

83.3(7)
A.58.

AMERIKA ADABIYOTI FANIDAN

MA'RUZA MATNLARI

III-IV kurs uchun

Buxoro-2009

83.3(7)
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Olinaa Nargisa.

O'ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI OLIY VA O'RTA
MAXSUS TA'LIM VAZIRLIGI

BUXORO DAVLAT UNIVERSITETI

INGLIZ TILI LEKSIKASI VA STILISTIKA KAFEDRASI

**AMERIKA ADABIYOTI FANIDAN
MA'RUZA MATNLARI**

III – IV kurs uchun

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~~BUXORO DAVLAT UNIVERSITETI~~
4524/92

ALISHER NAVOIY NOMIDAGI
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AXBOROT-RESURS MARKAZI

BUXORO – 2009

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AMERICAN LITERATURE

Lectures,

compiled by assistant – teacher Akobirov F.R.

The Department of English Lexics and Stylistics

BUKHARA 2009

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СЎЗ БОШИ

Ушбу маърузалар матни 5220100 филология йўналишининг Роман – Герман ўқув режаси асосида шугулланувчи инглиз филологияси мутахассислиги бакалавр тизими талабаларига мўлжалланган. Уни яратишда Америка адабиётшунослари ва танқидчилари томонидан ёзилган китоблар, дарсликлар, ўқув-усулий қўлланмалар ва интернет саҳифаларидан кенг фойдаланилди. Бундан ташқари АҚШнинг Аризона штати, Аризона Давлат Университети Инглиз ва Америка адабиёти кафедраси профессор ва ўқитувчилари ҳам ўз фикр ва мулоҳазаларини билдиришди.

Маърузалар матни Америка адабиёти тарихига мувофиқ даврларга бўлинган. Ҳар бир маърузада давр ҳақида ва ўша пайтда яшаб, ижод этган Америка адабиёти намояндалари ҳаёти ва ижоди, ёзган асар ва шеърлари ва ишларидан айрим парчалар берилган. Маърузалар матнининг яна бир афзаллиги шундаки, матн тили талабалар билимини назарда тутган ҳолда номураккаб инглиз тилида ёзилган. Маърузаларни бошдан охиригача луғат варақламасдан ўқиш ва ўрганиш мумкин.

Талабаларнинг инглиз тилисини ва Америка адабиёти ҳақидаги тушунчаларини бойитиш мақсадида ҳар бир маъруза охирида саволлар ва таянч иборалар берилган. Талабалар ёзуви ва шоирларнинг услуби ҳақида ҳам тушунчага эга бўлиш учун, Америка адабиётига хос асарларни топиб ўқиши учун аёрим насрий ва назмий асарлардан парчалар келтирилди, Америка адабиётига хос бўлган баъзи тушунчалар ҳақида маълумот берилди.

Ушбу маърузалар матнидан нафақат Бухоро Давлат Университетида, балки бошқа олий ўқув юртларида, колледж ва лицейларда ҳам фойдаланилса бўлади.

LECTURE 1. THE THEME: INTRODUCTION. THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

Plan:

1. National Beginnings. The role of The American Literature in the development of the world literature.
2. The writers and poets of different periods and their works.
3. Benjamin Franklin - US statesman and experimenter
4. Immortal quotes of Benjamin Franklin

Literature:

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw -Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Pœems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

The first literary works of the English-speaking peoples of North America were sermons, journals, and histories - concerns reflected in the work of the early poets Ann Bradstreet (c.1612-72) and Edward Taylor (c.1645-1729). In the Revolutionary period the most important work was practical or political, eg Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* (1732-58). Franklin's *Autobiography* (1781) is a memorable testament to a Puritan sensibility.

After the international impact of Washington Irving's *Sketch-Book* (1819-20), Fenimore Cooper likewise became a celebrity in the USA and Europe with his *Leatherstocking Tales* (1823-41), which introduced the theme of the problematic relationship between the wilderness and encroaching American civilization. Transcendentalism was enunciated by Ralph Waldo Emerson in *Nature* (1836) and by H D Thoreau in *Walden* (1855). Walt Whitman's free-form *Leaves of Grass* (appearing 1855-92) is the most sustained and successful

response to Emerson's call for a literature free from European influence.

By contrast, the poetry of Emily Dickinson offers unique concentration and intensity. Another group, that spoke for the darker side of existence in the USA included Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville. Poe's sinister *Tales* (1840, 1845) continue to fascinate; while Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), and Melville's epic *Moby-Dick* (1852), are central works of the American imagination. But Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) was the best-selling novel of the century.

Henry James and W D Howells (1837-1920) reacted against the parochialism of American literature, James going to Europe and producing a definitive series of novels on the clash of the two cultures, and Howells editing literary journals that published work by the European realists, James, and himself.

Howells also published Mark Twain, whose *Huckleberry Finn* (1885) is one of the few humorous books of the 19th-c whose humour remains uncorroded. Kate Chopin's brilliant short novel, *The Awakening* (1899), went unregarded for 60 years, while Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) was accepted as a classic. Naturalism was the dominant mode of American fiction until after World War 1, whether in stories like those by Jack London of life in hostile environments, or in the depiction by Theodore Dreiser of the developing industrial centres. The novels of Edith Wharton took New York society as their subject.

T S Eliot and Ezra Pound came to Europe after the war, using experimental verse to express their dismay at the decline of European civilization. Wallace Stevens too adopted the modernist faith in aesthetic values in a world where moral certainties seemed no longer tenable.

In the novel, Ernest Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald represented 'The Lost Generation', while another important innovator, William Faulkner, wrote a series of novels about the South. American drama makes its appearance with the plays of Eugene O'Neill, which rework autobiographical material with classical and expressionist techniques, and Arthur Miller (eg *Death of a Salesman*, 1949).

The novels of Jewish writers Bernard Malamud and Saul Bellow invoke urban life with subtlety and humour, while Norman Mailer (like Hemingway) sees his writing as a form of action. The most significant postwar poets have been Robert Lowell, John Berryman, and Sylvia Plath, who dealt harrowingly with the anguish and madness of the contemporary world, and John Ashbery, who imports the postmodern condition into poetry.

The recent novel has tended to polarize between the 'new journalism' represented by Truman Capote and Tom Wolfe, and the postmodern experimentalism of John Barth and Thomas Pynchon; but meanwhile, writers such as Gore Vidal, John Updike, and Philip Roth continue the history of America in fiction.

Benjamin Franklin **US statesman, writer.**

Franklin (1706-90) had an unusually wide range of careers: he was successful as a printer, publisher, journalist, politician, diplomat and physicist. Trained as a printer and working in New England and for nearly 2 years in London (UK), **Franklin** found he also had talents as a journalist; when he was 27 he published *Poor Richard's Almanac*.

In this, he 'filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences' which he concocted. Most are trite platitudes of the 'honesty is the best policy' kind, but some show the sly irony of his journalism (of which the best-known sample is probably his advice to young men to take older mistresses, 'because they are so grateful').

The almanac made him both famous and prosperous and, by franchises in printing shops and other businesses in which he provided a third of the capital and took a third of the profit, he made himself wealthy.

Franklin was a universal genius who did not realize that his "*Autobiography*" would eventually become a classic of its kind. The part of it given here shows the beginnings of his personal, civic, and political success, yet the account is uncolored by vanity. Franklin shows us that he is a human being as well as a successful man.

Though his style of writing was clear and even plain in his time, we now find it a bit hard to read. It has many long words, often from

Latin language, and long sentences. But we must remember that he was writing two centuries ago.

It is true that Franklin's style is formal. The organization of much of what he says — if not how he says it — is informal, however. In his famous "Autobiography", in particular, he talks first about one thing and then another with little attempt at connecting them. In the part of the "Autobiography" he talks first of all about how he studied language — something you are doing now — then about family matters, and finally about the club he founded called "Junto". Even in these few pages we can see a versatile energy and new ideas.

Of course, not all of his ideas were new. In some cases he simply became the most prominent advocate of old ones, especially the beliefs that we should work hard and that should save our money. These principles had been current since Puritan times, but Franklin spread them widely by putting them into a popular almanac, or calendar, called "Poor Richard's Almanac" which he himself printed. It contained many popular sayings such as "God helps them that help themselves", "Laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him", and "Beware of little expenses, a small leak will sink a great ship".

Key words

Puritans — a group of people who wished to "purify" the Church of England in the USA

Junto — a club founded by Benjamin Franklin

Calvinists — a movement with its leader — John Calvin

Trite Platitudes — a dull or trite remark, especially one uttered as if it were fresh or profound

Questions:

1. What role did the game of chess play in Franklin's study of foreign languages?
2. What languages did Franklin learn?
3. How did learning these languages help him?
4. What is Franklin's idea regarding how languages should be taught?
5. In what way did Franklin repay his brother for the problem he caused him in earlier years?
6. What was Franklin's reaction to inoculation against smallpox?
7. Why did he feel the way he did?

8. What is Junto?
9. Were there any other clubs, besides Junto?
10. According to Franklin, what were the advantages of forming additional clubs subordinate to the Junto?

LECTURE 2. THE THEME: WASHINGTON IRVING, JAMES FENNIMORE COOPER ARE AMERICA'S FRIST MAN OF LETTERS

Plan

1. Washington Irving – America's first man of letters.
2. Rip Van Winkle – foolish and well-oiled disposition
3. James Fennimore Cooper – the author of the most famous novel
"The Last of the Mohicans"

Literature:

1. Sean McMahon., "1000 Years of Poetry"., A Millenium Anthology., Marino Publication, USA., 2000
2. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
3. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
4. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
5. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy. An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Washington Irving
Life: (1783-1859)



I was always fond of visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners. Even when a mere child I began my travels, and many hours of discovery into foreign parts and unknown regions of my native city, to the frequent alarm of my parents, and the emolument of the town - crier. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my observations. My holiday afternoons were spent in rambles about the surrounding country. I made myself familiar with all its places in history or fable. I visited the neighboring villages, and added greatly to my stock of knowledge, by noting their habits and customs, and conversing with sages and great men. I even journeyed one long summer's day to the summit of the most distant hill, whence I stretched my eye over many a mile of terra incognita, and was astonished to find how vast a globe I inhabited.

- From "The Author's Account of Himself" in the *Sketch Book*

He was born in New York City. He was educated privately, studied law, and began to write essays for periodicals. He traveled in France and Italy (1804-06), wrote whimsical journals and letters, then returned to New York City to practice law in a haphazard way. He and his brother William Irving and James Kirke Paulding wrote the *Salamagundi* papers (1807-08), a collection of humorous essays. He first became more widely known for his comic work, *A History of New York* (1809), written under the name of Diedrich Knickerbocker.

In 1815 he went to England to work for his brothers' business; when that failed he composed a collection of stories and essays that became *The Sketch Book*, published under the name "Geoffrey Crayon" (1819-20); they included "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." In 1822 he went to the Continent, living in Germany and France for several years. In 1826 he went to Spain and

became attachè at the U.S. embassy in Madrid; while in Spain he did the research for his biography of Christopher Columbus (1828) and his works on Granada (1829) and the Alhambra (1832).

He was secretary of the U.S. legation in London during 1829-32. He would return to Spain as the U.S. ambassador (1842-46) but he spent most of the rest of his life at his estate, "Sunnyside," near Tarrytown, N.Y., turning out a succession of mainly historical and biographical works - including a five-volume life of George **Washington**. Although he never really developed as a literary talent, he has retained his reputation as the first American man of letters.

Rip Van Winkle

In the first excerpt, reprinted below, Rip is described for us. So are his difficulties at home, which he often escapes by going to the local inn to spend his time with his friends. But even the inn is not safe from his wife and so sometimes Rip takes his dog and goes hunting in the woods

Rip Van Winkle, however was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well - oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon and night her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house - the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-packed as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all

points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods – but what courage can withstand the ever – during and all – besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallow's air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleep stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveler. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinion of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his moevements as accurately as by a sundial.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labour of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods.

Questions:

1. Who was Rip's sole domestic adherent?
2. Why does Rip frequently leave his house?
3. Why did he like to go to forest?
4. Where did Rip meet with other idle people of the village?
5. What happened when he woke up?
6. Do we have such people as Rip van Winkle?
7. Who was Derrick Van Bummel and why was he important to the meetings of Junto?
8. How did Rip escape his wife when she came to the inn?
9. Where is the climax of the story?
10. How does the story end?

James Fenimore Cooper

Life: (1789-1851)

The democratic gentleman must differ in many essential particulars from the aristocratical gentleman, though in their ordinary habits and tastes they are virtually identical. Their principles vary; and, to a slight degree their deportment accordingly.

From "The American Democrat"

In Harry R. Warfel, Ralph Gabriel,
Stanley T. Williams, *The American mind*,
New York: American Book Company 1947

The writer Fennimore Cooper was born in Burlington, N.J. Raised in prosperous circumstances in his father's frontier settlement at Cooperstown, N.Y., he attended Yale University (but was expelled for a prank) and spent several years in the navy (1806-11). Living as a country gentleman, he wrote his first novel, *Precaution* (1820), allegedly after his wife challenged his claim that he could write a better one than what she was then reading. His second, *The Spy* (1821), is regarded as the first major American novel.

He moved to New York City and achieved great popular success with *The Pilot* (1823) and his first three Leatherstocking tales, *The Pioneers* (1823), followed by *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and

The Prairie (1827), a series that offered for the first time a heroic vision of the American frontier. Consisting of five novels, the series gets its title from one of the names applied to its frontiersman hero. Natty Bumpoo, who is also called Deerslayer, Hawkeye, Pathfinder, and Leatherstocking. The five novels tell the story of Bumpoo from youth to old age. From 1826 to 1833 he lived in Europe, where he wrote several American and European romances and other works revealing his deep homesickness for an unspoiled American wilderness. But his return to Cooperstown in 1834 was followed by years of bitter disillusionment with the U.S.A.

He wrote many satires and virulent criticism that were largely ignored by readers; he also engaged in libel suits against some of his critics and this only further alienated the American public. The prolific output of his last years included a scholarly history of the U.S. Navy (1839), and, among other novels, two final Leatherstocking tales, *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841).

The Last of the Mohicans

The passage that follows opens when Bumpoo (here called Hawkeye) has just saved an English officer from death at the hands of hostile Indians, the Hurons. Their leader is wicked Magua. The good Indians are the Mohicans, led by Chingachgook and his son Uncas. The English officer, named Heyward, is escorting two white girls, Cora and Alice, through the wilderness of upstate New York before the Revolutionary War, when Hawkeye comes to their aid.

The Hurons stood aghast at this sudden visitation of death on one of their band. But, as they regarded the fatal accuracy of an aim which had dared to immolate an enemy at so many hazards to a friend, the name of "La Longue Carabine" ("the long rifle") burst simultaneously from every lip, and was succeeded by a wild and a sort of plaintive howl. The cry was answered by a loud shout from a little thicket, where the incautious party had piled their arms; and at the next moment Hawkeye, too eager to load the rifle he had regained, was seen advancing upon them, brandishing the clubbed weapon, and cutting the air with wide and powerful sweeps. Bold and rapid as the progress of the scout, it was exceeded by that of a light and vigorous form which, bounding past him, leaped, with incredible activity and

daring, into the very center of the Hurons, where it stood, whirling a tomahawk, and flourishing a glittering knife, with fearful menaces, in front of Cora. Quicker than the thoughts could follow these unexpected and audacious movements, an image, armed in the emblematic panoply of death, glided before their eyes, and assumed a threatening attitude at the other's side. The savage tormentors recoiled before these warlike intruders, and uttered as they appeared in such quick succession, the often repeated and peculiar exclamation of surprise, followed by the well known and dreaded appellations of —

“Le Cerf Agile” (“the quick deer” French name given to Uncas because of his agility) “Le Gros Serpent” (“the large snake” French name given to Chingachgook.

He was so called because of his wisdom, cunning and prudence)

But the wary and vigilant leader of the Hurons was not so easily disconcerted. Casting his keen eyes around the little plain, he comprehended the nature of the assault at a glance, and encouraging his followers by his voice as well as by his example, he unsheathed his long and dangerous knife, and rushed with a loud whoop upon expecting Chingachgook. It was the signal for a general combat. Neither party had fire-arms, and the contest was to be decided in the deadliest manner; hand to hand, with weapons of offence, and none of defence.

Uncas answered the whoop, and leaping on an enemy, with a single, well-directed blow of his tomahawk, cleft him to the brain. Heyward tore the weapon of Magua from the sapling, and rushed eagerly towards the fray. As the combatants were now equal in number, each singled an opponent from the adverse band. The rush and blows passed with the fury of a whirlwind, and the swiftness of lightning. Hawkeye soon got another enemy within reach of his arm, and with one sweep of his formidable weapon he beat down the slight and inartificial defences of his antagonist, crushing him to the earth with the blow. Heyward ventured to hurl the tomahawk he had seized, too ardent to await the moment of closing. It struck the Indian he had selected on the forehead, and checked for an instant his onward rush. Encouraged by this slight advantage, the impetuous young man continued onset, and sprang upon his enemy with naked hands. A single instant was enough to assure him of the rashness of the

measure, for he immediately found himself fully engaged, with his activity and courage, in endeavoring to ward the desperate thrusts made with the knife of the Huron. Unable longer to foil an enemy so alert and vigilant, he threw his arms about him, and succeeded in pinning the limbs of the other to his side, with an iron grasp, but one that was far too exhausting to himself to continue long...

Key words

Legation – diplomatic minister and staff in a foreign mission

Frontier – the part of a country that borders with another country

Prolific – producing offspring, young, fruit

Leatherstocking – a compound of novels in one book

Alienated – different, not natural

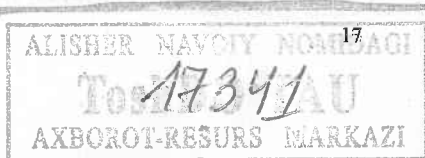
Questions

1. Why was Fennimore Cooper expelled from the University?
2. Was it normal to be expelled at that time?
3. What was the push for his achievements?
4. Where did the author achieve his great success?
5. Why were his satires ignored by most of the readers?
6. How does Uncas demonstrate his courage?
7. Do you think that the Hurons were afraid of Uncas and Chingachook? Explain your answer?
8. How was Hawkeye's weapon different from those used by the other combatants?
9. In your own words, describe the fight.
10. Is there any difference between the movie and the book?

LECTURE 3. THE THEME: PHILIP (MORIN) FRENEAU IS THE POET OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Plan:

1. Philip Freneau – poet of the American Revolution.
2. “*The wild Honey Suckle*” – a poem which was unread in the poet's lifetime.



~~4524/22~~

Literature:

1. Sean McMahan., "1000 Years of Poetry", A Millenium Anthology., Marino Publication, USA., 2000
2. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
3. McGraw -Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
4. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
5. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Philip (Morin) Freneau

Life: (1752-1832)



It is not easy to convince what will be the greatness and importance of North America in a century or two to come, if the present fabric of nature is upheld, and those bold and manly sentiments of freedom, which actuate them at this day. Agriculture, the basis of a nation's greatness, will here, most probably, be advanced to its summit or perfection; and its attendant commerce, will so agreeably and usefully employ mankind, that wars will be forgotten; nations, by a free intercourse with this vast and fertile continent with the whole world, will again become brothers after so many centuries of hatred and jealousy, and no longer treat each other as savages and monsters.

From *The Prose of Philip Freneau*, selected and edited by Philip M. Marsh.. The Scarecrow Press, New Brunswick, N. J., 1995

A poet and journalist Philip Freneau was born in New York City. A major early American poet, he was reknown as "Poet of the American Revolution" for his burning anti-British satires at the Revolution's outbreak. While in college, he had already determined to become a poet. After his experience as a sailor in the Revolutionary War, he turned to newspaper and pamphlet writing. Today, however, Freneau is remembered more his poetry than his prose. Two of his poems are reprinted below.

The first, "*The Wild Honey Suckle*" was virtually unread in the poet's lifetime, yet it deserve a place among major English and American works of poetry of that time. Much of the beauty of the poem lies in the sounds of the words and the effects created through changes in rhythm.

The idea for the second poem, "*The Indian Burying Ground*" was suggested by the fact that some Indian tribes buried their dead in a sitting, instead of lying, position. This poem, too, is marked by a regularity of rhythm and meter and by the use of "*Reason*" as an abstraction which is personified.

After a hiatus in the West Indies, where he wrote lyric verse with Romantic elements, he was captured by the British at sea and imprisoned under harsh conditions described in *The British Prison-Ship* (1781).

He was a sea captain later in the 1780s and wrote some of his best verse, including *The Hurricane* and *The Wild Honey Suckle*. In a new phase of his life, Freneau became editor of the *New York Daily Advertiser* in 1789; then from 1791 to 1793, backed by Thomas Jefferson, he capably edited the fiercely democratic *National Gazette*, in rivalry with John Fenno's Federalist paper. In later years, his reputation besmirched by enemies, he earned a meager living as a sea captain, farmer, and tinker.

The Wild Honey Suckle

Fair flower, that does so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet;

No roving foot shall crush thee here,
No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by;
Thus quietly thy summer goes,
Thy days declining to repose.

The Indian Burying Ground

Published in 1788, this poem is the earliest to romanticize the Indian as a child of nature.

In spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The posture, that we give the dead
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands –
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His images birds, and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dresses,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that knows no rest.

Key words

Revolution -- complete and forcible overthrow and replacement of an established government or political system by the people governed

Satire – the use of irony, sarcasm, denouncing

Rhythm – movement or procedure with uniform or patterned recurrence of a beat, accent

Meter – the rhythmic element in poetry and prose

Questions:

1. Why is Philip Freneau called "Poet of the American Revolution"?
2. Why is he famous for his poetry than for his prose?
3. What is the difference between prose and poetry?
4. Bring examples of his sayings?
5. What do you understand by saying "...sounds of the words and the effects created through changes in rhythm"?
6. What do you understand by "reading between the lines"?
7. Explain the meaning of the poem "The Wild Honey Suckle" , by reading it between the lines.
8. What is the idea of the second poem "The Indian Burying Ground"?
9. Give the idea of Indians and the Native Indians?
10. Do you know any Indian reservations in the USA? Do they still exist?

LECTURE 4. THE THEME: WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT AND EDGAR ALLAN POE ARE THE POETS OF AMERICAN LYRICS

Plan:

1. William Cullen Bryant – the first American lyric poet of distinction.
2. He is the establishor of the new Republican Party.
3. Life and literary activity of William Cullen Bryant.
4. Edgar Allan Poe and his foster life
5. Difficult but successful raise of Poe to the throne of literature

Literature:

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997

3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989

4. A Committee of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

William Cullen Bryant

Life: (1794-1878)



I infer that all the materials of poetry exist in our own country, with all the ordinary encouragements and opportunities for making a successful use of them. The elements of beauty and grandeur, intellectual greatness and moral truth, the stormy and the gentle passions, the casualities and the changes of life, and the light shed upon man's nature by the story of the past times and the knowledge of foreign manners, have not made their sole abode in the old world beyond beyond the waters. If under these circumstances our poetry should finally fail of rivalling that of Europe, it will be because Genius sits idle in the midst of treasures.

From "On Poetry in its Relation to our Age and Country," cited in
Albert D. Van Nostrand and Charles Voice: An Anthology of
American Poetry from the Seventeenth Century to the Present. The
Liberal Arts Pree: New York, 1959

A poet and editor William Cullen Bryant was born in Cummington, Mass. He was the first American lyric poet of distinction. He could make his poems sing melodies that might be stately, as they are in "Thanatopsis" gentle, as in "To a Waterfall" or stirring, as in "Song of Marion's Men" but always graceful and never cloying. He attended Williams College (1810-11), studied law (1811-15), and practiced in Great Barrington, Mass., (1816-25), before settling in New York City and Long Island (1843). An editor of the *Evening Post* (1829-78), he was an opponent of slavery and helped to establish the new Republican Party. During his long years as both a lawyer and editor he continued to write poetry such as "Thanatopsis" (written in 1811, revised in 1821) and "To a Waterfowl" (1821) that

gained him the reputation as America's first major poet. He also translated new editions of the *Illiad* (1870) and the *Odyssey* (1871-72).

Thanantopsis

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communication with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow coffin house

Make thee to sudder, and grow sick at heart; -
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around -
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air -
Comes a still voice - Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all this course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again...

Edgar Allan Poe
Life: (1809-1849)



There is a radical error, I think, in the usual mode of constructing a story. Either history affords a thesis – or one is suggested by an incident of the day – or, at best, the author sets himself to work in the combination of striking events to form merely the basis of his narrative – designing, generally, to fill in with description, dialogue, or authorial comment, whatever crevices of fact, or action, may, from page to page, render themselves apparent. I prefer commencing with the consideration of an effect. Keeping originality always in view – for he is false to himself who ventures to dispense with so obvious and so readily attainable a source of interest – I say to myself, in the first place, “Of the innumerable effects, or impressions, of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall, I, on the present occasion, select?” Having chosen a novel, first, and secondly, a vivid effect, I consider whether by ordinary incidents and peculiar tone, or the converse, or by peculiarity both of incident and tone – afterward looking about me (or rather within) for such combinations of events, or tone, as shall best aid me in the construction of the effect.

From “*The Philosophy of Composition*”,
Poetry and Prose, Houghton Mifflin

A poet, writer Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston, Mass. He was abandoned by his father when a baby and his mother died before he was three, so he was taken as a foster child into the home of John Allan, a Richmond (Va.) tobacco merchant whose business took him to Great Britain, where Poe was educated (1815-20).

Returning to Virginia, he continued his education (1823-25) and attended the University of Virginia (1826); having quarrelled with his foster father (although he chose “Allan” as his middle name) over his gambling debts and refusal to study law, he then went to Boston, where, anonymously and at his own expense, he published *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827).

He served in the U.S. Army under a false name (Edgar A. Perry) and incorrect age (1827-29) and then attended West Point (1830-31), but got himself dismissed when he realized he would never be reconciled with his foster father. He then went to Baltimore to live with his aunt, Mrs. Maria Clemm; he would marry her daughter and his own cousin, 13-year-old Virginia Clemm, in 1836.

His third volume of poetry (1831) brought neither fame nor profit, but a prize-winning short story, "A MS Found in a Bottle" (1833), gained him the editorship of the *Southern Literary Messenger* (1835-36). During the next several years he was a journalist and editor for a variety of periodicals in New York City, Philadelphia, and then back in New York City, where he settled in 1844 and continued working as an editor while nursing schemes of starting his own magazine. All this while he was gaining some reputation for his short stories, poems, reviews, and essays; such stories as "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839), "Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), and "The Goldbug" (1843), would later be regarded as classics of their genre. He gained some fame from the publication in 1845 of a dozen stories as well as of *The Raven and Other Poems*, and he enjoyed a few months of calm as a respected critic and writer.

After his wife died in 1847, however, his life began to unravel even faster as he moved about from city to city, lecturing and writing, drinking heavily, and courting several older women. Just before marrying one, he died in Baltimore after being found semiconscious in a tavern - possibly from too much alcohol, although it is a myth that he was a habitual drunkard and drug addict.

Admittedly a failure in most areas of his personal life, he was recognized as an unusually gifted writer and was admired by Dostoevsky and Baudelaire, even if not always appreciated by many of his other contemporaries. Master of symbolism and the macabre, he is considered to be the father of the detective story and a stepfather of science fiction, and he remains one of the most timeless and extraordinary of all American creative artists.

Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee; -
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

She was a child and I was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love -
I and my Annabel Lee -
With a love that the winged seraphs of Heaven
Coveted her and me.

Key words

Symbolism – the practice of representing things by symbols, or of investing things with symbolic meaning

Macabre – gruesome in character; dealing with or representing death

Fiction – the class of literature comprising works of imaginative narration

Critic – person who judges, evaluates or criticizes

Questions:

Thanatopsis

1. Does this poem in any way reveal that it is the work of a teenage youth? Explain your answer
2. According to the opening lines, what different messages does nature give us?
3. Open the meanings of the two lines:
*Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again...*
4. According to the poet, in what spirit should one approach death?

Annabel Lee

5. Cite lines which support the idea that the poem is an idealized account of Poe's dead wife, Virginia Clemm?

6. Does the "Love" have time?
7. How does the poem illustrate the timelessness of love?
8. Explain the meaning of "Stanza"?
9. How do you interpret the last four lines of the last stanza?
10. How does the poem end?

LECTURE 5. THE THEME: NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE IS AN AMERICAN SOLITARY WRITERS

Plan:

1. Salem – a city of witches
2. Nathaniel Hawthorne and his 12 years of solitary writing
3. Literary career of Nathaniel Hawthorne
4. Closing dates of his life

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Life: (1804-64)



What is Guilt? A stain upon the soul. And it is a point of vast interest whether the soul may contact such stains, in all their depth and fragrance, from deeds which may have been plotted and resolved upon, but which, physically, have never had existence. Must the fleshy hand and visible frame of man set its seal to the evil designs of the soul, in order to give them their entire validity against the sinner? Or, while none but crimes perpetrated are cognizable before an earthly tribunal, will guilty thoughts – of which guilty deeds are no more than shadows – will these draw down the full weight of a condemning sentence, in the supreme court of eternity? In the solitude of a midnight chamber or in a desert, afar from men or in church, while the body is kneeling, the soul may pollute itself even with those crimes which we are accustomed to deem altogether carnal. If this be true, it is a fearful truth.

From "Fancy's show Box" in Hyatt H. Wassoner, *Nathaniel Hawthorne: Selected tales and Sketches*, New York, Toronto: Rinehart & Co., Inc 1954 (Copyright 1950)

A prominent American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in Salem, Mass. A descendant of a judge in the Salem witch trials, he spent a solitary, bookish childhood with his widowed and reclusive mother. After graduating from Bowdoin College, he returned to Salem and prepared for a writing career with 12 years of solitary study and writing interrupted by summer tours through the Northeast. After privately publishing a novel, *Fanshawe* (1828), he began publishing stories in the *Token* and *New England Magazine*.

These original allegories of New England Puritanism, including such classic stories as "The Minister's Black Veil," were collected in *Twice-Told Tales* (1837). A brief period of paid employment, including the compilation of popular children's works and a stint at the Boston Custom House (1839-41) - thanks to his friend, Senator

Franklin Pierce - was followed by a half-year's residence at the transcendentalist community, Brook Farm.

In 1842 he married Sophia Amelia Peabody, also a transcendentalist, and they moved to Concord, Mass., where he began a friendship with Henry David Thoreau. Financial pressures forced his return to Salem (1845-49) where he secured another political appointment, this time as surveyor of the port of Salem (1845-49). During these years he continued to publish Puritan tales ("Young Goodman Brown," "The Birthmark"); collections of his stories included *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846) and *The Snow Image* (1851).

His dismissal from the surveyorship initiated the brief period of his greatest novels: *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), and *The Blithedale Romance* (1852). He also wrote two children's classics: *A Wonder-Book* (1852) and *Tanglewood Tales* (1853). His campaign biography of Franklin Pierce (1852) was rewarded with the U.S. consulship at Liverpool (1853-58).

He then went to live in Italy (1858-59) where he began *The Marble Faun*, which he published after returning to the U.S.A. in 1860. Back in Concord, he published his last major work, *Our Old Home* (1863), which drew on his experiences in England, but by then he was becoming ill and disillusioned.

In "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" Hawthorne illustrates several sides of his writing: his disenchanting view of human nature, his use of symbolism, and his interest in the supernatural. In addition, the story treats one of the new nineteenth century ideas that concerned Hawthorne: scientific experiment. The story itself is stimulating and rewarding study of right and wrong in human conduct.

"Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," which first appeared in the author's "Twice-Told Tales" in 1837, asks the question so many of us ask ourselves: "If I had my life to live over, what changes would I make?". In "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," Hawthorne builds a fantasy around the idea of the Fountain of Youth and provides the readers with logical but surprising answers.

In that part of the story which precedes the excerpt reprinted below, Hawthorne has described the doctor, his four elderly guests, and his weird-looking study.

Dr. Heideggers Experiment

Such was Dr. Heidegger's study. On the summer afternoon of our tale a small round table, as black as ebony, stood in the center of the room, sustaining a cut-glass vase of beautiful form and elaborate workmanship. The sunshine came through the window, between the neavy festoons of two faded damask curtains; and fell directly across this vase; so that a mild splendor was reflected from it on the ashen visages of the five old peoplewho sat around. Four champagne glasses were also on the table.

"My dear old friends," repeated Dr. Heidegger, "may I reckon on your aid in performing as exceedingly curious experiment?"

Now Dr. Heidegger was a very strange old gentlement, whose eccentricity had become the nucleus for a thousand fantastic stories. Some of these fables, to my shame be it spoken, might possibly be traced back to my own veracious self; and if any passages of the present tale should startle the reader's faith, I must be content to bear the stigma of a fiction monger.

When the doctor's four guests heard him talk of his proposed experiment, they anticipated nothing more wonderful than the murder of a mouse in an air pump, or the examination of a cobweb by the microscope, or some similar nonsense, with which he was constantly in the habitof pesteing his inmates. But without waiting for a reply Dr. Heidegger hobbled across the chamber, and returned with the same ponderous folio, bound in black leather, which common report affirmed to be a book of magic. Undoing the silver clasps, he opened the volume, and took from among its black - letter pagesd a rose, or what was one a rose, though now the green leaves and crimson petals had assumed one brownish hue, and the ancient flowerseemd ready to crumble to dust in the doctor's hands.

"The rose," said Dr. Heidegger, with a sign, "this same withered and crumbling flower, blossomed five and fifty years ago. It was given me by Sylvia Ward, whose portrait hangs yonder; and I meant to wear it in my bossom and our wedding. Five and fifty years it has been treasured between the leaves of this old volume. Now, would you deem it possibvle that this rose of half a century could ever bloom again?"

“Nonsense!” said the Widow Wycherly, with a peevish toss of her head. “You might as well ask whether an old woman’s wrinkled face could ever bloom again.”

“See!” answered Dr. Heidegger.

He uncovered the vase, and threw the faded rose into the water which it contained. At first, it lay lightly upon the surface of the fluid, appearing to imbibe none of its moisture. Soon, however, a singular change began to be visible. The crushed and dried petals stirred, and assumed a deepening tinge of crimson, as if the flower were reviving from a death – like slumber; the slender stalk and twigs foliage became green; and there was the rose of half a century, looking as fresh as when Sylvia Ward had first given it to her lover.

Key words

Allegory – the representation of spiritual, moral, or other abstract meanings through the actions of fictional characters that serve as symbols

Puritanism – the principles and practices of Puritans; extreme, often excessive strictness in moral or religious matters

Transcendentalist – transcendental character, thought, or language; a movement associated with Ralph Waldo Emerson

Symbolism – the practice of representing things by symbols, or of investing things with symbolic meaning

Supernatural – something not natural, not usual

Questions:

1. What do you understand by “bookish life”?
2. What is New England Puritanism?
3. How did the writer become friend with Henry David Thoreau?
4. What importance does a rose play in the story?
5. Why did Dr. Heidegger show the rose to his friends?
6. Who was Sylvia Ward?
7. Describe each character in the story?
8. Do you see any exaggerations in the story?
9. Describe the “magic” water?
10. Do you believe in eternal youth?

LECTURE 6. THE THEME: INTRODUCTION TO ROMANTICISM AND REASON TRANSCENDENTALISM

Plan

1. The peculiar features of Romanticism and Reason
2. Negro slavery and their partial freedom
3. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau – their works
4. Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne – similarities and differences

Literature

1. Sean McMahon., "1000 Years of Poetry"., A Millenium Anthology., Marino Publication, USA., 2000
2. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
3. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
4. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
5. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaraanga., India., Mysore, 1997
6. Dean Curry, Highlights of American Literature, United States Information Agency, Washington D.C. 20547, USA 1995

During the half century when the literature discussed in this section was written, the United States went through some of the great changes in its history. In the middle of the 19th century it was still mainly a country of farmers. Trade and manufacturing were growing more important with each decade, but it was not until the 1870th that a majority of Americans were making a living in non-farming occupations. Meanwhile, the population soared from 23 million in 1850 to 76 million in 1900. In the middle of the century Negro slavery was still a fact of American life. The nation was being split in two by

it. The South defended slavery more and more vigorously; the North criticized it more and more earnestly. The bitter war waged between the North and South from 1861 to 1865 permanently altered the character of American life. For many people – the great poet Walt Whitman for one – it was central fact of their lives. For the South it meant the lingering flavor of defeat; for the Negroes it meant freedom from slavery, if not all the freedom enjoyed by the whites.

After the Civil War the nation entered a period of vast commercial expansion. Railroads stretched from one end of the country to the other. Factories were built. Cities grew bigger. Fortunes were made.

Americans, whether native born or immigrants, earned more than ever before. They had more opportunities, more freedom. Often, as a result, they felt patriotism, a trust in their country that made them sure that the United States was the greatest nation on earth. Only a few of their fellow countrymen felt otherwise. However, these few included some of the notable thinkers of the time and, most significant for us, some of the best writers.

Throughout history men have expressed their dissatisfaction with their present condition through the written and spoken word. Thus, it should not be surprising that in the United States, as in other countries, the greatest writers have often questioned the values held dear by the majority of their countrymen. The thinkers in a society, writers among them, are the persons most likely to examine prevailing values and to discern flaws in the social structure before these flaws have been recognized by the society as a whole. This examination of values was as prevalent in the 19th century as it is in the 20th.

Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, for example, both denied that making money was as important as many Americans believed. On the other hand, both authors strongly affirmed the rights of the individual were then and are now a vital part of the American creed. Or take the case of Walt Whitman. His attitude toward sex was far more tolerant than that of the rest of his countrymen – but in his affirmation of democracy throughout his poems, he expressed values shared by most Americans. Mark Twain seemed either to conform to typical American values or to amuse his audience by adroitly making fun of them. Yet underneath he felt a brooding pessimism not only

about American values, but about life itself. The writings that he suppressed, and which he knew about, show his gloom. By the time he died he considered life, at best an evil dream.

As we have seen, writers of the first half of the 19th century, such as Poe and Hawthorne, were part of an international romantic trend in literature and art. Among the many characteristics of this romantic trend was a stress on the individual instead of the group, on irregular instead of the regular. In addition, the Romanticism of Poe and Hawthorne was dark and brooding. But all American Romanticism was not.

The American Romanticists of the mid - 19th century, who termed themselves Transcendentalists and who were led by Ralph Waldo Emerson, preached the positive life. Their group included two of the most significant writers America has produced so far, Emerson and his young friend, Henry David Thoreau. They became movers and shakers whose writing has had more and more impact as time has gone on.

Transcendentalism

Transcendentalism has been defined philosophically as "the recognition in man of the capacity of knowing truth intuitively, or of attaining knowledge transcending the rich of senses." Emerson drew a sharp distinction between the "Understanding," by which he meant the rational faculty, and the "Reason" by which he meant the suprarational or intuitive faculty; and he regarded the "Reason" much more authoritative in spiritual matters than the "Understanding." "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind," he proclaimed in a speech at Harvard University in 1838 in which he glorified intuition and repudiated all external religious authority. The core ideas of transcendental thought in the abstract can best be studied in Emerson.

There were also several other concepts that accompanied Transcendentalism and which have had even more influence. One was the idea that nature was ennobling, that men were somehow better for being out in the woods or meadows; and that on the other hand commerce was degrading, that a life spent in business was a wasted life. Another was the idea that the individual soul could reach God, or

as Emerson called him, the Over-Soul, without the help of churches and clergy.

All these doctrines may sound more or less abstract to us today. Yet, there was intellectual dynamite in them. For 30 years in the middle of the 19th century. Emerson preached to America through his lectures and essays. He preached Transcendentalism and more than Transcendentalism. He told them to be self-reliant and at the same time unselfish. He asserted that there was greatness in them all that needed only to be set free. And he gave his message in prose poetry of remarkable, individual beauty. Henry Thoreau stood ready to urge an even more powerful doctrine, but few listened to him during his short life. It was only later that the world paid attention. Then Thoreau became the fiercest enemy American commercial life has ever had. He insisted that getting a living stood in the way of life. To keep from having to work at jobs in which he had no interest, he went to live for two years in the woods, in a cabin he built for himself. There he lived with almost complete independence.

Walt Whitman was determined to be the poet of democracy. Though America has never cared as much for poetry as for prose, Whitman thought that he could reach the American people by throwing aside the traditional ornaments and prettiness of verse and creating his own form. He worked at his great poem or book of poems, *Leaves of Grass* throughout his his life. He developed a kind of free verse, without rhyme or a fixed rhythm but distinguished by Biblical cadences and impressive repetition. Through his new medium he tried constantly to reach those people no other poet had reached. His poetry was for the lowest as well as the highest on the American economic ladder. He put everybody in his poetry and tried to reach everybody.

Questions:

1. What are the main peculiarities of the age of Romanticism?
2. Bring out the representatives of Romanticism?
3. Do you see any connections between Romanticism in English literature and in American literature?
4. What is Transcendentalism?
5. How did the trend appear?
6. Who are the main representatives of the trend? What was their aim?

7. What did Emerson and Thoreau deny?
8. What can you say about Poe and Hawthorne?
9. State the differences between the works of Henry Thoreau and Emerson?
10. State the similarities in the works by Poe and Hawthorne?

Key words

Romanticism – a movement in literature, philosophy, art, and music, which characterized the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century

Expansion – landlords enclosed farmlands and evicted the peasants in favor of sheep cultivation. Colonial expansion became an outlet for this displaced peasant population.

Trend – a movement; a group of people, mostly large

Spiritual – relating to or consisting of spirit

Abstarct – consisted apart from concrete existence

LECTURE 7. THE THEME: RALPH WALDO EMERSON, HARRIET (ELIZABETH) BEECHER STOWE, HENRY DAVID THOREAU ARE THE REPRESENTATIVES OF TRANSCENDENTALIST MOVEMENT

Plan:

1. Ralph Waldo Emerson – Head of the Transcendentalist movement
2. German idealism, Neo-Platonism, Asian mysticism, and Swedenborgianism.
3. Emerson and his works
4. Calvinist life of Harriet (Elizabeth) Beecher Stowe
5. Religious school
6. Henry David Thoreau and the literary/philosophical movement
7. Creative life of Henry David Thoreau

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of

- American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw -Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Ralph Waldo Emerson
Life: (1803-82)



A man's power to connect his thoughts with its proper symbol, and so to utter it, depends on the simplicity of his character, that is, upon his love of truth and his desire to communicate it without loss. The corruption of man is followed by the corruption of language. When simplicity of character and the sovereignty of ideas is broken up by the prevalence of secondary desires, - the desire of riches, of pleasure, of power, and of praise - and duplicity

and falsehood take place of simplicity and truth, the power over nature as an interpreter of the will is in a degree lost; new imagery ceases to be created, and old words are perverted to stand for things which are not; a paper currency is employed, when there is no bullion in the vaults.

- From his essay, "Nature"

The essayist, poet and lecturer Ralph Waldo Emerson was born in Boston, Mass. Son of a Unitarian minister, he was eight years old when his father died leaving six young children. At age 14 Ralph entered Harvard where he ran messages for the president and waited tables. He also began the journal that he kept up for 50 years, the source of many of his poems, essays, and lectures. Unhappy teaching (1821-25), he tried the Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., and in 1826 began to guest preach in Unitarian pulpits, but his liberal ideas led him to break with the Unitarians in 1832.

At the end of the year he went to Europe where he sought out many of the major literary-intellectual figures - in particular, Thomas Carlyle, his lifelong correspondent - and began to develop his own philosophy, a compound of German idealism, Neo-Platonism, Asian mysticism, and Swedenborgianism.

Back in America in 1833 he took up guest preaching again, but he gradually abandoned that for public lectures. His first wife having died (1831), he remarried (1835) and settled in Concord, Mass., where he spent mornings writing and afternoons walking in the woods and fields; he enjoyed his four children and among his circle of friends was Henry David Thoreau.

His famous Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard in 1837, "The American Scholar," was a humanist manifesto, stressing Americans' distinctive traits; and in place of traditional Christianity, he subscribed to a philosophy known as Transcendentalism, stressing the ties of humans to nature. Hardly an activist, he did support the abolitionists and the Civil War.

Although he published many volumes of essays and poetry - *Nature* (1836), *Representative Man* (1850), *The Conduct of Life* (1860) - his main source of income as well as of his popular reputation came from the lectures that he gave throughout America and in England. He made a final trip to Europe and Egypt (1872-73) and continued to lecture and publish, but his mind clouded over during his final decade. Never accepted solely as a poet, philosopher, or creative writer, he has survived as one of America's most unique voices and influences.

Harriet (Elizabeth) Beecher Stowe **Life: (1811-96)**



Beecher writer; born in Litchfield, Conn. (daughter of Lyman Beecher). Raised by her severe Calvinist father, she was educated and taught at the Hartford Female Seminary (founded by her sister Catherine Beecher). Moving to Cincinnati with her father in 1832, she began to write sketches and short

fiction; she married in 1836 but persevered in her writing while raising seven children.

In 1850 her husband took up a post as professor of religion at Bowdoin College, Maine, and there she began work on *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It appeared in weekly installments in the *National Era* (1851-52) and was published as a two-volume novel in 1852; it became an instant and controversial best-seller, both in the U.S.A. and abroad. She made three trips to Europe during the 1850s where she was befriended by major literary figures.

The novel had a major impact on Northerners' attitudes toward slavery and by the beginning of the Civil War had sold more than a million copies. She followed this spectacular success with numerous works of fiction, biography, children's books, travelogues, theological works, temperance tracts, and practical works on housekeeping (including coauthoring with sister Catherine, *The American Woman's Home*, 1869), but nothing she wrote ever approached the success of her first novel.

Henry David Thoreau Life: (1817-62)



I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan – like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a board swath and shave close,

to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion.

- from *Walden*

The writer and poet Henry David Thoreau was born in Concord, Mass. After graduating from Harvard (1837), where he began his lifelong habit of keeping journals, he taught briefly in Concord but resigned to protest the disciplinary whipping of students. He helped in his father's pencil factory, and then, with his brother John Thoreau, opened a private school in Concord (1838), based on Transcendentalism, the literary/philosophical movement espoused by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, and Orestes Brownson.

When John became fatally ill, the school was closed and Thoreau lived in Emerson's home as a sort of handyman while he maintained his practice of writing in his journal; he published a few pieces in the *Dial*, the Transcendentalist journal, wrote poetry, and lectured at the Concord Lyceum. In 1843-44 he went to Staten Island, N.Y., to tutor the children of Emerson's brother, William Emerson, and upon his return built a small structure on Emerson's land alongside Walden Pond.

During his stay there - July 4, 1845-Sept, 6, 1847, although by no means every night - he was jailed one night for refusing to pay a poll tax meant to support America's war in Mexico; in 1849 he would publish an essay on this experience, "Resistance to Civil Government" (later known as "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience"), which in its call for passive resistance to unjust laws was to inspire Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. (Thomas Carlyle called it the one truly original American contribution to civilization.)

During this time he completed the manuscript for *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), a ruminative account of a trip he had taken with his brother John in 1839. The journal he kept at Walden became the source of his most famous book, *Walden, Or Life in the Woods* (1854), in which he set forth his ideas on how an individual should best live to be attuned to his own nature as well as to nature itself.

After leaving Walden, he lived with Emerson (1847-49) and then for the rest of his life in his family home; he occasionally worked at the pencil factory and did some surveying work while he made brief trips to such places as Cape Cod, Maine, and (in 1861) as far as Minnesota. By the 1850s he had become greatly concerned over

slavery, and having met John Brown in 1857, he would write passionately in his defense.

He lived out his final years knowing he had tuberculosis and spent much of his time preparing his journals and manuscripts for what indeed proved to be posthumous publication. Little known outside his circle in his day, it was not until later in the 20th century that he came to be regarded as one of America's major literary thinkers.

Key words

Transcendentalism – it has been defined philosophically as “the recognition in man of the capacity of knowing truth intuitively, or of attaining knowledge transcending the rich of senses.”

German idealism - it exalted the ideals of self-knowledge, self-reverence, and individual autonomy.

Asian Mysticism - the spiritual quest in any religion for the most direct experience of God. Characteristically, *mysticism*, widely practised in Eastern religions, concentrates on prayer, meditation, contemplation, and fasting, so as to produce the attitude necessary for what is believed to be a direct encounter with God.

Swedenborgianism – another philosophy of Emerson, relating to the philosophy of Swedish writers

Neo-platonism (Humanism) – historically, a movement that arose with the Italian Renaissance, in the writings of Ficino, Pico, and later Erasmus and More. The humanists drew on classical literature (particularly that of Greece) and emphasized the centrality of human achievements and potential, in opposition to many of the claims of dogmatic theology and science.

Questions:

1. Explain why Emerson believes that conformity is an enemy of self-reliance, basing your explanation on the following quotations:
 - a) Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it
 - b) Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members.
 - c) Who so would be a man, must be a non-conformist.
 - d) Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.

2. What do you think Emerson means when he says that the adult is “clapped into jail by his consciousness?”
3. In what way, according to Emerson, does youth exhibit force?
4. Like Emerson, Thoreau was a Transcendentalist. What similarities do you see in their attitudes?
5. According to Thoreau, in what way does business control the life and thought of people?
6. Why did Thoreau turn down a job he was offered? Where does he prefer to get his education?
7. Explain the meaning of “Asian mysticism”?
8. What is Neo-Platonism?
9. What can you say about Swedenborgianism?
10. State the difficulties while reading and learning the above lecture?

LECTURE 8. THE THEME: HERMAN MELVILLE

Plan

1. Early life of Herman Melville
2. The effect of his father’s death on his further life
3. Moby Dick – masterpiece of all times
4. Difficulties in reading Moby Dick

Literature

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Herman Melville
Life: (1819-91)



"It is with fiction as with religion. It should be present another world, and yet one to which we feel the tie"

- from his *Pierre*

The great writer Herman Melville was born in New York City. Though both his parents came from well-to-do families, a family business failure and, soon, after, the death of his father made it necessary for him to leave school when he was 15. He worked as a bank clerk (1834), farmhand, and schoolteacher. His shipboard experience served as the basis for semiautobiographical novel, *Redburn* concerning the sufferings of a genteel youth among brutal sailors. This theme of a youth confronted by realities and evils for which he is unprepared is a prominent one in Melville's works. Though based on Melville's experience, the hero of the novel was more callow and unhappy than Melville himself was, for the sailing experience also gave him a love of the sea, and aroused his desire for adventure.

In 1837 he served as a cabinboy on a ship bound for Liverpool. In 1841 he set sail on the whaler, *Acushnet*, for the South Pacific; he deserted at the Marquesas Islands with a friend and lived for a short time with the Typee cannibals; he escaped to Tahiti and enjoyed an idyllic period there before he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and returned to Boston (1844).

The publication of *Typee* (1846), based on his Marquesas Islands adventure, and *Omoo* (1847), derived from his stay in Tahiti, made him famous; *Mardi* (1849), *Redburn* (1849), and *White-Jacket* (1850), also based on his sea travels, were not quite as successful. He married Elizabeth Shaw (1847), moved to New York City, and traveled to England and Paris (1849).

He settled in Pittsfield, Mass., and while writing *Moby Dick* there he became a friend of Nathaniel Hawthorne, dedicating his epic to him. *Moby Dick* (1851) is considered a masterpiece of American literature, but it was not well received by either readers or critics, who found it difficult and unsettling. Melville composed the first American prose-epic *Moby-Dick* (An epic is generally a long poem on an important theme.) Although *Moby-Dick* is presented in the form of a novel, at times it seems like a prose poem. It is difficult to read for two reasons. Much of the talk in the novel is sailor talk, and much of the language is purposely old-fashioned, for effect. This technique of Melville's style was inspired by the great authors of Elizabethan England.

The plot of *Moby-Dick* deals with the ceaseless conflicts between good and evil, of nature's indifference to man "visibly personified and made practically assailable." Melville makes this conflict live for us not by putting it into simple statements but by using symbols – that is, objects or persons who represent something else. The white whale, *Moby-Dick*, symbolizes nature for Melville, for it is complex, unknowable and dangerous. For the character Ahab, however, the whale represents only evil. The prime symbol of good is the first mate of the ship *Pequod*, a man named Starbuck. And the prime symbol of the good that is destroyed by evil – and in this case is destroyed by a consuming desire to root out evil – is the captain of the ship, Ahab. A man with an overwhelming obsession to kill whale which had crippled him, he is Melville's great creation. He burns with a baleful fire, becoming evil himself in his thirst to destroy evil.

The autobiographical *Pierre* (1852) also failed to win over the public. Discouraged, Melville traveled to the Holy Land in search of inspiration (1856-57). Such works as *Israel Potter* (1855), *The Piazza Tales* (1856), and *The Confidence Man* (1857) also found few readers, while his poetry would prove even more elusive. Withdrawing from the quest for literary recognition, in 1863 he moved to New York City again and worked there as a customs inspector (1866-85).

His last significant work, *Billy Bud, Foretopman*, finished just before his death, was not published until 1924. He died poor and in obscurity; it was the 1920s before Americans recognized his

achievements and elevated him to his rank as one of the greatest of all American creative artists.

Key words

Semiautobiographical – not fully covering the author's biography, related to other themes as well

Rank – position

Obscurity – instinctly heard or perceived

Questions:

1. The men in Ahab's boat were in constant danger of death from three sources. What were they?
2. If men had to die, which death would Ahab prefer?
3. Why did Ahab prefer that type of death?
4. What is Moby Dick and why is he called so?
5. Ahab's boat approached Moby Dick's side and Ahab was soon standing "in a smoky mountain mist." What was the mist?
6. What happened after Ahab sent his harpoon into Moby Dick's body?
7. What does Ahab mean by "I grow blind. Is't night?"
8. How good Melville at describing action?
9. Compare Melville with other action loving writers?
10. Do you personally like action stories and why?

LECTURE 9. THE THEME: HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW IS AN EARLY AMERICAN POET

Plan

1. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his poetry
2. The main features of his creative writing
3. Love to languages
4. *The Song of Hiawatha* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish* - the best-known American poems of the century.

Literature

1. Sean McMahan., "1000 Years of Poetry"., A Millenium Anthology., Marino Publication, USA., 2000
2. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
3. Dean Curry, Highlights of American Literature, United States Information Agency, Washington D.C. 20547, USA 1995

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Life: (1807-82) -



"True poets embody and give form to the fine thoughts which are passing through their own minds; but these men, like mere painters, only animate those forms, which have long existed in every one's fancy." from his "Poets and Common Sense Men" "True greatness is the greatness of the mind: - the true glory a nation is a moral and intellectual preeminence."

- from his *Works*

A poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, but lived most of his adult life in Cambridge, the village outside Boston, where many writers lived. One of Longfellow's grandfather's was a state Senator and the other grandfather had been Revolutionary War general and a Congressman. Longfellow's family also expected him to choose a career of public service, as well as to support himself in some profession. Following his graduation from Bowdoin College (1826), where he was classmate of Nathaniel Hawthorne, he studied languages in Europe (1826-29) and became professor and librarian at Bowdoin (1829-35). After further study in Europe, he was appointed Smith Professor of French and Spanish at Harvard (1836-54). For a number of years, though his poetry was quite popular, Longfellow continued to earn his living by teaching, but

after 18 years of teaching at Harvard, he resigned his position, because he felt it interfered with his writing.

A collection of poetry, *Voices in the Night* (1839), contained the poems "A Psalm Life," "Hymn to the Night," and "The Light of the Stars," which soon became widely known.

Ballads and Other Poems (1841), including such immensely popular works as "The Village Blacksmith," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," and "Excelsior," and his longer narrative poems, *Evangeline* (1847), *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855), and *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858), further served to make him the best-known American poet of the century. His *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863) opens with "Paul Revere's Ride," which has ever since been a national favorite.

During the last years of his life, Longfellow received many honors, including honorary degrees from Cambridge and Oxford Universities in England. After his death, a bust of Longfellow was placed in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey – the first American to be so honored.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow brought European culture to the attention of Americans, and in turn spread American folklore in Europe, where his work was popular. American readers liked Longfellow's lyrical style, which was influenced by the German Romantic poets, and they were pleased by his emphasis on such subjects as home, family, nature, and religion. His style and subjects were conventional, especially in comparison with Whitman or more modern writers, and over the years.

For spiritual solace after the accidental death of his second wife in 1861, he translated *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri* (1865-67) and produced a series of six sonnets, "Divina Commedia," which are among his finest poems. Although his work later came to be regarded as saccharine and didactic, there is no denying that he long played one of the traditional roles of a poet.

Longfellow's position as a major American poet has declined. Nevertheless, in the late 19th century, Longfellow was without a doubt the most popular American poet.

Hymn to the night

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er men from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there, -
From those deep cisterns flow.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Key words

Romantic poets – poets belonging to the age of Romanticism

Saccharine – a white crystalline powder having taste about 500 times sweeter than cane sugar.

Didactic – intended to instruct, morally instructed

Conventional – controversy, dispute, rivalry

Folklore – the traditional songs, tales, proverbs, legends, and beliefs of a people. The term was suggested in 1846 by William John Thoms (1803-85), founder of the *folklore* journal *Notes and Queries*.

Questions:

1. Describe the early life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow?
2. What can you say about the adulthood of the poet?
3. Why is he considered to be one of the major poets of the world?
4. What honours were given to Longfellow?
5. How does the poet personify the Night?
6. Why does he welcome the Night?
7. What does he learn from her?
8. Critically analyze the poem.
9. Speak about the rhyme in the poem

LECTURE 10. THE THEME: EMILY (ELIZABETH) DICKINSON IS THE AUTHOR WITH PECULIAR FEATURES

Plan

1. **Emily Dickinson and her quotes on literature.**
2. **Emily Dickinson – daughter of famous lawyer and politician**
3. **Early poems of Emily Dickinson**
4. **Emily Dickinson – a writer of great power and beauty**

Literature

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Emily (Elizabeth) Dickinson

Life: (1830-86)



*"If I read a book and it makes my body so cold
no fire can ever warm me, I know that is
poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my
head were taken off, I know that is poetry."*

Emily Dickinson wrote her whimsical, darting verse with sublime indifference to any notion of being a democratic and popular poet. Her work, far different from that of either Whitman or Longfellow, illustrated the fact that one could take a single household and an inactive life, and make enchanting poetry their of it.

She was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, where her father was a prominent lawyer and politician and where her grandfather had established an academy and college. She attended Amherst Academy (1840-47), Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (1847-48), and lived in Amherst all her life. Emily's family was very closely knit and she and her sister remained at home and did not marry. She seldom left Amherst; she attended college for a year, and later made one trip as far as Washington and two or three trips to Boston. After 1862 she became a total recluse, not even leaving her house nor seeing even close friends. Her early letters and descriptions of herself in her youth reveal an attractive girl with a lively wit. Her later retirement from the world, though perhaps affected by an unhappy love affair, seems mainly to have resulted from her own personality, from the world. The range of her poetry suggests not her limited experience but the power of her creativity and imagination.

She met the Reverend Charles Wadsworth in Philadelphia (1854), and he may have been the inspiration for some of her love poems. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a former minister and author, seems to have been her literary mentor, as indicated in an extended correspondence beginning in 1862.

When she began writing poetry Emily had relatively little formal education. She did know Shakespeare and classical mythology and was especially interested in women authors such as Elizabeth Browning and the Bronte sisters. She was also acquainted with the works of Emerson, Thoreau and Hawthorne. Though she did not believe in the conventional religion of her family, she had studied Bible, and many of her poems resemble hymns in form.

There were several men, who at different times of her life, acted as teacher or master to Emily. The first was Benjamin Newton, a young lawyer in her father's law office who improved her literary and cultural tastes and influenced her ideas on religion. She refers to him as "a friend, who taught me Immortality"

Emily's next teacher was Charles Wadsworth, a married, middle-aged minister who provided her with intellectual challenge and contact with the outside world. It appears that she felt an attraction for him that he could not return, and when he moved to San Francisco in 1862, she removed herself from society even more than she had before. Wadsworth may have been the model for the lover in her poems, though though it is just as likely that the literary figure is purely imaginary.

Miss Dickinson's greatest outpouring of poems occurred in the early 1860s, and because she was so isolated, the Civil War affected her thinking very little. At this time she sent some of her work to Thomas Higginson, a prominent critic and author. He was impressed by her poetry, but suggested that she use a more conventional grammar. Emily, however, refused to revise her poems to fit the standards of others and took no interest in having them published during her lifetime. In Higginson she did, nevertheless, gain an intelligent and sympathetic critic with whom to discuss her work.

In the last years of her life Emily seldom saw visitors, but kept in touch with her friends through letters, short poems and small gifts. After her death in 1886, her sister found nearly 1,800 poems that she had written. Many of the poems were finally published in 1890s, and Emily Dickinson, like Melville, was rediscovered by the literary world in the 1920th.

The first authoritative edition, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* (3 vols.), edited by Thomas H. Johnson, did not appear until 1955. She is

known for her poignant, compressed, and deeply charged poems, which have profoundly influenced the direction of 20th-century poetry and gained her an almost cultlike following among some.

Emily Dickinson's poetry comes out in bursts. The poems are short, many of them being based on a single image or symbol. But within her little lyrics Miss Dickinson writes about some of the most important things in life. She writes about love and a lover, whom she either never really found or else gave up. She writes about nature. She writes about mortality and immortality. She writes about success, which she thought she never achieved, and about failure, which she considered her constant companion. She writes of these things so brilliantly that she is now ranked as one of America's great poets

Her poetry is read today throughout much of the world and yet its exact wording has not been completely determined, nor has its arrangement and punctuation. Since Emily never prepared her poems for publication, one of the bitterest battles in American literary history has been fought over who should publish and edit what she wrote. However, regardless of details or conflicts, there is no doubt that the solitary Miss Dickinson of Amherst, Massachusetts, is a writer of great power and beauty.

Speculation continues regarding her personal life, but it is noted that she became a recluse c. 1862, and apparently died from the complications of uremia.

Success

Success is counted sweetest
By those who ne'er succeed
To comprehend a nectar
Requires sorest need

Not one of all the purple host
Who took the flag today
Can tell the definition
So clear, of victory,

As he defeated, dying,
On whose forbidden ear
The distant strains of triumph
Break, agonized and clear

Key words

Verse – a type of poetry

Enchanting poetry – a very interesting, non-complicated poetry

Correspondence – keeping in touch by letters; it is also referred to correspondence study (40 days study in a year)

Mythology – the science or study of myth

Questions

1. What can you tell about early life of Miss Dickinson?
2. Why did she decide to have a solitary life?
3. Who was her first teacher?
4. Who was her literary master whom she felt attraction?
5. What can you say about her disease, how did she catch it?
6. What is one thing that you like in her poetry?
7. According to the poem, what best understands success?
8. In your opinion, who wants most to succeed?
9. Does the successful person value success? Does he recognize it for what it is?
10. Can you draw analogies from your own experience to illustrate the central idea of the poem?

LECTURE 11. THE THEME: MARK TWAIN, STEPHEN CRANE ARE THE FATHERS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

Plan

1. Mark Twain – the true father of national literature
2. Samuel Clemens and his desire towards river
3. The last stages of his life
4. Stephen Crane – the author of The Red Badge of Courage
5. Early life of the writer
6. Stephen Crane and his literary career

Literature

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Mark Twain

History: *pseudonym of Samuel Langhorne Clemens*

Life: (1835-1910)



When I was a boy there was but one permanent ambition among my comrades in my village on the west bank of the Mississippi River. That was, to be a steamboatman. We had transient ambitions of other sorts, but they were only transient. When a circus came and went, it left us all burning to become clowns; the first Negro minstrel show that came to our section left us all suffering to try that kind of life; now and then we had a hope that if we

lived were good, God would permit us be pirates. These ambitions faded out, each in its turn; but the ambition to be a steamboatman always remained.

- from Life on Mississippi

The writer, journalist, and lecturer Mark Twain is the pen name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, the writer H. L. Mencken called "the true father of our national literature." This title may be justified, for Twain made a more extensive combination of American folk humor and serious literature than previous writers had done.

He was born in Florida, MO, but while he was yet a small boy the family moved to Hannibal on the Mississippi River. There Sam developed a passion for the river and desire to become a pilot on a riverboat. This was the dream of all boys along the river, and Twain was very proud of himself when, later on, he actually became a pilot.

Clemens' father had wanted to be lawyer, and did actually serve as a justice of the peace and judge, but had to make his living as a farmer and storekeeper. He was a popular man in Hannibal, but remained poor, and when he died Sam was apprenticed to a printer (1847-57). Thus at age 11 Sam's formal schooling ended, though he continued to read extensively. As was the case with many 19th century writers, the printshop and journalism served as preparation for his career.

After working on his brother's newspaper for awhile, in 1854 Sam set out on his own, working as a printer in various Eastern and midwestern towns. In 1856 he fulfilled his boyhood dream by becoming a riverboat pilot (1857-61). When the boats stopped operating during the Civil War, Clemens served for a time as a volunteer soldier and then, in 1862, he went West.

Clemens first wrote for a newspaper in Nevada and then moved to San Francisco. During this period he wrote mainly humorous sketches, the most famous being "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." Between 1865 and 1870, Clemens went on tours of Hawaii, Europe, and Middle East as a correspondent. In 1867 he visited France, Italy, and Palestine, gathering material for his *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), which established his reputation as a humorist. In 1870 married Olivia Langdon (d.1904), the daughter of a wealthy New York coal merchant and then permanently settled in

Hartford, Connecticut. When he moved to Hartford, Clemens gave up journalism to make fiction writing his career. His writing were popular and sold well, although he sometimes found lecture tours necessary to supplement his income.

In Hartford, Clemens was surrounded by a wealthy, genteel society including several other popular authors of the time, and it has been assumed that this influence modified the boisterous writer of newspaper days, curbing his wit and social criticism. This assumption is not entirely true, for the "Mark Twain" who appeared autobiographically in the stoies of the West, and the Samuel Clemens of Hartford society were both, to some degree, social poses. Clemens' work does not suffer from being overly genteel, and his satirical writing is a shasp attack on society. In his last years, Clemens became increasingly bitter; some of his writing of this period is so pessimistic that he withheld it from publication.

In Hartford, CT, where they built a distinctive house (now open to the public) at the centre of a community of artists, known as Nook Farm. His two greatest masterpieces, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), drawn from his own boyhood experiences, are firmly established among the world's classics; other favourites are *A Tramp Abroad* (1880) and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889).

Widely known as a lecturer, he developed a great popular following. Financial speculations led to the loss of most of his earnings by 1894, and he embarked on a world lecture tour to restore some of his wealth. In his later years, he was greatly honoured (especially in England), but following the death of his wife and of two of his daughters, his writing took on a darker, pessimistic character, as seen in his autobiography (1924)

Life on the Mississippi (extract from Chapter 9)

There was no use in arguing with a person like this. I promptly put such a strain on my memory that by and by even the shoal water and the countless crossing-marks began to stay with me. But the result was just the same. I never could more than get one knotty thing learned before another presented itself. Now I had often seen pilots

gazing at the water and pretending to read it as if it were a book; but it was a book that told me nothing. A time came at last, however, when Mr. Bixby seemed to think me far enough advanced to bear a lesson on a water-reading. So he began:

“Do you see that long, slanting line on the face of the water? Now, that’s a reef. Moreover, it’s a bluff reef. There is a solid sand-bar under it that is nearly as straight up and down as the side of a house. There is plenty of water close up to it, but mighty little on top of it. If you were to hit it you would knock the boat’s brains out. Do you see where the line fringers out at the upper end and begin to fade away?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, that is a long place; that is the head of the reef. You can climb over there, and not hurt anything. Cross over, now, and follow along close under the reef—easy water there—not much current.”

I followed the reef along till I approached the fringed end. Then Mr. Bixby said:

“Now get ready. Wait till I give the word. She won’t want to mount the reef; a boat hates shoal water. Stand by—wait—wait—keep her well in hand. Now cramp her down! Snatch her! Snatch her!”

He seized the other side of the wheel and helped to spin it around until it was hard down, and then we held it so. The boat resisted, and refused to answer for a while, and next she came surging to starboard, mounted the reef and sent a long, angry ridge of water foaming away from her bows.

“Now watch her; watch her like a cat, or she’ll get away from you. When she fights strong and the tiller slips a little, in a jerky, greasy sort of way, let up on her a trifle; it is the way she tells you at night that the water is too shoal; but keep edging her up, little by little, toward the point. You are well up on the bar now; there is a bar under every point, because the water that comes down around it forms an eddy and allows the sediment to sink. Do you see those fine lines on the face of the water that branch out like the ribs of a fan? Well, those are little reefs; you want to just miss the ends of them, but run them pretty pretty close. Now look out — look out! Don’t you crowd that slick, greasy-looking place; there ain’t nine feet there; she won’t stand

it. She begins to smell it; look sharp, I tell you! Oh, blazes, there you go! Stop the starboard Wheel! Quick! Ship up to back! Set her back!"

The engine bells jingled and the engines answered promptly, shooting white columns of steam far aloft out of the 'scapepipes, but it was too late. The boat had "smelt" the bar in good earnest; the foamy ridges that radiated from her bows suddenly disappeared, a great dead swell came rolling forward, and swept ahead of her, she careened far over to larboard, and went tearing away about scared to death. We were a good mile from where we ought to have been when we finally got the upper hand again...

Stephen Crane
Life: (1871-1900)



*Once there came a man
Who said,
"Range me all me of the world in rows"
And instantly
There was terrific clamor among the people
Against being ranged in rows,
There was a loud quarrel, world-wide.
It endured for ages;
And blood was shed
By those who would not stand in rows,
And by those who pined to stand in rows.
Eventually, the man went to death, weeping.
And those who stayed in bloody scuffle
Knew not the great simplicity.*

(1895)

Crane saw life as hard, perhaps ruthless. Most of his writing he published during his short life was bleakly realistic, dealing with the poor and degraded. His style has been called realistic, naturalistic, and impressionistic. Like the impressionist painters, he tried to give an accurate rendering of the scene as a whole rather than concentrating on detail. His style is also marked by the use of vivid color and

imagery. In many ways Crane's life resembles his adventures stories, though his childhood was quite conventional.

He was born in Newark, N.J. When he was small his ill health was partly responsible for his family's move to upstate New York. His father was a methodist minister, and the family was a large, happy one. When Rev. Crane died, Stephen's mother earned money by writing articles for religious paper.

As he grew up, however, Stephen found his parent's religion irrelevant to the hard life he saw, and he indulged in many of the things they had forbidden. One of the forbidden pleasure was baseball, a sport at which Crane excelled. He might have become a professional player, but an older brother-urged him to go to college instead. He studied at Claverack College and Hudson River Institute, near Hudson, N.Y. (1888-90), and briefly at Lafayette College, Pa., and Syracuse College, N.Y. (1891), where he spent more time on baseball and social activities than he spent on his studies.

Crane left school in 1891, preferring to study humanity, he said, and became a reporter on the newspaper for which his brother worked. However, when he wrote too sympathetically about a workers' strike, both he and his brother lost their jobs.

He moved to New York City (1892), worked as a journalist, published his first novel, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893), and wrote poetry. During this period he met Hamlin Garland and William Dean Howells, two other realist writers who helped him in his work. At this time he also met the painters whose impressionism influenced his work, and wrote the above novel.

In 1895 he published his most famous work, *The Red Badge of Courage*, a novel concentrating on a young Civil War soldier. He traveled widely as a journalist and war correspondent but in 1898 settled in England where he became friends with several important writers including Joseph Conrad. Crane died prematurely of tuberculosis, but he left a body of work that has secured him a place as an American master.

Key words

Folk – people as the carriers of culture, esp, as representing a society's mores, customs and traditions

Criticism – an act of passing judgement as to the merits if anything

Pessimistic – the tendency to see only what is disadvantage or gloomy or to anticipate the worst outcome

Realistic – concerned with or based on what is real or practical

Methodist – a member of a Protestant denomination that developed out of John Wesley's revival and has an Arminian doctrine and, in the US., a modified episcopal polity

Impressionism – a style of late XIX century painting characterized chiefly by short brush strokes of bright colors in immediate juxtaposition to represent the effect of light on objects.

Questions

1. Why did Mark Twain get pseudonym?
2. What does his nickname mean?
3. What was his aim in life?
4. Why did all the boys want to become pilots or sailors?
5. Describe the closing periods of his life?
6. What is the main idea of the story "Life on the Mississippi"?
7. How does the story end?
7. What kind of life did the writer Stephen Crane have?
8. How does the story the "Red Badge of Courage" start?
9. Why did the story gain popularity?
10. Is there a translation of the story?

LECTURE 12. THE THEME: HENRY JAMES IS THE PRINCIPLE AUTHOR OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

Plan

1. Early life of the writers
2. Henry James and his principle interests
3. Henry James is a devotee of writing
4. Getting to know Turgenev and Flaubert

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of

- American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw-Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
 3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
 4. A Committee of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997
 5. Dean Curry, Highlights of American History, United States Information Agency, Washington D.C. 20547, USA 1995

Henry James
Life: (1843-1916)



The only obligation to which in advance we may hold a novel, without incurring the accusation of being arbitrary, is that it be interesting. That general responsibility rests upon it, but it is the only one I can think of. The ways in which it is at liberty to accomplish this result (of interesting us) strike me as innumerable, and such as can only suffer from being marked out or forced in by prescription.

- from his "The Art of Fiction" (1884)

The writer and critic Henry James was born in New York City (brother of Alice and William James). Son of the wealthy amateur philosopher, Henry James Sr., he was educated by private tutors until 1855; the family spent most of the years 1855-60 traveling in Europe, where Henry continued his education, then settled in Newport, R.I. (1860-62) where he apparently suffered an unspecified injury in a stable fire. He attended Harvard Law School (1862-63), then withdrew to devote himself to writing.

Starting in the mid-1860s his essays and critical reviews began appearing in *The North American Review*, while his first novel, *Watch and Ward*, was published in *Atlantic Monthly* (1871). He divided his time between Cambridge, Mass., and Europe (1869; 1872-74; 1875);

in Paris in 1875 he came to know Turgenev and Flaubert among other European writers. In 1876 he settled in England, where he would spend most of the rest of his life, chiefly in London and in Rye, Sussex; he never married but he was a sociable man, often in the company of other writers such as Edith Wharton.

He traveled frequently on the Continent, and published several notable travel books between 1875 and 1909. His first novels - of the so-called international period, dealing as they do with interactions between Americans and Europeans - include *The American* (1877), *The Europeans* (1878), *Daisy Miller* (1879), and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). The works of his second period stressed psychological and social relationships and include *Washington Square* (1881), *The Bostonians* (1886), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), and *The Sacred Fount* (1901).

During the 1890s he also wrote plays but he never found much success in the theater. He continued his examination of intricate psychological realities in works of his final period that include his three masterworks, *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). In 1904-05 he visited the U.S.A. where he traveled, lectured, and arranged for the New York Edition of his works (1907-09), for which he made numerous revisions. His account of his visit, *The American Scene* (1907), was not always appreciative of his homeland; he returned to the U.S.A. in 1910-11.

In 1915 he became an English citizen to show his solidarity with Britain during World War I and he became involved in war relief and the American volunteer ambulance corps. Soon thereafter he suffered several strokes, and he died shortly after receiving Britain's Order of Merit.

He had been writing almost to the end, and in his long career, in addition to his many novels and travel books, he had written many classic short novels ("The Turn of the Screw," 1898), short stories ("The Beast in the Jungle," 1903) and critical essays ("The Art of Fiction," 1885) as well as two memoirs. His intricate and complex sentence structure and delicately nuanced perceptions have never appealed to all readers but ultimately they became the models for one "school" of modern fiction and James has become recognized as one of the supreme writers of all time.

The Ambassadors

Book 8, section 3

As the door of Mrs. Pocock's salon was pushed open for him, the next day, well before noon, he was reached by a voice with a charming sound that made him just falter before crossing the threshold. Madame de Vionnet was already on the field, and this gave the drama a quicker pace than he felt it as yet – though his suspense had increased – in the power of any act of his own to do. He had spent the previous evening with all his old friends together; yet he would still have described himself as quite in the dark in respect to a forecast of their influence on his situation. It was strange now, none the less, that in the light of this unexpected note of her presence he felt Madame de Vionnet a part of that situation as she hadn't even yet been. She was alone he found himself assuming, with Sarah, and there was a bearing in that – somehow beyond his control – on his personal fate. Yet she was only saying something quite easy and independent – the thing she had come, as a good friend of Chad's, on purpose to say. "There isn't anything at all - ? I should be so delighted."

It was clear enough, when they were there before him, how she had been received. He saw this, as Sarah got up to greet him, from something fairly hectic in Sarah's face. He saw furthermore that they weren't, as had first come to him, alone together; he was as no loss as to the identity of the broad high back presented to him in the embrasure of the window furthest from the door. Waymarsh, whom he had to-day not yet seen, whom he only knew to have left the hotel before him, and who had taken part, the night previous, on Mrs. Pocock's kind invitation, conveyed, by Chad, in the entertainment, informal but cordial, promptly offered by that lady – Waymarsh had anticipated him even as Madame Vionnet had done, and, with his hands in his pockets and his attitude unaffected by Strether's entrance, was looking out, in marked detachment, at the Rue de Rivoli. The latter felt it in the air – it was immense how Waymarsh could mark things – that he had remained deeply dissociated from the overture to their hostess that we have recorded on Madame de Vionnet's side. He had, conspicuously, tact, besides a stiff general view; and this was why he had left Mrs. Pocock to struggle alone. He would outstay the visitor; he would unmistakeable wait; to

what had he been doomed for months past but waiting? Therefore she was to feel that she had him in reserve. What support she drew from this was still to be seen, for, although Sarah was vividly bright, she had given herself up for the moment to an ambiguous flushed formalism. She had had to reckon more quickly than she expected; but it concerned her first of all to signify that she was not to be taken unawares. Strether arrived precisely in time for her showing it. "Oh you are too good; but I don't think I feel quite helpless. I have my brother – and these American friends. And then you know I have been to Paris. I *know* Paris," said Sally Pocock in a tone that breathed a certain chill on Strether's heart.

"Ah but a woman, in this tiresome place where everything's always changing, a woman of good will," Madame de Vionnet threw off, "can always help a woman. I'm different things." She too, visibly, wished to make no mistake; but it was fear of a different order and more kept out of sight. She smiled in welcome at Strether; she greeted him more familiarly than Mrs. Pocock; she put out her hand to him without moving from her place; and it came to him in the course of a minute and in the oddest way that – yes, positively – she was giving him over to ruin. She was all kindness and ease, but she couldn't help so giving him; she was exquisite and her being just as she was poured for Sarah a sudden rush of meaning into his own equivocations.

Key words

Critic – a person who judges, criticizes and evaluates

Amateur – a beginner

Flaubert – French novelist

Classics – the languages and literature of ancient Greece and

Rome

Questions:

1. Speak about the early life of Henry James?
2. Which works of Mr. Henry James made him famous?
3. In your opinion why is he considered to be one of the great novelists of his age?
4. What are the signs that Strether sees which show him that the battle had already begun before he came in?
5. What is the stated purpose of the Countess' visit?

religious or national in character. There were myths, epics, fables, and parables. Some famous examples of story-telling of the Middle Ages are *A Thousand and One nights*, Chaucer's "*Canterbury Tales*", Boccaccio's "*Decameron*".

Perhaps it can be said that the short story is well-suited to American life style character. It is brief. (It can be read usually in a single sitting) It is concentrated. (The characters are a few in numbers and the action is limited.)

Dr. J. Berg Esenwein in his book, *Writing the Short Story* defines the short story as follows: "*A short story is a brief, imaginative narrative, unfolding a single predominating incident and a single character; it contains a plot, the details of which are so compressed, and the whole treatment so organized, as to produce a single impression.*"

A good short story should (1) narrate an account of events in a way that will hold the reader's interest by its basic truth; and (2) it should present a struggle or conflict faced by a character or characters. The plot is the narrative development of the struggle as it moves through a series of crises to the final outcome. The outcome must be the inevitable result of the traits of the character involved in the struggle or conflict.

The short story is the literary form to which the United States made early contributions. In fact, early in the 19th century America, the short story reached a significant point in its development. Three American writers were responsible for this development. They were Nathaniel Hawthorne, Washington Irving and Edgar Allan Poe. It was the latter who defined the literary form in his review of Hawthorne's *Twice - Told Tales*.

In this review, Poe asserts that everything in a story or tale - every incident, every combination of events, and every word - must aid the author in achieving a preconceived emotional effect. He states that since the ordinary novel cannot be read at one sitting, it is deprived of "the immense force derivable from *totality*." For Poe the advantage of the reader, who was less subject to the intervention of "worldly interests" caused by pauses or cessation of reading as in the case of a novel

6. Is it the real reason she has come? Please explain.
7. How does Mrs. Pocock reveal her feelings?
8. What role does Waymarsh play in this episode?
9. Where is the climax of the story?
10. What did you like in the story?

LECTURE 13. THE THEME: THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY: XIX CENTURY DEVELOPMENT. INTRODUCTION TO REALISM AND REACTION

Plan

1. Short story writing and its peculiar features
2. The representatives of the short story writing
3. Edgar Allan Poe, Pierce Ambrose, Frank Stockton, Stephen Crane are the representatives of the period
4. Realism and Reason - the definition and meaning
5. The representatives of the Realism and Reason

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw -Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997
5. Dean Curry, Highlights of American History, United States Information Agency, Washington D.C. 20547, USA 1995

From the beginning of time, man has been interested in stories. For many thousands of years stories were passed from generation to generation orally, either in words or in song. Usually the stories were

“In the brief tale, however,” Poe states, “the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intentions, be it what may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer’s control. There are no external or extrinsic influences – resulting from weariness or interruption.”

Poe felt that the writer of short stories should conceive his stories with deliberate care in order to achieve “a certain unique or single *effect*” beginning with the initial sentence of the story. According to Poe, the short story writer should not form his thoughts to accommodate his incidents, and thereby destroy the possibility of establishing the pre-conceived single effect, so much desired.

Four famous American short stories from the the 19th century are included in this section. The choice is not specifically representative of the many types of short stories nor do the stories necessarily demonstrate the most outstanding stories by each author. They are, however, among the most well-known and enjoyed by the average American reader.

Introduction to Realism and Reaction

Throughout the world many people think of Americans as being outgoing, materialistic and optimistic: outgoing, because they join clubs, take part in movements, talk with their neighbours across the hall or over the back fence; materialistic, because they are eager for new automobiles and nigger television sets, optimistic, because they believe that they have the power to do good things in a good world, because they seem to say “yes” to life instead of “no”.

There is some truth in this general impression, though less with the passing of each year. But American literature at its best rarely been the product of such Americans. Even in the 18th century, with its prevalent belief in the perfectibility of man through the perfecting of his institutions, there were skeptics; and the 19th century contained its great and pessimistic sayers of “No! in thunder” (as Melville described himself), as well as the great affirmers, like Emerson and Whitman. By the end of the 19th century the complacent, optimistic tone of the popular poets and novelists had been challenged by Mark Twain, Crane and James, to name only the best known; and the enduring writing of the first quarter of the 20th century is, more often

than not, critical of the quality of American society. Its tone is satirical; the stereotyped American is made a figure of fun or an object of pathos; the American dream is shown to be illusory. The occasional yea-sayer like Sandburg stands out almost as an anachronism.

Of the writers in this section, Theodore Dreiser was perhaps the first important new American voice of the 20th century. His naturalism and his choice of subject often echo his predecessor, Stephen Crane, but his style and methods are very different. There is none of the poetic symbolism, none of the probing of psychological depths and neuroses. Perhaps because of his childhood of bitter poverty in an immigrant family which suffered all the deprivations brought about by lack of education, skill and status, Dreiser was more concerned with society's effect on person than with man apart from his environment. Though the surface details which abound in his works are, of course, out of date – people's clothes, their speech, their jobs – his treatment of the social forces which the murderers and prostitutes, as well as the business successes, is as modern as ghetto literature. Dreiser was one of the first important writers to come from the lower levels of society, rather than from a long middle-class tradition, and in this he was the precursor of much that is good in contemporary American writing.

In his novels, Dreiser tried to treat human beings scientifically, rather than intuitively with the poetic insight so much prized by writers of the 19th century. Dreiser's tone is serious, never satirical or comic.

In their opposing ways, the two most important poets of the first decades of the 20th century, Edward Arlington Robinson and Carl Sandburg, also sought to explore the quality of American life and to report on it with Dreiser's kind of truthfulness, now, as from the beginning, American poets tended to divide sharply into two groups: traditionlists and innovators. Robinson and Sandburg in the 20th century represent these two poles as strikingly as did Poe and Whitman in the 19th century. Though less read now than Robert Frost, who first published during this period but whose major influence belongs to a later time, Robinson has the same New England background and equals some of Frost's best qualities as a poet and reporter on the world. Robinson's tone is, however, characteristically

ironic and somewhat aloof and detached, even when he evinces an undercurrent of compassion.

Key words

Realism – interest in or concern for the actual or real, as distinguished from the abstract

Reaction – a movement toward extreme political conservatism

Cessation – a temporary or complete stopping, discontinuance

Extrinsic – not essential or inherent, extraneous

Materialism – the philosophical theory that regards matter as consisting the universe, and all phenomena, including those of mind, as due to material agencies.

Questions

1. Give definition to short story writing?
2. Which short story writers do you know?
3. Why do we call them short story writers?
4. What can you say about the age of realism and reaction?
5. What was the main idea of that period?
6. Who are the representatives of the age of realism and reaction?
7. What kind of novels or poems was written in that period?
8. Recite any poem by the representatives of the Realism and Reaction?
9. What is the difference between realism and reaction?
10. Can you compare the period with any other periods of the English literature?

LECTURE 14. THE THEME: THEODORE (HERMAN ALBERT) DREISER IS THE MOST POPULAR AMERICAN WRITER

Plan

1. Theodore Dreiser is the most popular American novelist
2. Theodore Dreiser and his first works
3. Leaving for Chicago
4. "Sister Carrie" and its withdrawal from publication
5. Other notable works of Theodore Dreiser

Literature

1. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
2. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
3. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Theodore (Herman Albert) Dreiser Life: (1871-1945)



Of one's ideals, struggles, deprivations, sorrows and and joys, it could only be said that they were chemic compulsions, something which for some inexplicable but unimportant reason responded to and resulted from the hope of pleasure and the fear of pain. Man was a mechanism, undevised and uncreated, and a badly and carelessly driven one at that.

- from his *A Book about Myself*

He was born in Terre Haute, Ind. Raised in poverty and in a German-speaking environment, he left home for Chicago at age 16. After a period of odd jobs and a year at the University of Indiana he became a Midwestern newspaper reporter, and, in New York after 1894, a magazine feature writer. *Sister Carrie* (1900), his first and still highly regarded novel, was withheld from general distribution because of its supposed amorality; its commercial failure plunged him into financial distress and mental breakdown (1904).

He reestablished himself as a magazine editor, however, and self-published a second, successful edition of *Sister Carrie* (1907). The success of the novel *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911) allowed him to write full time; *The Financier* (1912) and *The Titan* (1914) followed. These novels were ungainly in style but groundbreaking in their naturalism and critique of American capitalist society.

The withdrawal from distribution, on moral grounds, of his autobiographical novel, *The Genius* (1915), ignited a national

anticensorship campaign supported by most of the leading literary figures of the day. His next decade, marked by an energetic output of plays, stories, memoirs, and travel books, culminated in *An American Tragedy* (1925), a major popular success despite its bleak view of American values.

He publicly supported left-wing causes through the 1930s and 1940s and propounded socialist ideas in his late works, joining the Communist Party shortly before his death. He had also returned to writing novels, two of which - *The Bulwark* (1946) and *The Stoic* (1947) - were among his various works published posthumously. As insensitive in his treatment of the English language as he was of many women in his life, he seems destined to survive as a major American writer.

Sister Carrie

When Caroline Meeber boarded the afternoon train for Chicago, her total outfit consisted of a small trunk, a cheap imitation alligator skin satchel, a small lunch in a paper box, and a yellow leather snap purse, containing her ticket, scrap of paper with her sister's address on Van Buren Street, and four dollars in money. It was in August 1889. She was eighteen years of age, bright, timid, and full of the illusions of ignorance and youth. Whatever touch of regret at parting characterized her thoughts, it was certainly not for advantages now being given up. A gush of tears at her mother's farewell kiss, a touch in her throat when the cars clacked by the flour mill where her father worked by the day, a pathetic sigh as the familiar green environs of the village passed in review, and the threads which bound her so lightly to girlhood and home were irretrievably broken.

To be sure there was always the next station, where one might descend and return. There was the great, bound more closely by these very trains which came up daily. Columbia City was not so very far away, even once she was in Chicago. What, pray, is a few - a few hundred miles? She looked at the little slip bearing her sister's address and wondered. She gazed at the green landscape, now passing in swift review, until her swifter thoughts replaced its impression with vague conjectures of what Chicago might be.

When a girl leaves her home at eighteen, she does one of two things. Either she falls into saving hands and becomes better, or she rapidly assumes the cosmopolitan standard of virtue and becomes worse. Of an intermediate balance, under the circumstances, there is no possibility. The city has its cunning wiles, no less than the infinitely smaller and more human tempter. There are large forces which allure with all the soulfulness of expression possible in the most cultured human. The gleam of a thousand lights is often as effective as the persuasive light in a wooing and fascinating eye. Half the undoing of the unsophisticated and natural mind is accomplished by forces wholly superhuman. A blare of sound, a roar of life, a vast array of human hives, appeal to the astonished senses in equivocal terms. Without a counsellor at hand to whisper cautious interpretations, what falsehoods may not these things breathe into the unguarded ear! Unrecognized for what they are, their beauty, like music, too often relaxes, then weakens, then perverts the simpler human perceptions.

Caroline, or Sister Carrie, as she had been half affectionately termed by the family, was possessed of a mind rudimentary in its power of observation and analysis. Self-interest with her was high, but not strong. It was, nevertheless, her guiding characteristic. Warm with the fancies of youth, pretty with the insipid prettiness of the formative period, possessed of a figure promising eventual shapeliness and an eye alight with certain native intelligence, she was a fair example of the Middle American class – two generations removed from the emigrant. Books were beyond her interest – knowledge a sealed book. In the intuitive graces she was still crude. She could scarcely toss her head gracefully. Her hands were almost ineffectual. The feet, though small, were set flatly. And yet she was interested in her charms, quick to understand the keener pleasures of life, ambitious to gain in material things. A half – equipped little knight she was, venturing to reconnoitre the mysterious city and dreaming wild dreams of some vague, far – off supremacy, which should make it prey and subject – the proper penitent, grovelling at a woman's slipper.

Key words

Naturalism – literary style combining a deterministic view of human nature and a nonidealistic, detailed observation of events

Mental breakdown – being mad, getting nervous breakdown at once or afterwards

Memoir – record of events based on the writer's personal observation

Sophisticated – worldly – wise; the process or result of change from the natural or simple to the knowledgeable or cultured

Tendency – a special and definite purpose in a novel or other literary work

Questions

1. Describe the early life of Theodore Dreiser?
2. Why was his novel "Sister Carrie" withheld from publication?
3. When did it appear again?
4. What was changed in the story after it touched the hands of the reader?
5. State briefly the plot of "An American Tragedy"?
6. Why is it so famous?
7. How many translations of the book do you know?
8. How can you describe the outlook of Caroline Meeber?
9. In what way is Caroline Meeber representative of thousands of young people who leave a small town for life in the big city?
10. Does this tendency exist in your country?

LECTURE 15. THE THEME: CARL SANDBURG AND HENRY LOUIS MENCKEN ARE COLLOQUIAL WRITERS

Plan

1. Carl Sandburg and his colloquial poetry.
2. Sandburg's different activities
3. Carl Sandburg's deep attachment to the biography of Abraham Lincoln
4. Henry Louis Mencken and his literary activity
5. The first works of Mencken
6. The closing years of Henry Mencken

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Carl Sandburg *Life: (1878-1967)*



I believe that free men the world over cherish the earth as cradle and tomb, the handiwork of their Maker, the possession of the family man. I believe freedom comes the hard – by ceaseless groping, toil, struggle – even by fiery trial and agony.

- Quoted in *Gallery of Americans*, p.42

*I glory in this world of men and women,
torn with troubles and lost in sorrow, yet
living on to love and laugh and play
through it all.*

- From *In Reckless Ecstasy* (his first book of poems, 1904)

A Poet, writer and folklorist Carl Sandburg was born in Galesburg, Ill. He studied at Lombard College, Galesburg (1898-1902) - with time out for service in the Spanish-American War (1899) - and in the decades ahead would work as an editor, journalist, copywriter, lecturer, and collector of folk songs.

He was an organizer of the Social-Democratic Party (1908), and was secretary to the Socialist mayor of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1910-12). Not long afterward he attracted public notice with his increasingly powerful poetry, especially the poem, "Chicago", and he

gradually became able to give most of his time to his writing. He did some literary journalism; he wrote ballads and books for children, and he continued with his serious poetry. And all the while, his interest in Abraham Lincoln deepened. He had grown up in Lincoln country and perhaps he thought of himself as a Lincolnesque figure. At any rate, he worked on the biography for years and by 1939 had completed the six volume life of Lincoln which he considered his masterwork. In 1940 he won the Pulitzer Prize for it.

He was ahead of most of his fellow poets in his interest in American folksong and lore; he collected some 300 folksongs and ballads in *The American Songbag* (1927) and he often gave public recitals, accompanying himself on the guitar. He also wrote children's books and a novel, *Remembrance Rock* (1948). Based in Chicago for much of his life, he retired to Flat Rock, N.C.

Carl Sandburg played the part of the simple workman, down to the cloth cap which he often wore. Nevertheless, he was an artist with words. His language was more colloquial and his rhythms looser any other poets, yet he too knew the value of form and poetic technique. As critic Louis Untermeyer puts it, there are "two Sandburg" the muscular, heavy – fisted, hard – hitting son of the streets, and his almost unrecognizable twin, the shadow – painter, the haunter of mists, the lover of implications and overtones."

THE HARBOR

Passing through huddled and ugly walls
By doorways where women
Looked from their hunger-deep eyes,
Haunted with shadows of hunger –hands,
Out from the huddled and ugly walls,
I came sudden, at the city's edge,
On a blue burst of lake,
Long lake waves breaking under the sun
On a spray – flung curve of shore;
And a fluttering storm of gulls,
Masses of great gray wings
And flying white bellies
Veering and wheeling free in the open.

H(enry) L(ouis) Mencken
Life: (1880-1956)



Every third American devotes himself to improving and uplifting his fellow-citizens, usually by force.

- from his Prejudices: First Series Bachelors know more about women than married men. If they didn't they'd be married, too.

- from his Chrestomathy 621

The editor and writer Henry Mencken was born in Baltimore, Md. He left school after his father's death (1899) to become a reporter for the *Baltimore Morning Herald*, later serving as drama critic, city editor, and then managing editor of the *Baltimore Evening Herald*. Soon after the *Herald* folded in 1906, he joined the *Baltimore Sun*; he remained associated with the *Sun* as editor, columnist, or contributor for most of his career, but he also wrote for many other publications.

Early on, Mencken published studies of George Bernard Shaw (1905) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1908), both of whom he admired. From 1914 to 1923, with George Jean Nathan he coedited a satirical magazine, *The Smart Set*; in 1924 he and Nathan cofounded the *American Mercury*, a cultural magazine for "a civilized minority," which he coedited for nine years. Social rebels admired Mencken's clever, iconoclastic attacks on the middle-class "booboisie," prudery, and organized religion and politics.

As a reviewer and critic he lambasted second-rate authors and championed such writers as Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, and Joseph Conrad. Many of his essays and reviews were collected in six volumes of *Prejudices* (1919-27). In a different vein, his detailed study, *The American Language* (1919), traced the developments of a distinctive American idiom.

During the 1930s, Mencken's cynicism and his antipathy to the New Deal appeared less in tune with the times, and he turned more toward the past, writing three volumes of memoirs, and beginning with *Happy Days* (1940). He also added two supplements to his

American Language (1945, 1946). A stroke in 1948 left him incapacitated during his last years.

Key words

Folklorist – a person who sings traditional beliefs, customs, legends

Decade – ten years

Public recitals – public lectures, giving lectures in public, also preachings

Cynicism – cynical disposition or belief, a person who believes in selfishness

Lambast – to beat or whip severely

Questions:

1. Discuss the early life of Carl Sandburg?
2. Why did he decide to become a poet?
3. What is the main idea expressed in “The Harbor”?
4. How does the poet achieve the contrast he wants to emphasize?
5. According to Mencken, what was the driving force in his writing?
6. Why do we consider his writings colourful?
7. Compare him with his other counterparts.
8. Bring out interesting moments of his life?
9. What did he tell people about poetry?
10. What is the main peculiarity of his poetry?

LECTURE 16. THE THEME: FRANCIS SCOTT FITZGERALD AND HIS HARDSHIPS IN AND SUCCESS LIFE

Plan:

1. Temporary wealth of Francis Scott Fitzgerald
2. Married life of Fitzgerald
3. Unsuccessful writings
4. The last years of Scott Fitzgerald
5. Posthumously published works of Fitzgerald

Literature:

1. Sean McMahon., "1000 Years of Poetry"., A Millenium Anthology., Marino Publication, USA., 2000
2. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
3. McGraw -Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
4. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
5. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Francis Scott Fitzgerald

Life: (1896-1940)



...This is what I think now: that the natural state of the sentient adult isa qualified unhappiness. I think also that in an adult the desire to be finer in grain than you are; 'a constant striving' (as these people say who gain their bread by sayin it) only adds to this unhappiness in the end - that end that comes to our youth and hope.

- from an autobiographical sketch written in April 1936 for *Esqurie* magazine.

The writer was born in St. Paul, Minn. He spent four years at Princeton, but left before graduating to join the army during World War I. His first novel, *This Side of Paradise* (1920), was blatantly autobiographical and made him temporarily rich and famous. Later that year he married Zelda Sayre, an aspiring writer he had met while stationed in Alabama.

A glamorous and witty couple, they lived a legendarily extravagant life in New York City that he unsuccessfully attempted to support with his writing - stories collected in *Flappers and*

Philosophers (1920) and *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922), a novel, *The Beautiful and the Damned* (1922) and a failed play, *The Vegetable* (1923).

Knowing they could live more cheaply in Europe, they moved there in 1924; he became friendly with Ernest Hemingway and other expatriates and wrote *The Great Gatsby* (1925), a critical but not financial success, and a volume of stories, *All the Sad Young Men* (1926). The continuing social round deteriorated into debts, alcoholism, and, in 1930, the first of Zelda Fitzgerald's mental breakdowns.

They returned to the U.S.A. that year, and the commercial failure of *Tender is the Night* (1934) led to his own breakdown, described in essays later collected in *The Crack-Up* (1945). He wrote screenplays in Hollywood (1937-40) and with Zelda now confined to a mental hospital in North Carolina, he became involved with the columnist Sheila Graham. He died in her apartment of a heart attack, leaving an unfinished novel, *The Tycoon* (1941).

Fitzgerald's best novel, *The Great Gatsby*, was published in 1925. By then Fitzgerald was himself rich, though his earnings could never keep pace with his and Zelda's extravagance. He had attained success as a writer, a serious novelist, and prolific producer of pot-boilers – short stories for slick magazines. *The Great Gatsby* reflects Fitzgerald's deeper knowledge, his recognition that wanting to be happy does not insure one's being so and that pursuit of entertainment may only cover a lot of pain.

The Great Gatsby

Chapter III

There was music from my neighbour's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whispering and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or talking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor – boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On week-ends his Rolls – Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk

yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing – brushes and hammers and garden – shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York – every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back door in a pyramid of pulpless halves. There was a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button was pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb.

At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough colored lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold. In the main hall a bar with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female guests were too young to know one from another.

By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five – piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums. The last swimmers have come in from the beach now and are dressing upstairs; the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colours, and hair shorn in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile. The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names.

The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already there and wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp,

joyous moment they center of a group, and then, excited with triumphs, glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light.

Key words

Blatantly – openly, offensively loud

Extravagant – extremely rich

Expatriate – to banish, exile

Screenplay – the outline or full script of a motion picture, scenario

Pot – boiler – very good story, bestseller

Slick – smooth and glossy, smooth in manners, speech

Questions:

1. Discuss in brief about the life of Mr. Fitzgerald?
2. What inspired him to become a writer?
3. What was his initial ambition?
4. Why did he have a temporary wealth?
5. What happened later to his wealth?
6. What is the narrator's attitude toward Gatsby's summer parties?
7. What are the signs of wealth at the party?
8. What mood is the author trying to establish?
9. Make ten most important questions to the story?
10. Discuss the final stages of his life?

LECTURE 17. THE THEME: JOHN (ERNST) STEINBECK IS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION PERIOD

Plan

1. John Steinbeck and his late career
2. The Great Depression period
3. The world of Great Depression in Steinbeck's literary life
4. "*In Dubious Battle*" a serious work of John Steinbeck
5. The final stages of his life

Literature:

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committee of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

John (Ernst) Steinbeck

Life: (1902-68)



A writer must declare and praise man's proven capacity for greatness of heart and spirit – for bravery in defeat, for courage, forgiveness, and love. I that a writer who does not passionately believe in man's ability to improve himself has no devotion for, now any membership in, literature.

- from his *Grapes of Wrath*

John Steinbeck did not start his literary career until Lewis and Fitzgerald had reached their peak. He seemed to be from a different world – the world of the Great Depression, the world of mass poverty. It was a world as far removed from that of Lewis as from that of Fitzgerald.

He was born in Salinas, California. He was an athlete and president of his high school class, who went to Stanford University in between various jobs. He learned to know the poor, in particular the migrant farm workers, American and Mexican, and he wrote from their point of view. By the middle 1930s, when Lewis and Fitzgerald were past their writing prime, Steinbeck had authored some very popular novels. *Tortilla Flat* was a humorous story about a Mexican –

American colony in Monterey, while *In Dubious Battle* was a serious work about a strike by migrant farmworkers. *Of Mice and Men* is a touching and perennially popular tale of two migrants and their mutual dependence and shared dreams. Steinbeck portrayed their odd friendship with great sympathy and understanding, and the work has been made into an equally successful play and movie.

He lived and worked with Oklahoma migrants who were heading for California (1937-39), and forged what is considered his masterpiece, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), from that experience. The novel revealed, once again, his love of the land, sympathy for the human condition, and his intolerance of the corruption and exploitation of the weak by powerful commercial interests. He worked as a foreign correspondent during World War II and during the Vietnam War (1966-67).

His critical reputation declined in his later years - despite such popular works as the novel *East of Eden* (1952) and a travel/memoir, *Travels with Charley* (1962) - but he had written a number of modern classics and was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1962.

His greatest success came in 1939 with *Grapes of Wrath*. This is the saga of a family of Oklahoma farmers named Joad, who are driven by drought to migrate to California. There they are scornfully called "Okies" and suffer mistreatment and exploitation. Yet somehow Ma Joad always manages to hold the family together. The book leaves the reader with the feeling which Steinbeck wanted to instill - that the poor can endure by helping one another, and perhaps also that they can expect no help from anyone else.

The Grapes of Wrath makes a potent appeal to the emotions. Highly charged emotional scenes, dramatic or pathetic, follow one another in rapid succession. Rarely does the drama turn to melodrama or the pathos to sentimentality, though the subject matter invites both kinds of treatment. The central incident is simple. A migrant worker, desperately poor, stops with his two boys at a roadside lunch wagon to buy a loaf of bread. The waitress does not want to be bothered; she is waiting on a pair of truck drivers who are bound to be better customers. But she gives in, and ends by letting each boy have a bit of nickel candy for a penny. The scene is understated. Each person in it is realized as an individual human being - proud or humble, mean or

generous, outgoing or introverted – though the scene is so brief. Because of Steinbeck's great talent and real admiration for dignity and human pride in adversity, we share his emotions for his characters.

Steinbeck arranges his effects around a central incident. He tells us that the action takes place beside a transcontinental highway, and fills out the scene with groups of staccato phrases which paint a picture for us like the brush strokes on an impressionistic canvas.

Key words

Humorous – funny, amusing

Migrant – a foreigner in a foreign land, a person settled in a foreign country

Portrayed – represented, drawn

Sympathy – a good impression towards somebody

Masterpiece – the best work of author

Impressionism – a style of late 19th century painting characterized chiefly by short brush strokes of bright colors in immediate juxtaposition to represent the effect of light on objects

Questions

1. Why does Steinbeck leave out some explanatory material?
2. Why does he make use of incomplete sentences?
3. Is this wayside restaurant (diner) similar to any place where you eat?
4. What is your idea of truck drivers?
5. What feeling does Steinbeck want the reader to have toward the truck drivers?
6. What do you understand by "Camaraderie"?
7. How does the author create an atmosphere of camaraderie in the restaurant scene?
8. Discuss the important facts of his life?
9. Describe the final years of his life?

LECTURE 18. THE THEME: INTRODUCTION TO MODERN VOICES IN PROSE AND POETRY

Plan

1. The effect of World War I on American writing
2. The appearance of new poets
3. The connectivity of Victorian period with the American poetry and prose
4. Robert Frost and his sayings

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy. An Anthology of English Poems. Prasaranga. India., Mysore, 1997

Although important events often reflect themselves quickly in the literature of a country, the effect of World War I on American writing was delayed. The war promptly produced some mediocre prose and poetry, but distinguished work – mainly in the form of novels – appeared only some years later. The best came from Ernest Hemingway. He had already written some very good short stories and one first-class novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, but he did not publish a novel fully involved with the war till 1929. It proved worth waiting for.

A Farewell to Arms, the moving story of the love affair of a wounded American lieutenant and an English nurse, is outstanding among literary works related to World War I. Hemingway had served with an ambulance group in France and then transferred to the Italian infantry, where he stayed till the close of the war. In this novel his two characters pass an idyllic Italian summer together. She becomes pregnant, and they go to Switzerland where she has her baby. But both

she and the baby die, and the American is left desolate. The war plays a principal part in combat and in the disastrous withdrawal of the Italian army after an overwhelming defeat. Because of his aversion to the cruelties of World War I, Hemingway made a cult of the courage, necessary to survive such an ordeal.

The onset of the **Great Depression**, on the other hand was rapidly mirrored in American literature, especially in novels, and during the ten years after the Depression started, much writing dealt with it. One of the best of these novels was John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. But after the arrival, the Depression little affected Hemingway's attitudes. During the 1930s, he continued to publish novels and short stories. He dealt with a variety of subjects but customarily revealed his high view of courage. The brave did not always survive in his fiction but they lived their lives to the fullest. It was not till the late 1930s that reference to the Depression crept into Hemingway's writing and, even then, its influence was indirect. It did not come in the form of an attack on poverty or joblessness but in a new interest in collective political action. He believed in a great alliance of liberals to fight the battles of both peace and war. When the Spanish civil war began in 1936, he traveled to Spain to report on it and write about it. When it was over, he published a notable novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. It is a war novel containing the message that all liberals must help one another, must act collectively, if good is to endure, but it is also a love story of great appeal.

In spite of the significance of war for him, Hemingway never projected a mindless combativeness. He knew the suffering that war could bring, a suffering invariably compounded by the tragedies it inflicted on civilian life. Nowhere does he show this better than in the short story, "In Another Country".

William Faulkner, too, knew the dislocations as well as the injuries that war could cause. During World War I, he trained with the British Royal Air Force in Canada, but the war ended before he could go overseas. Nevertheless, on returning to Mississippi, where his family had long lived, he recognized that the wounds of war were not only physical. He felt a sense of alienation from his Southern surroundings, which he showed in a novel called *Soldier's Pay*, published in 1926, and in a far better one, *Sartoris*, published three

years later. In the latter work, the hero comes back home after the war but cannot settle down. He is tied to his Mississippi town, yet he is now cut off from it. Death is the only solution for his problem. It comes when he recklessly flies an airplane of unusual design, which crashes.

During the first part of the 20th century, the novel continued to reign as the nation's chief literary form. Nevertheless, serious poetry continued to be written. The most widely accepted date for marking a poetic renaissance in the United States and the beginning of modern American poetry is 1912, the year *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse* was founded by Harriet Monroe and a group of subscribers. The first issue of the magazine stated its purpose: "to give to poetry her own place, her own voice." From its founding down to the present, the magazine has served its function admirably well and has been instrumental in introducing many new American poets to the poetry-reading public.

A common attitude among the new poets of the interwar years was one of rebellion against Victorian poetry, a rebellion which was often manifested in their reactions against Victorian philosophy. More often, however, rather than rebelling against *what* the Victorian poets had said, the typical new poet reacted against *how* they had expressed themselves. He was against the conventional poetic techniques of the times.

Experimentation was common. Robert Frost observed that "Poetry . . . was tried without punctuation. It was tried without capital letters. It was tried without any image but those to the eye. . . It was tried without content under the name of poesie pure. It was tried without phrase, epigram, coherence, logic, and consistency. It was tried without ability . . . It was tried without feeling or sentiment. . ."

Gradually free verse won acceptance, but after a period during which it was used increasingly, it began to decline in popularity. By 1941 many leading poets considered it rather old-fashioned. Nevertheless, free verse had important effects, for it offered new insights about possible variations in verse forms. Even so "classical" a poet as Robert Frost was not immune to such influences toward freedom of versification.

Key words

Prose – the ordinary form of spoken or written language, without metrical structure, as distinguished from poetry or verse

Fiction – not based on real events, developed by author's imagination

Liberalism – the quality or state of being liberal

Verse – one of the lines of poem

Versification – the act of versifying, verse form, metrical structure

Questions

1. Speak in brief the poets of that period?
2. Discuss the American Poetry during World War I ?
3. What was the effect of World War I on American Poetry?
4. Describe the attitude of the nation toward the poetry of that time?
5. What did the poets concentrate on while writing their poems?
6. What were Robert Frost's ideas?
7. Compare the that time poetry with the poetry of Post War Period?
8. Discuss in brief the life of common people of that time?

LECTURE 19. THE THEME: ERNEST (MILLER) HEMINGWAY, WILLIAM (HARRISON) FAULKNER (FALKNER) ARE PROMINENT WRITERS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

Plan

1. The life and literary activity of Ernest Hemingway
2. The prominent works of Hemingway
3. William Faulkner and his writing, farming and housing
4. William Fa(u)lkner and his letter changing in his name
5. Faulkner – Nobel Prize winning moments
6. The closing years of these writers

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989
4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Ernest (Miller) Hemingway

Life: (1899-1961)



“A writer’s, problem does not change. He himself changes and the world he lives in changes but his problem remains the same. It is always how to write truly and, having found what is true, to project it in such a way that it becomes a part of the experience of the person who reads it.”

- From his *Problems of Writer in War Time*

He was born in Oak Park, Ill. Son of a doctor (who would commit suicide), he never attended college but became a journalist for the *Kansas City Star* (1917-18). He served with the Red Cross Ambulance Corps in France (1917-18) and was wounded while accompanying the Italian army into battle. He worked as a journalist, covering the Greco-Turkish war for the *Toronto Star* (1920).

In Chicago, he married (his first of four wives) and went back to Europe to serve as a foreign correspondent (1921-24). He made frequent trips to Spain and the Austrian Alps but for the most part was based in Paris where he fell in with the expatriate circle centered around Gertrude Stein. His first published work was *Three Stories & Ten Poems* (1923), followed by *In Our Time* (1925), consisting of 15

stories that clearly drew on his own youthful experiences; already his distinctive voice was in evidence - simple sentences, enigmatic dialogue, precise description.

His first novel, *Torrents of Spring* (1926), was more a satire of Maxwell Anderson, but *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) gained him instant acclaim and seemed to capture what Stein labeled "the lost generation." *Men Without Women* (1927), another collection of stories, maintained his reputation, while his next novel, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), advanced him to the front ranks of contemporary writers.

He had returned to the U.S.A. in 1927 but would never stay long in one place, seemingly always in need of adventure - deep-sea fishing off Key West, Fla., big-game hunting in Africa. He had long been dedicated to Spanish bullfighting - his nonfictional work, *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), effectively introduced it to the non-Spanish world - and when the Spanish Civil War broke out, he went off to cover it (1936-38); he identified with the anti-Fascists, and his only play, *The Fifth Column* (1938), and one of his better novels, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), came out of this experience.

By now he was more than a well-known writer - he had become one of the great celebrities of the century, his every word, activity, drink, and clothing style reported on in magazines such as *Life*. In 1940 he bought a house in Cuba that was to be a fairly regular stopover (and which Fidel Castro and the Cubans treated as a historical site).

In World War II, he is said to have aided in espionage in the Caribbean under cover of deep-sea fishing; he then went to England to report on the Royal Air Force and he accompanied the Allied forces on their drive to liberate Paris. After the war, his talents as a writer seemed to have dulled, but he recaptured both popular and critical audiences with his short novel, *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), and ended up with the Nobel Prize in literature in 1954.

Restless and unable to complete new writing projects, he became prone to various physical ailments, mental depression, and eventually a form of paranoia; he committed suicide by shooting himself at his home in Ketchum, Idaho. A series of works, including *A Moveable Feast* (1964), appeared posthumously.

Hemingway's terse prose style, self-promoted macho image, and stress on the search for physical challenges have all lent themselves to imitation and parody; but at their best his writing, life, and themes ensured him a role as one of the century's major literary figures.

**William (Harrison)
Faulkner (Falkner)
Life: (1897-1962)**



I believe that man will not merely endure; he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past.

The poets' voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail.

*from his speech delivered on December
10, 1950, in Stockholm, Sweden,
when he received the Nobel Prize
for Literature.*

He was born in New Albany, Miss. He lived in nearby Oxford, Miss., nearly all his life, writing, farming, and hunting. The scanty education he had after the tenth grade included fitful attendance at the University of Mississippi after his World War I service with the Canadian Air Force. (The war ended while he was still in training.)

A writer from adolescence, he published his first poems in his early twenties, and during the next few years spent time in New Orleans, where he was encouraged by Sherwood Anderson. When his first book of poems, *The Marble Faun* (1924), was published, he added the "u" to his name. He traveled to Europe later in 1925, before

returning to Oxford. His first published novels were *Soldier's Pay* (1926) and *Mosquitoes* (1927).

The Sound and the Fury (1929) was the first of the complex stream-of-consciousness novels for which he was to become known. In the same year, *Sartoris* was published, the first of a series of novels centered on the Sartoris family in a fictionalized Oxford. He married Estelle Oldham Franklin in 1929. Over the years he created a historical saga centered on five families in his fictional Yoknapatawpha County.

His famously complex and difficult prose brought to life characters of the South, by turns degenerate, cruel, and macabre, and a major theme of his work was the toll taken by white Southerners' treatment of African-Americans. Other early fiction included *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Sanctuary* (1931), *Light in August* (1932), *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), *The Unvanquished* (1938), *The Hamlet* (1940), and *Go Down Moses* (1942).

Never that popular, he had to earn money by writing Hollywood screenplays in the 1930s, and, by that time, was known to drink heavily and habitually. By the middle 1940s his critical reputation was in eclipse; his rediscovery as a major writer began with the publication of *The Portable Faulkner* (1946), edited by Malcolm Cowley.

Faulkner won the 1949 Nobel Prize in literature; his *Collected Stories* (1950) won a National Book Award (1951); and *A Fable* (1954) won a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize (1955). He was writer in residence at the University of Virginia (1957; 1958). Later works include *The Town* (1957), *The Mansion* (1959), and *The Reivers* (1962). He died of a heart attack in Mississippi.

Key words

Greco – Turkish war – a war between Greeks and Turkish people

Enigmatic – mysterious

Contemporary – belonging to the same period of time, existing

Celebrities – famous people, stars

Nobel Prize – a prize worth 1 mln. dollars, given to a person in various field of life, for the best accomplishments. But the prize is not

given for Mathematic achievements, because Nobel's lady fell in love with a person who was mathematician.

Pulitzer Prize – a prize given for literary achievements only.

Questions

1. How did Hemingway spend his early life?
2. What was his ambition?
3. Did Hemingway reach his aim?
4. What did he mainly write about?
5. Discuss any of his writings?
6. How did the critics of that time describe Hemingway?
7. How was Faulkner interested in literature?
8. What was his motto in life?
9. How does Faulkner create mood and atmosphere in his works?
10. How does he bring the attitudes of the white men toward the Negroes?

LECTURE 20. THE THEME: ROBERT FROST AND LANGSTON HUGHES (JAMES MERCER) ARE THE FIGHTERS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

Plan

1. Life and literary activity of Robert Frost
2. Robert Frost and his never taking a degree
3. First volume of poems by Robert Frost
4. Life and Literary activities of librettist Langston Hughes
5. Struggle against the discrimination of African-Americans

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997

3. Rita Dove., Grace Notes, Poems., USA, 1989

4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997

Robert Frost,
Life: (1874-1963)



A poem is never a put-up job so to speak. It begins as a lump in the throat, a sense of wrong, a homesickness, a lovesickness. It is never a thought to begin with. It is at its best when it is a tantalising vagueness. It finds its thought and succeeds, or doesn't find it and comes to nothing. It finds its thought or makes its thought. I suppose it finds it lying around with others not so much to its purpose in a more or less full mind. That's why it oftener comes to nothing in youth before experience had filled the mind with thoughts. It may be a big emotion then and yet finds nothing it can embody in. If finds the thought and the thought finds the words. Let's say again: A poem particularly must not begin thought first.

- from his letter to Louis

Untermeier written on January 1, 1916

A poet, teacher Robert Frost was born in San Francisco. He studied at Dartmouth College (1892) and Harvard (1897-99) but never took a degree. He was a mill worker and teacher (1892-97), a farmer in New Hampshire (1900-12), and lived in England (1912-15); his first volume of poems, *A Boy's Will*, was published there (1913). Upon his return to New Hampshire he settled on a farm but he taught at many universities and colleges in the ensuing years.

He was a founder of the Bread Loaf School, Middlebury, Vt., (1920) and was poetry consultant to the Library of Congress (1958). He was often honored for his work, and in later years he cultivated the image of America's poet laureate.

Although those who knew him best admitted that he could be prickly, even nasty, none denied his achievements as a poet. His work

is distinguished by its everyday language, New England settings, and the natural world, as in *North of Boston* (1914). Individual poems, such as "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," "Mending Wall," and "The Death of a Hired Man," have ensured his popularity as well as critical acclaim.

Frost's verses became part of a great tradition, shaped by the Roman poet Vergil, of what is called bucolic poetry – poetry about farming. However, though he used farm situations in much of his poetry, he gave them a wide application. He might write about stepping on a rake and describe the feeling when it hit him, but he used the incident to show how life gives us bruises.

Some talents in poetry are used up early, but not Frost's. He continued to publish fine poetry for fifty years. He reached the height of his popularity after World War II. If America of the 20th century had a national poet, it was Frost. He was chosen to read one of his poems at the inauguration of the late President John F. Kennedy, the first poet ever so honoured.

Mending Wall

Something there is that doesn't love wall,
That sends the frozen ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there...

The Road Not Taken

Two roads devirged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could now travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by
And that has made all the difference.

Langston Hughes (James Mercer)
Life: (1902-67)

*Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die,
Life is a broken-wined bird
That cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frosen with snow.*

- from *Selection 1, Dreams*



A poet, writer, playwright and librettist was born in Joplin, Mo. After publishing his first poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (1921), he attended Columbia University for one year (1921), but left, working on a freighter to travel to Africa, living in Paris and Rome, and supporting himself with odd jobs. After his poetry was promoted by Vachel Lindsay, he attended Lincoln University (1925-29); while

there his first book of poems, *The Weary Blues* (1926), launched his career as a writer.

As one of the founders of the cultural movement known as the Harlem Renaissance - which he practically defined in his essay, "The Negro Artist and the Radical Mountain" (1926) - he was innovative in his use of jazz rhythms and dialect to depict the life of urban blacks in his poetry, stories, and plays. Having provided the lyrics for the musical *Street Scene* (1947) and the play that inspired the opera *Troubled Island* (1949), in the 1960s he returned to the stage with works that drew on black gospel music, such as *Black Nativity* (1961).

A prolific writer for four decades - in his later years he completed a two-volume autobiography and edited anthologies and pictorial volumes - he abandoned the Marxism of his youth but never gave up protesting the injustices committed against his fellow African-Americans.

In constant demand as a lecturer, Hughes traveled on speaking tours throughout the United States, to the West Indies, and to parts of Europe and Africa. He received many awards and honors for his writings, which have been translated into more than 25 languages.

The Negro Speaks of Rivers

I've known rivers
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the
flow of human blood in human veins.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln
went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy
bosom turn all golden in the sunset.
I've known rivers:
Ancient, dusky rivers.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

Key words

Librettist – the writer of a libretto, the text of an opera or similar work

Discriminate – to make a distinction in favour of or against a person on the basis of the group, or class to which he belongs, rather than according to merit

Acclaim – to greet publicly with loud or enthusiastic approval or praise

Inauguration – opening ceremony

Pictorial – pertaining to , expressed in, or of the nature of of a picture

Jazz – music originated in New Orleans around the beginning of the 20th century.

Questions

Mending Wall

1. What do you think the theme of the poem is?
2. Why do you think the poet refers to the mending of the wall as “just another kind of outdoor game”?
3. How does the poem end?

The Road Not Taken

1. What human traits are suggested by the first stanza of the poem?
2. In what way does the poem suggest that Frost was a non-conformist?
3. Choose any four lines and analyze them?

The Negro Speaks of Rivers

1. What does the poet mean when he says that his soul has grown deep like the rivers?
2. What is the purpose of the second stanza?
3. How do the repetitions heighten the effectiveness of the poem?

LECTURE 21. THE THEME: WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS AND ARCHIBALD MACLEISH, OBJECTIVISTS OF THE AMERICAN LITERATURE

Plan

1. "Objectivism" in the literary life of William Carlos Williams
2. The early life of Carlos Williams
3. The works and masterpieces
4. Extravagant childhood of Archibald Macleish
5. Famous works of the author
6. Closing periods of his life

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw -Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
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4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasaranga., India., Mysore, 1997
5. Dean Curry, Highlights of American History, United States Information Agency, Washington D.C. 20547, USA 1995

William Carlos Williams

Life: (1883-1963)



I will teach you my townpeople how to perform a funeral - for you have it over a troop of artists - unless one should scour the world - you have the ground sense necessary

- from his *Tract*

A poet, writer, physician was born in Rutherford, N.J. He studied in Switzerland and Paris (1897-99), the University of Pennsylvania's medical school (M.D. 1906), and did postgraduate work in pediatrics in Leipzig (1909-10). Returning to Rutherford, N.J., he would combine the writing of poetry with the practice of medicine (1910-51). He was associated with the Imagists early in his career, but preferred to call his approach "objectivism."

He went on to create a revolutionary modernist approach to prose and poetry; his masterpiece is generally regarded to be the five-volume semiautobiographical epic poem, *Paterson* (1946-58). He was also a novelist, playwright, critic, and translator, and was appointed Consultant in Poetry, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (1952), although he declined to serve

Among his most popular creations was Jesse B. Semple, better known as "Simple," a black Everyman featured in the syndicated column he began in 1942 for the *Chicago Defender*. Because he often employed humor and seldom portrayed or endorsed violent confrontations, he was for some years disregarded as a model by black writers; but by the 1980s he was being reappraised and was newly appreciated as a significant voice of African-Americans.

Tract

I will teach you my townspeople
how to perform a funeral –
for you have it over a troop
of artists –
unless one should scour the world –
you have the ground sense necessary

See! The hearse leads.
I begin with a design for a hearse.
For Christ's sake no black –
nor white either – and not polished!
Let it be weathered – like a farm wagon –
with gilt wheels (this could be
applied fresh at small expense)
or no wheels at all:
a rough dray to drag over the ground.

Archibald MacLeish
Life: (1892-1970)



One reason why some people resent modern poetry is that they prefer poetry which helps them forget the dreariness and the menace of daily experience

- Paul Engle in *The United States in Literature*, 1968, p. 542

He was born in Glencoe, Illinois, the son of Andrew MacLeish, a prosperous dry-goods merchant, and Martha Hillard, a college professor. Andrew MacLeish was a reserved, stern father whose lack of attention to his son may have generated Archibald's fierce drive to succeed.

MacLeish spent his childhood on a seventeen-acre estate on Lake Michigan. He was a somewhat rebellious though industrious child who needed, his mother judged, the discipline of a private school; he therefore attended Hotchkiss from 1907 to 1911. At Yale (1911-1915) he majored in English, wrote poetry, and was heavily involved in campus literary, social, and athletic activities. After graduating from Yale, he entered Harvard Law School in the fall of 1915. In June 1916 he married Ada Taylor Hitchcock; they had four children, three of whom survived infancy.

MacLeish's first volume of poetry, *Tower of Ivory*, appeared late in 1917 shortly after he had left for France and World War I to serve in the Yale Mobile Hospital Unit. He soon transferred to artillery school and eventually saw action in the second battle of the Marne, commanding Battery B of the 146th Field Artillery.

Returning to Harvard Law School, MacLeish graduated at the head of his class in 1919. He then taught law courses for a semester in Harvard's government department but turned down an offer to teach at the Harvard Law School; he worked briefly, instead, as an editor for the *New Republic*. In September 1920 he joined the Boston law firm of Choate, Hall and Stewart. He was a successful lawyer, but feeling confined by the profession and craving time to write poetry, he quit

the firm on the same day he was offered a partnership in February 1923.

September 1923 the MacLeishes headed for Paris, he hoping to become an accomplished poet and she to become a professional singer. There they joined the expatriate literary community, meeting writers such as E. E. Cummings, John Dos Passos, Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, James Joyce, and Ernest Hemingway. With Hemingway, MacLeish began a long and close though difficult friendship.

Always an organized worker, he established a program of reading to develop poetic style and technique. Perhaps he studied too well, for during the Paris period he wrote several long poems, which sounded much like T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and other pioneering modernists (*The Pot of Earth* [1925], *Nobodaddy* [1926], *Einstein* [1926, in *Streets in the Moon*], and *The Hamlet of A. MacLeish* [1928]). But he also wrote short poems equally notable for lyrical grace and a tone of muted horror at the human experience of spinning on our small planet through the dark and empty universe, as in "You, Andrew Marvell."

This poem and other lyrics--such as "Ars Poetica," "The End of the World," "Eleven," and "Not Marble Nor the Gilded Monuments"--have long been the source of MacLeish's poetic reputation.

The MacLeishes returned to the United States in 1928 and bought a farm in Conway, Massachusetts. "American Letter" in *New Found Land* (1930) asserts his commitment to the United States, despite the pull of Europe. The long poem *Conquistador* (1932) presents Cortes's conquest of the Aztecs as symbolic of the American experience. In 1933 *Conquistador* won the Pulitzer Prize, the first of three awarded to MacLeish.

Poetry, especially in a tumultuous time like the thirties, should be "public speech." His stage and radio plays of the thirties, notably *Panic* (1935), *The Fall of the City* (1937), and *Air Raid* (1938) aimed at and sometimes reached a wide audience. *Actfive and Other Poems* (1948), MacLeish's first poetic volume since *America Was Promises* (1939), contained public poems and private lyrics. During the fifties he achieved gratifying successes and a balance between his public and private work. *Collected Poems 1917-52* (1952) brought not only his second Pulitzer Prize, but Hayden Carruth's apology for the past carping of critics (*Nation*, 31 Jan. 1953). MacLeish was elected

president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1953. In his later years MacLeish wrote excellent lyric poems that reflect in a direct, personal tone on love and aging. Not that he lost the desire to advise and exhort; the play *Herakles* (1967) warns of the destructive potential of science. But the short lyrics constitute his best poetry after *J.B.* It can be argued that these later poems are as good as his famous poems of the twenties. He died in Boston.

Art Poetica

Science, that simple saint, cannot be bothered
Figuring what anything is for:
Enough for her devotions that things are
And can be contemplated soon as gathered.

She knows how every living thing was fathered,
She calculates the climate of each star,
She counts the fish at sea, but cannot care
Why any one of them exists, fish, fire or feathered.

Why should she? Her religion is to tell
By rote her rosary of perfect answers.
Metaphysics she can leave to man:
She never wakes at night in heaven or hell.

Key words

Imagism – a style of poetry that employs free verse, precise imagery, and the patterns and rhythms of common speech

Objectivism – the tendency, as of a writer, to deal with things external to the mind rather than with thoughts or feelings

Playwright – a writers of plays; dramatist

Lyric – having the form and general effect of a song, esp. one expressing the writer's feelings

Modernism – modern character, tendencies or values

Questions

1. Discuss the life and literary activity of Archibald Macleish?
2. What did he mainly write about in his poetry?

Tract

1. What do you think, why does the poem bear the name "Tract"?
2. What kind of design for a hearse does the poet prefer?
3. What does he prefer instead of flowers?
4. Why do you think the poet wants the driver to play an inconspicuous role?

Art Poetica

1. How can a poem be "wordless"? "motionless in time"?
2. The title of the poem is Latin, meaning "The Art of Poetry" It is traditionally used as the title for works on the philosophy of poetry. What is the poet's philosophy of poetry?
3. Do you agree with the above statement? Give your reasons?
4. Write your own definition of poetry, either in prose or poetry?

LECTURE 22. THE THEME: KATHERINE ANNE PORTER AND HER CONTRIBUTION TO POETRY

Plan

1. Poetry and Katherine Anne Porter
2. Interesting life of Miss Porter
3. Miss Porter's purpose in writing poetry
4. Circle of friends
5. The closing periods of Miss Porter's life

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
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Katherine Anne Porter

As soon as I learned to form letters on paper, at about three years, I began to write stories, and this has been the basic and absorbing occupation, the intact line of my life which directs my actions, determines my point of view, and profoundly affects my character and personality, my social beliefs and economic status, and the kind of friendships I form.

Quoted in Walter Blair, et al, *The Literature of the United States, Vol II*

The writer was born in Indian Creek, Texas. After being schooled mainly at home, she worked as a journalist in Denver, Colo., and Chicago. She would later elaborate on and exaggerate certain aspects of her life but she does seem to have lived in Mexico and in Europe for some years and would marry three times. Her first collection of short stories, *Flowering Judas, and Other Stories* (1930), gained her considerable acclaim, and for many years she was admired entirely for short stories and novellas, often drawing on Roman Catholic symbolism from her past while expressing her liberal views on present society.

With her best works somewhat relegated to schools as minor classics, she astonished the literary world with the publication of her only novel, *Ship of Fools* (1962), a rather bitter and ironic view of humanity. This gained her a final round of appreciation as her *Collected Stories* (1965) won both the Pulitzer and National Book Award, and she fired a parting shot with her critical account of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial and execution, *The Never-Ending Wrong* (1977).

Miss Porter has one of the most suitable of writing talents. She makes no easy explanations to her reader, assuming that he already knows something and that he will find the rest of what he needs to know in the story. As a writer, Miss Porter is devoted to her craft, and throughout her career she has worked scrupulously and painstakingly, refusing to print anything until she is completely satisfied with it.

In many of her stories, Miss Porter explores the lives of character who seem drawn into disillusionment and despair, sometimes by social, political and natural forces beyond their control, often by their

own selfishness and deceit. Like Hemingway, she appears to penetrate the thoughts of people, in detail or fragmentarily and thus enable the reader to experience the internal life of the character and his world.

In "Theft" we find an underlying structure of contrast and tension, the paradoxical problems of definition, and characteristic refusal by the author to indulge in "formula" writing.

The setting for "Theft" is New York City. The heroine is a writer and reviewer, like Miss Porter. The time is the onset of the Great Depression of the 1930s. The stolen purse in the story symbolizes all property. Appropriately, it is made of gold cloth. Thus, the stealing of the purse represents the conflict between the "haves" and the "have-nots". But the conflict is never simple in Miss Porter's stories, nor is it easy to arrive at a facile definition of the problem. The young woman who owns the purse has little else. She is in fact close to starving and may really be poorer than the janitress. But, like the purse, she is a symbol of those who possess things which other people do not have but want. And at the end of the story, by a brilliant reversal, the janitress has succeeded in making the heroine feel that she has stolen, if not from the janitress herself, then from the janitress' niece.

The emotions running through this story are mixed, as are the sympathies of the reader. We cannot sympathize at all with Bill or Roger and perhaps only a little with Camilo. Paradoxically, both Miss Porter's nameless heroine and the janitress seem to arouse our deepest feelings of empathy.

Key words

Classics – a work honored as definitive in its field

Sacco – Vanzetti trial – Nicola Sacco (1891-1927) Italian anarchist, in the U.S. after 1908; with B. Vanzetti executed for robbery and murder

Paradox – seemingly contradictory or absurd statement that expresses a possible truth

Janitress or Janitor – a person employed in an apartment house, school, office, to keep the public areas clean and do minor repairs

Empathy – the imaginative ascribing to an object of one's feelings and attitudes

Questions

1. Discuss the life of Miss Porter?
2. What was her ambition in life?
3. What was the main topic of her writings?
4. What can you say about the closing years of the writer?
5. Discuss the important work of Katherine Porter?
6. What do the critics of nowadays say about her?
7. What kind of life (rich, poor, medium?) do we see in her writings?
8. Write a critical note to "*Theft*".
9. How can we tell that the heroine and her friends are poor?
10. How does the story end?

LECTURE 23. THE THEME: SAUL BELLOW IS THE WRITER WITH HIS OWN PRINCIPLES

Plan

1. Saul Bellow is the writer with his own principles
2. The first work of Mr. Bellow
3. Some peculiar features from his life and childhood
4. List of the works

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
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Saul Bellow
Life: (1915-1998)



Since as early moment in the nineteenth century the writer has left the obligation not to repeat what has been done before and to strike some peculiar note of modernity.

- Quoted in *English Teaching Forum*,
- July-August 1966, p. 21

The writer was born in Lachine, Quebec, Canada. In 1924 his family moved to Chicago, and he attended university there and at Northwestern University. He abandoned his postgraduate studies at Wisconsin University to become a writer, and his first novel, *The Dangling Man*, appeared in 1944.

Other works include *The Victim* (1947), *Henderson the Rain-King* (1959), *Herzog* (1964), *Humboldt's Gift* (1975; Pulitzer, 1976); both *A Theft* and *The Bellarosa Connection* appeared in 1989. Later works include a collection of essays *It All Adds Up* (1994). He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1976.

In *The Adventures of Augie March*, the professor – hero has not yet emerged. Augie is a Chicago boy, brought up poor and fatherless, educated chiefly on the streets but also at home, which is a place both of love and discipline. The novel, episode by episode, incident by incident, shows Augie during the Depression, breaking away from his home and making his own way. He does many different jobs and gets something of an education from the text-books that he steals to sell. He encounters many kinds of men – crooked, honest, rich, and poor. He meets several girls who fall in love with him as he travels through the United States, into Mexico, and on to Europe.

But whatever he does, wherever he goes, he remains his own person. People like him, and want to help him and form lasting relationships with him. A rich couple, for instance, wishes to adopt

even though he is already a young man. A rich girl wants to keep him as a lover. They do not succeed, nor does anyone else. He refuses to be bound.

Major Works

Novels

1944 The Dangling Man

1947 The Victim

1953 The Adventures of Augie March

1956 Seize the Day

1959 Henderson the Rain-King

1964 Herzog-

1970 Mr Sammler's Planet

1982 The Dean's December

1987 More Die of Heartbreak

1989 The Bellarosa Connection

1989 A Theft

Stories

1968 Mosby's Memoirs and Other Stories

1984 With His Foot in His Mouth and Other Short Stories

1993 Something to Remember Me By

Other

1994 It All Adds Up (essays)

The Adventures of Augie March

Chapter 21

Simon did not want to see me. As soon as he heard my voice over the phone he said, "Augie! Where are you? Stay put. I'll come and pick you up right away."

I was calling from a vooth near my new place, which wasn't far from the old, on the South Side. He lived in the vicinity and was there within a few minutes in his black Cadillac, this beautiful enamel shell coming so softly to the curb, inside like jewellery. He beckoned and I got in. "I have to go right back," he said. "I left without a shirt; I just put on this coat and hat. Well, let's look at you."

He said this, but actually didn't much look, despite his rush to get down. Of course he was drivingm but just the touch of manured

hands on the valuable stones on the wheel – something like jade – did the trick. The thing pretty well ran itself. I thought he was sorry about the fight we had over Lucy and Mimi. I wasn't angry any more but was looking ahead. Simon was heftier than before. The light raglan with its chestnut buttons came open on his hard bare belly. Also his face was larger, and ruder, autocratic. The fat of it was not clear, as it is in some faces. Mrs. Klein, Jimmy's mother, had had a fat face, almost oriental, but there the fat illuminated something. However, I found out that I could not be critical of Simon when I saw him after a long interval. No matter, what he had done or what he was up to now, the instant I saw him I loved him again. I couldn't help it. It came over me. I wanted to be brothers again. And why did he come running for me if he didn't want the same?

Well, now he wanted to know how rugged things had been for me, and I didn't have any intention of telling him. What was I up to in Mexico?

"I was in love with a girl?"

"You were, uh? And what else?"

I didn't say anything about the bird or my failures and lessons. Maybe I should have. He criticized me anyway in his mind for my randomness and sentiment. So what did I stand to lose by telling him the facts? However, something haughty kept me. That was how brief the first warmth of love turned out to be. So he was judging me – what of it? Let him. Wasn't I busted down, creased, head-damaged, missing teeth, disappointed, and so forth? And couldn't I have said, "Well, all right, Simon, here I am." No, what I told him was that I had gone down to Mexico to work out something important. Then he started to talk about himself. He had built up his business and sold it at a whopping profit. Since he didn't want to have to do with the Magnuses he had gone into other kinds of business and he was very lucky. He said, "I certainly do have the gold touch. After all, I did start in the Depression when everything was supposed to be over and done with it." Then he described how he had bought an old hospital building at auction and turned it into a tenement. Inside of six months he had cleared fifty thousand bucks on this, and then had organized a management company and run the place for the new owners. He had a large in a Spanish cobalt mine now. They sold the stuff in Turkey, or

some place in the Middle East. He also had a potato-chip concession in several railroad stations. In fact, Einhorn himself could not have dreamed up such deals, much less have made them pay off...

Key words

Episode – an incident in the course of events

Discipline – training to act according with the rules

Enamel – an artistic workexecuted in enamel; glassy substance

Depression – the economic crisis and period of lw business in the USA (1929-1930)

Questions:

1. Some peculiar features of Saul Bellow's life?
2. Discuss any work by Saul Bellow?
3. Why do we consider him as one of the best writers of our time?
4. What was the main idea in his works?
5. What can you say about Augie?
6. Why did he refuse to be adopted by rich people?
7. How does the author describe the rich people of that time?
8. Describe the character of Augie March?
9. Speak about the characters and sketches of the story?
10. How does the story end?

LECTURE 24. THE THEME: RALPH (WALDO) ELLISON, ONE OF THE BEST AMERICAN WRITERS

Plan

1. Life and literary activity of Ralph Ellison
2. The ambition to become one of the best American writers
3. Major works and novels
4. The closing parts of his life
5. The comparison between Ellisonian and Wells's "The Invisible Man"

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
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4. A Committe of Teachers of University of Mysore., Wings of Poesy., An Anthology of English Poems., Prasarangaa., India., Mysore, 1997

Ralph (Waldo) Ellison Life: (1914-1994)



I am a novelist, not an activist. But I think that no one who reads what I write or who listens to my lectures can doubt that I am enlisted in the freedom movement. As to the individual, I am primarily responsible for the health of American Literature and culture. When I write, I am trying to make some sense out of chaos. To think that a writer must think about his Negroness is to fall into trap.

- Quoted in *The New York Times Magazine*,
November 20, 1953

The writer was born in Oklahoma City, Okla. He studied music at Tuskegee Institute before moving to New York City to study sculpture. A protégè of Richard Wright, whom he met in 1937, he wrote reviews, essays, and short stories. He spent seven years writing *Invisible Man* (1952, National Book Award), and although it was his only novel it gained him a place as a respected American writer and remains one of the central texts of the African-American experience.

The characters are strongly if simply drawn. They are often types, often exaggerations, but they stay in the reader's mind. There is Negro president of the college the young hero attends, a shrewd, classic "Uncle Tom", using both white and black men for his own benefit.

There is the bigoted Southern businessman and his opposite number in the North. There is the young Negro idealist who is killed because of his idealism. There is the Black Nationalist leader, Ras the Exhorter, a kind of leader later to become much more important on the American scene. There is the communist official in Harlem, using the Negro to help the aims of the Party, and a gallery of others, black and white.

The nameless hero, the *Invisible Man*, meets all these characters in the course of the book. A few treat him well. Most treat him badly. Many ignore him. They never see him as a person. That is why at the end of the book he retreats to complete invisibility. No one can see him in his cellar except himself.

His other major work, *Shadow and Act* (1964), is a collection of his essays and interviews. After teaching at various universities, he became the Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities at New York University (1970-79). He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1969.

Invisible Man

One night I accidentally bumped into a man, and perhaps because of the near darkness he saw me and called me an insulting name. I sprang at him, seized his coat lapels and demanded that he apologize. He was a tall blond man, and as my face came closer to his he looked inslently out of his blue eyes and cursed me, his breath hot in my face as he struggled. I pulled his chin down sharp upon the crown of my head, butting him as I had seen the West Indians do, and I felt his flesh tear and the blood gush out, and I yelled, "Apologize! Apologize!" But he continued to curse and struggle, and I butted him again and again until he went down heavily, on his knees, profusely bleeding. I kicked him repeatedly, in frenzy because he still uttered insults though his lips were frothy with blood. Oh yes, I kicked him! And in my outrage I got out my knife and prepared to slit his throat, right there beneath the lamplight in the deserted street, holding him by the collar with one hand, and opening the knife with my teeth – when it occurred to me that the man had not seen me, actually; that he, as far as I knew, was in the midst of a walking nightmare! And I stopped the blade, slicing the air as I pushed him away, letting him fall back to the street. I stared at him hard as the lights of a car stabbed through te

darkness. He lay there, moaning on the asphalt; a man almost killed a phantom. It unnerved me. I was both disgusted and ashamed. I was like a drunken man myself, wavering about on weakened legs. Then I was amused. Something in this man's thick head had sprung out and beaten him within an inch of his life. I began to laugh at this crazy discovery. Would he have awakened at the point of death? Would Death himself have freed him for wakeful living? But I did not linger. I ran away into the dark, laughing so hard I feared I might rupture myself. The next day I saw his picture in the *Daily News* beneath a caption stating that he had been "mugged". Poor fool, poor blind fool, I thought with sincere compassion, mugged by an invisible man!

Most of the time (although I do not choose as I once did to deny the violence of my days by ignoring it) I am not so overtly violent. I remember that I am invisible and walk softly so as not to awaken the sleeping ones. Sometimes it is best not to awaken them; there are few things in the world as dangerous as sleepwalkers. I learned in time though that it is possible to carry on a fight against them without their realising it. For instance, I have been carrying on a fight with Monopolated Light and Power for some time now. I use their service and pay them nothing at all, and they don't know it. Oh, they suspect that power is being drained off, but they don't know where. All they know is that according to the master matter back there in their power station a hell of a lot free current is disappearing somehow into the jungle of Harlem. The joke, of course, is that I don't live in Harlem but in a border area. Several years ago (before I discovered the advantage of being invisible) I went through the routine process of buying service and paying their outrageous rates. But no more. I gave up all that, along with my apartment, and my old way of life: That way based upon the fallacious assumption that I, like other men, was visible. Now, aware of my invisibility, I live rent-free in a building rented strictly to whites, in a section of the basement that was shut off and forgotten during the nineteenth century, which I discovered when I was trying to escape in the night from Ras the Destroyer. But that's getting too far ahead of the story, almost to the end, although the end is in the beginning and lies far ahead.

Key words

Protege – a person in the patronage, protection or care

Fallacious – logically unsound

Assumption – something taken for granted

Questions

1. Describe the early life of Ralph Waldo Ellison?
2. What are his major successful works?
3. Why his works were popular? What was the reason?
4. Has he ever written poems?
5. Critically analyze the novel?
6. What can you say about the main hero?
7. Regarding the novel, is Simon really glad to see Augie?
8. Discuss in brief the plot of the novel?
9. Where is the climax of the story?
10. Have you ever read any similar novel?

LECTURE 25. THE THEME: ROBERT (TRAILL SPENCE) LOWELL, JR, THEODORE (HUEBNER) ROETHKE, CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS OF WORLD WAR I

Plan

1. Robert Lowell – a conscientious objector in World War II
2. A troubled man and brilliant poet
3. Lowell's notable poems
4. Poetic activities of Theodore Roethke
5. Early and late sketches

Literature

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994

2. McGraw-Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
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Robert (Traill Spence) Lowell, Jr
Life: (1917-77)

Sincerity and fascination with oppositions are among the most representative themes of the contemporary writer. These can be reflected in the poet's temperament as well as in his choice of subject matter. An intense awareness of the difference between appearance and fact, seeming and being, the superficial and the essential, in idea, is matched by a bold sometimes daring use of oppositions, of unexpected juxtapositions, in form.

- *English Teaching Forum,*
 January-February 1971, p.12

Of the many poets writing in the United States in recent years one of the most outstanding was Robert Lowell. He was related to such earlier American poets as Amy Lowell, and James Russel Lowell. He was born in Boston, Mass. A conscientious objector in World War II, he served a prison sentence (1943-44). He taught at many institutions, was Consultant in Poetry, Library of Congress (1947-48), and wrote several plays and translations. A troubled man and brilliant poet, he combined his two beings in launching the so-called confessional school of poetry, and has been honored for his disquieting works, as in *Notebook 1967-1968* (1969; augmented 1970). His first book of poems, *Land of Unlikeness*, was published in 1944. From this volume he selected the best poems, which he revoked and published as *Lord Weary's Castle*. This collection won the Pulitzer Prize in 1946. Other volumes of his poetry are: *The Mill of the Kavanaughs* (1951), *Life Studies* (1959), and *For Dead Union* (1964). Lowell taught at a number of schools, including Kenyon College, Boston University, and Harvard.

Lowell's earlier poems, especially those that appeared in *Lord Weary's Castle*, represented an involvement with the traditions of the poets of the generation of T. S. Elliot and Allen Tate. However, in both subject matter and language, his later poems seem a departure from these traditions and assume a more contemporary posture. Because of his early traditional approach and later divergence, Lowell was one of the most transitional of contemporary American poetry.

Perhaps the chief characteristic of Lowell's poetry is its vitality. He never overelaborates about a feeling or thought just so that it will fill a poem, but instead packs the lines he writes with exuberant energy. Sometimes he may prove difficult to understand, yet he is not one who loves obscurity for its own sake. His rhyme and rhythm are regular, and the beat of his verses is strong; we can feel the pulse in them. When one of his rhymes is off or a rhythm is wrenched, it is for a poetic purpose.

From *Lord Weary's Castle*

Katherine's Dream

**It must have been a Friday. I could hear
The top-floor typist's thunder and the beer
That you had brought in cases hurt my head;
I'd sent the pillows flying from my bed,
I hugged my knees together and I gasped.
The dangling telephone receiver rasped
Like someone in a dream who cannot stop
For breath or logic till his victim drop
To darkness and the sheets. I must have slept,
But still could hear my father who had kept
Your guilty presents but cut off my hair.
He whispers that he really doesn't care
If I am your kept woman all my life,
Or ruin your two children and your wife;
But my dishonor makes him drink. Of course
I'll tell the court the truth for his divorce.
I walk through snow into. St. Patrick's yard.
Black nuns with glasses smile and stand on guard
Before a bulkhead in a bank of snow,**

**Whose charred doors open , as good people go
Inside by twos to the confessor. One
Must have a friend to enter there, but none
Is friendless in this crowd, and the nuns smile.**

**Theodore (Huebner) Roethke
Life: (1908-63)**

*I wake to sleep, and take my walking slow.
I feel my fate in what I cannot fear.
I learn by going where I have to go.*

- From *The Waking*, Selection II

Theodore Roethke grew up in Saginaw, Mich, where in his spare time he helped his father in the family's florist business. By working with plants and flowers he developed a love of nature which was reflected in his first book of poems, *Open House*, published in 1941. After graduating from the University of Michigan and Harvard, Roethke taught in a number of universities and, like many contemporary poets, he continued to write poetry while teaching. His volume of poetry, *The Waking: Poems 1933 – 1953* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1953, and his collected poems, *Words For The Wind* won the National Book Award in 1959. His last volume, *The Far Field*, was awarded the same prize in 1964 posthumously.

Roethke's work has been called "personal, lyrical, and spontaneous." He has been highly praised by contemporary critics, some of whom consider him to have been one of the three or four best poets writing in the United States at mid-century. Of himself Roethke has said: "I have a genuine love of nature...A perception of nature – no matter how delicate, how subtle, how evanescent – remains with me forever." His poems about natural subjects are, however, not simply "nature poems" in the objective sense. Rather, they mirror the poet's own inner struggles – alternate heights and depths of his emotion. An extremely skillful technician, Roethke manipulated rhyme and rhythm with such competence that the reader often senses the meaning of a poem emotionally before he has grasped it intellectually.

Contrary to many contemporary poets who display feelings of alienation and abandonment and who search for deeper sources of feeling and knowledge, Roethke succeeded in facing up to the terrors of modern life by expressing a kind of joyful defiance:

We think by feeling. What is there to know?
I hear my being dance from ear to ear.
I wake to sleep, and take my walking slow

The Waking

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.
I feel my fate in what I cannot fear.
I learn by going where I have to go.
We think by feeling. What is there to know?
I hear my being dance from ear to ear.
I wake to sleep, and take waking slow.

Of those so close beside me, which are you?
God bless the Gorund! I shall walk softly there,
And learn by going where I have to go

Light takes the Tree; but who can tell us how?
The lowly worm climbs up a winding star;
I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.

Key words

- Pulitzer** – a prize given for literary achievements
- Confessional** – characteristic of, or based on confession
- Augment** – to make larger in size
- Obscurity** – the state or quality of being obscure
- Rhyme** – verse or poetry having correspondence in the terminal sounds of the lines
- Rhythm** – strong and irregular pulses caused in music

Questions

1. Discuss the life and the major works of Robert Lowell?

2. What can you find in his poems that you can not find in any other poems?
3. What can you say about the final years of his life?
4. Why did he devote his life to writing poetry?
5. How do the first nine lines provide an effective contrast with the mood of the remainder of the poem?
6. Why was Roethke awarded with the Pulitzer Prize?
7. What is the difference between the Pulitzer prize and the Nobel prize?
8. What images of life and death does the poet convey?
9. What is the meaning of the second line of the first stanza?
10. Critically analyze the whole poem?

LECTURE 26. THE THEME: RANDALL JARRELL, JAMES WRIGHT ARE THE DEFENDERS OF THE COLOURED PEOPLE

Plan

1. Life and literary activity of Randall Jarrell
2. The main idea in his works
3. James Wright – defender of the coloured people
4. Early works and sketches
5. The final stages of their life

Literature:

1. Howard Cincotta., Deborah M.S. Brown., Stephen Burant., Michelle Green., Jeanne S. Holden., Richard Marshal., An outline of American History, USA, United States Information Agency, May 1994
2. McGraw –Hill., 75 Readings., An Anthology, USA., Sixth Edition., 1997
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Randall Jarrell
Life: (1914-65)

*The moon rises. The red cubs rolling
In the ferns by the rotten oak
Stare over a marsh and a meadow
To the farm's white wisp of smoke.*

- From *The Breath of Night, Selection I*

He was a poet literary critic born in Nashville, Tenn. He was a student of John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren at Vanderbilt University. His academic career was interrupted by his service with the Army Air Corps in World War II (1942-46). His war poems attracted national attention in the 1940s; *The Woman at the Washington Zoo* (1960) won a National Book Award.

Poetry and the Age (1953), a reevaluation of modern American poets, established Jarrell as a critic with unflinching judgment and a witty style, while his one novel *Pictures from an Institution* (1954), is regarded as a minor classic of the academic-novel genre. Most of his career he taught at the University of North Carolina (1947-51; 1953-54; 1961-65). He was consultant in poetry to the Library of Congress (1956-58). His premature death resulted from his being hit by a car.

Called "one of the most gifted poets and critics of his generation," Jarrell was the recipient of a number of literary prizes for his poetry and was widely known for his writings as editor and critic of contemporary poetry. Of him, writer Philip Booth has said that Jarrell "constantly stretched himself to find a language commensurate with his affectionate sadness for the human condition." Another poet, Stanley Kunitz, has pointed out that "all the voices in all of Jarrell's poems are crying 'Change me!' The young yearn to be old in order to escape from their nocturnal fears; the old long for the first time of their youth, no matter how poor and miserable it was, for 'in those days everything was better.'"

The Breath of Night

**The moon rises. The red cubs rolling
In the ferns by the rotten oak**

Stare over a marsh and a meadow
To the farm's white wisp of smoke.
A spark burns, high in heaven.

Deer thread the blossoming rows
Of the old orchard, rabbits
Hop by the well-curb. The cock crows

From the tree by the widow's walk;
Two stars, in the trees to the west,
Are snared, and an owl's soft cry

Here too, though death is hushed, though joy
Obscures, like night, their wars,
The beings of this world are swept
By the Strife that moves the stars.

James Wright
Life: (1927-1980)

*Just off the highway to Rochester, Minnesota,
Twilight bounds softly forth on the grass.
And the eyes of those two Indian ponies
Darken with kindness.*

- From A Blessing,

The writer and a poet, was born near Natchez, Miss. The grandson of slaves and son of a sharecropper, he went to school in Jackson, Miss., through only the ninth grade, but got a story published at age 16 while working at various jobs in the South. In 1927 he went to Chicago and worked briefly in the post office, but, forced on relief by the Depression, he joined the Communist Party (1932).

With two more minor works published, he found employment with the Federal Writers Project; his *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938), a collection of four stories, was highly acclaimed. In 1937 he moved to New York City where he was an editor on the Communist newspaper, *Daily Worker*, but the publication of *Native Son* (1940) brought him

overnight fame and freedom to write; a stage version (by Wright and Paul Green) followed in 1941 (and Wright himself later played the title role in a movie version made in Argentina).

Black Boy (1945) advanced his reputation, but after living mainly in Mexico (1940-46), he had become so disillusioned with both the Communists and white America that he went off to Paris where he lived the rest of his life as an expatriate. He continued to write novels - such as *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958) - and nonfiction - such as *Black Power* (1954) and *White Man, Listen!* (1957) - and was regarded by African-American writers such as James Baldwin as an inspiration. His naturalistic fiction no longer has the standing it once enjoyed, but his life and works remain exemplary.

Critics have compared Wright's poetry to that of Edwin Arlington Robinson and Robert Frost. Like these older poets, he most often uses both rhyme and conventional meter and the simple language in which he states his ideas. He views humanity with compassion and understanding, one example of which we may see in his poem, "Mutterings Over the Crib of a Deaf Child". In "A Blessing," Wright articulates a lyricism of pure joy.

Blessing

Just off the highway to Rochester, Minnesota,
Twilight bounds softly forth on the grass.
And the eyes of those two Indian ponies
Darken with kindness.
They have come gladly out of the willows
To welcome my friend and me.
We step over the barbed wire into the pasture
Where they have been grazing all day, alone.
They ripple tensely, they can hardly contain their happiness
That we have come.
They bow shyly as wet swans. They love each other.
There is no loneliness like theirs.
At home once more,
They begin munching the young tufts of spring in the darkness.

Key words

Critic – a person who judges and evaluates

Contemporary – belonging to the same period, age or year

Humanity – mankind, people

Questions

1. Discuss the early life of Mr. Jarrel?
2. What was the inspiration for James Wright to write poems?
3. What images of life and death does the poet convey in his poem "The Waking"?
4. Why did the author name his poem "The Waking"?
5. What is the meaning of the second line of the first stanza?
6. What does the poet mean by saying that "There is no loneliness like theirs", in his poem "Blessing"?
7. What or who is blessed in the poem?
8. What do you think the poet means by the last two lines of the poem?
9. Have you come across to any similar poems?
10. How does the poem end?

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*Buxoro davlat universiteti «Ziyo Rizograf»
ishlab chiqarish korxonasida chop etildi. Buyurtma №61
Adadi 100 nusxa. Buxoro shahri M.Iqbol ko`chasi, 11-uy*

