

**Depression, a Major Theme of Modern Literature as the Culmination
Point of the Degradation of Human Feelings Found in Victorian
Literature**

Md. Lustful Arafat¹, Associate Professor, Department of English, Hajee
MohammadDanesh Science and Technology University, Dinajpur
Muntaha Jahan Khan Kalmy², Assistant Teacher, Rowshonabag Govt. Primary
School, Panchagarh.

Article Received: 23/04/2024

Article Accepted: 27/05/2024

Published Online: 28/05/2024

DOI:10.47311/IJOES.2024.6.5.168

Abstract:

This study aims to show how life is portrayed in the Victorian age through Victorian literature and its following effects on modern literature. The paper represents depression, considered to be the central theme of modern literature, also found available in modern society where degradation of human feelings found in Victorian society and literature that acted as the catalysts of depression. A comparison of Victorian and modern writers' writings and techniques is shown to make this paper more acceptable. To show the writing styles of Victorian and modern novels, it has been described that They hold grotesque elements. In contrast, modern novels use a 'stream of consciousness.' Victorian poetry uses dramatic monologue, whereas modern poetry uses 'interior monologue.' Another comparison is held, keeping in mind the spiritual conditions of humans in the two periods. In the Victorian age, people remained far away from spirituality; on the other hand, in modern society, people attempt to clutch their spiritual senses. Finally, this paper talks about how Victorian literature primarily reflects depression from the breakdown of romantic spirits and disillusionment, followed by the rise of materialistic achievements during industrialization, resulting in the cry of a departed and disinterested human soul prevailing in modern literature.

Keywords: Themes, Victorian literature, disillusionment, modern literature

Introduction

The term 'Depression' is closely related to hopelessness, a state of low mood and reluctance to all kinds of activities that can affect a person's thoughts, behaviors, tendencies, and sense of well-being to a great extent. Massive degradation of human feelings, behaviors, and adverse relationships of humans are considered to be the critical factors of depression, which are vividly seen in modern society and are drastically portrayed in modern literature. These portrayals are found in Victorian

literature. Victorian literature primarily reflects depression, which refers to the decaying romantic spirits that are followed by the rise of materialistic achievements during industrialization, which resulted in the cry of a departed and disintegrated human soul from his world prevailing in modern literature. The juxtaposition of the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror results in disillusion among the contemporary people as during the French Revolution, it was expected that political freedom, social construction, and enlightenment would be brought to Europe; but unfortunately, these expectations were dashed because of the 'Reign of Terror' as during Reign of Terror many persons were ruthlessly executed by the ruling faction that ultimately causes disillusion in the society. So, disillusionment is the beginning of depression and is considered to occur from the distance between Romanticism and realism.

For this reason, the Victorian Age was preceded by Romanticism and followed by modernism and realism. Victorian period literature can also be called a mix of romantic and realist writing. All the writers of this period had three general characteristics. Firstly, the literature of this period tends to face realism, which has become a powerful weapon for human progress. Secondly, Victorian literature deviates from the strict principle of " Art and Art's sake" and asserts its moral purpose. Thirdly, as reflected in its literature, the Victorian Age was an age of depression, pessimism, and confusion that have finally been grasped in modern literature.

Literature Review

In the mid-1970s, Peter Lewiston deconstructed that depression is caused by a combination of stressors in a person's environment and a lack of personal capabilities or skills. According to Lewiston, depressed people are precisely those people who do not have ideas on how to cope with the fact that they are no longer receiving positive reinforcements like they were before. For example, a kid who has newly been shifted to a new home and has consequently lost touch with prior friends might not have the social skills necessary to make new friends easily and could become depressed. In the same way, a man who has been executed from his job and faces numerous difficulties finding a new job might become depressed.

According to Sigmund Freud, the tendency to internalize lost objects is normal, and that depression is simply due to excessive super-ego. Thus, the depressive phase occurs when the individual's super-ego or conscience dominates. By contrast, the manic phase occurs when the individual's ego or rational mind asserts itself, and s/he feels controlled. To avoid the losses turning into depression, the individuals need to engage in a period of mourning work, during which they recall memories of the lost one. This allows them to separate themselves from the lost person, reducing inner-directed anger. Although depression is a modern phenomenon, its root lies in the Victorian Age. Analyzing the literature, art, poetry, and plays of the Victorian period, it is found that Victorian society and culture strongly influenced modern society in the evolving depression we find in modern literature. Sylvia Plath, a modern poet and novelist, portrays her struggle and depression in her novel *The Bell Jar*. It has become a modern classic and poetic way

that describes the character Esther Greenwood's bitter experience in New York as a young fashion intern's spiraling journey into depression:

" I did not know why I was going to cry, but I know that if anybody spoke to me or looked at me too closely, the tears would fly out of my eyes, and the snobs would fly out of the throat, and I would cry for a week."

Emily Bronte's eminent novel *Wuthering Heights* is a very dreary book, as many of the main characters act. In today's society, the characters in the novel would most likely have been identified by certain aspects of mental illnesses that may have ultimately changed the whole effect of the novel and the effect that each of the characters had on each other in the novel.

Although characters depicted with depression have emerged from Victorian literature with forced lobotomies, evil nurses, and mad women confined in attics, and possibly, readers with mental health matters of their own can identify and diagnose some of the more modern depictions, more needs to be done to create more literature with trustworthy and realistic protagonists that will portray depression crystal.

Key Factors Behind Depression

Alienation

Alienation is the inability to involve oneself in social activities that generate depression felt by that person as he gets isolated from his whole surroundings. Alienation is not always a phenomenon created by the victims; instead, sometimes, the social environments become responsible for it. In many uncivilized societies, especially in the Indian subcontinent, an AIDS patient is forced to live alone and has to lead a miserable life that causes abundant depression.

Aimlessness

Aimlessness is also a common phenomenon in modern society. The victim leads his/her life just as living as a 'puppet' since he/she can see everything but does not enjoy it due to aimlessness. His/her life becomes like a boat without any rudder. Life becomes futile and meaningless for a modern man or woman. Thus, modern people need clarification about the values of their lives.

Frustration:

Statistics show that more than sixty percent of people in the modern age suffer from frustration. People become frustrated when they need help getting the output according to their demands or expectations. It may happen when someone does not need to get jobs according to his worth, or a student cannot get results according to his expectations. Nowadays, people are getting more frustrated than in the past due to the modern social structure.

Realism

Realism, also known as naturalism, represents something truthfully without any artificialities. When people feel the bitter taste of realism, they remain too far away from their imagination and Romanticism and get attacked with terrible depression.

Surrealism:

Arthur Schopenhauer, a renowned philosopher, used "will" as an aimless, mindless, and nonrational impulse to mean surrealism. For Schopenhauer, the world

of "will" is an entirely blind impulse and endless striving with no end, devoid of knowledge and lawlessness. With Schopenhauer's vision of the world as "will," there is no God to be comprehended, and the world is meaningless. If anthropomorphically considered, the world is represented in eternal frustration, as it goes nowhere and endlessly strives for nothing in particular. It is a world beyond any consideration of good and evil. Schopenhauer's characterization of the thing-in-itself as "will" is understood to be a blind and aimless striving. This aimlessness and blind striving for life is also a reason for depression for modern individuals.

Nihilism

Frederick Nietzsche, a nihilistic philosopher, used the term "eternal recurrence," which earns the meaningless variations of life. This idea of "eternal recurrence" becomes the cornerstone of nihilism. Nietzsche viewed his argument for eternal recurrence as a document of the absurdity and meaninglessness of life. He states:

"This life which you live must be lived by you again, and mere will be nothing new in it; the eternal hourglass will again be turned and turned, and you with it be dust of dust. "

Existentialism

It provokes the introspection of the sufferer about personal morality, thus revealing the psychological repression. A person suffering from an existential crisis asks himself if his life has meaning, purpose, or value. When he does not find satisfactory answers, he ultimately gets depressed about his meaningless life. According to the great philosopher Sartre:

"If a man, as the existentialist sees him as not definable, it is because, to begin with, he is nothing. He will be something later, and then he will be what he makes of himself. "

Victorian Literature That Have Influenced in Evolving the Degradation of Human Feelings and Depression in Modern Literature Novels

Literature always expresses the ideas and sentiments of the human mind, which are closely connected with and conditioned by the ages. The reflection of any age depends on the quality of mind in which it is reflected. A sensitive mind can render back the slightest shades, and its creation is characterized by delicacy, subtlety, and depth. During the Reign of Terror (June 1793 – July 1794), the sans-culottes and the Hebertists put pressure on the National Convention delegates and contributed to the overall instability of France. This Reign of Terror caused the breakdown of all the hopes and expectations of the French Revolution because the economic and political freedom and social construction were utterly shattered, resulting in disillusion. This disillusion is much more responsible for the degradation of human feelings and people's adverse relationships as people gradually lose tolerance. The impact of that hopelessness and loss of tolerance has evolved in Victorian society, which is portrayed in Victorian literature.

The novels of the Victorian period acted like such a genre, which aimed to entertain the rising middle-class people and to depict contemporary life in that

cumulative changing society. Although the novels of this period were in the way of development since the 18th century with the works of Henry Fielding, Lawrence Sterne, Samuel Richardson, Daniel Defoe, and others, it was in this period when the novels got much acceptance as well as readership. The overseas colonies, the domestic market, the growth of the cities, and an increase in the publications fascinated the growth of the novel. The characters were well-rounded, and the protagonists usually belonged to the middle class, who struggled to create their position in the industrial and mercenary world. The stress was on realism and attempting to portray the struggles of the ordinary people that middle-class readers could associate with. The moral tangents were an attempt to rescue the moral degradation prevalent in society and hope and positivity to the audience. One of the renowned authors of this age, Charles Dickens, was much more concerned with these matters and portrayed his own autobiographical experiences in his *Oliver Twist*. His novels usually open the world of workhouses, the dens of the thieves, and the streets. While there was economic prosperity on one side, there was extreme poverty on the other, and while virtue and morality were championed, hypocrisy was a big part of that society. His social commentary was found in his novels. Class conflict is eminently found in his novels. Degradation of human values and behaviors such as thievery, criminality, a decline of Religion, lies, deceit, vanity, guilt, and blame are common themes of his novels.

In his eminent novel, *Oliver Twist*, class conflict is vividly seen where the folk are pathetically ignored due to belonging to the lower class. In the same novel, he depicts the criminality and thievery of the people of the Victorian age where the character Sikes is a thief, Fagin is the receiver of stolen goods, and the girl is a prostitute who painted them with deformities, wretchedness, and poverty. The decline of Religion is also found in this novel, as Religion is shown as an organized and institutionalized form that does not care for those who turn to the church for help. In his masterpiece *Great Expectations*, Dickens shows the terrible effects of industrialization, for which an acute class conflict is seen while the rich people are practicing their vanities and the newly becoming gentlemen are becoming snobs. Excessive vanity is found in the characters of Miss Havisham and Estella, belonging to the upper class. They mock the shabby clothes of Pip, a lower-class boy. However, when Pip becomes a gentleman at a young age, he becomes very snobby; he wishes Joe would be brought up gently, too: " I wished Joe had been rather more gently brought up."

In *David Copperfield*, human suffering is portrayed much more by Dickens. So, it can be said that suffering is the primary tool of characterization in *David Copperfield*, where Mr. Murdstone rudely abuses Mr. Copperfield, and Dr. Strong is passing sorrowful times for the thought that his young wife was cheating on him. Novels of Thomas Hardy also reflect the degradation of human feelings and behaviors in his renowned novels. In his famous novel *Far from the Madding Crowd*, he shows that Religion plays two contradictory roles: it shapes people's moral principles on the one hand, and on the other hand, people misquote the Bible. Being alcoholic is also a vivid theme of this novel: Workman Joseph Poorgrass, being too alcoholic, becomes

dumb and more clumsy than usual. Pride is shown in the way that everyone is trying to be better than another in subtle ways. Gabriel Oak, who had lands and sheep of his own, lost everything in a freak accident and became a shepherd; he got depressed because his beloved Bathsheba did not want to marry him, which is also an outcome of class conflict.

Class conflict is also portrayed in Hardy's masterpiece *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, where Alec, who belongs to the upper class, takes away the chastity of the young, poor girl Tess, who used to work in Alec's house. Anthony Trollope also depicts the degradation of human values in his novels. In his masterpiece *The Warden*, he shows that people are getting far away from religious values due to the decline of Religion, where religious matters shift from the gentle benevolence of Reverend Harding to the more dogmatic positions of the strict high churchmen. The character of Harding, Trollope shows that human kindness is much more critical than dogmas. Social privilege and poverty are also seen in this eminent novel. Elizabeth Gasket shows her prudence in portraying the decaying values of humans during the Victorian age in her novels. In her *Mary Barton*, she skillfully depicts the difficulties faced by the working class. In her famous novel *North and South*, she shows snobbery and class conflict, where Margaret, a poor girl, thinks she is worthy of marrying Thornton as she is educated and cultured. However, Thornton's mother wanted her son to avoid marrying Margaret as she was poor and Thornton was wealthy.

Plays

Victorian plays also portray the degradation of human feelings, as found in the writings of Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, Henrik Ibsen, and Euripides. Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* shows how class conflict was flagrant in the Victorian age and gave birth to the vanity of upper-class people. Members of the upper-class society practice a great deal of pretense and pride, feeling that they are inheritably entitled to their higher social status and wealth. On the other hand, the lower class people are shown as humble and less pretentious. In the same play, Wilde shows how lies and deceit prevailed in Victorian society. None of the play's characters show genuine remorse or guilt for telling lies. Jack and Algy repeatedly lie about their respective identities. Specifically, the fictional personas they made to cover up their doings, shirk their duties and deceive their beloveds.

In *A Woman of No Importance*, Wilde satirizes the corrupted ruling class, specifically Lord Illingworth, a very conscienceless member of the House of Lords and an inveterate seducer of the opposite sex, with a woman of little resources and power.

Some plays by George Bernard Shaw also expose the degradation of human feelings prevailing in Victorian society. His famous play *Mrs. Warren's Profession* shows the adverse relationship between mother and daughter, where the daughter accepts her mother. Mrs. Warren's profession is prostitution, but she rejects her as a mother. In the same play, Shaw proves love to be a commodity. He logicalizes that prostitution is often looked down upon as a disgraceful profession because it is one kind of commoditization of sex. However, the characters point out in various ways that, in some cases, marriage is also a commoditization of women. Through the

conversation between Mrs. Warren and Vivie, Shaw wants to make the readers understand that prostitution is also a work like marriage; it may not be enjoyable for most women, but it is a way to survive for them. In his *The Devil's Disciple*, through the character of Anthony Anderson, Shaw shows how money-obsessed the people of Victorian society were. Anthony Anderson proves himself as a coward by grabbing money and escaping from home.

Henrik Ibsen, a renowned playwright of the Victorian age, shows how terrific the class conflict was in Victorian society through his play *An Enemy of the People*, which resulted in the degradation of human feelings and behaviors. In this play, Ibsen shows the inequality among the people that took place due to class conflict while upper-class members want to rule over the lands, and lower-class people are struggling and working hard to change their fate. Vanity is also a common theme of this play, as many characters are concerned about maintaining their faces in public. Hypocrisy runs rampant throughout the play. The characters are seen to compromise themselves for a host of reasons. Power, money, and public image all play a vital part. Dr. Stockmann, the play's protagonist, refuses to compromise his beliefs no matter what they are. His dedication to his principles sharply contrasts with many other characters. Many of the characters have solid reasons for compromising themselves.

Euripides, a renowned classical dramatist of the Victorian period, shows how betrayal causes a significant crack in the relationship between husband and wife in his masterpiece *Medea*. In this play, Euripides shows that all the violence and terror is caused by Jason's betrayal of his wife, Medea. In this play, an inhuman activity, "exile," is shown through Medea's banishment by the king. Revenge, one of the elements of degrading human relationships, is also an essential feature of this play, where the protagonist, Medea, is seen taking revenge on her husband, Jason, for betraying her. Gender discrimination, another element of degrading human feelings, is also seen in *Medea*.

In *A Clean Well-Lighted Place*, Earnest Hemingway shows that unhappiness, discontent, and dissatisfaction are the most common elements of modern life and offers a fairly general view of the world, suggesting that even the happiest people, being young and wealthy and are content with their lives, someday get drunk, feel lonely and dissatisfied, that ultimately drag them to depression. Existential depression is one of the techniques Hemingway uses to convey the story's inherent theme. The story of the play says that the older man's attempt to commit suicide and the young waiter's interpretation of the Lord's prayer are the symptoms of depression they both always suffer from. Using the word "nada," which means "nothing," the waiter can only utter the following prayer:

"Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name, thy kingdom nada, thy will be nada, as it is in nada. Give us this nada, our daily nada and nada, as our nada as we nada our nadas not into nada, but deliver us from nada, pues nada" (177).

Everything is just "nothing" for both the old man and the young waiter, and both of them are trying to escape from the wreck of nada, the nothingness that comes with existential depression.

Poetry

Victorian poetry also portrays the decaying values of human beings, which are found in the poetry of Matthew Arnold, Robert Browning, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. These poems highly influence modern poetry in portraying the degradation of human values, which have directly drawn out depression, which we find in the poetry of W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, and W.H. Auden. Although there are some differences in the writing techniques and styles of the Victorian poets and Modern poets, both of these groups emphasize the same theme- the degradation of human values that ultimately causes terrible depression, which is clearly noticed among the characters of Modern poetry and also in modern social life. In most of the poems of Matthew Arnold, there is psychological conflict, the recurring theme of man's loneliness, and an utmost search for an inner life. In his *The Scholar Gypsy*, the speaker criticizes the fatigue and strain of modern life, which is depressing and toilsome, and yearns for a better world where he can peacefully survive:

"Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which brings much to being tired and baffled.
O life unlike to ours!"

Robert Browning uses much more dramatic irony in his poems and exposes the degradation of human values through the use of abnormal psychology, misuse of arts, vanity, and so on. In his *Porphyria's Lover*, the speaker murders his beloved Porphyria and gives the description of the murder and how he accomplished it, which exposes 'abnormal psychology' as he murdered her by strangling her with her hair, then sits and admires the corpse for the rest of the night :

" In one long yellow string, I wound
Three times her little throat around
Moreover, strangled her."

Almost the same ideas of Victorian poetry regarding the degradation of human values are found in modern poetry. Although modern poets' writing styles are different, the portrayals of the degradation of human values are almost alike, ultimately turning into depression. T.S. Eliot, in his *The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock*, shows that Prufrock has spent all his life in contemporary modern society in which society there are many frivolities and flippancies but little sense. Just as Arnold criticizes modern life, addressing it as a "disease ". Eliot, through Prufrock, also criticizes modern life as monotonous and abounds with trivialities. Eliot uses many metaphors in this poem. Sometimes Prufrock compares himself with Prince Hamlet; I, like Hamlet; he also suffers from indecisiveness; and sometimes with a worm pinched against the wall, I just like Prufrock is Prufrock ferring f like confin; het. All of these are the reasons for his mancession, as he cannot make the appropriate decision

, ions in his Prufrock," Then how should I begin?
To spit out all the butt ends of my days and ways
Moreover, how should I presume?"

William Butler Yeats uses technique and style to express meaningful ideas and revolutionary types. Style and content throughout all his poems. His style helps to understand the complexities of modern life. He demonstrates how he is

automatically unique through his innovative utilization of style and contents in case of degradation of human values in the modern age and how it brings depression in modern society. In his famous religious poem, *The Second Coming*, Yeats demonstrates that things are disintegrating due to man's indifference to God's call.

Therefore, the center cannot hold its position, and the forces of disorder become eruptive dominant: " Things fall apart, the center cannot hold." The poet sees a widening gyre at the top speed, and its controller cannot control it. This is compared to the falcon, which its master does not control because of the distance of the two. The result is an all-round convulsion in which the finer values of life are lost; anarchy is let loose upon the world. The poet's mind is stuffed with the anarchy and the blood-dimmed tide of the modern world:

" The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned :

The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity."

As a result of these wrongdoings, Yeats got depressed and thought that Jesus Christ should incarnate once more to eradicate these wrongdoings.

the dropping slow."

W.H. Auden's poetry unfolds two wings of his mind. The first is the pressure of his time, which he was unable to bear, and the second is the urge to integrate theory, such as love or faith. Much of Auden's poetry concerns moral issues, evidence, and solid social, political, and psychological content. In *Shield of Achilles*, Auden compares old and modern age values, showing his depression over the degradation of human feelings. In the Homeric shield, there were carved scenes of religious rituals. However, in the modern age, religious rituals are gradually decaying, as people put much concentration on camps where the pale prisoners of the wars are tied to the stake and brutally shot dead:

" Girls are raped, two boys

knife the third

Were axioms to him"

So, modern poetry is the lamentation of lost souls, and souls are found to be disintegrated from their bodies. As a result, modern people are also socially disintegrated.

Findings And Analysis

Industrial Revolution and Class Conflict

The adverse consequence of the Industrial Revolution in the Victorian age also has awful social effects: tremendous poverty, massive overcrowded dwellings, child labor, sexual harassment, dirt, and drunkenness. It had successfully converted Merry England into a sooty and squalid England. Values of money prevailed due to the increased materialism of that period. Utilitarianism and Laissez-faire had become the most popular philosophy of that time as utilitarianism emphasized humans' spiritual requirements, and many workers migrated to towns where they built up a new working class. In the industries and factories, the workers were experiencing numerous injustices, including harsh working conditions, ruthless child labor with

smoke, and pollution. Kellow Chesney had described that terrible situation in the following manner:

" Hideous slums, some of them acres wide, some no more than crannies of obscure misery, make up a substantial part of the metropolis..... Thirty or more people of all ages may inhabit a single room in big, once handsome houses." 7

At that time, the street children were mainly orphans without any caregivers. Charles Dickens portrayed the miserable conditions of those wretched children in his eminent novel *Oliver Twist*. In this novel, Dickens condemns the bitter outcomes of industrialization in 19th-century land. He shows how various contemporary social wrongdoings, including the poor's residences and their working places, child labor, and the process of making children criminals, took place due to industrialization.

Decline of Religion

The decline of Religion is found in both the Victorian and modern periods and its effect in the literature of both periods, but there is a comparison in determining the declining process of Religion in the two periods. During the Victorian period, the priests utilized Religion for their benefit when they did not feel shame in using art as an element of the churches. However, people remained aloof from religious activities during the modern age and suggested that churches be demolished. Perhaps the decline of Religion is also a reason for modern people's depression, as their souls are far away from the proximity of God.

Money Obsession:

One of the most common characteristics of the Victorian age is 'money obsession.' To the Victorians, the view of money was different from ours. For example, most families prefer to spend the lion's share of their resources on food- one of the facts that makes it difficult to calculate the exact equivalencies between money in their time and our own. In the high money-obsessed society of the Victorian period, money provides an opportunity for some, while its absence prevents others from fulfilling their dreams. Money and high social status are perceived as the greatest of all aspirations, as one's worth seems to rise along with one's economic situation. So, money is the means of social prestige for the middle class. It makes sense that Victorian society creates a social prison, incarcerating people with low incomes at the lowest level of life. As a result, ney and obsessions were created between the wealthy and lower classes, resulting in separation. The aftermath of this separation of lower classes resulted in people who could not attain a higher status due to the absence of money.

Conclusion

The above discussion shows that the Victorian Age is the junction between the Romantic Age and the Modern Age, characterized by the juxtaposition of the French Revolution and Reign of the Terror, which gradually brought out disillusion and depression. The degradation of human feelings, mutual relationships, and behaviors prevailing in Victorian society is considered to be the outcome of the disillusion that had resulted from the juxtaposition of the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror. Victorian literature is much more successful in transferring the decaying human values that have wholly evolved in Modern literature and Modern

society and ultimately brought out depression in modern social life the catalysts of The Victorian period are science, technology, socio-economic conditions, politics, philosophical ideas, decline of Religion, industrialization and class conflict.

References

- Rohan KJ, Lindsey KT, Roecklein KA, Lacy TJ. Cognitive-behavioral therapy, light therapy, and their combination in treating seasonal affective disorder. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 2004; 80: 273-283.
- Tsuang MT, Faraone SV. *The genetics of mood disorders*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.
- Lewinsohn, Peter. *A behavioral approach to depression*. (1974).
- Seligman, Martin. *Depression and learned helplessness*. John Wiley & Sons (1974).
- Gray, Elizabeth. "Angel of the House" in Adams, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Victorian Era* (2004) 1: 40–41
- Plunkett, John; et al., eds. (2012). *Victorian Literature: A Sourcebook*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 2.
- Walkowitz, Judith . *Prostitution and Victorian society: Women, class, and the state* (1982).
- Kafka ,Franz (1883–1924): *The Metamorphosis* (1915).