

A. Zhararova

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH WRITERS

Literature is a mirror of a nation, its reflection, its soul and heart. Literature is an essential part of our daily life. Literature is a term used to describe written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, "literature" is used to describe anything from creative writing to more technical or scientific works, but the term is most commonly used to refer to works of the creative imagination, including works of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction. Literature represents a language or a people: culture and tradition. But, literature is more important than just a historical or cultural artifact. Literature introduces us to new worlds of experience. We learn about books and literature; we enjoy the comedies and the tragedies of poems, stories, and plays; and we may even grow and evolve through our literary journey with books. Ultimately, we may discover meaning in literature by looking at what the author says and how he/she says it. We may interpret the author's message. In academic circles, this decoding of the text is often carried out through the use of literary theory, using a mythological, sociological, psychological, historical, or other approach. Whatever critical paradigm we use to discuss and analyze literature, there is still an artistic quality to the works. Literature is important to us because it speaks to us, it is universal, and it affects us. Even when it is ugly, literature is beautiful.

British literature is quite rich. Eliza Acton, (1799–1859), poet and cookery writer, Harold Acton, (1904–1994), writer and scholar, Paul Adam, (born 1958), novelist, Douglas Adams, (1952–2001), novelist and scriptwriter, Richard Adams, (born 1920), novelist, Sarah Flower Adams, (1805–1848), poet and hymn writer, Donald Adamson, (born 1939), author and historian, Arthur St. John Adcock, (1864–1930), novelist and editor, Fleur Adcock, (born 1934), poet, Joseph Addison, (1672–1719), essayist and poet, *The Spectator*, Percy Addleshaw, (pen name Percy Hemingway, 1866–1916), writer and poet, Joan Aiken, (1924–2004), novelist, Arthur Aikin, (1783–1854), science writer, Lucy Aikin, (1781–1864), children's writer, biographer and writer on history, this is not the full list of outstanding British writers. Literature is a life, like an alive thing, it is born, develops and enlarges. Contemporary British Literature also is not an exception. Look at the distinguished British writers of today. While it is impossible to rank the

most important authors in contemporary literature, here is a list of ten important (English language) authors with some biographical notes and links to more information about them and their work.

1. Isabel Allende. Chilean-American author Isabel Allende wrote her debut novel, *House of Spirits* to great acclaim in 1982. The novel began as a letter to her dying grandfather and is a work of magical realism charting the history of Chile. Allende began writing *House of Spirits* on January 8th, and subsequently has begun all her books on that day. Chilean Author, Isabelle Allende was born on August 2, 1942 in Peru. In the 1960s and 1970s, Allende worked as a Journalist for a number of publications in both Chile and Venezuela. A coup in Chile in 1973 sent Allende into exile in Venezuela and spurred her towards writing literature. Her first novel, "The House of the Spirits," was published in 1982. Since that time, she's written many novels and collections of short stories for which she's won numerous awards around the world. The name of her recent work is *My Invented Country*, 2003.

2. Margaret Atwood. Canadian author Margaret Atwood has numerous critically-acclaimed novels to her credit, most recently *Oryx and Crake* and *The Penelopiad* (2005). She is known for her feminist themes, but her prolific output of work spans both form and genre. Margaret Atwood spent much of the early years of her childhood living in the Ontario wilderness, where her father worked as an entomologist. Her family moved to Toronto when she was 11 years old, which was when Atwood finally attended school full-time. From an early age Atwood was a gifted writer. She began writing at the age of six and committed to pursuing writing as a career when she was 16. Atwood studied at Victoria College, University of Toronto, completed a master's degree at Radcliffe College, and subsequently studied at Harvard for two years after that. She married in 1968 and divorced in 1973. Thereafter, she entered into a longterm relationship with fellow Canadian novelist Graeme Gibson, with whom she moved back to the Toronto area and in 1976 gave birth to their daughter, Eleanor Jess Atwood Gibson. Atwood published her first book of poetry in 1964 and has published several more since, the most recent being *The Door* (2007). Throughout her career she has tended to alternate between writing poetry and prose. She has several short story collections to her name, as well as

numerous novels, which tend towards satirical commentary on society, oftentimes in the guise of speculative fiction. The Handmaid's Tale (1985) is perhaps Atwood's best known novel and emblematic of the social criticism for which Atwood is famous. The Handmaid's Tale is the winner of the 1987 Arthur C. Clarke award and the 1985 Governor General's Award. It is set in a near-future dystopia in which the United States has been overthrown by the Republic of Gilead, a racist and chauvinistic society in which the main character and narrator, a woman called Offred, is kept as a concubine ("handmaid") for reproductive purposes. Oryx and Crake (2003) similarly showcases Atwood's prowess with social commentary in a post-apocalyptic, speculative fiction centered around scientific technology that has spiraled out of control and the resulting dystopia. Margaret Atwood's September 2009 novel, The Year of the Flood, is set in a landscape concurrent to that of Oryx and Crake and contains some of the same characters.

3. Jonathan Franzen. Winner of the National Book Award for his 2001 novel, The Corrections, and a frequent contributor to The New Yorker magazine, Jonathan Franzen is also the author of a 2002 books of essays entitled How to Be Alone and a 2006 memoir, The Discomfort Zone. Jonathan Franzen was born in a suburb of Chicago and raised in Webster Groves, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. He graduated from Swarthmore College in 1981 and studied thereafter at the Freie Universität in Berlin on a Fulbright scholarship. Jonathan Franzen's recent novels have been hailed as literary masterpieces. Both The Corrections and Freedom are sprawling, realist novels about the deterioration of the family in suburban, middle class America, as was his 1988 debut novel, The Twenty-Seventh City. When The Corrections, Franzen's third novel, was selected for Oprah Winfrey's book club in 2001, Franzen's response was famously unenthusiastic, essentially declining the Oprah nod. Much media attention followed Oprah's retraction of her invitation for Franzen to appear on the show, from which The Corrections quickly benefitted, becoming one of decade's best selling literary novels. The Corrections won both the 2001 National Book Award for Fiction and the 2002 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for fiction. In 2002, Franzen published a collections of essays, How to Be Alone, and in 2006, a memoir titled The Discomfort Zone. Freedom (2010) is his fourth and most recent novel. Jonathan Franzen's Books: The Twenty-Seventh City (1988), Strong Motion (1992), The Corrections

(2001), How to Be Alone (2002), The Discomfort Zone (2006), Freedom (2010).

4. Ian McEwan. British writer Ian McEwan started winning literary awards with his first book, First Love, Last Rites (1976) and never stopped. Atonement (2002) won several awards and is being made into a movie, and Saturday (2005) won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. British author, Ian McEwan, was born in Aldershot, England in 1948. The son of a military man, McEwan spent his childhood abroad in various locales in Africa, Asian, and Europe. In 1998, McEwan was awarded the Booker Prize for Amsterdam, and his 2001 novel, Atonement, was nominated for the Booker. His 2005 novel is entitled Saturday and recounts a single day in the life of a successful English neurosurgeon. Ian McEwan's fiction includes: First Love, Last Rites 1975, In Between the Sheets 1978, The Cement Garden 1978, The Comfort of Strangers 1981, The Child in Time 1987, The Innocent 1990, Black Dogs 1992, The Daydreamer 1994, The Short Stories 1995, Enduring Love 1997, Amsterdam 1998, Atonement 2001, Saturday 2005 and others.

5. David Mitchell. English novelist David Mitchell is known for his tendency toward experimental structure. In his first novel, Ghostwritten (1999), he uses nine narrators to tell the story and 2004's Cloud Atlas is a novel comprised of six interconnected stories. Mitchell won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize for Ghostwritten, was shortlisted for the Booker Prize for number9dream (2001) and Cloud Atlas, and is on the Booker longlist for Black Swan Green (2006). As a child, Mitchell spent hours alone reading. His favorite books were Willard Price adventure books. As he told the New York Times, "They'd be highly politically incorrect now. Amazonian adventure. South Sea adventure. Two brave young white boys from New York, actually. And they'd go all over the world, defeat evil plots and loot the local ecosphere for their father's zoo back in New York State." At 18, Mitchell backpacked through India and Nepal with a girlfriend before beginning his studies of English and American Literature at the University of Kent. While at university, Mitchell babysat the sons of a professor. He wrote bedtime stories for the boys and mimic different literary styles in so doing, forshadowing the stylistic play he would later show in Cloud Atlas. In his 20s, Mitchell taught English as a second language in England, Sicily, and Hiroshim, Japan. In his free time, he worked on his first novel - a story containing 365 chapters, 20 subplots and scores of

characters - which was never published. His first published novel, *Ghostwritten* (1999), was similarly complex, with nine narrators in nine locations telling interlocking stories. *Ghostwritten* won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize and was shortlisted for the Guardian First Book Award. Both *number9 dream* (2001) and the structurally remarkable *Cloud Atlas* (2004) were shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. In 2006, Mitchell wrote the semi-autobiographical *Black Swan Green* and in 2010, *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*, an historical novel set at a Dutch East Indies Company trading post in early nineteenth century Japan. David Mitchell's *Novels: Ghostwritten* (1999), *number9 dream* (2001), *Cloud Atlas* (2004), *Black Swan Green* (2006), *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* (2010).

6. Toni Morrison. Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) was named best novel of the past 25 years in a 2006 New York Times Book Review survey. The novel won the Pulitzer Prize in 1988, and Toni Morrison, whose name has become synonymous with African American literature, won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993. Born Chloe Anthony Wofford, in 1931 in Lorain (Ohio), the second of four children in a black working-class family. Displayed an early interest in literature. Studied humanities at Howard and Cornell Universities, followed by an academic career at Texas Southern University, Howard University, Yale, and since 1989, a chair at Princeton University. She has also worked as an editor for Random House, a critic, and given numerous public lectures, specializing in African-American literature. She made her debut as a novelist in 1970, soon gaining the attention of both critics and a wider audience for her epic power, unerring ear for dialogue, and her poetically-charged and richly-expressive depictions of Black America. A member since 1981 of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, she has been awarded a number of literary distinctions, among them the Pulitzer Prize in 1988. She won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993. Her notable work: *Beloved*, 1988, Pulitzer Prize in Fiction.

7. Haruki Murakami. Son of a Buddhist priest, Japanese author Haruki Murakami first struck a chord with *A Wild Sheep Chase* in 1982, a novel steeped in the genre of magical realism which he would make his own over the coming decades. Murakami's most popular work among Westerners is *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, though 2005's *Kafka on the Shore* met with success in this country, as well. The English version of Murakami's most recent novel, *After Dark*, is slated for release in 2007. Murakami is also a devoted marathon

runner, and he writes about both writing and running in his 2008 work of nonfiction, *What I Talk About Running*. Newcomers to his Murakami's fiction may want to start with *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, Murakami's the most surreal of Murakami's novels and widely regarded as his best. Haruki Murakami - Recommended Reading: *1Q84* (2011), *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running* (2008), *Kafka on the Shore* (2005), *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1997), *Norwegian Wood* (2000), *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (1991), *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1989).

8. Philip Roth. Philip Roth seems to have won more book awards than any other American writer alive. Most recently he won the Sidewise Award for Alternate History for *The Plot Against America* (2005) and a PEN/Nabokov Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2006. In *Everyman* (2006), Roth's 27th novel, he sticks to one of his familiar themes: what it's like growing old Jewish in America. Roth won one literary prize after another for a succession of four books in the 1990's: *Patrimony* won the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1991, *Operation Shylock* won the PEN/Faulkner in 1993, *Sabbath's Theater* won the National Book Award in 1995, and *American Pastoral* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1998. Roth has continued to be as prolific in recent years. In 2004, Roth penned *The Plot Against America*, an alternative history in which he posited the notion of Charles Lindbergh's presidential campaign victory in 1940 and the ensuing anti-semitic policies enacted in the United States. *The Plot Against America* was followed with *Everyman* in 2006, a short meditation on mortality. 2007's *Exit Ghost*, a return to the Zuckerman novels in which Nathan Zuckerman returns to his hometown of New York to find how everything has changed, is purported to be the last of the Zuckerman novels. *Indignation* (2008), Philip Roth's 29th book, follows a young Jewish man from New Jersey to college in Ohio as he tries to avoid being drafted for service in the Korean War. Philip Roth's Recent Works: *The Plot Against America* (2004), *Everyman* (2006), *Exit Ghost* (2007), *Indignation* (2008), *The Humbling* (2009), *Nemesis* (2010).

9. Zadie Smith. Literary Critic James Wood coined the term "hysterical realism" in 2000 to describe Zadie Smith's hugely successful debut novel, *White Teeth*, which Smith agreed was a "painfully accurate term for the sort of overblown, manic prose to be found in novels like my own *White Teeth*." Her third novel, *On Beauty*, was shortlisted for the Booker Prize and won the 2006 Orange Prize for Fiction. Smith aspired to a career

in journalism and studied English Literature at Cambridge. While in college she published several short stories, an initial success that led her to secure an agent for the novel she was writing. She completed that first novel, *White Teeth*, while still at Cambridge and published it after graduation in 2000. *White Teeth* which tackles issues of race and the experience of immigrants in working class and middle class England, became an instant bestseller and won numerous literary prizes including the 2000 Whitbread Book Award and the Guardian First Book Award. In 2002, Smith published *The Autograph Man*, which follows the fortunes of a Jewish-Chinese purveyor of autographs. *The Autograph Man*, while successful, was far less so than Smith's debut. *On Beauty* (2005) was Smith's third novel, and once again focused on the immigrant experience, this time of a mixed-race British-American family living in the U.S. *On Beauty* won the 2006 Orange Prize for Fiction and was shortlisted for the 2005 Man Booker Prize. In 2009, Smith published *Changing My Mind*, a collection of previously published essays largely about writing and reading. Books by Zadie Smith: *White Teeth* (2000), *The Autograph Man* (2002), *On Beauty* (2005), *Changing My Mind* (2009).

10. John Updike. *Terrorist* (2006) is the most recent in the twenty-some novels John Updike has to his credit. His four *Rabbit* Angstrom novels were named in 2006 among the best novels of the past 25 years in a *New York Times* Book Review survey. John Updike's first book of poetry, *The Carpentered Hen and Other Tame Creatures*, was published in 1958, and his first novel, *The Poorhouse Fair*, was published in 1959. In 1960, Updike published *Rabbit Run*, the first of the "Rabbit" novels (*Rabbit Run*; *Rabbit Redux*; *Rabbit Is Rich*; *Rabbit At Rest*; and *Rabbit Remembered*). The book was an instant

success and established Updike's reputation as one of the most significant contemporary American novelists. In 1963, Updike received the National Book Award for *The Centaur*, and the following year he was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, a post that got him invited on a State Department sponsored cultural exchange tour of Eastern Europe. In 1981, *Rabbit Is Rich* received the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, and ten years later, Updike received a second Pulitzer for *Rabbit at Rest*. Updike was awarded both the National Medal of Art from President George Herbert Walker Bush in 1989 and the National Medal for the Humanities from George W. Bush in 2003. Updike wrote and published over 60 books, including novels and collections of short stories, poetry, and essays. *The Early Stories 1953-1975* was a large anthology of the author's short stories which won the 2004 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, and in 2006 he was awarded the Rea Award for the Short Story. In 2006, Updike published *Terrorist* and in 2008, *The Widows of Eastwick*.

As we have already mentioned, literature is a life, it never stops, it breathes, increases. Nowadays English language is a global one, everyone is eager to learn, to know, to master it, because especially English language helps to open many doors ahead. Certainly, it is a vital, key language. We expect much from contemporary British literature. These days reader knows a lot and he feels like knowing more and more. I think, contemporary British literature quite coincides his requirements.

* * *

Мақала қазіргі Ұлыбритания жазушыларының шығармашылығына арналған.

* * *

Статья посвящена работам современных английских писателей.

Д. С. Ибраева

ЖЫРАУЛАР ПОЭЗИЯСЫНДАҒЫ ҰЛТТЫҚ ДҮНИЕТАНЫМ

Көркем шығармадағы қаламгердің қоршаған ортаға, айналадағы дүниеге, қоғамға көзқарасы, оның эстетикалық идеалы, белгілі бір қоғамдық құбылысқа, тарихи оқиғаларға берген бағасы оның дүниетанымынан хабар береді. Ақын дүниетанымы оның өз шығармасынан көрініс тауып отыратын, жасаған өнер туындысының табысты, жемісті болуына үлкен әсерін тигі-

зетін маңызды факторлардың бірі. Көркем шығармада көтерілген тақырыптың өзектілігі, сондылығы, ондағы айтылған ойдың маңыздылығы жазушы дүниетанымының қаншалықты деңгейде екенін аңғартады.

«Ақын, - дейді Белинский, - ең алдымен адам, одан кейін өз ұлтының азаматы, өз заманының ұлы. Халқы мен заманының рухы