

**The Long 18th Century**  
**Classicism**  
**Rise of the Novel**

## Long 18th century

- Stuart Restoration (1660), Glorious Revolution (1688: Catholic James II is replaced by Protestant William of Orange who agrees to respect the Parliament); political parties: Tories and Whigs
- Empire: Act of Union with Scotland (1707), overseas colonization
- terms: Augustan Age, Classicism, the Age of Reason (Enlightenment) - rationalism, science and empiricism; John Locke, Isaac Newton; encyclopedias
- deism (“natural religion,” cultivation and benevolence)

## **John Locke: *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690)**

I suppose it may be of use to prevail with the busy mind of man to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in a quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our capacities (...) Our business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct.

## Long 18th century

- revival of Christian piety: Methodism (the Wesley brothers, George Whitfield)
- theory of art: wit, decorum, universal Nature
- rise of the (upper) middle class >> rise of journalism and political satire, letter writing and journaling, the novel as a genre



## Alexander Pope

*An Essay on Criticism* (1711)

*The Rape of the Lock* (1712)

*The Dunciad* (1728)

*An Essay on Man* (1733-4)

image: wikipedia

## ***Essay on Criticism***

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame  
By her just standard, which is still the same;  
Unerring Nature, still divinely bright,  
One clear, unchanged, and universal light,  
Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,  
At once the source, and end, and test of art.

(...)  
Those rules of old discovered, not devised,  
Are Nature still, but Nature methodized;  
Nature, like liberty, is but restrained  
By the same laws which first herself ordained.

## ***Essay on Man***

Say first, of God above, or man below,  
What can we reason, but from what we know?  
Of man what see we, but his station here,  
From which to reason, or to which refer?  
Through worlds unnumber'd though the God be known,  
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.  
He, who through vast immensity can pierce,  
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,  
Observe how system into system runs,  
What other planets circle other suns,  
What varied being peoples ev'ry star,  
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.

But of this frame the bearings, and the ties,  
The strong connections, nice dependencies,  
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul  
Look'd through? or can a part contain the whole?  
Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,  
And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee?

Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,  
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?  
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,  
Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less!  
Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made  
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?



Or ask of yonder argent fields above,  
Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove?  
Of systems possible, if 'tis confest  
That Wisdom infinite must form the best,  
Where all must full or not coherent be,  
And all that rises, rise in due degree;  
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain  
There must be somewhere, such a rank as man:  
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)  
Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong?

Respecting man, whatever wrong we call,  
May, must be right, as relative to all.  
In human works, though labour'd on with pain,  
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;  
In God's, one single can its end produce;  
Yet serves to second too some other use.  
So man, who here seems principal alone,  
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,  
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;  
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

...

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;  
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:  
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place,  
His time a moment, and a point his space.

Cease then, nor ORDER imperfection name:  
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.  
Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree  
Of blindness, weakness, Heaven bestows on thee.  
Submit—In this, as in any other sphere,  
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:  
Safe in the hand of one disposing Power,  
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.  
All Nature is but art, unknown to thee;  
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
All partial evil, universal good:  
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear: Whatever IS, is RIGHT.

# Great Chain of Being

1579 drawing



image: wikipedia



## **Jonathan Swift**

*Drapier Letters* (1724)

*Gulliver's Travels* (1726)

*Modest Proposal* (1729)

image: bl.uk

## ***Modest Proposal***

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that of the hundred and twenty thousand children, already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one fourth part to be males, which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine (...) therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may at a year old be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom, always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter. (...)

I grant this food to be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.





Walter, Sheppard, Sc.

*Captain Lemuel Gulliver, of*  
Redriff & tat. f.ue 78.

TRAVELS  
INTO SEVERAL  
Remote NATIONS  
OF THE  
WORLD.

In FOUR PARTS.

By *LEMUEL GULLIVER*,  
First a *SURGEON*, and then a *CAP-  
TAIN* of several *SHIPS*.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for *BENJ. MOTTE*, at the  
*Middle Temple-Gate* in *Fleet-Street*.  
MDCCLXXVI.



PART I.

*A Voyage to Lilliput.*

PART II.

*A Voyage to Brobdingnag.*

PART III.

*A Voyage to Laputa, Bal-  
nibarbi, Luggnagg, Glub-  
dubdrib, and Japan.*

PART IV.

*A Voyage to the Country  
of the Houyhbnoms.*

***Gulliver's Travels*, 1st edition**

image: bl.uk



## ***Gulliver's Travels***

*Gulliver returns home from the virtuous horses Houyhnhnms*

My wife and family received me with great surprise and joy, because they concluded me certainly dead; but I must freely confess, the sight of them filled me only with hatred, disgust, and contempt; and the more, by reflecting on the near alliance I had to them. For although since my unfortunate exile from the Houyhnhnm country, I had compelled myself to tolerate the sight of Yahoos (...) yet my memory and imaginations were perpetually filled with the virtues and ideas of those exalted Houyhnhnms. And when I began to consider that by copulating with one of the Yahoo species, I had become a parent of more, it struck me with the utmost shame, confusion, and horror.

As soon as I entered the house, my wife took me into her arms, and kissed me; at which, having not been used to the touch of that odious animal for so many years, I fell in a swoon for almost an hour. (...) The first money I laid out was to buy two young stone-horses, which I keep in a good stable (...) My horses understand me tolerably well; I converse with them at least four hours every day. They are strangers to bridle or saddle; they live in great amity with me, and friendship to each other.

# Daniel Defoe

*The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*  
(1702)

*Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

*Moll Flanders* (1722)

*Journal of the Plague Year* (1722)

*Roxana* (1724)



J. Taverner. Pinx.

M. Gucht. sculp.



*Daniel De. Foe*  
*Author of the Trueborn Englishman.*

image: bl.uk



Clark & Pinck.

THE  
**L I F E**  
AND  
STRANGE SURPRIZING  
ADVENTURES  
OF  
*ROBINSON CRUSOE,*  
Of YORK, MARINER:

Who lived Eight and Twenty Years,  
all alone in an un-inhabited Island on the  
Coast of AMERICA, near the Mouth of  
the Great River of OROONOQUE;

Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, where-  
in all the Men perished but himself.

WITH  
An Account how he was at last as strangely deli-  
ver'd by PYRATES.

*Written by Himself.*

L O N D O N:  
Printed for W. TAYLOR at the Ship in Pater-Noster-  
Row. MDCCLXIX.

**Daniel Defoe**  
***The Life and Strange***  
***Suprising Adventures of***  
***Robinson Crusoe of***  
***York, Mariner***

characters:

Robinson Crusoe

slave boy Xury

Friday, native inhabitant

First edition of Robinson Crusoe  
image: bl.uk



## ***Robinson Crusoe***

*Robinson allows freedom of religion on his island*

My island was now peopled, and I thought myself very rich in subjects; and it was a merry reflection, which I frequently made, how like a king I looked. First of all, the whole country was my own property, so that I had an undoubted right of dominion. Secondly, my people were perfectly subjected - I was absolutely lord and lawgiver - they all owed their lives to me, and were ready to lay down their lives, if there had been occasion for it, for me. It was remarkable, too, I had but three subjects, and they were of three different religions - my man Friday was a Protestant, his father was a Pagan and a cannibal, and the Spaniard was a Papist. However, I allowed liberty of conscience throughout my dominions.

4

g.S. 21<sup>st</sup> May. 1673.



# Aphra Behn

## Oroonoko (1688)

image: wikipedia



**Samuel Richardson**

*Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*

(1740)

*Clarissa* (1747-9)

image: wikipedia



HENRY FIELDING.

*From a miniature in the possession of Mr. Ernest Fielding.*

## Henry Fielding

*The Adventures of Joseph  
Andrews (1742)*

*The History of Tom Jones, a  
Foundling (1749)*

image: [gutenberg.org](http://gutenberg.org)





*The Discovery of the Foundling-*

*Published as the Act directs, 15 July 1780.*

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
TOM JONES,  
A  
FOUNDLING.

By HENRY FIELDING, Esq.

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*Mores hominum multorum vidit*

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IN SIX VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for JOSEPH WENMAN,  
No. 144, FLEET-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXXIX.

# Henry Fielding

## *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*

characters:

Tom Jones

Mr Allworthy

Blifil

Sophia Western

## **Tom Jones**

*the narrator reflects on creating a new genre*

Though we have properly enough entitled this our work, a history, and not a life; nor an apology for a life, as is more in fashion; yet we intend in it rather to pursue the method of those writers, who profess to disclose the revolutions of countries, than to imitate the painful and voluminous historian, who, to preserve the regularity of his series, thinks himself obliged to fill up as much paper with the detail of months and years in which nothing remarkable happened, as he employs upon those notable areas when the greatest scenes have been transacted on the human stage. (...)

Now it is our purpose, in the ensuing pages, to pursue a contrary method. When any extraordinary scene presents itself (as we trust will often be the case), we shall spare no pains nor paper to open it at large to our reader; but if whole years should pass without producing anything worthy his notice, we shall not be afraid of a chasm in our history; but shall hasten on to matters of consequence, and leave such periods of time totally unobserved. (...)

My reader then is not to be surprized, if, in the course of this work, he shall find some chapters very short, and others altogether as long; some that contain only the time of a single day, and others that comprise years; in a word, if my history sometimes seems to stand still, and sometimes to fly. For all which I shall not look on myself as accountable to any court of critical jurisdiction whatever: for as I am, in reality, the founder of a new province of writing, so I am at liberty to

make what laws I please therein. And these laws, my readers, whom I consider as my subjects, are bound to believe in and to obey; with which that they may readily and cheerfully comply, I do hereby assure them that I shall principally regard their ease and advantage in all such institutions: for I do not, like a *jure divino* tyrant, imagine that they are my slaves, or my commodity. I am, indeed, set over them for their own good only, and was created for their use, and not they for mine. Nor do I doubt, while I make their interest the great rule of my writings, they will unanimously concur in supporting my dignity, and in rendering me all the honour I shall deserve or desire.



## **Laurence Sterne**

*A Sentimental Journey through  
France and Italy (1768)*

*The Life and Opinions of  
Tristram Shandy, Gentleman  
(1759-1767)*

image: [wordsworth-editions.com](http://wordsworth-editions.com)

## ***Tristram Shandy***

### *Tristram's conception*

I wish either my father or my mother, or indeed both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to it, had minded what they were about when they begot me; had they duly considered how much depended upon what they were then doing;--that not only the production of a rational Being was concerned it, but that possibly the happy formation and temperature of his body, perhaps his genius and the very cast of his mind;--and, for aught they knew to the contrary, even the fortunes of his whole house might take their turn from the humours and dispositions which were then uppermost:--Had they duly weighed and considered all this, and proceeded accordingly,--I am verily persuaded I should have made a quite different figure in the world, from that, in which the reader is likely to see me. (...)

*Pray, my dear, quoth my mother, have you not forgot to wind up the clock?-----Good G--!* cried my father, making an exclamation, but taking care to moderate his voice at the same time,--*Did ever woman, since the creation of the world, interrupt a man with such a silly question?*

## ***Tristram Shandy***

### *digression as the main narrative strategy*

Digressions, incontestably, are the sunshine;--they are the life, the soul of reading;--take them out of this book for instance,--you might as well take the book along with them;--one cold eternal winter would reign in every page; restore them to the writer; he steps forth like a bridegroom,--bids All hail; brings variety, and forbids the appetite to fail.

All the dexterity is in the good cookery and management of them, so as to be not only for the advantage of the reader, but also of the author, whose distress, in this matter, is truly pitiable: For, if he begins a digression--from that moment, I observe, his whole work stands stock still;--and if he goes on with his main work,--then there is an end of his digression.

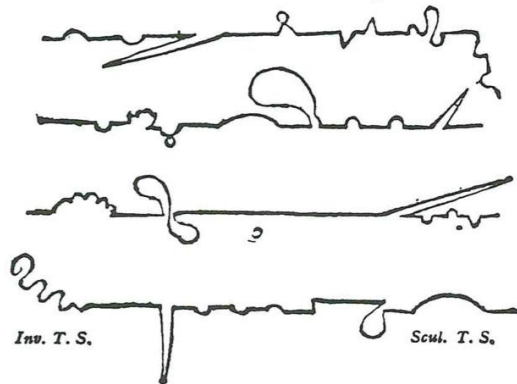


—Lord have mercy upon me,—said my father to him-  
self—

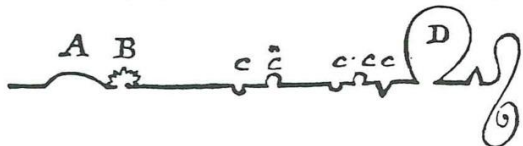
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## CHAPTER XL

I AM now beginning to get fairly into my work; and by the help of a vegetable diet, with a few of the cold seeds, I make no doubt but I shall be able to go on with my uncle *Toby's* story, and my own, in a tolerable strait line. Now,



These were the four lines I moved in through my first, second, third, and fourth volumes.<sup>1</sup>—In the fifth volume I have been very good,—the precise line I have described in it being this:



By which it appears, that except at the curve, marked A, where

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the first edition.

# Tristram Shandy

## sample page