



Bildungsroman in Jane Austen's *Emma* and Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*: A Comparative Study

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The term 'comparative literature' is difficult to define for it evolves not only two or even more than two literatures in comparison at the same time. It is a difficult task for a critic or comparatist to compare two different treaties as they have different facets such as linguistic, cultural, religious, economic, social and historical.

'Literature Comparee', the French term for 'Comparative Literature' first emerged in France around 19th century. Susan Bassnett espouses that most of the scholars who have travelled, "Towards it from different points of departure" have not come to meet at a definite point. They have explored various contrasting perspectives. In short, critics have not arrived at a fixed norm but rather working towards enriching literary comparison by fresh and more developed theories. Etymologically, the term comparative literature denotes any literary work or works when compared with any other literary work. Hence, comparative literature is the study of two or more than two significant literary treaties or literatures in the light of the sources upon which they are based such as themes, myths, forms, artistic strategies, social and religious movements and trends into consideration.

The comparatist finds out the similarities and dissimilarities among various works that he has undertaken for the purpose of comparison and the justification lies in the fact that his approach must be unbiased and unprejudiced to reach the ultimate truth. It is only his earnest and sincere approach which will bring forth the naked truth or natural result and this reality is the purpose of the comparative study.

The term 'Bildungsroman' was coined in 1819 by philologist Karl Morgenstern in his university lectures, and later famously reprised by Wilhelm Dilthey, who legitimated it in 1870 and popularized it in 1905. The genre is further characterized by a number of formal, topical and thematic features. The term coming-of-age novel is sometimes used interchangeably with Bildungsroman, but its use is usually wider and less technical. In literary criticism Bildungsroman is a novel of formation, novel of education. It is a literary genre that focuses on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from youth to adulthood. In other words it is a novel dealing with one person's formative or spiritual education. The birth of the bildungsroman is normally dated to the publication of Wilhem Meister's Apprenticeship by Johann Wolfgang Goethe in 1795-96.

A *Bildungsroman* relates the growing up or "coming of age" of a sensitive person who goes in search of answers to life's questions with the expectation that these will result in gaining experience of the world. The genre evolved from folklore tales of a dunce or youngest son going out in the world to seek his fortune. Usually in the beginning of the story there is an emotional loss which makes the protagonist leave on his journey. In a Bildungsroman, the goal is maturity, and the protagonist achieves it gradually and with difficulty. The genre often features a main conflict between the main character and society. Typically, the values of society are gradually accepted by the protagonist and he/she is ultimately accepted into society — the protagonist's mistakes and disappointments are over. In some works, the protagonist is able to reach out and help others after having achieved maturity.

Goethe is also famous for denoting the term "world literature" and exploring a platform for literature from around the world despite of chronological barrier, and constrictions of the time etc. Matthew Ar-

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