

American Literature

America

- A mixture of wanderers, explorers, travellers, settlers, religious outlaws, landless, political refugees and natives
- Of these the minority / marginalized is the Natives
- American multiculturalism has a "melting pot" nature

Pre- Colonial Era

- Legends, myths, poetry of American Indians.
- Mostly oral till 18th century
- Origin of the world, histories of tribes, tales of heroes

Spanish Settlements

- St Augustine
- Albany
- New Amsterdam
- Main language Dutch
- In 1664, the English conquered Amsterdam; renamed it as New York; Dutch Language was replaced by English

Colonial Period (1607- 1775)

- 1st successful English settlement in Jamestown (in the colony of Virginia) to the outbreak of American revolution
- Writings religious, political or historical
- Journals and travelogues
- Rise of African American writings

Early Works

- Captain John Smith-1" American author
A True Relation....

- John Winthrop
 - Journal - The History of New England
- 1630 establishment of printing press in Cambridge New English colonies
- 1st printed item was a German book in Pennsylvania

William Hill Brown's epistolary novel *The Power of Sympathy* (1775) is called the first American novel

Revolutionary Age (1765-1790)

- Between the revolutionary Stamp Act (1765) and the American Revolution
- Revolution (1775-1783)
- Independence (1776)

Literature of the Revolutionary Period

- Issues related to independence
- Dignified, plain, clear prose
- European influence in early years
- Gradually began to reflect American experiences
- Difference between American and British politics
- Benjamin Franklin
- Thomas Paine
- Thomas Jefferson's "Statute of Virginia"

Alexander Hamilton & James Madison - Federalist Papers in support of the constitution

Benjamin Franklin (1706-90).

- One of the Founding Fathers of the United States
- Called "the first American"
- Published the revolutionary newspaper Pennsylvania Chronicle
- Established University of Pennsylvania

- became Governor of Pennsylvania
- Led the protests against the 1765 Stamp Act

Works:

- "The Busy Body" followed the Addisonian style
- *Poor Richard's Almanack*

Published under pseudonym Richard Saunders

- Invented many gadgets and instruments as well as social innovations

Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

- met Benjamin Franklin, who convinced Paine to move to America
- emigrated to America in late 1774, only a few months before the revolutionary war began
- political life
- Edited *Pennsylvania Magazine*

"Common Sense" (1776)

- Political pamphlet
- Anonymously published
- Brought the rising revolutionary sentiment
- Placed blame for the suffering of the colonies directly on the British monarch, George III
- Led to the first successful anticolonial action in American
- *The American Crisis*
- *The Rights of Man*
- *The Age of Reason*

Rights of Man (1791)

- Written during a two-year period in which participated in the French Revolution
- Part 1 Dedicated to George Washington

- Reply to the arguments of Edmund Burke in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790)
- Part 2 is a discussion of the principles of government
- Opposes the idea of hereditary government

The Age of Reason (1794, 1795, 1807)

- "Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology"
- Three parts
- Inspired by Freethinkers
 - opposes 18th century British Deism
 - freedom of conscience
 - demand for religious tolerance
 - opposition to the idea of 'Original Sin'
 - objected to organized religion
 - questions the sacredness of the Bible

Early National Period (1775-1824)

- national imaginative literature;
- ended with triumph of Jacksonian democracy
- *The Contrast* by Royall Tyler in the tradition of the English Restoration comedies
- *The North America Review* –
- Washington Irving
 - "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"
 - "Rip Van Winkle"
- James Fenimore Cooper
- Slave narratives - *The Life of Frederick Douglass* & *The Life of a Slave Girl*

James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851)

- depicts African, African American and Native American characters

- Lived mostly in Cooperstown, New York
- Expelled from Yale University for bad behavior
- Served in the US Navy
- Started his writing career with *Precaution*
- high-spirited adventure stories
- Founded the Bread and Cheese Club
- Lived in France, England, Switzerland and Italy about seven years
- criticized as being reactionary, romantic and pedagogical in tone
- Mark Twain attacked in "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" (1895)
- Often compared to Walter Scott

The Leatherstocking Tales

- series of five novels
- featuring the main hero Natty Bumppo, known by European settlers as "Leatherstocking," "The Pathfinder", and "the trapper" and by the Native Americans as "Deerslayer," "La Longue Carabine" and "Hawkeye"

Leatherstocking Tale 1

- *The Deerslayer, or The First War Path* (1841)
- Set in 1740-1745
- Set on Otsego Lake in upstate New York
- Introduces Natty Bumppo as "Deerslayer"

Leatherstocking Tale 2

- *The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757* (1826)
- Set in 1757
- Historical novel
- Set during the French and Indian War
- Natty Bumppo as a young British Army scout
- he is called Hawkeye

Leatherstocking Tales 3 & 4

- *The Pathfinder: The Inland Sea* (1840)
- Set in 1750s
- The inland sea of the title is Lake Ontario
- *The Pioneers: The Sources of the Susquehanna* (1823)
- Set in 1793
- takes place in Templeton
- Natty Bumppo is now elderly

Leatherstocking Tale 5

- *The Prairie: A Tale* (1827)
- Set in 1804
- Natty as "the trapper" or "the old man"

19th Century

- Romantic spirit
- Influence of French Revolution & ideals
- 1829-Andrew Jackson President
- Socio-political changes
- Gold Rush and American
- American Renaissance & Civil War

American Romanticism (1828-65)

- Elements of American Frontier, ties with nature
- Optimism
- Experimentation
- Mingling of races
- Industrialization
- Civil War

- Focus on common man
- Beauty, far away, non-normal, past, gothic, emotion, imagination, subjectivity, escapism, nature as knowledge-refuge-divine, supernaturalism, foreshadowing

The American Frontier

- Unsettled land outside settlements
- Free land in the West, its recession explained American development
- Frederick Jackson(historian)
- Frontier movement started in Jamestown
- Freedom from socio-political institutions
- Achievement and conquest
- Meeting of savagery & civilization
- Attitudes & institutions produced by the Frontier
Democracy (free land-econ. equality, rise of common man)

American Renaissance (1850s)

- *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (1941) by FO Matthiesen
- Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Representative Men* (1850)
- Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851)
- Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851)
- Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* (1854)
- Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855)
- Individualism
- Nature as an organism
- Emotion
- Diversity

Two predominant genres

The Sentimental Novel

The Romance

The Sentimental Novel

- Influence of Samuel Richardson Feelings
- religious faith, moral virtue, family closeness, traditional values, marriage and motherhood
- *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (by Harriet Beecher Stowe)
- *Little Women* (by Louisa May Alcott)

Harriet Elizabeth Beecher (1811-96)

- Family of abolitionists
- Worked as a teacher
- first novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852)
- Subtitle "Life Among the Lowly"
- Lincoln "This is the lady who started this great war"

Other Novels-

The Minister's Wooing

Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp

The Romance

- Novel distinguished from Romance
- Long fiction, excitement, adventure, dark passions, less realistic than novel
- *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826)
- *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)
- *Moby-Dick* (1851)

Edgar Allan Poe (Gothic Romances)

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-64)

- Born in New Hampshire
- Dark Romanticism
- Melville's *Moby Dick* was dedicated to him

Major Works

- *Twice-Told Tales* (1837)
- *House of the Seven Gables* (1851)
- *The Blithedale Romance* (1852)
- *Moses from an Old Manse*
- *The Marble Faun* (1828)
- *Fanshawe* (1828)

The Scarlet Letter (1850)

- Set between 1642-49
- during the Puritan regime in Boston
- Introductory section: The Custom House Autobiographical sketch on Hawthorne's own experiences at the Salem Custom House
- Excellent social commentary

The House of the Seven Gables (1851)

- A Gothic romance
- Based on a curse pronounced on the author's family
- the Pyncheons are cursed by Wizard Maule when the first Colonel Pyncheon deprived him of his wealth
- The novel is about the decadent Pyncheons in the mid-19th century, and how the curse is lifted

Distinction Between the Romance and the Novel

- The House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne describes himself as a writer of 'romances'

- distinguishes the romance from the novel
- The two genres are different in their conception of truth

- Regarded Emerson as too idealistic
- fascinated with the realism of Anthony Trollope
- Trollope quotes this in *An Autobiography*
- reflects on the creative work of the romantic artist

Blithedale Romance (1852)

- presents a utopian community
- skeptical about Transcendentalist idealism
- Protagonist and narrator Miles Coverdale seeks betterment of the world through the agrarian lifestyle
- Character Zenobia represents Margaret Fuller
- Hollingsworth, a passionate monomaniac, is reminiscent of Herman Melville

Herman Melville (1819-91)

- Born in New York
- *Typee* (1846)
- *White Jacket* (1850)
- *The Confidence Man* (1857)
- *Billy Budd, Sailor* (1891, pub. 1924)
- *Mardi* (1849)
- *Pierre* (1852)

Typee (1846)

- Subtitle: "A Peep at Polynesian Life"
- Typee is the name of a tribe
- About his travel experiences as a captive on the island Nuka Hiva

- Expresses sympathy for the savages and tries to civilize them
- Protagonist Tommo fears cannibalism of the Typee people, but still wants to civilize them
- Criticizes missionaries

White Jacket (1850)

- Subtitle: "The World in a Man of War"
- Experience as a common seaman working for the US government

Billy Budd, Sailor (1891)

- Novella Adapted as a stage play in 1951
- Billy Budd, a seaman, is working on the ship HMS Bellipotent
- Another character, John Claggart falsely accuses Billy of conspiracy to mutiny
- Captain Edward Fairfax "Starry" Vere summons both in his cabin Billy, unable to respond due to his stuttering, accidentally kills Claggart
- Billy is court-martialled and executed
- Billy dies saying "God bless Captain Vere!" Later, Captain Vere dies saying, "Billy Budd Billy Budd"

Moby-Dick or The Whale (1851)

- Story of a whaling voyage
- narrated by Ishamel
- Captain Ahab's tragic monomania in his pursuit of a white whale
- Main issues which dominated 19th century thought in Symbolic
- tightly packed with philosophical musings
- Unfavorable criticism

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49)

- Pioneer of American short story, detective fiction and science fiction –
- "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"

- "The Raven" (1845)
- Developed a unique style in literary criticism
- Baudelaire translated Poe's stories and admired him

"To Science" (1829)

- a sonnet by Poe published as a prologue to 'Al Aaraaf' in *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems*
- The poet apostrophizes Science as one whose peering eyes alter all things
- Poe developed the theme of the conflict of scientific thought and poetic feeling in his prose
- but later, as in the prose poem Eureka, considered that the beauty of poetry depended on its representing a scientific concept of an ordered universe.

"The Raven" (1845)

- First published in *New York Evening Mirror*
- The poem is inspired by Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge* (1841)
- The famous refrain of the poem is 'Nevermore'.
- One stormy night, a tired student is visited by a raven that can speak one word, 'Nevermore'
- The student is grieving for his lost beloved and questions the bird about meeting her in another world
- The poem symbolizes the mournful and never-ending memories of Poe's dead wife Virginia

"To Helen" (1836)

- This poem praises the nurturing power of women
- He himself said that the poem was written for Mrs Jane Stanard, a friend's mother
- The name was changed to 'Helen' to symbolize the Greek ideal of beauty

- The famous lines 'The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome' idealize the classical world
- Helen is also called Psyche in the poem
- woman symbolizes the poet's emotional and creative state

"The Bell" (1849)

- Onomatopoeic poem
- Mourning over loss of his wife Virginia
- four parts
- Shows life from the nimbleness of youth to the pain of age
- Passing seasons is used as a metaphor of life

"El Dorado" (1849)

- Journey of a gallant knight in search of El Dorado, the mythical city of treasures
- Reaction to California Gold Rush (1849)

Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque

- Famous stories-

"MS Found in a Bottle"

"The Pit and the Pendulum"

"The Fall of the House of Usher"

"The Purloined Letter"

"The Tell-Tale Heart"

"The Haunted Palace"

"The Oval Portrait"

"Tamerlane"

"The Murders at Rue Morgue"

"The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839)

- First published in Burton's Gentleman's Magazine

- An unnamed narrator approaches the house of his boyhood friend, Roderick Usher
- The house has an evil and diseased atmosphere
- In the Usher family, only one member has survived from generation to generation

"The Purloined Letter" (1844)

- Presents the detective C. Auguste Dupin
- Epigraph from Petrarch

"The Tell-Tale Heart" (1843)

- Starts in medias res
- Unnamed narrator

"The Philosophy of Composition" (1846)

- Poe analyses "The Raven"
- The essay appeared in Graham's Magazine
- good writing depends upon certain factors:

brevity

unity of impression or unity of effect

logical method

- Poe says the climax of "The Raven" (stanza 16) was written first so that every effect in the poem should lead in that direction.

An Anti-Transcendentalist

- a Dark Romanticist who did not share the Transcendentalists' optimism and belief in human greatness
- Poe wrote a story, "Never Bet the Devil Your Head", in which he expressed his deep dislike for Transcendentalism, calling its followers 'Frogpondians'
- In Poe's essay 'The Philosophy of Composition' he denounces the excess of the suggested meaning... which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind)

Transcendentalism -1830s-40s

- Developed in New England
- Believed God is present in nature
- Based on the writings of the 18th century philosopher Immanuel Kant
- Human beings can know truth
- stressed self-reliance, individuality
- Influenced by the work of the Romantic poets, particularly William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- believed that people had an innate sense of the spiritual, a spiritual knowledge that transcended what could be known empirically, or what could be corrupted by the senses
- reacting against the spiritual tradition of the Unitarian church, a non Trinitarian form of Christianity

Transcendentalism: Influences

- Transcendentalism drew heavily on the idealist and otherworldly aspects of the following-
 - English and German Romanticism
 - Hindu and Buddhist thought
 - The tenets of Confucius and Mencius

Concord

- Transcendentalism centred in Concord
- Thoreau was born here
- Emerson settled here as an adult
- American Revolutionary War had also started herein 1775 By the 1850s
- almost like a pilgrim centre

The Dial (1840-44)

- Quarterly magazine

- The first issue, edited by Margaret Fuller, published in July 1840 in Boston
- Emerson called it a 'Journal in a new spirit'
- The title was suggested by Bronson Alcott, and suggested a sundial
- Emerson succeeded Fuller as editor for the magazine's last two years

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82)

- Born in Boston, Massachusetts
- attended Boston Latin School and Harvard College
- Began a career as a Unitarian minister
- Married Ellen Tucker, the great love of his life, in 1829
- Her death a year and a half later devastated him and took a heavy toll on his religious faith

Beginnings of Transcendentalism

- Influenced by Montaigne, Swedenborg, Hegel, Plato
- After a tour of Europe, Emerson became a lecturer
- He re-married and lived in Concord, Massachusetts
- In Concord, Emerson became friends with Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry David Thoreau
- In the early 1840s he began to write works on various aspects of transcendentalist philosophy
- Ideas Personal, conversational style
- Caught the mood of America-optimism
- America as torch-bearers of human history
- Urged Americans to be independent thinkers
- Do not look to Europe for models.
- Self-culture movement
- Individuals have access to the eternal truths of nature

- Truth resides throughout creation and is grasped intuitively, not rationally

"Nature"(1836)

- Long prose essay
- Preface in the first edition is a passage from the Neoplatonic philosopher Plotinus describing the primacy of spirit and of human understanding over nature
- The Preface in the 1849 second edition is a poem by Emerson himself
- Nature is divided into an introduction and eight chapters

The Concept of Nature

- In the Introduction, he laments the current tendency to accept the knowledge and traditions of the past instead of experiencing God and nature directly, in the present
- All our questions about the order of the universe may be answered by our experience of life and by the world around us

Each individual is a manifestation of creation and holds the key to unlocking the mysteries of the universe

Four 'uses' of nature

- Commodity
- Beauty
- Language
- Discipline

From this, he develops the concept of the

'Oversoul' or 'Universal Mind'

Other Poems

- "Concord Hymn"
- "Rhodora"
- "Brahma"

- "Uriel"
- "Snow Storm"

"Brahma" (1856)

- Influenced by Hindu philosophy of life
- "If the red slayer think he slays, Or if the slain think he is slain, They know not well the subtle ways I keep, and pass, and turn again"

"The American Scholar" (1837)

- Lecture given to the Phi Beta Kappa Society
- begins with a sketch of the social fragmentation caused by the manufacturing culture that mechanizes lives and destroys the soul
- Emerson presents an idealized portrait of intellectual life rooted in the liberated individual thinker
- man should learn from Nature, history, and life as action
- The scholar should reject old ideas and think for him or herself, to become "Man Thinking"
- By doing so, the scholar would attain wholeness, which is a central concern of the essay
- Such a scholar has certain duties based on qualities like freedom, courage, openness, attentiveness, and an intense awareness of the moment
- In this essay, Emerson supports self-reliant individualism and rejects everything that blunts creative human potential

"Self-Reliance" (1841)

- Considered to be the definitive statement of Emerson's philosophy of individualism and the finest example of his prose
- Explains Emerson's phrase "trust thyself"
- Every individual possesses a unique genius that can only be revealed when that individual has the courage to trust his or her own thoughts, attitudes, and inclinations against public disapproval
- Follow one's own instincts and ideas

"The Over Soul" (1841)

- Relationship between soul and ego
- Spirit of individualism and vedantism

"Politics" (1844)

- Thoughts on democracy
- Civilization can reach unfathomable places through moral force and creativity

Representative Men (1850)

- Discusses the role played by great men in society - Plato, Swedenborg, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Napoleon, Goethe
- Praised by Matthew Arnold

The Conduct of Life (1860)

- Collection of nine essays-

"Fate"

"Power"

"Wealth"

"Culture"

"Behaviour"

"Worship"

"Beauty"

"Illusion "

- Central question is "How shall I live?"
- Influenced several writers including Friedrich Nietzsche

Henry David Thoreau (1817-62)

- Born in Concord, Massachusetts
- Unorthodox manners and irreverent views
- Idealism

- A devoted Abolitionist (against slavery)
- Became an intimate friend of Emerson
- In 1845-47, Thoreau spent two years in Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts, living a simple life supported by no one
- The episode was both experimental and temporary
- *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, first published in 1854

Walden: Life in the Woods (1854)

- Divided into 18 chapters
- Records Thoreau's life from 1845-47
- Importance of contemplation, solitude, closeness to nature

"Paradise (to be) Regained" (1843)

- An essay written in the form of a review
- Themes-

Democracy

Self-improvement of people

Distrust of humanity's attempts to improve upon nature

"Civil-Disobedience" (1849)

- In July 1846, he was imprisoned for not paying a poll tax
- He defended himself in a lecture to the Concord Lyceum
- published under the title "Civil Disobedience"
- Illustrates the idea:
 - That government is best which governs least
 - The individual should not permit the government to overrule..
 - Don't wait passively for justice
 - be just yourself
- Inspired social thinkers as Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi

"A Plea for Captain John Brown" (1859)

- Speech given at Concord, Massachusetts
- About the abolitionist John Brown who raided Harper's Ferry Armory in 1859, which led to his execution

Walt Whitman (1819-92)

- One Inspiration Emerson
- Free verse
- Glorifies spiritual life grounded in the body and everyday life
- Democracy
- Individualism

Leaves of Grass (1855)

- Title is from the essay "The Poet" by RW Emerson.
- The title is ironic: "leaves" means pages, and "grass" is the slang for inferior creative efforts
- First edition was published in Brooklyn on 4 July, with 12 poems
- "Song of Myself"

"When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"

- wrote after Lincoln's assassination in 1865, at the end of the American Civil War (1861-65)
- "Lilacs" is an unconventional pastoral elegy in three parts

"Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking"(1859)

- Belongs to the birth of the poet' genre
- Typically romantic- Much used by Wordsworth
- "Out of the Cradle" describes the poet as a young boy watching a pair of mocking birds nesting on the Paumanok beach

"Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"

- Originally titled 'Sun Down Poem'

- The poet observes the crowd at the ferry and thinks of those who will make the crossing in the future
- In a hundred years, others will be seeing the same sunset, the same ebb and flow of the tides
- This scene forms part of a grand, spiritual scheme of life, in which everything has its individuality yet is part of the whole

Drum Taps (1865)

- 53 poems on the opening of the Civil War
- Topics-
 - Purpose of war
 - Patriotism
 - Issue of slavery
 - Sufferings of soldiers

Brahmin Poets

- The term came to be applied to a number of prominent New England writers
- Most important among them were Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and James Russell Lowell
- All three were educated in Europe and became associated with Harvard University
- Upper class in background but democratic in sympathy
- carried their genteel, European-oriented views to every section of the United States
- writings fused American and European traditions and sought to create a continuity of shared Atlantic experience
- they advocated a genteel, rational humanism, quite out of step with their brilliant contemporaries
- They made Boston the literary capital of America

- Edited two influential Boston magazines, North American Review and the Atlantic Monthly

William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)

- American romantic poet, journalist
- long-time editor of the New York Evening Post
- first published poem was "The Embargo; or, Sketches of the Times"
- Chiefly remembered for his poem "Thanatopsis"
- "To A Waterfowl"

Works had been described as "of a thoughtful, meditative character, and makes but slight appeal to the mass of readers."

- edited *Picturesque America* published between 1872 and 1874
- This two-volume set was lavishly illustrated and described scenic places in the United States and Canada
- *Letters of a Traveller* (1850)
- Towards the end of his career, he worked towards translating Homer's works instead of penning his own poetry

He worked on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from 1871 to 1874

Thanatopsis (1817)

- First published in the "North American Review" in 1817
- Reflects upon the meditation of death
- views death as a natural and unavoidable part of human existence rather than as something to worried upon
- focuses on the importance of nature in the role of death.

H.W. Longfellow (1807-1882)

- American poet and educator
- First American to translate Dante's *Divine Comedy*
- First major poetry collections were

Voices of the Night (1839)

Ballads and Other Poems (1841)

- In 1839 published *Hyperion*

Major Works

- *Evangeline, A Tale of Acadie* (1847)
- *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855)
- *Paul Revere's Ride* (1860)

Emily Dickinson (1830-86)

- Called Nun of Amherst
- About 1700 short poems
- Only a few published during lifetime
- Puzzling, obscure. Love, death, nature, immortality
- Questioning of established religion, authority

"Because I could not Stop for Death"

- Also called "The Chariot"
- Death is personified as a male friend or suitor who arrives in his carriage
- Death takes the speaker to her new home, a swelling of the ground

"My life closed twice before its close"

- Has a personal and a universal level
- On the personal level, the speaker recollects the two losses in her life which were as painful as death itself.
- She cannot imagine suffering the pain of death, which will be greater than the pain she has already suffered
- The theme of the universal human condition of suffering 'Parting is all we know of heaven, / And all we need of hell' The last two lines
- To enter heaven means parting from our loved ones in death

At the same time, the misery of separation and loss is hell enough in this world

"I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died"

- The speaker says she heard a fly buzz when she died
- Then she describes the moment of her death

Other Poems

"A Bird Came Down the Walk"

"A Dimple in the Tomb"

"A Loss of Something Ever Felt I"

- Collections

Wild Night

Final Harvest

A Brighter Garden

Civil War 1861-65

- Republican Lincoln elected in 1860
- War due to North-South divide, over slavery issue
- War ended, deeper problem of race relations
- Economic concerns
- Growth of industry
- Metropolis
- Realism (Revolt against romantic idealization)
- American dream (from rags to riches-harsh underside, materialism)
- Naturalism

Realistic Period (1865-1914)

- The savage Civil war
- Reconstruction of the nation following North-South Divide
- Industrialization and Urbanization in the North
- American self concept and Literature mutated

- Got the name from novels by Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Henry James, John W. DeForest, Harold Frederic

Naturalistic Period (1900-1914)

- The former writers were present but more influenced by Frank Norris, Jack London & Theodore Dreiser
- Naturalism describes a type of literature that applies scientific principles of objectivity and detachment to the study of human beings
- Unlike realism naturalism implies a philosophical position
- In Emile Zola's phrase human beings are "human beasts," and characters are "products" can be studied impartially through their relationships to their surroundings
- Described in Zola's *The Experimental Novel* (1880)
- Herbert Spencer was a major influence

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

- Samuel Langhorne Clemens
- Anti-imperialist Presbyterian
- Local colour realism
- Depicted the rugged frontier life and the Southern tradition
- Character writer
- Defined an era
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- themes of racism & slavery, Intellectual & moral education, Hypocrisy of civilized society

American Literature of the 20th Century

Early 20th Century Writers

o Edith Wharton (1862-1937)

♣ *The Age of Innocence* (1920)

o **Naturalism**

♣ Stephen Crane (1871-1900)

• *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895)

♣ Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945)

• *Sister Carrie* (1900)

♣ Jack London (1876-1916)

• *The Call of the Wild* (1903)

o **Imagism**

♣ Formed in the University of Pennsylvania

♣ Verbal concentration

♣ Anthology: *Des Imagistes*

♣ **Major Poets**

• Ezra Pound

• Amy Lowell

• Hilda Doolittle.

• Richard Aldington

• William Carlos Williams

♣ A major playwright:

Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953)

• Introduced Realism on stage

• Experimented with Expressionism, Myth, Naturalism

• Introduced African American characters and dialect on stage

• Major Plays

o *Beyond the Horizon* (1918)

- o *Emperor Jones* (1920)
- o *The Hairy Ape* (1922)
- o *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931)
- o *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (1957)

- **Literature of the 1920s**

- o Jazz Age
- o Lost Generation
- ♣ Term coined by Gertrude Stein
- Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961)
 - o *A Farewell to Arms* (1929)
 - o *The Sun Also Rises* (1926)
- F Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940)
 - o *The Great Gatsby* (1925)
- Henry Miller (1891-1980)
 - o *Tropic of Cancer* (1934)
- o **Harlem Renaissance**
 - ♣ Racial pride, need for a new black identity
 - ♣ Flowering of African American literature and art
 - ♣ New Negro Movement
 - ♣ Alaine Locke (1885-1954)
 - ♣ Claude McKay (1889-1948)
 - ♣ Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960)
 - ♣ Langston Hughes (1901-67)
- **Literature of the Depression Era (1930s)**
 - o Stock Market Crash in 1929
 - o Features of Literature
 - ♣ Disoriented and alienated characters
 - ♣ Moral degeneration and discord in the family
 - ♣ Financial troubles
 - ♣ Decadent families from the South

- ♣ Failure of the American Dream
- ♣ Failure of communication
- ♣ Themes of drinking, drug taking, mental instability, death
- **Arthur Miller (1915-2005)**
 - ♣ *Death of a Salesman* (1949)
 - ♣ *All My Sons* (1947)
 - ♣ *The Crucible* (1953)
- **Tennessee Williams (1911-83)**
 - ♣ *The Glass Menagerie* (1944)
 - ♣ *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947)
 - ♣ *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955)
- **William Faulkner (1897-1962)**
 - ♣ *Light in August* (1932)
 - ♣ *The Sound and the Fury* (1929)
- **John Steinbeck (1902-68)**
 - ♣ *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939)
 - ♣ *Of Mice and Men* (1937)
- **Edward Albee (1928-2016)**
 - ♣ *The Zoo Story* (1959)
 - ♣ *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962)
- **Elmer Rice (1892-1957)**
 - ♣ *The Adding Machine* (1923)
- **Post War Poetry**
 - Robert Frost (1874-1963)
 - ♣ Depicted rural life in New England
 - ♣ Used traditional verse forms
 - ♣ Poems begin in delight and end in wisdom
 - ♣ *A Boy's Will* (1913)
 - ♣ *North of Boston* (1914)

o **Beat Generation** (1950s)

- ♣ A literary and counterculture movement of the 1950's
- ♣ Questioned the rampant materialism of the capitalistic society
- ♣ William S. Burroughs (1914-97)
- ♣ Jack Kerouac (1922-69)
- ♣ Allen Ginsberg (1926-97)
- ♣ Neal Cassidy (1926-68)

o **Confessional Poetry** (1950s-60s)

- ♣ An intensely subjective poetic style
- ♣ These poets reveal intimate aspects of their private lives
- ♣ They often write in the first person using straightforward and sometimes explicit language
- ♣ Depicted taboo themes such as sex, troubled marriages, and mental illness

♣ Robert Lowell (1917-77)

• *Life Studies* (1959)

♣ Anne Sexton (1928-74)

• *Live or Die* (poetry collection) (1966)

♣ Sylvia Plath (1932-63)

• *The Bell Jar* (1963)

• *Colossus* (1960)

• **The 1960s**

o Vietnam War

o Counter Culture Movements

• **Jewish- American Writers**

o Theme of existential alienation

o Bernard Malamud (1914-86)

♣ *The Fixer* (1966)

♣ *A New Life* (1961)

o Saul Bellow (1915-2005)

♣ *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953)

♣ *Herzog* (1964)

o Philip Roth (1933)

♣ *American Pastoral* (1997)

• **Postmodern Novelists**

o Features

♣ Irony, playfulness, black humour

♣ Self-consciously deconstructed, self-reflexive and paranoid narrators / protagonists

♣ A sense of discontinuity

♣ Intertextuality

♣ Hyperreality

o Ken Kesey (1935-2001)

♣ *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962)

o J.D. Salinger (1919-2010)

♣ *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951)

o Harper Lee (1926-2016)

♣ *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960)

o Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977)

♣ *Lolita* (1955)

♣ *Pale Fire* (1962)

o Norman Mailer (1923-2007)

♣ *The Naked and the Dead* (1948)

♣ *An American Dream* (1965)

o Truman Capote (1924-84)

♣ *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958)

o Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007)

♣ *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969)

o Joseph Heller (1923-99)

♣ *Catch-22* (1961)

o Thomas Pynchon (1937)

♣ *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966)

♣ *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973)

o **Horror & Cyberpunk Fiction**

♣ Issac Asimov (1922-92)

• *Foundation Series*

♣ Stephen King (1947)

• *The Stand* (1978)

♣ William Gibson (1948)

• *Neuromancer* (1984)

• **African American Writers**

o Features

♣ Black Arts Movement of the 1960s

♣ Pride in their race, ethnicity and identity

♣ Dramatic, evocative language

♣ Use of Biblical verses, proverbs, aphorisms, and the tone of sermons

♣ Conversational tone

♣ Use of black dialects

♣ A powerful evocation of cultural values and community consciousness

♣ Intense, subjective and emotional treatment of events and situations

o Richard Wright (1908-60)

♣ *Native Son* (1940)

♣ *Black Boy* (1945)

o James Baldwin (1924-87)

♣ *Go Tell it on the Mountain* (1953)

o Maya Angelou (1928-2014)

♣ *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969)

o Toni Morrison (1931)

♣ *The Bluest Eye* (1970)

♣ *Sula* (1973)

♣ *Beloved* (1987)

- o Alice Walker (1944)
 - ♣ *The Color Purple* (1982)
 - ♣ *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (1983)
- o Jamaica Kincaid (1949)
 - ♣ *Annie John* (1984)
- o LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka) (1937-2014)
 - ♣ *Dutchman* (1964)
- o Lorraine Hansberry (1930-65)
 - ♣ *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959)
- **Asian-American Writers**
 - o Amy Tan (1952)
 - ♣ *The Bonesetter's Daughter* (2001)
 - o Jhumpa Lahiri (1967)
 - ♣ *The Namesake* (2003)

Indian Literature in English

Indian Education in the Pre Independence period: -

*1600 -December 31-East India Company

*1614- First demand for Indian Education from Christian Missionaries.

*As a result, in 1698, a clause was included in the charter asking the company to maintain a school.

That is missionary clause.

*Demand for Indian education by two Englishmen-Charles Grant and William Wilberforce.

*1797-Charles Grant Report-Demands Indians should be given English education.

*1813- Charter Act

*It laid the foundation for western education in India.

*1823-A committee for public instruction was set up.

*2nd February 1835-Mercaulay's minute.

* Known as the English Education Act of 1835.

* Macaulay's Minutes is known as the Blueprint of Indian education.

* Macaulay's theory is known as the downward filtration theory.

*Primary education in Indian language-demand was first codified by Charles Wood- calls Wood's despatch (1854).

*Known as the Magna Carta of Indian education.

*Provisions of Woods despatch: -

- Increase moral character of Indians.

- An education department in every province.

- Universities in the model of University of London.

- One government school in every district.

- Granting aids for private schools.

- Education from primary level to university level.

- Promote Women`s education.

- Medium of instruction at the primary level should be vernacular and at a higher level it should be English.

*Calcutta, Madras, Bombay Universities set up-1857

*Punjab University-1882

*Allahabad University-1887

1902- Indian University education was formed.

*1917- Sadler commission was appointed.

*Demanded for 3 years graduate and 2 years post graduate course (3+2).

Indian Education in the Post-Independence period:-

*1955- An official language commission was appointed.

*Strongly recommended the use of English.

*1961-Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE).

*They proposed Three Language Formula.

*1965-Associate Official Language Act.

*1964- Kothari Commission.

* Opening line-The destiny of India is being formed in the classrooms.

*The first book written by an Indian in English-The travels of Dean Mohammed-1794.

*The first novel written by an Indian-Rajmohan's Wife-Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

*Published in India Field.

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio-

*Poems (1827)

•The Harp of India

•Song of the Hindoostani Minstrel

•The Fakeer of Jungheera: A Metrical Tale and Other Poems

•To India - My Native Land

•To the Pupils of the Hindu College

Krishna Mohan Banarjee-

•The Persecuted

* Kailas Chandar Dutt-

•A Journal of the 48 Hours of the Year.

Michael Madhusudan Dutt

King Porus

The Captive Ladie (1849)

Ratul Potra

Sermista (1859) (Bengali and English)

Padmavati (1859)

Ekei Ki Boley Sabyota (1860)

Krishna Kumari (1860)

Buro Shaliker Ghare Ron (1860)

Tilottama Sambhava Kavya (1861)

Meghnad Badh Kavya (1861)

Brajagana Kavya (1861)

Veerangana Kavya (1861)

Ratnavali (English translation)

Nil Darpan (English translation)

Choturdoshpodi Kobitaboli

Rizia, the Sultana of Inde

Rosaló Sornolatika

Bongobani

Sonnets and other poems (1866)

Bongo bhumir prati

Toru Dutt

*Was a Bengali translator and poet from British India, who wrote in English and French.

*She is among the founding figures of Indo-Anglian literature, alongside Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809–1831), Manmohan Ghose (1869–1924), and Sarojini Naidu (1879–1949).

Notable works:-

*A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields (1877)

Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan (1882)

Le Journal de Mademoiselle d'Arvers (1879).

Rabindranath Tagore

* In 1913 he became the first non-European to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature.

* Gitanjali-Song Offerings

*Chitra

*Post Office

*The Cycle of Spring

*Home and the World

*Gora

*The Child

Sri Aurobindo

*An Indian philosopher, yoga guru, maharishi, poet, and Indian nationalist.

He was also a journalist, edited newspapers such as Vande Mataram.

*The Life Divine

*The Synthesis of Yoga

*Savitri

Sarojini Naidu

A proponent of civil rights, women's emancipation, and anti-imperialistic ideas, she was an important figure in India's struggle for independence from colonial rule.

* Naidu's work as a poet earned her the sobriquet 'the Nightingale of India', or 'Bharat Kokila' by Mahatma Gandhi because of colour, imagery and lyrical quality of her poetry.

*The Golden Threshold

*In the Bazaars of Hyderabad

Nissim Ezekiel

He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1983 for his collection, "Latter-Day Psalms", by the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters.

1952: Time to Change

1953: Sixty poems

1956: The Discovery of India

1959: The Third

1960: The Unfinished Man

1965: The Exact Name

1974: Snakeskin and Other Poems, translations of the Marathi poet Indira Sant

1976: Hymns in Darkness

1982: Latter-Day Psalms

1989: Collected Poems 1952

A K Ramanujan

*Tri lingual poet

* Only Indian poet anthologized by the western writers.

*Striders

*Relations

* Second Sight

* Black Hen

*Interior Landscape *

The Speaking Shiva

Three Hundred Ramayanas

R K Narayan

- Malgudi

- William Faulkner
- Narayan's mentor and friend Graham Greene
- *Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher*
- *My Days* — Autobiography
- N Ram, Susan Ram — Biographers
- *Swami and Friends* (1935)
 - The novel follows a ten-year-old schoolboy, Swaminathan, and his attempts to court the favour of a much wealthier schoolboy, Rajam
 - Malgudi is first introduced
- *The Bachelor of Arts*
 - Chandran and Malati
 - Mangala Dhosha
- *The English Teacher* (1945)
 - Krishna and Susheela
 - Dedicated to his own wife Rajam.
- Other notable works include *Waiting for the Mahatma*, *Dark Room*, *Malgudi Days*, *The Guide*, *The Financial Expert* and so on
- *The Man Eater of Malgudi* — based on the Bhasmasura myth. Nataraja and Vasu are the main characters
- In 1964, Narayan published his first mythological work: *Gods, Demons and Others*, a collection of rewritten and translated short stories from Hindu epics.
- *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), and *A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983)

Mulk Raj Anand

- *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*
- *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts*, *Village trilogy* — *The Village*, *Across the Black Waters*, and *The Sword and the Sickle*
- *The Big Heart*, *Seven Summers*, *The Road*, *Death of a Hero*
- *Untouchable* (1935)
 - Set in the north Indian cantonment town Bulashah,
 - It depicts a day in the life of Bakha,
- *Coolie* (1936)
 - Highly critical of British rule in India and India's caste system
 - The protagonist is a 14-year-old boy, Munoo
- *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937)

- Oppression of the poor, and is about a peasant who tries to protect his daughter from a British soldier. Adapted to a Hindi film, *Rahi*.

Raja Rao

- Metaphysics
- *Kanthapura*
- *The Serpent and the Rope* — second novel (1960)
 - protagonist Ramaswamy
- *Kanthapura*
 - Raja Rao's first and best-known novel, *Kanthapura* (1938), is the story of a south Indian village named Kanthapura. The novel is narrated in the form of a Sthala Purana by an old woman of the village, Achakka
 - The main character of the novel is Moorthy
- Other works include *The Cat and Shakespeare*, *The Meaning of India*, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Great Indian Way*, *The Chess Master and His Moves*

Khushwant Singh

- *Train to Pakistan*
- *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale*
- *Delhi*
- *The Company of Women*

Kamala Markandeya

- *Nectar in a Sieve*
- *A Handful of Rice*
- *Possession*
- *A Silence of Desires*

Shashi Deshpande

- *The Dark Holds no Terrors*
- *That Long Silence*
- *If I Die Today*
- *Small Remedies*

- *The Stone Women*

Amitav Gosh

- *The Circle of Reason*
- *The Calcutta Chromosome*
- *The Shadow Lines*
- *The Glass Palace*
- *Hungry Tide*
- *Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke* and *Fire of Flood* are part of a trilogy

Geeta Hariharan

- *The Thousand Faces of Night*
 - Devi, Sita, Gopal and Mahesh
- *The Ghosts of Vasu Master*
- *I Have Become the Tide*
- *The Art of Dying*

Kiran Desai

- *The Inheritance of Loss* — Booker Prize
 - Biju and Sai

Aravind Adiga

- *Between the Assassinations*
- *Selection Day*
- *The White Tiger* — Booker Prize
 - Balram Halwai

Shashi Tharoor

- *The Paradoxical Prime Minister*
- *Why I Am a Hindu*
- *Show Business*
- *The Great Indian Novel*
 - Retelling of Mahabharata narrator Veda Vyas

Vikram Seth

- *A Suitable Boy*
- *A Suitable Girl*
- *Golden Gate*

Jhumpa Lahiri

Arundhati Roy

Salman Rushdie

DRAMA

Mahesh Dattani

- *Tara* — characters Chandan and Tara
- *Dance Like a Man* — Jeraj and Ratna.

Vijay Tendulkar

- *Silence! The Court is in Session*
 - Leela Benare

Manjula Padmanabhan

- *The Harvest* — Om Prakash
- *Lights Out* — Bhaskar and Leela
 - Depicts the harsh realities of violence against women.

Gireesh Karnad

- *Hayavadana*

- *Nagamandala*
- *Tughlaq*

Asif Currimbhoy

- *Goa* (1964)— racial discrimination
- *The Doledrummers* —Youth culture
- *The Dumb Dancer* — is a story of Kathakali Artist
- *The Captives* — India-China war
- *An Experiment with Truth* — Gandhi-related
- *Inquilab* — Naxal movements

WOMEN'S WRITINGS

Amrita Pritam

- Indian novelist, essayist and poet, who wrote in Punjabi and Hindi
- Pritam is best remembered for her poignant poem, *Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu* (Today I invoke Waris Shah – "Ode to Waris Shah"), an elegy to the 18th-century Punjabi poet, an expression of her anguish over massacres during the partition of India
- Her most noted novel was *Pinjar* ("The Skeleton", 1950), Puro is the main character.
- A long poem, *Sunehade* is seen as her masterpiece

Anita Desai

- *Bye-Bye Blackbird* — Dev, Adith and Sara
- *In Custody*
- Her first novel, *Cry, the Peacock* (1963), and a later novel, *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* (1975).
- *Fire on the Mountain* (1977) was criticized as relying too heavily on imagery at the expense of plot and characterization, but it was praised for its poetic symbolism and use of sounds.
- *Clear Light of Day* (1980), considered the author's most successful work, is praised for its highly evocative portrait of two sisters caught in the lassitude of Indian life. Its characters are revealed not only through imagery but through gesture, dialogue, and reflection. As in most of her works, the novel reflects Desai's essentially tragic view of life.

- *Baumgartner's Bombay* (1988) — It tells the story of a German Jew named Hugo Baumgartner who flees the Holocaust to Bombay.

Ismat Chughtai

DALIT WRITINGS

Sharankumar Limbale (born June 1, 1956)

- Marathi language author, poet and literary critic. He has penned more than 40 books but is best known for his autobiography *Akkarmashi*. *Akkarmashi* is translated into several other Indian languages and into English. The English translation is done by D. Santosh Bhoomkar and published by the Oxford University Press with the title *The Outcaste*.
- His critical work *Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit Literature* (2004) is considered amongst the most important works on Dalit literature.

Meena Kandasamy

- Translated into 18 languages, she is one of most famous feminist writers in India, who doubles as an activist.
- Author of two collections of poetry, "*Touch*" and "*Ms. Militancy*", the critically acclaimed novel "*The Gypsy Goddess*" and most recently "*A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife*"
- *When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife*

Bama

- Born in a family of agricultural labourers, Bama Faustina Soosairaj donned many hats before she finally became a writer. She used to write poetry in college but became a schoolteacher and a nun later to educate Dalit girls. It was after leaving the seminary in 1992 that she went back to serious writing.
- The semi-fictional autobiographical novel "*Karukku*" (1992) is her most famous work, although she has written more novels and short story collections since then. Originally written in the Tamil dialect she used to speak as a child, the novel created quite a stir, with Bama being prohibited from

entering her village for seven months. When the novel was finally translated into English in 1998, Bama went on to win the Crossword Book Award in 2000.

- *Karukku* was translated into English by Lakshmi Holmstrom.
- Another work is *Sangati*. It's an example of Dalit Feminism.

Omprakash Valmiki

- Born in Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh, Valmiki's autobiography "*Joothan*" is one of his most popular books. He is also the author of poetry collections such as "*Sadiyon ka Santap*" and "*Bas Bahut ho Chuka*" and short story collections such as "*Salam*" and "*Ghuspaitiye*".
- *Joothan* literally means scraps of food left on a plate, destined for the garbage or for the family pet in a middle-class urban home. It is related to the word *jootha*, which means polluted

Vijila Chirappad

- The Malayali poet has published three collections: "*Adukala Illathaa Veedu* (A Home Without a Kitchen)", "*Amma Oru Kalpanika Kavitha Alla* (Mother Is Not a Poetic Figment of Our Imagination)", and "*Pakarathi Ezhuthu* (Copied Notes)". The 2012 anthology of Indian poems by Oxford University Press features some of her work.
- Her poetry is also prescribed reading at the Kerala, MG, and Calicut Universities.

Namdeo Dhasal

Raja Dhale

Shantabai Krishnabai Kamble

- *The Kaleidoscopic Story of My Life* — autobiography