UNIT 4 CHARACTERS AS CHARACTERISATIONS

Structure

4.0   OBJECTIVES

The aim is this unit is to give you an insight into Fielding's attitude to society as exemplified in his portrayal of comic and realistic characters.

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Characters in fiction refer to actual men and women in society. They are visualised by the author in human and social terms. While reading a novel, you would have come across long descriptions of the appearances and habits of important characters. The author also gives information about their age, station in life and relationship with one another. However, very soon we start hearing them speak in the first person which means that they are freed from the descriptive mould. The dialogue assigned to them puts them into a situation in which they have to carry out their specific plan of action. This 'plan of action' is loosely called the plot of which all characters are a part.

The plot, then, is a plan or sequence of incidents which is important for us largely because it has men and women in it. Good writers pay great attention to the visualisation of these men and women. They work and rework them to make the account appealing and realistic. They also select those aspects of society for depiction which directly relate to the characters. All aspects of the world captured by the author combine so well with one another that the work gains an identity of its own. This is the problem. It is immensely difficult to separate one part of a work for consideration while others are kept out of focus.

Oneness and Indivisibility of a Work

Are there parts or segments in a literary work which can be understood in separation? My answer is that a literary work can be considered a complete and unified whole and may appeal to the reader as such. We can go to the extent of comparing the work with a living organism to stress its oneness and integrity. There is a point in saying that a book cannot be split up in parts unless we want to "murder it." Harsh words these, but we know that

the effect of a literary piece on the reader is of a different kind than that of a philosophical treatise. One way to explain this difference is to say that a novel or a poem is indivisible and has what can be called its inviolability.

But what do we make of the fact, while reading a book, that a specific aspect of it draws our attention more clearly than the others? To put it differently, how does it happen that in our discussion about texts, certain areas get exclusive emphasis while the rest are more or less entirely ignored? Some of these areas can be identified as characters, the opening and ending as well as the process through which the action moves inexorably towards the ending, one or more recurring references (symbols, metaphors, myths) and the specific presence and role of the author. I am talking of the class-room discussion or the seminar format under which the 'serious' readers exchange their individual impressions about a work with one another and assess the validity of one impression against the other.

When I say "in our discussions," I have to be aware of the significant encroachment the serious student of literature makes on the work's territory, its world with diverse segments of life, meaning thereby that "divisions" and "separations" of the kind reflected in "impressions" actually take place not in the text but in the mind of the reader. All discussions about literature, the whole critical enterprise stands upon this exertion and effort of the reader to "make sense" of a book in her or his individual context. A consideration of "aspects and parts" — they are arbitrary divisions — of a book helps us as its critical readers to enter into its nature and spirit. No doubt the divisions contribute mightily to our comprehension of the author's urge to share his or her response to the prevailing environment. It is this urge, this response of the particular author, which constitutes the work's distinctiveness or inviolability – the unifier of the work being its maker. We understand a lot more acutely the author's world, social and cultural, through his work, his particular response to it.

The Common Reader versus the Critic

But there is another format, that of the comprehension of a literary piece by the "common reader," the educated sections in the larger society, as different from the "specialist reader," the student of literature and the critic. The common reader may not be "professionally" interested in seeing those nuances which presumably take our response to a higher plane, he or she may instead seek a direct link of the work with the world surrounding him or her. This happens many a time in the case of the works which reflect specifically on contemporary issues. The common reader may feel that the book in question — the poem, the novel, the play — contains a message and a statement about the actual situation of the time. The question is : How do we as serious "uncommon" readers of literature deal with such an attitude?

In my view, the idea of literature as carrying a message should always be cherished, though we notice that most of the criticism coming from the western academe has discarded it. The academy in the first world, that is how they have to be called by us, tends to divide the human creative-intellectual endeavour in separate compartments — economy, politics, philosophy, print and audio-visual media, ideology, literature, theatre, linguistics, the arts, etc. Under this scheme, the message has been assigned to politics, ideology or the media. Literary criticism, on the other hand, has come to gradually constitute the "internal areas," the linguistic-textual aspects of a book. But can we, the members of a third world society which stands deprived of even the basic means of subsistence, afford the luxury of a class-room or seminar format? In fact, Raymond Williams reminds the reader in the developed world of the west that literature should be firmly placed "in society."

4.2 | PROBLEMS OF CHARACTERISATION

To my mind, characters afford important clues to the author's attitude and response. They enlighten us about the way the author's mind works in the process of understanding human personality within a particular system. But before I comment on a character or a set of characters in *Tom Jones* from the angle of human personality, I wish to state that a character in a work of fiction is always a symbol, a concretised pattern of social behaviour. What I imply is that social behaviour can be a good subject of comment – you can call a particular behaviour good, bad or just acceptable. This goes against the notion of that character who cannot be analysed except in psychological terms. An individuality captured in a novel has nothing to do with a flesh and blood human being – it is a represented individuality, not an actual one. Let me explain further. A character's representation or what is called characterisation reflects essentially upon (tells about) its representer or creator — the author — and not upon that 'personality' which a novel appears to contain within itself. Arnold Kettle struggles with this idea throughout his two-volume study *An Introduction to the English Novel*. But Kettle does not resolve the dilemma between what he calls "life" and "pattern" and merely settles down to accept what he considers two separate types of fictional works under the categories of "life" and "pattern." Kettle has argued that there can be a certain type of character which engages the attention of the reader in realistic-experiential terms – the reader feels the way the character does – and that the reader enters the emotional world of the character. For Kettle, this is "life" as captured by a novelist. Kettle's category of "pattern" the opposite of "life," stands for the author's moral or social viewpoint. To my mind, it does not vitally matter whether a character has more or less of "life" in the sense Kettle understands the term. I also add that recognition of "life" in a character in fiction may induce us to unnecessarily explore his or her "psychological depths." How does a critic do it? Of course, we read a number of books which analyse a character's mind, going, for instance, into the reasons why Maggie in *The Mill on the Floss* decides to run away with Stephen Guest. However, the question is whether we explore her mind or study the factors (concerning society, family, etc.) that influenced her perception. Such a critical exercise tells us not about Maggie but George Eliot. I reiterate that the character in fiction is finally an extension of the author's consciousness. On the other hand, the reader, in the course of reading a novel, gets acquainted with the author's understanding and point of view.

4.2.1 Point of View in Fielding

In Fielding's case, identifying the attitude is not a problem. Unlike most English novelists, Fielding clearly states his socio-ideological position. When he as an author does not like a particular character or is critical about an issue, he offers sharp comments to tell his disapproval. Of course, while doing so, he adopts the comic mode and we have to admit that his repertoire of comic devices is immense. Nevertheless, none among the readers is ever left in doubt about the author's critical stance. If found unacceptable, things and people are ridiculed and exposed unambiguously in his works. It is also to be asserted that more than the comic devices and dramatic presentations of events and happenings, it is Fielding's remarks which enlighten and alert the reader. To say that Fielding is always ironical and seldom forthright in his remarks is wrong. The fact is that his comments are largely informed by that deep commitment to virtuous conduct which is the result of his strong involvement in social affairs. Consider the 'non-comic' and quite assertive tone of this statement : "I would not willingly give offence to any, especially to men who are warm in the cause of virtue or religion. I hope, therefore, no man will, by the grossest misunderstanding, or perversion, of my meaning, misrepresent me, as endeavouring to cast any ridicule on the greatest perfections of human nature; and which do indeed, alone purify and enoble the heart of man, and raise him above the brute

creation" (130). To miss out on this serious aspect of comment which the author shares with his reader would deprive us of much which in Fielding's view is the wisdom of human life.This forms an important part of his character-presentation.

4.2.2 Typical and Individual Characters

The two concepts of the 'typical' and 'individual' can be gainfully employed to understand Fielding's characterisation. Typicality stands for the broader traits of a person's behaviour. Under this view, a clergyman as a member of the profession and a maidservant would behave as all clergymen and other maidservants of the period. In the use of typicality, the writer's aim is to suggest that a society largely moulds and shapes the behaviour of its members. The men and women living at a time bear the stamp of their society and its ways. While representing characters this way in a work, the writer implies that there isn't much need to explore the deep urges and desires of people. In this sense, the typicality of a character becomes a significant means of gaining insights into the reality of the particular historical epoch to which the author belongs. But the concept of typicality by itself does not appreciate specificity and distinctiveness in a character — it swears too much by the 'general.'

The "individual" in a character could means two things: firstly, it denotes that sensuousness which draws the reader close to the character, establishes an imaginative link betweeen the two and the reader "becomes one" with it. Authors achieve it through the psychological projection of characters in which not just the decisions taken but the processes through which the particular person reached his or her resolutions are communicated to the reader. There is a whole aesthetic argument based upon a character's "individuality" and "sensuousness" which certifies that character's, or even the whole novel's, authenticity. This stands in opposition to another character who is merely typical and, therefore, stands for an idea. This, as I see it, is a narrow view of the concept of "individuality." If we adopted this view, we would be constrained to believe that Fielding's novels, and the characters in them, lack that verve as well as delicate sense of feeling in a situation which is the hallmark of intensely human writing. More, we might even visualise opposite polarities between the typical and the individual, the former standing for the social and the latter for the human.

The second meaning of the "individual" has greater validity, in that it points towards the particular phenomenon of which a character is a part. In fact, we cannot separate a character from the larger phenomenon under whose specific (because historically created at a juncture) rules it operates. Fiction criticism should go into this relationship between the character and the phenomenon and find out the way in which the two "create" a specificity together. Thus we see that the peculiar pattern of events presented by an author may or may not impart "sensuousness" and "authenticity" in human terms to its actors, it may not show them as "breathing" and "living," and yet engage the reader's attention in its descriptions because of the close identification the presented pattern may establish between the reality of the work and that of the reader. Do we not generally think of our own world, go over our fears and predilections while reading a good novel? In this sense, Fielding's characters may in fact be more "real" and "un-theoretical" than, for instance, those of Richardson's.

4.2.3 Jenny Jones's Character

To illustrate this, let me deal with Jenny Jones's character in *Tom Jones* at some length. Jenny Jones has been shown in three phases — as a young woman when she found herself to be much brighter than others in the neighbourhood; as a middle-aged person when she met Jones for the first time at Mazard-Hill; and finally as one surrounded by

suspicious glances but quite on her own in London. To begin with, let us address the question: what could be the motive of the author in presenting her in Somersetshire as a keen and intelligent student as well as a sensitive individual? The author derives a great deal of pleasure from her virtuosity which in a mere maidservant would be out of place. This makes her highly unpopular in the neighbourhood, particularly among women who feel threatened by her qualities of mind. That she wins close intimacy and friendship with Miss Allworthy is proof of her impressive accomplishments. Does Fielding wish to impart those "comic-heroic" qualities to her as a character which he visualises in a number of struggling individuals from the lower classes — consider Fanny, Joseph and Parson Adams in *Joseph Andrews*? My answer would be in the affirmative since Fielding chooses Jenny Jones as a character to emphasise a high degree of dynamism and agility. Also, is it not the author's purpose to use her as a fictional device through which the blind prejudices as well as stupidities of the majority of people can also be pinpointed? Add to this the virtue of patience and forbearance discernible in her behaviour when Mr. Allworthy so elaborately castigates her for the sin that she has *not* committed. Her loyalty to Miss Allworthy is not ordinary. The quality of her sincerity to a trapped woman would do even Sophia Western proud. Of course, the reader is to believe till the very end that she is the mother of Tom. Keeping this in view, it is not hard to connect some of the traits and abilities of Tom with those of Jenny as his "mother," strengthening the assumption that the mother of the protagonist has an importance of her own and is by that logic a character of prominence. Her expulsion by Allworthy from the neighbourhood of Paradise Hall is the height of attention she has received in the beginning of the novel. And the problem in the first phase of Jenny's career is that just when she has raised extreme expectations as an important character, she is made to disappear (as Jenny Jones) from the world of the novel forever. Again, the question is : why? As we view her second phase, we find that Jenny has undergone radical change and become an altogether different person.

It cannot be said that Fielding's characters are static, that they tend to retain throughout the novel their initial shape and form. Some of the characters may be of that kind, they may play a simple unchanging role, conceived as they are in the "humorous" mould. It is a functional role, assigned to serve particular demands in their case. This we will consider later in the discussion. What I say at this point is that Jenny Jones as Mrs. Waters cannot be easily recognised in view of so much happening to her in the previous nineteen years. For instance, she has acquired a new name not just formally and technically. Instead, she has over the long period become a typical army officer's woman — unsettled, sexually exploited, stupid, insensitive. Where are those qualities of head which put her substantially above most women in Somersetshire? What has remained of the old person in Mrs. Waters is the habit of striking easy relationships on the sly. The change is from an intelligent young woman to a clever calculating middle-aged woman. Fielding not only recognises this change consciously, and remembers the kind of person Mrs. Waters was when young, he also keeps in view the social process in which the transformation has occurred. Even ordinarily, Fielding is fond of charting the life-course of characters, i.e., sharing information with the reader about significant past happenings in the life of characters. While there may be other fictional purposes such as intensifying the plot-structure behind these numerous discourses Fielding presents, one quite important motive in the present case is that the author puts almost the whole blame for the moral-mental decline in Jenny Jones at the door of society. This is done deftly in terms of characterisation under which we see a whole system and structure critiqued through Mrs. Waters. It may as well be said that the crudities and amoral ways in Mrs. Waters are in fact instances of the brutal rigidities of the society in which she has lived and of which she is a mere victim.

Fielding works to a plan as he shows Mrs. Waters caught in the web of circumstances. Think of the situation in which Tom meets her for the first time — a woman "stripped

half-naked, under the hands of a ruffian, who had put his garter round her neck and was endeavouring to draw her up to a tree" (440-1). She faces an attempt at robbery by a desperate criminal in a forest where chances of getting help are remote. The atmosphere is "wild" in more senses than one. After she has struggled for a while, Mrs. Waters is in a state of total incapacity as she (in torn clothes) is shouting to be saved. This resembles the natural behaviour of an animal to ward off the blow and escape injury. On being rescued, Mrs. Waters turns, almost instantly, into the impulsive mould of sexuality. This seems understandable in those surroundings. The incidents subsequent to this at the Upton inn are hilarious on the surface. Actually, they also take effect under a pattern which is highly oppressive — the threats held by economic subsistence, moral principles, social etiquette, manipulative strategies of the lower people, all forming a sophisticated network at the inn which may be seen as evolved for preventing animals to gain liberty. This I call the general plan elaborately conceived and executed by the author. But the plan is only a plan, a framework. Mrs. Waters as a character may or may not adhere to the code which the framework seeks to impose on the members of society in general. And the strength of Mrs. Waters as a character lies in that she assiduously violates the code while her physical energy is constantly sapped by the intense pressures of struggle. But she is weakened 'physically' by the various assaults from centres of power — a husband in search of an absconding wife, a father closely following (on horse) his daughter so that he can capture her and hand her over to a husband in marriage, a young woman in pursuit of a lover, husband, etc. These not merely threaten Mrs. Waters's privacy with a lover, but also end up in snatching that lover who grows conscious by and by about the value of purity, loyalty and virtue. Looked at from her angle, the Upton inn is a battleground where she loses (physically) most of what she longed to achieve. But she does not give up. If she is a lively and entertaining player at the Upton inn, a highly successful comic character, it is because she has been presented in concrete terms by the author. She breathes. This I call a "concretised" character in whom the typical traits have been highly individualised. I borrow the phrase from Georg Lukacs to call this "concrete typicality" which in my opinion is the strong point of characterisation.

4.2.4   Social Dimension of Incest

In the third and last phase, Mrs. Waters appears just one of the many characters who have converged upon London to be of some use in the resolution of Tom's problems. But, is her presentation of individuality by the author compromised in the process of moving towards the city? I do not think so because in spite of the horror caused by the revelation that she is Jones's mother, she strikes the reader as a person who committed the sin of incest with the least awareness. Secondly, incest has individualistic-moralistic overtones — the individual is condemned to remain in a mental state of sin by a society whose moral code he/she has wilfully or otherwise violated. But it is to be interpreted and judged in a society which has given birth to much graver distortions of morality and ethics. There is a kind of primitivism in incest and the act points towards that distant past when relationships had not yet become fully and properly defined, and that this had given a vague and mythical dimension to a violation of social codes. On the other hand, the eighteenth century London society hides much moral-sexual distortion beneath the veil of secrecy and gradually reduces male-female interaction to a self-seeking manipulative level. To put it more clearly, hypocrisy is a much greater sin for Fielding than incest because in the former case, there is a falsity and dishonesty to which an individual consciously commits himself or herself, and society discreetly overlooks the act. However, in the latter case, the individuals involved as well as those sympathetic towards them feel "horrified" and morally "repelled." Fielding as author is quite clear when he says :

Both religion and virtue have received more real discredit from hypocrites, than
the wittiest profligates or infidels could ever cast upon them: nay farther, as these
two, in their purity, are rightly called the bands of civil society, and are indeed
the greatest of blessings; so when poisoned and corrupted with fraud, pretence
and affectation, they have become the worst of civil curses and have enabled men
to perpetrate the most cruel mischiefs to their own species (130-1).

Incest is viewed differently. On knowing that Mrs. Waters, with whom Jones has been to
bed, is none other than Jones's own 'mother' Jenny, Partridge's face looks "paler than
ashes, his eyes fixed in his head, his hair standing on end, and every limb trembling." In
fact, the moral-social code regarding incest gets further established through the feeling of
horror. Soon enough, the reader gets to know that those considered guilty of the "act"
were innocent. Retrieval of Tom and Mrs. Waters from the tight spot – it is a different
thing that Mrs. Waters knew all along that she had never mothered a child – makes all
heave a sigh of relief. Again, incest to Fielding in the last pages of the novel is an act that
is comitted only once or a few times, but an act nevertheless. Compare this with the
goings on in London under cover and which the London society wilfully ignores. We can
scarcely term Lady Bellaston's efforts at engaging Tom as a lover an act. Instead, it is an
elaborately planned practice.

4.3 REALISTIC AND COMIC CHARACTERS

4.3.1 Jenny Jones—a Character in the Realistic Mould

The question we can pose is: How does Fielding characterise Jenny Jones as Mrs. Waters
in the third phase? Firstly, she is not as much in focus in this phase as she was at Upton.
Her role towards the end of the novel becomes totally subservient to the interests of Tom
Perhaps, she has now lost the capacity to substantially influence the course of action in
the novel. Why? Is it because the novel is supposed primarily to be the story of Tom and
Sophia? To say that Fielding is interested in showing how Sophia and Tom finally
manage to get married would be to miss the whole point. Of course, apparently the novel
places Tom and Sophia at its centre, but at a deeper level, it is about the world with
which they are confronted, the world in which they have to live and under whose logic
they have to construct a relationship. Jenny Jones also ends up getting a clearance from
Mr. Allworthy about her transgressions. The question can still be asked : Where would
Jenny Jones go now? Tom's difficulties have been overcome as he turns out to be the
nephew of Mr. Allworthy. As a consequence, distinction of birth is bestowed upon him.
Having seen that Tom is a respectable person of the gentleman class, Squire Western
loses no time agreeing to give his daughter's hand to him. But the whole arrangement,
the whole solution appears to be a mere joke in comparison with what Tom and Sophia
have gone through previously. This is the crux of the matter. Tom and Sophia unite only
comically, with a great deal of wrestling and effort on the part of the author. In a
significant sense, they do not marry because the logic of the specific circumstance does
not permit it, their final fate being as problematic as that of Jenny Jones.

At the same time, Jenny Jones should be understood in terms of her realism, as one who
typifies the fate of all underprivileged women in England. Mark the number of such
women in the novel — Molly, her sisters and mother, the landlady and Susan the
chambermaid at the Upton inn, Mrs. Miller, Nancy, etc., and our view of the hardships
they undergo not merely at the sexual level but also on the economic-social plane is
complete. One can scarcely overlook the hurts that life has given to these women.
Fielding quite vividly presents these women and exhibits a great deal of fellow-feeling
for them. One is struck by Fielding's portrayal of Susan the chambermaid at Upton
whose "lips were so large that no swelling could be perceived in them, and moreover

they were so hard that a fist could hardly make any impression on them" (447). In spite of the humour, the crude violence to which ordinary women were subjected is not lost on us.

Let us remind ourselves that Jenny is one of these women, the only difference is that she is mentally better equipped and can on that strength communicate more impressively with her superiors. Because of this, she receives a hostile response from others. Even the best of men in the novel (Mr. Allworthy) thinks it proper to throw her out of the place altogether on account of the moral outrage she is supposed to have committed. Mr. Allworthy has been given the charge to keep the social surroundings morally clean. The punishment of expulsion is also meted out to Partridge but Jenny Jones is to suffer more than him — being a woman, she is fated to be abused sexually in a world ruled by patriarchal notions — chastity, propriety, loyalty, etc. Keep in mind the ideological environment of England at the time : a woman as privileged and protected as Sophia would invite crude verbal assaults. Consider what Ensign Northerton says about Sophia at the Upton inn : "I knew one Sophy Western that lain-with by half the young fellows at Bath" (342). Squire Western's appreciative remarks about Tom's free and reckless "affairs" with women, his victories and conquests, come to mind.

4.3.2 Characters in the Comic Mould

I have so far talked about Jenny Jones who belongs to the category of realistically drawn characters. These characters face threats and challenges from their society which they are born to bear with. They give that impression. Their tragedy is that the novel is not focused upon them. As a category, these characters form the realistic background, this being their true function. However, the category of "comic" characters is different. They influence the action in a major way. "Comic" would include, apart from Squire Western, Miss Western, Thwackum, Square, Mr. Allworthy and Blifil. Fielding's comprehension of these characters is in terms of an idea, that is along abstract-theoretical lines. They could be defined as Mr. Good, Mr. Spontaneous, Mr. Evil, Mr. Hypocrite, Miss Aggressive, etc. Fielding seems to have evolved a whole concept of the "comic" character. This has little to do with the comedy of humours of the previous century and before. Fielding has departed from the comedy of humours by making extensive use of real and concrete situations in which the action is made to take place. The arena of action is not human nature, the essence of human behaviour on earth which is the human beings' temporal home. That is why events and situations in *Tom Jones* are persistently called "history." If *Tom Jones* were not "history," for instance, but a revelation of human nature for the purpose of preserving it from evil, it would have been a different sort of writing. Fielding tests the efficacy of qualities the comic characters represent in actual surroundings. This enables him to evolve a new kind of characterisation, that which embodies initiative and optimism. Also, he stresses the desirability of these qualities in his own society. The reader is compelled to examine the larger tendencies that characters drawn under this mode symbolise. See the contrast between Jenny and Mrs. Fitzpatrick (realistic mode) on one side and Mr. Allworthy and Blifil (comic mode) on the other.

4.4 LET US SUM UP

Fielding wishes to share with the reader the firm belief that it is possible to attain goodness and virtue in life. Making his comic characters a part of this positive struggle, Fielding shows to the reader the fundamental value of virtuous human conduct. Most of the comic characters in *Tom Jones* taste defeat temporarily or permanently in pursuit of their goal. Yet, all seem to gradually realise the true worth of one or the other moral principle. In the process of fighting along in life, they perceive that virtue in theory is not what it may come out in practice. Mr. Allworthy's humility in the presence of Sophia in

the last book of *Tom Jones* is an eye-opener — he could not "see" whatever happened before his eyes: Tom's parentage, Blifil's machinations, Thwackum's complicity, etc. This is how abstract 'ideas' fail in a world that is the product of a variety of contending motives and perspectives and whose roots are in actual "history." Allworthy's humility is the comic answer to actual threats from social forces which assume not only realistic forms such as Molly, Jenny Jones, Partridge, Mrs. Miller, Lady Bellaston, etc., but also comic forms — Blifil, Thwackum, Squire Western. The two kinds of characters — characterisations — complement each other, they work under a perspective whose basic reference is the attainment of virtue and enlightenment through continuous effort.

4.5 GLOSSARY

Organism : Other important derivatives are organic and organicism. It denotes something living and growing. Society as well as literature are conceived under this in terms of evolving naturally, as if from within. This concept underplays analysis and rational reconstruction.

The common reader : A distinct category of perception, in the twentieth century. Earlier, there was no distinction between the common reader and the specialist. The division has come to gradually acquire ideological overtones. For instance, if literature appeals to the common reader, it has the capacity to influence society. However, the specialist may view literature as just one among many responses – all being subject to examination and comment in the academic-literary world.

Concretised behaviour : Also individuated or individualised behaviour. Human behaviour captured in literature in specific terms. A character presented as no other, as unique. Bringing forth this aspect, the writer takes recourse to a number of factual details.

Life and Pattern : Arnold Kettle's words. He has used the former in the sense of vitality. A character, living and talking, may have a lot of strength and dynamism in him or her. "Pattern" points towards common social traits. Tales with a moral reflect a "pattern," an "idea" that applies to most of the people in life.

Point of view : An important concept in modern criticism theory. According to this, the author's or a character's point of view significantly alters the given reality of a period.

Typical : Originally Karl Marx's word. Georg Lukacs developed the idea considerably. Typical symbolises the larger social aspect without which a literary work would lose its appeal. It relates to character as well as overall representation. We identify with a novel because, according to Lukacs, characters and the narration/description in it tells us about our conditions.

Realistic mode : The mode that draws us towards the actual conditions of a period. A particular experience or happening is at its centre.

Comic mode :	Under this mode, the writer makes broad observations about life and behaviour. The writer's view and purpose have the upper hand in it.

4.6 QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by the term "characters as characterisations"? Do characters in a work of fiction not reflect "actual" men and women in life? How would you relate to the characters in *Tom Jones*? Discuss.

3. How do we reach Fielding's point of view in *Tom Jones*? What role does it play in the shaping of characters and situations in the novel?