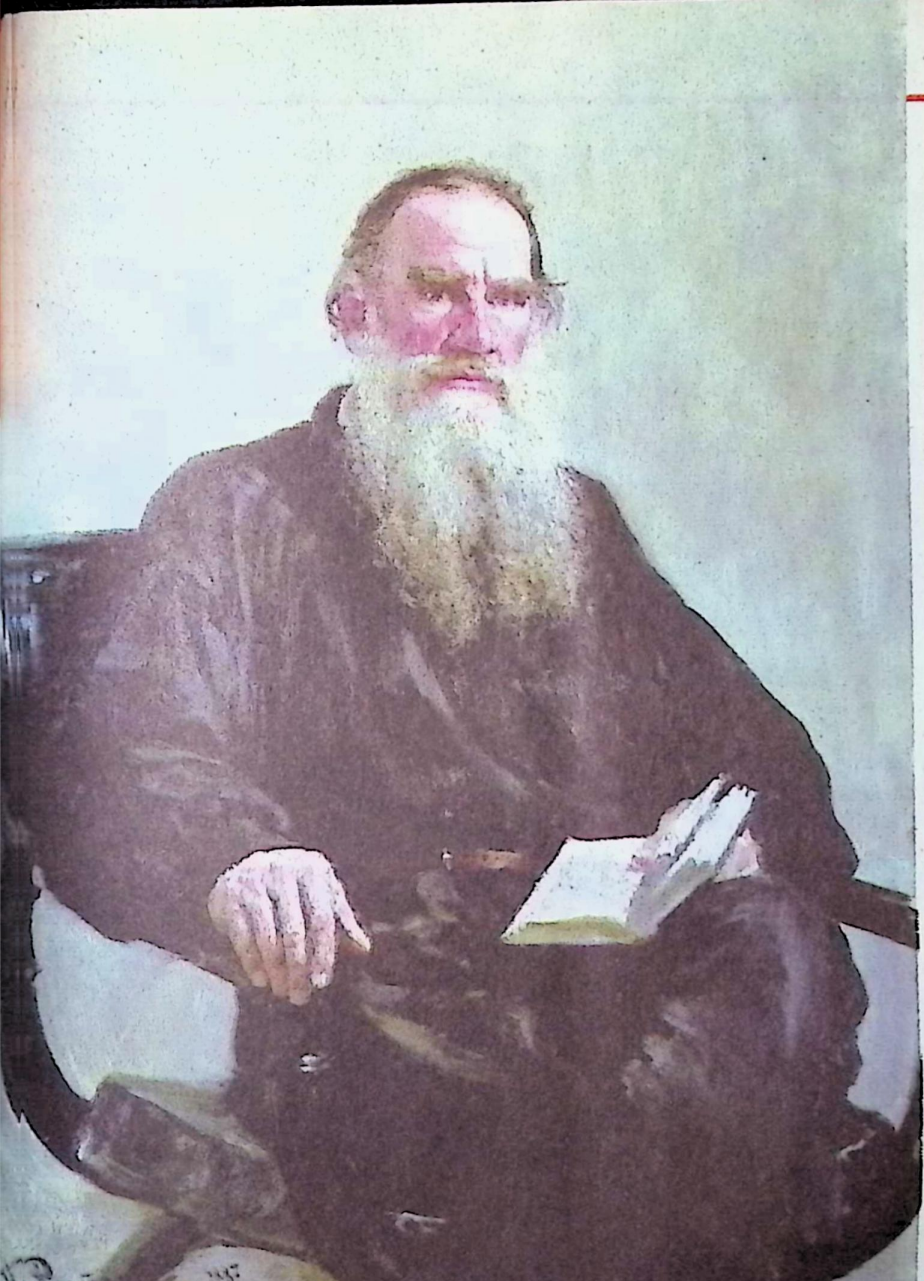
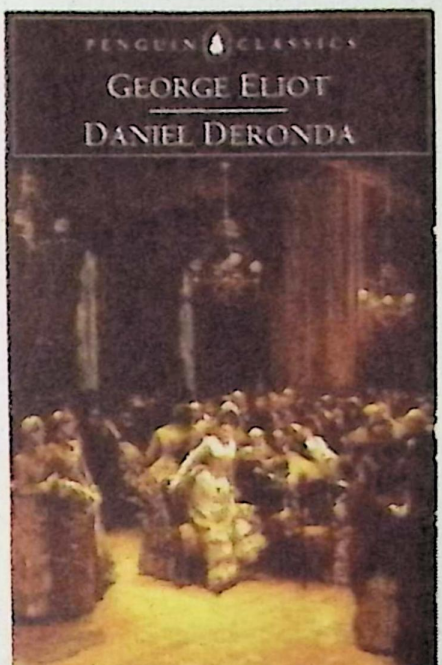
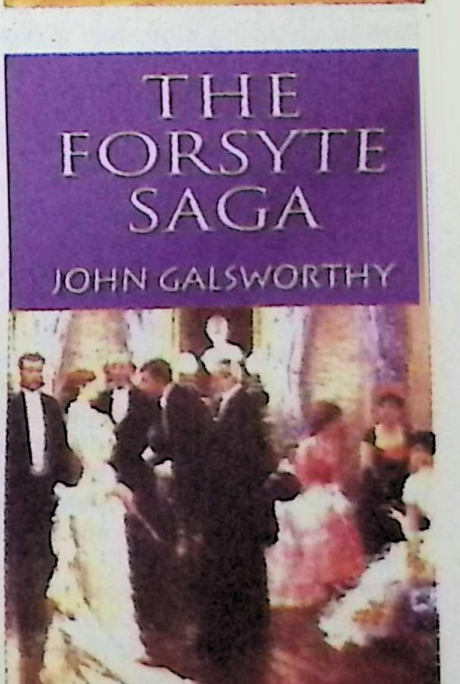


Leo Tolstoy





remains boundless. Shorot's Bengali novels *Shesh Proshno -- The Last Question* and *Charitiraheen -- The Immoral* were stupendous. The outside world has no knowledge of them.

This is by no mean a comprehensive account of my favourite books. But I shall certainly mention the love of my life. I found it in a neglected corner of our dusty DU library-George Eliot's last novel *Daniel Deronda* I had already read *Adam Bede, The Mill on the Floss* and *Middlemarch*, a novel of Tolstoyan magnitude. Inciden tally both Toststoy and Proust read and admired her. Virginia Woolf accused her of not being able to portray the aristocracy with veracity. Nothing could be farther from the truth. When George Eliot had settled down in London with Lewis, her partner, in a house planned by a renowned architect, she embarked upon an elegant life-style, being sought after by the royalty.

Daughter of an uneducated builder, her voice and intonation were those of an aristocrat. The depiction of great houses and their inmates has a sure touch we do not find in Woolf who belongss to the upper middle class. She might have brushed shoulders with the British aristocracy who do not figure in her work, even if they do it is very superficially.

I don't regret doing my Ph.D thesis on this novel hardly read by anyone. Nevertheless it is outstanding. ■