novel: The term "novel" is applied to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of *fiction* written in prose. As an extended narrative, the novel is distinguished from the *short story* and from the work of middle length called the *novelette*; its magnitude permits a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plot (or plots), ampler development of milieu, and more sustained exploration of character and motives than do the shorter, more concentrated modes. As a narrative written in prose, the novel is distinguished from the long narratives in verse of Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spenser, and John Milton which, beginning with the eighteenth century, the novel has increasingly supplanted. Within these limits the novel includes such diverse works as Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*; Jane Austen's *Emma* and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*; Charles Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* and Henry James' *The Wings of the Dove*; Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Franz Kafka's *The Trial*; Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* and James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*; Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* and Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*.

The term for the novel in most European languages is **roman**, which is derived from the medieval term, the *romance*. The English name for the form, on the other hand, is derived from the Italian **novella** (literally, "a little new thing"), which was a short tale in prose. In fourteenth-century Italy, there was a vogue for collections of such tales, some serious and some scandalous; the best known of these collections is Boccaccio's *Decameron*, which is still available in English translation at any well-stocked bookstore. Currently the term "novella" (or in the German form, *Novelle*) is often used as an equivalent for *novelette*: a prose fiction of middle length, such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* or Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*. (See under *short story*.)

Long narrative romances in prose were written by Greek writers as early as the second and third centuries AD. Typically they dealt with separated lovers who, after perilous adventures and hairbreadth escapes, are happily reunited at the end. The best known of these Greek romances, influential in later European literature, were the *Aethiopica* by Heliodorus and the charming pastoral narrative *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus. Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* (the model for Shakespeare's *As You Like It*) and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* were Elizabethan continuations of the pastoral romance of the ancient Greeks. See *romance* and *pastoral*.

Another important predecessor of the novel was the **picaresque narra-tive**, which emerged in sixteenth-century Spain; see Michael Alpert, trans., *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *The Swindler* (2003), and Giancarlo Maiorino, *At the Margins of the Renaissance: Lazarillo de Tormes and the Picaresque Art of Survival* (2003). The most popular instance, however, *Gil Blas* (1715), was written by the Frenchman Lesage. "Picaro" is Spanish for "rogue," and a typical story concerns the escapades of an insouciant rascal who lives by his wits and shows little if any alteration of character through a long succession of adventures. Picaresque fiction is realistic in manner, **episodic** in structure (that is, composed of a sequence of events held together largely because they happened to one person), and often satiric in aim. The first, and very lively, English example was Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594). We recognize the survival of the picaresque type in many later novels such as Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953), and Thomas Mann's *The Confessions of Felix Krull* (1954). The development of the novel owes much to prose works which, like the picaresque story, were written to deflate romantic or idealized fictional forms. Cervantes' great quasi-picaresque narrative *Don Quixote* (1605) was the single most important progenitor of the modern novel; in it, an engaging madman who tries to live by the ideals of chivalric romance in the everyday world is used to explore the relationships of illusion and reality in human life.

After these precedents and many others—including the seventeenth-century *character* (a brief sketch of a typical personality or way of life) and Madame de La Fayette's psychologically complex study of character, *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678)—what is recognizably the novel as we now think of it appeared in England in the early eighteenth century. In 1719, Daniel Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe* and in 1722, *Moll Flanders*. Both of these are still picaresque in type, in the sense that their structure is episodic rather than in the organized form of a *plot*; while Moll is herself a colorful female version of the old picaro—"twelve Year a Whore, five times a Wife (whereof once to her own Brother), Twelve Year a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon in Virginia," as the title page resoundingly informs us. But *Robinson Crusoe* is given an enforced unity of action by its focus on the problem of surviving on an uninhabited island, and both stories present so convincing a central character, set in so solid and detailedly realized a world, that Defoe is often credited with writing the first **novel of incident.**

The credit for having written the first English **novel of character**, or "psychological novel," is almost unanimously given to Samuel Richardson

for his *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740). *Pamela* is the story of a sentimental but shrewd young woman who, by prudently safeguarding her beleaguered chastity, succeeds in becoming the wife of a wild young gentleman instead of his debauched servant girl. The distinction between the novel of incident and the novel of character cannot be drawn sharply; but in the novel of incident, the greater interest is in what the *protagonist* will do next and on how the story will turn out; in the novel of character, it is on the protagonist's motives for what he or she does, and on how the protagonist as a person will turn out. On twentieth-century developments in the novel of character see Leon Edel, *The Modern Psychological Novel* (rev. 1965). For an account, in the mode of *cultural studies*, of the genesis of the conception of character in the novel, see Deidre S. Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (1998).

Pamela, like its greater and tragic successor, Richardson's *Clarissa* (1747–48), is an **epistolary novel;** that is, the narrative is conveyed entirely by an exchange of letters. Later novelists have preferred alternative devices for limiting the narrative *point of view* to one or another single character, but the epistolary technique is still occasionally revived—for example, in Mark Harris' hilarious novel *Wake Up, Stupid* (1959) and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982). See Linda Kauffman, *Special Delivery: Epistolary Modes in Modern Fiction* (1992).

Novels may have any kind of plot form—tragic, comic, satiric, or romantic. A common distinction—which was described by Hawthorne, in his preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and elsewhere, and has been adopted and expanded by a number of critics—is that between two basic types of prose fiction: the realistic novel (which is the novel proper) and the romance. The **realistic novel** can be described as the fictional attempt to give the effect of realism by representing complex characters with mixed motives who are rooted in a social class, operate in a developed social structure, interact with many other characters, and undergo plausible, everyday modes of experience. This novelistic mode, rooted in such eighteenth-century writers as Defoe and Fielding, achieved a high development in the master novelists of the nineteenth century, including Jane Austen, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, William Dean Howells, and Henry James in England and America; Stendhal, George Sand, Balzac, and Flaubert in France; and Turgenev and Tolstoy in Russia. It as in the writings of Jane Austen, Edith Wharton, and John P. Marquand, a realistic novel focuses on the customs, conversation, and ways of thinking and valuing of the upper social class, it is often called a **novel of manners.** The **prose romance**, on the other hand, has as its precursors the chivalric romance of the Middle Ages and the *Gothic novel* of the later eighteenth century. It usually deploys characters who are sharply discriminated as heroes or villains masters or victims; its protagonist is often solitary and relatively isolated from a social context; it tends to be set in the historical past, and the *atmosphere* is such as to suspend the reader's expectations that are based on everyday experience. The plot of the prose romance emphasizes adventure and is frequently cast in the form of the *quest* for an ideal or the pursuit of an enemy; and the nonrealistic and occasionally melodramatic events are claimed by some critics to project

in symbolic form the primal desires, hopes, and terrors in the depths of the human mind and to be therefore analogous to the materials of dream, myth, ritual, and folklore. Examples of romance novels are Walter Scott's *Rob Roy* (1817), Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* (1844–45), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and an important line of American narratives which extends from Edgar Allan Poe, James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville to the writings of William Faulkner and Saul Bellow. Martin Green, in *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (1979), distinguishes a special type of romance, "the adventure novel," which deals with masculine adventures in the newly colonized non-European world. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is an early prototype; some later instances are Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883), H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1886), and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901).

Refer to Laurie Langbauer, *Women and Romance: The Consolations of Gender in the English Novel* (1990); Deborah Ross, *The Excellence of Falsehood: Romance, Realism, and Women's Contribution to the Novel* (1991). On the realistic novel in the nineteenth century see Harry Levin, *The Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists* (1963). On the prose romance in America, see Richard Chase, *The American Novel and Its Tradition* (1957); Northrop Frye, "The Mythos of Summer: Romance," in *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957); Joel Porte, *The Romance in America* (1969); Michael D. Bell, *The Development of American Romance* (1980); and for a skeptical view of the usual division between novel and romance, Nina Baym, *Novels, Readers, and Reviewers: Responses to Fiction in Antebellum America* (1984).

Other often identified subclasses of the novel are based on differences in subject matter, emphasis, and artistic purpose:

Bildungsroman and **Erziehungsroman** are German terms signifying "novel of formation" or "novel of education." The subject of these novels is the development of the protagonist's mind and character in the passage from childhood through varied experiences—and often through a spiritual crisis—into maturity; this process usually involves recognition of one's identity and role in the world. The mode began in Germany with K. P. Moritz's *Anton Reiser* (1785–90) and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795–96); it includes Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1861), Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* (1915), and Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924). A significant early critical discussion was Karl Morgenstern, "On the Nature of the Bildungsroman" (1820, trans., Tobias Boes, *PMLA*, Vol. 124, March, 2009). An important subtype of the Bildungsroman is the **Künstlerroman** ("artist-novel"), which represents the development of a novelist or other artist from childhood into the stage of maturity that signalizes the recognition of the protagonist's artistic destiny and mastery of an artistic craft. Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1849–50) can be considered an early instance of this type; later and more developed examples include some major novels of the twentieth century: Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* (1913–27), James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1914–15), Thomas Mann's

and of devices adopted from the art of the cinema; the dislocation of time sequence; the adaptation of forms and motifs from myths and dreams; and the exploitation of *stream of consciousness* narration in a way that converts the story of outer action and events into a drama of the life of the mind.

Such experimentation reached a radical extreme in the second half of the twentieth century (see *postmodernism*). Vladimir Nabokov was a supreme technician who wrote **involuted novels** (a work whose subject incorporates an account of its own genesis and development—for example, his *Pale Fire*); employed multilingual puns and jokes; incorporated esoteric data about butterflies (a subject in which he was an accomplished scientist); adopted strategies from chess, crossword puzzles, and other games; parodied other novels (and his own as well); and set elaborate traps for the unwary reader. This was also the era of what is sometimes called the **antinovel**—that is, a work which is deliberately constructed in a negative fashion, relying for its effects on the deletion of standard elements, on violating traditional norms, and on playing against the expectations established in the reader by the novelistic methods and conventions of the past. Thus Alain Robbe-Grillet, a leader among the exponents of the **nouveau roman** (the **new novel**) in France, wrote *Jealousy* (1957), in which he left out such standard elements as plot, characterization, descriptions of states of mind, locations in time and space, and frame of reference to the world in which the work is set. We are simply presented in this novel with a sequence of perceptions, mainly visual, which we may *naturalize* (that is, make intelligible in the mode of standard narrative procedures) by postulating that we are occupying the physical space and sharing the hyperacute observations of a jealous husband, from which we may infer also the tortured state of his disintegrating mind. Other new novelists are Nathalie Sarraute and Philippe Sollers. See Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero* (trans. 1967), and Stephen Heath, *The Nouveau Roman: A Study in the Practice of Writing* (1972).

The term **magic realism**, originally applied in the 1920s to a school of surrealist German painters, was later used to describe the prose fiction of Jorge Luis Borges in Argentina, as well as the work of writers such as Gabriel García Márquez in Colombia, Isabel Allende in Chile, Günter Grass in Germany, Italo Calvino in Italy, and John Fowles and Salman Rushdie in England. These writers weave, in an ever-shifting pattern, a sharply etched *realism* in representing ordinary events and details together with fantastic and dreamlike elements, as well as with materials derived from myth and fairy tales. See, for example, Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967). Robert Scholes popularized **metafiction** (an alternative is **surfiction**) as an overall term for the growing class of novels which depart from realism and foreground the roles of the author in inventing the fiction and of the reader in receiving the fiction. Scholes has also popularized the term **fabulation** for a current mode of freewheeling narrative invention. Fabulative novels violate, in various ways, standard novelistic expectations by drastic—and sometimes

highly effective—experiments with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, and fusions of the everyday, the fantastic, the mythical, and the nightmarish, in renderings that blur traditional distinctions between what is serious or trivial, horrible or ludicrous, tragic or comic. Fabulators active in the second half of the twentieth century include Thomas Pynchon, John Barth, Donald Barthelme, William Gass, Robert Coover, and Ishmael Reed. See Raymond Federman, *Surfiction* (1975); Robert Scholes, *Fabulation and Metafiction* (1979)—an expansion of his *The Fabulators* (1967); James M. Mellard, *The Exploded Form: The Modernist Novel in America* (1980); and Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction* (1984). For an account of metafiction from a feminist viewpoint, see Joan Douglas Peters, *Feminist Metafiction and the Evolution of the British Novel* (2002). Refer also to the entries in this *Glossary* on the literature of the *absurd* and *black humor*.

See *fiction* and *narrative and narratology*. Histories of the novel: E. A. Baker, *History of the English Novel* (12 vols., 1924ff.); Arnold Kettle's Marxist survey, *An Introduction to the English Novel* (2 vols., 1951); Dorothy Van Ghent, *The English Novel: Form and Function* (1953); Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (1957); Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740* (1987; 2nd ed., 2002); J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (1990); Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (1990); Emory Elliott, ed., *The Columbia History of the American Novel* (1991); and John Richetti, ed., *The Columbia History of the British Novel* (1994). *The Novel*, ed. Franco Moretti (2 vols., 2006), consists of essays by many critics on the history, forms, and themes of the novel as an international literary type. Michael McKeon, ed., *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach* (2000), gathers essays in literary criticism of the novel, from its beginnings to the present. On the art of the novel: Percy Lubbock, *The Craft of Fiction* (1921); E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927); and three later influential books—Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending* (1968); Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (rev. 1983); and David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction* (1992). *The Theory of the Novel*, ed. Philip Stevick (1967), is a collection of influential essays by various critics. The Czech émigré writer Milan Kundera has written three notable meditations on the novel in Europe: *Testaments Betrayed: An Essay in Nine Parts* (1995), *The Art of the Novel* (2003), and *The Curtain: An Essay in Seven Parts* (2006). For a stimulating discussion of the elements of fiction such as *realism, metaphor, sympathy, character,* and *point of view*, see James Wood, *How Fiction Works* (2008).

For additional types of the novel, see *absurd, literature of the; detective story; fantastic literature; Gothic novel; graphic novel; magic realism; novel of sensibility; novelette; realism and naturalism; romance novel; science fiction; utopias and dystopias*. For features of the novel, see *atmosphere; character and characterization; confidant; distance and involvement; frame story; local color; narration, grammar of; persona, tone, and voice; plot; point of view; realism and naturalism; setting; stock character; stock situations; stream of consciousness*.