



**ALAN SILLITOE'S SATURDAY NIGHT AND SUNDAY MORNING:
A CLASSIC OF WORKING-CLASS FICTION**

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The 'working-class fiction' refers to a kind of historical or contemporary reality. It is a kind of truth. This body of fiction that is partly past history (as in the case of its representation in Dickens's *Hard Times*) and partly contemporary reality (as in the case of Alan Sillitoe's classic novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Evening* (1958), makes use of imitation, imagination and fiction / invention. It is fictive representation of some type of natural discourse. It represents the working-class people's verbal action, reporting, describing and referring.

When it comes to the 20th century English fiction in Great Britain, it is stated that the 20th century fiction began with uncertainties and redefinitions as literary modernism ushered. Once the literary giants, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, Joseph Conrad, E.M. Forster and others finished their innings it was more so. In politics, democracy ushered in leading to the world wars and the end of colonialism. Socialism intensified; and its reflections resulted into the consolidation of Labor Party and its coming to power in the late 1920s. The loose Commonwealth of Nations and then postcolonialism led to multiculturalism. As they say Britain became plural.

The early 20th century English novel began to have experimentation, changing shapes and forms and change in subject matter. The postwar English fiction saw the republication of Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as accepted thing finally. *The Beetles* was another event in literary culture. This dissenting, anarchic, constantly shifting youth culture, which had been preliminarily delineated by Colin MacInnes (1914-76) in his novels *City of Spades* (1957) and *Absolute Beginners* (1959), was galvanically energized in the postwar years. Andrew Sanders adds:

The decade was often hailed, though not universally welcomed, as the era of the 'New Morality'. It was certainly the era of the female contraceptive known popularly since 1960 simply as 'the pill'. In 1956 the influential theatre critic and baiter of Mrs Grundy, Kenneth Tynan (1927-80), had described Jimmy Porter's 'casual promiscuity' as typical enough of the sexual behavior of post-war youth (Sanders 618).

Later John Robinson's *Honest to God* advocated a liberalization of sex relations. The BBC's Reith Lecturer, Professor George Carstairs announced that popular morality was a wasteland 'littered with the debris of broken convictions' because of the emergent concept of sexual relationships 'as a source of pleasure'. The postwar working-class fiction of such writers as Alan Sillitoe, John Braine, Raymond Williams, Sid Chaplin, Nell Dunn, Barry Hines, Germaine Greer and others of the 1960s and 70s reflect all the socio-political problems of England.

Lord Clement Atle's third Labour Government from 1945 was a milestone for working-class people's welfare as well as the British colonies that became independent. In 1956 twenty-year period of economic prosperity began. Already the means of production were nationalized. Sid Chaplin's *The Thin Seam* (1950), Len Doherty's *A Miner's Sons* (1955), John Braine's *Room at the Top* (1957) and Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1957) appeared. Alan Sillitoe wrote a foreword for Tressell's novel *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* in 1955. John Braine was his friend. Sillitoe's own classic novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* appeared in 1958 following by his short story collection *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*. Raymond Williams' *Border Country* appeared in 1960. The 1974's Minor's Strike and Thatcher's Government were milestone in the period. The New Labour