined into a whole of personality.

The complexity of events renders a moral action of the narrative where the events, actions and different situations precipitate the development, evolution and change of the hero. In this respect, I emphasize the relationship between the inward and the outward, between the hero's spiritual components and external circumstances.

The Victorian Bildungsromane differ according to the degree of fictional reconciliation and connection of these elements. With Meredith, Eliot, Butler, or Hardy, for example, the interaction with other people, the external events, and the pressure of the environment precipitate and influence the evolution and formation more than the hero's own inner life, his perception and imagination (as in Dickens, for instance, or Emily Brontë).

The character of a Bildungsroman, as in Victorian fiction in general, is the counterpart, or alter ego, of the author, rather than his mirror image or double, which is the same person.

The character, along with the self-presentation of both the biological and intellectual growth and formation¹¹ within the wide range of events and actions combined in the whole of a story of the narrative, also attempts to reveal at the end the entire reconfiguration of the internal structure, in other words its metamorphosis.

The change of the inner perspectives, of the consciousness and the psychic configuration of the character is determined by suffering and the harsh experience of living, and it implies the escape from the false self-image, along with the prospects of the hero's moral regeneration and a true emotional maturity.

In some Victorian Bildungsromane the achievement is explicitly stated (as, for example, in *The History of Pendennis* or *Jane Eyre*), or it can be implicitly rendered in the final scenes of the novel (in *Great Expectations*, for instance, Pip's social embarrassment and rejection of Joe in Part II is countenanced of Joe in Part II is countenanced of the genuine values of friendship and love of Joe and Biddy; he is kind and generous towards Herbert Pocket; mention also should be made of his benevolent attitude and protective relation towards Magwitch, despite his abhorrence of him; also, despite his recognition of Miss Havisham's deceit, he is kind to her in her madness and refuses to take the money she offers him).

¹¹ Including both inner change and change of condition, moral attributes and social action, spiritual essence and external behaviour.

The character, sometimes in a position of the agent whose discourse allows the unfolding of the story, expresses his second hypostasis: that of the narrator of the fictional world in general, and of the character's experience of life as a process of development leading to formation in particular.

There are moments in Victorian Bildungsromane when character and narrator become virtually one, especially through the process of remembering in which perceptions and memories of the past are fitted one within the other. The present becomes the time for remembering the past, and sometimes the past comes to occupy the present, which allows for repetitiveness and failure to dissociate good from evil.

The hero's experience of life as memory begins with the prevalence of good, and then the intrusion of evil is inevitable. The intrusion of evil becomes a necessary device in the process of formation and thwarts the character's actual attempt to experience the wholeness of the process of development through the revival of the good past, which may eventually allow for the psychological change—hence the completeness of formation.

Only the narrator, I think, who attempts verbally to experience the totality of his developmental process, may achieve completeness (formation) not just through the revival by repetition of the good moments of the past, but also through a change of consciousness, which permits him to escape the evil past.¹²

The achievement of the Victorian writer of a Bildungsroman is that he expresses a special insight into the narrator's inner life as he does into the protagonist's. As both character and narrator, Pip, David, or Jane—whose stories thus imply simultaneously two different stages of the same person's experience of life in formation—will act and experience the events and will control the narrative discourse, often intervening in the narration.

Through this technique, which may be labeled 'moral retrospect', the character is the narrator situated at the end of the narrative process, more mature, able to remember, '*to judge and interpret his own activities in the light of his later, greater wisdom*' (Lawrence 1985: 210).

In other words, memory and self-examination become modes of rendering the process of formation, as well as important factors in the writer's psychological structure as he applies it to both the strategy of character analysis and the voice of the narrator. The distinction between

¹² The first temporal reality as present time covers the experience of childhood. Though it becomes the past in relation to the present of the hero's stages of youth and then maturity, it may dominate the reality of, especially, the present time of maturity through repetition, and may become the only present that has been fully real in the hero's experience of life (as in *David Copperfield*, *The History of Pendennis*, or *Wuthering Heights*, for example). Nevertheless, be it congenial or obstructing, the present time of childhood may yet offer new experiences of life as the basis for character formation, even though, when it becomes the past, it continues to determine the process of development and change (as, for example, in *Great Expectations* or *Jane Eyre*).

narrator and character vanishes through memory at certain narrative moments when the latter experiences the events that the narrator is also experiencing in speaking (telling) many years later.

As suggested above, the difference between the hero and the narrator is that the former is unable to see the correlation between the evil part and the good part of existence, which would determine the failure of change, of a new life of a complex personality who achieved formation. It is the narrator's task to bring necessary thematic and narrative nuances and perspectives of accomplishment, especially through an adequate verbalization of evil and the acquisition of freedom from the past by a proper confession.

It seems that the Victorian writer of a Bildungsroman suggests the truth that to confess, to tell, and to write down the evil past, bad memories, or the experience of life in general, means to escape from repeating the evils, or the repetitiveness of the existence in general. It is, no doubt, an important factor in achieving the formation of personality within the mental process of development.

The activity of telling the experience of life is performed by the hero of a Bildungsroman as narrator for himself and to and for other human agents involved in the narrative, namely other characters and the reader—this aspect is framed as a narrative relationship within the fictional system of the Bildungsroman (the protagonist of *Great Expectations*, for example, confesses verbally to other characters of the narrative; similarly, the narrator of this novel confesses in writing to the reader).¹³

The frustration and alienation of a hero entering upon maturity may vanish, the child and the adult become one, there is no distinction between past and present, but '*a presentness of things and memories past*' (Westburg 1977: 65), and there is no separation between hero and narrator. At this moment, the wholeness of the hero's self is suggested and the formation is more or less complete. As is suggested in this study, more often the hero's search for self-knowledge as basis for his formation leads to occasions when the past displaces the present, and to a dramatization of the final stage of the process of development. It is, however, just one reason for the failure of formation.

The narrator in a Bildungsroman, as in almost the entire Victorian fiction, and as mentioned above, renders his omniscient point of view, not allowing his characters the freedom to act and speak in their own name, and hurrying up with conclusions and interpretations so the reader will conclude and understand the narrative message from the authorial point of view.

¹³ On the level of narrative analysis, the difference between hero and narrator in a Bildungsroman is thus between *actual* experience and *verbal* experience (the hero acts and suffers, the narrator remembers and assesses)—which I hazard to say is not far removed from the classical distinction between *showing* and *telling*—or, when confession is involved in both cases, the difference is between *verbal* and *written* representation of events.

Similarly, the omniscient narrator and his subjective involvement in the narrative determines its specific 'mood', which can presage the climax and the ending (in *David Copperfield*, for instance, in spite of the huge range of miseries and sufferings which are to be faced by the hero, the reader cannot help expecting a happy end and often is not impressed by them; in *Great Expectations*, on the other hand, with fewer tragic events in the life of the character, the mood and tone suggest a dramatic turn of the story).

It is important to understand, in approaching every Victorian Bildungsroman, that the real author employs the strategies of a fictional confession, which I regard as an autobiographical novel, rather than those of a non-fictional confession, which I regard as autobiography. A proper interpretative correlation should be thus established between memory and imagination with regard to the entire process of development leading to the formation of personality. In this respect, the writer of a Bildungsroman has to imagine his character's experience of life, and to create a consciousness in formation other than his own. It is an accomplishment of every Victorian author of Bildungsroman, which allows for the creation of a narrator who not only narrates a remembered life but also reveals, as a character, a hero, or none of these (that is, as narrator only), the process of remembering this life. The process of remembering is far from being tranquil, as it is the process of formation of personality.

The real author of a Victorian Bildungsroman may manage or fail in rendering, in other words imagining, the inner life of a character. It has been claimed, for instance, that compared to George Eliot or Charlotte Brontë, Dickens and Thackeray are not able to adequately treat the feelings and thoughts of their characters.

I attempt to discredit the general validity of such criticism, whose accurateness is more or less a wishful desire, for they are limited and depend upon the hazardous, general viewpoints of what the hero's inner life as presented in the novel might actually be. Though the writer's ability or inability is hard to follow because of the complexity of the fictional system, and the complex nature and subtlety of the character's imaginary psychology, it represents, no doubt, an interesting aspect of any critical analysis, along with its importance in the meaning-making endeavor in approaching the Victorian Bildungsroman.

That is to say, I attempt to avoid generalization as not being useful to my study, for only selection and critical attention, through a contextual analysis, given to certain characters of certain novels, namely those recognizable as Bildungsromane, may adequately reveal whether a writer is able or unable to deal with inner life, again, only with regard to the process of character formation. It is a definite part of the general concern of this study, along with, say, the analysis of structural specificity of narrative construction of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

Like the approach to third-person strategies, the narrative structure of the Bildungsroman is also complicated and hard to follow. As in Dickens, Thackeray or Meredith, the complexity of the narrative is given by their failure to provide that organic unity required by a narrative discourse; their novels are full of detached episodes, sometimes too much plot and a complicated intrigue, incoherent and lacking a sense of form, although it seems that their narratives present a linear movement of a cause-and-effect determinism (so-called linear narrative), of an adventure story, picaresque novel or fictionalized autobiographical narrative structure (required by the Bildungsroman).

But the complexity of the narrative construction of the Victorian fiction in general and the Bildungsroman in particular is sometimes given less by one author's failures of construction, and more linked to a number of specific narrative structures (so-called concentric narratives), for instance that characteristic to the novel of Emily Brontë.

I argue, however, that other structural deviations are also possible. Dickens, for example, in *David Copperfield*, renders a linear representation of events and of the hero's experience of life, which finally turns to reveal a circular, in some respects concentric, process of character formation.

As it is, the linear narrative (chronological representation of events) dominates the Victorian novel of formation, and the concentric narrative, when it appears to determine the fictional organization of text, reifies the premises of modern non-linear narrative (simultaneous representation of events) in its incipient stage.

According to the principle of chronotope, in both linear and concentric narratives the coherence is determined by a cohesion of the temporal and spatial elements, the difference being provided by the temporal relation between the events depicted in the novels: while the concentric development of discourse allows freedom for temporal movements forward and backward, and even temporal digressions, the linear text is presumed to represent iconically the sequence of events in time.

3.4.1 The Representation of Personality as Its Formation

The development and consolidation of the literary tradition of the Bildungsroman in Victorian England is first of all given by the steady recurrence of certain motifs in it, for the novels generally labeled as Bildungsromane represent a unity of their concern. However, none of the Victorian novelists examined in the present study ever claimed to be writing a Bildungsroman, some might have never known the term at all. Yet after Goethe each of them was aware of the literary tradition he or she was working in, in spite of individual differences of the novels, both in manner

and matter, sometimes as sharp as the lives they reflect and consider as narrative material.

Some of the Victorian novels, say, *Great Expectations*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Jude the Obscure*, are among the best works of English fiction ever written, and, though as independent entities they received much critical appreciation from different points of view, they were less approached in detail or even as a group in a generic study with direct reference to the conventions of the Bildungsroman.

In this study I already attempted to find general thematic relationships and narrative lines specific to Victorian creators of Bildungsromane. Some of these aspects need a further and closer approach, for instance the representation of personality as its formation—through the experience of childhood (under terror, in most cases), formal and self-education, the larger society and the experience of urban life, ordeal by love, the artistic maturation and individualization—or the problem of the biographical substratum and the novel.

Indeed, an examination of some representative Bildungsromane belonging to Victorian fiction indicates that the narrative framework of these novels is developed to render the representation of personality as its formation.

The logic of rendering the process of formation reveals its great length, of thousands of pages, in exploring the character's growth and development, say, a personal history of at least 25-30 years. Hence the necessity of careful selection among the writer's memories, for the narrative has to cover a period of time that would eventually disclose the individual evolution, as in Wordsworth, through three biological stages—childhood, youth, and early maturity.

The Victorian Bildungsroman thus centers on the character's progress which can be better explained through what I label existential chronotope, whose two sided peculiarities (the spatial and temporal components) condition the character's existence which is rendered as the process of evolution and formation, and which is unapproachable without analyzing the formative perspectives provided by the chronotope of home, the chronotope of roadway, and that of city.

In the Victorian Bildungsroman time is related to space, and the imaginative capability of the author uses both of them to present the formative process as a quintessential part of man's experience of life, or rather the process of time-regulated development of the protagonist.

In the modern world time is also related to space, but imaginative literature of the 20th century has provided new perspectives of literary organization of these concepts. The concept of time, for instance, is closely linked to the speed at which people of this century perform their spatial movement. Mention should be also made of the fact that Einstein has

postulated that time is another dimension of space, and much of the 20th century literary interest in space is an extension of some of his theories about time and space.

In the Victorian Bildungsroman the quality of time determines the narrative construction of formative realities in the sense of physical and intellectual growth until maturation (complete or relativistic).

The quality of space parallels that of time, and it is no less important in rendering the progress of the protagonist. In the Victorian Bildungsroman the latter element is closely linked to the setting of formation, including provinciality, countryside, school, city, all with their indispensable thematic attributes, such as the generation gap, education, reading, profession, money, and others.

In other words, the principle of chronotope may be applied to analysis on both the level of narrative structure and that of themes, motifs, images, symbols, emblems, and characters.

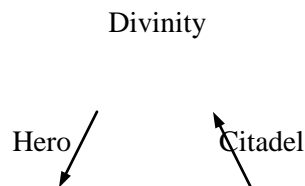
The third-person strategies as applied by the Victorian writer of Bildungsroman focus on rendering two major relationships: one is of the individual with himself, his self-conscious comprehension of personal failures and achievements, and the other between the individual and society. It is sometimes difficult to draw a sharp line between these two kinds of relationship, and to conceive the predominance of one over the other, yet in general the romantic impulse assured the concern with the representation of the inner progress of the protagonist, while new Victorian cultural realities, especially that of realism, determined the social progress of the hero, an attempt to find a secure place within the social background (including family stability, professional achievements, financial success).

In terms of the former relationship, the Victorian writer of a Bildungsroman reveals his interest in the character's inner life by tracing a process of agony of the soul at certain moments of the character's state of mind. Just like with English romantic poets, with Victorian authors the story of a symbolical process of development becomes a psychological drama of the hero who would eventually discover a series of meanings concerning the interrelationship of life elements and the affirmation of universal harmony.

The Victorian writer of Bildungsromane expresses thus a special interest in a certain psychological vision, particularly the psychology of guilt, which is a special device in many novels of character formation, but not exclusively (to name only Dostoyevsky or Conrad). The psychology of guilt and its thematic connections are quintessential to the accomplishment of formation; they represent personal consequences of deviant action in the process of development leading to formation; and render the critical moments of character's life experience, his frustration, suffering, the necessity of a decisive decision, and, not least, the situation implying a change of the inward.

In terms of the latter relationship, the Victorian Bildungsroman opens perspectives of intertextuality and the rendering of themes and structural elements common to the 19th century novel of formation and other writings of different literary backgrounds and ages, even Antiquity, for instance, with necessary, of course, deviations in both form and content.

The literary pattern of the ancient epic, for example, includes the interdependency of three basic elements that form the structural essence of many literary works to come:



In the epic tradition divinity acts upon the hero (who differs in some respects from other humans, but possesses no ego and is not character in its own right), the latter (having the goal of) acting in the interests of the citadel (*imago dei*), that is, society. To mention that this scheme is applicable to the analysis of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, where, similarly, divinity, represented by the Christian God and other Christian allusions, as well as nature and finally the Mariner's own conscious (subconscious or alter ego), acts upon the hero (Ancient Mariner), who is no character in its own right, making him to commit a primordial crime against nature. This idea is provided by the fact that there are actually no psychological motivations of such an action, for the character himself does not say why, neither does he know why, he shot the bird.

Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, as the hero of the epic tradition, is supposed to act for the benefit of society: his sin becomes a universal example of what may happen to those who try to challenge the universal harmony of the natural system, the goal of his recounting the story being first of all didactic ('*And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth*'), then formative (when he departs from the Ancient Mariner, the wedding guest is a '*sadder and a wiser man*'), and finally ethical, with an intelligible moral with high religious allusions ('*Farewell, farewell! but this I tell / To thee, thou Wedding—Guest! / He prayeth well, who loveth well / Both man and bird and beast. // He prayeth best, who loveth best / All things both great and small; / For the dear God who loveth us, / He made and loveth all*').

The Victorian novel of character formation brings necessarily new perspectives and changes, revealing its departure from the literary pattern of the epic tradition, and Coleridge's alliance to it. The hero of a Bildungsroman, in turn, though also determined by anything external to his inward stimuli, expresses a psychological motivation of the relationship that

is to be established between him and society, usually a city, as in *Great Expectations*, for example. Moreover, his influence on the medium is minimal, for he often has to accommodate himself to the reality of a larger society that provides influences from beyond on the hero's psychology, suppressing his conscious integrity.

In this respect, the Victorian Bildungsromane discussed in the present study differ according to the degree of reconciliation between a quixotic idealism and inseparable materialism—in other words, between the inward and the outward. Some of the protagonists, like Maggie, Catherine, Heathcliff, or Pip, are less able than David Copperfield, Ernest Pontifex, Pendennis, or Jane to reconcile these two aspects, to see how the processes of professional achievement and money making contribute to their true enrichment of spirit.

In nearly every Bildungsroman the failure to reach the accomplishment of both sides becomes the central conflict of the narrative, and in most of the cases this conflict is personal in origin. In other words, the problem lies with the hero himself: David has an errant heart, Pip misdirects his affections and ambitions, Ernest misconceives his vocation.

Claude Bremond ([1973] 1981) considers that the narrator possesses certain methods of third-person strategies; the simplest and most coherent way of disclosing the character's descriptive attributes being to suggest explicitly a number of characteristic features which would sum the psychic and moral condition of the character. Thus the omniscient narrator in Thackeray's *The History of Pendennis* gives a more clear account of his character's personality, or rather of what it becomes in the process of formation:

Those kind readers who have watched Mr. Arthur's career hitherto, and have made, as they naturally would do, observations upon the moral character and peculiarities of their acquaintance, have probably discovered by this time what was the prevailing fault in Mr. Pen's disposition, and who was that greatest enemy, artfully indicated in the title-page, with whom he had to contend. Not a few of us, my beloved public, have the very same rascal to contend with: a scoundrel who takes every opportunity of bringing us into mischief, of plunging us into quarrels, of leading us into idleness, and unprofitable company, and what not, in a word, Pen's greatest enemy was himself: and as he had been pampering, and coaxing, and indulging that individual all his life, the rogue grew insolent, as all spoiled servants will be; and at the slightest attempt to coerce him, or make him do that which was unpleasant to him, became frantically rude and unruly. A person who is used to making sacrifices—Laura, for instance, who had got such a habit of giving up her own pleasure for others—can do the business quite easily; but Pen, unaccustomed as he was to any sort of self-denial, suffered moodily when called on to pay his share, and savagely

grumbled at being obliged to forego anything he liked. (Volume II, Chapter XIII)

The process leading to this conflict is long and torturous, having its roots in the infantile experience of human life, and then follows a number of distinct elements of the plot, which I regard as definite components of a typical Bildungsroman narrative pattern. The themes intermingled in the structure of narration are to be found throughout almost the entire development of fiction—approached diachronically in the first chapter of my study—namely experience, journey, roadway, ordeal, trial, adventure, moral issues of personal conduct, love, struggle for survival, and many others.

The chronotope of roadway, for example, stands for journey, search, or sudden happening, or unexpected meeting, which determine the gaining of knowledge, the evolution and formation of spiritual components within the universe of human existence in childhood, adolescence, and further stages of development. More than that, the chronotope of roadway provides a clear interrelationship between the chronotope of home and that of city, for, as it usually happens, the growing child, willingly or not, leaves at a certain moment the relative security of his home to make his own way in life through the experience (often consisting of trial) of a larger society.

The chronotope of home renders thus the importance of an original space in the analysis of the hero's experience of life in the process of formation. In every Victorian Bildungsroman discussed in this study the psychological construction of character is revealed through the presentation of home primarily as a house and then as consisting of various relationships among the members of the family.

The house is the first spatial reality in every Bildungsroman, the first sphere of action, the first nucleus of the existential universe, a microcosm of human life, having a door that leads into an infinitely larger world that seems to provide stronger premises for the process of formation.

As it is, the experience of childhood is no less important, for the growing child, though instinctively, is able to make a differentiation between the inward and the outward, good and evil, mind and soul, and the house mediates between these two factors. The division of the hero's original state of mind occurs in childhood as well as in later life, which is determined by both the change of setting and the changes in the spiritual universe. The character's departure and alienation from home represents his movement in space and time, and his sense of the twofold nature of things. Heathcliff, for example, is able to sense and perpetuate the dialectics of love and revenge; Jane and Maggie—rationality and feeling; David—good and evil. These existential dichotomies have temporal as well as spatial links to reality: at the beginning of *David Copperfield*, for instance, space consists

of the family house and the church; time consists of Sunday (corresponding to the spatial reality of church) in opposition to the rest of the week (family house), all creating a structure of comfort (native house and the rest of the week) and discomfort, that is Sunday and church. The latter fictional devices come to be associated with Murdstone, who assumes the role of his dead father, or rather a new parental figure, and who represents the rebirth of evil, of death itself. It leads to an inevitable conflict which determines, as in the Victorian Bildungsroman in general, the hero's exile or alienation—say, the fictional reality of new perspectives of chronotope: journey, school, city, new house, and others, their existence depending on the narrative and thematic specificity of every Victorian novel of formation.¹⁴ Thus the relative static and finite space of the original home is replaced by the more dynamic and, hypothetically speaking, infinite spatial reality of a larger society, especially the public life of the city, to which the character has to accommodate himself.

Though the original home represents the first spatial and temporal reality of the Bildungsroman, the spatial component dominates the narrative structure; and in the later running of the plot the temporal quality remains vague and even beyond the narrator's concern. He may at times introduce the reader to the young man's age, though he often must deduce the biological development from the process of events representation within the story and any intellectual changes of the protagonist. However, the temporal structure of the narrative reflects the novel's tempo: sometimes very rapid, covering in a few pages many years from the protagonist's life, sometimes the rhythm is slow, describing in many pages, or chapters, the experiences of the hero during several days (being strongly autobiographical, this feature of the Bildungsroman arises from the writer's own dealing with the huge range of memories).

3.4.1.1 The Actual Childhood and the Archetypal Image of the Child

To the Victorian authors of Bildungsromane, as to Wordsworth, Blake, Coleridge or Byron, the experience of childhood is clearly of first importance in the formation of personality. One may claim that not until the psychology of the child was taken seriously as an important literary concern was the writing of Bildungsromane a possible enterprise. To the Victorians the child was little more than the small adult, '*an entity in himself responsive to experiences that might alter the entire direction of his growing mind and eventually influence for better or for worse his whole maturity*' (Buckley 1974: 19).

¹⁴ In *David Copperfield*, however, the first exile is within the character's own home, when Murdstone expels him from his original bedroom.

To the Victorian writers of Bildungsromane, the experience of childhood is not far removed from the expression of its vulnerability to frustration of adult rationality (parents, older generation) in particular, and to social victimization in general.

Though the process leading to final initiation is socially determined, the formation may be complete if the character of a Bildungsroman has been successful in resisting the frustrations of childhood caused by adults (as in *David Copperfield*, for example, or *Jane Eyre*) and social relationships. Otherwise, as in *Wuthering Heights*, for instance, if the experience of childhood, besides laying the foundation of mature existence, consists of a division of feeling and will, love and hate, provided by exterior circumstances, which persists until entering the stage of maturity, the failure of final accomplishment (formation of personality) is imminent.

In this respect, on the one hand, as in English romantic poetry, the Victorian novel of formation renders a symbolical vision of childhood, an archetypal image of the child, which suggests the deep significance for mature narrators of the experience of childhood. I consider the archetypal dimension of the fictional discourse as offering premises of validity for the formation of personality, for the symbolical image of the child represents every person's urge to achieve accomplishment as a whole. The social circumstances and especially the rationality and morality of the mature mind attempt to thwart the emotional, imaginative and visionary aspects of the growing child; in the long process of evolution to maturity these aspects are being suppressed to the point of exclusion.

At the end of this process, through special moments of spiritual insight and revelation related to pain and suffering, the character may eventually realize his completeness or achieve it through the reconciliation between the inward and the outward, feeling and mind, instinct and action. The revival of the lost emotion and primary values from childhood marks the return to the origins of life, a comprehension of the unconscious archetypal context that confers the desired wholeness as a basis for formation.

The problem lies in the proper correlation between childhood and adulthood, that is, in rendering the degrees of identification between and detachment from one another. In the Victorian Bildungsroman the experience of childhood is often a static element, and, as in *David Copperfield* for example, it is also repetitive. The formation of personality is a possible achievement only if it involves the stage of maturity as different from and yet continuous with the childhood.

The change of the hero's consciousness leading to completeness and formation, though it is deeply rooted in the experience of the past, should avoid mere repetition or a series of variations on the existence in childhood. It should result from the hero's search for his own identity, in spite of his

personal links with the past, and his attempt to avoid the forms of repetition. As in *The Mill on the Floss*, one form is heredity. The idea is expressed also in *David Copperfield*, where, towards the end of the narrative, Mr. Chillip states that there is ‘*a strong resemblance between you and your poor father, sir!*’, a statement which renders literary and pseudo-literary parallels.

In this respect, on the other hand, without denying this interpretation, the Victorian author portrays an actual childhood, or rather the autobiographical remembrance of himself in the days of his own childhood. As in Dickens, the presentation of actual children is sparked off by the author’s own memories of his childhood sufferings—hence the sentimentality and melodramatic tone of his Bildungsromane, his self-pity, which finally turn to be considered artistic defeats. The remembrance goes hand in hand with imagination, which gives a fictionalized, unreal past, an invented childhood by inventing the childhood fears, naïveté, specific language and innocent thought.

The problem is now the correlation between autobiographical and fictional events, in other words, hypothetically speaking, between the verbs ‘to be’ and ‘to write’.

On the general level, the difficulty of such a fictional concern lies in the proper correlation between childhood as symbol/archetype and childhood as fact (remembered and/or invented), especially because the essence of the former is not applicable to the portrayal of the experience of life of any particular child, whether actual or imagined. As it is, both these aspects help explain the importance of childhood experience as conceived in the Victorian Bildungsroman in particular, and its significance as a literary concern in the 19th century English Fiction.

However, in some of the Victorian Bildungsromane, the experience of childhood remains beyond the narrator’s concern: when the reader first meets Richard Feverel, for example, he is already fourteen years old, and the readers are introduced to events happening during his birthday; similarly, no dramatic impression of a formative childhood is given for Arthur Pendennis—he is a seventeen-year-old sensitive young man, launched on a love affair with a much older actress (like at the beginning of *Wilhelm Meister*).

As it is, the growing child, more often than not, appears in Bildungsromane as orphaned, at least fatherless or bereaved of the father (like Jane, Heathcliff, David, Pip, Pen, Jude). But if his father is alive (as in *The Way of All Flesh*), or he appears to have a stepfather (as in *David Copperfield*), the child will almost certainly be repelled by a parent who seeks to suppress his strongest desires, thus proving antagonistic to his creative drives and imaginative ambitions. In this respect, Ernest Pointfex, the hero of *The Way of All Flesh*, declares:

A man first quarrels with his father about three-quarters of a year before he is born. It is then he insists on setting up a separate establishment. When this has been once agreed to, the more complete the separation forever after the better for both. (Chapter 85)

The idea of an orphaned boy necessarily intensifies the concern with what the process of development (in its temporal and spatial aspects) will make of the child. The absence of biological interaction means both freedom and danger, and it represents one of the first steps in acquiring an identity. The child discovers, for instance, that his parents are dead (Pip and David are even fascinated by the tombstones of their fathers), which allows for the discovery of a sense of himself.

The orphan in a Bildungsroman would often attempt to acknowledge the 'parent - child' relationships with adults, which is a new step in the developmental process towards formation. Male protagonists find in their mothers true protectors and guides. Similarly, such positions are assumed by certain parental figures, be they relatives, even natural fathers, if alive, or not (like Major Pendennis, Arthur's uncle and guardian, or Sir Austin Feverel, or Mr. Overton, the narrator of *The Way of All Flesh*), be they wanted (Miss Havisham or Miss Temple) or otherwise rejected by the hero (Magwitch).

Claude Bremond ([1973] 1981: 172-3), following the significant theoretical contribution provided to the analyses of literary discourse by V. Propp ([1928] 1970), emphasizes the notion of 'narrative function', to which a division of characters in the narrative is applicable. The character who can influence the narrative evolution and the design of the events has the function of an *agent*; whom I call, however, the parental figure of the Bildungsroman, usually a minor character within the narrative (Murdstone or Major Pendennis, for instance), or a homodiegetic narrator (Mr. Overton or Nelly Dean, for example).

In terms of my approach, I shift the conception of Bremond—who argues that an agent can move from an initial state A to a changed state non-A, thus being a persona who does not control the events, but is determined by them: he is now a *patient*—and consider that agents can influence both the narrative evolution and the evolution of other characters, that is to say, the experience of life as a process of development and formation of the protagonists. Of course, there can be other characters, besides the adult, as parental figures, which may influence the formative process (for example, Helen Burns).¹⁵

¹⁵ Also, there can be characters who may influence the spiritual development and consolidation of a protagonist in a novel that is not to be regarded as a fictional discourse within the literary system of a Bildungsroman. I am talking about *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the novel that aroused a storm of controversy over its morality; and its Aestheticism and Oscar Wilde's attachment to the 'art for art's

Sometimes the protagonist seeks for a substitute parent, a ‘master’, as one may notice in Jane-Rochester relationship. In the case of Jane, however, she finds parental support in maternal nature, but, like every human being, she is not entirely a part of it. Her own parent who has given and secured her life is God, the Father, and the only mother is the mother within. These symbolical parents appear at certain moments of intellectual and emotional crisis, when the rational world disappears in the boundless world of imagination, myth, and dream:

*I lifted up my head to look: the roof resolved to clouds, high and dim; the gleam was such as the moon imparts to vapours she is about to sever. I watched her come—watched with the strangest anticipation; as though some word of doom were to be written on her disk. She broke forth as never moon yet burst from cloud: a hand first penetrated the sable folds and waved them away; then, not a moon, but a white human form shone in the azure, inclining a glorious brow earthward. It gazed and gazed on me. It spoke to my spirit: immeasurably distant was the tone, yet so near, it whispered in my heart—
‘My daughter, flee temptation.’
‘Mother, I will.’
So I answered after I had waked from the trance-like dream. (Chapter 27)*

sake’ doctrine are the first things that everyone normally discusses with reference to this novel. I will avoid the discussion of Aestheticism, because it is not highly relevant to my study, yet I hypothesize that the novel, from a distinct point of view, displays some of the aspects of the basic pattern of a Bildungsroman in so far as it renders the formation of a character from an innocent person into an immoral creature. Also, Dorian is presented as progressing, or rather regressing, to art and back to life. There are two characters (agents) that assume the protective role and influence the formation of Dorian. Basil introduces him to the realm of art and art as another form of existence. The artist refuses to exhibit his painting because art mirrors the artist’s inner existence, art is the image of the artist himself (see Shelley’s conception of the poetic language, where language has a direct relation to thought alone, and there is nothing that interposes between conception and expression; that is to say, poetry/art has no referent in the real world, and the artistic sign is purely a creation of the mind, having its referent only in the thought of the poet), or that the portrait is too revealing of his love for Dorian, as Dorian later fears that it is too revealing of himself, which is in contradiction with Wilde’s statement in the book’s Preface that ‘*To reveal art and conceal the artist is art’s aim*’. Lord Henry seduces and corrupts Dorian through plagiarizing the ideas and conceptions stated in Pater’s *Studies in the History of Renaissance*, ever quoting, or misquoting, without acknowledgment, from this book as a means of expressing judgments on beauty, art, life, the relationship between life and art. To give just one example, Lord Henry, like Pater, proposes a new hedonism attainable through art, stating that ‘*We are punished for our refusals. Every impulse that we strive to strangle broods in the mind, and poisons us. The body sins once, and has done with its sin, for action is a mode of purification. (...) The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it, resist it, and your soul grows sick.*’ Oscar Wilde has regarded the three characters as reflections of his own image, explaining to a correspondent: ‘*Basil Hallward is what I think I am: Lord Henry—what the world thinks me: Dorian is what I would like to be—in other ages, perhaps.*’ Dorian finally offers a Faustian pact, with no visible devil, that he will exchange places with his portrait, to preserve himself as a work of art. Through a presentation of the gradual change of this character, Wilde was able to illustrate in his work the truth that ‘aesthetics are higher than ethics’, yet one may not help noticing that the novel does not take a positive view of recognized Aestheticism, or fully support the doctrine—it rather displays its dangers, especially the dangers of following the doctrine of Aestheticism in real life.

The search for a substitute parent or creed results from this very loss of the father, either by death or alienation, as it does from the loss of faith in the values of home and family.

The death associated with paternity may be regarded as a negative apprehension of the original state, loss of innocence, a tragic awakening of self-consciousness, or as an anti-father manifestation of the hero. David and Pip, for instance, encounter persons with threatening aspects near their fathers' graves (Murdstone and, respectively, Magwitch), whose deathly aspects are prophetic images of the danger to come and point to the idea that death is in life, that is to say, frustration, suffering, and a kind of fatality are to be faced in the process of development and change from childhood to maturity. The presentation of 'living adults without life', who 'come out of earth', implies the creation of an initial negative perception of the future evolution and formation, the later developmental crisis, and, in the case of children, the prediction about the death of childhood and entrance into the morbidity of mature life.

The earliest moment of the child's psychic activity is thus a synthesis of death and life, that death is necessary to life, and life emerges out of death; and an apprehension of these elements as one of life's dichotomies, along with others: feeling and thought, good and evil, truth and falsehood, human and non-human, and so on. The hero in evolution will eventually deal with the negative energy formed at the beginning of his developmental process through the connection established between inner and external circumstances, use and absorb it, or, when the completeness and success of formation is desired, repudiate it.

3.4.1.2 The Larger Society and the Experience of Urban Life

The conflict of generations, but not exclusively, provides the hero's alienation from his original home, as well as his inner division between two antithetical realities, which William Blake labeled 'innocence' (of childhood) and 'experience' (of the adult world).

The conflict leads inevitably to separation and becomes the main motive in the assertion of the protagonist's independence. The separation from the original world of childhood is an alienation as well as an emancipation or liberation since childhood is good as well as bad. It is good when the hero has freedom to explore at full the workings of his imaginative mind, or when there are other characters (for example Joe) that kindly direct and influence his experience of life. It is bad when the original home is hardly a source of liberation and there are characters that disturb the *status quo* of childhood (for instance Magwitch). In this case the chronotope of home renders its symbolical image of a life-prison: Jane Eyre is imprisoned in the Red Room; or Pip's sister imprisons him in her household (she

actually locks the front door, feeds him a diet, and lets him out only for intervals).

The hero's intrusion into another world—that of the larger society—is determined by his own change of consciousness and external perspectives as it is a result of someone else's intrusion into his universe of childhood (examples are numerous: Murdstone, Magwitch, Mrs. Reed, Sir Austen, and others), who literally disrupts the stability of the original home.

Henceforth the hero must make his own way through the turbulent waves of experience. At this point, the process of formation of the personality includes education and preparation for a career (as for Jane or Pendennis, for instance) or, at a more general level, the experience of urban life.

In the Victorian Bildungsroman education, as I shall show in approaching individual writers and novels, is of two main kinds: (1) self-education, which consists of two other components—the hero's own readings and learning in the school without walls, that is to say, the whole experience of life; and (2) formal education, which in turn includes at least three kinds—the knowledge acquired through institutionalized training (or verbal learning through the work of the mind), apprenticeship (or schooling for a specific job through the work of the body), and upper-class education (directed towards no specific occupation).

The journey from home is an escape from provinciality, be it convenient for the hero (when it conveys the meaning of basic human drives, natural and rustic resistance to the confusion and illusion of the city, as in *Great Expectations*) or totally hostile to his own sensibility and ideas acquired meanwhile from unprescribed reading. David, Pip or Jude first enter the city (usually London) with naïveté and bewilderment: to David, for instance, 'What an amazing place London was to me when I saw it in the distance (...) I believed all the adventures of all my favourite heroes to be constantly enacting and re-enacting there'. But sometimes the larger society is not necessarily London (as in *Jane Eyre*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and *Jude the Obscure*), or even there is no larger society at all (*Wuthering Heights*).

As it is, the larger society and especially the city, or the establishment of social relationships, play a double role in the hero's life. The new setting allows for liberation from family and provincial constraints, a citadel of light as a protest of civilization against wilderness and savageness, apparently opening new perspectives of progress and formation. But more often it brings frustrations and conflicts more decisive than any disenchantment and disillusion with the narrowness of provincial life.

As it is, in terms of the Victorian Bildungsroman fictional system, it is important to understand that the separation from home (childhood) and entrance into other spatial (elements of a larger society, such as boarding-

school, university, city) and temporal realities (adolescence, youth, early adulthood) involve emotional, mental and physical development.

It suggests the hero's entrapment in an existential, spiral cycle of succeeding minor experiences of life, each consisting of the thematic juxtaposition of success and failure, triumph and ordeal, rejection and acceptance, and so on. Each of them leads gradually to the ultimate experience of frustration and pain, which changes the hero's psychological validity and offers premises for completeness and formation.

Adolescence, as the period of puberty crisis, is the stage that displays the most significant spiritual and bodily awakening since it is the central event in the normal course of physical and emotional growth. The hero's awareness of the change in his body is revealed by childhood sexuality and adolescent sexuality (in the Victorian Bildungsroman, the sexual implications are rather obscured) as it is by corporal punishment (David Copperfield) or slight of body provided by adults (Pip, whose body is equated to the pig at the Christmas dinner).

Because, perhaps, of the Victorian reserve about sexual behavior, the Victorian writer of Bildungsromane may avoid to a certain extent the presentation of the crises of physical development. Dickens, for instance, creates a physical void when dealing with puberty and adolescence. In comparison, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, among others, emphasize early adolescence, rather than childhood, as a period of life displaying a most relevant conscious and physical awakening.

In *Jane Eyre*, for example, the heroine meets the Rev. Mr. Brocklehurst in Mrs. Reeds's breakfast room:

The handle turned, the door unclosed, and passing through and curtsying low, I looked up at—a black pillar!—such, at least, appeared to me, at first sight, the straight, narrow, sable-clad shape standing erect on the rug: the grim face at the top was like a carved mask, placed above the shaft by way of capital. (Chapter 4)

This phallic imagery makes of the head of Lowood School a symbol of male sexuality that is associated with death, terror, and sadism. Jane and her schoolmates are not trained and guided to become human individuals possessing their own sexuality, not even valuable, marketable possessions (as decorative heroines of romance).

There are these two aspects against whom Charlotte Brontë will attempt to struggle in her narrative. In the tradition of the Victorian Bildungsroman, her strong point of view is expressed through the voice of Jane the narrator and reified in the experience of life of Jane the character. Charlotte Brontë would always attempt to point that her heroine's personality is formed not simply by moral decisions imposed by the Victorian world, but also by her own psychological essence. As it is

suggested in Jane's childhood and adolescence, the social status may be an important condition of defining her sexuality. Later, however, when development assures the psychic stability and definite perspectives of existence, the social and economic status seem after all to be minimal conditions of Jane's sexual development and sexual equality between man and woman.¹⁶

The Victorian female writers seem to lay stronger emphasis on the character's sensibility and inner life in the process of development as a struggle against the social environment in their fictional assertion of the concept of 'independent woman'. In comparison, I argue that the Victorian male authors of Bildungsromane attempt to find a compromise between the inner and outer experiences of the hero, hoping to integrate him into the social background.

Although literary perceptions of the process of character development and formation are different, the Victorian writers of Bildungsromane render generally the artistic conviction about the importance of childhood experience and adolescent response to external stimuli. Thus they reveal the literary continuation and consolidation of the 'myth of childhood' in English literature, whose beginnings have been provided by the English romantic poets. The cultural shift determines both the continuation of the romantic tradition (some romantic attitudes, devices, poetic principles being preserved in Victorian fiction) and the transfiguration, hence aspects of novelty, of the romantic concern with the experience of childhood (to mention, for instance, the defining of childhood and adolescence through their social interaction with other people and the environment).¹⁷

¹⁶ The later psychosexual experience of Jane is determined, among other things, by Bertha, her alter ego, an androgynous figure who symbolizes a warning against Jane's desire for sexual and emotional release. Jane herself becomes a crucial experience for Rochester's psychosexual development. It seems that he has sexual anxieties caused by the aggressive, strangely virile, sexuality of Bertha. Psychoanalytical theory argues that the fear of the female eternally inexplicable nature is common to both primitive and civilized man. Because it is a product of Victorian sexual repression, the reader is not surprised that Bertha is a beast, a vampire. Rochester reveals the fact that he wants to find in Jane the opposite of Bertha, insisting from the very beginning of their relationship that she is a fairy, an elfin from another world. He denies thus her sexuality, personality, even her human and social nature, attempting to turn her into a dependent, a slave, a sexual plaything under his dominance. This aspect becomes one of the reasons why Jane leaves him after discovering the existence of his first wife.

¹⁷ The concern with the experience of childhood and adolescence takes in 20th century fiction new perspectives, even of a stronger human resonance. In this respect, there are two examples that are impossible for me to avoid, which render two different viewpoints on this topic. The 'myth of childhood' is destroyed in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, whose author rejects and denies any hope that human innocence and purity exist in children. Instead, the English writer develops certain parts of the biblical material to reveal the depressing truth about man's nature, defining what he calls '*the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart*'. In comparison, the innocence of the child and adolescent is preserved, despite various attempts to lose it, in Jerome David Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. The American novelist emphasises the purity of children and adolescents through a presentation of the critical stage in puberty of a sixteen-year-old boy. Holden Caulfield's condition is complicated by mental breakdown, emotional problems; he suffers because of an undisciplined hyper-sensibility, as well as physically, for he is unable to cope inwardly with bodily changes. Like in the Victorian Bildungsroman, the hero does not reject maturity but tries to find a better model of existence than the adults and the

In this respect, it is also important to understand that the social dimension of the hero's developmental process—determined by the painful separation from the past—displays a change of his inside, namely a duality of his spiritual components. What I mean is that, on the one hand, a part of his psyche associates itself with the experience of the past. On the other hand, another part of his consciousness discovers elements of novelty, in fact a new inside, a new identity. The latter part is more immediate and more real, and emphasizes more strongly his new individuality which is in the process of being formed in the isolation arisen from frustration and suffering. There is thus a self within the self, a past within the present and different temporal and spatial realities.

Indeed, the separation of the child from his parents means a move towards a greater understanding, a greater consciousness than that previously available at home or family circle. Such a consciousness is highly individualized, and, as it is often asserted in Victorian *Bildungsromane*, it is apprehended in the isolation from others. It is, however, acquired not through loneliness but through a complex range of external perspectives provided by the social background in general, and by the relationships that are being established between the character in formation and other human beings, within the social spatial reality, in particular. These perspectives often consist of trial, ordeal, the protagonists' sense of abandonment, insignificance, danger, self-exposure to a world unsympathetic to the new consciousness expressed through the child—all these elements reveal the possibility of losing the psychic wholeness, and a number of difficulties to be faced in the process of attaining final accomplishment (in other words, the formation of personality). The paradox is that the child possesses powers and intelligence far greater than those of the rest of humanity; he is divine, as English romantic poets would assert, but he also appears as insignificant, his consciousness stupid, his way of living helpless in relation to the larger society.

If he survives his trial by parents, the hero has thus to undergo further testing, a larger ordeal provided by the city, money, and love. The first two aspects are linked to the professional career of the protagonist, his search for a vocation and social accomplishment. Like in a Renaissance conduct book, some of the recurrent themes in Victorian *Bildungsromane* are thus the making of a gentleman, professional achievement, and a stable place in the social hierarchy. These ideals become difficult to achieve, for the struggle for survival is hardly conducive to good manners and consideration of the others. In this respect, money assumes an important role in the novel, and the hero's social position often depends on his financial success (except for

environment offer, yet he can conceive of no realistic substitute for it. He is merely a rebel, and his consciousness is nearly destroyed by the conflict between his desired psychic integrity (through love, wisdom, stability, virtue, charity) and the externals of behaviour and social values.

the protagonists of *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, perhaps). Money's pervasive importance is often emphasized and determines the sort of accommodation to the contemporary to protagonist world of social interaction. Major Pendennis declares that life '*without money and the best society isn't worth having.*' Mr. Overton believes the loss of money is at the root of all evil and declares money more desirable than health or reputation; he even withholds Aunt Alethea's legacy until Ernest is mature enough to appreciate it. If Ernest or Richard Feberel can take considerable wealth for granted, most of the other characters must resist the menace of real poverty: money-worries plague the progress of Pen, David and Jude; bankruptcy is the central motif of the plot in *The Mill on the Floss*; the 'great expectations' of Pip are more or less prospects of inheritance. Except for Jane Eyre and the protagonists of *Wuthering Heights*, most of the characters do not remain indifferent to property and financial resources (perhaps because of the writers' concern with the representation of the new, atomistic world of middle-class progress, and the realistic mode conveyed in fiction writing).

On a more personal level, the protagonist of Victorian Bildungsromane, like the traditional hero of romance and folklore, must resist the trial by love. The love ordeal is linked to the protagonist's sentimental career, involving at least two amorous entanglements. The strong sensitivity that made for childhood alienation from home and provinciality leads now to a larger ordeal, which is also self-induced, especially by the character's neglect of true love and his determined dabbling in passion. This aspect is mostly represented in the formation of David, Pen and Richard, the latter being told by his father, Sir Austin Feberel, that '*Love of any object is the soul's ordeal; and [women] are ours, loving them, or not.*'

3.4.1.3 Formation as Success and Failure

Both the preparation for a professional career and the sentimental journey, as determinant parts of the whole process of character evolution and formation, are also dominant elements of the central conflict in every Bildungsroman, which is personal in origin. The conflict demands in most of the cases the hero to reappraise his values, escape his selfish lust, and change his consciousness, his judgments and ways of behavior. The responsibility of change is assumed as a result of the protagonist's understanding of true values of moral behavior towards himself and others.

The conflict is founded on the juxtaposition of evil and innocence; in other words, on the correlation between two patterns of development leading to formation: one implies degeneration in time; the other suggests a process of regeneration in time. The former consists of the hero's fulfillment of a

threatening destiny that adults imagine for him, and in his internalization of false values and principles that others try to impose on him. Towards the end of the developmental process, the hero may evade that destiny. It represents one of the most important premises for his formation. It stands for a rise, a psychic change, a personal positive transformation, justifying the novel's happy ending (the ending to be marriage as the symbol of a new beginning, rather than the evil death which has distorted the original innocent *status quo*). It constitutes the final experience in the process of formation, the most real and less provisional one since all past experiences are digested by the hero's psyche only to make way for the next ones. The experience of childhood, that of education, of 'expectation', of dream, of myth, of physical growth, of conscious change, and so on, are included in the hero's total experience and in his final identity which will be both the transfiguration and the sum of all these experiences. In Victorian Bildungsroman they represent definite aspects of the developmental process leading to formation; in a non-developmental fiction they are mere appearances.

A Faustian-like figure, the hero is never satisfied with the present experience, he always yearns for a future where the formation of his personality is hypothesized to take place. The future would be a result of his movement from self-alienation to a desired final wholeness of his psyche. In the Bildungsroman in which formation is successfully achieved the future is everything, otherwise it can be nothing. Sometimes the character in his progress through time (from childhood to maturity) and space (from provincial, simple lifestyle to the social and cultural complexity of the city) reaches a future based on the past (David Copperfield); sometimes a future resembling nothing of the origins (Jane Eyre); sometimes it is more vague than he thought it would be (Pip or Richard Feverel).

Most of the Victorian Bildungsromane discussed in the present study create or recreate the same final experience in different ways, which is almost pointless to give examples of—I should, however, give one, for instance that of David Copperfield: the protagonist states in the final pages of the novel the following *sententia* drawn from his experience: '*New thoughts and hopes were whirling through my mind, and all the colors of my life were changing*'.

The young man, as he appears in Victorian Bildungsromane, experiences internally directed epiphanies, moments of insight leading to the comprehension of the reality of things. He now feels a sense of duty to the self and the others, a sense perhaps induced by the positive experience of childhood, nonetheless strong through all the rebellion and turbulence of adolescence and youth, and in spite of its apparent submission in the long process of formation. At this moment, the attaining of a greater consciousness (as in Wordsworth), which means the accomplishment of the

formation of personality, has loneliness as its counterpart and should reveal actually a change in consciousness, which would eventually determine a move from earlier, restricted ways of experience of life towards a new philosophy of life, a new vision and understanding of life's meaning.

It would also determine a move from the concern with physical, exterior success (the hero as a dandy: say, fine clothes, possession of money, witty appearance, admiration of his friends) to the cultivation of humanity, feeling and intellect. The success of formation of a complete character depends on a proper correlation between inner life and exterior circumstances, the ego inside and the externals of behavior, yet sometimes the aspect of a stable social position and wealth is of no prevailing importance (as in *Jane Eyre*) or it is taken for granted (as in *Wuthering Heights* or *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*).

However, even if the hero understands the error of his sentiment and conduct, he is by no means guaranteed a resolution to his problems, and his initiation (formation as a mature personality) is often far from being complete.

Thus, whatever attempts the Victorian writer of Bildungsromane will make to achieve an adequate perspective of his narrative, he will find it difficult to give his fiction an organic and coherent ending. He may therefore choose among several perspectives: he may reward the hero for his sufferings, giving the novel a recognizably happy ending (the number of such works is relatively small, to mention *David Copperfield*, *The History of Penderennis*, *The Way of All Flesh*, and *Of Human Bondage*, the latter a 20th century, not Victorian, novel); he may evade the conflict by bringing the hero to an untimely death (*The Mill on the Floss*, *Jude the Obscure*, or *Marius the Epicurean*, for instance, ending with the death of the protagonist); he may leave the hero's future ambiguous (such an ending is given in most of the novels, for example *Great Expectations*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, or Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, concluding more or less uncertainly, but opening speculation about the defeat of all positive emotion and about the protagonist's final choice).

I believe that one of the main reasons for the process of evolution and development to come or not to come to completion—in other words, the presentation of formation as success or defeat—is the ability or, respectively, the failure to separate the archetypal images and symbols of the human process of development, say, the archetypal symbol of the child, for instance, from the writers' own memories of the growing selves, for example those of childhood. In other words, the Victorian writer of Bildungsromane, through the voice of his narrator, must dissociate the memories of himself, especially those of himself as a victim, from his sense of what the memory signifies. If he does not make this separation, as perhaps Wordsworth has managed to do, the symbolical images do not help

integrate consciousness, they create a deeper alienation by providing divisions of mind and soul, good and bad, love and anger, acceptance of the danger of self-extinction and anger, bitterness and self-pity. If the archetype appears as a means of achieving the psychic totality of the human, and the correlation between feeling and thought, spiritual components and rationality, the inside and the outside (in my case, achieving the formation of personality), the writer must comprehend the fact that the imagined process of the formation of his fictitious character, resulting from the workings of his memory, represents the expression of an unconscious need for the wholeness of the human being. In this respect, the rendering of frustrations, ordeals and trials from the parents, mature world and social background is then a polemical response against the divisions of the self.

Most relevant, the very essence of the Victorian Bildungsroman, its hidden meaning, is thus the presentation of the process of formation of personality as the expression of the writer's unconscious need for achieving the wholeness of his own self, his own attaining of a greater consciousness, the process being conceived within the framework of a fictional system.

I also believe that the reason for the difficulty of giving the Bildungsroman a clear and decisive ending arises from the fact that the Victorian novel of character formation is highly autobiographical, and, perhaps because the author's own career is still in progress, or just beginning, or he is still too close to the orientation of the character, he cannot be sure that the evolution and development leading to the formation of a hero like himself have been completed or a success. The Victorian Bildungsroman is thus more than other kinds of fiction subject to intrusions from areas of the author's experience beyond the narrative conventions and limits of imaginative prose.

3.4.2 Biographical Substratum and the Novel

Since most of the English Bildungsromane, as novels dealing with the development of a young person, usually from childhood to maturity, are strongly autobiographical, this study raises and explores the issue of the prevalence of the confessional impulse in Victorian fiction and the general use of subjectivity, along with an attempt, sometimes difficult, to draw sharp lines between biography and autobiography, autobiography and the autobiographical novel (fictional autobiography as a Bildungsroman). Mention should be also made of any distinction between author and hero, and any degree of identification between and detachment from each other. As suggested above, the analysis of Victorian Bildungsromane should also explore the difficulty of correlation between the symbolical representation of the process of formation and the memory images of the authors' selves, which are involved as concomitants in this process.

Both biography and autobiography embody a unique moment in the history of man's conception of himself, representing actually a rare and very late phenomenon in the growth of the human spirit, requiring literacy, individuality, and a sense of history. Without literacy the author of autobiography, for instance, cannot write his own life for others and without widespread literacy there are not enough others for whom to write. Of course, one can envisage illiterate people dictating their life histories, but to conceive such an enterprise is only possible in a cultural setting that already possesses autobiography. More basically, without a conception of individuality, without a notion of one's selfhood, autobiography is impossible. As many philosophical anthropologists have observed, the primitive, tribal man does not possess a sense of individuality, and this sense of himself is lacking precisely because he lacks a sense of history. Emphasizing that from the point of view of an-historical peoples or classes 'suffering' is equivalent to 'history', Mircea Eliade points out that the archaic man achieves his sense of '*communitas*' by denying history and the individuation it creates. Interest in the 'irreversible' and the 'new' in history is a recent discovery in the life of humanity. The crucial difference between the man of the archaic civilizations and modern, historical man lies in the increasing value the latter gives to historical events, that is, to the 'novelties' that, for traditional man, represented either meaningless conjunctures or infractions of norms (hence 'faults', 'sins', and so on) and that, as such, required to be expelled (abolished) periodically. In other words, for archaic, preliterate, tribal humanity, which conceives of the universe in terms of archetypal, ever-recurring processes and rituals, to be different (to be individual) is to fall. For to be different is to botch a planting ritual, violate some taboo, or otherwise fall away from the way things are and always have been. In this respect, Nietzsche claims that human beings are to regard the state of individuation as the origin and primal cause of all suffering, as something objectionable in itself. Such is the manner in which primitive civilizations regard the unique, the individual, man or woman, and this kind of difference is not something for what one strives or, having attained it, wishes to remember.

In matters of literary phenomenon, simulated autobiography is a device used in novels (for instance Defoe's *Moll Flanders*), and the novel can often be autobiography in the guise of fiction (as in Dickens's *David Copperfield* or Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*). Autobiography can be generally regarded as an extended, organized narrative (story) of a person's life as written by that person, and, as memoirs, it is prepared for the public eye. In this respect, autobiographies are distinct from other similar forms, such as diaries, journals, and letters. Also distinctions should be made between autobiographies and memoirs, for, whereas the latter deal at least in part with public events and recounted

persons other than the author, an autobiography is a confessional, connected narration of the author's life, with some elements of introspection (as, for example, St. Augustine's *Confessions* or Franklin's *Autobiography*).

Autobiography, as a recollection written down by the subject of the work, is to be distinguished from biography—also a life story, a written account of a person's life, but recorded by someone else, someone who centers the whole attention on the subject of interest. In this respect, autobiography, especially applied to the purpose of fiction writing, stands near the 'life and times' book, being concerned with a life and a period, while biography does not look two ways.

Thus, given the biographical substratum of the Victorian fiction, the frequent identification between the author and the protagonist, the tendency to speak in *propria persona* inside the narrative as the narrator and main character (the autodiegetic narrator in *David Copperfield* or *Jane Eyre*, for example), as well as the interest in the actuality and social circumstances of the period, it is appropriate to regard the Bildungsroman as an autobiographical novel, or an autobiographical type of fiction, even if the omniscient heterodiegetic narrator of *The History of Pendennis*—a third-person discourse—assumes the position of an apparently distant observer, recounting the story of a life but providing interpretations and attempting to hold readers' attention, as does the homodiegetic narrator of *The Way of All Flesh*, who even more than others, as a pure biographer, concentrates his attention on the main protagonist.

However, 'autobiographical novel' is a vague and misleading term, often lacking direct and clear definition. Bildungsroman may be placed into this category as a more or less distinct type of autobiographical fiction, rather than representing the autobiographical novel itself or covering its entire literary area. It should be distinguished from other types of autobiographical literature, such as the confessional novel, for instance. A typical Bildungsroman narrative pattern is highly introspective; it concentrates on the development and evolution of a protagonist in accordance with certain temporal and spatial realities, a huge range of events and personal experiences that determines the formation of a mature, stable personality, and the detachment between the hero and the author is desired by the latter. A confessional novel (also a rather flexible term), written in the first-person, is more personal and subjective; the account of feelings, ideas, experiences, physical states, states of mind and soul is provided to determine and represent a highly emphasized self-revelation which is being 'confessed' to the reader (as in De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* or George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man*). The Victorian novel of evolution, as described in the present study, does not lack confessional elements—especially the protagonist's self-revelations (spots of time, epiphanies, moments of insight) that play

important parts in the process of intellectual formation and maturation—that determine, along with more or less definite autobiographical elements, the narrative framework of Bildungsromane.

When approaching any Bildungsroman, one should always make distinctions between autobiography and the autobiographical novel (for the sake of convenience and because the problem of biographical substratum, discussed in the present subchapter, is just one aspect of the general concern of my study, I regard the Bildungsroman as an autobiographical novel, in spite of the above suggested ideas).

One must avoid the interpretation of a literary work by heavy reliance on aspects of the author's life as a basis for understanding, which may result in biographical fallacy, although one may argue that no person is better qualified to recount his own life than himself, and, in the case of Victorian Bildungsromane, the form of autobiography becomes largely fictional. This opinion is highly unreliable, as is memory itself, for one may hardly recall clear details of early life, and other persons' impressions, though sometimes useful, are equally unreliable. The writer himself may sometimes suppress the disagreeable facts of his life, deforming the temporal aspect, or recall what it pleases him to remember, thus distorting the truth for the sake of convenience or any other literary or non-literary purposes of the narrative discourse.

In this respect, the fictional autobiography (including Victorian autobiographical novel as Bildungsroman) is unreliable as extra-literary truth, though it has a unique literary value that actually determines one of the major concerns of the present study.

This literary value emerges out of the special responsibility of the autobiographical novelist to make his narrative aesthetically independent of its author.

There is thus a number of important interpretative considerations regarding the detachment of the writer of autobiographical fiction from his narrative material, as well as from his narrator and the hero whose experience of life he attempts to present and assess within a literary discourse.

The reader of the autobiographical novel, like that of autobiography, is tempted to believe that there are no degrees of detachment between the author and the narrator. If there are any, this problem is of secondary importance to my research, and they can be revealed through the critical interpretation of the relationship between writer and character. I may at least argue that the author of Victorian Bildungsromane creates and expresses, and the narrator verbally reifies, the same, in most cases omniscient, point of view.

It is revelatory for my study to approach the narrative relation between author and the hero in development, or between hero and narrator.

I think that the reader (a critic or a non-trained receiver of the literary message) of the autobiographical novel, i.e. the Bildungsroman, like that of autobiography, may easily find any degrees of identification between the writer and his fictitious character. He should be well informed about the real circumstances of the writer's life (for example his biography, letters, memories) and should be able to treat analytically and penetrate through contextual analysis the narrative material.

Thus one may easily reveal that in the case of Charlotte Brontë, for example, Jane's educational experience at Lowood is not far removed from the author's own recollections of childhood at the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge. The prototype of Helen Burns, Jane's intelligent schoolmate and older friend is Charlotte's own eldest sister, Maria, who died of tuberculosis at thirteen. The figure of Edward Rochester, Jane's lover and master resembles the conflicting attributes of a real-life Belgian professor, Constantine Heger, whom Charlotte loved, and that of her beloved Zamorna.

Similarly, other Victorian writers of Bildungsroman also circulate between the pretensions of imaginative creation and the experience of real life, creating what may be labeled 'symbolic autobiography'. If powerful enough, the biographical circumstances dominate the climactic perspective of the autobiographical novel.

Dickens, for example, implies in *Great Expectations* the motif of the ordeal by love in the narrative treatment of his hero in development. Thus Pip's formation and psychic completeness is rendered ambiguously also because he is afflicted with passion for a woman (Estella) who does not return his feelings and probably has almost certainly found him distasteful. For Dickens the man, this woman was an eighteen-year-old actress named Ellen Lawless Ternan. At the time of the novel's writing, Pip's unhappy infatuation echoes Dickens's own, for his love for Ellen was still in the hopeless stage, and even more than a year after the novel's completion Dickens was not able to overcome Ellen's resistance. From sources other than the novel, for instance two of Dickens' letters in the autumn of 1862, the reader can see that Ellen was not in love with him; and, from the memories of their contemporaries, that the thought of intimacy with him repelled her. Now the reader can understand the unhappy ending of the novel.

One may say that, though *David Copperfield* is closer to the facts of Dickens's life, *Great Expectations* is closer to its spirit.

In this respect, the reader of the autobiographical novel, like that of autobiography, may be tempted to believe that there are no degrees of detachment between the author and the character. Indeed, David Copperfield (the narrator) and Charles Dickens (the author), for example, may be

equated because it is natural to think that many of the things that happen to David, and many of the places he goes to, belong equally to Dickens.

It is more difficult to apprehend the differences between the author and the hero within the fictional system of the autobiographical novel (Bildungsroman). I doubt whether it occurs at least to one non-trained reader in a hundred to wonder if Dickens and David are different.

Against any identification theory, I consider four main arguments reified through the analysis of individual Victorian authors and Bildungsromane.

Simply, (1) the truth is that if David Copperfield were Charles Dickens, to follow this example, there would have been no *Great Expectations* or *Oliver Twist*.

Seriously, (2) it is obvious that the mind of the author contains the whole narrative material, whereas the character's mind, situated within it, does not. Similarly, the narrator's mind is given less knowledge and emotion, for he is also a narrative device, a created, imaginary, fictitious persona within the narrative.

Likewise, (3) the written accounts of the author's life (biography, letters, diary, and others) help the critical opinion on the validity of detachment between the writer of the Bildungsroman and the hero in formation.

Finally, (4) irrespective of their similar or different experiences, it is difficult to imagine that the mature writer of a Bildungsroman remembers clearly the entire range of action, attitude and emotion of his own, say, childhood. Hence the use of imagination as a creative principle in fiction. It suggests, however, a parallel between, say, Dickens (child and adult) and Pip (child and adult) whose older selves attempt to establish and maintain a narrative distance from their younger selves. Nevertheless, it is important to apprehend that there is yet another type of narrative distance—sometimes subjective, sometimes objective, sometimes ironic—between the author-narrator and his immature protagonist whose process of formation is stated and evaluated. The latter type of narrative distance reveals actually the existence of detachment between the writer and the character of a Bildungsroman.

In other words, in spite of any apparent similitude, the author himself tries to create a narrative distance from his character by attempting to avoid any emotional indulgence in the hero's experience of life; or assuming a mature, objective look back; or establishing a moral attitude; or controlling and interpreting omnisciently (sometimes through a narrator who moves in time with the character, sometimes through the voice of a narrator who is at the end of the narrative) the story according to the point of view expressed in the discourse.

In terms of the fourth argument, I thus consider the transfiguration of the real circumstances of the writer's life due to artistic imaginative drives, as well as in accord with the narrative point of view and the narrative concern of the fictional material. To give an example, the educational experience of Charlotte Brontë lasted in reality a period of ten months in the author's ninth year, but it is given a duration and a prominence in the novel that cast its shadow over all the subsequent action, and becomes an important experience in the general process of development leading to the formation of Jane's personality.

On a more general level, there are also distinctions between the author of autobiography and that of autobiographical fiction. The autobiographer, typically an older man, indulging in retrospective analysis and often less sentimental about his youth, renders, through fear of self-exposure, his own view on his own life story out of the things that he wants to remember. His self-consciousness must account for the omissions from the experience of life between childhood and manhood, as well as for the fact that his view about himself is incomplete, only partial, for he can describe himself and his experience of life only from his point of view, and his life changes even as he records it.

In comparison, the autobiographical novelist has a distinct advantage over the autobiographer. Usually a younger man, near the time of his initiation and entering the stage of adulthood, self-ironic but still mindful of the turbulence and pains of the space between childhood and early maturation (reproduced as accurately as possible), the writer of the autobiographical novel is however freer to select and reveal certain aspects of his past by assigning to his protagonist some of his own feelings, ideas and deeds and inventing as many others as he needs to complete a dramatic characterization.

But whatever strategies he follows, the creator will hardly manage to provide his narrative with a coherent and organic ending, making of it the least satisfactory part of the narrative. Especially the involvement of subjective and highly personal emotions of the novelist may thwart the integrity of the narration. Similarly, if properly handled, subjectivity can provide a peculiar vibrancy to incident, story, setting, and character. Sometimes, as in Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1831), the ending suffers by the story's return to the impersonal facts and objectivity which are different from those aspects of sensibility that originally suggested the story. Sometimes, as in *Of Human Bondage*, the ending suffers by a wish fulfillment introduced from without, as if the writer turned his wishes into fiction, describing the marriage that he would have liked to make (indeed, the union between the unfortunate Philip and Sally violates the logical structure of the plot).

Somerset Maugham, in his comments on this novel in *The Summing Up* (1938), makes an interesting distinction between autobiography and the autobiographical novel, which may help a better understanding of Victorian Bildungsroman: *'It is not an autobiography, but an autobiographical novel; fact and fiction are inextricably mingled; the emotions are my own, but not all the incidents are related as they happened and some of them are transferred to my hero not from my own life but from that of persons with whom I was intimate'* (cf. Buckley 1974: 24).

The autobiographical novel is a fictional discourse about the self, the Victorian spirit adding to this concern the issue of how the individual self relates to what is outside himself (compared to modern literature which seeks to stress on individual consciousness and sensibility along with the indifference to the objective reality of the present or recent past). The autobiographical mode as conveyed in the Victorian Bildungsroman renders the writer's attempt to strike a proper balance between the self and the demands of society, refusing to choose between either the private or the public, feeling or matter of fact, subjective or objective. This aspect was already comprehended by the scholars of the Victorian period, E. D. H. Johnson, for example, calling it 'double awareness': the authors of *David Copperfield* and *The Mill on the Floss* attempt to find those forms of making the individual experience relevant to the needs of the others. Their realistic style reveals the concern with moral issues, while the vitality of the romantic spirit in their writings (as in Wordsworth's *The Prelude*) finds public uses for the experience of the self, opening the private experience to others, yet seeking some methods to protect individuality against them.

Indeed, the Victorian authors of autobiographical novels were writing the stories of their own lives at a moment in the history of human consciousness when romantic tradition had done much to change the way man thought about himself and his experience. Later, it was Freud to appear on the scene with his radical redefinition of self, society, and discourse. In this respect, George P. Landow (whose ideas I found on the Internet) reasons that this historical situation in between makes the second half of the century simultaneously the most and the least 'Freudian' of ages: the most because the 19th century European middle-class society, with its strongly paternal family structure, had a genetic relation to the neuroses Freud encountered and the theories he formulated as a result; while it was the least because men could quite self-unconsciously discuss matters soon to appear in an entirely new light. In other words, Victorian novelists could unconsciously disclose matters of subjectivity and the hidden realms of the self, while, in turn, the 20th century modernists, like Joyce, Pound, Woolf, in an age of modern psychology that made the self more exposed, more fascinating and more comprehensible, would consciously attempt to present it as more elusive, less palatable and manageable, and, at the same time,

would try to avoid fatal depths by keeping close to the safer coasts of memory, and I may add that the autobiographical impulse, in both Victorian and modern narratives, when it does turn inward, tends to appear in more explicitly fictional modes. A critic noticed that a writer undertaking an autobiography (fictional autobiography in the case of the Bildungsroman, I may add) is like signing a contract with the Devil: there is much to be won and everything, especially honor, to be lost; also, in the Age of Freud, to subject oneself to even amateur psychological scrutiny seems rather like performing an act of private therapy in public.

Although there is a number of vivid differences between the narrative discourses belonging to Victorian and modern literature (or the 20th century literature in general), it is this very aspect—of accommodating autobiographical elements in fiction—that should link both modes of novel writing. This aspect constitutes the essence of the Bildungsroman in general, that subjective literature of *‘the dialogue of the mind with itself’*, as Matthew Arnold called it.

On a general level, critics of the past decade have increasingly begun to recognize that Victorian literature has similarities with the work of the first third of the 20th century, that modern literature, say, of Joyce, Eliot, Woolf, and that no great divide separates Victorian and modern artists. The time has come, perhaps, given the huge amount of recent literary productions and the historical entrance into a new millennium, that critics may realize that it is just as useful to see Eliot as the last great Victorian poet and as the first great modern one; that Pound’s translations and exploration of poetic forms follow rather naturally from the work of Rossetti; and that the great narrative experiments which inform the writings of Joyce and Woolf are found earlier in Victorian poetry, or even much earlier, in metaphysical poetry of Donne or romantic poetry of Wordsworth, among others. In some respects, one may perceive that the modern imagery of the wasteland, use of personae, rhetorical discontinuity, and personal appropriations and recreations of myth also characterize Victorian poetry—hence a reevaluation of the position of tradition and the individual talent, neither only praising Eliot and other modernists for their radical originality nor denigrating them for lack of it, but rather observing how they take their places within a major literary continuity.

On a particular level, that of the main concern of my study, one may think that the Victorian autobiographical novel is characterized by many of the central concerns which also inform modern literature. Most of the major Victorian novelists and a number of 20th century writers learned to render private thoughts and feelings, private experiences of character evolution and formation within the conventional pattern of the Bildungsroman, where the autobiographical component, besides linking these two literary traditions, is

one of the most important and determining element for the existence of the genre.

Also, in both cases (Victorian and the 20th century fiction), both the strength and the weakness of the Bildungsroman lie in its autobiographical element. In this respect, Buckley reasons that the autobiographical component *'gains in immediacy and authenticity from the novelist's intimate knowledge of his materials. It suffers whenever the novelist's engagement leads to special pleading for a self interest outside the frame of the fiction or when the motivation of the hero is determined by forces in the novelist's experience for some reason excluded from the novel. In such cases, we must know something of the author's life, as the most objective of his biographers have been able to present it, if we are adequately to understand and appraise his book'* (1974: 26).

4. THE VICTORIAN NOVEL AS ARGUMENT

4.1 Gender Distinction 1: Artistic Individualization and Maturation of the Male Characters

I believe that my attempt to interpret the individual Victorian novels of formation through their division according to gender distinctions of both the writer and the character would assist a more detailed, yet comprehensive, analysis and understanding of Victorian Bildungsromane.

Firstly, I hope it will disclose the distinct, individual features of each process of development of each discussed novel, in both form and content. Secondly, it will allow for the detached revealing of general characteristic features of Victorian male Bildungsromane, and, respectively, of female fiction of character formation. Finally, it will suggest general thematic and narrative elements, devices, and principles of Victorian Bildungsroman as a definite literary system. At this final level, the chapter's direct approach to some of the most representative writers and novels of the Victorian age will represent also a practical argumentation of the ideas and conceptions stated in the present study.

The argument for such an interpretative modality arises from my specific apprehension of the Victorian Bildungsroman as a fictional system whose elements are also the elements of other minor fictional systems (individual Victorian Bildungsromane, both male and female) that constitute its general patterned system. For the reason of avoiding repetition, the argument is suggested in detail in my introductory chapter.

4.1.1 The History of Pendennis: History of Self and History of the Age

The writing of *The History of Pendennis* was interrupted at roughly the midpoint for three months by a severe illness of the author, which may have been cholera, and which is perhaps responsible for the low narrative pulse and faded vitality of the second half of the serial. This novel ran concurrently with *David Copperfield*, and their dual appearance brought about the first of many comparisons with Dickens, by David Masson in the *North British Review* (May 1851). Thackeray now felt that he and Dickens were battling for the title of the king of the novelists' hill, though he would never equal Dickens's popularity, except for the critics.

The History of Pendennis is considered one of the great autobiographical novels of all times, in fact a Victorian expurgation of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, describing Thackeray's own disappointments in college, ambivalent relation with his mother, and an insider's knowledge of the London publishing world.

It has been also called '*the first true Bildungsroman in English fiction*' (Ray 1958: 110), and indeed it displays a huge range of the corresponding narrative elements. First of all, it is a story of a highly sensitive protagonist, whose double-sided self—of '*thousand vanities and weaknesses*' and '*yet some generous impulses (...) not altogether dishonest*', as the omniscient narrator states—determines the evolution and formation of his personality, from childhood to maturity, with the clear goal of becoming a gentleman, along with professional and financial accomplishment. In this respect, Major Pendennis, who assumes the role of a beneficent parental figure, often tells his protégée:

'Look out: I shall be on the watch for you: and I shall die content, my boy, if I can see you with a good lady-like wife, and a good carriage, and a good pair of horses, living in society, and seeing your friends, like a gentleman.' (Volume I, Chapter XXVIII)

Another example:

'My object, Arthur, is to make a man of you—to see you well placed in the world, as becomes one of your name and my own, sir.' (Volume I, Chapter XXXVI)

At the beginning of the novel, the temporal component of the narrative determines its rapid rhythm: no dramatic impression of a formative childhood is given and the reader is introduced directly to an eighteen-year-old young man passing through an ordeal of love induced by a passionate, non-rational sentimental affair with an actress, Miss Fotheringay. Next, the reader finds Pendennis passing through institutionalized education, a necessary element in Bildungsromane, as a student at Saint Boniface College, Oxbridge (perhaps an imaginary place labeled after Oxford and Cambridge). His gentleman-like personality, conduct, and inclinations reveal his Pre-Raphaelite temperament, or rather that of a dandy, for he is fond of beautiful clothes and jewelry, enjoys popularity and strikes others by his taste in matters of art, food, and relations with people. His artistic side flourished earlier, arisen from the amorous entanglement with the actress, Pendennis continuing writing poetry and printing his verses at his own expense. Back home, he launched a new sentimental career by a passionate relationship with Blanche Amory, which proved to be a fiasco. Dissatisfied and bored with provincial life, Pen leaves his home and family circle to make his way independently in the city. In London, his personality somehow changed by the dramatic experience as a student, and driven by financial constraints, Pendennis is searching for a profession, vocation and a working philosophy. He continues his sentimental career by involving himself in two love affairs, less passionately with Fanny, and, now driven by practical

reasons, with Blanche Amory. He continues his literary career, publishing different literary works and critical articles in different periodicals, and achieves commercial success with a novel, *Leaves from the Life-Book of Walter Lorraine* (viewed as a satire on or a parody of sentimental literature, for it deals primarily with love, despair, unfaithfulness). At the end, Pendennis becomes a man of fashion, and, like Thackeray himself, is praised by the London literary society.

In the modern critical context, one may believe that in the process of his evolution and initiation in the philosophy of living, first from the provincial setting of his mother (chronotope of home) to university and then to Fleet Street and London society, Pendennis becomes a snob, a dandy, egotistic and egocentric, a social climber with intentions of a successful marriage and a seat in Parliament. He is not given the epiphany, the major revelation leading to the comprehension of personal failures, or of the nature of the impact Pen's vices had on his spiritual, inner existence. He thus does never perceive the exact nature of his vices and virtues, nor does he ever reflect about the intelligent operation of other persons' vices and qualities in personal relations with his self.

On the other hand, it seems that the omniscient narrator of the novel intended to render another understanding of the narrative, another comprehension of its meaning by the reader. Arthur Pendennis, the protagonist of the novel, at first naïve, then corrupted by society and the social relations he establishes with other persons, and, despite certain weaknesses of character, is content to acquire a wisdom of living, a philosophy of life, being saved by the friendship with George Warrington, and by the love of a good, much idealized woman, Laura, with whom he is happily united in a middle-class marriage, so dear to the hearts of Thackeray and Dickens.

In a final analysis, along with the presentation of Arthur's history from childhood to maturity, Thackeray might have also attempted to reflect in his narrative the age in its social, cultural, and moral aspects. *The History of Pendennis* may thus be another novel without a hero; a comedy depicting human vanity and snobbery, which determine the desire of attaining financial success and higher social positions; a parody on manners and prejudices, on romantic and sentimental literature, on idealized characters. Major Pendennis, for example, a quixotic figure, a social philosopher, represents the idealized values and elegant manners of an old, gentlemanly conduct. Assuming the position of a parental figure determined to reify his worldly ambitions by changing the life of his nephew, Major is at the end a victim of his own desires, a pathetic character, even ridiculous, unable to cope with new reality, though conscious of his mistakes.

In this respect, the novel '*contains the criticism of the other literary genres, contributing to their change and integrating some of them in its own*

structure. From a parody of other literary genres the novel has become a parody of itself which is the condition of its eternal renewal' (Galea 1996:128).

A parody on sentimentality and sentimentalism, Thackeray's novel reveals nevertheless the author's sentimental (or melodramatic) outlook on human life and the world. Thus Helen and Laura, two 'saintly' women, like Amelia, are praised and exalted, their personalities are idealized, and they assume the position of beneficent agents, always ready to get Pen out of all kinds of trouble and difficulties. In the same line of third-person strategies, George Warrington, a continuation of Dobbin, is Laura's male counterpart (as Dobbin is Amelia's), and appears to carry more of the readers' admiration (or at least he did in the Victorian period) because of his gentlemanly conduct and a kind of quixotic idealism against the same world of *Vanity Fair*.

But in general Thackeray views the world and human life under their ironic and ridiculous aspects, describing events and personalities, revitalizing and even coloring them with elements of mystery and suspense (as he does when he presents the Claverings, for example), or diminishing their importance through a melodramatized rhetoric of a narrative discourse.

Pendennis, the character he created, a Victorian *el picaro*, is involved in a variety of events and situations, and meets in his journey (both physical and spiritual) different sorts and conditions of men (actors, journalists, writers, adventurers, representatives of different social layers). This fact allows the author's panoramic presentation of the atmosphere and rhythm of the Victorian age in its different aspects, especially the cultural background, and permits the expression of an omniscient narrative point of view through the voice of the narrator. The writer raises the problem of the relation between natural talent and culture, of the theater and dramatic presentation, of journalism (for instance the reader finds out how the *Pall Mall Gazette* came into being), of literature and the literary world.

It seems that after three months of grave illness, the inability to give the serial its former vitality has determined the writer to subordinate the interest in Pen's character and personality to a concern with rendering the history of the epoch, hence the preoccupation to deal with the new intricacies of a somewhat changed narrative structure.

The History of Pendennis focuses on both historical events and individual destinies, concentrating however on the history of the formation of a personality, to which the author adds a parodic, sometimes ironic, melodramatic and sentimental point of view on human existence within society, thus offering new literary attributes to the tradition of Bildungsroman. Though the novel presents many animated events and a number of well individualized characters, it achieves no rendering of decisive actions and of the complexity of inner emotion or intellectual

development. In this respect, Seymour Betsky claims that '*Thackeray does not offer us any powerful images of representative health, or present any intelligent characters who, however minor or however outweighed, conduct a campaign that organizes some nucleus of intelligence*' (1976: 153).

Except for the character of George Warrington, I may add, and it also seems that only Pendennis develops and earns a philosophy of life, moving from naïve provinciality to a mild worldliness, rationalizing his passivity, selfishness and self-indulgence.

Even so, the novel does not achieve an important, decisive focus on either hero (his personality) or theme (the formation of his personality), or at least not like that achieved by Charles Dickens. Also, unlike some of Dickens' fiction, the final appeal of *The History of Pendennis* has little to do with the evolution and formation of the character of Pen, first of all because Thackeray finally chose to reduce his literary discourse and characters almost entirely to a presentation of human vices and values, the effects of time on their development and their applicability to a presentation of the history of an epoch.

I argue that even the change of consciousness, as a dominant axiom for the validity of character formation, does not definitely occur in the final stage of Pendennis' development. In this respect, Thackeray's narrative is more than other Victorian Bildungsromane bound to the strong literary tradition of the picaresque fiction, in which the spiritual essence of the protagonist does not experience a radical change, though Pendennis, like any *el picaro*, finds happiness in the acquired social position and family circle, where Laura '*loves him always with the most constant affection*', and, despite his shortcomings, she and his children '*welcome him back with a never-failing regard and confidence*'.

The ending of the novel itself supports my interpretation, where the author in less than a page emphasizes repeatedly this aspect, stating Pendennis' '*faults and wayward moods*', then his '*fits of moodiness and solitude*', and finally concluding on a moralizing note:

We own, and see daily, how the false and worthless live and prosper, while the good are called away, and the dear and young perish untimely,—we perceive in every man's life the maimed happiness, the frequent falling, the bootless endeavor, the struggle of Right and Wrong, in which the strong often succumb and the swift fail: we see flowers of good blooming in foul places, as, in the most lofty and splendid fortunes, flows of vice and meanness, and stains of evil; and, knowing how mean the best of us is, let us give a hand of charity to Arthur Pendennis, with all his faults and shortcomings, who does not claim to be a hero, but only a man and a brother. (Volume II, Chapter XXXVII)

4.1.2 Charles Dickens and the Double Vision of Formation

The first thing that anyone would normally think about Dickens, when it comes to discuss his personality and literary activity, is his immense popularity, Dickens capturing the popular imagination as no other novelist had done before, but which may diminish the objectivity of any critical approach. However, the writings being familiar to the wider public, many receivers of one's critical attempt to discuss Dickens know what is talked about, and this can be considered the main advantage of his popularity. Yet to criticize Dickens, to talk about the existence, besides merits, of any defeats in his novels, is often '*regarded by some of his more devout English readers as almost on a par with criticizing the Royal Family*' (Churchill 1976: 119). Indeed, in some respects, Dickens is the greatest genius of British literature, but, the same critic believes, '*no writer of any distinction at all has ever produced so much rubbish*' and '*unfortunately the genius and the rubbish exist side by side in the same novels*' (ibid.).

This aspect makes him unique among Victorian novelists, the most unequaled of all, but, at the same time, certain characteristic features place him within the literary conventions of his time, making him a typical Victorian writer. This paradoxical status of Dickens is given again by the coexistence of both merits and defeats in his literary production.

It has been noticed that his defeats come from the immaturity of the novel form and the uneducated taste of the middle-class that formed the main corpus of his reading audience. Dickens, himself a middle-class, was not an intellectual and educated man, not a conscious artist, if compared to Thackeray or George Eliot, not able to understand his faults and to analyze and coordinate his observations; he didn't have the power to structure and systematize the narrative material raised by his strong creative imagination, talent and inspiration. He was also accused of sensationalism and sentimentality and his inability to portray female characters other than innocent, idealized or grotesque. Dickens tells the story remarkably, capturing and holding the reader's attention, but an objective critic cannot help pointing out that intellectual weakness is the main cause of his failure to discover and work with patterns and laws governing fiction in general and his own genius in particular. That it is to say, Dickens cannot impose order on his imagination and inspiration; he cannot construct and he is lacking the sense of form, for indeed many of his novels have no organic unity required by a narrative discourse, are full of detached episodes, sometimes too much plot and a complicated intrigue which is hard to follow (it seems that Dickens is still bound by the formal conventions of the picaresque novel and those imposed by Richardson and Fielding in the 18th century).

One may notice that Dickens' intellectual weakness is also the cause of his uncertain grasp of character, for, writing outside his range, he brings in all sorts of types outside his own medium, aristocrats or lower-class

representatives, to whom he fails to render any strong personalities, and, failing over his characters, he cannot draw complex, serious protagonists able to act according to their own personalities because of incoherent changes in their situations, thus disregarding their personality. Many of Dickens' characters, of course with a few brilliant exceptions like David Copperfield or Pip, seem to exist in his fictional system as mere narrative inventions, or rhetorical devices used to express the authorial points of view. They also seem to serve no purpose in the running of the plot, making it more agglomerate than complex or coherent, and, in many cases, one cannot help noticing their alliance to the conventional melodrama types.¹⁸

Melodrama, as a distinct genre, flourished in the 19th century and produced a kind of naïvely sensational entertainment, but the melodrama in Dickens' novels disturbs the unity of tone, Dickens over-using the pathos and overstating the tragic condition of some of his characters, coloring them with strong sensationalism and extravagant emotional appeal.

However, creating on a larger scale and covering a huge range of characters and incidents is also a merit, and Dickens' merits are given by the same strong creative imagination, almost unprecedented in the history of English literature. It has been called a 'fantastic imagination'—for his range consists mainly in those aspects of life that permit the fantastic treatment and perhaps because of the author's willingness to exaggerate—fascinated by the grotesque, which modifies the narrative material accentuating its

¹⁸ Though fiction and poetry were the dominant literary forms of the 19th century cultural context, compared to drama, and melodrama, as the most important characteristic and dominant aspect of the latter, was overshadowed by the more prominent literary doctrines of romanticism and later realism, it actually raised and dominated the Victorian stage. More than that, the theatrical melodrama (melodramatic tactics or melodramatic mode) emerged and was transmitted into the novel as a means of rendering a highly charged emotion (criminal conduct, family conflict, bodily torture, and so on) in its social context, or rather as a literary, often polemical response, to the invasive effects of market culture, especially the principle of classification which determines the category of the economic class. However, it seems that both the melodramatic tactics and romantic attitudes emerged in the contention of fiction discourses of the Victorian Age (as in the novels of Dickens or those of the Brontë sisters, for example), but, Elaine Hadley reasons in *Melodramatic Tactics: Theatricalized Dissent in England's Marketplace, 1800–1885* (the information being available to me from Internet), although both modes launched critiques of the period's unique style of governance in which theatricalized displays of state power disguised the economic restructuring of hierarchical England into what is now called a class society, the procedures of these modes were different. Thus, much of the romantic viewpoint facilitated the ongoing fragmentation of the public sphere and its model of social exchange. By contrast, the melodramatic mode resisted the classification of English society and romantic internalization of the human by insisting on the vitality of traditionally public, social formations which represented identity in terms of familial and communal relationships. The writers who adopted the melodramatic tactics in their fictional writing also attempted at detecting and resisting the modern principle of classification. Caroline Norton, for example, in her writings of the 1840s and 1850s, applied the melodramatic mode to the discussion of family relationships, familial sentiment, the principle of classification being now intricately encoded by gender. Another example of the relationship between the melodramatic mode, typical of all instances of social melodrama, and the aesthetic values of the fictional discourse, is provided by Dickens in, for example, *Oliver Twist*, where the melodramatic tactics are employed to resist the alienating and classifying effects of The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1843, finally seeking radical change based on reactionary values. But such nostalgic idealism never quite succeeded in abolishing the modern principle of social class and control in the 19th century.

characteristic features to a fantastic degree, and horror, which creates remarkable characters and impressive atmosphere and setting. The setting of his novels reveals the power of both creating the atmosphere and describing the actual appearance of humans. Yet both his characters and the situations they are involved in are melodramatic and conventional, but the combination of realism and the macabre still produces special, sometimes shocking, effects on Dickens' readers. Besides the power to create setting and atmosphere, but linked to these two, other distinctions and merits of Dickens are his poetry and humor. It is the poetry that gives vitality to his descriptions—'poetic fantasies', comic and macabre, for Dickens' poetic imagination is stimulated mostly by the gloomy and the sinister. Claimed by many to be the greatest humorist that English literature ever produced, Dickens combines both satire and pure humor, both fantastic in their exaggeration, but also effective because of reference to reality. The characters of his novels are humorous rather than realistic portraits, and his comic effects are often rendered through the repetitiveness at the level of narrative structure, but especially in matters of content, particularly in the third-person, as the repetition of a set phrase, a tag, such as Mrs. Micawber's: '*I shall never desert Mr. Micawber*'. Though it distinguishes a number of characters, repetition is a banal structure, related to an infinite time, the characters are static in a world lacking transformation and merely participating in the process of meaning-making. The humor in Dickens is linked to a certain obsession, to someone bound to an invariable ritual habit, the human sense of superiority towards an obsessed person being another source of laughter.

One possible approach to the narrative strategies and structure of Dickens' fiction is to say that the structure Dickens uses for his novels, as Northrop Frye (1978) points out, is that of the New Comedy, which originated in Greece in the 3rd and 4th centuries BC, with emphasis on amorous intrigues with a happy ending, the best known playwrights being Philemon and Diphilus. It came down to Dickens from the Roman imitators Plautus and Terence, who, in turn, influenced Ben Jonson (whom Dickens admired) and later Moliere. The main action, Frye believes, is a 'collision' of two social types or societies: 'the obstructing and the congenial society'.

Dickens continued its tradition by creating a number of stereotyped plots and characters, and he was very conventional in applying the New Comedy plot structure to his own novels. Thus the congenial society is centered on the love between hero and heroine—Dickens, more than anyone, being the slave of the formal convention of his time, which taught him that these types were essential to a novel—the obstructing on the characters who often can be regarded as parental figures related to the main characters and who try to smother this love and the self-accomplishment of the protagonists. As in a New Comedy plot structure, the characters of the

obstructing society dominate most of the action and range of incidents, but towards the end a change in the plot reverses the situation and the congenial society dominates the happy ending. In building his characters, Dickens proves again typically Victorian and bound to the New Comedy structure: he doesn't look at them from an intellectual point of view, he has no special insight into the qualities which are typical of man as man, and he does not tell much of the inner life of the character. It is in contact with other humans that the individual characteristic features reveal themselves most vividly, Dickens presenting remarkably well those qualities that separate one man from the others and thus disclosing one of the most important aspects of human nature—its individuality.

In his novels Dickens seems also to have introduced satire, almost non-existent in a typical New Comedy artistic pattern, but he continues the creation of some humorous characters, belonging to both the congenial and the obstructing side. The differences between these characters create the condition of the action of and opposition between the two social types: the humor of the congenial society is merely dramatic, good and consisting of some harmless eccentricities; that of the obstructing one helps rendering society with all its false standards and values, for comedy in Dickens' novels was not merely comic relief. Hence the appearance of satire, which makes the characters of the latter social type appear ridiculous, bad or even dehumanized. Thus humor (comedy) is naturally connected to morality (play), and the comic allusions to social levels, which define the English comic tradition, have shifted from the 18th century concern with man and human nature to the 19th century 'social comic genre'. Even the parental figures attached to the central character belong to these societies: there are, besides biological parents who are often dead before the story begins (or who mysteriously emerge at the end bearing names unrelated to the story), the parental figures of the obstructing society, who are generally cruel and often similar to the step-parents of folklore, and the parental figures of the congenial society, who assume a protective role and relation to the main character. The family was actually the only social unit which Dickens regarded as genuine, it was the key to social identity, and the comic action often moved towards recognition scenes, the discovery of unknown parents, the articulation of correct family relationships, and so on.

In delineating his characters Dickens also uses the technique of caricature and that of description. Especially naming and epithet, which may reveal the main features of the physical and the intellectual, as well as the habits and obsessions, and are evocative with regard to both main and subsidiary characters. These names are idiosyncratic and suggestive of meaningful resonance in the story, and help a better apprehension of the characters' function in the narrative. 'David Copperfield', for instance, suggests in my mind the biblical resonance of his entire experience of life:

‘David’ evokes the mythic king who through struggle in life would eventually be crowned and achieve stability of existence; ‘copper’ symbolizes the fluctuation and change in life, yet hard to break; ‘field’ is a specific ending for Jewish names, and ‘*he was a Jew and a Jew suffered*’ (Bernard Malamud, *The Magic Barrel*). ‘Murdstone’ represents cruelty and criminal inclination. ‘Estella’ suggests the unreachable, cold star. ‘Miss Havisham’ contains ‘sham’, which stands for her duplicitous and pretending personality.

‘Pip’ suggests baby talk, existence in a language (Pip, for instance, suffers from being named a blacksmith’s boy), and the value of credibility in assessing the story (pips of grapes, which hazardously may point to *in vino veritas*). It also implies a formative principle in that the acquisition of a name is the first step in establishing one’s identity and existence (to find a ‘pip’ of identity, to be identified in his name) out of original purity and innocence of a child.

These interpretative modalities, among whom is N. Frye’s critical viewpoint, are just some possible ways of understanding the fictional structuring of Dickens’ novels, given the complexity and polyvalence of his literary discourse.

I argue that though Dickens uses in his novels a certain number of theatrical devices—that eventually represent exterior things and activities—they allow for the expression of the characters’ inner existence and the author’s creation of a quite complex structure of consciousness. Even though these effects are traditional, rendering traditional ways of insight into character, and revealing no special insight into actual consciousness, it is this very imaginary consciousness that offers perspectives more subtle than the realistic/mimetic third-person strategy of, say, George Eliot, and perspectives more interesting in the analysis of the psychological process leading to formation through the turbulence of temporal and spatial change. The imaginative implication is baseless unless it has ties to the entire fabric of the novels. To provide a kind of sense of some order and pattern in the experience of his characters, Dickens applies the principle of (climactic) coincidence, and that of fate, which contain elements of the external pattern of existence and interior responses to it.¹⁹ Among other things, the correlation between them suggests the possibility of inner development and change as the hero is given the knowledge of his situation and the ability to understand the patterned events of his existence, some of them containing at certain moments of the narrative a huge range of significance.

¹⁹ To follow only *Great Expectations*: Magwitch is not only the source of Pip’s ‘great expectations’ but also Estella’s father; Compeyson is Miss Havisham’s former lover and Magwitch’s partner in crime; Jaggers is the lawyer of both Miss Havisham and Magwitch; Molly is both Estella’s mother and Jaggers’ servant, and so on.

This aspect should be considered in the approach to Dickens with respect to the Bildungsroman for it implies that the experience of life by a hero in formation has a meaning, and even the most random event, or a coincidence, or the workings of destiny, represent parts of the entire process of inner growth and evolution towards a greater consciousness founded on self-revelation and self-understanding.

There are, however, other aspects of Dickens' fiction that should be considered when critically focusing on the Victorian Bildungsroman as a particular area of research and the main concern of this study.

For instance, notice should be made of the picaresque form of his novels, or the characteristic features of his narrator who renders the universe of childhood and reveals the author's own concern with the experience of a child. It seems that Dickens writes best when he does so from a child's point of view, for he is instinctive, possesses a strong imagination and vivid sensations, and the first parts of both *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations* can be regarded among the best pictures of childhood in English literature.

In rendering the importance of childhood's inner perception of and response to the exterior world in the later stages of the process of character formation, Dickens continues the romantic assertion of the experience of childhood; he establishes it as a literary concern, as a definite hypostasis of the larger myth of childhood in English fiction.

My interest, however, is primarily in the experience of childhood as a definite structural principle within the literary system of Victorian Bildungsroman.

The child's 'I' is interrelated with the 'not-I', that is, a rather primitive distinction between the inner and the outer. In this respect, Dickens renders the major Victorian concern with social phenomena and the status of personality as integrated or not in the social structure. For Dickens, the structure of society reveals chiefly the sinister and absurd aspects of it, aspects that are often invaded by comic action. But Dickens seriously tended to suspect all institutions and social structures; the natural human kindness and basic human values are set against the cruelty of the impersonal, soulless institution: church, charitable society, government office, laws, inhuman theory, or simply individual selfishness, for he felt that they were attempting to destroy the good which could only arise from the spontaneous action of the individual.

Like the writers of old moralities, Dickens presents a strong moral outlook, which determines the emotional content of his novels, peopling his books with a wide range of virtues and vices, believing in the universal value of the primary, benevolent, natural impulses and affections of man, and thus being more than an artist—a prophet expressing a viewpoint of life and drawing a scale of values that has universal application.

In his best novels, Dickens focuses his literary concern on rendering the complexity of human existence as life-time and life-experience, the history of growth and development of the self in the vortex of life, and he as well as the reader catches the artistic hints of universal time-passing.

Among his novels that reveal this concern, but also among his best writings, are *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*. They have much in common: both are picaresque tales of adventure, in both the story is told as a first-person narration, and the hero is shown developing from childhood to maturity in the Bildungsroman tradition. There is however a certain number of differences between these two writings with regard to the Bildungsroman tradition, especially in matters of character evolution and development process, and the peculiarities of the final stage—the formation of a mature personality.

There are also certain differences between these two novels in matters of narrative construction, because of certain changes in the writer's own artistic growth during the decade that part them. Critics have noticed that the narrator of *Great Expectations* is more of a totally matured person than the narrator of *David Copperfield*, that his voice, differently from that in *David Copperfield*, is used '*neither for recapture of the past nor for enough knowledge of it to change the narrator's present identity*' (Westburg 1977: 121), and that the entire novel is written by the narrator for other people (ibid.).

I argue, however, that *David Copperfield* is written for other people, in that it expresses the author's subjective point of view through the voice of the narrator to the reader. Though it focuses on a concrete individual and a concrete process of character formation, the often-fragmented narrative fails over a proper delineation of its hero who, like the narrator, sometimes vanishes in the dislocated construction, or circulates somewhere between present and past. Only towards the end a proper balance between these two temporal components is established, and the hero displays the psychic attributes of his final formation in completing the circular journey towards the origins.

In turn, *Great Expectations* may be regarded to have been written by the writer for the narrator and hero, and it indeed reveals deeper insights into human psychology, and a remarkable ability of the author to treat the theme of formation using his hero more concretely and completely.

Yet both narratives have in common the confessional tonality determined by the same authorial experience of life transfigured in the process of the fictional act of creation in two distinct hypostases.

Dickens himself, not to write the same book twice and to repeat himself, attempted to avoid any connections between these two novels, as he would write to his friend John Forster when beginning *Great Expectations*: '*To be quite sure I had fallen into no unconscious repetitions, I read David*

Copperfield the other day, and was affected by it to a degree you would hardly believe' (cf. Westburg 1977: 116).

4.1.2.1 The Circular Journey of David Copperfield: Formation Achieved

'Of all my books I like this best', wrote Dickens about *David Copperfield*, and it has always been a favorite with a wider public. The novel, in spite of the hero's early miseries, is a high-spirited and optimistic book, David finally becoming a famous author and making a happy marriage. The marriage as the union of grown man and woman expresses the hero's completeness, the resolution of the contradictions and frustrations of his life, which is presented in purely human terms and which is indeed in the spirit and requirements of the Victorian middle-class reading public.

In the novel, as in other Victorian Bildungsromane, the author tells the story of his own life interpreted through fiction. Highly autobiographical, for the emotional identification of the author with the character is very strong, the novel follows the hero's evolution and presents his experiences and events he is involved in at the same time with influences of the medium.

The narration slowly moves from childhood through youth and early adult life to a more stable adult maturity; it consists mainly of memories about the formation of a personality through suffering and life experiences.

The happy visual universe of childhood is shadowed by the appearance of Murdstone, a typical parental figure of the obstructing society (actually a narrative device used by Dickens to increase the value of the hero's suffering, given the impropriety of any emotional links between beautiful and kind Clara Copperfield and cruel Murdstone, but it may be that '*Every woman adores a Fascist*'—Sylvia Plath, *Daddy*), who inspires fear in the little boy and treats him as wild nature which needs to be tamed. Though his childhood under terror, imposed by other characters and the medium, the hero will eventually preserve his innocence and resist the cruel destiny.

After the death of his mother, David is sent to school and then to menial employment in London, where he lives a life of poverty and misery. Finally, after a multitude of events, incidents and a complex narrative structure involving lots of characters and incredible situations and actions, rendering the development of his artistic side in parallel with his affections, the plot ends with the marriage between David and Dora Spenlow, a 'pretty empty-headed doll', reminiscent of his mother, mainly because of the workings of his 'undisciplined heart' rather than conducted by mature reasoning, but who dies after a few years and David marries the much idealized and right for him Agnes Wickfield. Perhaps it will not be much to say that David's final accomplishment and entrance upon maturity is to rise

to the level of Agnes: '*What I am, you have made me, Agnes*', says David in the final scenes of the novel, contradicting some of his earlier statements that he has worked out his own destiny.

Along with these protagonists, there is a number of other characters that people Dickens' novel, some of them raised to the level of high importance for the narrative and thematic structure of the novel, and others being merely shadowy figures with no evident purpose in the running of the plot. Yet they are also highly individualized according to Dickens' own interest and concern in expressing his point of view to the reader: in the case of Uriah Heep, for example, Dickens uses the ideolects/sociolects on a personal level in order to reveal both the psychological features of the character and the ideological and sociological issues: the character, though desiring to rise on the social scale, is showing through his speech that he is uncultivated and of humble condition.

The main concern of my analysis, however, should focus on discussing the thematic and narrative perspectives exposed by Dickens, which render his novel as a fictional system of Bildungsroman, and should concentrate on the process of formation of the personality of David, the main character of the narrative.

The novel ends with the sense of the hero's return to his origins, for he finds '*everything as it used to be when we were children*', '*everything was as it used to be, in the happy time [of childhood]*'; the sense of indoors, of the final spatial reality not far removed from the original chronotope of home, or from other previous homes which are versions of the first one.

It is interesting to mention that I have set up these ideas from my mind before I came across a number of critical studies that render the same conception. For the reason of consistency I find Barry Westburg's as the most explanatory one: '*The beginning of David's life and the end of his trials meet and close a mythic circle. Time's arrow is really a boomerang after all. The end is a repetition on a higher and even more stable level of the situation at the beginning. The sense of reacquisition, thanks partly to the narrator's exertions in researching his life, overcomes the sense of loss*' (1977: 107).

In this respect, a problem arises: I cannot deny the fact that the backward-looking quality of the entire narrative, as well as the marriage of David and Agnes, which represents a consecration of the past, a denial of new future perspectives, provide speculation about a real change, a real formation of the character, and about a future that contains something new.

I argue, however, that the final appeal of this novel is a sense of achievement, with promising signs of completeness of the process of character formation, especially due to the realization of the character's self as a whole between feeling and mind, and reified in the idea that the remembered past is now dismissed and the present becomes the reality.

The possibility for the formation of David's personality is thus given by Dickens' merit of correlating the actual image of his formative experience through memory with its archetypal version. I believe that the archetypal image of childhood is of primary importance, for it clearly finds expression in the story of the narrative, namely in a dream of return to origins, which is perfectly suited to a psyche like David's, a psyche with retrospective tendencies and consisting of much of his past in the form of Peggotty and especially Agnes.

One may still argue, as Barry Westburg does, that the one who cannot get rid of the past expressed primarily through the idealism and completeness of childhood, who remains imprisoned in the psychological pattern of the circularities of consciousness, remains actually '*an apprentice who can never become a master*' (ibid.), an incomplete man.

The absence of any visible signs of a new life does not necessarily imply the absence of formation on the part of the hero, nor does it suggest only the return to the stage which contains many of the features of the original one. The novel confirms my suspicion: '*everything was as it used to be*' does not necessarily mean—or it does not at all mean—that everybody or somebody was as he used to be.

In other words, *David Copperfield* does not only follow the narrative and thematic elements of a typical Bildungsroman fictional pattern, which renders the process of evolution and development of a personality, it also reveals the final idea of the hero's completeness as a personality that achieved formation. I think the basis for formation is provided by the fact that David's character, personality and consciousness are perpetually changing within the framework of a circular experience aimed at rendering a meaningful correlation between beginning and end.

That is to say, his existence represents a life-myth, an experience structured as a symbolical concord between the origins (the experience of childhood) and the state of desired completeness and final formation (entering upon maturity). Between them is a transitory stage of youth, a Keatsian 'space between', a temporal and spatial reality representing the phase of development and evolution.

The circular narrative movement is expressed through the subjectivity of the omniscient narrator of the novel. The narrator has lived through his experience of life and come to understand the events he recounts. He also comments on their meaning and sometimes exposes them to ridicule and caricature, for example the child's frustration and suffering. He moves freely in time and space and may be situated almost anywhere in time, or he can at any moment look backwards from a place in time, which becomes the time of the narration, making the reader aware of this place.

In this respect, the narrative of *David Copperfield* may focus directly on the act of narration and emphasize the existence of the narrator within this act of literary communication.

This aspect is one of the most important features that would eventually bring together all the Victorian Bildungsromane discussed in the present study within a definite fictional system, of course with necessary thematic and narrative deviations. In *Great Expectations*, for example, though Mr. Pirrip also lived through the events of his experience, the narrator assumes an objective point of view and he rarely indicates his place in time in the relation to the hero and the narrative.

The narrative renders the experience of the hero as a straight line, and the temporal component is considered linearly, at times optimistically, but more often pessimistically.

4.1.2.2 The Linear Journey of Pip: Formation Ambiguous

Great Expectations, in which life is not a laughing matter, renders the dramatic condition of the hero, who has cruelly discovered for himself the disreputable social basis on which his well-being is founded. It seems that Pip, who has developed and arisen above most of the false and frustrating circumstances of the world, has not found an authentic meaning of life, a place in the world, a perspective of existence of his own.

As in *David Copperfield*, the story of *Great Expectations* is reified through the discourse of an autodiegetic narrator, and the effect of the use of the first-person narration determines the fictional endeavor with defining the character of Pip.

In a confessional manner, and in terms of the literary pattern of Bildungsromane, Pip is at the beginning an orphan, a victim of the adult world, whose perspectives are shifted, psychic wholeness is dissociated, and views are distorted by a sadistic older sister, by the dramatic encounter with Magwitch, and then by Miss Havisham's stratagem of making him Estella's plaything and Provis' wish to transform him into a 'gentleman'. Throughout the narrative, the hero moves from relative innocence to the loss of his moral and intellectual balance and finally to an attempt of self-recognition and to a possibility of having a realistic and meaningful life.

However, external forces and manipulations determine his condition, which is a result of the weaknesses in his own character. His excessive pride and narcissism, his obsession with Estella and his indulging into wishful thinking of some new 'great expectations' turn him upside down and make him to cast off and forget the genuine, concrete truths and virtues of his true friends Joe Gargery and Biddy, his life representing now '*a waiting game given over to fantasy and endless anticipation*' (Lawrence 1985: 209) in a world of illusion.

The hero himself is rationalizing his perspectives:

No more low wet grounds, no more dykes and sluices, no more of these grazing cattle—though they seemed, in their dull manner, to wear a more respectful air now, and to face round, in order that they might stare as long as possible at the possessor of such great expectations—farewell, monotonous acquaintances of my childhood, henceforth I was for London and greatness: not for smith's work in general and for you.
(Chapter 19)

The authorial linear determinism of cause-and-effect arrangement of the narrative material is thus transformed by the hero himself into another chain of causality consisting of the correlation between inner, subjective self (inner drives, passions, rationality) and outer, objective self (the apprehension of environmental circumstances and the interaction with other people).

These aspects would gradually establish and develop the hero's process of a developmental crisis. The crisis of evolution is a frequent thematic device in perhaps every Victorian Bildungsroman discussed in this study, but it is *Great Expectations* and *The Mill on the Floss* where it is highly emphasized. In Dickens' novel it discloses at the end the ambiguity of successful formation; in Eliot's novel it leads to a drama of brotherhood love, an impossible psychic conflict resolved in a union by death.

Dickens' radicalism was almost burnt out when he came to write *Great Expectations*, for he no longer nursed much hope of changing the world for the better and he had lost much of his feelings that the simple, rustic existence (a romantic allusion) is naturally better than the sophisticated, urban civilization.

Like *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations* focuses on the character evolution process from childhood till manhood, but, while David grows and changes happily in all respects, along with the authorial allusions to his idealized, almost static perfectibility in spite of the trials and ordeals provided by the medium—he is the constant of his narrative, Pip changes tragically and more radically at the moment of coming into contact with the larger society, represented in the novel by his relations established with other characters, the city, its institutions, and especially money—I regard him as a variable character of the narrative. That is to say, David's growing self does significantly change after the radical transformation of his condition and inner perspectives in childhood. In turn, Pip is much more a subject of change, a 'twice born' individual: first is his natural birth and second is his spiritual rebirth at the end when he displays the ability to escape 'a dreamed-of future identity' (Westburg 1977: 115) which he has attempted earlier to define himself in accord with.

In terms of the stimulus beyond his inward on the process of formation, and those linked to the social circumstances, mention should be made of money, or rather the curse of money, for it changes the character for the worse and is unacceptable because of its source, the convict Magwitch and not fairy-good for him Miss Havisham. Actually, Pip's relationship with Magwitch is at the heart of the narrative, and one of the climactic points of the plot is Pip's discovery in Chapter 39 that his social position, that of a gentleman, to which his 'great expectations' are linked, is based on money coming from a fallen man, even if it represents the product of hard work, not crime, a moment that represents the end or loss of his illusions (the first motif of the novel). 'Crime and punishment', perhaps the second main motif in the general pattern of the novel, renders the character's psychological transformation from a complex, sensitive, and imaginative type into a snob cutting off his roots, revealing a strong social embarrassment set against his previous condition, again because of money and his anxiety to become a gentleman.

Though one may argue that the end of the narrative marks the hero's return to the basic and true human values known to him from childhood and taught to him by Joe, along with a sense of a (re-)change in the hero's consciousness and his revaluation of the process and the final stage of development, the novel nevertheless ends with a strong sense of incompleteness of Pip's self—hence the ambiguity with regard to the success or failure of his final formation.

The novel has actually two endings: one Dickens' original ending, the other representing a version written on the advice of his friend Bulwer-Lytton. The original ending is the one that clearly emphasizes the idea that a number of failures and mistakes in life cannot be retraced and otherwise avoided. They are irrevocable and become the fateful means of life's misery and disappointment. The one who lives on 'expectations', illusions and appearances is bereft of any perspectives and is self-trapped—as Pip is—in a slow developmental process beyond any clear premises of reality. Yet the novel ends with a note of mature understanding through a harsh experience of life, and, though Pip the narrator gives this explanation with reference to Estella—

she gave me the assurance that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham's reaching, and had given her a heart to understand (...)—

the reader is aware of his own understanding and change of consciousness which, he implicitly assesses, are more important and valuable than any material rewards.

Explicitly, the entire narrative's somber view on human existence is arisen from the hero's self-destruction caused by his failure to dissociate

passion from rationality, evil from good, cruelty from benevolence, repugnance from affection, and especially illusion from reality, expectation from tangible matter of fact. The baseless nature of Pip's passion, his obsession with Estella and the desire to win her are similar to his illusory expectancy of gentlemanhood and material achievement.

The narrator himself states this aspect, omnisciently commenting on the meaning of the events represented in the narrative:

The unqualified truth is, that when I loved Estella with the love of a man, I loved her simply because I found her irresistible. Once for all; I knew to my sorrow, often and often, if not always, that I loved her against reason, against promise, against peace, against hope, against happiness, against all discouragement that could be. (Chapter 10)

The second ending also renders a sense of the hero's mature understanding and an insight into his own inner life. Despite the similarities, the two endings remain different. The first, describing the circumstances of a random meeting of Pip and Estella on a street, suggests a pessimistic view of any accomplishment and perspectives of change of the self. The second, rendered within a different spatial reality—namely in a secluded moonlight garden—implies a more optimistic view of the final possibilities of success and completeness of Pip's process of formation in the union of hero and heroine.

The revised ending would romantically and unrealistically bring the plot to a consequence of reunion of two people who free themselves from illusion through the sufferings of life, the pain of the process of time, the spatial movement and the experience of the growing selves. The sense of reunion of the pair is similar to the sense of the relationship between past and present, though not so strongly evoked by the author as in *David Copperfield*. The return to the past is less prosaic and is suggested by the atmospheric detail and description that contribute to the emotional apprehension of change. There is a sense of change in the first version too, as well as that of a mutual understanding of the protagonists, but this one lacks any complex technique of describing the atmosphere and setting. It rather comprises a rhetorical strategy of dialogue that leads to the ambiguity of formation because of the strong sense of irrevocable suffering and loss it implies.

As Bulwer-Lytton suggested, Dickens' second ending would be more satisfactory to the middle-class reading public. It is not, however, closer or even more appropriate to the general tone of the novel, though it seems to provide better resolution to the romantic tension in the narrative. Dickens, like other Victorian writers of Bildungsromane, succumbed to the Victorian reading public's demand for happy ending in bringing together the hero and heroine who can now live 'happily ever after'.

As it is, Dickens' merit constitutes the ability to fit both the original and the revised ending in the general pattern of the novel, and, though almost opposite, they possess equal value in matters of artistry.

There is, however, a number of certain critical nuances with regard to the fictional system of a Bildungsroman that should be considered in the analysis of *Great Expectations* in both form and content.

Notice should be made primarily of the issue regarding the success or failure of the formation of Pip's personality. The difficulty of a clear critical reasoning is provided by the writer's attempt to counter-balance two seemingly opposite aspects: (1) the sense of change of the hero's inside (a necessary condition for the success of formation, and which is suggested in both endings) and the happy union of Pip and Estella (suggested in the revised ending), and (2) the sense of incompleteness of the hero's self because of the sense of loss and frustration regarding his place in the world and the relation with Estella (suggested especially in the original ending which renders the ambiguity and even failure of formation).

On the level of narrative strategies and that of thematic construction, the pattern of development of the hero's self is rendered linearly, and the process is essentially a straight line into the indefinite and infinite space and especially time. I mean that the desired end as the formation of Pip's personality is not apprehended clearly, not even definitely resembling his origins and the beginning of the developmental process. The hero's mode of psychic relevance is defined by the term 'expectation' which clearly suggests a consciousness in growth and directed towards the future, not the past, as in the case of David Copperfield.

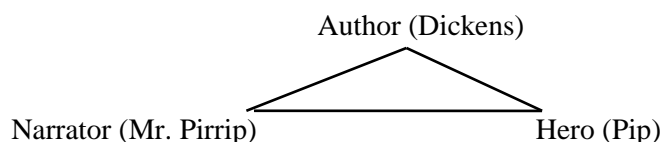
A paradoxical situation is to be considered here, which renders the ambiguity of Pip's formation. The sense of change of his mind is implied in both endings, and both endings reveal the final stage of Pip's process of evolution as a moment-to-next moment perspective of the pattern of his experience of self. Time is positive to Pip when every next moment brings nearer the desired formation, but time in development is also negative and represents a great danger for it suggests the ambiguity of the exact moments when formation is achieved.

I argue that the formation of Pip is more ambiguous than that of David, even if it may imply a stronger sense of hope and belief in the perspectives of a changed consciousness than the mythologized return to the past of David—a rather simple acceptance of the origins as a means of accomplishment, and whose experience of self is thwarted by the fear of the next moment which raises temporal gaps between the present and desired past, between the hero-adult and the hero-child.

I believe, however, that compared to Pip, David's formation may be regarded as a success because it is founded on his ability to establish a solid, though symbolical, relation between present and past through a circular

journey to his origins and the beginnings of his developmental process. Pip, in turn, has to live and move linearly in an infinite temporal reality that implies the possibility of his completeness that will presumably, or eventually, but not definitely, take place in the future—hence formation ambiguous.

Through the voice of his narrator Dickens is able to present the process of development of his hero from childhood till maturation, and to establish a relationship between them. The triangulation I suggest renders the relationship:



In this respect, Dickens' merit in this novel is that he enables the reader to sense the distance between the narrator and the hero, yet to assume that the former was once the child and then the growing Pip. Dickens, in turn, is able to remain invisible in the narrative, concealed behind his narrator who speaks about himself to another person (supposedly the reader). In accord with the pattern of autobiographical fiction, particularly that of the Bildungsroman, the narrator knows a lot about Pip's inner life. It seems that the narrator observes the hero's (that is to say, Pip's) evolution and moves with him in time as the latter gradually develops both physically and intellectually. Over most of the narrative, except, perhaps, for the representation of childhood, the narrator sustains an omniscient point of view in his position of a judge and interpreter of the hero's experience of life. His analyses and judgments are pervasive and often reveal his ironic and subtle outlook on the process of formation. And yet what keeps the distance between narrator and character is Pip's self-disclosure through his own language, which permits to reveal a state of consciousness that someone else may not clearly reveal. The distance between them is also provided by the diminished narrative interest with regard to the experience of childhood²⁰, as well as by the narrator's relative objectivity at certain narrative moments.

²⁰ Though the experience of childhood in *Great Expectations* is important and often determines the mature existence as in every other Victorian Bildungsroman, one can not help noticing a number of thematic and narrative deviations. The mature narrator is thus less sympathetic towards the condition of children and childhood (for example as in the Christmas dinner scene); he seems to have got beyond the past, changing and challenging the Victorian 'myth of childhood' and the idea of a child's innocence as such. In this respect, one may call Dickens a 'proto-modernist' in so far as he anticipates the remarkable account of childhood in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, in which no longer childhood is sacred or magic simply because it is childhood. On a general level, Dickens' novel may be regarded as a modern example of rendering the right relations with the past and not unconditionally accepting it.

Compared to *David Copperfield*, with its evident subjectivity of the omniscient narrator throughout the entire narrative, the point of view in *Great Expectations* is firstly objective, non-omniscient, when the narrator-child is objective about the experience of childhood he describes, and then, in some respects, subjective, when the adult omniscient narrator comments on the meaning of events.

This twofold perspective of the narrator—first-person objectivity and then first-person subjectivity—is Dickens' conscious fictional innovation which suggests the gap, or narrative digression between narrative time (present voice/speech/telling) and narrated time (narrated past events), in other words, between the narrator and the hero in the form of the relation of the adult narrator to the child Pip. This aspect opens new interesting perspectives in the analysis of the narrative structure of Victorian Bildungsroman. Each Victorian novel of character formation displays, however, its own particularities of the narrative construction, to mention, for example, the concentricity of *Wuthering Heights*, or the pervasive objectivity of the omniscient narrator in *The Way of All Flesh*.

Unlike *David Copperfield*, the narrative of *Great Expectations* gradually discloses less a return to the experience of childhood than an attempt to create a new fictional reality out of it. Unlike *David Copperfield*, in *Great Expectations* childhood is represented not for its own sake, and there are no special later insights into the early stage of the hero's self. Even some events of the child's experience are not considered as an experience or as important in the process of development, such as the birth of the protagonist, for example, which would depend on second-hand information. The novel begins with an event relatively late in childhood, when Pip is about seven years old, which is probably almost accessible to the author's memory. It is presented in a way that it becomes the first in a series of events that would form the first crisis, the first moments of change in consciousness, that is to say, of the development leading to the desired completeness and formation.

Through the character he created, one may reason, Dickens is able to express the anguish and passions of his own nature. But at the same time the character is nothing else than a pathetic victim of the external world. At the beginning an innocent and pure child, together with Estella, symbolically representing the primordial couple in the garden of Miss Havisham, Pip goes to city, the agent of corruption, loss of personality, acquisition of experience and end of innocence. Similarly, Estella loses her personality when becoming an instrument of manipulative revenge against men in Miss Havisham's hands, who also influences the formation of Pip (he naïvely believes in her good intentions, only much later to understand her true intentions). Yet Joe is the first parental figure for the orphan Pip, who provides formative attributes to his personality (provincial existence,

uncorrupted by civilization, some basic human drives, kindness, honesty, links to nature, at the same time ignorance, even mediocrity). Next comes Mrs. Joe, his 'sadist' sister, who teaches him the sense of property, and Miss Havisham, who creates in Pip the world of 'great expectations' and the impulse to change his condition, which he started hating even after their first meeting. A strange character in a strange setting, creating an expressionist-like film set, Miss Havisham in her bridal clothing and her room are unforgettable, frozen forever in their static existence.

The most important parental figure is Magwitch, the destroyer of the 'great expectations', an ambivalent figure whose later decent and honorable behavior wins the readers' approval, but not Pip's, who expresses his repugnance on his appearance. The author himself intended to make him a pathetic figure, an inferior being, dog-like in his yearning for approval and appreciation. It seems that Dickens expresses the Victorian fear of the criminal element in society, but, making him escape from the soldiers, the author will eventually attribute to his personality a rebellious aspect against social structures (unlike Orlick, another criminally inclined character, who does not reveal any repentance for his evil doings). But Magwitch also makes Pip look at life realistically, understand that one must not only receive but also give (this primitive structure of receiving and giving is actually another major motif of the novel), even if, as in Estella's case (an orphan like Pip, formed by Miss Havisham, different from Pip, however, outside of society and its usual patterns), he destroys Pip's personality by creating of him an instrument to fulfill his own never-produced accomplishment. Finally, however, Pip expresses a benevolent attitude towards Magwitch, protecting the one who gave him his own life as a gentleman.

In this respect, the writer of the Bildungsroman introduces a character that, in close personal relation with the protagonist in development, and along with the influences of the medium, would eventually participate in and mostly determine the process of evolution and formation.

As in Dickens' *Great Expectations* or George Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* this aspect leads inevitably to defeat and personal failure, victimizing the hero's personality, for he has to understand by himself the connection between right and wrong, good and evil, and the value of wisdom in personal choice. In other words, the character whose *bildung* is narrated has to grasp at certain moments of the narrative certain moments of personal revelations, of epiphanies, usually at times when personality experiences strong feelings of remorse and despair, at bottom in the grip of self-regarding vices (pride, idleness, dandyism, narcissism, snobbery, social climbing).

4.1.3 George Meredith: The Intrusion of Tragedy

George Meredith's hero, Richard Feverel, is a victim of such an exterior to his inward intrusion from the part of another character: a victim of a rigorous and inflexible 'system' of education and upbringing designed by his father, Sir Austin.²¹ It seems that at the beginning, in the narrative section about the conflict with a local farmer, the 'system' proves beneficent to the hero's education and formation, for it spiritually unites father with son, providing the latter with a deep understanding of human virtues and vices, of ethical principles of personal conduct.

In the further process of development, however, the 'system' proves hostile to Richard's own interior aspirations and psychological status.

The intrusion of a stimulus beyond Richard's inner life provides the intrusion of tragedy in the process of development and evolution, and eventually thwarts the desired completeness and formation of the hero, and contributes to a tragic or near-tragic ending of the narrative.

In the general literary fictional system of Victorian Bildungsromane, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel: A History of Father and Son* comes diachronically after *David Copperfield*, *Jane Eyre* and *Pendennis*. The development of the protagonist in these early narratives is inevitably crowned by the fulfillment of formation in both psychic completeness and success in society, except, perhaps, for *Pendennis* for whom only a compromise is possible. Though initially at odds with the environment and one's self, each character in development profits from each new experience of life, each success and failure, triumph or trial, so as to be integrated into society, congenial familial relationship, along with a change in consciousness that reconstructs his spiritual framework.

Like these novels, Meredith's fiction also depicts the physical and intellectual development of a character from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. Unlike their authors, Meredith challenges the inevitable spiritual and external success of the formative process. As in *The Mill on the Floss*, his narrative departs from the earlier practice of Bildungsromane, and acquires despairing overtones through an authorial vision of disorder and disruption, which leads inevitably to the untimely broken experience of life, and even to the emotional and intellectual death of the protagonist (in George Eliot's novel, the death is physical as well, which excludes the characters from the human world).

Written early in Meredith's writing career, his novel discloses the author's own private regrets and personal wounds. Like his protagonist in development, Meredith lost his own mother as a child; like Sir Austin

²¹ Though his father determined his formative process, Richard may have been influenced by other characters and their characteristic psychic features, for instance Adrian's immorality (the character of Adrian brings to mind Oscar Wilde, who admired Meredith) or Austin Wentworth who provides Richard with a chance to disclose his better self.

Feverel who works on his 'system', he had to face his wife's desertion with one of his friends, the painter Henry Wallis, and the task of raising his son while at work on his novel, which implies an allegorical link between his work and the work of Sir Austin.

The bleak experience of life and the painful process of Richard Feverel's development, determined by the mistake of his father, are symbolically founded on the breakdown of the Victorian family institution as such, along with other changes that have occurred by the late 1850s. The fictional universe of this novel expresses thus the often problematic reality of the second half of the Victorian age. The fictional ordeal of the hero parallels the rise and development of a new generation of scholars and men of letters in the Victorian age, who by the middle of the century would regard the experience of the past generation as impracticable in the present.

The year 1859 is generally accepted as a turning point in the Victorian state of mind. Significantly, Darwin's *Origin of Species* appears in 1859. Yet Matthew Arnold, who in 1859 produced his first polemical essay, ceasing to write poetry, has been modeled by Thomas Arnold, his father, who, like Sir Austin, manifested himself as a severe Victorian scholar. Similarly, John Stuart Mill, whose *On Liberty* saw publication also in 1859, had been shaped by James Mill, who, like Sir Austin, considered the principles of Locke and that of the Age of Reason. It is hardly a coincidence that *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* appeared the same year, and that 1859 was also the year of composition of Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*.

The division of Victorian sensibility (a huge family ruled by the 'maternal' wisdom of queen Victoria) parallels the division in the family of Tullivers and that of Feverels.

Though the representatives of the latter follow different ways of life, it is the destruction of the father-son relationship that is most relevant. What was initially broken to pieces is hardly possible to provide with a new growth. The father's faulty 'system' is based on rationalism and calculated behaviorism, the son's developmental perspectives on sentiment and passion equated with imagination. The imagined indignity which pledges vengeful action, the dreaming of himself as a 'chief of an Arab tribe' reveal the child's attempt to escape the prosaic reality of the adult world by taking refuge in fantasies. In the process of his maturation, as an act of rebellious attitude against his father's 'system', Richard's concession to sentiment and passion includes love and marriage with Lucy, the simple and pure Victorian idealized image of woman, whom he literally venerates as an 'angel'.

The novel's tragedy is thus built up by the antithetical juxtaposition of reason (Sir Austin) and emotion (Richard). In this respect, I consider the major mistake of both father and son as being their failure to correlate these two indispensable components of the human personality, and there are no visible attempts to do so. Richard only pretends to escape the emotional

entrapment, when Lucy is sent to school; while Sir Austin's perhaps only sentimental endeavor is his desired choice of a specific type of an 'inexperienced woman' as a bride for his son.

The possible fulfillment is denied to Richard because of another concession of his to passionate instinct, namely the sexual entanglement with a certain Mrs. Bella Mount, which suggests moral inadequacies of a unilateral character, even if Richard himself is not capable of forgiving himself. The weaknesses of Richard's character are exploited by his father's calculated 'system' of upbringing, whose pressure of paternal opposition weakens the marriage of Lucy and Richard, who yields to the waves of dissipation, in particular to the advances of Bella.

In remorse and despair, he exiles himself to the Rhineland, where he receives the news that his wife has given birth to a child. The news literally turns him upside down and suggests some premises of Richard's climactic change of heart towards the end of the novel as a way of spiritual completeness and formation of his personality. Yet Richard, as well as his father, is severely charged at the end through the unexpected catastrophe of Lucy's death.

In the final aspects of my interpretation, the process of development is rather dramatic than narrated, and it is blended with respect for metaphor, which ultimately becomes a weakness of the author.

In this respect, it may be stated that, although *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* is not George Meredith's most successful novel, it undoubtedly marks the beginning of an experimental route that defines its author's creative arrangements. This experimental and rare endeavor employs a number of certain characteristic narrative devices and techniques that make Meredith's Bildungsroman obscure and difficult. In particular, his narrative structure creates a literary discourse that redoubles and proliferates within itself.

It is to be noticed that, like other Victorian Bildungsromane discussed in this study, among which *Jane Eyre*, for instance, Meredith's novel presents a complex organization of the text ('frame-text') that consists of a general or main narrative—which I would label 'frame-story' (whose thematic elements are united within a 'frame-history')—within which I find different minor narratives (narrative sections or separate narrative units) combined to form the whole of a developmental process of this particular Bildungsroman. Each of them discloses, through the verbal (of the narrator) and written (of the author) representation, the following inevitable macro-sequence of a typical Bildungsroman literary pattern:

- 1 euphorical beginning describing the rural and family experience of the hero in development
- 2 the conflict between father and son

- 3 marriage as rebellion
- 4 unexpected event and progressive epiphanization of the hero
- 5 death physical (the heroine) and spiritual (the hero).

The narrative point of view which reifies the above suggested structure is extremely complex and dynamic: primarily, the narrator's story is the most comprehensive one—who performs the basic narrative function to narrate and assess the developmental process of Richard—to which I add at least four metatextual and metadiegetic perspectives (metatexts) of different narrators, which would eventually reveal, on a distinct stylistic level, the dramatic amplification of Richard's ordeal and spiritual evolution:

- 1 the poetry written by Richard himself and by Diaper Sandoe
- 2 *The Pilgrim's Scrip*, 'a collection of original aphorisms' by Sir Austin Feverel
- 3 Clare Forey's diary
- 4 the many letters the characters send each other, which assume great significance in the narrative presentation of the developmental process, and among which the one by Lady Blandish to Austin Wentworth, at the end of the novel, is most relevant.

The corresponding narrators of these metatexts perform their metanarrative, metadiegetic, communicative, testimonial and even ideological functions.

As mentioned above, the authorial point of view is expressed most explicitly and comprehensively through an omniscient heterodiegetic narrator who dominates the narration of Richard Feverel's process of development and provides its poetic implication on a different, particular stylistic level.

Meredith the novelist often assumes the role of a poet, and Meredith the 'realist' is rather a 'romantic sentimentalist' and a lyric whose poetic mind is at work in many passages of the novel. This kind of poetic, imaginative technique is determined by the writer's sensibility mostly gravitating to symbolism and leading towards nature and Christian ethics. The natural background creates a Paradise regained for the characters that fulfill their Eros:

Away with Systems! Away with a corrupt world! Let us breathe the air of the Enchanted Island. (...)

Pipe, Happy Love! pipe on to these dear innocents!

The tide of colour has ebbed from the upper sky. In the West the sea of sunken fire draws back; and the stars leap forth, and tremble, and retire before the advancing moon, who strips the silver train of cloud from her

shoulders, and, with her foot upon the pine-tops, surveys heaven.
(Chapter 19)

Towards the end, in the passage of his walking through the woods, after he receives the news about his child, Richard's experience of a spiritual progression towards revelation is also sparked off by a suggestive counterpointing of natural elements and biblical symbols. The progression of living creatures fits the hero's own progress from frustrated physical strife to a strong internal sense of humility and love through the climactic revelation of Madonna and the Child, and finally to a sense of inner stability combined with a peaceful fruitfulness of the landscape:

He looked within, and saw the Virgin holding the Child. (...) He felt in his heart the cry of his child, his darling's touch. (...) And as they led him he had a sense of purification so sweet he shuddered again and again. When he looked out from his trance on the breathing world, the small birds hopped and chirped; warm fresh sunlight was over all the hills. He was on the edge of the forest, entering a plain clothed with ripe corn under a spacious morning sky. (Chapter 42)

As mentioned above, however, although a change in consciousness might have been produced, the hero is guaranteed neither the spiritual accomplishment nor the fulfillment of external perspectives on life. That is to say, Meredith's effort to open the narrative to a poetic, imaginative technique of rendering the psychic completeness leads inevitably to an ambiguity of acknowledgment of inner potentialities and nurture of the intellectual and social perspectives, of individuality and formation.

Meredith himself seems to have failed in combining passionate romantic response to nature and the experience of human life with the fictional topicality of any social preoccupation, including the moral consideration of George Eliot or the satiric humor of Thackeray.

Nonetheless, Meredith's Bildungsroman reveals originality and complexity in its fictional universe, a concern complying with the reality of human existence and a conscious exploration of the human inner life. His novel is difficult to read and apprehend its message, which is actually an achievement by difficulty of style and difficult wavering of technique in his attempt to reconcile character and event, his formative process and symbolic images of the natural environment.

In denying his created persona the formation of personality, psychic stability and social integration, Meredith anticipates, as George Eliot does, the narrative and thematic perspectives of the developmental processes of protagonists in later Victorian Bildungsromane, such as Jude Fawley and Ernest Pontifex, as well as of the 20th century novels of formation, such as Paul Morel or Stephen Dedalus.

4.1.4 Thomas Hardy: The Obscurity of Formation

Jude the Obscure is Hardy's last great novel, which expresses his later ideas and attitudes before he came to write poetry, superior to fiction and his true vocation, as Hardy himself always would consider. The applicability of different fictional elements and devices with lyrical or symbolical considerations in treating certain themes and certain third-person strategies indeed may give the impression that his novels are a means of reaching the status of poet.

It is claimed that Hardy was a poet in many lyrical passages of his fiction, especially those dealing with spatial realities of the imaginary Wessex, and he wrote the formal poetry of his life. If he is often a realist in his poetry, he is a poet in his fiction, and this is much noticeable in his Bildungsroman, which, unlike his earlier works (say, *Far from the Madding Crowd*), brings up no idea that the tension and violence of human life and nature may be either eliminated or borne by patient endurance.

Hardy was claimed to possess a bizarre juxtaposition specific to the Pre-Raphaelites, but he is mainly a regional novelist, whose imaginary world of Wessex covers a large area of southern and western England. Hardy is almost romantic in his admiration and observation of the natural world, often with a strong symbolic effect. In the same way he approaches and reveals some attitudes of celebration towards his native Wessex. He reveals in his novels a deep attachment to the rural customs and ways of life, which he knew as a boy, to the close communion and idealized relationship between man and nature, which he praises, among others, yet to a lesser extent, in *Jude the Obscure*.

Although this novel discloses a less explicit autobiographical substratum, compared to other Victorian Bildungsromane, it reifies Hardy's later artistic sensibility and it involves a number of other concerns which express Hardy's later, new outlook on human existence and the new environmental considerations of this existence (as he does in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, for instance, which is, like *Jude the Obscure*, a pessimistic novel, yet expressing more explicitly the author's growing awareness of social changes and problems of his time, such as agricultural innovation and the power of the new aimed at replacing the old patriarchal relations in a rural community).

In both novels, however, the level of tragedy is extended by the author's insights into human psychology and the idea of the imperfection of man dominated by his subconscious passions, the social relations and the mysterious forces that govern human destiny. Jude, in this respect, like Michael Henchard, is a mere puppet bandied about by fate.

Hardy is also aware of the contradiction of contemporary sexual mores and the new perspectives of the female experience of life, expressed, among others in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Sue Bridehead, the heroine of *Jude the Obscure*, impressed as Hardy himself by Swinburne's outspoken repudiation of Christianity, is an intelligent and fascinating but neurotic example of what was known in the 1890s as the 'New Woman'. In rendering her relationship with Jude, Hardy might have been tempted to express a personal attitude of obscure acerbity about love, marriage, sexuality, stereotypes of men and women, which ultimately allows the narrative appear difficult and burdensome rather than luminous.

Yet *Jude the Obscure* is primarily a Bildungsroman, and within the 3rd person focused narrative the narrator is aimed at disclosing the process of evolution and development of a protagonist from boyhood until maturity, following the thematic and narrative perspectives of a typical Bildungsroman frame-text, and emphasizing the idea of life ordeal, especially that by love and social interaction, and, in this respect and some others, the novel becomes a part of the general concern of my study.

Hardy's novel is pervaded by a sense of crisis and subservience to the past like that of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, and, like Meredith, Butler, and George Eliot, its author stipulates the failure of any formative perspectives of his protagonist, as well as the tragic, obscure and frustrating perspectives of his protagonist's developmental process.

The theme of formation is intermingled with Hardy's general concern—remarkably expressed throughout his entire career as a novelist—with the struggle of man against the indifferent forces that rule the world and that inflict on him sufferings and ironies of life and love; in other words, the power of destiny, its stress-mark on the existence of humans.

In his Bildungsroman, Hardy concentrates on character, and his sharp sense of psychological complexity and special insights into the human spiritual universe find expression less in the affectionate presentation of the rustic characters, as in other novels, but rather in exploring the universe of the characters' inner world, while touching some important psychological issues.

The author unfolds the tragic story of the two central characters, who represent new social types: Jude Fawley, a talented working man who is passionate for education and self-improvement, and the woman he loves, Sue Bridehead, a 'New Woman' of the 1890s.

The main character, whose formative process represents the fictional nucleus of the novel, is Jude, with a more complex personality than the others, and, unlike the others, he develops and changes as the narrative progresses. He is the central figure who affects the life of every other character in the story, and, similarly, his experience of life and his

developmental process are affected by the relationships he establishes with other characters.

Of no less importance are his own self-conceived arrangements of life, desires and expectations, which determine a painful and frustrating struggle for achievement and formative success, as well as their conflicting juxtaposition with the thwarting perspectives of a larger society. In this respect, Hardy seems to have exaggerated his own struggles for self-education and accomplishment, which are expressed through a pessimistic, obscure view on the decline of his own world and the emergence of an oppressive modernity, and which ultimately renders obscure the entire narrative in general, and the character of Jude and his formative process in particular.

The early part of the novel presents the childhood of Jude: an orphan brought up by an old village woman, who at the beginning of the narrative mourns the separation from his teacher. The first spatial reality of the novel is thus provincial, at Marygreen, then the narrative organization follows Jude's desire for education, and Christminster, the '*heavenly Jerusalem*', as a character suggests in the novel, becomes the second important spatial reality in Jude's formative process.

Other spatial realities to come, as well as the temporal organization of the narrative in a logical, linear continuity of events, determine the protagonist's search for a philosophy of living and for a place in the educational system and society in general; his attempt to establish human interconnections and his effort to adjust in the changing world; his sentimental career involving two love affairs (with Arabella and, respectively, Sue); and his gradual progress from an illusory kind of existence to a more rational apprehension and consideration of life experience and perspectives of personal accomplishment.

If the process of development leading to formation is obscure and oppressive with regard to Jude's personality, the ending is lugubrious—it is suggested by the untimely death of the protagonist, and it suggests, in turn, the defeat of Jude's formation. The ultimate failure of fulfillment seems to be rooted in the hero's own intellectual and emotional difficulties, and in his own failure to find a sense of purpose in his life experience through the possibility of correlating inner drives with real perspectives provided by the environment, and to separate good from evil, spirit from flesh. Hardy himself states that *Jude the Obscure* is

a novel addressed by a man to men and women of full age; which attempts to deal unaffectedly with the fret and fever, derision and disaster, that may press in the wake of the strongest passion known to humanity; to tell, without a mincing of words, of a deadly war waged between flesh and spirit; and to point the tragedy of unfulfilled aims (...). (Preface to the First Edition)

Throughout the narrative, the narrator thus expresses Hardy's point of view about the contrast between the ideal life a man desires for himself and the sordid real life he is destined to lead, their incompatibility being the major source of failure in Jude's developmental process and in the desired formative fulfillment.

The narrator makes the reader aware of the fact that the hero in development has never known the bright side of life, and his entire formative journey, both spiritual and physical, ends in tragedy, which is death, and he becomes, as Arabella says at the end of the novel, '*a 'andsome corpse*'.

Thomas Hardy is almost unique in the general Victorian pattern of fiction writing, and it is difficult to find any direct alliances to one or another literary trend of the time (as to say, for instance, that Dickens is sometimes romantic and sometimes more realistic, the Brontë sisters are romantic, Thackeray and Eliot are writers of realistic fiction). However, it wouldn't be appropriate to do so, but rather to consider his remarkable correlation of some literary aspects of romanticism, realism and even naturalism, as some critics say, and the fact that he triumphantly takes the English novel into the 20th century.

Yet critics do argue that Hardy's genius has revealed itself most efficiently in poetry rather than in fiction, and even that only two or three of his novels should remain minor classics. If so, I would consider them to be *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), yet not as minor classics but rather as important works representing the culmination of the literary power of Victorian novel in general.

Jude the Obscure is actually disregarded as aesthetically valid and efficient in late Victorian fiction, and it is said to be '*frequently disliked even by Hardy's admirers*' (Klingopulos 1976: 418). Among Hardy's important works, however, I would consider *Jude the Obscure* as well, especially with regard to the wholeness of the fictional system of Victorian Bildungsromane; and, in this respect, I would regard it, along with Butler's *The Way of All Flesh*, as representing the culmination of the literary power of Victorian Bildungsromane in particular.

4.1.5 Samuel Butler: Looking Back in Anger at the Formative Process

Like *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *Jude the Obscure*, and *The Mill on the Floss*, William Butler's Bildungsroman is pervaded by a sense of existential crisis and tragedy, and by frustrating developmental perspectives that appear to thwart the final psychic completeness of the protagonist, his spiritual fulfillment and the formation of his personality.

Unlike them, however, Butler disregards the ultimate possibility of escaping the impossible existential conflict of the protagonist—founded on the relationship between the spiritual and the social, or self - family, self - other people, self - environment—at the final stage of his intellectual and physical maturation, which is death (either physical, as in Eliot's and Hardy's Bildungsromane, or spiritual, as in Meredith's novel). Instead, Ernest Pontifex, like Butler himself, eventually attains psychic wholeness, and becomes a serious-minded person.

Samuel Butler implies, like other Victorian writers of Bildungsromane, the interpretative reasoning that his fiction is founded on a confessional impulse that formulates an experience of life drawn upon the raw material of his own experience of life as the son of a stern clerical father, his education at boarding school and then at Cambridge. These autobiographical matters of fact, along with the assumption that Butler in real life might have been a child of a sensibility equal to Ernest's, are fictionalized in order to exploit the theme of formation which frames the experience of the life of Ernest Pontifex, his struggle to escape a repressive upbringing induced by his father, his search for spiritual completeness and his artistic evolution.

After the Cambridge period (Chapter L or LI) till the end of the novel, however, the narrative material is rather imaginary and it clearly deviates from Butler's own experience of life—Ernest's suffering and frustration, for example, are not that of Butler who, instead of going through Ernest's ordeal as a clergyman, gave up his occupation and went to New Zealand—except for the fact that Ernest becomes at the end of his formative process someone like Samuel Butler himself.

The author creates thus a disguised autobiography, an autobiographical novel in which he attempts to attack bitterly the conduct of his own father and to condemn ironically Victorian domesticity, Victorian social and sexual hypocrisy, especially religious falsehood, for—as the narrative message stipulates—the '*spirit behind the Church is true, though her letter—true once—is now true no longer*'.

At the same time, Butler attempts to establish through his homodiegetic narrator (Mr. Edward Overton, an imaginary friend of the family) a distance between the mind of the person who creates the fictional message and the mind of the person who suffers in the process of evolution and formation as conceived within the fictional discourse and transmitted through the fictional message, that is a narrative distance between the author and the hero in development, so as the reader would apprehend the differences between the life experiences of Samuel Butler and Ernest Pontifex.

This is what actually every Victorian author of Bildungsromane does, yet Butler is more than, say, Dickens or Thackeray, interested in

understanding his own experience of life—hence the omniscient point of view reified through authorial interpretative suggestions regarding the hero's life, which ultimately represent a criticism of that life that is also self-criticism.

The author's searching comments and interpretations are reified through fictional narrative and thematic arrangements of Ernest's experience of life as a process of development consisting of the protagonist's weaknesses, failures, hatred of convention (religious, social, familial), triumphs, self-criticism which allows the acquisition of a self-satisfied knowledge and which eventually appears to determine his formative completeness.

Some of the author's criticism directed at Theobald and Christina, Ernest's parents, and at Dr. Skinner, Ernest's headmaster, is also directed at Ernest himself—that is to say, it represents a self-criticism of both the writer and the hero. This type of criticism in the narrative is expressed through the narrative voice of the novel's homodiegetic narrator, who would often reveal critical judgments on the protagonist's formative process (which are permanent and necessary for art, as well as of real interest to my analysis) and the environment (which are chiefly of historical interest). Yet Mr. Overton is Butler without Butler's ingenuity and originality; he is just a kind narrator, a minor character with a sufficient income, an author of burlesque writings. It is Ernest Pontifex who achieves critical understanding of his own life, as Samuel Butler did; it is Ernest who loves Handel to idolatry, as Butler did; it is Ernest who is capable of writing Butler's books, and so on.

In handling the theme of formation as a means of fictional representation of his character, Samuel Butler attempts, like Meredith and George Eliot, to be critical of a father's faulty 'system' applied to his child's process of education and growing-up, that is of development. In the case of Ernest this system is conceived of as Christian, founded on orthodox forms, and applicable to a life outside the Church. A loving mother cannot disrupt the thwarting principles of the system, and they gradually determine the final separation between the protagonist in development and his family.

The pattern of Bildungsroman, as reified in *The Way of all Flesh*, implies the chronotope of roadway which stipulates this departure, and which links the chronotope of original home to that of city. The latter determines a complex background of inner and exterior perspectives of development, yet what makes Ernest Pontifex's decision of separation final is actually a letter from his father, which he receives during his imprisonment—a tragic experience of life that appears to mark a new step in his formative process. Even the letter from his mother, who yearns for 'a happy, united, God-fearing family as we were before' (Chapter LXVII), could not have changed his decision, because

This letter did not produce the effect on Ernest that it would have done before his imprisonment began. His father and mother thought they could take him up as they had left him off. They forgot the rapidity with which development follows misfortune, if the sufferer is young and of a sound temperament. Ernest made no reply to his father's letter, but his desire for a total break developed into something like a passion. 'There are orphanages', he exclaimed to himself, 'for children who have lost their parents—oh! why, why, why are there no harbours of refuge for grown men who have not yet lost them?' (ibid.)

Ernest Pontifex eventually attains that refuge, gains financial success and it seems that he also reaches successful spiritual formation as his aspirations meet the terms of inner accomplishment as a writer. This happy ending, however, is somewhat of a variant of the stock happy ending of the Victorian Bildungsroman, especially with regard to his social position and integration:

He is in a very solitary position (...) He has formed no alliances, and has made enemies not only of the religious world but of the literary and scientific brotherhood as well. This will not do nowadays. If a man wishes to get on he must belong to a set, and Mr. Pontifex belongs to no set—not even to a club. (Chapter LXXXVI)

Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* (written in the 1870s but not published until after his death, and the death of the Queen²²) and Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* are connected by their common isolation from the main tendencies and literary trends of the 19th century English cultural phenomenon; except for that of Bildungsroman, for they both are late-Victorian novels of character evolution and development, and they represent the literary culmination of the fictional tradition of this type of novel in the 19th century English cultural background and important literary hypostases within the larger system of Victorian Bildungsromane.

4.2 Gender Distinction 2: The Power and Extent of Female Individual Consciousness in Development

In the case of Victorian female authorship, the Bildungsroman takes on new perspectives in that it represents the result of women writing which focuses primarily on those stages of developmental process, which represent important steps towards independence, emancipation, and intellectual and

²² Perhaps not incidentally, for Butler was the first who had the courage and originality to reveal that everything was not as happy in the Victorian family as it was commonly suggested. Butler disliked Dickens' novels because he must have seen in them a glorification of the Victorian family. Yet he was wrong in the sense that he forgot that certain Dickensian parents and parental figures were far from satisfactory human beings, to say nothing of Mrs. Nickleby, Mr. Dorrit or Mr. Murdstone.

sexual equality. The narrative develops the fictional concept of 'independent woman' and a specific language for female experience within a continuing tradition of women's literature.

Among the literary hypostases of the Victorian women authorship, the female novel of development is central, and the major issue for the female protagonist is the search for autonomy and selfhood in opposition to the social constraints placed upon her, including the demand to marry.

This conflict, usually with autobiographical resonance and often framed in metaphors of imprisonment (the social, cultural, or sexual enslavement of Jane, for instance), is embodied in such novels as Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, and George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*.

A number of basic narrative and thematic elements of the literary system of Bildungsroman are also remarkably displayed in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's long blank-verse 'novel' *Aurora Leigh: A Poem in Nine Books*.

The Victorian male writers of Bildungsromane, in their correlation of the character's inner perspectives and exterior behavior within the process of formation, seem to have attempted to find a compromise between inner and outer experience, or reconcile these aspects, hoping to integrate their hero within the social background.

In its turn, the Victorian female authorship seems to have emphasized the character's inward, rather than the influences of the environment on the process of development, yet involving it in an allegorical struggle against social determinism in their literary assertion of the concept of 'independent woman'. Even so, the narrative and thematic perspectives of the female writers are different. Jane Eyre, for instance, is allowed the spiritual accomplishment in the form of female 'independence' on the level of equality with male characters, and her social integration. For Maggie both these aspects are not possible, nor even the compromises of Pendennis or Ernest Pontifex. In *Wuthering Heights* there is no concern with the complexity of social environment at all, although the disruption of the harmony of family life leads to the same existential implications as in *The Mill on the Floss*.

According to the Bildungsroman fictional pattern, and in spite of vivid difference between them in matters of narrative and thematic structure, the novels of Victorian female writers show the evolution of the main characters as a gradual process from childhood to maturity, and their structure generally consists of a biographical substratum and fiction, the evolution and formation of character correspond to her own nature and its counterpart nurture, and the ever existing ideals and disappointments, true and false virtues as necessary stages of maturation of the main character.

4.2.1 Emily Brontë: The Romantic Side of Development and Formation

Emily Jane Brontë's only novel, *Wuthering Heights*, even more powerful and valuable than *Jane Eyre*, which is more popular, I may argue, displays remarkable image patterns that project emotional elements onto the representation of characters and the external world. 'Wuthering' may be a Yorkshire variant upon 'weathering' ('stormy'), and, indeed, one may say that the storm is violent, as the lives and events of the characters, but at the end it stops, along with the happy ending of the narrative, and the nature is calm and brightened, making people smile again.

It is more of a romantic allusion about nature mirroring and being linked to human existence, and which creates actually the novel's poetic appeal, its poetic and moral structure, so representative of the author's own imaginative powers.

Indeed, one may definitely notice that the novel is less concerned with rendering social and moral issues, and concentrates on the complexity of human insight, telling the story of a family living at Wuthering Heights, and the family of Thrushcross Grange.

It is also a complex Bildungsroman, describing the process of evolution and formation of two generations, covering a number of characters, their processes of development, and different features, categories and lengths of these processes.

Emily Brontë's novel also underlines the fact that the complexity of the narrative construction of Victorian fiction in general and Bildungsroman in particular is sometimes given less by one author's defects of construction, and is more linked to a number of specific narrative structures, so-called 'concentric', in which a narrative within a narrative within a narrative, and so on, are arranged according to a certain theme, motif or principle of the narrative concern. Thus *Wuthering Heights*, though undoubtedly a Bildungsroman in its presentation of the process of formation of a number of characters, centers on the theme of love and revenge, which is voiced by a narrator who gives an account of a tale told by someone else, and within this tale there are further narratives, and the '*movement "inwards" at the beginning is complemented by a movement outwards at the end, a return to the original narrative relationship*' (Cook 1995: 144).

Though the construction of the novel is often regarded as its weakest point, and it has been called 'clumsy' by more than one critic, for indeed the various parts contributed by the narrative voices of Mr. Lockwood and, through him, Ellen Dean, have a tendency to provide digressions and cut the story into segments, the narrative structure is nevertheless close-packed, every incident having its place in this extremely complex plot, contributing to the feeling or the impression left by the character. The first chapters represent an introduction aimed at creating the atmosphere, forming a

logical beginning for the further account of the story, which soon turns back on itself, quickens up, takes in other narratives—for instance a diary is read, which goes back thirty years—and so on, a narrative within a narrative within a narrative on different temporal and spatial levels, according to the essence of the chronotope: the present day and then back, forward nearly twenty years and then back again, speech within speech, incident within incident, culminating with a movement into the future when Mr. Lockwood unexpectedly revisits Thrushcross Grange, still its tenant, just to return to a temporal reality which not long before represented ‘the present day’. The last chapters are actually an addendum to the main story, a concession to the popular taste, to provide the happy ending demanded by the reading public.

Among the ‘narrative voices’ of the novel, that of Nelly Dean is quintessential. Like Mr. Lockwood, she serves the function of an intermediary between the narrative material and the reader. Unlike Mr. Lockwood, whose stereotypical attitudes and romantic visions may insert subjectivism, curiosity and horror into the reader, Nelly Dean’s moral outlook and rational attitude gives credibility to the events presented unrealistically, and which are both bizarre and inconceivable. Also, her ironic and comic attitude, unlike Mr. Lockwood’s, helps to preserve the novel’s balance.²³ Yet the atmosphere of folklore that the novel has, which is derived from its apprehension as a tale whose events are long past and survive only through oral transmission (in the case of Nelly Dean) and then in written form (in the case of Mr. Lockwood), adds force to its quality of mystery and myth.

Putting the telling and assessment of the story into the mouth of this extraordinary teller, the author seems to get over certain inconveniences: for instance there is no need to explain how Heathcliff made his money, for Nelly just does not happen to know. Nelly Dean provides the real beginning of the story, in Chapter IV, when Lockwood asks her, speaking of Heathcliff, ‘*Do you know anything of his story?*’, and she replies: ‘*It’s a cuckoo’s, sir. I know all about it*’. She is involved with all the main events of the narrative, knows everything about everybody, even their inmost and intimate thoughts, but sometimes the reader cannot help noticing that her vocabulary and her remembrance of small details over a period of thirty years are improbable, which is very important for the critic’s attempt to dissent from her viewpoint. However, she is the unifying factor of the narrative technique, the reasoning principle of this almost fantastic tale, and, in this narrative of frequent pagan allusions, the name ‘Dean’ suggests a religious meaning, as she is almost the only one who reminds people of the existence of a supreme God.

²³ In Chapter 9, for instance, when Hindley tries to kill her using a knife, Nelly tells him that she would prefer to be shot since she dislikes the taste of his blade.

Similarly, Lockwood is no less important for the understanding of the novel, although he is less concerned, compared to Nelly Dean, with giving explanations on the events and being involved in the lives of characters (even his name more or less suggests closeness and obtuseness, as one may notice in his response to Nelly's suggestion of a possible affair between him and young Cathy).

The explanations and interpretations of both narrators are often revealed simplistically, and they are intellectually and emotionally limited. One may argue, however, as U. C. Knoepfelmacher does, that '*paradoxically enough, it is this balanced housekeeper who provides us with the keys to a story about the imbalances of the heart*' (1973: 96). Of course, the reader's apprehension of the narrative message and his point of view is neither identical to that of these narrators nor to that of the author, which is expressed through these two homodiegetic narrators. Their judgments reveal more about the narrators than about the characters, thus offering premises for the reader's better apprehension of the novel, yet emphasizing strongly the characters' personalities and inner lives so as to rise over the simplistic minds of those who attempt to explain them.

The narrative system of *Wuthering Heights* contains two narrators who narrate the events of the story, framing them within the patterns of a number of narrative units combined to form the whole of the novel, their specific interrelationship giving the concentricity of this fictional discourse. Mr. Lockwood, a minor character within the narrative, assumes firstly the position of the homodiegetic narrator 1 (N1), apparently a distant observer whose narrative voice does not express the author's omniscient point of view; he addresses directly the receiver of the literary discourse, whom I regard as a real reader (RR). Narration 1 follows its logical temporal and spatial movement until Nelly Dean starts her own narrative presentation. She becomes the homodiegetic narrator 2 (N2), expressing an omniscient point of view to a fictitious reader (FR)—whom I consider narrator 1, now the direct receiver of the literary message and its means of transmission to the real reader.

In this respect, Mr. Lockwood assumes also the position of the narratee of this literary discourse (which is involved in a literary communicative situation) and its narrative organization. In other words, as I perceive him, Mr. Lockwood is (1) narrator 1, (2) narratee, and (3) fictitious reader.

Narrator 2 (Nelly Dean) turns the story a few decades back, developing it rather linearly till what has been regarded as the present moment—in other words, till the end of narration 1. Narration 2 is now disclosing the elements of a typical Bildungsroman plot pattern, describing in tragic terms the process of evolution and development of a number of characters, their childhood, youth, the early maturity and death of Catherine,

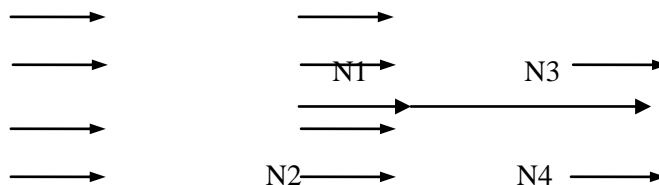
the decrepitude of Heathcliff, and the present stage in the life of the younger generation.

The concentric general narrative structure of the novel contains also a third narration of narrator 1 (Lockwood), in between narration 2 and another narration 4 of narrator 2 (Nelly Dean) who moves back in time to the moment of Lockwood's departure and then renders the representation of events till the actual ending of the novel. The events allow the representation of the culmination of the second process of development and formation, which is the one of the younger Cathy and Hareton.

In matters of narrative construction, the Victorian Bildungsroman takes thus in *Wuthering Heights* new interpretative perspectives, according to which I hypothesize the following elements:

N1	Narration 1	RR	
N2	Narration 2	FR (N1)	RR
N1	Narration 3	RR	
N2	Narration 4	FR (N1)	RR

and the following structure which renders the concentricity of the literary text:



Among the characters of the novel, it seems that Heathcliff, compared to the others, embodies both love and revenge, two main themes implied in the narrative, thus being more complex as a personality than others who either love (Catherine, Edgar Linton) or are driven by and exist for revenge (Hindley). These categories provide the basis and purpose of their existence, and, when lost, they have no reason to live on, become insane and eventually die: Heathcliff is bereft of love (Catherine's death) and revenge (Hindley dies and he becomes the owner of both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, thus accomplishing his aim), and having no one to love or hate, that is to say, having no purpose in life (and he never had one), his end is no less tragic and meaningless than that of the others. Similarly, Hindley's sense of life consists of hatred and revenge against Heathcliff, and when the latter leaves Wuthering Heights after he hears about Catherine's intention to marry Linton, Hindley loses the purpose of living, degrades and

finally, 'helped' by Heathcliff on his return, dies in misery, changed from human to animal condition.

I think this thematic implication is founded on the writer's conception of psychological determinism, which, as in Dickens²⁴, is rendered through the principle of fate as an agent in human existence, and which helps to determine the attributes (such as passion, obsession, yearning, and so on) of the characters as framing their entire existence, particularly the process of development and formation of a mature personality. The principle of character 'development' is applicable to every growing individual (Hindley or Edgar Linton, for instance); that of 'formation', I believe, may be announced only with regard to those who have the ability to overcome the unilateral life pattern, and, especially linked to the inner existence of the characters, to those able to create a moral existence founded on self-understanding and psychic change (Cathy and Hareton; similarly, to extend the list to other Bildungsromane, it is the case of Pendennis and Pip).

As Wordsworth wrote earlier, especially in *The Prelude*, and according to the narrative construction of Bildungsromane, the author of this novel describes childhood as the age of spiritual understanding from which further life is either developing or falling away. These phenomena, which may be labeled the 'antecedents of childhood', make possible psychological delineation of specific human features (love and revenge) that eventually become characteristic of the entire personality. It is to notice that Heathcliff is less violent within the story, responding to others' attacks and violent actions towards him. If Catherine has been called the driving force of the story, he would become its structure, remaining passive as other characters act upon him.

The ties that bind Heathcliff and Catherine—two characters whose interrelationship constitutes the nucleus of the narrative, representing the struggle of universal forces as archetypes—are beyond sex, and from the stormy intercourse of their elders, resolved in the union of death, young Hareton and Cathy would eventually achieve a balance in life of the active and the passive. The love of Hareton and Cathy may be considered an anticlimax to the love of Heathcliff and Catherine, which dominates the narrative, though it seems that one could not find its consummate force without the other.

The incestuous connections (though no literal incest occurs in the story) of the characters which are linked to the Oedipal myth of family life, as well as the suggestion of familial cursed past, prove typical elements of the literary pattern of the family romance: a stepbrother and a stepsister

²⁴ In *Great Expectations*, for instance: Pip's ambition, pride and narcissism; Magwitch's obsession to create and possess a 'gentleman'; Estella's coldness of soul and heart; Miss Havisham's hatred and obsessive desire to revenge; and so on.

marry a sister and a brother, and two sets of first cousins marry, but whose union is burdened by a bargain of the past.

The intertextual analysis reveals also the novel's alliance to the tradition of revenge drama, gothic novel, ghost story, and even fairy tale.

The revenge drama (like Elizabethan drama, for instance *Hamlet*) implies a persona with an avenging spirit who assumes madness (Heathcliff, whose madness appears real) and applies the forces of evil in an act of revenge.

The gothic elements include mysterious characters, violence and madness, family curse and haunted house, bleak atmosphere and the sense of morbidity and mortality in Heathcliff's yearning to rejoin the other half of his soul in death.

The ghost story allows the blending of the narrative material with elements of the supernatural, such as the ghost of Catherine or the two mysterious figures wandering in the moors.

The fairy tale offers the motifs of imprisonment (Cathy, for instance), cruel lord, interfering servant, and others.

It is more difficult, however, to trace any definite motifs and fictional elements that would include *Wuthering Heights* in the tradition of Bildungsroman.

Indeed, compared to *Jane Eyre*, Emily's novel was never considered a Bildungsroman, and still is not, perhaps because of the complexity of other thematic and narrative perspectives it offers to a critical discussion. Also, this may be because the number of elements typical of the Bildungsroman literary pattern is relatively small and hard to follow. For instance, there is almost no literary concern with rendering the environment and the social background as the spatial basis of the story and that of the developmental process, or, I may argue, there is no social background at all so as to determine the character's evolution and formation.

Nonetheless, *Wuthering Heights* is another Victorian Bildungsroman and should be approached as a definite part of its fictional system, although the principle of chronotope determines an unconventional, with respect to the Bildungsroman, narrative and thematic correlation of elements; and that formation acts differently with respect to characters; because it acts out of the character, I would say, for indeed the development is founded on the inner correlation between emotional and intellectual components, and on strictly inter-human relationship, rather than on the exterior determinism of a larger society.

I argue that this aspect represents Emily Brontë's literary achievement, and it also makes *Wuthering Heights* a distinct and unique narrative discourse among Victorian Bildungsromane, yet representative of its general fictional system.

Among the characters, it seems that only the young Cathy and Hareton receive both spiritual accomplishment (an important point in the narrative) and material reward (a simple matter of fact), justifying one possible perspective of the Bildungsroman—the novel's happy ending.

In the case of the supernatural passion of Heathcliff and Catherine, the failure to reach any spiritual *status quo* (stability of fulfillment) renders the tragedy of their life experience, and, in matters of my concern, transforms the fictional material of the Bildungsroman, justifying another perspective—the novel's tragic account of human existence.

Unlike the second generation, these two characters cannot find fulfillment in a temporal existence of growth and change. As I have suggested, Heathcliff is the only character whose completeness is evident, as well as his search for essences in a non-temporal, static dream-world created by his superior imagination. Despite the physical growth and spiritual change, he manages to preserve some basic perspectives of the original experience of childhood as an existence of healthy freedom and the basis of their mythical oneness, and towards whose unconstrained universe both Heathcliff and Catherine have tended in their attempt to escape the adult institutional world.

Although Catherine points to her essential unity with Heathcliff (*'I am Heathcliff—he's always, always in my mind'*), she is not entirely part of that static, unreal world since she self-consciously accepts the world of temporal change and growth. Catherine's inner division makes her circulate between these levels of existence (rational and irrational, change and stasis, consciousness and unconsciousness), and, although her *'semiconscious being responds to the asocial energies represented by Heathcliff, [she] nonetheless finds her conscious, social self yielding to the ordered existence represented by Edgar Linton'* (Knoepfelmacher 1973: 96). Unable to exist in both worlds, her process of development is ultimately a tragedy, and she precipitates Heathcliff's self-division, hence the incompleteness and final failure of his accomplishment.

Heathcliff's and Catherine's love and prospects of existence prove mutually destructive since Heathcliff's own condition is unnatural. Moreover, it is against the normal human experience of life.

Only through the love of the second generation can the author offer meaningful perspectives to a process of development and formation in a temporal, normal, ordinary world.

If the formative premises of the entire existence of Heathcliff and Catherine have come to a dead end, the final psychic completeness of Hareton's and Cathy's formation completes a cycle. The intrusion of outside blood humanizes the Earnshaw strain, making them capable of correlating the passionate with the moral and rational, and of expending their capacity

of love to others. Their healthy laughter at the end of the narrative signifies the restoration of sanity in the destroyed world of *Wuthering Heights*.

But the process leading to the final accomplishment is torturous and needs a change of consciousness on the part of the heroes. Cathy has to understand the difference between evil and good, insincere maneuver and true human values (say, Hareton's unfeigned kindness and his capacity to love), and restore her psychic wholeness. If able to do that, she may now shift her self-projection and 'civilize' Hareton so as to create the premises of their union as the fulfillment and final formation of both characters. In other words, Hareton's psychic change is thus a result of Cathy's own capacity to reach a greater consciousness and to explore his hunger for love and knowledge. She can change intellectually and spiritually due to her ability, which Catherine never possessed, to establish a balance between variation and stasis, civilization and love, Victorian acceptance of social responsibility and romantic rebellion and freedom.

One may argue, however, that the history of the second generation is pointless, and the characters are poor versions of the first generation: the union of Cathy and Hareton, for instance, lacks the mythic power of the union of passionate Catherine and demonic Heathcliff; and Linton Heathcliff, a caricature of Edgar Linton, among others involved in the events, attenuates the narrative tension of the first half of the novel.

On the other hand, as I have attempted to argue, the death of Catherine at almost the midpoint of the narrative, may suggest the beginning of a natural extension of the narrative which contributes to its meaning by means of structural and thematic repetition of names, personalities, events, justifying its cyclical essence.

In terms of the *Bildungsroman* literary pattern, the second movement of the narrative shows a strong parental figure (Heathcliff) that consciously attempts to control by revenge the destiny of two characters in development. Their perspective of achievement in the union of marriage is also overshadowed by the suggestion of a cursed past, provided also by Heathcliff. He literally curses himself to be haunted by Catherine beyond the grave, and this fact influences the second generation as Heathcliff plays out his obsession through his nephew, niece and son.

His death implies the end of his vengeful behavior, means liberation of the formative process, and, as I have stated, allows the normal course of life's evolution and eventually accomplishment of the second generation of lovers: Hareton and Cathy.

What I mean is that—hypothetically speaking, although the entire narrative reveals a romantic point of view of the author (despite the narrators' attempt to provide insertions of realism)—I consider the history of Heathcliff and Catherine as being founded on a more obviously romantic

(illogic) attitude than that of Hareton and Cathy whose process of formation discloses also its alliance to the literary principles of (logical) realism.

I do not intend or have any pretensions to assert the superiority and validity of one over the other.

In this respect, the novel is a highly unconventional work for the Victorian age and Victorian reader whose horizon of expectation includes largely a blend of social environment and Christian ethics so as to determine both hero and action. As the English novel in general has developed through the 18th and 19th centuries, realism may be just one, although far from being essential, characteristic feature of *Wuthering Heights*. As it is, exploiting the conventions other than those typical of Victorian literary background, Emily Brontë is able to move her narrative from the realm of realism to that of the romantic attitude towards life and romantic treatment of human existence.

At first regarded as excessively morbid and violent, met with more incomprehension than recognition, unlike *Jane Eyre*, it was not until Emily's death of consumption that *Wuthering Heights* became widely acknowledged as a masterpiece, gradually re-assessed, praised as a masterful fusion of romance and other genres, including realism, though its author's personality and much of her character remained enigmatic.

4.2.2 Charlotte Brontë: Emotional Symbolism vs. Rational Control

Emily's sister, Charlotte Brontë was the most admired of the Brontës, although criticized for her emotionalism and didacticism. The need of being loved, as one critic remarked, was considered unbecoming for a clergyman's daughter, but more widespread were praise for her special insight into the depths of human feelings and psychology, and the high popular and critical esteem.

Compared to Emily's novel, it seems that Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* can be easily comprehended and analyzed according to the interpretative modalities regarding the Victorian Bildungsroman.

On the level of narrative construction, however, I argue that though Emily Brontë tells her story through the narrative voices of Nelly Dean and Lockwood, two minor characters of her own creation, and her novel discloses a concentric narration, and though her sister Charlotte renders hers as a first-person narration of the main character, framed in terms of a linear text, the narrative structure of *Jane Eyre* is no less complex and worthy of a structural approach than that of *Wuthering Heights*.

In this respect, it is clear that the fictional organization of *Jane Eyre* as a literary text, centered on focusing the reader's attention on the emphasis placed by the author on female personality, reveals the existence of a main, general, well-rounded narrative (as in the case of *The Ordeal of Richard*

Feverel, it is appropriate to call it ‘frame-story’) consisting of a number of minor narrative sections (separate narrative units), each meeting the requirements of independent, rounded, in the traditional way, narrative arrangements, and each corresponding to the requirements of a typical Bildungsroman plot pattern (I call these requirements thematic elements of the ‘frame-history’): the Gateshead section (corresponding to childhood, generation gap, provinciality); the Lowood section (institutionalized education and early miseries); the Thornfield section, which actually allows for the development of two other narrative units within its narrative structure—the Moor House section and the Ferndean section, justifying the happy-ending and the final accomplishment of the main character/heroine (corresponding, respectively, to the larger society, alienation, two love affairs—one with Mr. Rochester, of a passionate, almost carnal attraction, suitable to her personality, and another on a spiritual level, with no perspectives of inner fulfillment, with St. John—at the same time the search for a vocation and a place in the world, development of the professional side, rediscovery of family relations, and final accomplishment while entering upon maturity).

The general narrative structure of the novel consists thus of three main narrative units/sections and two minor narratives developed within the structure of the third one:

<i>Jane Eyre</i> as Frame-Text = Narration	
Frame-Story	Frame-History
<u>Narrative Sections/Units</u>	<u>Bildungsroman Thematic/Plot Elements</u>
N1: Gateshead section (four chapters)	childhood, conflict of generations, provinciality
N2: Lowood section (six chapters)	institutionalized education and early miseries
N3: Thornfield section (fifteen chapters) ²⁵	larger society, search for a vocation and a stable existence, 1 st type of sentimental career
N3.1: Moor House section (seven chapters)	professional career, 2 nd type of sentimental career, rediscovery of family relations
N3.2: Ferndean section (three chapters)	revelation, final accomplishment and formation of personality while entering upon maturity

It appears to be a sort of *mise en abyme*, or a ‘narrative-in-the-narrative’ structure, which establishes a strong link between the frame-story and the other minor narratives inscribed in it.

²⁵ Interrupted by a single, long chapter when Jane revisits Gateshead and Mrs Reed dies. Between this section and the Moor House section there is another long chapter which presents her starvation and suffering.

The relations of these narratives (narrative sections/units) with the frame-story are both explicative and thematic. Moreover, all these narrative stances and the suggested motifs have a sound structural basis, for they are unified by the theme of character formation, that is to say, by Jane's process of development according to the principle of chronotope.

Each narrative unit and its particular thematic elements represent a type of experience, an act of liberation, an assertion of the heroine's self, an awareness of her potentiality, generally—a new stage of her allegorical journey of development, until the formation is achieved. Each begins with Jane being intellectually tormented and spiritually/emotionally starved, and ends with a personal victory achieved through ordeal, but it inevitably determines the nature of the succeeding trial (the triumph over John Reed leads to the struggle with Brocklehurst, for example, and so on).

This fictional pattern brings to my mind the cyclical representation of the experience of life of James Joyce's protagonist.²⁶ His hero in development (Stephen Dedalus of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, a modern Bildungsroman, and also the character of *Stephen Hero* and *Ulysses*) reveals a pattern of existence as a spiral of analogies and motifs, where existence is a continuous flux of experience in which archetypal situations and similar human types are rehearsed continually under different appearances.

In the case of both Joyce's experimental fiction and the Victorian Bildungsroman, the process of development entraps the hero in a cycle of dialectical components: failure and success, crisis and triumph, denial and acceptance, and so on, where the final spiritual crisis and the ultimate moral conflict can be solved in moments of certain psychic revelation, that is to say, of epiphany.

Among the differences, one is that Joyce attempts to a greater extent than the Victorian author to provide new perspectives in third-person strategies, moving his hero from being a distant observer, a passive sensorial receiver of external stimuli to becoming an artist, creator, writer, reader, and an explorer of his own consciousness. A general difference is that Joyce also attempted to break the conventional linear movement and the cause-and-effect sequence of conventional narrative.

In *Jane Eyre*, as in the Victorian Bildungsroman in general, the individual sections, which represent parts of general human experience in development, are often rendered linearly, being inter-determined and representing the unity of a fictional system. Within them, however, the narrative movement varies, and the action is of various kinds, or there are

²⁶ At the end of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* Stephen is left with the prospects of completeness and liberation flight; at the beginning of *Ulysses* he is overwhelmed by frustration and an acute sense of entrapment, and at the end of this novel he succeeds in getting reconciled with himself and the environment.

different events, yet all are subtly paralleled or linked—section to section, incident to incident—and seen in their entirety.

The transitions between these narrative units are as varied as the units themselves. They are founded generally on incident, passionate drive and calculated rationality of Jane or other characters. They have the pretension of the continuity of a real life, except, perhaps, for the final scenes, when Jane hears Rochester's voice and hurries to him.

The narrative sections as presented above reveal thus a single unifying principle (I mean that of formation), but I also sense a kind of repetitive structure of the narrative. That is to say, as in a typical literary pattern of quest-romance or fairy tale, a number of events, actions, situations, and even character types recur at all times so that Jane's general experience of development and formation of her personality consists of new, different experiences of new, different kinds of exterior behavior and inner intensity until the final resolution of conflict and psychic completeness are achieved. In this respect, Helen Moglen argues that the novel's repetitive structure underlines its allegorical quality: *'There can be little question that Jane is herself portrayed by Brontë as a "real person", but the novel is so much the story of the heroine's psychological development that people and situations seem often to be generated as alternative value systems that she must explore as aspects of her growth'* (1976: 108).

Within the general narrative structure of the novel, Jane acts as both character and narrator, through whom the author attempts to express a point of view communicated to the reader. Thus never before had the English novel claimed that a woman possesses so much of a personality and complex inner structure, or that a woman's passion can equal or exceed that of a man. The narrative movement of the novel represents events around the strong characters of Jane and Rochester. Like Dickens' characters, Jane gradually narrates as she is spiritually and biologically developing, in parallel with a more mature narrator who remembers everything that is narrated, governed by reason and with less subjectivity in telling the story, hence a less unreliable narrator (throughout the story she teaches herself not to indulge in romantic hopes, and when Rochester is gone away, for instance, the reader is determined to think that she is apparently indifferent). But she also has the freedom to choose incidents in order to emphasize her strong personality, this aspect being possible while rendering a number of oppositions between characters and continued throughout the entire story. Helen Burns and St. John Rivers represent most relevant antitheses to Jane's personality.

Through her autodiegetic narrator Charlotte Brontë has the ability to link the author to the reader, to share oneself in the experience of the character, yet to detach him from an omniscient, observing author, making

him a reader who observes, in turn, the author. The following examples may be quite explanatory:

Gentle reader, may you never feel what I then felt! May your eyes never shed such stormy, scalding, heart-wrung tears as poured from mine.
(Chapter 27)

And, reader, do you think I feared him in his blind ferocity?—if you do, you little know me. (Chapter 37)

In terms of the fictional system of a Bildungsroman, with respect to its autobiographical form, it is easy to argue that the authorial point of view is not far removed from that of the narrator whose narrative voice, *vice versa*, expresses exclusively that of Charlotte Brontë's. The simplicity is, however, an illusion. A deeper contextual analysis reveals the existence of what I may call 'multiple narrative stances' or points of view within the general narrative pattern. As suggested above, Jane the narrator (N1) may either present the events at the age at which Jane the character experiences them (N1 tells objectively the story), or Jane the narrator (N2) may look back at her formative process through childhood, adolescence, youth from the age of about thirty, ten years after her marriage and formation (N1 omnisciently assesses and interprets the story). Within the general narrative material and according to the above-suggested narrative units-sections, other interrelated narrative arrangements of retrospective assessment of the events are also implied. The largest, perhaps, would involve the narrative level of Jane at eighteen seeing herself at ten and measuring her development, which is correlated with the level of Jane at thirty seeing and interpreting both.

W. A. Craik extends this narrative approach, reasoning that '*as the action develops, other points of view are taken up within this main framework. The eighteen-year-old Jane at Thornfield has the opportunity to revisit the scene of her first sufferings and her first defiance, Gateshead, and to reassess both herself and those who hurt her; and there are many other equally vital but even smaller time-lapses and retrospects: Jane at Lowood looks back and tells her sufferings at Gateshead to Miss Temple; at Morton, she contrasts herself as schoolteacher with what she would have been as Mr Rochester's mistress; and the whole of the section at Thornfield is punctuated by pauses for Jane to review, analyse or assess what has gone before. These degrees of involvement make it easy to suppose that when we have reached the most detached narrator, we have reached the author. It is easy to feel that Jane Eyre at her wisest and most omniscient is Charlotte Brontë herself, and probably the majority of readers do so, consciously or not, at some time during their acquaintance with the work*' (1968: 75).

The story of *Jane Eyre* is founded on a typical Bildungsroman narrative and thematic structure of the literary discourse. The heroine

reveals a long, torturous process of development towards completeness and formation of her personality. The process consists of different experiences combined to form the whole experience of life as a search for a place in the world. Every experience, every state and stage of her spiritual and physical pilgrimage offers temptations and examples of good and evil in human nature and external behavior. Her own spiritual growth circulates between good and evil, emotion and rationality, rebelliousness and obedience, independence and submission.

Orphaned as a child, Jane is under constraints and experiences unhappiness in the household of her relatives, the Reed family. Now she is shown as highly intelligent, strongly imaginative, with astonishingly powerful feelings and sensibility, fancying that the spirit of Mr. Reed may return into the Red Room, but she is also capable of reasoning analysis in her account to her cousins and Mrs. Reed, her speech and behavior, and her strong sense of right and wrong making her appear much older.

Later, at Lowood school, Jane the narrator continues her self-representation of a life-fighter, but learning to be passive and enduring without resistance (one may notice the thematic connection with Shelley's idea of the non-violent resistance to evil). The opposition here is provided by the character of Helen Burns, who preaches the orthodox lessons of forgiveness and endurance, and who also becomes merely a narrative device used by the narrator to emphasize Jane's own personality, or the way a female personality should be, and, when no more needed after Jane leaves the school, Helen dies.

Jane is now determined to face existence, to make her own way in life, needing no advice and guidance from another person (this happened after Miss Temple left the school, under whose personality Jane's lively spirit was successfully subdued). At Thornfield, as a governess, Jane renders her professional development and her attitude towards a student, which is far from being sentimental, and is drawn to her employer, Edward Rochester. The professional development goes hand in hand with her growing affection for him (*'the bonny wanderer'*, *'the pilgrim'*): Rochester is shown from the very beginning as a masterful character of whom Jane refuses to be afraid, in their long conversations she meets the challenge successfully, and one can notice her professional pride when she is really upset by his suggestion that she may have been helped in her paintings by an artist. Such aspects, along with her courage in facing the physical danger of the fire in the bedroom, or listening, as an innocent governess, to Rochester's story about his French mistress, were unfamiliar qualities in a Victorian heroine. Finally the love-starved governess wins this most unlikely man, the substitution of her never known father, the romantic libertine, himself totally misfitting in the Victorian typology of character representation, and is about to marry him. However, she is revealed that he

is married, and his lawful insane wife is imprisoned in the upper room of the mansion. She leaves him refusing to become his mistress, pleading conscious as a sufficient excuse for the Victorian reading public, for, the power and extent of her female personality being so far so highly and strongly emphasized and rendered, her position as a mistress, not wife, will eventually diminish and disregard her individuality. Also, with such a strong personality, she is unwilling to accept the father-child relationship under his masculine dominance, and the inferior state as a mistress.

Departing from Rochester, Jane is befriended by the family of Riverses, especially by St. John Rivers whose marriage proposal she rejects. St. John is the right man in all respects except for that of love, Rochester is the wrong man in all respects save that of love.

At this narrative moment, the developmental process of Jane has come to an end. She successfully withstands St. John's missionary zeal and resists the claims of his Christian vocation. She refuses his 'partnership' in religious service, regarded as another attempt to dominate her spiritually, and as she needs no support from others. What she needs is personal completeness of both mind and soul, spirit and body as the premises of her formation. Protected by the principle of divine love, Jane accepts the union with Rochester, which is both spiritual and passionate, and, especially, is founded on an independent position.

When Rochester's insane wife (the symbol of his guilt and the compulsory punishment, as well as of Jane's desire for emotional and sexual relief) burns down the mansion killing herself, Jane hurries to him and they marry. It seems that the marriage meets the terms of her own personality and inner nature, and, although he is blind and maimed, Jane returns triumphantly to establish the mother-child dominance over him, yet on an equal footing in both spirit and action.

The novel reverses the earlier gothic narratives in which pretty ladies find sexual fulfillment only to be enslaved by the masculine strength and will of male protagonists. Although to a certain extent this motif of the romantic story may be found in *Jane Eyre*, the stereotypical pattern is broken by the fictive concept of the 'independent woman', as well as by the author's emphasis on her heroine's strong individuality. The latter element stands out clearly in the opposition between the plainness of Jane's exterior appearance (different from beautiful romance heroines who are spiritually superficial, represented in the novel by Blanche Ingram) and the complexity, depth and substance of her inner life (revealing intelligence, self-discipline, practicality, the balance between emotion and rationality).

The rejection of the stereotype is also revealed by the ending of the narrative, which links the characters' strength of elementary life forces and provides a sustainable continuity of their existence together, which is even more basic than sex. In this respect, I agree with K. Lawrence who argues

that in rendering the personal history of a woman, Emily Brontë '*is not antiromantic but anticonventional. She preserves the traditional social values of love and marriage but gives them new psychological resonance by characterizing her heroine fully as a living and independent person*' (1985: 238) who, as the author herself, is unwilling to withstand the power of imagination, I may add.

The Bildungsroman in the case of Emily Brontë is less concerned with the plot, the succession of events or the portrayal of the social medium and life as it is, or typologically representative protagonists (elements required by the realistic fiction). Instead, it emphasizes a number of aspects reminiscent of the romantic literary tradition, among which the role and significance of mysterious elements in the story, along with the author's methods of artistic individualization of characters while exploring their psychological depths and range of feelings.

I argue that Charlotte Brontë presents the development of her heroine both in terms of inner perspectives (in accord with romantic tradition) and in that of a woman struggling against the environment to define herself according to her own spiritual aspirations (in accord with Victorian realism). Moreover, the sense of reality in *Jane Eyre* depends on the writer's understanding of the need for a romantic side in real life. The realism of the book '*is abetted by Brontë's wonderful control over her materials from start to finish: though the characters may give way to impulse, may waver between opposing compulsions, the author knows exactly what she is doing*' (Stone 1980: 114).

That is to say, on the level of thematic construction, the work abounds with romantic allusions and artistic elements, though Charlotte herself, an admirer of Thackeray, dedicated her half-realistic and most un-Thackerayan novel to him. The emotion and passion (romantic allusions—'*Did ever anybody see such a picture of passion!*', remarks Mrs. Reed in Chapter 1) find their fictional counterparts in the moral scheme of the narrative, in the rational control and mimetic analysis of the formative process on the part of the author (realistic elements).

The handling of romantic devices creates a powerful emotional symbolism founded on remarkable image patterns consisting, as critics have often hypothesized, of traditional connotations of four elements (earth, air, fire, water) and seasonal cycles. Their significance appears in defining the character and creating different spatial (actual landscape, place, setting) and temporal (chiefly the presentation of Bildungsroman human ages: childhood, adolescence, youth, early maturity) realities.

The association between seasons and human emotion in the symbolic scheme of the narrative occurs in every instance of Jane's development towards every new experience. The journey to Lowood, Thornfield, Moor House, Ferndean happens in wintry weather, which symbolizes the

threatening spatial realities against the vulnerability of her spirit. Spring is described as bringing perspectives of renewal, hope, and adjustment to what was recently an alien environment. It also suggests the maturation of the heroine.

In terms of the traditional elements, the heroine's name points to 'air', to an ethereal being, and she is indeed, like the wind, for example, a wanderer, disclosing her spiritual essence. Her passionate nature suggests also 'fire' and her opposite is St. John Rivers, whose name is symbolic for 'water', or rather ice, as his spiritual coldness and emotional frigidity imply. Rochester is associated with 'earth', his face, for instance, being described as having the strength of rocky granite. 'Fire' corresponds to summer, that is to say, the passion of sexual love, the climactic moment of union is to be reified in a midsummer night when Rochester proposes marriage.

The relationship between Jane and Rochester is conceived in the narrative development as a relation between master and victim. In this respect, K. Lawrence reasons: '*Jane Eyre can be seen not only as a romantic ingenue but as a masochist and a martyr, one who takes pleasure in enslavement. Rochester is not only the perfect Byronic but the symbolically castrated victim of Jane's unacknowledged sexual aggression*' (1985: 239). He resembles Byron in character and features, but he is more of a Byron moralized and made fit to live in the Victorian world.

Jane as a victim is formed through human bondage, suffering and self-denial. She develops a personal conviction of her helplessness and worthless existence, although she continually attempts to struggle for her rights and intends, after leaving Lowood, to devote herself to others in a larger world.

Yet from the beginning till the end of her formative process, Jane creates self-images of a victim and religious martyr. The latter aspect is provided by a number of religious allusions throughout the entire narrative. They are exposed in the form of religious doctrines (false or true) which shape the becoming of her personality. Sometimes Jane learns them from other individuals, sometimes she experiences her own spiritual revelations of Christian insight.

The most negative experience is her threatening, cruel indoctrination by Mr. Brocklehurst at Lowood. The positive religious experiences are provided by Helen Burns, also at Lowood, who teaches her the Christian values of mercy, forgiveness, endurance and patience. Later, Jane will forgive her aunt Mrs. Reed for withholding her rightful legacy, and Rochester for concealing his marriage.

Biblical typology provides thus the Victorian Bildungsroman in the case of Charlotte Brontë with imagery and theme, and represents a form of symbolism as a device for creating and defining the moral and spiritual condition of the character.

Among other things, the orthodox typology is applicable in the novel to provide oneself with severe judgment, self-punishment, and reconsideration of earlier spiritual weaknesses. At one moment in the narrative Jane says:

My future husband was becoming to me my whole world; and more than the world: almost my hope of heaven. He stood between me and every thought of religion, as an eclipse intervenes between man and the broad sun. I could not, in those days, see God for His creature: of whom I had made an idol. (Chapter 24)

Later, immediately after discovering Bertha's existence, Jane confesses, describing herself in the third-person:

Jane Eyre, who had been an ardent, expectant woman—almost a bride—was a cold, solitary girl again: her life was pale; her prospects were desolate. (Chapter 26)

and then

My hopes were all dead—struck with a subtle doom, such as, in one night, fell on all the first-born in the land of Egypt. I looked on my cherished wishes, yesterday so blooming and glowing; they lay stark, chill, livid corpses, that could never revive. I looked at my love: that feeling which was my master's—which he had created; it shivered in my heart, like a suffering child in a cold cradle. (ibid.)

What I mean is that Jane worshipped a man instead of God, and she made an idol of Rochester, worshipping a false god and, as it turned out, a false man as well. After discovering the existence of Rochester's insane wife, she compares her love to the dead first-born of the Egyptians who had perished in the tenth plague, and she places that love into an existing spiritual context. She realizes that she is being punished for not obeying the precepts of the true God, and she also understands that she is guilty of the sin of the Egyptians, that is to say, of believing both that God's powers are limited and that they could evade his law.

Such an ethical resonance of religious doctrine to one's self-reevaluation is to be found in sermons and spiritual autobiographies of Antiquity. *Jane Eyre* is itself an autobiographical narrative, hence the efficient application of religious material.

In terms of Bildungsroman, such a fictional treatment of the typology determines important moments of self-awareness and self-understanding as premises for formation, in general, and serves the inclusion of Jane's character and behavior into a clearly defined system of values.

Jane's process of development is thus a combination of religious rhetoric, romantic emotionalism and realistic rationality. But the desired formation is to be achieved neither in Heaven (as for Bunyan's Christian²⁷) nor in imagination (as in the case of the romantic hero) but in a real, domestic context (meeting the terms of the general fictional pattern of Victorian Bildungsromane). The latter is impossible, however, without the application of the first two (including fate, providence, coincidence, nature, and others).

It seems that compared to other writers of Victorian Bildungsromane, namely those who have rendered their heroes' formation ambiguous, Charlotte Brontë is able to establish a compromise between (1) the Victorian assertion of an individual's self-discipline and his integration into a domestic and social sphere of ethical action, and (2) the romantic cry of imagination, emotion, passion, and individual integrity. Hence the completeness and success of her heroine's formation founded on a sense of integrity and interdependence with Rochester.

As I have stated, emotion goes hand in hand with a rational viewpoint on the experience of life, both being determined to create the narrative with respect to the heroine's process of development and formation.

The emotive principle of the narrative is connected to the inner experiences of Jane. As suggested above, it may include childhood frustration, love and sexual commitment, her sense of spiritual mission provided by different aspects of religious belief that she encounters, her professional conception, and a number of others.

Rationality appears in the case of Jane's interaction with other humans, the environment and the varieties of social constraint and determinism. The characters other than Jane and Rochester are of different types, and are realistically presented as corresponding to the society in which the heroine lives. Their function within the narrative material is to emphasize Jane's personality in her process of development, and they reveal themselves only if what they do and think reveals Jane. Although their number is not so big as in Dickens or, say, Thackeray, some of them are both congenial and some obstructing with regard to Jane's experience of life.

The spatial component in the novel, rendering a number of places where the action occurs, is another essential part of the narrative structure. The settings have as much character as humans, and serve the same purpose. 'Gateshead', for instance, like the household of Pip's sister, implies a symbolical place of imprisonment and torment, as the name itself suggests.

²⁷ Though like Christian, for most of the narrative she does not understand the nature of her quest/developmental process, and the possibilities of resolving the inner conflicts that thwart final formation and fulfilment. Also like Christian, she is penniless and homeless, bereft of family and friends, and has to pass through radical trials of life, physical pain and spiritual humiliation.

‘Lowood’ stands for spiritual and physical hardship and animosity. The symbolical implication of ‘Thornfield’ is twofold: ‘field’ implies the freedom and happiness in some parts of the house and landscape; ‘thorn’ determines its evil and sinister aspect. ‘Moor House’, though evocative of ‘wasteland’, is a symbol of family unity and security. The last place is ‘Ferndean Manor’ which suggests the divine union of Jane and Rochester, but it is ‘*quite a desolate spot*’, ‘*deep buried in a wood*’, so it is natural to assume that they may leave the gloomy setting.

The rational objectivity is necessary because it expresses the authorial point of view on human existence and the environment that are beyond the narrow concern with one individual, although it is expressed through Jane, the narrator and main character of the narrative. To exemplify that, I give Jane’s much discussed statement that reads almost like a feminist manifesto:

Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. (Chapter 12)

Again, I stress, the juxtaposition of emotion and rationality is evident in the narrative, and it determines the process of development and the success of Jane’s formation in terms of her psychic completeness (achieved through the acquisition of spiritual independence) and exterior stability (through material independence, for she has money and is no longer tied to any employment). The latter aspect, like in *Wuthering Heights*, and as Jane herself suggests in the final scenes of the novel, is not quintessential as a formative principle.

Though sometimes overusing pathos and sentimentality, and despite the presence of some grotesque coincidences and the supernatural, *Jane Eyre* is one of the finest and most complex fictional components in the general system of Victorian Bildungsromane.

4.2.3 George Eliot: The Incompatibility of Romantic and Realistic Analyses of Development as Formative Failure

George Eliot’s *The Mill on the Floss*, more complex than her previous novel *Adam Bede*, reveals a new stage in her literary maturation. Like George Meredith, she chooses to write a Bildungsroman as her third novel, and, like Meredith, she changes the early tradition of the Victorian Bildungsroman with respect to the success of the formative process.

The novel is a typical Bildungsroman in so far as it presents the gradual formation of a character, actually two characters, Maggie and Tom, from childhood through adolescence to their maturation, but it takes new perspectives, hence new possible critical approaches.

These perspectives are linked, besides challenging the final success of formation and the departure from the fictional practice of Dickens and Thackeray, to the fact that the internal aspirations of the young protagonists are terminated by their untimely death. George Eliot attempts, however, to emphasize this aspect by concentrating chiefly on the personality of Maggie, not Tom, the latter being considered ultimately as a device used to shape his sister's status within the narrative.

The Mill on the Floss discloses the fictional organization of a typical Bildungsroman narrative pattern divided into seven books but comprising, as a frame-story, three main narrative sections. The narrator starts the story in a trance-like perspective of the creative act and moves from early childhood experiences to youth and the growing estrangement between sister and brother, and finally to young maturity disclosing the final stage of the formative process, actually its failure, which ends with their reconciliation through death.

At the beginning, the novel expresses the author's own emotional and spiritual struggles in childhood, and the first section is actually dominated by the brother-sister relationship between Maggie and Tom (Marian Evans and her brother Isaac)²⁸, making up what may be called the finest 'childhood idyll' in English fiction, for the infantile experience and its period lay the foundation for the positive emotions of adult life.

In other respects their childhood is idyllic as well as a time of intense suffering, sorrow and frustration: Maggie cutting off her hair, forgetting to feed Tom's rabbits, and pushing Lucy into mud are childhood episodes whose actual representation makes them common devices of stories for children, but in Eliot's novel they also constitute and determine the extension of fictional subject-matter. In this respect, childhood, as the time of emotional intensity, is opposed not only to mature, intellectual life, but also to convention.

Although the author sentimentalizes the early stage of human development, it is not only an idyllic, Wordsworthian representation of childhood as a reconciliation of lyricism and symbol, but also a reconciliation of lyricism and irony, of symbol and Thackerayan satire, for it seems that George Eliot finds it almost impossible to romanticize childhood if it lays the foundation for a choiceless and victimized experience of life as a process of development and formation.

²⁸ Significantly, Marian Evans was born in 1819, as was Maggie; her brother Isaac Evans in 1816, as was Tom. Moreover, Maggie's alienation from Tom is not far removed from real life, specifically Isaac's intransigence after her affair with a married man.

The period of childhood and the education of proud Tom and his brilliant sister end with the foreclosure upon the Dorlcote Mill by the debt of Mr. Tulliver, its owner, to lawyer Wakem. Tulliver remains as manager, but vows his son to eternal hatred of the Wakems. Maggie becomes interested in Philip Wakem, the son of the new owner, against her family's wishes. Stephen Guest, engaged to Lucy Deane, takes Maggie for a boat-ride, and, though she refuses, they are forced to spend the night in the drifting boat. Tom, who is now running the mill that he has been able to buy back, and her father cast off Maggie as a fallen woman, which is actually the climax of the novel, the drama of brotherhood love, the impossible moral conflict solved by an external agent, the autumnal flood of the river Floss, during which Maggie hurries to her brother and is drowned with him.

As in Meredith's Bildungsroman, Tom and Maggie are not allowed the spiritual accomplishment and social integration, as, say, it is possible for David Copperfield or Jane Eyre, and their entire process of development, which is ultimately tragic, is founded on the breakdown of their family determined by the mistakes of the older generation (especially the father).

The destruction of family harmony as a congenial determinant of later evolution and formation is provided at the very beginning of the narrative by Mr. Tulliver who thwarts Tom's development by imposing on him a classical education, which would have been actually more suited to Maggie; and who '*laughs audibly*' at little Maggie's childish actions. By encouraging his daughter's fantasies and impulsive actions, he thus precipitates the consolidation of Maggie's asocial nature, rebellious attitude against conventional ethics and duties, and her desire to escape the spiritual narrowness of St. Ogg's.

Mr. Tulliver also does what Maggie prophetically states when she refuses to help her aunt Mrs. Glegg as '*tearing things to pieces to sew'em together again*' (Book I, Chapter 2). But her father will never be able to sew things together again. It is impossible to do so as it is clear that the failures of the parents anticipate the failures of the children, or as it is impossible to revive an idyllic past of childhood at Dorlcote Mill within the reality of St. Ogg's—as mature Tom and Maggie attempt finally to do—or as to unite these two characters.

The unity, George Eliot believes, can be found only through death provided in the novel by nature (natural phenomena). Even so, omnisciently concluding the novel's literary message, the narrator reflects about nature's impossibility to bring things together again, for

Nature repairs her ravages—but not all. The uptorn trees are not rooted again; the parted hills are left scarred: if there is a new growth, the trees are not the same as the old, and the hills underneath their green vesture bear the marks of the past rending. To the eyes that have dwelt on the past, there is no thorough repair. (Book VII, Conclusion)

As with the experience of childhood, it seems that George Eliot finds it impossible to romanticize nature and especially water as its constituent element, yet raising them to the level of symbolical representation. In this respect, whereas '*Meredith's treatment of the rainstorm suggests the existence of a regenerative force, George Eliot's reliance on the flood as a deus ex machina remains a mechanical device to bring about a harmony that brother and sister never experienced while alive*' (Knoepflmacher 1973: 133), which is, in my apprehension, at best pathetic and less plausible than if Maggie had been pictured as a victim of accident.

Moreover, although '*In their death they were not divided*', the unity of Tom and Maggie through death does not imply the formation of their personalities, but rather a tragic culmination of a developmental process so carefully built from the beginning, and the expected tragedy allows no final resolution of interior division and no psychic completeness that would eventually determine the individual correlation of the inside and the outside, or, as in the case of Maggie, of inner romantic aspirations and the rationality of external social comportment (with a romantic perspective, like the Wordsworthian or Shelleyan sensibility directed against the urbanized, uncomfortable world).

Indeed, by equating passion and imagination, and taking refuge in the world of fantasies, it would be almost impossible for Maggie to cope with the prosaic reality of a mature world and social conditioning of the individual in the world of St. Ogg's.

Like Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot attempts to emphasize positively the complexity of the female personality, creating a highly emotional and intellectualized character, whose life is a perpetual conflict between aspiration and possibility, happiness and duty, natural rights of man and the restrictions of morality, religion and convention.

George Eliot's authorial endeavor is mostly remarkable because of her special penetration into the characters' inner world and especially her insights into the psychological differences that separate Maggie and Tom so as to reveal two destinies and two formative experiences of life.

Maggie is more intelligent than her brother, whose existence is founded on a straightforward fight for getting and keeping, and who is unworthy of Maggie's devotion. However, it seems that even the author herself sensed the feminine need to lean upon the masculine assurance and will, as Maggie tries to find in her brother a protective reality of her sentimental needs.

The two characters, Tom and Maggie, even if deeply attached to each other, form an eternal and perfect contrast evident in the childlike accidents of their childhood and in the serious actions of maturity, as the two family types they seem to belong to. Tom, like the Dodsons, is pragmatic, hard-

working and practically-minded, showing features of selfishness and self-satisfaction, learning to avoid problems of every kind. He is committed to duty, to things rather than emotions, and to a sense of achievement, which is rather financial than spiritual. The failure of Tom's formation is provided by his total consideration of financial success and acquisition of property as the main and sole aims of human existence in a process of practical training and development.

Maggie—like the Tullivers, who represent the rustic, provincial existence of small farmers and their failure to adapt to the newly created environment—is romantic and emotional, impulsive and impractical, imaginative and generous, less reliable and less successful. She yearns for a spiritual accomplishment rather than a material one within a process of emotional education and development, but its unilateral consideration is no less open to a successful resolution of the formative process.

In the final stage of their young adulthood, both protagonists reveal that their practical (Tom's) and, respectively, emotional (Maggie's) evolution have been leading to a common tragic end and a common failure of their formative processes, though they are finally united through death. In this respect, *'Eliot's sense of psychological and social reality decreed that she show brother and sister developing away from each other, but her romantic sensibility decreed that they be reunited in the face of that reality'* (Stone 1980: 215). In other words, *'to explain the unresolvable division that runs through the novel is to say that while Eliot analyzes life from a realistic-scientific point of view, she puts her materials together with an artistic-romantic desire to transcend that reality'* (ibid.: 216), but it is wrong to say that the triumph of the romantic values in the end offers premises for the protagonists' fulfillment and success of formation.

On the contrary, their personalities lack formation or they rather achieve wrongly determined perspectives of formation. It is this authorial incompatibility of romantic perspective and realistic analysis of developmental process that ultimately renders the formation of both protagonists as a tragic failure.

Tom, on the one hand, may have successfully fulfilled his exterior conditioning of existence (social integration, financial and professional success), while revealing a deficiency of spiritual components—hence the failure of his developmental process and formation.

On the other hand, Maggie may have successfully developed her sensibility and inner potentialities of existence (intelligence, emotional complexity, imaginative capacity), while revealing a deficiency of social adaptability and integration into the environment, the exterior world being actually antagonistic to her inner world—hence the failure of her developmental process and formation.

I think that these thematic perspectives with regard to the process of development and formation of character represent George Eliot's major literary contribution to defining structural elements within the fictional system of Victorian Bildungsromane, as well as its validity as a literary tradition.

Unlike Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot makes thus her characters act as influences dictate to them (the affirmation can be challenged by the idea that Jane Eyre refuses the position of a mistress because of the Victorian standards of marital status). Tom's and Maggie's evolution and formation are determined by family relationships, inter-human connections and social correlation between individual and environment. Especially Maggie is weak in relation to the environment and is finally destroyed by common standards and the public opinion.

Though the author attempts to attack the narrow-mindedness, the family pride and prejudices, the social rules, presented, as in Dickens but unlike Thackeray's satire, with humor and sympathy, she seems not to approve of Maggie's rebellion, didactically showing the dramatic fate of those discontented from their lot.

The author herself does not see any other way of solving her character's problem except for the fact of allowing her to be broken by conventions, and suggests, by providing an external solution (the flood on the river as a possibility for a brief restoration of an Eden that never existed), that life is merely a rational problem, hardly allowing for the existence of yet unknown possibilities.

The concern with character and social medium, so characteristic to a number of Victorian novelists, takes in *The Mill on the Floss* new, interesting perspectives, allowing the involvement of the concept of 'normal' which, along with her omniscient point of view and the consideration of characters firmly placed in an actual social situation, makes her a realistic writer and a remarkable proponent of Victorian realism.

This aspect is of primary importance to George Eliot, who continues the concern with the human personality belonging or not to a certain social medium, rendering the conclusion that it actually belongs to and is dependent on society (although one can not help noticing her special insight into human psychology and a keen analysis of the individual), and it should be so if any fulfillment is desired—otherwise it brings ruin (the idea is brilliantly rendered in *Middlemarch*, critically considered her masterpiece). The characters' actions, especially in the latter novel, their moral crises and decisions taken are thus strongly under the prevailing pressure of the social (*Middlemarch*) way of life, without any vivid suggestions of the all-powerful destiny. '*There is no private life which has not been determined by a wider public*', says George Eliot, and this is also shown in the novel by the

author's profound analysis of the individual, her special insight into human psychology.

In this respect, her novels are definitely among the first English writings entirely concerned with intellectual life. Virginia Woolf termed it '*one of the few English novels written for grown-up people*'. Indeed, henceforth the development of English fiction will reveal the art of fiction as being not only the product of a sensitive observer but also the means of rendering ideas based upon a conscious rational philosophy, new scientific discoveries and the evolution of human thought.

But the influence of scientific disciplines upon her work, materialized in the methodical demonstration of certain philosophical and aesthetic theories, in the terminology and concepts borrowed from biology, medicine, mathematics, as well as her frequent intervention with analyses, explanations and reflections, often present in her work, also represent the crisis of the English novel in the second half of the 19th century. George Eliot's fiction bears also the influence of the French Auguste Comte (1789—1857), especially his Positivism and the scientific attitude towards social behavior (he also invented the word 'sociology'), the cause-and-effect relationship in different areas of human existence (economics, religion, culture), which explains human conduct. Comte saw three stages in the evolution of humanity—theological, metaphysical, positivist—and he believed that Europe was in the Positive or scientific era of development, therefore, Eliot insists in her novels, man should receive his rewards and punishments during his life, here and not hereafter, such rewards being not material but consisting of inner well-being.

Considered by more than one critic as the first modern novelist (David Cecil, for instance), George Eliot's progressive attitude towards the special issues of social behavior and determinism represents another reason for her attention being focused on character and the rendering of characters acting as the medium dictates, for they are indeed conditioned by circumstances, education, inherited mores and prejudices.

Though George Eliot has broken with the picaresque tradition, still fecund in Victorian fiction (in Dickens, for instance), and has transformed the novel into a study of the individual as a social unit, she is no longer interested in socially representative types (except, perhaps, for the Tullivers and the Dodsons), for she is shifting the emphasis from the factual to the psychological and from plot to character and social medium.

George Eliot's Bildungsroman—*The Mill on the Floss*—reveals thus the authorial split between a romantic and a realistic artistic attitude, and her endeavor to provide the latter with new fictional perspectives that ultimately turn to be modern. Yet one cannot help noticing her attempt to reconcile the realistic/mimetic analysis of development and formative process as it is

(life/world-as-is) with a thwarted romantic idealism through the intrusion of the high emotion of love and a sympathetic authorial vision.

This vision of sympathy makes the reader in turn both approve and sympathize with Maggie's hypersensitivity and her yearning for passionate feeling and imagination as a means to transcending the unromantic and unattractive reality of the environment and social conditioning expressed by the world of St. Ogg's. Yet the reader is also aware from the very beginning that the heroine's (like Tom's) process of development leading to formation and fulfillment is doomed because of the oppressive frustration of the exterior world that constrains her and subjects her to the burden of reality.

Similarly, the return to the past and the experience of childhood as a means of completeness is impossible, as it is impossible to grasp moments of fulfillment in one's devotion to nature or to a world separated from the reality of existence through the workings of human sensibility and imaginative perspectives.

4.2.4 Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Genre and Gender Perspectives of the Formative Process

Because of the specific condition of the poet and the poetic genre²⁹ in the Victorian cultural background, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora*

²⁹ The condition of Victorian poetry displays its general inadaptability within the new cultural realities of the Victorian age. The Victorian poetic production, though complex and various in its literary involvement, was viewed as a marginal literary discourse; an unimportant genre that did not suit the needs of the Victorian audience for realism; as a continuation of the romantic poetry into the 3rd and 4th generation (this opinion belongs to Harold Bloom); and even as a betrayal of the romantic writers' imaginative honesty and autonomy. Indeed, it seems that the Victorian poets were unable or unwilling to sustain the confidence in the freedom and priority of imagination and in the aesthetic autonomy cherished by the romantic authors. They would prefer indirectness in the expression of the inner self, poets assuming multiple identities within the poetic technique of the dramatic monologue (a conscious innovation of the Victorian poets), replacing the concern for subjectivity with a new concern for imaginary situations, the development of a purely imaginative writing (invention or re-creation of situations not real or true), or the concern with other temporal and spatial realities (Greek Antiquity, for instance, or general European Middle Age)—elements which provide a possible basis for escapism and fundamentally render the major theme of escapism in Victorian poetry. Of course other possible elements and aspects linked to escapism may be considered, for example the intermediary psychological state (*ataraxie*) between life, awakening, day and death, sleep, night, expressed in poetry in close relation to nature and natural objects and phenomena (Tennyson's *Ulysses*), where life and death are not desirable but a transitory status between them, yet sometimes the Victorian lyrical I (as in Swinburne) vividly tends towards the latter. The refuge may be also found in the creative act and in art itself (as in Robert Browning's *Andrea del Sarto* and especially the poetic production of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood).

Another major characteristic feature of Victorian poetry is the fact that it marks a transitory state between the classical, romantic poetry, and the modern poetry with all their literary implications, similitudes and differences. The former is generally characterized, on the level of verse technique, by a complex use of figurative language, stylized diction, metaphorization and ornamentation of the poetic discourse, while on the level of interpretation and that of the poetic image, the meaning is more or less clear and needs no big efforts of deconstruction (the 'harmonious madness', in the case of Shelley, for 'poetry', for instance, and many other examples can be added); in modern poetry, however, the fragmentation of message and the simple, often colloquial use of language usually complicate rather than render explicitly the poetic message/meaning ('*And I am dumb to tell the lover's tomb / How at my sheet*

Leigh: A Poem in Nine Books reveals a number of specific characteristic features with regard to the Bildungsroman tradition, as well as new literary perspectives in both its form and content.

Mention should be made, for instance, of the fact that in matters of technique the work is a narrative poem, which tells a story, particularly the development and evolution of a female protagonist in verse form. The process of development of a female personality is now rendered in long poetic form, the one that also characterizes, among others, the famous *In Memoriam*, *The Idylls of the King*, and *The Ring and the Book*.

It seems that *Aurora Leigh* challenges the literary tradition of the Victorian Bildungsroman, or rather, it transfigures its structural perspectives for, undoubtedly, the essence of the main thematic and narrative elements of the novel of formation are preserved in Barrett Browning's work unchanged.

On the level of thematic organization, however, I find at least one important emphasis that may determine a possible deviation from the general literary Victorian Bildungsroman pattern accepted as a fictional system. I may argue that there has been no special concern on the part of the Victorian writer of Bildungsromane, either male or female, to reveal in their novels the evolution and formation of an artist, except, perhaps, for the character of David Copperfield, Pendennis, and, to a lesser extent, Ernest Pontifex—even so, the development of the artist seems to be an unconscious expression of the more or less limited distance between the hero and the author as he remembers himself in his formative youth.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning self-consciously attempts to achieve the rank of artist, poet, as she attempts to reconcile her femininity with her artistic aspirations. No doubt, like other Victorian female authors, she attempts to emphasize the evolution and consolidation of a complex inner wholeness, and the intellectual and social validity of her heroine, but she also attempts to express the evolution and formation of Aurora's artistic side, without which her inner wholeness and psychic completeness are hardly possible. These aspects make Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* the first female *Künstlerroman* in English literature.

As in *Jane Eyre*, Aurora is raised by an insolent and contemptuous aunt, against whose cruelty she rebels, perhaps too successfully. The male characters of the Victorian Bildungsroman, like Pip, for example, judge people based chiefly on wealth, Jane and Aurora judge women based solely on their femininity. As in Jane-Helen Burns literary association, Aurora

goes the same crooked worm', as in Dylan Thomas, for example). In this respect, Victorian poetry constitutes both a continuation of the former mode of writing, as in Tennyson, or Arnold, and an opening of the modern perspectives in the verse making endeavor, as in Elizabeth Barrett's poetry or Robert Browning's experiments with dramatic monologue, language and syntax, and culminating with the strikingly modern Hopkins' 'I caught this morning morning's minion, kingdom of daylight's / dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon (...)'. Of course, many other things could be added, but they do not represent in a special way the main concern of my study.

initially feels a detached pity for Marian, yet when Aurora meets Marian again in Paris, Marian has the kind of love that Aurora yearns for, and she is conscious that she cannot possibly achieve it.

Aurora judges herself only as Romney, a symbol of Victorian male authority, expresses her personality and status:

*Women as you are
Mere women, personal and passionate,
You give us doting mothers, and perfect wives,
Sublime Madonnas and enduring saints!
We get no Christ from you—and verily
We shall not get a poet, in my mind.*

(Book II, ll. 222-7)

Throughout her formative process Aurora attempts to deny and otherwise prove that she may achieve the status of a poet, while Romney challenges Aurora's goal. Indeed, at first it appears that in the case of both her feminine and artistic side, she is denied emotional fulfillment. She refuses to accept the role of obedient wife, since it would mean forgoing the intellectual independence needed to develop as an artist, but then she must also refuse the love of a husband. She will not marry without love, as Marian intends, nor will she marry without her husband's respect, as it appears Lady Waldemar does. Although she embraces Marian as the perfect mother, she does not seek to develop those qualities in herself, or femininity in general, and instead assumes the masculine role of her provider and protector. She also rejects the social femininity that embodies what Aurora's aunt would have liked her to become.

Aurora never becomes a Marian or a Lady Waldemar, and in the final scenes of the narrative poem she harmonizes her femininity with her artistic aims. In her relationship with Romney, as Jane Eyre, Aurora must work out the love she feels for him over and over again in order to have him on her terms. Romney finally admits that she can be both a woman and a poet, and their love is consummated. And as he, now blinded and powerless, gives up his male pride, she surrenders her artist's pride and power, and declares her spiritual change (*'I am changed since then, changed wholly'*, Book IX, l. 673).

She has thus to experience changes of her own inner perspectives so as to achieve the completeness of formation. When she meets Romney again, she can finally separate the society's femininity that repulses her (that of Lady Waldemar) from sincere feminine expression of love (that of Marian), and accept the latter—hence the formative success of Aurora the woman.

Regarding her formative success as a poet, there are certain perspectives that suggest the accomplishment of this side of her personality

too. Aurora Leigh, a thirty-year-old poet now, who has just been reunited with her cousin Romney, accepts him and discovers that all her artistic successes have been jeopardized by suppressing her true feminine love:

*Passioned to exalt
The artist's instinct in me at the cost
Of putting down the woman's, I forgot
No perfect artist is developed here
From any imperfect woman.*
(Book IX, ll. 645-9)

and she even exclaims that

*Art is much, but Love is more.
O Art, my Art, thou'rt much, but Love is more!'
Art symbolizes heaven, but Love is God
And makes heaven. (...)*
(ibid., ll. 656-7)

In this respect, the proper correlation of artistic drives and emotional consistence through love would eventually determine the completeness and success of formation within a meaningful existence.

As in *Jane Eyre*, the theme of formation focuses on a female protagonist, and it is also expressed by a female author, and the experience of life is merely a sympathetic process, yet it leads to a successfully achieved formation, but it is the new genre perspective (the thematic level of Bildungsroman reified at the level of poetic form) which implies an obviously radical redefinition of the hero in formation in particular, and the whole system of Victorian Bildungsroman in general.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning is a poet and she regards poetry as the genre most congenial to the expression of her literary message, including the process of formation of her protagonist (although in her correspondence with Robert Browning she confesses her obsession with novels and her enthusiasm for the epical genre).

On the level of literary discourse (narrative organization) *Aurora Leigh* self-consciously employs devices and elements of many kinds of narrative poems, of poetry and narrative, of epic and metrical romance (including the elevation of the hero from the epic and the test/trial of the hero from the Medieval romance, as well as other appropriated features of male-coded writing, including prophetic aspirations or confessional subjectivity), but the author also attempts to reject the tradition of the epic narrative as inappropriate to the Victorian age.

Barrett Browning transfers subjects and methods of the Victorian woman's novel (say, female independence and gender equality) to the long

poem, employing it as a means of rendering a truer than in prose embodiment of phenomenological and spiritual truth. The work also praises imaginative and experiential truth, which becomes the center of explicitly stated theories of poetry, inspired prophetic poet, the role of the poet and the significance of the creative act. It also occupies a central position in rendering the entire process of character evolution. *Aurora Leigh* conceives, for instance, the expression of poetic theory also as a means of disclosing the inward of woman in her struggle with social determinism and even the relationships with men.

It seems that this challenge of the epic narrative tradition anticipates the 20th century postmodernism, although *Aurora Leigh* as a whole employs a more conventionally unified narrative structure than that of the long poems of Tennyson and Robert Browning, who attempt to structure a long form out of fragments. The unifying principle of Barrett Browning's literary discourse is actually the process of development of a female personality, which implies the thematic convention of character formation.

Having, however, in many respects abandoned narration as the dominant principle of literary structure and organization, *Aurora Leigh* employs chains of images, motifs, and paradigms to inform its climactic segmented poetic structure, and though it makes greater use of the narrative, it nevertheless relies heavily on skillfully assembled organizing motifs.

One source of such motifs constitutes the biblical material. As a child, Elizabeth Barrett Browning was raised in the Evangelical faith and its doctrines strongly influenced her choice of Biblical types and her construction of a personal myth in *Aurora Leigh*. The problem of faith appears as the relation between having faith and keeping faith, between belief and right conduct (or right identity), which is a central experience to the meaning of the work and which appears embodied in relations between men and women, especially that of marriage.

In the romantic creation of personal myth, nature becomes a metaphor for the fusion of the spiritual and the earthy elements of existence. As with the English romantic poets, say Shelley or Keats, Barrett Browning believed that the poet, although remaining firmly placed in the natural world of fleshly existence, must also '*reach / The spiritual beyond it*' (Book VII, ll. 779-80), yet emphasizing strongly the biblical essence and Christian grounds of human experience of life rather than suggesting the possibility of achieving through nature and natural objects the access to superior, highly interiorized forms of existence (see, for instance, Shelley's *To a Skylark* or Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale*). In this respect, she considered the marriage of man and woman, for example, to be the earthly analogue of God's loving union with humanity.

In keeping with standard Victorian literary usage of autobiography, Barrett Browning's use of Biblical typology illustrates thus the spiritual dimension of the apparently commonplace of her Victorian spatial reality.

Yet it seems that the intrusion of biblical typology provides also a number of discontinuities in Barrett Browning's aesthetic theory—that considers marriage as an analogue of God's love for humanity—and disrupts her fictional autobiography. The humbled Romney is blinded (as Rochester is) when he reunites with Aurora, which I hazed to consider a definite element of the Victorian female revenge fantasy against those who, like Rochester and Romney, fail to value women as their intellectual and sexual equals. This aspect could be regarded as the imaginative counterbalance of the biographical substratum of the *Aurora Leigh* and its autobiographical essence.

That is to say, Barrett Browning's Bildungsroman reflects an individual's inner experience of life, encountering what is common day to day and remembering the actual developmental stages of the past, and transforming them by the author's own imaginative powers into the authorial point of view.

The latter is transmitted through an autodiegetic narrator, or ego, or lyrical I, not far removed from the poet's own sensibility, and reified through the experience of life of her *alter ego*, Aurora Leigh, the heroine whose evolution and formation of the poetic and human mind is narrated.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning herself is aware of the formal inadequacies of autobiography, which is, in turn, a result of her conflicting awareness of herself as a traditional autobiographer and an experimental artist who attempts to give to a traditional concern a new literary form. In terms of the latter aspect, the poet has faced the task of articulating her autobiographical components and her poetic philosophy in verse, and of venturing into formerly male literary territory.

This twofold poetic consciousness disrupts actually the conventional form of narrative writing in general, and the narrative arrangements of Victorian Bildungsroman, in particular: in the first four books of *Aurora Leigh* the main concern is Aurora's artistic development and evolution, where the narration is clearly retrospective; beginning with Book V, however, the main focus is on Aurora's search for emotional fulfillment through the process of self-knowledge and change in consciousness.

In the first four books the narrative distance between the narrator and the hero is more or less clearly suggested by the retrospective organization of narration, while in the second part of the work the mode of narration changes from authorial retrospection to an immersion in events that presupposes no distance between character and narrator.

Throughout the entire narrative, however, there is no vivid fictional distance between the author and her narrator, which can be better explained

by the high degree of self-reflexivity in the narrator and Barrett Browning's own concern with self-consciousness in the process of development.

There are these two elements that link Elizabeth Barrett Browning to the tradition of English romantic poetry, although it seems that in the absence of a female precedent, it is indulgently appropriate to believe that the poetess follows her own rules in assembling her verse-novel in both form and content.

That is to say, on the thematic level of this Bildungsroman in verse form, the work displays the romantic focus on subjectivity (which determined its labeling as a Victorian, feminist version of William Wordsworth's autobiographical poem *The Prelude*) and discloses the author's interest in motivation and self-knowledge, and a concern with the inner life (emotion and consciousness), which lead to the exhaustive spiritual exploration and self-scrutiny in the process of development leading to formation.

One may reason at this point, as I have attempted to show, that by adjusting the method of self-reflection in an autobiographical narrative, and her femininity and aesthetic philosophy as a specific type of philosophy of life in the process of character development and formation, Elizabeth Barrett Browning maps her literary achievement onto the female Victorian authorship which represents distinct hypostases of the Bildungsroman literary system.

The poetry of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the critical evaluation of its literary value somehow decreased in the 20th century, and now she is considered a less important Victorian writer, her poems being often anthologized as 'other Victorian poetry'.

However, during the 19th century, no female poet was held in higher esteem among cultured readers in both the United States and England than Elizabeth Browning. Her poetry had an immense impact on the works of Emily Dickinson who admired her as a woman of achievement. She was recommended as a possible successor to the poet laureateship that was left vacant by Wordsworth's death in 1850, but it went to Tennyson.

Though Barrett's popularity waned after her death, and late-Victorian critics argued that much of her writing would be forgotten, she is widely remembered for *The Cry of the Children*, *Bertha in the Lane*, *A Musical Instrument*, most of *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, and especially for *Aurora Leigh*, her *magnum opus*, written in the Bildungsroman tradition, which today attracts more attention than the rest of her writings.

4.3 20th Century Connections of the Pattern

In a previous chapter, which discusses the issue of the biographical substratum of the Victorian Bildungsromane, I have already suggested that

Bildungsroman, perhaps the most successful of the autobiographical forms because the most richly creative, attracted most of the major Victorian novelists and a number of 20th century writers (Joyce, Woolf, Wells, Lawrence, Maugham, Golding).

The 20th century connections of the Victorian Bildungsroman could be better analyzed, though less pretentiously interpretative, through their fictional cohesion within the literary system of Bildungsroman in general.

I may thus follow the thematic and narrative perspectives of a typical Bildungsroman literary pattern, which I have attempted to disclose in the approach to the Victorian Bildungsroman.

Yet I believe the new cultural considerations, which are founded on the artistic correlation of or rather opposition between the conventional, Victorian manner and new, experimental trends and artistic perceptions (as aspects of modernism), determine certain mutations of the fictional (narrative and thematic) elements in 20th century Bildungsromane and eventually allow their division into modern (experimental) and contemporary (traditional, conservative) Bildungsromane.³⁰

As I have approached Victorian novels of character formation, among other things, with regard to romantic and/or realistic literary perspectives, I may label David Herbert Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* modern Bildungsromane, while Herbert George Wells' *Tono-Bungay*, for example, and Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* realistic Bildungsromane.

All of them, however, should be considered as a whole with reference to the Bildungsroman tradition, yet each in particular with reference to individual correlation between narrative and thematic elements of the fictional system of Bildungsroman, as well as distinguished in terms of traditional, realistic and, respectively, experimental, modern manner of writing.

Herbert George Wells' *Tono-Bungay* is conceived within the general literary assumptions of Edwardian literature at the beginning of the 20th century. The Edwardians of the early 1900s revealed a preoccupation with social and moral issues, and attempted to preserve intact much of their Victorian cultural heritage.

³⁰ There is often made a distinction, although not clearly stipulated, between modernism and tradition, modern and contemporary. A writer is modern (Joyce, Woolf, Eliot, Yeats) when characterized by imaginative intensity and aesthetic concentration, stress on individual sensibility and consciousness, indifference to the objective reality of the recent past and inclination towards the remote past, preoccupation with the discovery of new means of expression and exploration of new fields of human experience. Contemporary is defined by the artistic productions of those (many Victorian writers, as well as Wells, Greene, Maugham, Galsworthy) who are directly involved in the world in which they live, who take progressive social attitudes, respond fully to the most important topics of everyday life, and are less concerned with artistic innovation and new means of expression.

The literature of those years, however, revealing a rather complex and extended literary discourse, also attempted to reevaluate the assumptions, impressions, convictions, facts, and images of the Victorian culture, and to deal with the new implications of contemporary scientific and evolutionary thought and development, and their conclusions.

The resulting *mélange* of often contradictory artistic trends and conceptions is reflected, hypothetically speaking, in Wells' realistic Bildungsroman which represents, in Buckley's opinion, the result of a curious mixture of genres: '*adventure story, science fiction, comedy of manners, social satire*' (1974: 187).

As a Bildungsroman, Wells' novel follows the evolution of George Ponderevo, its hero-narrator. It seems that the major influences are Dickens' *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*, along with Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, and indeed there is no real interpretative effort needed to apprehend the narrative and thematic similitude in matters of characterization and events representation (Uncle Teddy resembles Wilkins Micawber, Beatrice Normandy bears similitude with Estella, the house Bladesover is reminiscent of Raynham Abbey, and so on).

The theme of formation unfolds the chronotope of home, where at the beginning the hero is fatherless, and, alienated from an antipathetic and hostile mother, and from the provincial setting, he passes through institutionalized education, where he finds a friend, and apprenticeship, during which he finds congenial parental figures, Uncle Teddy and Aunt Susan.

His physical and spiritual maturation implies success and failure of the gentlemanly conduct, joy and ordeal provided by love, and the hero is finally left with the prospects of successful formation of his personality, including intellectual fulfillment on the professional level as a man of science, and financial, that is social accomplishment.

On the narrative level, the linear textual organization is reified by the voice of George the narrator, who, as in classic, conventional Bildungsromane, retrospectively assesses his own formative process; moreover, he is not far removed from the authorial sensibility, and reflects his creator's point of view and even his actual experience of life. George as narrator is a middle-aged engineer, satisfied with his scientific accomplishments and self-conscious about his artistic potentialities as a fiction writer. The narrative is not simply a self-portrait, and the narrator is not Wells' mouthpiece, although much of George's (as hero) formative experience and many of the ideas expressed by George (as narrator) are revealing of Wells' own values, thoughts, positive features, as well as of unattractive attributes.

They also reveal the author's alliance to the conventional type of fiction writing, especially his concern with a wide range of intellectual,

moral and social issues, when the linear movement of the narrative discourse is disrupted by an omniscient narrator who presents his opinions and ideas about science, art, ethics, sex, religion, family life, socialism, and which are actually Wells' own.

Unlike Wells' novel of character formation, David Herbert Lawrence's Bildungsroman, *Sons and Lovers*, recounts a young man's quest for a satisfactory philosophy of life which is psychologically determined rather than conditioned by any social and moral concerns.

Lawrence's Bildungsroman—as well as that of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf—is to be regarded in the general context of experimental fiction as a definite part of 20th century modernism.

By the closing twenty years of the 19th century, the Victorian standards, beliefs, and values of the social and the personal—hard work, moral strength, religious orthodoxy, sexual reserve, family virtues, confidence in personal and historical development—were questioned and supplanted by new attitudes and outlooks, or challenged by a new, sometimes angry, generation of writers and intellectuals.

A major impact on these artists was provided by the principles of Walter Pater, among others, who attempted to advocate an aesthetic hedonism, a refinement of sensation in pursuit of an ultimate truth in art and life, the aesthetic doctrine of 'Art for Art's sake', defying conventional opinion and moral or political purpose (his collection of essays, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), being a key to the cultivated aestheticism which dominated avant-garde culture in England in the 1890s).

The modernist spirit in art in general and literature, both in fiction and poetry, in particular, was also influenced by the late 19th century Impressionism in painting, which attempted to achieve a projection of the artist's immediate perceptions, to render the subtle evocation of atmosphere and the pure sensation, perceiving reality as a subjective projection of feelings and impressions; and by French symbolism, often described as an equivalent to romanticism (some critics say that if the romantic movement produced symbolism, then symbolism marked the appearance of modernism), with its emphasis on imagination, the power to guess and to suggest obscure connections between facts, allusiveness, musical harmony, implicit meaning, connotative levels of expression, and so on.

Moreover, the rise of modernism in the English literary background has its roots in the first decade of the 20th century, which saw crucial developments and newly established conceptions in thought, including philosophy, psychology, and physics.³¹

³¹ In 1900 Freud published *Interpretation of Dreams*, and, in 1901, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*; in 1905 Einstein published his *Special Theory of Relativity*, showing that there is no absolute truth, only relative truths; Edmund Husserl was preparing a revelation in philosophy, involving new considerations for the relation between mind and phenomena, and Bertrand Russell another in the field of

The early 1900s provided thus the basis for modernism, an international movement in art in general, which manifested itself in music, visual arts, literature, as well as in fiction, and which may have ended in the middle 1920s, when a new interest in social phenomena revived the concern with the rendering of human existence as determined by social and moral issues.

The basis of modernism consisted of a quickly moving succession of incidents and in an agglomeration of ideas, theories and often conflicting interpretations of the individual's place in the world, of his possibilities in an alien social system.

Modernism, as an intellectual current in the first half of the 20th century, was chiefly an extension of the later 19th century revolt against Victorianism. Thus the desire to oppose the positivist, conventional principles of the Victorian age, as well as the search for stronger moral values in a world of irrational conflicts and loss of stability and equilibrium, are the other sources of modernism. Modernists attempted to reveal a rebellious spirit in art, a tendency to reject the commonplace and the traditional conventions, and to reflect in their works this state of confusion and chaos.

In the case of literary discourse, namely fiction, they produced remarkable changes in form and content, to mention the shift of consensus between author and reader (for instance the narrative strategies of juxtaposition and multiple point of view would challenge the reader to reestablish a coherence of meaning from fragmentary forms); the rejection of realistic conventions and the adoption of complex and difficult new structural and thematic organizing principles; the rejection of chronological linear development of the narrative and the consideration of character as ultimate literary concern, especially his psychological motivation, through, say, the tracing of the flow of character's thoughts in the stream-of-consciousness technique, or through the substitution of a logical exposition of thoughts with collages of fragmentary images and complex allusions; the expression of a sense of urban cultural dislocation, along with an awareness of new anthropological and psychological theories (such as those of Freud and Jung³²).

logic. Changes were produced also in visual arts—the introduction of Cubism in 1907, for example—and in music. Marinetti's *Futurist Manifesto* was published in 1909; in 1916, with the war at its most terrible stage, the Romanian Tristan Tzara and others in neutral Switzerland founded the movement 'Dada', radical and influential, rejecting knowledge, morality, progress, logic, past.

³² The new developments in the field of psychological ideas stimulated the artists' interest in discovering new artistic methods to show the fact that the human perceptions of actual phenomena are not reliable, denying the traditional concept of self-control and self-responsibility, and recognizing responsibility, and recognizing this experience of life. The individual is thus no longer regarded as a fully integrated personality, his feelings and thoughts are uncertain, his impressions and responses unpredictable. Freud's theory on human psyche, for example, provided tragic and pessimistic views on the human being's possibilities, proving that the individual is subject to obscure, unknown, illogical instincts and passions coming from the *id*; also his theory of symbols provided symbolical interpretation of man's gestures and

In this context of modern literary endeavor, Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* discloses certain textual elements that render its fictional system unique, as well as certain intertextual perspectives that reveal its alliance to the general Bildungsroman fictional system, on the one hand, and to the experimental fiction of the first half of the 20th century, perhaps the most important offspring of English modernism, on the other.

In matters of the latter aspect, Lawrence's Bildungsroman is primarily concerned with the psychic experience of Paul Morel's developmental and formative process, which turns out to be actually the intimate and infinite process of thought, while the symbolical value of recurrent images or situations makes utterance coherent and allows the formulation of ultimate meanings.

In the process of development from childhood to maturity, Paul's experience of life consists primarily in the thwarting perspectives of childhood, the responsibility for which is laid on his father, in a long, extended ordeal by love and in a frustrating search for a stable existence apart from the rationalism and social conditioning, which involve the hero's relationships with Miriam, Clara and his mother.

The Freudian interpretation of the novel (with regard to the Oedipal complex, for instance, among other aspects) may partly help the analysis of the process of development and the third-person techniques. Mrs. Morel is unfulfilled on the spiritual level with her husband, a sensuous being, though she is an active partner on the mental level, and she turns away from him towards her sons, especially Paul, with whom she establishes a close intellectual relationship, in which she perceives a chance of fulfillment.

This relationship is of great influence in Paul's experience of life, for it determines his formative process in the sense of his artistic evolution (she encourages his aesthetic sensibility, his interest in painting as a professional career and that of escaping the frustrating perspectives of the original home—yet the becoming of a gentleman is far from being a central motif in the novel) and his sentimental career (the affairs with Miriam and, respectively, Clara).

his peculiar response to external reality. Even of greater importance was Jung's theory of memory and archetypes: the principle governing the personal unconsciousness is not *libido* but the collective memory, that is a structure of symbols rooted in the whole experience of the human race (including folklore, history, mythology), which provides primordial images, principles, and archetypes. The human mind is thus born with pre-established forms of psychic behavior, and the close relations between art, dreams and myths are means by which archetypes are made accessible to consciousness. Myths provided a frame of reference in terms of which human experience could be evaluated. When used by both critics and writers, for example, they make possible the link of the experience of primitive man to that of modern man, proving the continuity and permanence of certain eternal human features. The great mythmakers of the century—J. Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, A. Huxley, T. S. Eliot, W. Golding—opposed in their works the Savage (Natural Man), with his primitive, natural drives, to the conventions and norms of their contemporary society.

Paul's love towards Miriam is purely spiritual, which is determined by her incapacity to escape the limited range of an existence exclusively on the intellectual, conscious level. Similarly, Paul is unfulfilled in his sensual relationship with Clara, who, though opposite to Miriam, is also limited and cannot support Paul's assertions of the soul.

Paul circulates between soul and flesh, spiritual and physical experience of life, unable to grasp their unity or correlate them to achieve psychic completeness. His failure of formation is directly determined by his ties with his mother, who rejects Miriam, for her communication with her son on the spiritual level is much stronger, and, the physical relation being impossible, she appears to accept Clara as a substitute of her inhibited side. Yet Paul himself is unsatisfied with Clara's limited response to his craving for a complete existence, his aspiration towards both kinds of experience.

The failure of Paul's formative process is thus determined by the failure of his sentimental career and especially by his mother's death. The human motivation stands as representative of an experience of life that disregards the stability of the ego of the classic Bildungsroman (except, perhaps, for *Great Expectations*).

The human motivation and human experience on different levels accounts for the narrative organization, in which the motives of each character are determined by the different ranges of experience upon which each of them is capable of living and achieving fulfillment. In this psychological delineation of the narrative structure, unpredictable and lacking logical succession, the novel attains unity and departs from the conventional cause-and-effect determinism of the linear text, often responsive to the effects of external events.

In matters of the autobiographical substratum, implied but not necessarily required by the fictional pattern of Bildungsroman, *Sons and Lovers* reveals its essence as an exposition and elucidation of Lawrence's own life (that is to say, a fictional commentary raised by the author's creative response to his own experience of life)—his own early experience of life as the son of a miner; the crisis of his own later life; his mother's death—and thought: his passionate belief in the elementary impulses of man; his acute sensitivity to the beauty of natural objects; his special insight into human psychology.

The latter aspect is framed within the theme of formation of Paul Morel's personality, which is correlated, in turn, with two of Lawrence's main themes: the conflict between man and woman, and the relationship between mother and son.

The novel renders the writer's special psychological insight into character, whose existence is beyond a definite moral scheme. Lawrence follows closely his characters and describes their inner experiences, which

may suggest the fact that Lawrence is hardly breaking away from conventional modes of narrative organization.

Yet he is vividly original in making out of his psychological insight complex characters and out of the differences between characters and their motivation of life experience the premises of the narrative structuring of his fiction, which is complex, unique and detailed. Especially the differences between the characters determine the narrative organization, which are expressed spatially by a sensitive use of imagery.

The narrative's spatial structuring out of symbolic images discloses the character distinction in the sense that some live only spiritually or intellectually, others' mode of experience is purely sensuous, which is also limited, others are capable of complete experience. The best example of spatial organization that the narrative offers is perhaps the correlation between light and darkness, and different kinds of flowers. Mrs. Morel is associated with light, '*tall white lilies*', Miriam is associated with white flowers too—this aspect signifies the spiritual essence of human existence. Mr. Morel represents darkness; Clara receives red flowers from Paul, who also notices in the garden a bed of pink and purple irises—it implies the sensual consideration of human experience of life.

Images, as symbolic representations of human condition, are used by Lawrence to emphasize the spatial relations in his narrative, chiefly archetypal, and the close connection between narration and spatial forms. The imagery represents parts of nature which is constantly present in his writings, creating a life of its own, not a mere background; and being described as acquiring deep symbolical and emotional significance which is suggested rather than directly stated.

In this respect, Lawrence is credited with the trend of mythic symbolism, which—along with the stream of consciousness³³ of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, and the polyphonic constructions of A. Huxley—represents the result of the influence of French literature, with its concern with the style and structure of a literary work, and of Russian literature, with its ability (to say nothing about Dostoyevsky) to reach the

³³ Coined by the American philosopher William James (1842—1910) in *Principles of Psychology* (1890) to describe the flow of thoughts of the waking mind, the term means that reality is not objectively given but is perceived subjectively through consciousness, and was used by novelists (also by the French M. Proust) to describe the unspoken thoughts and feelings of their characters, without applying objective description or conventional dialogue. The concern with the mental process is not actually new, what is new is the interest in the abstract manifestations—intuition, impressions, sensations, memories—of mental experience, and in the processes which make them possible. As stream of consciousness refers rather to subject matter than to technique, new methods were necessary to treat such subject matter. One is given by the psychological principle of free-association, that is to say, the power of one thing to suggest another, and another by the device called interior monologue, direct or indirect, which renders the psychic context and processes of character just as they exist at different levels of conscious control before they are formulated for deliberate speech, and which allows the writer to reveal the character's consciousness and expose it for the apprehension of the reader.

deepest levels of the human soul, on the rise and consolidation of the experimental fiction against the English cultural background.

The climax of the English experimental novel was in the 1910s and 1920s, while the weakening of it was produced in the 1930s (although the Experimental methods had definitely entered the tradition of fiction writing, they were no longer the substance of a regular trend), when another kind of fiction seemed to take shape, or it was rather a continuation of the Victorian writers' concern with realism and social issues, as it was the decade when politics and realism were back to the writers attention.

William Somerset Maugham's Bildungsroman, *Of Human Bondage*, although written in the period of English experimental fiction, discloses certain narrative and thematic features not far removed from the contemporary manner, as the author himself is primarily concerned with rendering the social and political events, and the public causes of the period, which made him favor a 'new realism' in his fiction.

As a Bildungsroman, *Of Human Bondage* has almost all the narrative and thematic elements of the genre, including its strong biographical substratum.

The personal elements in the narrative and the semblance of the experience of life and personality of the author to that of the protagonist render the power and extent of the autobiographical nature of this Bildungsroman, especially with regard to certain formative elements of Maugham's, which find their fictional counterparts as formative elements in the process of Philip Carey's development.

These formative elements imply similitude with regard to spiritual and physical components of the developmental process; yet the novel is essentially a fictional reconstruction of emotional, religious and aesthetic experiences of the author's childhood, youth and early maturity, reified in the formative process of Philip.

Among other things, the hero's childhood, like that of the novelist's, is orphaned and unhappy; Maugham's mother died in 1882, Philip's in 1885 (in the novel the father dies first); Maugham suffered the burden of a painful stammer, Philip is afflicted with a club-foot, and in the case of the latter, as it would have been in the case of the novelist, the physical deformity would determine a mental anguish due to the humiliating treatment by school-fellows. Also, in the case of the hero of Maugham's Bildungsroman, the omniscient narrator states:

Philip passed from the innocence of childhood to bitter consciousness of himself by the ridicule which his club-foot had excited. (Chapter 13)

Also many other examples can be added in order to emphasize the fact that many aspects of Philip's development and formation are drawn

from the author's memory and are reified by concrete detail, especially with regard to the spatial setting of evolution: Whitstable in Kent, where Maugham spent part of his childhood, becomes Blackstable; Canterbury becomes Tercanbury, representing the thwarting perspectives of the institutionalized education; Philip's life at the vicarage is much of what Maugham remembered after twenty years; as well as the Paris of artistic evolution, the London hospital of professional career, and so on.

Of Human Bondage is a novel, however, an autobiographical novel, not an autobiography. Philip's experience of life as a formative process is not an exact transcript of the novelist's and is not to be taken literally. Philip himself, as Maugham would often explain, is not a literal self-portrait: Maugham suffered from stammer, Philip has a club-foot; Maugham rejected medicine for literature, Philip finally turns from painting to medicine; Maugham did not marry until almost twenty years out of medical school, Philip's marriage is entirely imagined, representing, as the novelist confessed, an exercise in wish-fulfillment.

The bitterness and frustrating perspectives of existence in Maugham's early life and later experience of life are imaginatively shaped into a narrative of formation of a character who attempts, in his childhood and youth, to conceal his coyness, stubbornness, sensitivity, personal tragedies and to achieve a philosophy of life, a formative completeness that would eventually enable him to deal with the inner and outer components of his existence.

Although far too long in rendering the theme of formation, and in the reiteration of thematic perspectives in the narrative context of conventional, realistic fiction, *Of Human Bondage* is a novel in which formation is finally a success, for its hero finally emerges as a well-defined and wholly credible personality.

The Victorian Bildungsroman in both content and form influenced Maugham's Bildungsroman, while Spinoza's *Ethics* had influenced its thematic conception of character formation.

In this respect, Maugham asserts that human experience becomes valuable in the future through the use of imagination and reason—thus, unlike Dickens' viewpoint expressed in *David Copperfield*, a man in formation may shape his future existence and escape the past through the exercise of reason. Otherwise, if subject to passion, his human liberty is thwarted and he is submitted to human bondage, existential frustration and a senseless life.

Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* also seems to reject Goethe's assumption about the 'Happy season of youth! (...) happy times of the first wish of love!'; instead it contains a strikingly modern view on the almost-absurdity of the human condition, when both Maugham's and Philip's

conventional views of truth, religious and ethical values are challenged, and they are both forced into profound self-questioning:

It is an illusion that youth is happy, an illusion of those who have lost it; but the young know they are wretched, for they are full of the truthless ideals which have been instilled into them, and each time they come in contact with the real they are bruised and wounded.

As it is, Maugham's Bildungsroman, unlike that of Joyce, Woolf, or Lawrence, reifies the author's outlook on his hero's formative process within a large range of conventional thematic concerns, which are framed within a classic, traditional narrative organization.

James Joyce's Bildungsroman, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, takes further the new fictional perspectives of the English experimental novel, expressing the opposition against the traditional concern with external reality and the presentation of characters as social units.

As in Lawrence, the character is actually the main field where Joyce's innovations work, namely the human inner life, but unlike Lawrence, whose narrator expresses a more or less omniscient authorial point of view, Joyce appears to allow his characters freedom to speak for themselves, to disclose their own thoughts and feelings. He attempts thus to achieve an authorial objectivity and to withdraw the omniscient narrator. The reader is involved as a participant in discovering implied meanings, providing various interpretations, and establishing associations between apparently disrupted components of narrative organization.

In this respect, the traditional concept of narrative construction, as a linear representation of events and incidents involving the character in his external relations, has been finally given up (although I argue, as I have attempted to reveal, that certain more or less successful attempts to do so were made by Victorian writers of Bildungsroman as well, to say nothing about Emily Brontë).

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, to a certain extent, is autobiographical, but the simple rendering of external facts is replaced by the rendering of the complexity of human experience and the inner life of the characters.

The literary discourse consists now in inner, personal reactions to external activities—it chiefly concerns the flux of experience, which is the flux of consciousness.

For Stephen Dedalus, the flux of consciousness represents the means of rendering his physical and intellectual development, which is framed thematically and narratively within the life experience of a formative process.

The process of development and formation of Stephen Dedalus, according to my interpretative modality applied to the analysis of the literary pattern of Bildungsroman, is primarily the concern of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, although it is interesting to argue that it also represents the thematic nucleus of *Stephen Hero* and *Ulysses*, Joyce's masterpiece.

All three writings reveal certain common thematic and narrative perspectives that can suggest the unified consideration of their fictional discourses. All three writings, and, to generalize my point, *Dubliners* as well, disclose the authorial concern with three basic aspects of life: religion, nation, language; and all his writings show the two sides of the author (as narrator and character): the Irish citizen and the accomplished artist. In all his work, and in a troubled period in the history of Europe and his own country, Joyce grasped the atmosphere of frustration and futility, the sense of chaos and confusion.

The themes of *Dubliners*, for example, his first important book, consist of rendering the almost-absurdity of human condition amid social determinism, the psychological issues of individual existence, the motif of exile and search for existential stability, among others. Joyce intended to write a chapter of the moral history of his country, and he chose Dublin as it seemed to him the center of paralysis on different levels of human existence, which he presented under four of its aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life. In all the 15 stories of the book the characters are of humble existence, incapable to fulfill inner potentialities and to establish communication with the others; they experience relevant epiphanies, apparently due to some trivial incidents; they attempt at escaping the bonds of everyday life, but all they get is an acute sense of frustration and entrapment; the use of motifs and symbols creates an increasing complexity of ideas and subjective human reactions.

Although these stories are of no real help in my attempt to argue about Joyce's connection with the literary tradition of Bildungsroman, some of their thematic perspectives are intermingled with the theme of formation in Joyce's next major work, which is *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The novel, which has its origin in the semi-autobiographical fragment *Stephen Hero*, reconstructs the spiritual *bildung* of an artist, his physical growth and the development of his personality.

The formative process, which consists of often frustrating stages of life experience, continues in *Ulysses*³⁴ in so far as at the end of *A Portrait*

³⁴ The novel is rather critically considered from other interpretative perspectives, and is generally claimed to be defying all theories of fiction, as an encyclopedia of modern life, a symbolic novel, a comic extravaganza like *Tristram Shandy*, a modern *Divine Comedy*, a naturalistic drama, a universal metaphor with its complexity of methods and diversity of subjects, a modern epic based on Homer's *Odyssey* (actually *Ulysses* follows closely Homer's work: each episode finds its counterpart in Homer, for example, and the protagonists Stephen Dedalus, Leopold Bloom and Molly Bloom are, respectively,

Stephen, the archetype of the frustrated artist, although left with the prospect of liberation and fulfillment, is, at the beginning of *Ulysses*, again overwhelmed by doubt and frustration. At the end of *Ulysses* he succeeds in getting reconciled with himself and society, and it seems that the formation of his personality is crowned with success.

The name of the hero reveals a symbolic frame of reference which suggests this formative success: Stephen is perhaps St. Stephen, a Christian martyr stoned for no real guilt (the name Stephanos in Greek has in its root the meaning of 'crown'); Dedalus, or Daedalus, the creator/artist, suggests the human aspiration to escape the labyrinth of an existence determined by factors beyond one's individual perspectives.

In this respect, Stephen Dedalus, an aesthete and artist in formation, the alter-ego of the author, capable of apprehending deeper the reality through his sensitivity and artistic sensibility, experiences in his process of development and evolution a number of frustrating external influences, and, through suffering and sacrifices required in the process of artistic formation, will eventually find the way out of the existential labyrinth and will be crowned, in other words, will achieve the fulfillment and success of formation of his human and artistic personality.

As a Bildungsroman, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* touches on the main thematic elements of the Bildungsroman, although its traditional narrative organization appears to be denied by the author. The title itself, one may notice, reveals three main elements of the Bildungsroman fictional system: 'portrait', a kind of spatial principle, implies the concern with the character's inner life, according to which external perspectives of experience are arranged (in other words, the author proceeds from inside of character to the outside of social relationships and details); 'artist' is clearly the desired culmination of the formative process; 'young man', in my opinion, implies a temporal principle that determines the biological and intellectual progress according to the natural perspectives of development of a human being.

In the third-person focused narrative, representing the spiritual, fictionalized biography of an artist, which is framed within a remarkable fictional correlation of subjectivity and objectivity, lyrical passages and dramatized fragments of event representation, I detect the process of evolution from childhood through adolescence to maturity (in a traditional pattern of chronological development); the frustrating perspectives of family life, institutionalized education and vocational apprenticeship; the understanding of the inadequacy of his father's existence and that of his

Telemachus, Ulysses and Penelope). Critics often discuss the stream of consciousness technique, the device of interior monologue, the novel's operation in different styles to represent the thoughts of different characters, the flow of impressions, memories, meditations and the workings of an individual psyche.

compatriots'—hence Stephen's sense of alienation from his own family and, eventually, from his own country; the search for identity and the dilemma of finding a stable place in the world; the sense of guilt and still another one of the wrong, undeserved punishment by society; the final choice of self-exile, of repudiating religious devotion and the consideration of a devotion to life, art and spiritual freedom.

Each aspect forms an independent stage and a decisive phase in the process of character development leading to formation, each is an important step towards final completeness and fulfillment, and each represents a new direction of movement in the spatial and temporal realities or non-realities of geographical and spiritual cycle.

In terms of the formative process of Stephen Dedalus, which eventually determines his alliance to the character typology of the literary system of Bildungsroman, I consider that epiphany is the dominant principle that reifies crucial experiences which cause a person to understand something in a new and extraordinary way, thus allowing for premises for his spiritual maturation and completeness.

Moreover, epiphany, which culminates in each chapter, appears to solve the spiritual crisis that dominates the beginning of every chapter, bringing a lyrical mood of hope and optimism, although every new spiritual accomplishment is denied at the beginning of every next chapter. This moment of spiritual illumination is thus the conditioning device of a dialectical process containing rejection and affirmation, denial and acceptance, failure and triumph, and so on, which represents actually the very process of evolution and formation of a personality.

Epiphanies illuminate all the stages of Stephen's understanding: he rejects priesthood, religion, language, authority, family, nationality and country, and embraces self-exile as the only means of self-liberation and self-escape (the idea is suggested through the motif of the flying bird: bird names of some characters, the girl's bosom as '*the breast of some dark-plumaged dove*', and so on), yet also as a possibility to awaken the consciousness of his countryman in his posture as an artist who would bring beauty and civilization to humans.

According to Joyce, epiphanies, as moments of revelation, are central to human existence. Applied to literary discourse, epiphany serves as a technique. Its major sources are Wordsworth's 'spots of time' (which allow for the imaginative power of redemption), as well as certain Victorian versions implied by Victorian poets (Tennyson, Robert Browning, Hopkins) and by Victorian writers of Bildungsromane, for example Dickens in *Great Expectations*.

Stephen Hero gives the famous definition of epiphany as '*a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself.*'

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, among many epiphanies experienced by the protagonist, I may point to the one provided by the image of a girl on the sea-shore: '*To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life!*' (Chapter 4).

James Joyce made Stephen Dedalus into a sort of archetypal image of the 20th century artist, and through him Joyce expressed his own conception of art, his ideas on the role of the artist, the form of the work of art, and the reaction of the audience to that work. Joyce disregarded the notion of genre, for instance; instead, he considers three conditions of art—lyrical, epical, dramatic—based on the principle of the distance between the creator and the product of his artistic effort.

Through Stephen Dedalus, Joyce expresses his aesthetic conception on epiphany as a concentrating state of intense revelation and illumination, which is founded on an apparently trivial incident and which becomes the structuring principle in everyone of his works. The apprehension of the aesthetic image, as a psychological act, implies a movement from cognition (*integritas*—the apprehension of object's wholeness) to recognition (*consonantia*—the object's harmonious unity is grasped) and then to satisfaction (*claritas*—the moment of artistic apprehension in a state of mental delight and spiritual radiance, in which the object is epiphanized).

Epiphany, as a moment of self-understanding leading to the formation of personality, is conceived in contextual relations with other important structuring devices of Joyce's fiction, such as interior monologue, or stream of consciousness technique, which allows for the author's departure from rendering the formative process as socially determined. The reader has to establish connections and draw meanings from the complex pattern of the hero's interior monologue, which is a complex system of symbolical and archetypal associations, although apparently aimless and disrupted because of recurrent ideas and mental images that occur to Stephen's consciousness.

The stream of consciousness is also brilliantly employed in the narrative organization of Virginia Woolf's experimental fiction. She is chiefly remembered today for *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *The Waves*, yet *Jacob's Room*, written earlier, represents a part of my concern with rendering the 20th century connections of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

An exponent of modernism and a writer of experimental novel, Woolf attempts to break the traditional pattern of narrative organization, including its careful definition of character through the omniscient narrator. Instead, she creates a novel in which vision is more important than plot, searching for new devices and methods of expression in order to give meaning to the apparently disconnected and incoherent impressions. Her writings reveal a brilliant projection of lyricism and a poetic vision of life: a projection of moods and states of mind leading to the sensation that the human is a

microcosm in the larger universe of nature, the mystery of the individual's inner experience in its correlation to the external universe.

Her lyrical prose is a metaphorical prose, for she often combines metaphor with metonymy to provide the reader with a sense that life is not a patterned universe with an objective existence, but rather an obscure feeling, a sensation, a state of mind, which determines, as she remarks in *Modern Fiction*, a subjective reaction: '*The mind receives a myriad impressions—trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. (...) Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end*' (cf. Urnova 1979: 199).

The language, rich in symbolic and metaphoric expression, has to serve the purpose of rendering the problem of the human search for identity in a world of contradiction and confusion, the theme of time and death, the complex fusion between present experience and memory (the latter aspect is mostly noticeable in *Mrs. Dalloway*, a novel consisting of a free experiment with time, in limiting the 'objective time' to one single day from the life of its characters).

Both Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, as writers of the experimental novel, turned away from the traditional handling of fictional form and content, and, unlike the realistic writers contemporary to them, it seems that they also deviated from the schematic pattern of thematic and narrative organization of the literary system of Bildungsroman. On the other hand, they continued to reveal aspects of the psychology of a young person in development, yet with lesser concern about his integration into the social background or his adjustment to any philosophy of living.³⁵

In the case of *Jacob's Room*, it is even difficult to grasp the essence of the young man who is developing into maturity, for his personality is chiefly undisclosed to the reader's apprehension of the narrative message (sometimes the reader is allowed to follow Jacob's thoughts, yet almost always the author shifts the perspectives on some other character's stream of consciousness).

The novel lightly presents the formative process of an unheroic hero, Jacob Flanders, from childhood through adolescence to his death in his late twenties during the First World War. In this respect, he becomes representative of the war-destroyed promises of youth.

The spiritual dimension of the protagonist remains essentially unknowable, yet the reader may grasp moments of his general characterization or of his involvement in the events represented in the narrative: he is fatherless, clearly a gentleman, he is miserable in London but happy in his trip to the Acropolis, and his affairs with women are casual,

³⁵ It seems that the interest in Bildungsroman has shifted to America, only to mention Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel* or James T. Farrell's Studs Lonigan trilogy.

and so on. Jacob searches for a meaningful life, although he may find a refuge from all worldly values in the 'room'.

In terms of Woolf's 'rebellion' against the narrative strategies of classic realism and of conventional fiction in general, in her Bildungsroman, in so much as it may be labeled so, the author employs conventional realistic elements in a parodist manner in order to subvert the conventional stability and closure of classic realistic novels. Through an elusive main character, shifting narrative perspectives, and a parody of the linear development of the classic Bildungsroman, Woolf exposes her own newly conceived narrative strategies, revealing the instability and often-vague organization of the conventional narration.

Moreover, the novel has no regular plot, and the narration consists of short narrative stances that reveal the fragmentariness of human existence reified and proved structurally in the literary discourse.

In spite of the explicit aspects of departure from the conventions of the Victorian Bildungsroman, as well as from the narrative discourses of 19th century classic realist texts and those of the Edwardian fiction, Virginia Woolf's narrative experimentation, idiosyncratic narrative style and fictional innovations reveal themselves to be a result of her conscious combination of elements from previous stages of novel evolution, many of them being directly determined by the conventional techniques of classic realism.

For reasons of space, and because this novel does not constitute the main concern of my study, I place Virginia Woolf's Bildungsroman in the context of the general literary reaction against the 19th century conventions of realism, which manifested itself in the first half of the 20th century in her novels as well as in the novels of Joyce, Lawrence, Huxley.

Actually neither Woolf's Bildungsroman and that of other experimental novelists, nor the 20th century realistic novels of formation represent the main concern of my study.³⁶ Yet in rendering their division according to modern and traditional perspectives of fictional organization, I hope to have suggested a possible interpretative modality or at least an aspect of analysis in the approach to the literary discourses of the 20th century writers who attempted to accommodate a powerful vision of personal biography to the conventions of the Bildungsroman literary system, thus bringing fresh perceptions to the unpredictable experience of the formation of a personality and also continuing the process of development of Bildungsroman within a new cultural and literary background.

Finally, given the fact that the main concern of the present study is the Victorian Bildungsroman, the 20th century narrative discourses, which reveal

³⁶ Including the fiction of the Angry Young Men of the 1950s, which displays many, especially thematic, elements of Bildungsroman: provincial setting, alienation from family and middle-class conformity, dissatisfied education, struggle for independence, sexual initiation, vocational apprenticeship, final professional and financial commitment, and even adjustment, through compromise, to society.

an alliance to the tradition and conventions of Bildungsroman, and because of their complexity and new thematic and narrative perspectives, require a separate and a more profound approach that will be eventually reified as the concern of another, independent study.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS. THE TYPOLOGICAL CIRCLE OF THE BILDUNGSROMAN

The most important stage of development and the final consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a literary tradition in English literature belong to the Victorian Age, though I believe that the antecedents of such a fictional discourse are to be found diachronically throughout the entire process of prose development from Antiquity; and it has been continued in 20th century novel writing with necessary new nuances and deviations (to mention only the modern rejection of the idea of progress, or the sense of crisis, chaos and confusion, or the multiple point of view with regard to the narrative organization of the literary discourse, and many others which suggest new, interesting perspectives of analysis).

The ancient narratives provide a number of thematic attributes involving the character's life-time as life-experience, for instance adventure, ordeal, trial, moral issues of personal conduct, love, struggle for survival, autobiographical substratum, and many others, none of which, however, though diachronically applied and developed by many authors until the end of the 18th century (especially by the writers of the picaresque novel), ever offered premises for the formation of personality, which is actually the final literary appeal and desired culmination of every Bildungsroman (yet suggesting evolution, change of condition with respect to social background, and many others).

I regard these attributes as elements of the developmental fiction rather than of Bildungsroman, though it provides the fictional substratum for the existence of the latter.

The rise and development of novel writing from Antiquity until the 18th century also suggests the existence of other fictional devices that appear as literary concerns in the Bildungsroman, such as sin, arrest, imprisonment, penance, escape. The original thematic essence of these elements—applied and used to render the hero's exterior change and his condition within social relationships—has been shifted by the Victorian author of Bildungsroman in order to reveal the very essence of the hero's inner life. In this respect, they become elements of a psychological, mental process of change that may determine the hero's maturation in the sense of formation of his personality.

The Victorian Bildungsroman involves the principle of crises, revelation and change leading to the formation of personality, while the elements in the fiction from Antiquity until the end of the 18th century reveal the static presentation of a static process of development, hence the character is static and the change is actually a pseudo-change, for it asserts primarily the outward condition of the hero, lacking the concern with the spiritual component. The formation of a personality should account for both

the inward and the outward, emphasizing the former aspect, and the idea of difference in the process of inner change.

It was not until Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* that the formation of personality was equaled as a literary concern to the rendering of social background, or ever considered as a literary concern. Until Goethe produced his novel, at the end of the 18th century, the experience of life, following the scheme of the ancient and picaresque novel, was important only for the evolution and development of the character's condition: the chronotope of roadway contributes to the hero's relations and contacts with different social layers, where the author's critical outlook is more or less predominant. The character remained fixed, with his inner life static from the beginning till the end, and the unchanged spiritual essence determined the linear movement of the entire narrative structure, as well as the logical succession of events.

That it is to say, the fiction from Antiquity until the 18th century has in some respects a confessional quality—which is an aspect of my concern—and the hero, whether a narrator of his own story within a first-person narration or not, may have sinned, done penance, developed, but he is hardly matured in the process of development. In turn, Goethe does not merely recount a number of adventures and love encounters; he rather introduces the theme of formation (in the sense of maturation) of a human personality amid the vortex of life, as the author himself noted (against Rousseau's conception expressed in *Emil*, for example, or by Emily Brontë in *Wuthering Heights*, where the evolution and education of a young personality should exclude any social determinism).

As it is, the development of world literature, particularly fiction, from Antiquity until the end of the 18th century, provided the Victorian Bildungsroman with a number of elements of narrative technique and strategy, such as the identification between narrator and character, the interest in the readers' response to the text, the linear narrative movement, the chronotope of roadway, that of city, the introspective and retrospective account of events and states of mind, the ethical component of the narrative distance between author and character, and between narrated events and reader, and others.

The Victorian Bildungsroman was also influenced and anticipated by a number of literary concerns of the English Romantic Movement, especially regarding its insight into human psychology and the experience of childhood. What I mean is that every Victorian Bildungsroman discussed in this study focuses on the individual that can be defined by his experience of the past and growing self. The essential experience is that of childhood, and the essential mode of operation of the hero's psyche is memory. The hero in the final stage of his mature formation of consciousness and the physical entering upon maturity attempts, as David or Pendennis do, to return to the

past, to establish a mythic circle between the present moment and the moment which has sparked off the moments of a temporal and spatial reality that constitutes actually the very developmental process undertaken by the protagonist.

Those like David or Pendennis find completeness and their formation can be considered a success in that they are able to find a suitable end to their developmental process in relation to their beginnings. Others, like Pip, Richard Feverel, or Maggie, are committed to live in the infinite time which becomes a fictional principle that appears to render the ambiguity of formation, for, though it suggests the possibility of acquiring a new identity through a change in consciousness, it also implies that this new identity will presumably—not definitely—come into existence.

Generalizing these aspects, which are discussed earlier in this study (see Chapters 3 and 4), I conclude with the idea that in terms of the romantic impulse in the Victorian novel of formation, the writers of Victorian Bildungsromane have thus continued the original romantic emphasis on the identity of the child and the symbolic significance to mature individuals of their experience of childhood. Along with the assertion of childhood's lasting importance, Victorian novelists have also considered its vulnerability to conventional opinion.

With Blake, Wordsworth and other representatives of the romantic trend in English literature the child is the only character who keeps his mind always inquisitive, open to external phenomena, which in the long run turns to become trite and conventional for a mature person. Wordsworth himself and others remain highly subjective in matters of pursuing the transformations of the mind. Their comprehension of the universe being most personal and egotistic (self-centered), it focuses the reader's attention upon the germination of the inner self of an individual, together with the implied theme of the lasting importance of childhood impressions, especially of natural forces, in the process of development of a human personality. The polar interrelation between life and death, black and white, childhood and maturity, joy and sorrow, innocence and experience, visionary relief and rationality, instinct and action, feeling and will, emotion and mind, which can be traced in the works of the English romantic poets, seems to serve the same purpose. In other words, this method of contrasting opposition serves as a means of emphasizing the contradictions as a result of perceiving the external world through the perspective of the inner self and its expectations. In this respect, the concern with childhood was part of a broader tendency to re-emphasize the significance of the individual and the possible validity of individual judgment even when they clash with social victimization. Also, it represented a polemical response to the excessive cast of mind and morality of the 18th century dominant assertion of rationality.

The literature of the romantic period becomes psychologically oriented, and the poetry of the time has the retrospective concept as a dominating one, giving one the right to call it 'poetry of the past' (Bakhtin felt in the works of romantic writers the remoteness of the past, solitude and, on the whole, very specific coloring of the mood), for this aspect is the direct consequence of the authors' alienation from reality and their incapability to fit in the contemporary process, their unwillingness, originating from obedience to destiny, though not fatal, to change the future.

In the atmosphere of uncertainty and unsteadiness within the new social and cultural system, and rejection of the old system of values, personality gets alienated (the reflection in the literary works of the position 'between Heaven and Hell'). Thus, as in every modern and experimental literary enterprise, personality is determined to become the focus of investigation of the romantic author whose tools are imagination and emotional intensity, and the invented matter would fit the outbursts and aspirations of this subjective creator. To live in an imaginary world is easier than in reality—the one deprived of imagination will never be able to escape from frustrating convention—and this becomes a widespread leitmotif in a number of literary works. The temptation to live in a dream world related to the past, to come back to what has already been before and does not exist any more, to a fabulous arabesque of nerves as the brain can bring anyone to the beginning of one's life, where one felt so secure, compels the imagination to constantly undertake the trip to childhood as it is seen in a number of literary works belonging to English romantic period.

As for the succeeding periods (trends) in English literature dealing with the theme of childhood, they need a special critical approach, especially the Victorian fiction as *Bildungsroman*, for one may detect there the same lasting concern with the infantile experience and its importance for the general process of character formation, a concern which was anticipated, as I have attempted to reveal in my study, by the literary writings belonging to the romantic movement (the main influence and the most familiar model was provided, however, as it is often hypothesized, by Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*).

As it is, a number of English romantic writers revealed a willingness to explore the less conscious aspects of feeling and thought which was accompanied by a concern with the experience and insights of childhood more serious than many previous periods would have thought reasonable.

In turn, the Victorian authors of *Bildungsromane* expressed a twofold vision of the child and the experience of childhood: (1) the actual childhood and its limited circumstances, and (2) the archetype of the child. The former underlines the romantic assertion of the importance of childhood and its vulnerability to social circumstances, or rather to frustration and victimization provided by mature rationality in the treatment of actual

children. This aspect finds its interpretative modality through Freudian theory applied to the narrator's remembrance of his upbringing, as for example in Dickens' or Eliot's remembrance of themselves in the early stages of their process of development and life experience.

The latter vision considers the idea of the child, the symbolic image for the mature narrator of his childhood. To follow Jung's conception, the archetype of the child suggests the psychic wholeness of man, for, as it is rendered in the Victorian novel of formation, some of the unconscious aspects of the psyche are being repressed almost to the point of exclusion (I consider primarily the destruction of feeling and instinctive conduct).

It is that by emphasizing the visionary capacity of the child, his strong sensitivity and imaginative creativity, his instinctive action, set up against the rationality and excessive morality of the adults, the Victorian writers of Bildungsromane express the truth that only when the protagonist in formation realizes himself as a whole of mind and emotion, action and instinct, that is to say, the hero acquires a sense of himself, the formation of personality becomes a reality (as in *The History of Pendennis*, *David Copperfield*, *Jane Eyre*, or *The Way of All Flesh*), a possible culmination of his entire process of development and initiation (as in *Great Expectations*). Otherwise, when the division between mind and feeling, morality and instinct dominates the fictional material and the reconciliation between the outward and the inward is impossible, the entire process of development renders formation as tragedy or mere failure (as in *Wuthering Heights* or *The Mill on the Floss*).

The formation of a mature personality is also provided by the symbolical return to the basic values of the experience of childhood in a kind of cyclical structuring of the narrative material. As it is, the rendering of the experience of childhood as a definite thematic component in Bildungsromane and as an important factor in the entire process of formation of personality is just one element in the fictional complexity which involves both content and structure, both thematic and narrative contexts of the Victorian novel of formation.

Victorian fiction itself is a complex, often contradictory literary phenomenon, which dominated the 19th century cultural background. The dominance of the novel in this age emerged from the intimate connection between a particular form of the Victorian novel, which can best be called realism, with the desires, aspirations, and anxieties of its readers. For all their awareness of the contradictions involved in writing realistic fiction and their consciousness that language could not provide a transparent objective verisimilitude, novelists as realists still believed that language could represent the world beyond the text and convey a meaning outside of language, a non-verbal truth, as much as, for all its deconstruction of the possibility of a single reliable narrator, Eliot's masterpiece, *Middlemarch*,

indicates the author's faith in her power to record the process of change in the English provincial society.

Realism, seen as a set of literary conventions, inscribes and presents as 'natural' a specific version of reality, an equation of the 'real' with the material life of a commercial, industrial society. The mode focuses on interpersonal relations and the protagonist's desire for social status in a highly stratified society. In a society that praised the virtue of individualism and lauded the 'self-made man', the naming of the self and the reconciliation of this self to society became a central issue and Bildungsroman or the novel of development a central fiction form. For male protagonists, the primary issue of the novel turned upon whether social aspirations within the class system could be reconciled with authentic desire and moral feeling. This conflict in the lives of men, often with autobiographical resonance, is played out in *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, *Pendennis*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *Jude the Obscure*, *The Way of All Flesh*.

Like all forms of Victorian fiction, the Bildungsroman must be classified by gender, for this was the age in which women were, for the first time, ranked equally with men as writers within a major genre. The Bildungsroman pattern is now embodied in such novels as *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Mill on the Floss*.

As much as novelists were concerned with the development of individual consciousness, they also sought to represent the transformations within their society—a world both urban and rural, commercial and traditional, fragmented yet coherent. Painting on a large canvas, writers shaped what might be called panoramic novels that move across the various classes and social settings. Dickens' *Bleak House*, for example, shifts from the estate of the highest aristocracy to the slums of London to represent the paradox of coherence amid fragmentation.

Rather than following the traditional plot/subplot structure, these fictions are 'multiplot' with no one central figure and with manifold patterns of action (also Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, for instance, with its focus on the lives and interactions of many sets of characters in the years around Waterloo; similarly, Eliot's *Middlemarch* is concerned less with the life of a single character than with the web that binds together this provincial community).

With these representations of a shifting fragmented society, coherence is often achieved through a narrative voice that comments upon the action and is unrelated to the consciousness of a single character. This often-misunderstood narrative method is appropriate to its subject, a society that a single participant cannot fully understand, and is employed with a complexity and multiplicity of functions—sometimes omniscient and reliable; sometimes merely another character among multiple centers of

consciousness; sometimes indeterminate and ironic; sometimes the voice of the community, the standard by which action may be judged and a guide to readers facing a new world which they, like the narrative voice, cannot fully comprehend.

In my approach to the Victorian Bildungsroman with regard to its level of a literary discourse, I have considered and applied the interpretative arrangements of Bakhtinian criticism (whose stature and importance have only recently been acknowledged in the West), structuralist approach (especially its focus on literary text as a whole, with no need to consider the extra-aesthetic particularities, and the relationship established between content and form/technique, thematic level and structural perspectives), and narratology as offering an ordered system of study, a set of methods which find their direct applicability to such a specific area as the Victorian novel of formation. Narratology is best applicable in my consideration of Bildungsroman as a literary system, because the interpretative strategy of this discipline is largely founded on the ultimate assumption that the stories/narratives of one cultural background reveal certain common elements that are interrelated.

I haven't, however, excluded all other approaches, for they also have contributions to make to a theoretical and practical analysis of the Victorian Bildungsroman. I also believe to have avoided the shortcomings of a number of these schools, or modified them according to the essence of my research. In matters of structuralist approach, for example, I have attempted to avoid its concern primarily with literary text as a system of synchronically framed elements, for I also concentrate diachronically on Bildungsroman development.

The multiplicity of theories and approaches provides also a multiplicity of definitions of the term Bildungsroman. Rather than repeat the details of some of the well-known definitions, I have attempted to present one of my own, hoping to disclose some of the main elements and general principles of the Bildungsroman as a unique fictional system.

I regard 'Bildungsroman' as a type of autobiographical fiction (an autobiographical type of fiction) which renders the process of evolution, growth, and formation of a character in his both biological and intellectual development usually from childhood till early maturity according to the principle of chronotope whose spatial and temporal components form the basis of its entire narrative structure and the basis for its analysis.

It is mainly the Victorian Bildungsroman my concern here. Its unique literary essence is provided by the fact that, focusing on the spiritual progress of the protagonist, the narration, as conceived by Victorian novelists, concentrates also on his growth and development within the context of a defined social background, and thus the final formation and initiation may also imply a search for a meaningful existence within society.

The formation of personality is the self-conscious, thematic and narrative category of every Bildungsroman. I have attempted to find and describe the premises for the formation as the essence of each Victorian novel discussed in this study, among which I should mention:

- 1 the fictional reality of a process of character development and evolution from childhood to adulthood framed as a literary discourse; the autobiographical substratum expresses here the author's attempt to create a new consciousness and his search for a repetition of the past as a means of self-recapture as well as self-knowledge
- 2 the change, reconfiguration of the inner structure of the hero as a result of certain moments of psychological crisis leading to moments of revelation/epiphany (the change of the outer condition is an element of development of the self rather than its formation); the change is in this respect more than necessary, it is inevitable as well as reified by action which determines inner perspectives of existence
- 3 the capability of the real author to dissociate the archetypal symbol/image of the child (which leads to the realization of the being's wholeness—hence to formation) from the actual childhood (consisting of memory's image of his childhood self and/or invented images of childhood, that is, in remembrance and imagination)
- 4 the juxtaposition of the differences between childhood and adulthood with the continuity of maturity and childhood—in other words, the correlation between past and present in terms of departure from and return to the original chronotope (the asymmetry of departure and return implies only the process of development)
- 5 the proper correlation of inner/spiritual/romantic perspectives in the process of formation (intelligence, emotional and imaginative capacity) with exterior/practical/realistic perspectives of formation (social integration, professional and financial success); that is to say, the hero in development must avoid unilateral, one-sided consideration of the formative process, for, though successful as distinct parts, their division causes the failure of psychic completeness and individual formation.

In this respect, through separate textual, intertextual and contextual analyses of both narrative strategies and contents of a number of Victorian novels which I regard as Bildungsromane—*The History of Pendennis*, *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *The Way of All Flesh*, *Jude the Obscure*—in terms of their form, I consider the following general fictional structure (the Bildungsroman as literary discourse):

Society/Cultural Context

Author	Narrator	Text = Bildungsroman	Narratee	Reader
Text as History/Literary Work/the Level of Thematic Organization:				
Inter-Human and Inter-Social Relationships				
Character		Change of the Inner/Outer		
The Process of Development (Physical and Intellectual)				
Autobiographical Substratum			Formation	
The Principles of Time and Space (Chronotope) Involved in Narrative and Thematic Relations				
Text as Story/Literary Discourse/the Level of Narrative Organization:				
Intro-/retrospective narration/narrative (linear text) or narrations/narratives (concentric text) of the omniscient narrator (or rather the omniscient point of view of the author expressed through the voice of the narrator)				
Related Texts/Intertextual Perspectives				Language

and, in terms of their contents, with deeper consideration of the thematic level of the text, the following general elements (some of them in any order) of a typical Bildungsroman literary pattern (the Bildungsroman as literary work):

- 1** a child (sometimes orphaned or fatherless) lives in a village or provincial town
- 2** he/she is in conflict with his actual parents, especially father, or any parental figures (the trial by older generation)
- 3** he/she leaves home to enter a larger society (usually city, especially London, definitely not a *ultima Thule*); the departure is determined by **2** or other external stimuli, or an inner stimulus (for instance the desire for experience that the incomplete, static atmosphere of home does not offer)
- 4** he/she passes through institutionalized education and/or self-education
- 5** a young person now, he/she seeks for social relationships with other humans
- 6** his/her experience of life is a search for a vocation and social accomplishment
- 7** he/she has to undergo the ordeal by society (professional career)
- 8** he/she has to resist the trial by love (sentimental career)
- 9** he/she passes through moments of spiritual suffering and pain
- 10** now in his/her early manhood, he/she experiences epiphanies that lead to (or should determine) his/her final initiation and formation (complete or relativistic, or not existing at all—that is to say, the final stage of the

formative process implies the dichotomy success/failure, or a third possibility of partial success/partial failure)

which render a syntagmatic structure as follows:

1 2 3 4 (or 4 3) 5 6 7 8 (5-8, in any order) 9 10.

These numbers represent the ‘motifs’, and the unifying ‘theme’ is formation. Against this proposed regularity, whose structural elements occur in every Bildungsroman, I have attempted to identify in this study a number of narrative and thematic ‘deviations’, certain paradigmatic substitutions of particular events and actions, and a number of exceptions that prove the rule.

Above all, I believe that the very essence of Victorian Bildungsroman, its deep contextual meaning, is the fact that the presentation of the process of formation of personality—this process being rendered within the framework of a fictional system (and in that sense an indirect confession)—represents actually an expression of the writer’s unconscious need for attaining his own wholeness of the self, his own move towards greater consciousness.

The realization of every being as a whole of rationality and emotion, mind and soul, the inside and the outside—especially through the correlation between the desired fulfillment of inner formative perspectives and the exterior considerations of social integration and accomplishment—as I have suggested in the study, is one of the most important premises for the success and completeness of formation.

The psychic totality is achieved at the moment of appearance of archetypes and mythic perspectives, namely those linked to the human process of evolution and development (for example the archetypal symbol of the child). The failure of Victorian writers of Bildungsromane to separate the archetypal/mythic images from their memory’s images of growing selves (that is, the failure to get beyond the past by constructively remembering it) leads inevitably to divisions of psychic wholeness, for example to emphasizing anger and self-pity, which renders the formation of personality a mere failure.

In other words, the attempt of the real author to recreate himself, through the voice of the narrator and the experience of life of the character within the narrative, in a verbalization of his life, succeeds up to a certain point—hence formation and completeness are sometimes ambiguous, which is determined by the failure of constructive memory to bring liberation, ‘*for the theory of memory holds out the hope of success, at least*’ (Westburg 1977: 109).

As it is, and as I have argued in this study, one of the unifying factors of all Victorian Bildungsromane, as well as that of their 20th century connections, would be the principle of verisimilitude which renders similar formative elements in the experience of life and personality of the author and of the protagonist in development. As it is, the real author of a Victorian Bildungsroman, through his alter ego (that is his character), attempts to create a consciousness with a ‘*redoubled time-sense*’ (ibid.: 50), in that the hero expresses the desire to be representational and literal about his past, as well as creative of himself in the present, at the moment of formation of his personality.

The former aspect regards fiction as a mimetic representation of memory’s images and of social and moral issues of the writer’s epoch; the latter considers the imaginative essence of the Bildungsroman, its abstractness and freedom from the direct reference to the reality of Victorian life—the capability of the real author to shift from the former to the latter aspect renders, on the one hand, the artistic completeness of the writer, and, on the other hand, the validity of the character’s formation (as in *David Copperfield*, for example, or *Jane Eyre*). Otherwise, as in *The Mill on the Floss*, the accomplishment of formation is a mere failure.

Another achievement of the Victorian writer of Bildungsromane is the confessional mode in the novel, which dramatizes the author’s imaginative development as the writer of the narrative, its hero and narrator. The Victorian Bildungsroman displays thus elements of the fictional autobiography, where the autobiographical consideration is the source and origin of the narrative, and the author’s own artistic development is both a verbal return to his experience of the past (childhood, education, and so on) and a written account of his way out of it.

In the process of my analysis I have come to consider the principle of chronotope as the unifying factor of all Bildungsromane discussed in the present study, and, in this respect, I hypothesize the existence of four types of chronotope within the fictional framework of the novel of formation. The study/analysis of chronotope may be achieved through horizontal representation (synchronically) or vertical representation (diachronically). Also, the principle of chronotope is applicable to the analysis and interpretation of both the narrative structure of the Bildungsroman and its range of motifs, themes, emblems, characters, images, and details (thematic level of the text).

The types of chronotope and their specific features, along with their applicability in the approach to the Victorian Bildungsroman, as I consider them, are the following:

1 *the chronotope of home* (suggesting the temporal and especially the spatial origins of the character, the relations within the family circle, or simply the

reality or non-reality of a spatial category of inner/outer stability or instability)

2 *the chronotope of roadway* (determining the spatial and temporal movement as premises for the experience of life in the form of a process of formation)

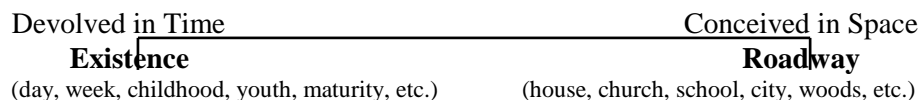
3 *the chronotope of city* (in other words a larger society as another element of synthesis which constitutes an important factor for the evolution and formation of the hero; it sometimes can become a new home)

4 *the existential chronotope* (viewed as the existence/experience of life of a human in formation).

In terms of these hypothesized types of chronotope, I consider another textual model of the fictional system of Bildungsroman, which has been suggested to me by Umberto Eco ([1990] 1996: 168), but whose interpretative arrangement, that has no reference to the Bildungsroman or fiction whatsoever, I have modified according to the vector of analysis that I apply in my study. In his discussion of metaphor as an element of content and encyclopedia, Eco considers the dictionary definition of 'life' (developed in time) and 'road' (conveyed in space) as elements of a process.

As applied to the analysis of the textual and intertextual perspectives of the fictional system of Bildungsroman, I hypothesize the following structure:

Process of Character Development/Evolution



Formation of Personality

The analysis of Victorian Bildungsromane reveals that all four types of chronotope are intermingled and interrelated: the chronotope of roadway determines the hero's departure from home and family circle—itself a chronotope—and brings him to the city, which becomes another chronotope, or to another chronotope of home, all of them reifying the existential chronotope.

The problem of such an approach consists of the difficulty of correlating the chronotope and the mythological background it recreates. Actually two mythological backgrounds, each according to the two components of chronotope: *cronos* (time, temporal element) and *topos* (place, setting, spatial element).

On the one hand, given the spatial component, I find the problem being determined by the mythologization of a particular setting or place, say, city, for instance, which is involved in the process of character formation. That is to say, the symbol of the city as presented in Victorian Bildungsromane—the universe of London the capital, for example, or that of a provincial town, or rather the entire provincial setting—becomes a myth when it assumes the position of a point of reference for the entire character's existence and experience of life rendered as the process of formation of his personality.

On the other hand, given the temporal component, according to Northrop Frye's (1957) conception about mythos/mythosy—where the four seasons correspond to a number of thematic modes regarded as generic determinants of thematic universals (spring - romance, summer - comedy, autumn - tragedy, winter - irony), representing also the diachronical development of the literary phenomenon—the mythos would correspond to the development of the human personality, which is the essence of every Bildungsroman.

In other words, childhood corresponds to spring, romance; youth to summer, comedy; manhood to autumn, tragedy; decrepitude to winter, irony. It appears that the personality in formation is again mythologized by being included in the cosmic cycle of human existence. An exception is the latter element, that is old age, which is not the literary concern of a Bildungsroman, for this type of novel often ends with the time when its protagonist enters maturity, along with an attempted return, as in Wordsworth, to the universe of childhood.

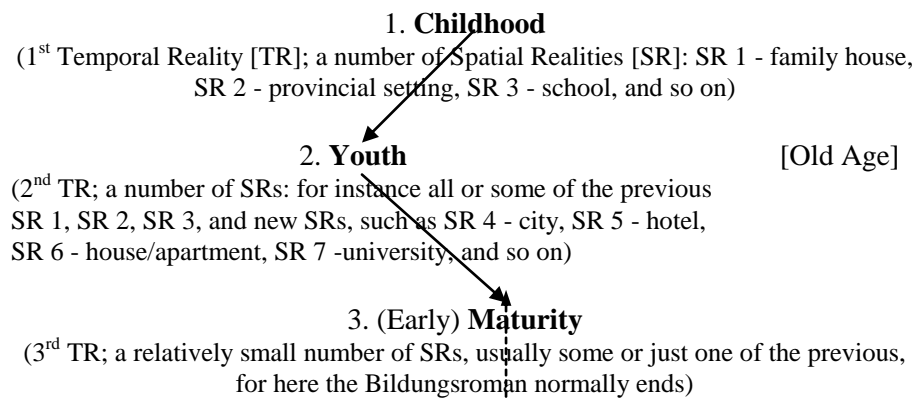
However, the physical return impossible (for a temporal reversal process is impossible), the mature hero seeks a reevaluation or revival of the basic human values imbued in him at home in the stage of childhood, but repressed later in the process of formation. In this respect, on a more general level and in terms of the above ten elements of the literary pattern of the Victorian novel of formation, I consider the following fictional model of the Victorian Bildungsroman—that consists of three main thematic elements which determine a syntagmatic structure—which is rendered according to the principle of chronotope and which corresponds to the natural biological stages of evolution of a human being.

The three thematic elements are:

- 1 childhood: the stage at home, where the experience of life, though static, is incomplete
- 2 youth: the stage determined by the departure from home and consisting of a larger society to which the hero must accommodate himself, and where his evolution and development actually take place

3 (early) maturity: the final stage of desired formation, completeness and change determined by the experience in the second stage.

These elements determine the following structure which renders the character's experience of life as a process of personality formation, and which would be also helpful in any attempt to correlate the chronotope and myth in the approach to Bildungsroman³⁷:



This fictional model that I suggest is applicable to the analysis of Victorian Bildungsromane in general, of course with necessary schematic deviations, especially in matters of (3), in both form and content.

As I have attempted to suggest in this study, on the level of technique the deviations, that is, certain modifications of the narrative arrangement of the literary discourse, are related to and may be revealed through the analysis of the narrative construction of Victorian Bildungsromane, especially with respect to the so-called linear narratives and concentric narratives. Though it seems to lack any critical and theoretical interpretative precision, I hope to have at least suggested the linearity and, respectively, the concentricity of each novel.

In terms of the above scheme, such an analysis may take new perspectives, to mention only *David Copperfield*, whose fictional discourse renders a linear movement in representing the events of the story and the hero's experience of life, but towards the end the narration seems not to be

³⁷ I regard the four stages as aspects of myth, while the elements provided in brackets are linked to the principle of chronotope. Mention should be made of the fact that while temporal realities change only according to the natural growth of a person, the spatial realities offer a variety of different narrative and thematic perspectives, as the Victorian novels are differently conceived by their authors. In terms of narrative analysis, however, the temporal component of narration renders the relationship narrative time vs. narrated time, which sometimes is freely handled by the narrator and determines digressions on the narrative level.

far removed from a textual concentricity, or rather a circular process of formation of the hero's personality.

The deviations on the level of themes, motifs, symbols, and third-person strategies are no less important and should be discussed in relation to the narrative construction of Victorian Bildungsromane. Though they have been asserted and discussed in this study, I think the following explanatory conclusions are needed. Their generality, which may appear as an undetailed opinion or point for consideration, is yet formed by consideration of specific facts in each novel.

Firstly, the hero's process of development may end with a state of being reminiscent of (1), that is to say, having the characteristic features of the original one, but on a greater level of the hero's consciousness, thus performing a circular movement where the formation is complete because of the meaningful correlation between beginning and end, or is incomplete (as in *David Copperfield*, and, respectively, in the story of Tom in *The Mill on the Floss*). Significantly, the pattern exists in many great literary works of different cultural systems and historical periods—to mention just the story of Ulysses in *The Odyssey* and the tale of the prodigal son in the *Bible*, or the state of mind of the lyrical I in *Tintern Abbey*.

Another deviation would show a greater form of departure, when the return to a home is more of a transfiguration rather than a reestablishment of the original one (as in *The History of Pendennis* or *Wuthering Heights*).

The third possibility implies an even more radical departure, when the hero makes a new spatial reality into a new home (congenial, as in *Jane Eyre*, or obstructing, as for Maggie in *The Mill on the Floss*).

Finally, the circular movement may disappear, and the process of development is a linear journey of the hero; he is not returning or establishing any homes, but becomes a rolling-stone, a pilgrim with perspectives of accomplishment ambiguous or even absent (*Great Expectations*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *The Way of All Flesh*, *Jude the Obscure*).

According to these four hypothesized schematic deviations, the principle of formation, as well as that of chronotope, works differently, determining the existence of a varied fictional typology of the novel of formation, or various types of it, especially because of important personal emphases of each writer.

The formation of a personality, for example, as I suggested earlier in the study, may be complete, ambiguous, or even absent. But the fact that it is rendered ambiguous or as not existing does not imply at all the exclusion of a certain novel from the literary range of Bildungsroman.

Not for this reason, nor because of any lack of critical and theoretical interest, but for reasons of space, and because these novels reveal the same common features characteristic to the whole system of the Bildungsroman, I

have excluded a number of Victorian writings whose alliance to the tradition of Bildungsroman is more or less obvious, among which George Meredith's *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* (1871) or Walter Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* (1885).

Similarly, my final references to 20th century connections of the Victorian novel of formation—here also for the reason that these works do not actually represent the main concern of my study—are not focused on more recent English Bildungsromane, such as William Golding's *Free Fall* (1959) or the novels of the 'Angry Generation' of the postwar period, among which John Wain's *Strike the Father Dead* (1962).

In my discussion of Victorian Bildungsromane, both through generalization and in the detailed consideration of each novel, I hope to have more or less clearly emphasized the idea that in spite of all vivid differences between the Victorian Bildungsromane approached in this study, all of them should be considered, in matters of literary theory and criticism, as narrative and thematic hypostases of one definite fictional system, one literary tradition, one artistic pattern, and should be labeled as such. It is that the common features, devices and elements are stronger and more numerous (say, the idea of change of a character's inward, thirst for completeness, moments of revelation, search for a meaningful experience of life, and many others), which would eventually allow the literary synthesis rather than dissension of these novels.

The above-suggested structures are also applicable to both the Victorian Bildungsroman and the 20th century fictional continuations of the tradition, and in both cases, again, with necessary structural and thematic deviations—given the differences on the general level of two distinct cultural systems—and similitudes.

Some of the Victorian writers, for example Dickens and George Eliot, through their assertion of the individual consciousness in development as a literary concern, already anticipated a number of modern perspectives in the 20th century novel of formation—say, the move towards a deeper exploration of the human psyche and interior universe, that is to say, towards modernism and aestheticism in terms of an artistic attempt to render the human existence independently of social determinism in both the fictional system and the concern with readers' response to the literary discourse.

The main concern of this study is the Victorian novel of formation; the 20th century continuation of its literary tradition needs an independent study, primarily because of its complexity of discourse, in both content and technique.

The vector of methodology, as I have conceived it, determines here the only direction of my research—the Victorian Bildungsroman.

The vector of methodology, as I have applied it, renders the typological circle of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

‘Circle’ means the circular structure of Bildungsroman less than its closeness and concentricity of a complex fictional system, a definite literary pattern rendered in terms of the communicative situation of a literary discourse.

The term ‘typological’, related to both the Greek and Roman root words from which ‘type’ derives, does not imply here the biblical interpretation, or any references to allegorical symbols, particularly in the religious sense, especially in the *Bible*—my ultimate argument is that Christian typology (say, from the *Old Testament*) considers the fulfillment (formation) of individuals within their earthly life less than it emphasizes the possibilities of their moving towards completion in Christ.

It is only this scheme of progressive revelation that anticipates the religious notions of typology as patterning a later secular character with literacy and fictional consideration of the process of formation, that is to say, the character of Victorian Bildungsromane.

Instead, I apply ‘typological’ to my concluding reflections about the Bildungsroman as a wholeness of definable common characteristic features in both form (literary discourse—narrative level) and content (literary work—thematic level) that distinguish them as representing certain elements of a definite literary system (say, the omniscient point of view of the author, usually the linear development of the narrative, the autodiegetic narrator, etc., and, respectively, orphan child, ordeal by love, social frustration, adventure, romantic emotionality, realistic behaviorism, etc.).

Though the novels discussed in this study reveal a significant number of such common features, there are certain thematic and narrative devices and principles which differ in many respects, their pseudo-similarity turning these novels into distinct hypostases of one literary pattern.

I hope to have asserted a number of structural and thematic deviations, for instance the different vision of formation, the linear and concentric movement of the narration, different narrative principles or kinds of the narrator, or the fact that David’s ‘*everything was as it used to be*’ is definitely in no respect the *locus classicus* of the Bildungsroman as a distinct type/system of novel.

The word ‘typological’ is also applicable to the character who becomes representative of this system. The real author of Victorian Bildungsromane attempts to create an individual, that is to say, a type. In this respect, his hero, revealing qualities borrowed from tradition (say, the picaresque novel) and being highly individualized, is a type character who embodies a number of distinguishing features of the fictional system of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

Typology encourages certain habits of mind, which determine the writers of Victorian Bildungsromane to think in terms of prior models. Although such strategies may derive from religious typology, they have little in common with it (except, perhaps, for the case of *Jane Eyre*) and should not be confused.

The Victorian sensibility was generally moral and physiognomic, besides the intrusion of romantic cultural considerations, and what is regarded in the Bildungsroman as a realistic motivation is often correlated with type fulfillment.

What I mean is that within the suggested typological circle of Victorian Bildungsromane the protagonist is determined to fulfill a type by completing a pre-established pattern, that is to say, the process of development and formation of the human personality.

The characters of the romantic literature act according to spiritual arrangements of passion and rebelliousness; those of the modern, 20th century fiction display an experience founded on complexes and neuroses. Instead, the protagonists of Victorian Bildungsromane reveal recognized, predictable combinations of inner and outer attributes that eventually reify conventional types (conventions of character) of the literary system of the Bildungsroman.

The vector of methodology, as I have conceived and applied it, determines also the interpretative modality applied to the analysis undertaken in this study.

Admitting and provisionally adopting the multitude of interpretative points of view (a methodological complexity), which may have provided pluralism and synchronization to my study, it tends towards synthesis—that is to say, it allows the freedom to choose critical and theoretical categories mostly efficient and applicable to the essence of my research.

As it is, from the ultimate incompleteness and failure of all criticism and theory I hope to have progressed to some new interpretative arrangements of my own, which consider the complexity of the Victorian novel of formation and its wholeness as a fictional system, and which are compatible with its analysis, and whose validity is suggested and supported by the contextual approach—through the interpretative generalization as well as detailed consideration of each novel separately, and in matters of both content (thematic level) and form (the level of narrative structure)—to the reality of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. General Literary History and Criticism

- Allen, Walter, 1954 - *The English Novel: A Short Critical History* (London, Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Baker, Ernest A., 1969 - *The History of the English Novel* (Barnes & Noble)
- Bateson, F. W.; Meserole, H. T., 1976 - *A Guide to English and American Literature* (London, New York, Longman)
- Bernard, Robert, 1995 - *A Short History of English Literature* (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers)
- Conrad, Peter, 1985 - *The Everyman History of English Literature* (London Melbourne, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.)
- Daiches, David, 1964 - *English Literature* (New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc.)
- Daiches, David, 1964 - *Critical Approach to Literature* (USA, Prentice-Hall Inc.)
- Daiches, David, 1971 - *The Penguin Companion to English Literature* (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co.)
- Daiches, David, 1975 - *A Critical History of English Literature*, 4 vols. (Secker & Warburg)
- Day, Martin S., 1963-4 - *History of English Literature*, 3 vols. (New York, Garden City, Doubleday & Co.)
- Drabble, M., 1992 - *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press)
- Eagle, D., 1987 - *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature* (Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press)
- Ford, Boris (ed.), 1982 - *The New Pelican Guide to English Literature*, 8 vols. (Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Fowler, Alastair, 1987 - *A History of English Literature* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press)
- Lawrence, K. 1985 - *The McGraw-Hill Guide to English Literature* (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co.)
- Legonis, Emile; Cazamian, Louis, 1971 - *History of English Literature* (London, J. M. Dent & Sons)
- Lodge, David, 1971 - *The Novelist at the Crossroads* (Ark Paperback)
- Magill, Frank N. (ed.), 1963 - *Cyclopedia of Literary Characters* (New York, Harper and Row)
- Ousby, I. (ed.), 1993 - *The Cambridge Guide to English Literature* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Rogers, Pat (ed.), 1990 - *The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature* (Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press)

- Sampson, George, 1970 - *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Sanders, Andrew, 1994 - *The Short Oxford History of English Literature* (Oxford, Clarendon Press)
- Stapleton, M., 1983 - *The Cambridge Guide to English Literature* (Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press)
- Thornley, G. C.; Roberts, Gwyneth, 1987 - *An Outline of English Literature* (Longman)
- Ward, A. C., 1960 - *Illustrated History of English Literature* (London, Longman)
- Wynne-Davis, Marion (ed.) - *The Boomsbury Guide to English Literature* (Bloomsburg Publishing Ltd.)

II. Beginnings to the Seventeenth Century

1. General Critical References

- Chadwick, H. M.; Chadwick, N. K., 1986 - *The Growth of Literature*, vol. 1: *The Ancient Literature of Europe* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Hight, Gilbert, 1976 - *The Classical Tradition, Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature* (New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press)
- Ferrante, Joan M., 1975 - *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature, From the Twelfth Century to Dante* (New York, London, Columbia University Press)
- Legge, Dominica, 1978 - *Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background* (Westpoint, Greenwood Press Publ.)
- Robertson, D. W. Jr., 1980 - *Essays in Medieval Culture* (Princeton University Press)
- Schlauch, M., 1967 - *English Medieval Literature and Its Social Foundations* (London, Oxford University Press)

2. Romanian Critical Contributions

- Dorobăț, Dumitru; Pârvu, Sorin, 1993 - *English Literature*, vol. 1: *Old English Literature*, vol. 2: *Middle English Literature* (Iași, Editura Fundației "Chemarea")
- Preda, Ioan-Aurel (ed.), 1983 - *English Literature and Civilization: The Renaissance and the Restoration Period* (București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică)

III. Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Literature

1. General Critical References

- Bjornson, Richard, 1979 - *The Picaresque Hero in European Fiction* (Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press)
- Hill, Christopher, 1991 - *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714* (London, Rontledge)
- Jones, Richard Foster, 1951 - *The Seventeenth Century, Studies in the History of English Thought and Literature* (Stanford)
- Engell, James, 1981 - *The Creative Imagination. Enlightenment to Romanticism* (London, Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Johnson, Clifford, 1977 - *Plots and Characters in the Fiction of the Eighteenth Century English Authors* (Dawson, Archon Books)
- Preston, John, 1970 - *The Created Self. The Reader's Role in Eighteenth Century Fiction* (London, Heinemann)
- Smith, Grahame, 1984 - *The Novel and Society. Defoe to George Eliot* (New Jercey, Bernes and Noble Books)
- Watt, Ian, 1974 - *The Rise of the Novel. Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Chatto & Windus)

2. Critical References on Individual Writers

JONATHAN SWIFT

- Donoghue, Denis, 1971 - *Jonathan Swift. A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Ehrenpreis, Irvin, 1962 - *Swift. The Man, His Works and the Age* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press)
- Hunting, Robert, 1967 - *Jonathan Swift* (New York, Twayne Publishers Inc.)
- Ulman, Craig Hawkins, 1973 - *Satire and the Correspondence of Swift* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Vickers, Brian - *The World of Jonathan Swift* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)

DANIEL DEFOE

- Shinagel, Michael, 1968 - *Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Weiman, Robert, 1962 - *Daniel Defoe* (Halle)

HENRY FIELDING

- Alter, Ronert, 1968 - *Fielding and the Nature of the Novel* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)

- Nokes, David, 1987 - *Henry Fielding. Joseph Andrews* (Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Varey, Simon, 1986 - *Henry Fielding* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)

3. Romanian Critical Contributions

- Munteanu, Romul, 1974 - *Literatura europeană în epoca luminilor* (București, Editura Enciclopedică Română)
- Olteanu, Tudor, 1974 - *Morfologia romanului european în secolul al XVIII-lea* (București, Editura Univers)

IV. The Romantic Movement

1. General Critical References

- Abrams, M. H., 1953 - *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York, O. U. P.)
- Chase, Cynthia (ed.), 1993 - *Romanticism* (London, New York, Longman)
- Furst, Lilian R., 1984 - *Fictions of Romantic Irony* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Iversen, A. (ed.), 1990 - *The Impact of the French Revolution on English Literature* (Aarhus, Aarhus University Press)
- Mellor, Anne K., 1980 - *English Romantic Irony* (Cambridge, London, Harvard University Press)
- Sale, Roger, 1988 - *Closer to Home. Writers and Places in England 1780-1830* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, Harvard University Press)

2. Critical References on Individual Writers

WILLIAM BLAKE

- Adams, Hazard, 1963 - *William Blake. A Reading of the Shorter Poems* (Seattle, University of Washington Press)
- Bloom, Harold, 1963 - *Blake's Apocalypse. A Study in Poetic Argument* (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Co. Inc.)
- Damon, S. Foster, 1973 - *A Blake Dictionary. The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake* (London, Thames and Hudson)
- Davis, Michael, 1974 - *William Blake. A New Kind of Man* (Los Angeles, University of California Press)
- Ferber, Michael, 1991 - *The Poetry of William Blake* (Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Gillham, D.G., 1966 - *Blake's Contrary States. The Songs of Innocence and of Experience as Dramatic Poems* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)

- Gillham, D.G., 1973 - *William Blake* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Keynes, Geoffrey, 1968 - *The Letters of William Blake* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Murry, John Middleton, 1964 - *William Blake* (New York, London, McGraw-Hill Book Co.)
- Raine, Kathleen, 1979 - *Blake and the New Age* (London, George Allen & Unwin)
- Wagenknecht, David, 1973 - *Blake's Night. William Blake and Idea of Pastoral* (Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press)

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

- Gardiner, Alan, 1991 - *Wordsworth* (Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Sheats, Paul D., 1973 - *The Making Wordsworth's Poetry 1785-1798* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Wuscher, Hermann J., 1980 - *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in Wordsworth, 1791-1800* (Uppsala)

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

- Baker, Carlos, 1970 - *Shelley's Major Poetry. The Fabric of a Vision* (Princeton Princeton University Press)
- Cameron, Kenneth Neill (ed.), 1973 - *Romantic Rebels. Essays on Shelley and his Circle* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Cameron, Kenneth Neill, 1974 - *Shelley. The Golden Years* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Dowden, Edward, 1951 - *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.)

GEORGE GORDON BYRON

- Marchand, Leslie A., 1968 - *Byron's Poetry* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Marchand, Leslie A., 1979 - *Byron. A Portrait* (The University of Chicago Press)
- Martin, Philip W., 1982 - *Byron. A Poet Before His Public* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Moore, Doris Langley, 1962 - *The Late Lord Byron* (London, John Murray)
- Rutherford, M., 1967 - *Byron. A Critical Study* (Stanford)

JOHN KEATS

- Mayhead, Robin, 1962 - *John Keats* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Patterson, Charles I., 1970 - *The Daemoniac in the Poetry of John Keats* (Chicago, London, University of Illinois Press)

- Sperry, Stuart M., 1974 - *Keats the Poet* (Princeton, Princeton University Press)
- Vendler, Helen, 1983 - *The Odes of John Keats* (Cambridge University Press)

OTHER

- Johnson, Edgar, 1970 - *Sir Walter Scott: The Great Unknown*, 2 vols. (New York, Macmillan)
- Wheeler, K.M., 1981 - *The Creative Mind in Coleridge's Poetry* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)

3. Romanian Critical Contributions

- Călin, Vera, 1970 - *Romantismul* (București, Editura Univers)
- Golban, Petru, 1998 - *Paralelisme și particularități* (Chișinău, EAST WEST for You Ltd.)
- Golban, Petru, 1998 - *A Student's Guide to English Literature. Romantic Movement and Victorian Age* (Chișinău, EAST WEST for You Ltd.)

V. The Victorian Age

1. General Critical References

- Beach, Joseph W., 1962 - *English Literature of the Nineteenth and the Early Twentieth Centuries. 1798 to the First World War* (New York Collier Books)
- Buckley, Jerome Hamilton, 1974 - *Season of Youth. The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Chase, Karen, 1984 - *Eros and Psyche. The Representation of Personality in Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens and George Eliot* (London, New York, Methuen)
- Fernando, Lloyd, 1977 - *'New Women' in the Late Victorian Fiction* (London, University Park, The Pennsylvania State University Press)
- Goodin, G. (ed.), 1974 - *The English Novel in the Nineteenth Century. Essays on the Literary Meditation of Human Values* (Urbana a. o.)
- Kestner, Joseph, 1985 - *Protest and Reform. The British Social Narrative by Women 1827-1867* (Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press)
- King, Jeannette, 1986 - *Tragedy in the Victorian Novel. Theory and Practice in the Novels of George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Henry James* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)

- Knoepflmacher, U. C., 1973 - *Laughter and Despair. Readings in the Novels of Victorian Era* (London, Los Angeles, University of California Press)
- Southall, Raymond, 1977 - *Literature. The Individual and the Society. Critical Essays on the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (London, Lawrence and Wishars)
- Stone, Donald D., 1980 - *The Romantic Impulse in Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Stonyk, Margaret, 1984 - *Nineteenth Century English Literature* (New York, Schocken Books)
- Ward, A. W.; Waller, A.R., 1953 - *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. 13: *The Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Wilson, A. N., 1989 - *Eminent Victorians* (London, BBC Books)
- The Worlds of Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, Harvard University Press, 1975)

2. Critical References on Individual Writers

CHARLES DICKENS

- Churchill, R. C., 1976 - *Charles Dickens* (in *The Pelican Guide to English Literature*, vol. 6 *From Dickens to Hardy*, edited by Boris Ford, Penguin Books Ltd., pp. 119-43)
- Donovan, Frank, 1968 - *Dickens and Youth* (New York, Dodd, Mead & Co.)
- Fawcner, Harold William, 1972 - *Animation and Rectification in Dickens' Vision of the Life-Denying Society* (Uppsala)
- Frye, Northrop, 1978 - *Dickens and the Comedy of Humours* (in *The Victorian Novel, Modern Essays in Criticism*, edited by Ian Watt, London, New York, Oxford University Press)
- Hibbert, Christopher, 1962 - *The Making of Charles Dickens* (New York, Evanston, Harper & Row)
- Jenkin, Leonard, 1964 - *Charles Dickens' Great Expectations* (New York, Monarch Press)
- Johnson, Edgar, 1977 - *Charles Dickens. His Tragedy and Triumph* (New York, The Viking Press)
- Leavis, F.R.; Leavis Q. D. - *Dickens the Novelist* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press)
- Mankowitz, Wolf, 1978 - *Dickens of London* (New York, Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc.)
- Newsom, Robert, 1977 - *Dickens and the Romantic Side of Familiar Things. Bleak House and the Novel Tradition* (New York, Columbia University Press)

- Pearson, Hesketh, 1949 - *Dickens. His Character, Comedy and Career* (London, Methuen & Co. Ltd.)
- Sucksmith, Harvey Peter, 19td.)
Sucksmith, Harvey Peter, 19s Dickens. The Rhetoric of Sympathy and Irony in His Novels (Oxford, Clarendon Press)
- Welsh, Alexander, 1986 - *The City of Dickens* (Cambridge, London, Haward University Press)
- Westburg, Barry, 1977 - *The Confessional Fictions of Charles Dickens* (Illinois, Northern Illinois University Press)

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

- Betsky, Seymour, 1976 - *Society in Thackeray and Trollope* (in *The Pelican Guide to English Literature*, vol. 6 *From Dickens to Hardy*, edited by Boris Ford, Penguin Books Ltd., pp. 144-68)
- Ray, Gordon N., 1958 - *Thackeray: The Age of Wisdom* (New York, McGraw-Hill)
- Wheatley, James H., 1969 - *Patters in Thackeray's Fiction* (The M. I. T. Press)

THE BRONTE SISTERS

- Bradbrook, Frank W., 1967 - *Jane Eyre and Her Predecessors* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Craik, W. A., 1968 - *The Brontë Novels* (London, Methuen & Co. Ltd.)
- Gaskell, E. C., 1988 - *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (Leicester, Charnwood)
- Moglen, Helen, 1976 - *Charlotte Brontë. The Self Conceived* (Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press)

GEORGE ELIOT

- Hanson, Elizabeth; Hanson, Lawrence, 1952 - *Marian Evans and George Eliot. A Biography* (London, New York, Toronto, Oxford University Press)
- Laski, M., 1973 - *George Eliot and Her World* (New York)
- Neale, Catherine, 1989 - *George Eliot. Middlemarch* (Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Norbelie, B.A., 1992 - *"Oppressive Narrowness". A Study of the Female Community in George Eliot's Early Writings* (Uppsala)

THOMAS HARDY

- Bayley, John, 1979 - *An Essay on Hardy* (Cambridge, London, New York, Cambridge University Press)
- Butler, Lance St. John, 1980 - *Thomas Hardy* (Cambridge, London, New York, Cambridge University Press)
- Brown, Douglas, 1961 - *Thomas Hardy* (London, Longman)

- Elliot, Albert Pettigrew, 1966 - *Fatalism in the Works of Thomas Hardy* (New York, Russel & Russel)
- Klingopulos, G. D., 1976 - *Hardy's Tales Ancient and Modern* (in *The Pelican Guide to English Literature*, vol. 6 *From Dickens to Hardy*, edited by Boris Ford, Penguin Books Ltd., pp. 406-19)

OTHER

- McKenzie, G., 1967 - *The Literary Character of Walter Pater* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, University of California Press)
- Spanberg, Sven-Johan, 1974 - *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel and the Traditions of Realism* (Uppsala)

3. Romanian Critical Contributions and Romanian Translations of Foreign Criticism

- Bottez, Monica, 1985 - *Aspects of the Victorian Novel. Dickens* (Bucuresti, TUB)
- Cartianu, Ana, 1967 - *Istoria literaturii engleze. Secolul XIX* (București)
- Galea, Ileana, 1996 - *Victorianism and Literature* (Dacia Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca)
- Garaudy, Roger, 1968 - *Despre un realism nețărmuit* (București, Editura pentru Literatură Universală)
- Grigorescu, Dan; Alexandrescu, Sorin, 1971 - *Romanul realist în secolul al XIX-lea* (București, Editura Enciclopedică Română)
- Iliescu, Adriana, 1978 - *Proza realistă în secolul al XIX-lea* (București, Editura Minerva)
- Olteanu, Tudor, 1977 - *Morfologia romanului european în secolul al XIX-lea* (București, Editura Univers)
- Vereș, Grigore, 1989 - *A Course in Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century English Literature and Civilization* (Iași, Iași University Press)

VI. Twentieth Century English Literature

1. General Critical References

- Batchelor, J., 1982 - *The Edwardian Novelists* (London)
- Beach, Joseph W., 1962 - *English Literature of the Nineteenth and the Early Twentieth Centuries. 1798 to the First World War* (New York Collier Books)
- Bergonzi, B., 1970 - *The Situation of The Novel* (London)
- Bergonzi, B., 1980 - *Heroes' Twilight. A Study of the Literature of the Great War*, 2nd edn. (London)

- Bradbury, Malcolm, 1971 - *The Social Context of Modern English Literature* (London)
- Burgess, A., [1967] 1971 - *The Novel Now* (London)
- Chapple, J. A. V., 1970 - *Documentary and Imaginative Literature 1880-1920* (London)
- Ellmann, R., 1960 - *Edwardians and Late Victorians* (New York)
- Faulkner, P., 1977 - *Modernism* (London)
- Fraser, G. S., [1953] 1964 - *The Modern Writer and His World* (London)
- Friedman, A., 1966 - *The Turn of the Novel* (New York)
- Fussell, P., 1975 - *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London)
- Gillie, Christopher, 1975 - *Movements in English Literature 1900-1940* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Hewison, R., 1981 - *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War 1945-1960* (London)
- Hunter, Jefferson, 1982 - *Edwardian Fiction* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Massie, Allan, 1990 - *The Novel Today* (Longman)
- McGann, Jerome, 1993 - *Black Riders: The Visible Language of Modernism* (Princeton, Princeton University Press)
- Perl, Jeffrey M., 1989 - *Skepticism and Modern Entity before and after Eliot* (Baltimore, London, The Johns Hopkins University Press)
- Polhemus, Robert, 1980 - *Comic Faith. The Great Tradition from Austen to Joyce* (Chicago, London, The University of Chicago Press)
- Robson, W. W., 1970 - *Modern English Literature* (London)
- Stevenson, Randall, 1993 - *The British Novel Since the Thirties* (Iași, Institutul European)
- Stewart, J.I.M., 1963 - *Eight Modern Writers* (Oxford, Clarendon Press)
- Wilson, Edmund, 1962 - *Axel's Castle. A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930* (Collins, The Fontana Library)
- Ward, A. C., 1951 - *Twentieth-Century Literature* (London, Methuen & Co. Ltd.)

2. Critical References on Individual Writers

JAMES JOYCE

- Ellmann, R., 1984 - *James Joyce*, 2nd edn. (Oxford)
- Blades, John, 1991 - *James Joyce. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Penguin Books Ltd.)
- French, Marilyn, 1976 - *The Book as World. James Joyce's Ulysses* (London)
- Scott, Bonnie Kime, 1984 - *Joyce and Feminism* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press)

VIRGINIA WOOLF

- Bell, Quentin, 1972 - *Virginia Woolf. A Biography* (New York, London, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)
- Davies, Stevie, 1989 - *Virginia Woolf. To the Lighthouse* (Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Rosenthal, Michael, 1979 - *Virginia Woolf* (London, Henley, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.)

D. H. LAWRENCE

- Moore, H. T., 1974 - *The Priest of Love: A Life of D. H. Lawrence* (London)
- Finney, Brian, 1990 - *D. H. Lawrence. Sons and Lovers* (Penguin Books Ltd.)

OTHER

- Curtis, Anthony - *Somerset Maugham* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson)

3. Romanian Critical Contributions

- Miroiu, Mihai, 1980 - *An Introduction to the Technique of the Modern Novel* (Universitatea București)
- Stanciu, Virgil, 1981 - *A History of English Literature*, vol. 1: *From Pater to Wells* (Cluj-Napoca, Universitatea Babes-Bolyai)

VII. Literary Theory

1. Foreign Theoretical Contributions

- Bakhtin, M. M., [1937-8] 1975 - *Formi vremeni i hronotopa v romane* (in *Voprosi literaturi i estetiki*, Moscva, Khudozhestvenaya Literatura, pp. 234-407)
- Bakhtin, M. M., 1986 - *Estetica slovesnovo tvorcestva* (Moscva, Iscustvo)
- Bonazza, Blaze O., 1982 - *Studies in Fiction* (New York, Harper & Row)
- Booth, Wayne C., 1961 - *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago)
- Bove, Paul A., 1986 - *Intellectuals in Power. A Genealogy of Critical Humanism* (New York, Columbia University Press)
- Brown, E.K., 1978 - *Rhythm in the Novel* (University of Nebraska Press)
- Cook, Guy, 1995 - *Discourse and Literature* (Oxford, Oxford University Press)
- Cuddon, J. A., 1992 - *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 3rd edn. (London, Penguin Books Ltd.)
- Eco, Umberto, 1995 - *Apocalypse Postponed* (edited by Robert Lumley, London, Flamingo)

- Edwards, Lee R. - *Psyche as Hero. Female Heroism and Fictional Form* (Middleton, Wesleyan University Press)
- Empson, William, 1947 – *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London)
- Fielder, Leslie A., 1960 - *No! In Thunder. Essays on Myth and Literature* (Boston, Beacon Press)
- Fowler, Alastair, 1982 - *Kinds of Literature. An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)
- Frye, Northrop, 1957 - *Anatomy of Criticism* (New Jersey)
- Hartman, Geoffrey, 1981 - *Saving the Text. Literature/Derrida/Philosophy* (London, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press)
- Holman, C. Hugh; Harmon, William, 1992 - *A Handbook to Literature*, 6th edn. (New York, Macmillan Publishing Company)
- Jung, Carl, 1962 - *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.)
- Jung, Carl, 1969 - *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (Princeton, Princeton University Press)
- Labor, Guerin; Earle, G.; Lee, Morgan; John, W.R., 1966 - *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* (New York, London, Harper & Row)
- Lanham, Richard A., 1969 - *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms. A Guide for Students of English Literature* (Los Angeles, London, University of California Press)
- Livingstone, Paisley, 1991 - *Literature and Rationality. Ideas of Agency in Theory and Fiction* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Lotman, Y., 1968 - *Lectii po structuralinoi poetiki* (Riga)
- Lotman, Y., 1970 - *Structura khudozhestvenovo texta* (Moscv, Iscustvo)
- Miller, Fred D. Jr.; Smith, Nicolas (ed.), 1989 - *Thought Probes. Philosophy Through Sciences, Fiction, Literature* (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall)
- Moretti, Franco, 1987 - *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (London, Verso)
- Olsen, Stein Haugom, 1978 - *The Structure of Literary Understanding* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)
- Radt, S.L., 1988 - *The Importance of the Context* (Amsterdam, Oxford, New York)
- Ross, Stephen David (ed.), 1987 - *Art and Its Significance. An Anthology of Aesthetic Theory* (New York, State University of New York Press)
- Shklovsky, V. B., 1963 - *O teorii prose* (Moscv)
- Shklovsky, V. B., 1966 - *Povesti o prose* (Moscv, Khudozhestvenaya Literatura)
- Scholes, Robert, 1961 - *Approaches to the Novel. Materials for a Poetics* (San Francisco, Chaudler Publishing Co.)

- Trimmer, Joseph F.; Jennings, C. Wade - *Fictions* (San Diego, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Pub.)
- Tynyanov, Y. N., [1927] 1977 - *O literaturnoi evolutii* (in *Poetica. Istoria literaturi. Kino*, Moscva, Nauka, pp. 270-81)
- Urnova, D. M. (ed.), 1979 - *The Idea of Literature. The Foundations of English Criticism* (Moscow, Progress Publishers)
- Uspensky, B. A., 1970 - *Poetica compozitsii* (Moscva, Isustvo)

2. Romanian Theoretical Contributions and Romanian Translations of Foreign Literary Theory

- Barthes, Roland, [1953, 1954, 1957, etc.] 1987 - *Romanul scriiturii* (București, Editura Univers)
- Barthes, Roland, 1994 - *Plăcerea textului* (Cluj-Napoca, Echinox)
- Brandi, Cesare, [1974] 1985 - *Teoria generală a criticii* (București, Editura Univers)
- Bremond, Claude, [1973] 1981 - *Logica povestirii* (București, Editura Univers)
- Călinescu, Alexandru, 1978 - *Perspective critice* (Iași, Editura Junimea)
- Corbea, Andrei, 1995 - *Despre "teme". Explorări în dimensiunea antropologică a literarității* (Iași, Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza)
- Cornea, Paul, 1998 - *Introducere în teoria lecturii* (Iași, Polirom)
- Driek Van der Sterren, 1996 - *Psihanaliza literaturii. Oedip Rege* (Editura Trei)
- Ducrot, Oswald; Schaeffer, Jean-Marie, 1996 - *Noul dicționar enciclopedic al științelor limbajului* (București, Editura Babel)
- Dumitrescu, Ana, 1981 - *Metodologia structurilor narative* (București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică)
- Eco, Umberto, [1979] 1991 - *Lector in fabula* (București, Editura Univers)
- Eco, Umberto, [1990] 1996 - *Limitele interpretării* (Constanța, Editura Pontica)
- Eco, Umberto, 1997 - *Șase plimbări prin pădurea narativă* (Constanța, Editura Pontica)
- Florescu, Vasile, 1973 - *Retorica și neoretorica. Geneza; evoluție; perspective* (București, Editura Academiei)
- Forster, E. M., [1927] 1968 - *Aspecte ale romanului* (București, Editura pentru Literatură Universală)
- Freud, Sigmund, 1980 - *Introducere în psihanaliză. Prelegeri de psihanaliză* (București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică)
- Freud, Sigmund, 1980 - *Scrieri despre literatură și artă* (București, Editura Univers)
- Genette, Gerard, [1966-72] 1978 - *Figuri* (București, Editura Univers)

- Genette, Gerard, [1979, 1991] 1994 - *Întroducere în arhitext. Ficțiune și dicțiune* (București, Editura Univers)
- Girard, Rene, [1961] 1972 - *Minciună romantică și adevăr românesc* (București, Editura Univers)
- Groeben, Norbert, [1972] 1978 - *Psihologia literaturii* (București, Editura Univers)
- Hocke, Gustav Rene, [1959] 1977 - *Manierismul în literatură* (București, Editura Univers)
- Iosifescu, Silvan, 1972 - *Analiză și interpretare. Orientări în critica literară contemporană* (București, Editura Științifică)
- Jauss, Hans Robert, 1983 - *Experiență estetică și hermeneutică literară* (București, Editura Univers)
- Lintvelt, Jaap, 1994 - *Punctul de vedere* (București, Editura Univers)
- Marino, Adrian, 1969 - *Modern, modernism, modernitate* (București, Editura pentru Literatură Universală)
- Marino, Adrian, 1973 - *Dicționar de idei literare*, vol. I (București, Editura Eminescu)
- Marino, Adrian, 1991-7 - *Biografia ideii de literatură*, 4 vols. (Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia)
- Munteanu, Romul, 1988 - *Metamorfozele criticii europene moderne* (București, Editura Univers)
- Munteanu, Romul, 1989 - *Farsa tragică* (București, Editura Univers)
- Mureșanu Ionescu, Marina, 1996 - *Literatura un discurs mediat* (Iași, Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza)
- Nemoianu, Virgil, 1967 - *Structuralismul* (București, Editura pentru Literatură Universală)
- Nemoianu, Virgil, 1996 - *Micro-Armonia. Dezvoltarea și utilizarea modelului idilic în literatură* (Iași, Polirom)
- Parfene, Constantin, 1993 - *Teorie și analiză literară* (București, Editura Științifică)
- Perez, Hertha, 1979 - *Ipostaze ale personajului în roman* (Iași, Editura Junimea)
- Pop-Corniș, Marcel, 1882 - *Anatomia balenei albe* (București, Editura Univers)
- Propp, V., [1928] 1970 - *Morfologia basmului* (București, Editura Univers)
- Rene, Girard, 1972 - *Minciună romantică și adevăr românesc* (București, Editura Univers)
- Ricoeur, Paul, [1986] 1995 - *Eseuri de hermeneutică* (Humanitas)
- Robert, Marthe, [1972] 1983 - *Romanul începuturilor și începuturile romanului* (București, Editura Univers)
- Roznoveanu, Mirela, 1983 - *Civilizația romanului* (București, Editura Albatros)

- Sălăvăstru, Constantin, 1996 - *Raționalitate și discurs* (București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, R. A.)
- Segre, Cesare, [1969, 1974, 1977, 1979] 1986 - *Istorie-cultură-critică* (București, Editura Univers)
- Simion, Eugen, 1981 - *Întoarcerea autorului* (București, Editura Cartea Românească)
- Starbinski, Jean, 1985 - *Textul și interpretul* (București, Editura Univers)
- Ștefănescu, Cornelia, 1972 - *Momente ale romanului* (București, Editura Eminescu)
- Steiner, George, 1983 - *După Babel* (București, Editura Univers)
- Surdulescu, Radu, 1997 - *Critica mitic-arhetipală. De la motivul antropologic la sentimentul numinosului* (București, Editura ALLFA)
- Todorov, Tzvetan, [1973, 1969] 1975 - *Poetica. Gramatica Decameronului* (București, Editura Univers)
- Tomasevski, Boris, 1972 - *Teoria literaturii. Poetica* (București, Editura Univers)
- Valette, Bernard, 1997 - *Romanul. Introducere în metodele și tehnicile moderne de analiză literară* (București, Cartea Românească)
- Vitner, Ion, 1971 - *Semnele romanului* (București, Cartea Românească)
- Vlad, Ion, 1983 - *Lectura romanului* (Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia)
- Vultur, Ioan, 1987 - *Narațiune și imaginar* (București, Editura Minerva)
- Wellek, Rene, 1970 - *Conceptele criticii* (București, Editura Univers)

INDEX

- Aleman, Mateo 16, 31, 32
 Guzman de Alfarache 31, 32
 Apuleius 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 38, 110
 Golden Ass 22, 23, 24, 25, 38, 110
 Ariosto 31
 Aristotle 93, 94
 Arnold, Matthew 98, 143, 169
 Arnold, Thomas 169
 Augustine, St. 137
- Bacon, Francis 39,
 Bakhtin, M. M. 14, 23, 25, 26, 87, 97, 234, 237
 Balzac, H. de 104
 Barrett Browning, Elizabeth 18, 79, 180, 207-214
 Aurora Leigh: A Poem in Nine Books 18, 180, 208-214
 Barthes, Roland 94, 108
 Betsky, Seymour 149
 Bjornson, Richard 35, 47
 Blaga, Lucian 53
 Blake, William 17, 51-59, 76, 87, 122, 127, 233
 Songs of Innocence and of Experience 51-59
 Bloom, Harold 149
 Boccaccio, G. 82
 Booth, Wayne C. 93, 94
 Bremond, Claude 120, 125
 Brontë, Charlotte 18, 25, 100, 115, 129, 130, 139, 141, 180, 189-200, 203, 205
 Jane Eyre 18, 105, 109, 112, 117, 123, 128, 129, 132, 133, 134, 137, 168, 170, 180, 181, 186, 189-200, 202, 205, 209, 210, 235, 236, 238, 241, 245, 248
 Brontë, Emily 18, 103, 112, 116, 180, 181-189, 196, 213, 223, 232
 Wuthering Heights 18, 97, 105, 106, 109, 123, 128, 132, 134, 166, 180, 181-189, 200, 232, 235, 236, 238, 245
 Browning, Robert 208, 210, 211, 227
 Buckley, Jerome Hamilton 9, 44, 87, 90, 109, 110, 123, 142, 144, 215
 Bunyan, John 17, 25, 35, 37, 199
 The Pilgrim's Progress 35, 37
 Burns, Robert 89
 Butler, Samuel 18, 19, 112, 174, 176-179
 The Way of All Flesh 18, 176-179
- Byron, George Gordon, Lord 17, 50, 51, 56, 59, 77-88, 122, 197
 Don Juan 51, 77, 87-88
- Carlyle, Thomas 98
 Cecil, David 206
 Cervantes, Miguel de 16, 31, 32, 40
 Champfleury, J. H. 103, 104
 Chaucer, G. 59
 Churchill, R. C. 150
 Clare, John 50
 Cicero 92
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor 49, 58, 59, 60, 64, 78, 119, 122
 Comte, Auguste 99, 104, 206
 Conrad, Joseph 118
 Cook, Guy 13, 15, 97, 181
 Cooper, J. F. 91
 Craik, W. A. 193
 Cuddon, J. A. 93
- Darwin, Charles Robert 98, 99, 104, 189
 Defoe, Daniel 17, 37, 40, 136,
 Moll Flanders 38, 39, 136
 De Quincey, Thomas 137
 Dickens, Charles 7, 14, 17, 18, 88, 100, 103, 104, 105, 108, 112, 115, 116, 124, 129, 136, 139, 140, 145, 147, 149, 150-167, 176, 178, 185, 192, 199, 201, 205, 206, 215, 222, 227, 235, 236, 246
 David Copperfield 18, 59, 105, 110, 115, 116, 120, 122, 123, 124, 134, 136, 137, 139, 142, 145, 155, 156, 157-160, 161, 163, 166, 168, 215, 222, 235, 236, 238, 241, 245
 Great Expectations 18, 105, 109, 112, 114, 115, 117, 120, 128, 134, 139, 140, 155, 156, 157, 160-167, 215, 219, 227, 235, 236, 238, 245, 255
 Diphilus 152
 Donne, John 143
 Dostoyevsky, F. 14, 107, 118, 121
- Eco, Umberto 7, 107, 242
 Edgeworth, M. 89
 Einstein, A. 118, 217
 Eliade, Mircea 136
 Eliot, George (Marian Evans) 18, 98, 100, 103, 107, 115, 129, 150, 154, 168, 172, 174, 178, 180, 201-207, 246

- The Mill on the Floss* 18, 59, 105, 106, 109, 117, 124, 128, 132, 134, 142, 161, 168, 169, 176, 180, 201-207, 236, 238, 241, 245
- Eliot, T. S. 218
- Farrell, James T. 228
- Fayette, La 89
- Fénelon, François de 17, 35, 36
- Les Aventures de Télémaque* 35, 36
- Feuerbach, Ludwig 104
- Fielding, Henry 17, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44, 145, 150
- Tom Jones* 38, 39, 40, 44, 145
- Flaubert, Gustave 104
- Florescu, Vasile 92
- Forster, E. M. 94
- Forster, John 157
- Franklin, B. 137
- Freud, Sigmund 98, 99, 142, 143, 217, 218, 235
- Frye, Northrop 152, 154
- Galsworthy, John 104, 214
- Gawain and the Green Knight, Sir* 29, 30
- Genette, Gerard 94, 95, 96, 106
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von 9, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 37, 43, 44-48, 116, 223, 232, 234,
- Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* 9, 16, 20, 23, 37, 44-48, 232, 234
- Gogol, N. V. 104
- Golding, William 214, 246
- Goldsmith, Oliver 38
- Greene, Graham 104, 214
- Greene, Robert 38
- Greimas, A. J. 95
- Grimmelshausen, Hans Jacob von 17, 35, 36
- Simplicius Simplicissimus* 35
- Guevara, Luis Velez de 17, 31, 34, 36
- El Diablo Cojuelo* 31, 34
- Hadley, Elaine 151
- Hardy, Thomas 17, 18, 100, 110, 112, 173-176, 177, 179,
- Jude the Obscure* 18, 110, 117, 128, 134, 173-176, 179, 236, 238, 245
- Harmon, William 102
- Hawthorne, N. 89
- Heliade-Radulescu, I. 57
- Heliodorus 16, 24, 38, 110
- Ethiopian History* 24, 38, 110
- Hobbes, Thomas 39
- Holman, C. Hugh 102
- Homer 94
- Hopkins, G. M. 208, 227
- Howe, Sussane 109
- Howells, W. D. 104
- Husserl, Edmund 217
- Huxley, Aldous L. 221, 229
- Huxley, Thomas Henry 98
- Iser, Wolfgang 15
- Jakobson, Roman 12, 93
- James, Henry 94
- James, William 220
- Jauss, Hans Robert 108
- Johnson, E. D. H. 142
- Johnson, Edgar 88
- Johnson, Samuel 38, 78
- Jonson, Ben 152
- Joyce, James 18, 63, 66, 108, 134, 136, 142, 143, 191, 214, 216, 221, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 229
- A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 18, 88, 134, 136, 191, 214, 223, 224, 225, 227
- Jung, Carl 72, 218, 235,
- Keats, John 17, 51, 59, 60, 75-77, 87, 159, 211, 212
- Klingopulos, G. D. 176
- Knoepflmacher, U. C. 183, 187, 203
- Landow, George P. 142
- Lawrence, David Herbert 110, 214, 216, 218, 219, 220, 223, 229
- Sons and Lovers* 18, 214, 216, 218, 219
- Lawrence, K 113, 160, 196, 197
- Laymon 28
- Lesage, Alain-René 17, 37, 41, 42
- Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* 42
- Levi-Strauss, Claude 95
- Locke, John 39, 61, 64, 65, 73, 169
- Longus 16, 24, 28, 110
- Daphnis and Chloe* 24, 38, 110
- Lotman, Y. 20, 107
- Lubbock, P. 94
- MacDonald, George 98
- Malamud, Bernard 154
- Malory, Sir Thomas 16, 30, 31
- Le Morte d'Arthur* 30
- Marinetti, F. T. 217
- Marx, Karl 99, 104
- Masson, David 145
- Maugham, William Somerset 18, 110, 142, 214, 221, 222, 223
- Of Human Bondage* 18, 134, 141, 214, 221, 222, 223
- Melville, Herman 53
- Meredith, George 18, 112, 116, 167, 168-173, 174, 177, 178, 201, 202, 203, 215, 246
- The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* 18, 59, 105, 134, 167, 168-173, 174, 176, 190, 215, 238, 245
- Mill, James 169
- Mill, John Stuart 168, 169
- Milton, John 52, 59
- Moglen, Helen 192
- Moliere, J. B. P. 152
- Moore, George 138
- Nashe, Thomas 16, 36, 38
- The Unfortunate Traveller, or the Life of Jack Wilton* 34
- Newton, Isaac 99
- Nietzsche, F 136
- Norton, Caroline 151
- Pater, Walter 216, 246
- Petrarch, F. 82

- Petronius 38
Satyricon 38
 Philemon 152
 Plath, Sylvia 157
 Plato 93
 Plautus 152
 Pope, Alexander 78, 87
 Porter, J. 89
 Pound, E. 142, 143
 Prince, Gerald 15
 Pritchett, V. S. 89
 Propp, V. 95, 125
 Proust, M. 220
- Quevedo, Francisco de 17, 31, 34, 36
La Vida del Buscon don Pablos de Segovia 31, 34
 Quintilian 92
- Rabelais, François 16, 31, 33, 40
Gargantua et Pantagruel 31, 33
 Reeve, Clara 38
 Richardson, Samuel 38, 40, 150
 Ricoeur, Paul 12
 Rogers, Pat 52
 Rossetti, D. G. 143
 Rousseau, J.-J. 232
 Ruskin, John 98
 Russell, Bertrand 217
- Sainte Maure, Benoit de 28
 Salinger, Jerome David 130
 Sanders, Andrew 28, 40, 41, 52
 Scarron, Paul 17, 35, 36
 Scott, Sir Walter 17, 51, 88-91, 101
Waverley 51, 88-91
 Shakespeare, William 59
 Shelley, Percy Bysshe 50, 74, 75, 78, 80, 194, 203, 211, 212
 Shklovsky, V. B. 20, 21
 Sidney, Sir Philip 31
 Smollett, Tobias 17, 37, 41
The Adventures of Roderick Random 41
 Sorel, Charles 17, 35, 36
Histoire Comique de Francion 35, 36
 Spenser, Edmund 31
 Spinoza, B. 222
 Stendhal (Henry Beyle) 104, 141
 Stone, Donald D. 196, 204
 Swift, Jonathan 17, 37, 42, 87
Gulliver's Travels 42
 Swinburne, Algernon, Charles 59, 174
- Taine, Hyppolite 99
 Tasso, T. 31
 Tennyson, Alfred 208, 211, 213, 227
 Terence 152
 Thackeray, William Makepeace 18, 88, 98, 100, 103, 104, 115, 116, 145-149, 150, 172, 176, 178, 196, 199, 201, 202, 205, 236
The History of Pendennis 18, 112, 120, 134, 137, 145-149, 235, 238, 248
 Thomas, Dylan 208
 Todorov, Tzvetan 90, 93, 94, 95
 Tolstoy, L. 104
 Trollope, Anthony 100
 Troyes, Chretien de 28, 29
 Turgenev, I. S. 104
 Twain, Mark 104
 Tynyanov, Y. N. 10, 11
 Tzara, Tristan 217
- Urnova, D. M. 228
 Uspensky, B. A. 107
- Valery, Paul 90
Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes 16, 31, 32
- Wace 28
 Wain, John 246
 Watt, Ian 39
 Wells, Herbert George 18, 104, 214, 215, 216
Tono-Bungay 18, 214, 215
 Westburg, Barry 22, 114, 156, 157, 158, 159, 161, 240
 Wieland, Cristoph Martin 17, 37, 43, 44
Die Geschichte des Agathon 43
 Wilde, Oscar 126, 168
 Wolfe, Thomas 228
 Woolf, Virginia 18, 108, 142, 143, 206, 214, 216, 221, 223, 227, 228, 229
Jacob's Room 18, 214, 227, 228
 Wordsworth, William 17, 49, 50, 51, 54, 56, 58, 59-75, 76, 78, 87, 117, 122, 134, 143, 185, 202, 203, 213, 226, 233, 243
Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey 51, 66-70
Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood 51, 58, 70-75
Preface to Lyrical Ballads 69
The Prelude 49, 51, 59, 60-66, 73,, 83, 142, 185, 213

Petru Golban (b. 1973), of Romanian origins, is licensed in Philology and holds a PhD in English and American Literature (at 'Al. I. Cuza' University of Iasi, Romania). His academic and professional career started in 1995. Since 2000 he resides with his family in Kutahya, Turkey, and teaches English literature classes at Dumlupinar University. He is also the author of 20 studies and 2 books (*Paralelisme si particularitati*, 1998, and *A Student's Guide to English Literature. Romantic Movement and Victorian Age*, 1998), and his concerns include particular aspects of the History of English Literature, Comparative Literary Studies, and Literary Theory and Criticism.

The Victorian Bildungsroman represents an attempt to establish *a vector of methodology* in the approach to a particular type of fictional discourse (the novel of character formation), but its wide-ranging critical perspectives are aimed at answering the needs of students of English in their literature classes, and would be useful to anyone concerned with, first of all, Victorian fiction studies, but also to those interested in theoretical perspectives of modern fiction studies in general, as well as in certain aspects of Western literature as a developing tradition, the period of English Romanticism, and that of Victorian literary production in general, the 20th century novel, experts and novices alike, university or high-school students and the more general reader who feels that his/her readings in English and World literature would be enriched by the present book.