

**ДЕРЖАВНИЙ ВИЩИЙ НАВЧАЛЬНИЙ ЗАКЛАД
«УЖГОРОДСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ»
ФАКУЛЬТЕТ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ ФІЛОЛОГІЇ
КАФЕДРА АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ ФІЛОЛОГІЇ**

«ЗАТВЕРДЖУЮ»

Декан факультету

Рошко М.М.

« ____ » 20 ____ року

**СУЧАСНА АНГЛОМОВНА ЛІТЕРАТУРА
Конспекти лекцій**

Рівень вищої освіти	Магістр
Галузь знань	03 Гуманітарні науки
Спеціальність	035. Філологія
Предметна спеціальність (Спеціалізація) (за наявності)	035. Філологія
Освітня програма	Філологія
Статус дисципліни	Нормативна
Мова навчання	Англійська

Конспекти лекцій до навчальної дисципліни «Сучасна англомова література» для здобувачів вищої освіти галузі знань **03 Гуманітарні науки** спеціальності **035 Філологія** предметної спеціальності (спеціалізації) (за наявності) **035 Філологія** освітньої програми **Філологія**.

Розробники:

Гайданка Д.В., к.ф.н., доц. кафедри англійської філології,
Рошко М.М., кандидат філ.наук, доцент, декан факультету іноземної філології

Рецензенти:

Зимомря І.М., доктор філ.наук, професор, завідувач кафедри теорії і практики перекладу факультету міжнародних відносин УжНУ
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Розглянуто та затверджено на засіданні кафедри **англійської філології**

протокол № ____ від « ____ » _____ 20__ р.

Завідувач кафедри _____ доц. Голик С. В.

Схвалено науково-методичною комісією _____

_____ факультету

протокол № ____ від « ____ » _____ 20__ р.

Голова науково-методичної комісії _____ доц. Синьо В.В.

□ □ 20 _____ р.

□ □ ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет», 20 _____ р.

1. ОПИС НАВЧАЛЬНОЇ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ

Найменування показників	Розподіл годин за навчальним планом	
	Денна форма навчання	Заочна форма навчання
Кількість кредитів ЄКТС – 3	Рік підготовки:	
Загальна кількість годин – 90	1	1
Кількість модулів – 1	Семестр:	
Тижневих годин для денної форми навчання: аудиторних – 1,8 самостійної роботи студента –	2	1
	Лекції:	
	16	2
	Практичні (семінарські):	
	8	4
Вид підсумкового контролю: залік	Лабораторні:	
Форма підсумкового контролю: залік	Самостійна робота:	
	60	

2. МЕТА НАВЧАЛЬНОЇ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ

Метою вивчення навчальної дисципліни «Сучасна англomовна література» є залучити студентів до вивчення літературного процесу кінця 20 - початку 21 століть та ознайомити з англomовною літературою, створеною за цей період та позначуваною терміном "Contemporary Anglophone literature" у контексті загальносвітового розвитку літератури.

Цілі курсу:

- 1) критично оцінити соціальні контексти та політичні ідеології, що домінують у період сьогодення, а також розглянути літературні тексти, що виникли на їх тлі;
- 2) ознайомити студентів з критичними рамками (культурні та літературні) сучасних соціокультурних процесів, як-то: феміністська теорія, постмодернізм, постколоніалізм, неоісторизм тощо, розвинути вміння незалежно працювати з ними;
- 3) надати студентам можливість проаналізувати значення ключових постатей англomовного літературного процесу сьогодення, проблематику їх знакових творів, а також врахувати важливість гендерної, класової, статевої та расової ідентичностей у сучасній англomовній літературі.

У завдання курсу входить:

Курс «Сучасна англomовна література» складається з курсу лекцій та практичних занять, під час яких розглядаються ключові соціокультурні процеси, тенденції, літературні постаті та знакові твори кінця 20 - початку 21 століть.

Результатом навчання є формування нижчезазначених інтегральних, загальних і спеціальних (фахових, предметних) компетентностей.

3. ПЕРЕДУМОВИ ДЛЯ ВИВЧЕННЯ НАВЧАЛЬНОЇ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ

Передумовами вивчення навчальної дисципліни «Сучасна англomовна література» є опанування таких навчальних дисциплін (НД) освітньої програми (ОП):

4. ОЧІКУВАНІ РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ НАВЧАННЯ

Відповідно до освітньої програми, вивчення навчальної дисципліни «Сучасна англomовна література» повинно забезпечити досягнення здобувачами вищої освіти таких програмних результатів навчання (ПРН):

Програмні результати навчання	Шифр ПРН
Упевнено володіти державною та іноземною мовами для реалізації письмової та усної комунікації, зокрема в ситуаціях професійного й наукового спілкування; презентувати результати досліджень державною та іноземною мовами	ПРН - 2

Оцінювати й критично аналізувати соціально, особистісно та професійно значущі проблеми і пропонувати шляхи їх вирішення у складних і непередбачуваних умовах, що потребує застосування нових підходів та прогнозування.	ПРН - 4
Аналізувати, порівнювати і класифікувати різні напрями і школи в лінгвістиці.	ПРН - 7
Оцінювати історичні надбання та новітні досягнення літературознавства.	ПРН - 8
Здійснювати науковий аналіз мовного, мовленнєвого й літературного матеріалу, інтерпретувати та структурувати його з урахуванням доцільних методологічних принципів, формулювати узагальнення на основі самостійно опрацьованих даних.	ПРН-11
Доступно й аргументовано пояснювати сутність конкретних філологічних питань, власну точку зору на них та її обґрунтування як фахівцям, так і широкому загалу, зокрема особам, які навчаються	ПРН-13
Обирати оптимальні дослідницькі підходи й методи для аналізу конкретного лінгвістичного чи літературного матеріалу.	ПРН-15
Використовувати спеціалізовані концептуальні знання з обраної філологічної галузі для розв'язання складних задач і проблем, що потребує оновлення та інтеграції знань, часто в умовах неповної/недостатньої інформації та суперечливих вимог.	ПРН-16

Очікувані результати навчання, які повинні бути досягнуті здобувачами освіти після опанування навчальної дисципліни «**Сучасна англomовна література**»:

Очікувані результати навчання з дисципліни	Шифр ПРН
Здатність осмислювати літературу як полісистему, розуміти еволюційний шлях розвитку вітчизняного і світового літературознавства.	ФК-2
Здатність критично осмислювати історичні надбання та новітні досягнення філологічної науки.	ФК-3
Здатність здійснювати науковий аналіз і структурування мовного / мовленнєвого й літературного матеріалу з урахуванням класичних і новітніх методологічних принципів.	ФК-4
Здатність застосовувати поглиблені знання з обраної філологічної спеціалізації для вирішення професійних завдань.	ФК-6
Здатність вільно користуватися спеціальною термінологією в обраній галузі філологічних досліджень.	ФК-7
Усвідомлення ролі експресивних, емоційних, логічних засобів мови для досягнення запланованого прагматичного результату	ФК-8

5. ЗАСОБИ ДІАГНОСТИКИ ТА КРИТЕРІЇ ОЦІНЮВАННЯ РЕЗУЛЬТАТІВ НАВЧАННЯ

Засоби оцінювання та методи демонстрування результатів навчання

Засобами оцінювання та методами демонстрування результатів навчання з навчальної дисципліни є:

- презентації
- виконання індивідуальних та групових завдань
- есе-літературний аналіз обраного та прочитаного літературного твору із запропонованого переліку.

Форми контролю та критерії оцінювання результатів навчання

Форми поточного контролю: групові дискусії, презентації, есе з літературного аналізу твору;

Форма модульного контролю: письмова

Форма підсумкового семестрового контролю: іспит

Розподіл балів, які отримують здобувачі вищої освіти (модуль 1)

Поточне оцінювання та самостійна робота								Модульна контроль на робота	Сума
T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Пр	Есе		50%	100
4	4	4	4	4	10	20			

Розподіл балів, які отримують здобувачі вищої освіти (модуль 2)

Поточне оцінювання та самостійна робота								Модульна контроль на робота	Сума
T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Пр	Есе		50%	100
4	4	4	4	4	10	20			

T1, T2 ... – теми

Пр. – презентація

Есе з літературного аналізу твору

Оцінювання окремих видів навчальної роботи з дисципліни

Вид діяльності здобувача вищої освіти	Модуль 1		Модуль 2	
	Кількість	Максимальна кількість балів (сумарна)	Кількість	Максимальна кількість балів (сумарна)

Практичні (семінарські) Заняття	5	20%	5	20%
Лабораторні заняття (допуск, виконання та захист)				
Комп'ютерне тестування при тематичному Оцінюванні				
Письмове тестування при тематичному оцінюванні				
Презентація	1	10%	1	10%
Есе	1	20%	1	20%
...				
Модульна контрольна Робота	1	50%	1	50%
Разом				10 0

**Критерії оцінювання модульної контрольної
роботи**

Шкала оцінювання: національна та ECTS

Сума балів за всі види навчальної діяльності	Оцінка ECTS	Оцінка за національною шкалою	
		для екзамену, курсового проекту (роботи), практики	для заліку
90 – 100	A	відмінно	зараховано
82-89	B	добре	
74-81	C		
64-73	D	задовільно	
60-63	E		
35-59	FX	незадовільно з можливістю повторного складання	не зараховано з можливістю повторного складання
0-34	F	незадовільно з обов'язковим повторним вивченням дисципліни	не зараховано з обов'язковим повторним вивченням дисципліни

**Критерії оцінювання підсумкового
семестрового контролю**

Шкала оцінювання: національна та ECTS

Сума балів за всі види навчальної діяльності	Оцінка ECTS	Оцінка за національною шкалою	
		для екзамену, курсового проекту (роботи), практики	для заліку

90 – 100	A	відмінно	зараховано
82-89	B	добре	
74-81	C		
64-73	D	задовільно	
60-63	E		
35-59	FX	незадовільно з можливістю повторного складання	не зараховано з можливістю повторного складання
0-34	F	незадовільно з обов'язковим повторним вивченням дисципліни	не зараховано з обов'язковим повторним вивченням дисципліни

6. ПРОГРАМА НАВЧАЛЬНОЇ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ

6.1. Зміст навчальної дисципліни

Тема 1. Англomовна література кінця XX – початку XXI століть: ключові тенденції в літературі сьогодення.

Тема 2. Теоретичне підґрунтя сучасної англomовної літератури. Пост-постмодернізм. Теорії фемінізму, постколоніалізму, квір-теорії, неоісторизм.

Тема 3. Сучасна британська література. Основні теми, напрями та вектори розвитку (кінець XX – початок XXI ст.).

Тема 4. Ключові постаті сучасної літератури Британії (Казуо Ісігуро, Ён Мак'юен, Джуліан Барнс, Салман Рушді).

Тема 5. Ключові постаті сучасної літератури Британії (Девід Лодж, Девід Мітчелл, Зеді Сміт, Кейт Аткинсон, Хіларі Ментел).

Тема 6. Сучасна література США. Основні теми, напрями та вектори розвитку (кінець XX – початок XXI ст.).

Тема 7. Ключові постаті сучасної літератури США (Джонатан Франзен, Мерілін Робінсон, Девід Фостер Воллес, Донна Таррт).

Тема 8. Англomовна література Канади та англomовна постколоніальна література (Маргарет Етвуд, Янн Мартель, Халед Хоссейні, Емма Доног'ю, Джуно Діаз, Арундаті Рой, Чінуа Ачебе, Мінолі Салгадо).

Структура навчальної дисципліни

Назви змістових модулів і тем	Кількість годин				
	Форма навчання:				
	у тому числі				
Усього	лекції	практичні (семінарські)	лабораторні	індивідуальна робота	самостійна робота

2-й семестр						
Тема 1. Англомовна література кінця XX – початку XXI століть: ключові тенденції в літературі сьогодення.		2	1			6
Тема 2. Теоретичне підґрунтя сучасної англомовної літератури. Пост-постмодернізм. Теорії фемінізму, постколоніалізму, квір-теорії, неоісторизм.		2	1			6
Тема 3. Сучасна британська література. Основні теми, напрями та вектори розвитку (кінець XX – початок XXI ст.).		2	1			6
Тема 4. Ключові постаті сучасної літератури Британії (Казуо Ісігуро, Єн Мак'юен, Джуліан Барнс, Салман Рушді).		2	1			6
Тема 5. Ключові постаті сучасної літератури Британії (Девід Лодж, Девід Мітчелл, Зеді Сміт, Кейт Аткинсон, Хіларі Ментел).		2	1			6
Тема 6. Сучасна література США. Основні теми, напрями та вектори розвитку (кінець XX – початок XXI ст.).		2	1			6
Тема 7. Ключові постаті сучасної літератури США (Джонатан Франзен, Кормак Маккарті, Мерілін Робінсон, Девід Фостер Воллес, Донна Таррт).		2	1			6
Тема 8. Англомовна література Канади та англомовна постколоніальна література (Маргарет Етвуд, Янн Мартель, Халед Хоссейні, Емма Доног'ю, Джуно Діаз, Арундаті Рой, Чінуа Ачебе, Мінолі Салгадо).		2	1			6
Разом за модуль		16	8			60

6.2. Теми практичних (семінарських, лабораторних) занять

№ з/п	Назва теми	Кількість Годин	
		денна	Заочна

1	Семінар-дискусія 1. Теоретичне підґрунтя сучасної англомовної літератури. Теорії фемінізму, постколоніалізму, квір-теорії, неоісторизм. Постмодернізм. Пост-постмодернізм. Метамодернізм. Трансμοдернізм.	2	
2	Семінар-дискусія 2. Сучасна британська література: риси, тенденції, представники.	2	
3	Семінар-дискусія 3. Сучасна американська література: риси, тенденції, представники.	2	
4	Семінар-дискусія 4. Сучасна канадська та постколоніальна література.	2	
5	Есе з літературного аналізу твору із пропонуваного переліку.	2	
Разом		10	

6.4. Самостійна робота

№ з/п	Назва теми	Кількість Годин	
		денна	Заочна
1	Постмодернізм у літературі кінця ХХ – початку ХХІ століть	6	
2	Сучасна цифрова література.	6	
3	Жіноча англомовна література кінця ХХ – початку ХХІ століть література. Чікліт.	6	
4	Елітні та поп-жанри у сучасній англомовній літературі.	6	
5	Сучасна англомовна література жанру наукової фантастики та фентезі (Ніл Гейман, Джоан Ровлінг, Френк Герберт тощо). Утопії та антиутопії в англійській літературі	6	
6	Сучасні англомовні автори-Нобелівські лауреати.	6	
7	Екокритика.	6	
8	Література й ідеологія. Вплив ідеологій на вектори літературного розвитку кінця ХХ – початку ХХІ століть.	6	
9	Жанр інтелектуального роману в англійській літературі	6	
10	Найкращі англомовні романи ХХІ століття.	6	
Разом		60	

7. ІНСТРУМЕНТИ, ОБЛАДНАННЯ ТА ПРОГРАМНЕ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ, ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ЯКИХ ПЕРЕДБАЧАЄ НАВЧАЛЬНА ДИСЦИПЛІНА (у разі потреби)

Технічні засоби: комп'ютер, інтерактивна дошка, проектор, мобільний телефон.

CONTEMPORARY ANGLOPHONE LITERATURE

LECTURE NOTES

LECTURE 1.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE. CRITICAL FRAMEWORK. KEY GENRES AND DOMINANT THEMES

‘**Contemporary literature**’ is a term we would normally use to classify literary works produced after the Second World War or more recently. In more general terms, this concept would entail the literary legacy of the very late 20th century and more specifically 21st century. In this way, it can be used interchangeably with ‘post-postmodern literature’, although not all contemporary literature has specifically postmodern features.

- **What Is The Difference Between Modern And Contemporary Literature?**

While some themes can be found in both modern and contemporary literature and hardly any time gap exists between the two, there are a few essential points of difference between modern and contemporary literature

CATEGORY	MODERN LITERATURE	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE
Definition	Modern literature is the literature created in the late 19th and early 20th century which departed drastically from the classical and traditional forms	Contemporary literature refers to the literature being created in the present, post the Second World War and involves the expression of social and political viewpoints and realism more than the earlier styles of writing.
Time Period	Modern literature is literature written in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.	The beginning of the era of contemporary literature is considered to be from the Second World War (1940) and its time frame is still continuing.
Coverage	Modern literature mostly includes literature in North America and Europe.	Contemporary literature includes literature from all over the world.
Theme and writing pattern	Modern literature was more focused on themes like inner self and consciousness. The stream of consciousness was often used as a literary technique.	Contemporary literature often includes stories with a base in reality. Contemporary literature stories are more character-driven than plot-driven.

Trends in Contemporary Literature

- **writers of BAME and other backgrounds break into literary fiction**
 (*BAME [/,bi:.ei.em'i:/ /beim/ US /,bi:.ei.em'i:/ /beim/ - abbreviation for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic: used to refer to people in the UK who do not consider themselves to be White, Cambridge Dictionary online]: Hari Kunzru, Zadie Smith, Salman Rushdie, Ben Okri, Dorothy

- Koomson, A.A. Dhand, Sunjeev Sahota, NoViolet Bulawayo and Taiye Selas
- **Personal point of view:** CL showcases and describes the social and political views of the author. The author expresses their personal opinions through the dialogues of characters and tries to link those messages with the socio-political events in the works and reality.
 - **Innovative narrative resources:** The narration of CL is quite dynamic. Contemporary writers use tools like modification of time and presenting the characters' inner world in their narration style to provide more insight and drama.
 - **Magical realism:** The development of the style of magical realism is considered to be the hallmark of CL. This technique of using magical realism is revolutionary and marked by social and political character.
 - **Pressing issues:** CL often tends to revolve around the pressing issue in the world, which can include racism, inequality, economic gap, corruption, mental illness, dogma, globalization, digitalization, LGBT, etc.
 - **Influence of World War II:** CL tends to be influenced by many themes and motifs revolving around World War II.
 - **Superimposition of fiction and nonfiction:** The blurry distinction between fiction and nonfiction, referred to as crosses. Fiction writers often use authentic material and information in their stories and make many parallels to real-life events. On the other hand, non-fiction writers use dialogue and imaginary scenarios to arouse and maintain the readers' interest

The most crucial concepts in literary theory

Blurred lines between elite writers, genres and themes (In the exclusive club of books to have sold over one million copies, literary works include *Atonement* by Ian McEwan, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, *The Time Traveler's Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger, *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *Elizabeth is Missing* by Emma Healey were the bestselling 'literary' titles (the bestselling overall was E. L. James' *Fifty Shades of Grey* with over a million). Harper Lee's *Go Set a Watchman*, and Kate Atkinson's *A God in Ruins*, Sebastian Faulks, William Boyd and the now-Nobel Laureate Kazuo Ishiguro, Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections*, Emma Donoghue's *Room*, Stef Penney's *Under A Pole Star* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*) also sold well.

Marginalised writing:

Critical Race Theory - Lens using a theoretical and interpretive mode that examines the appearance of race and racism across dominant cultural texts

Feminist Critical Theory - lens using a theoretical and interpretive mode that examines the appearance of gender and patriarchy across dominant cultural texts).

Queer Theory - Lens, using a theoretical and interpretive mode that examines the appearance of sexuality and sex across dominant cultural texts.

Psychoanalysis - Uses the Freudian theory of psychoanalysis as a lens to analyze and deconstruct a text).

Deconstruction - The theoretical lens that uses language and texts to examine supposed "truths," question cultural norms and hegemonic structures.

Ecocriticism - the study of literature and ecology from an interdisciplinary point of view, where literature scholars analyze texts that illustrate environmental concerns and examine the various ways literature treats the subject of nature. Earlier theories in literary and cultural studies focussed on issue of class, race, gender, region are criteria and "**subjects**" of critical analysis. The late twentieth century has

woken up to a new threat: **ecological disaster**. The most important environmental problems that humankind faces *as a whole* are: **nuclear war, depletion of valuable natural resources, population explosion, proliferation of exploitative technologies, conquest of space preliminary to using it as a garbage dump, pollution, extinction of species (though not a human problem)** among others. In such a context, literary and cultural theory has begun to address the issue as a part of academic discourse. Various versions of environmentalism developed. **Deep ecology** and **ecofeminism** were two important developments. These new ideas questioned the notion of “development” and “modernity,” and argued that all Western notions in science, philosophy, politics were “anthropocentric” (human-centred) and “androcentric” (Man/male-centred).

Ecocritics ask questions such as:

- How is nature represented in the novel/poem/play ?
- What role does the physical-geographical setting play in the structure of the novel?
- How do our metaphors of the land influence the way we treat it? That is, what is the link between pedagogic or creative practice and actual political, sociocultural and ethical behaviour towards the land and other non-human life forms?
- How is science—in the form of genetic engineering, technologies of reproduction, sexualities—open to critical scrutiny terms of the effects of science upon the land?

Feminist theories. Feminism (for while the word may only have come into English usage in the 1890s, women’s conscious struggle to resist patriarchy goes much further back) has sought to disturb the complacent certainties of such a patriarchal culture, to assert a belief in sexual equality, and to eradicate sexist domination in transforming society

-First-wave feminist criticism: Woolf and de Beauvoir (*The Women’s Rights and Women’s Suffrage* with their emphasis on social, political and economic reform)

-Second-wave feminist criticism (*Betty Friedan’s “The Feminine Mystique”, 1963*) – the liberationist movements of the mid-to-late 1960s. Although second-wave feminism continues to share the first wave’s fight for women’s rights in all areas, its focal emphasis shifts to **the politics of reproduction, to women’s ‘experience’, to sexual ‘difference’ and to ‘sexuality’, as at once a form of oppression and something to celebrate** (*Elaine Showalter(‘gynocriticism’) , Dale Spender’s Man Made Language (1980), Kate Millett’s Sexual Politics*).

-Third-wave feminism (“sexual liberation,” a major goal of second-wave feminism - a process of first becoming conscious of the ways one’s gender identity and sexuality have been shaped by society and then intentionally constructing one’s authentic gender identity. This was evident in the double entendre and irony of the language commonly adopted by people in their self-presentations. Slang used derogatorily in most earlier contexts became proud and defiant labels (the spirit raw honesty, humour, and horror of Eve Ensler’s *“The Vagina Monologues”*)

- **Fourth-wave feminism** began about 2012, with a focus on sexual harassment, body shaming, and rape culture **#MeToo**.

Queer Theories (*Alan Sinfield (1989)‘The Movement’, Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides published in 2002, Rudi C. Bley’s The Geography of Perversion (1996)*). Originated in gay liberation movements (Stonewall Riot in New York in 1969) and utilized two main strategies: **‘consciousness-raising’**, borrowed from Black and

women's movements, and **'coming out'** – publicly affirming gay identity – which is unique to gay communities whose oppression partly lies in their social invisibility (**Jonathan Dollimore, Alan Sinfield**). It pursues 2 main goals: to resist persecution and discrimination against a sexual minority, and to encourage gay people themselves to develop a pride in their sexual identities.

Lesbian Criticism

The concept of 'compulsory heterosexuality' was first articulated by Gayle Rubin (1975), and subsequently given wide circulation by **Adrienne Rich** in her essay '**Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence**' (1980). The concept challenges the common-sense view of heterosexuality as natural and therefore requiring no explanation, unlike lesbian and gay sexuality (**Barbara Smith's** essay, '**Towards a Black Feminist Criticism**', 1986).

New Historicism - theoretical lens that considers both the historical context a text was written, and that within it is read.

New historicism began in 1980. Despite many attacks from feminists, cultural materialists, and traditional scholars, it dominated the study of early modern literature in the 1980s and 1990s. Arguably, since then, it has given way to a different, more materialist, form of historicism that some call "**new new historicism.**"

At its core, new historicism insists—**contra formalism—that** literature must be understood in its historical context. This is because it views **literary texts as cultural products that are rooted in their time and place**, not works of individual genius that transcend them. New-historicist essays are thus often marked by making seemingly unlikely linkages between various cultural products and literary texts. In addition to analyzing the impact of historical context and ideology, New Historicists also acknowledge that their own criticism contains **biases that derive from their historical position and ideology**. Because it is impossible to escape one's own "**historicity**," the meaning of a text is fluid, not fixed. New Historicists attempt to situate artistic texts both as products of a historical context and as the means to understand cultural and intellectual history.

Postcolonial theory is a literary theory or critical approach that deals with **literature produced in countries that were once, or are now, colonies of other countries**. It may also deal with literature written in or by citizens of colonizing countries that takes colonies or their peoples as its subject matter.

Pivotal in the shaping of postcolonial studies is **Edward Said's "Orientalism"** (1978) is. Post-colonial authors: Bill Ashcroft et al.: "the book is concerned with writing by those formerly colonized by empires (The Empire Writes Back, 1989), Michael Perfect "Contemporary Fictions of Multiculturalism, 2014, Timothy Ogene "Re-writing as aesthetic experiment, 2016)

Postcolonialism involves:

- a studied engagement with the experience of colonialism and its past and present effects, both at the local level of ex-colonial societies and at the level of more general global developments thought to be the after-effects of empire.
- the discussion of experiences such as slavery, migration, suppression and resistance, difference, race, gender and place as well as responses to the discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy, anthropology and linguistics. The term is as much about conditions under imperialism and colonialism proper, as about conditions coming after the historical end of colonialism.
- A growing concern with racial minorities in the west, embracing Native and African Americans in the US, British Asians and African Caribbeans in the UK and Aborigines in Australia and Canada, among others.

- a wide range of applications, designating a constant interplay and slippage between the sense of a historical transition, a socio-cultural location and an epochal configuration (Ato Quayson, Stanford University)

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<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/blog/what-is-postcolonial-literature/>
[<https://www.sampleassignment.com/blog/what-are-the-trends-in-contemporary-literature>]

LECTURE 2

POST-MODERNISM AND POST-POSTMODERNISM. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After the series of **human rights violations** that occurred during and after **World War II** (including the Holocaust, the atomic bombings of Japan, and Japanese internment in the US), writers began to feel as if **meaning was an impossible quest**, and that the only way to move forward was to embrace meaninglessness. Thus, postmodern literature **rejected (or built upon) many of the tenants of modernism**, including **shunning meaning, intensifying and celebrating fragmentation and disorder**, and initiating a major shift in literary tradition.

Post-Modern

The first mention of the term “Postmodern” can be found in **Rudolf Pannwitz’s** *“The Crisis of European Culture”* (1917), who used it to describe the Nietzschean superman. **Federico de Onis** introduced the term “Postmodernism” in his *“Anthology of Contemporary Spanish and Latin-American poetry”* (1932) and defined it as a minor reaction to Modernism. A decade later, **Arnold Toynbee** used it to describe the post-WWI era and a new historical cycle in Western civilization. The term **“Postmodernism”**, concerning literature, was introduced by American scholar **Ihab Hassan in 1977**. Ihab Hassan also developed the classification of postmodern literary techniques, which became classic.

Different events greatly influenced the development of Postmodernism, namely: Genocide, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, a state of political and military tension after WWII, new technologies etc.

General overview of post-modern techniques by Hassan:

- irony, playfulness and black humour (*the discussion about death as in **Catch-22**, or silliness of the very serious situation in which the fate of people is in someone’s hand but it is made a common absurd situation such as in **Waiting for Godot***);
- Pastiche (*Thomas Pynchon’s writing, **Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead** by Tom Stoppard, **The British Museum is Falling Down** by David Lodge, **The Traveler** by Dave McClure, **Bohemian Rhapsody** by Queen*);
- intertextuality (*the main plotline of Disney’s **The Lion King** is a take on Shakespeare’s **Hamlet** or The structure of James Joyce’s **Ulysses** is modelled after Homer’s **Odyssey***);
- technoculture and hyperreality (*Don DeLillo’s **White Noise**, **cyberpunk**, like **Dune** by Frank Herbert*);
- metafiction (*In the movie **Last Action Hero** **Arnold Schwarzenegger**, **Arnold** plays a fictional cop that is brought into the real world, and his kid*

- *sidekick also joins him in the movie world*);
- historiographic metafiction (*Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children (1981)*, *A. S. Byatt's Possession (1990)*, *Michael Ondaatje's The English Patient (1992)*, *Thomas Pynchon's Mason & Dixon (1997)*);
- temporal distortion (to create various effects: irony, parody, a cinematographic effect);
- magic realism (***(Of Love and Other Demons*** by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, ***the Life of Pi*** by Yann Martel).
- faction;
- paranoia *Randle McMurphy* in Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1962)*, *Yossarian* in Joseph Heller's *Catch-22 (1962)*, *Billy Pilgrim* in Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five (1969)*);
- Maximalism and minimalism;
- participation

Postmodern writers often use ***irony, playfulness and black humour*** when they want to treat serious subjects from a distant position. These characteristics are the hallmarks of the postmodern style.

2. The Era after Post-Modernism

Since the late 1990s there has been a small but growing feeling both in popular culture and in academia that postmodernism **“has gone out of fashion.”** However, there have been few formal attempts to define and name the **era succeeding postmodernism**, and none of the proposed designations has yet become part of mainstream usage.

Features of the Post-postmodernism era:

- Humanism - a more serious and mindful consideration of the **forces which divide and marginalize people in numerous different ways** (including but not limited to judgments towards gender, race, nationality, sexuality, socioeconomic status, etc.) and the hope that having honest discussions and examinations concerning these forces can help to at least partially overcome them
- **Inclusion** - the extent to which societal expectations inform the formation of our identities and how those who deviate away from those expectations are often rejected as a result
- **embracement of the complexities** inherent to a person's internal identity, which means understanding the various factors which played a role in their development and acknowledging the different aspects of their character which may be at war with each other
- **Representation** - recuperative acts against silence and apathy, and does so from within the postmodern condition of image culture, subjectivity, and obsession with representation” (Holland 17)
- **the author-narrator's** subjectivity and potential deviations from the truth into our understanding of the story

Modernism	Post Modernism	Post-post modernism
<p>Began around 1900 and continued on as the dominant cultural force in the intellectual circles.</p> <p>Encompasses many competing individual directions and is impossible to define as a discrete unity or totality.</p> <p>general characteristics include an emphasis on "radical aesthetics, technical experimentation, spatial or rhythmic, rather than chronological form, [and] self-conscious reflexiveness" as well as the search for authenticity in human relations, abstraction in art, and utopian striving.</p> <p>These characteristics are normally lacking in postmodernism or are treated as objects of irony.</p>	<p>arose after World War II as a reaction to modernism, whose radical artistic projects had come to be associated with totalitarianism or had been assimilated into mainstream culture.</p> <p>Postmodernism began to compete with modernism in the late 1950s and gained ascendancy over it in the 1960s and since then has been a dominant, though not undisputed, force in art, literature, film, music, drama, architecture, history, and continental philosophy.</p> <p>Salient features of postmodernism are the ironic play with styles, citations and narrative levels, a metaphysical skepticism or nihilism towards a "grand narrative" of Western culture, a preference for the virtual at the expense of the real, a "waning of affect"</p>	<p>is still in its early stages.</p> <p>Post-postmodernism is emerging as one where faith, trust, dialogue, performance, and sincerity can work to transcend postmodern irony.</p> <p>- Turner's post-postmodernism 1995 - the landscape architect and urban planner Tom Turner issued a book-length call for a post-postmodern turn in urban planning</p> <p>- Epstein's trans-postmodernism 1999 - from the book "Russian Postmodernism: New Perspectives on Late Soviet and Post-Soviet Culture"</p> <p>- Gans' post-millennialism The term <i>post-millennialism</i> was introduced in 2000 by the American cultural theorist Eric Gans</p> <p>- Kirby's pseudo-modernism or digimodernism 2006 - The Death of Postmodernism and Beyond</p> <p>- Vermeulen and van den Akker's metamodernism 2010 - "Notes on Metamodernism"</p>

Key Ideas of Transmodernism

- "shimmering aesthetics", "new sentimentality", "new utopianism", "subjunctive modality"
- Disappearing cause of tragedy, the possibility of utopia.
- dethroning the absolute and the individual as two Western myths, formulated in the Middle Ages and Modernity respectively.
- debunking both of the masks of individuality (authorship, originality, innovativeness) and of the absolute (the transcendental, truth, reality)
- Quotationality instead of self-expression, simulation instead of truth, play with signs instead of the reflection of reality, difference instead of contradiction:

Key Ideas of Post-millennialism

- the destruction of the author as the governing consciousness, the fragmentation of the formerly coherent and knowable self as the basis of characterization, and the disintegration of the narrative arc subtended by the dynamics of rise and closure
- Esthetic form remains sacrificial, but sacrifice is no longer understood as a necessary feature of social organization; it is merely a "psychological" element of the human condition. **We no longer really believe in good guys and bad guys, but we need the dichotomy in order to enjoy the narration and the catharsis it effects**

Metamodernism, that has come to replace it, is a **more positive, more affirmative attitude, although it can sometimes share postmodern ironies and instabilities**. Metamodern approach is the dynamics of oscillation between the modern and postmodern sensibility, between postmodern apathy, deconstruction, and distrust in grand narratives, on the one hand, and modern enthusiasm and

utopianism, on the other, between pessimism and optimism, “between hope and melancholy, between naïveté and knowingness, empathy and apathy, unity and plurality, totality and fragmentation, purity and ambiguity” (Vermeulen and van den Akker "Notes on Metamodernism, 2010).

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LECTURE 3

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH LITERATURE. KEY THEMES, TRENDS, AND REPRESENTATIVES (LATE 20TH – EARLY 21 CENTURY).

Is it possible to recognise the quality or defects of literary works without revising one's preconceived ideas about what literature is supposed to do? For example, if you are temperamentally and ideologically committed to experiment and modernism can you distinguish between displays of craftsmanship and the replacement of skill with randomness? If you can, does recognition of 'skill' involve a correlate acceptance of significance? In a broader sense, does the presence of demonstrably excellent writing guarantee that the work itself is of great value?
Richard Bradford

Today it is difficult to speak of '**British literature**' as such, in a cultural environment which has become increasingly globalized. British fiction have come to acknowledge the complex and subtle interaction of formal experimentation with the renewal of fiction's political and ethical agenda in a British culture that is ever more global and constantly queering its own sense of collective memory. The British fiction entertains dialogue with the multiple voices of a complex cultural landscape, very varied cultural backgrounds, not only from the Indian sub-continent, but also from Africa (Taiye Selasi and Helen Oyeyemi both of Nigerian origin) and China (Xiaolu Guo).

This is yet another indication of how much '**British fiction**' has become a **world fiction** and is mapped and marketed as such.

These ages depict modern literature through social/political/religious milieus with different genres of poetry, novel and drama.

❑ REVIVAL OF HISTORICAL FICTION

Since the 1980s, there has been a marked resurgence of history in English fiction, but the re-birth of **the historical novel is necessarily accompanied by changes and takes new forms** (H.Mantel and her novels about Cromwell). New trends in the historical novels, distinct from Linda Hutcheon's historiographic metafiction and its disruptive narrative strategies, marked by distance, irony, parody and pastiche appear. New attempts are made **to represent the past realistically** without dismissing the lessons of postmodernism in the line of post-postmodernism and 'new sincerity' or metamodernism (A.Parey).

❑ INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY

Writers **recontextualize** texts to focus on **Britain's relation to its own history and sense of cultural identity** (essays of Steven Connor, *The English*

Novel in History (1995), *The Last of England?*, by Randall Stevenson, Andrzej Gasiorek “*Post-War British Fiction. Realism and After*” (1995).

❑ COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

Many essays developed the argument that **post-modernist self-reflexiveness** could allow fiction to explore a changing and complex sense of collective identity (Richard Bradford defines it as the articulation of ‘**Nation, Race and Place**’, *The Novel Now. Contemporary British Fiction*).

Professor of comparative literature, Timothy Brennan reconfigures globalization as a form of **cosmopolitanism** and links it back to colonialism as one of the hegemonic forms by which metropolitan and colonial states justify the spread of their power. He suggests that the current focus on **hybridity, transnationalism and globalization** is complicit with the U.S. model of cultural imperialism and capitalism. Invoking an eclectic array of cultural sources and models from Cuban music to the writings of C.L.R. James, he advocates **a return to the values of community and a sense of collective identity**.

❑ PLURALITY OF VOICES AND OF NARRATIVES WITHIN A BRITISH CULTURAL CONTEXT

Scottish and Irish fiction develop counter-histories: Stefanie Lehner’s recent *Subaltern Ethics in Contemporary Scottish and Irish Literature*. Hywel Dix’s recent *Postmodern Fiction and the Break-Up of Britain* explores what a ‘**ubiquitous present**’, which would be best exemplified by Jonathan Coe’s *The Rotter’s Club* (2001) and which derives from **the pluralization of British ethnicities and from devolution politics** with the emphasis on broader ‘**postcolonial predicament**’, in which ‘**Britishness itself has become unravelled**’ [Catherine Bernard. Recent research on contemporary British Fiction].

❑ INTERTEXTUALITY OF MUCH OF BRITISH CONTEMPORARY FICTION

Literature is not the product of a specific nation; rather it is **a combination of the experiences of all nations**. There is **inheritance amongst the literary texts all over the world literature**. The issue of interaction between the nations is called “**intertextuality**” or a literary work within different interactions.

M.Albay, M.Serbes argue that “**society is mirrored up in the literature**”, with formic, contently and stylistic resemblances among the cultures and literary areas in a literary work (“*The house of Doctor Dee*”, “*The Lambs of London*”, “*The Casebook of Victor Frankenstein*” by Peter Ackroyd). The **reminiscences, allusions, quotations, and aphorisms** used in the novels form the **skeleton** of the works and is the means to show heroes’ characteristic features.

P. Ackroyd states that intertextual dialogue “settles” events in certain cultural paradigms. So the writer makes open the structure of the novel and opens the way for many interpretations.

❑ INTRICATION OF THE POETICS / POLITICS AND ETHICS OF FICTION

The 20th century sought to free individuals from **the constraints of authoritative cultural traditions and institutions**, giving rise to **anxiety rather than liberation**. Instead of deriving one’s sense of purpose from one’s role and place within a community, the consumer has been deceived into thinking that their identity can be purchased through the meaning represented by the conspicuous consumption of a brand, complex intrication of literature, politics and ethics of fiction, the

phenomenology of reading tying in **with a reflexion on its political responsibility.**

❑ **POWERLESSNESS AND “SMALLNESS” OF AN INDIVIDUAL VS WORLD SYSTEM**

The reader finds the concept of ‘**the e bay imaginary**’ that carries the **future indeterminacy suddenly opening up in the everyday**’ (*William Gibson’s novel, Pattern Recognition*), internationalism in place of elite cosmopolitanism.

❑ **ANTI-WAR AND ENVIRONMENTALISM**

In literature as well as on the street, common were the anti-war protests, protests against pollution, economic disparity (exacerbated by the international financial collapse in 2008, income distribution, and for environmental protection.

Recent years have seen a burgeoning of novels that respond to the environmental issues. The literary works are arranged in thematic subdivisions, organized around keywords employed by literary critics: ‘**environmentalism**’, ‘**money and markets**’, ‘**technology and cyberculture**’, ‘**migration and labour**. L. Squire defines environmental crisis fiction as concerned with a range of environmental issues and with the human subject as a catalyst for these issues, characterized by **a thematic use of "death,"** through which it explores a **"crisis" of both environment and self.**

❑ **MAGIC, MYTHOLOGY**

After medievalism, in the 21st century, magic and mythology are again trending (*J.K. Rowling’s series Harry Potter novels, C.S. Lewis’ The Chronicles of Narnia, Dan Brown’s Novels The Da Vinci Code, Inferno, Angles and Demons*). The conflicting definitions of magical realism emerge from the reality that what some scholars call “**magical realism**”. As a genre, it is a movement of Latin American authors (J. L. Borges, G. G. Márquez, I. Allende) that mixes myth and reality in order to battle back against the staunch realism of Western literature and is inherently postcolonial (Toni Morrison, Louise Erdrich, Yaa Gyasi, and Arundhati Roy, Kazuo Ishiguro’s “Buried Giant”).

❑ **DIGITAL OR CYBER LITERATURE**

It is the latest trend in which **works of creation are exclusively on and for digital devices.** In this trend of literature, **the writer relies on cyber medium like website, blogs or social media pages** (“*Pry*” by Danny Cannizzaro and Samantha Gorman also known as *Tender Claws*, Jason Nelson, Michael Joyce’s *12 Blue* and Jim Andrew’s *Stir Fry Texts*). Multiple trends have emerged and are emerging in 21st century. Some are like adaptations of traditional movements and techniques while others are the outcome of science and technology.

❑ **POP-FICTION or GENRE FICTION**

It is created in order to attract majority of audiences or readers already familiar with the genre. It is also known as **Genre fiction** (Chetan Bhagat “2 States: The story of Marriage”, “Half Girlfriend”, etc.). The focus remains on becoming **best seller and for that the story could be taken to any level.**

❑ **MIDDLEBROW LITERATURE**

The novels that appear in most book clubs, specifically aimed at the largest reading demographic; that is **women aged between 40 and 65.** The story matter will be “**associated with women and the middle class. It is reverent towards legitimate culture and thus concerned with quality**”

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LECTURE 4

OUTSTANDING CONTEMPORARY BRITISH AUTHORS. Part 1.

Julian Barnes (19 January 1946, Leicester)

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Julian Barnes started out as a journalist before publishing his first novel, *Metroland*, in 1980. Since then he has carved out a reputation as one of **contemporary Britain's most brilliant and sophisticated novelists, often grouped with Martin Amis and Ian McEwan.**
- Barnes's prose is **elegant, witty and playful**, and he often employs techniques associated **with postmodern writing - unreliable narrators, a self-conscious linguistic style, an intertextual blending of different narrative forms - which serve to foreground the process of literary creation, the gap between experience and language, and the subjectivity of 'truth' and 'reality'.**
- Despite this playful experimentation with language, style and form, Barnes's fiction is also **grounded in psychological realism and his themes are serious, poignant and heart-felt.**
- inventive and intellectual novels about obsessed characters curious about the past, novels with endless self-discovery, **the nature of love, particularly its dark side, exploring humankind's capacity for jealousy, obsession and infidelity, alongside the perennial quest for authentic love**
- mixture of biography, fiction, and literary criticism.
- the most literary, the most intellectual, and above all, the most international of British contemporary novelists.

- Julian Barnes wrote his “Duffy” detective novels under the pen name of Dan Kavanagh.

Metroland (1980) A coming-of-age novel explores a 20th-century society in England and France through the story of Christopher, a young English man who tries to escape his dull, middle-class suburban life by moving to Paris and emerging himself in French culture. It was followed by ***Before She Met Me*** (1982), an intense portrait of the dark side of the human heart which features a man's jealous obsession with his wife's former lovers.

Flaubert's Parrot (1984), written in an experimental, non-linear style, intertwines **the realistic personal story of its protagonist, Geoffrey Braithwaite, with a wealth of literary and artistic references, and a complex web of different genres and textual forms, combining fiction with biography, literary criticism, letters and other documentary texts.** Braithwaite, a retired doctor, spends his time pursuing his passionate interest in the French writer, Gustave Flaubert, and Barnes's novel incorporates the fruits of Braithwaite's research (Richard Brown, *Contemporary Novelists*). Yet underlying this **intertextual collage of literary research and biographical information about Flaubert is Braithwaite's emotionally traumatic story regarding his wife's adultery and death which, strangely, seems to echo the experiences of some of Flaubert's characters** - thus creating another layer of overlapping of the many different threads of *Flaubert's Parrot*.

Talking it Over (1991), followed by a sequel, *Love etc.* (2000) explores the intensities and **frustrations of male-female relationships, this time through a complicated love triangle.** Structure - **monologues written in turn by each of the three characters - presents three different versions of events, with each character asserting the truthfulness and validity of their own point of view,** questioning and subverting the objectivity of truth, suggesting that there is no single 'correct' version, merely differing subjective viewpoints and interpretations.

England, England (1998) **satirises** the virtual reality and capitalism of contemporary English culture by depicting a **dystopian vision in which the modern-day tendency to experience everything in virtual terms is taken to extremes.** The Isle of Wight has been turned into a bizarre theme park, England, England, in which there are replicas of most of the country's major tourist attractions, all of which embody stereotypical notions of **Englishness.** Parallel to the central narrative, is the personal story of the life of Martha, an employee at England, England, who eventually becomes exhausted and bitter as we follow her experiences from childhood to old age.

***Arthur and George* (2005)** is based on a true story of two men whose paths crossed unexpectedly: **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**, and **George Edalji**, a half-Indian rural solicitor wrongly convicted of a crime, thought to stem from racial prejudice and Conan Doyle stepped in to help to get justice for Edalji. The novel is rich and multi-layered: Barnes combines his depiction of this fascinating true detective story with a vivid and well-researched chronicle of Edwardian society, as well as delving into the complicated **personal life of Conan Doyle, and once again exploring the nature of love.**

Salman Rushdie (born in India in 1947)

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- he is the most significant living novelist in English

- he was fascinated by Gunter Grass
- he is best known for his **magical realism and historic fiction** the interplay of the Indian, the experimental European, the magical realist influences, huge aesthetic and intellectual effort, a quasi-allegorical science-fiction fantasy
- His second novel, *Midnight's Children*, is regularly cited as the 'Booker of Bookers' and its impact is still being as *it* inaugurated the 'contemporary' period of literature in English, being the first novel of the age of globalization about identity, nationhood, memory, personal and collective trauma, history, persecution, escape, evil, the interweaving of the personal and the political and writing itself which much contemporary fiction is still exploring
- His fourth novel, *The Satanic Verses*, led to the 'Rushdie Affair' certainly the most significant literary-political event since the Second World War. *The Satanic Verses* – represented an emergence into the dominant stream of literature in English of two different 'proto-traditions' of writing: **the tradition of European anti-realism and Indian writing.**
- many writers belong to **the 'post-Rushdie' style**: Vikram Seth, Kiran Desai, Rohinton Mistry, Arundhati Roy, Gita Mehta, Jeet Thayil's *Narcopolis* (2012), Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000), Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). Rushdie's influence is visible in contemporary American writing, e.g. Junot Diaz *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007)

Grimus (1975) was Rushdie's literary debut, showing a story of a young Native American who gains immortality. The book contains **Christian, Norse, Hindu mythologies**. The structure draws some comparison to another poem on what "God" is, and "God" is the totality of life and **reality rather than an entity**.

Midnight Children (1981) is about India during Britain's colonial rule and **historical events that actually happened. It has examples of postcolonial, postmodern, and magical realist literature.** The innovative use of magic realism allowed Rushdie to employ the **nation-as-family allegory** and confound it with an impossible telepathy among a multitude of children from a multitude of languages, cultures, regions and religions. No one genre dominates the entire novel, however. It encompasses the comic and the tragic, the real, the surreal, and the mythic. The postcolonial experience could not be expressed by a Western or Eastern, public or private, polarity or unity, any more than any single political party could represent all the people of the nation.

Satanic Verses (1988). The title refers to the Satanic Verses, a group of Quranic verses that refer to three pagan Meccan goddesses: Allāt, Uzza, and Manāt. It involves Indian expatriates in contemporary England, i.e the story about migration, intertwined with magical visions of the protagonist. The **protagonists** are Gibreel Farishta and Saladin Chamcha, both Indian Muslims, trapped in a hijacked plane from India to Britain. Dream visions, contained elements offensive to Muslims: **it is a transformed re-narration of the life of Muhammad**. At its centre is the episode of the so-called satanic verses, in which the prophet first proclaims a revelation in favour of the old polytheistic deities, but later renounces this as an error induced by the Devil. Muslims accused it of blasphemy.

"The Old Man in the Piazza" (2020) is about an old man with loafers, who comes daily around 4 PM to the piazza to order the same meal. He hears the clamour from the Olympic summer scandal, and people quarrelling with one another. Rushdie is the fabulist, telling a story about how language, which he personifies as a woman, is

weakened and revolts during a time when the people in the piazza refuse to speak negatively about anything.

Kazuo Ishiguro

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- lyrical tales of regret fused with subtle optimism.
- **The Nobel Prize in Literature 2017** was awarded to Kazuo Ishiguro "who, in novels of great emotional force, has uncovered the abyss beneath our illusory sense of connection with the world."
- The memory and representation of trauma is a recurrent theme in the work of Kazuo Ishiguro. **Memory**, yet collective, not individual is the main character of his novels.
- Ishiguro writes "the international novel is in the form of writing which, despite its specificity in time and place, reaches beyond national and linguistic boundaries (Matthews and Groes).
- His characters' more and less conscious struggles to tell their own stories demonstrate the central, dynamic relationship of narration and identity.
- His work celebrates openness and tolerance, addressing readers of all places and times without falling into cultural relativity
- The story is set near key historical events, but the author deliberately keeps silent about them. He is hardly interested in history, facts, real events, but the fate of the little man, personal responsibility, awareness and reconsideration of the hero's own actions are essential.
- The concept of "**unreliable narrator**".

A *Pale View of Hills* (1982). Ishiguro's first novel detailing the postwar memories of Etsuko, a Japanese woman trying to deal with the suicide of her daughter Keiko, set in an increasingly Westernized Japan following World War II. It is about **the indeterminacy and the subjective nature of human vision/memory**. The title may refer to someone who is no longer seeing her picture clearly, which may also be the events in her past. Ishiguro makes insightful points about **Japanese culture and the effect of the passage of time on his characters**. It is a cultural transition as the novel contrasts western and eastern mentalities. **Two main connected themes in the novel:** the unreliability of memory and the incapability to distance oneself from past traumatic events; and the psychological dissociation and imaginary/mistaken association as mechanisms to make peace with the past and to overcome self-blame and grief.

The Remains of the Day (1989; film 1993)

- With the publication of *The Remains of the Day*, Ishiguro became one of the best-known European novelists at just 35 years of age.
- It is a first-person narrative, the **remembrances of Stevens, an elderly English butler** whose prim mask of formality has shut him off from understanding and intimacy.
- It is a book about a **thwarted life** and how **class conditioning can turn you into your own worst enemy, making you complicit in your own subservience**. It's probably quite an English book –a protagonist who takes four decades to fail to declare his feelings.

- The protagonist suggests **it is better to enjoy the present time in one's life than to dwell on the past**, as "the evening" is, after all, the best part of the day.
- **Salman Rushdie** argues that "the real story ... is that of a man destroyed by the ideas upon which he has built his life."
Never Let Me Go (2005)
- The title stems from a song "Never Let Me Go" that Kathy listened to throughout her life.
- A **dystopian science fiction** novel
- a scathing critique of human arrogance and a moral examination of how we treat the vulnerable and different in our society.
- Within the grounds of Hailsham, Kathy grows from schoolgirl to young woman, but it's only when she and her friends Ruth and Tommy leave the safe grounds of the school (as they always knew they would) that they realize the full truth of what Hailsham is.
- In exploring **the themes of memory and the impact of the past**, Ishiguro takes on the idea of a possible future to create his most moving and powerful book to date
The Buried Giant (2015)
- **an existential fantasy tale** inflected by Arthurian legend
- **Mix of reality and non-reality**: fantastic things happen everyday, both horrible things and incredible things, and the magical realist tales they tell may seem fantastic but are, inherently, grounded in what happened.
- In post-Arthurian Britain, Axl and Beatrice, an elderly British couple, set off to visit their son, whom they haven't seen in years. And, because a strange mist has caused mass amnesia throughout the land, they can scarcely remember anything about him.
- As they are joined on their journey by a Saxon warrior, his orphan charge, and an illustrious knight, Axl and Beatrice slowly begin to remember the dark and troubled past they all share.
- By turns savage, suspenseful, and intensely moving, *The Buried Giant* is a luminous meditation on the act of forgetting and the power of memory.

Ian McEwan

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- ❑ Ian McEwan's works have earned him worldwide critical acclaim.
- ❑ McEwan's early works are concerned with desire in all of its manifestations. Influenced by Freudian theories of sexuality, being shocking tales of incest, paedophilia, erotic violence, sex and death (*First Love, Last Rites, In Between The Sheets, and The Cement Garden*)
- ❑ His restrained, refined prose style accentuates the horror of his dark humour and perverse subject matter.
- ❑ **Atonement** was also made into an Oscar-winning film.
- In the 1980s, when McEwan began raising a family, his novels became less insular and sensationalistic and more devoted **to family dynamics and political intrigue**

- The influence of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) is evident in *Saturday* (2005), a vivid depiction of London on February 15, 2003, a day of mass demonstrations against the incipient war in Iraq.
- Climate change is the subject of McEwan's satirical novel *Solar* (2010).
- *Sweet Tooth* (2012) is the Cold War-era tale of a young woman recruited by MI5 to secretly channel funding to writers whose work reflected Western values.
- *The Children Act* (2014; film 2017) centres on a judge who must rule on the medical treatment of a teenage Jehovah's Witness whose parents object, on the basis of their religious beliefs, to his receiving a blood transfusion.
- Drawing inspiration from *Hamlet*, McEwan next wrote *Nutshell* (2016), which is narrated by a fetus whose adulterous mother plots with her lover to kill the baby's father.
- In *Machines Like Me* (2019), a love triangle develops between a couple and a male robot.
- Inspired by Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, the novella *The Cockroach* (2019) concerns Brexit (the British exit from the European Union).

Amsterdam (1998)

- a social satire influenced by the early works of Evelyn Waugh
- A profound contemporary morality tale that tells a retrospective story of Molly and her two former lovers who made a euthanasia pact.
- It traces over six decades the consequences of a lie told in the 1930s and raises issues of love, extramarital affairs, friendship, and morals of suicide.

Atonement (2001)

- It is a complex text that holds a story within a story, *Atonement* is a bildungsroman that explores the soul of a young girl
- **Genre:** Historical fiction, Western Europe's violent twentieth-century history
- **Setting:** McEwan debates fiction and fact in the historical panorama covering six decades of the twentieth century (England and France; before, during, and after World War II). Beginning in prewar Britain and concluding with the millennium, *Atonement* is a study of before and after, cause and effect, crime and punishment.
- **The** main theme is hidden in the title: the word "atonement" suggests a crime, committed against life and love. The theme of *Atonement* - that the novel is a fiction based on reality created by its protagonist in an attempt to atone – questions how the historical novel creates a version of the past, and explores the narrative potential of this hybrid of history and fiction.

Saturday (2005)

- It is preoccupied with the relationship between public and private histories, and how individual experiences occur in tandem with historical events (L. Marcus)
- Like other contemporary novels it rewrites earlier fictions being a representation of a day in the life of a man and a city (allusion to modernist city texts of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf)
- The novel narrates 24 hours in the life of neurosurgeon Henry Perowne who, after 'having woken in an unusual state of mind' (McEwan 2005: 17), intends to enjoy his day of leisure, which will also see his family reunited after a period
- At the heart of the novel lies the transformation of the self,
- "an increased fascination with mental processes, a concern with the nature of

'empathy', and a redefinition of the modernist preoccupation with 'consciousness' in neurological terms" (Ian McEwan Contemporary Critical Perspectives. Ed. By Sebastian Groes and Matt Riley. Continuum, 2009)

LECTURE 5

OUTSTANDING CONTEMPORARY BRITISH AUTHORS. Part 2.

David Mitchell

- ❑ English author whose novels are noted for their lyrical prose style and complex structures.
- ❑ named by *Granta* magazine as one of the twenty 'Best of Young British Novelists'.
- ❑ brought up and educated in the south of England; after graduation, he spent eight years in Japan. His fiction is a **meeting of east and west, in which reincarnated souls are placed within a world ordered by technology**, where **materialism reduces the concept of the soul to pulses of electrochemical activity in the brain**.
- ❑ Mitchell's novels reflect that stories made **from perspectives on events rather than the events themselves**. A primary aspect of Mitchell's approach to his art is a point of view which is endlessly multiplying points of view, which characterises.

Ghostwritten (1999)

- ❑ a collection of **interconnected narratives** that take place in a variety of locations throughout the world.
- ❑ bears similarities to the works of **Murakami Haruki**. Critics even labelled the book as "a new Murakami translation of Fitzgerald's short stories"
- ❑ noteworthy for its **plotting and realistic characterizations**. *Ghostwritten* won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize for the best work of fiction by a British author under 35.
- ❑ There are **10 separate sections**, making for a jigsaw puzzle of a novel. Most of the sections are **first-person narratives**, told by different narrators and set in a variety of locales. Beginning in Okinawa the novel moves to Tokyo and across Asia and Europe, coming full-circle back to its beginning.

Cloud Atlas (2004; film 2012)

- ❑ it combines **metafiction, historical fiction, contemporary fiction and science fiction**.
- ❑ the book is about **reincarnation** and the **universality of human nature**
- ❑ the title references a **changing landscape (a "cloud")** over manifestations of **fixed human nature (the "atlas")**. The title was inspired by **the piece of music of the same name by Japanese composer Toshi Ichihyanagi**.
- ❑ a series of **6 interlinked stories**—written in differing styles—through which Mitchell explores and criticises the seeming progress of the postindustrial age. Each story is interrupted at a pivotal moment
- ❑ In the first half of the book, the narratives progress chronologically from a 19th-century travel journal of an American notary to a postapocalyptic future where Western civilization has been nearly extinguished.

- ❑ the interrupted stories are brought to their conclusions (in reverse chronological order) over the second half of the novel, which ultimately ends with the tale of the 19th-century notary.

The Bone Clocks (2014)

- mirrors the six-part temporally disjunct structure of *Cloud Atlas*, chronicling episodes in the lives of a writer and her acquaintances and slowly teasing out a supernatural plot about immortal beings.
- All the sections in “The Bone Clocks” are narrated in the first person: we follow Holly Sykes as she grows up, and reappears in the successive sections. In the second, she has a brief relationship with Hugo Lamb in 1991. In the third, set in 2004, she is living with Ed Brubeck, who later dies in Syria. A single mother in the fourth section, set in 2015, Holly is a successful writer.
- “The Bone Clocks” deals with recurrent themes of Mitchell's writing: the spirit and reincarnation, human predation, and mortality, the central being the eternal battle between Good and Evil.

Sarah Waters

One of the most widely-read novelists of her generation, Waters has helped make evocations of the British past into a respectable staple of contemporary fiction. Her characteristic feature is the psychological and sexual theme of her “**lesbo historical romps**”. *The Little Stranger* (2009) followed the critical success of *Fingersmith* (2002) and *The Night Watch* (2006) to become her third novel to earn a place on the shortlist of the prestigious Man Booker Prize for Fiction. **She displays concern with the socially disenfranchised (thieves, rent boys, prisoners and orphans).**

***Fingersmith* (1999)**

The novel's title reflects the erotic themes of the novel (***Fingersmith*** is an archaic term for a petty thief, but in her work it has intentionally sexual connotations). *Fingersmith* is a romance stalked by conventions of Victorian sensation novels and Newgate fiction (**Newgate novels** or **Old Bailey novels** were novels published in England from the late 1820s until the 1840s that glamorised the lives of the criminals they portrayed). The book is notable for its eroticism and depiction of pornography. Literary critics focused on the novel's sexual themes, feminism and pornography. It is about a lesbian love between **Maud and Sue** that challenges hetero-patriarchal norms. Maud and Sue both face struggles as women in Victorian society, and have exploitative relationships with men.

***Affinity* (1999)**

The novel, also set in the Victorian era, centres on the world of Victorian Spiritualism and tells the story of the relationship between an upper-middle-class woman and an imprisoned spiritualist. *Affinity* is an eerie tale of many prisons and resonates long after its conclusion with the chill of the Gothic style.

Kate Atkinson

Behind the Scenes at the Museum (1995)

The novel follows five generations and more than a century of the protagonist's family history, as reported in "footnotes" that follow relevant chapters. It is about a young girl and her journey to adulthood against the background of her efforts to uncover family secrets. Themes: 1) women go through hardships and feel powerless—particularly during World War II and the return to normality. 2) only our

actions affect how we are remembered. Each character in the book makes choices which directly affect how other characters—and the reader—remember them.

Life After Life (2013)

The novel is characterized by the unusual combination of narrative strategies to reconstruct the past: the forking-path narrative technique and the emphasis on affect and the senses that together contribute to renewing the historical novel. It reimagines the second World War. *Life After Life* which offers successive versions of Ursula Todd’s life as the heroine is born, dies, is born again, lives, dies again and so on and so on, each time hoping to improve the world she lives in by trying to avoid causes of death or misery. Brief allusions to key historical events are made from the characters’ point of view, with no exposition by the narrator. The war is depicted in terms of its consequences on the lives of civilians.

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**LECTURE 6
 CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN LITERATURE**

A Brief Timeline of American Literature

Period Dates	Name Period	Characteristics	Famous Authors and Works
Arrived 40,000 - 20,000 B.C	Native Americans	Oral literature: epic narratives, creation myths, stories, poems, songs	
1600s-1700s	Colonial Literature	The earliest American literature. Experiences of the first European settlers of North America starting in the 1600s.	John Smith, Anne Bradstreet’s “The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America”
Mid- to Late 1700s	Enlightenment and Revolution	Literature encompasses the patriotic spirit	“Federalist Papers” (1787–88), by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay Phillis Wheatley “Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral”
Early 1800s-1820s	American Gothic	The emergence of true American literature: (1800-1820s) about	W. Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”,

		American society and American landscape	N.Hawthorne, E. Poe, W. Faulkner
1820s-1850s	Romanticism and Transcendentalism	Individualism, intuitive perception intuition, idealism, inductive reasoning, faith in inner experience, the power of the imagination.	N. Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter", H. Melville's "Moby Dick", H.D. Thoreau, R. W. Emerson, E. A. Poe "The Raven".
1850-1900	Realism and Naturalism	a detailed and unembellished vision of the real world, complete disillusionment, utterly realistic portrayal of everyday life and ordinary people	M. Twain, J. Steinbeck Th. Dreiser "Sister Carrie", J. London "Call of the Wild", "To Build a Fire"
1920-1940 "the New Negro Movement" Prohibition	Harlem renaissance "the Jazz Age" "the Roaring 20s" Black cultural movement in Harlem, New York	Other poetry used conventional lyrical Forms. Some poetry rhythms based on spirituals, and jazz, lyrics on the blues, and diction from the street talk of the ghettos	Jean Toomer, Jessie Fauset, Claude McKay, James Weldon Johnson, Alain Locke, Eric D. Walrond, Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes
1900-1950	Modern Literature	A radical break from the past, destruction, a loss of faith in traditional structures and beliefs, disillusionment broken "American Dream", bold experimentation in style and form, interest in the inner world of the human mind Stream of consciousness).	E.Hemingway, G. Stein, F. S. Fitzgerald, W. Faulkner
1950-present	Contemporary:	media, language, and information technology influence, feeling of endless duplication of literature New literary forms and techniques, combining fiction and nonfiction, experimenting with style and form "Postmodernism"	T. Morrison, J. Franzen, Kh. Hosseini, M. Robinson, D. F. Wallace.

Key themes of Contemporary American Literature

- ✓ Economic colonization
- ✓ Global warming
- ✓ Neo-Imperialism
- ✓ Trans-border terrorism
- ✓ Poverty, filth & squalour
- ✓ LGBT, racial, ethnic & communal problems,
- ✓ Crime, corruption, avarice
- ✓ **Struggle with Dehumanization** (Joseph Heller),
- ✓ **The problem of Being, Search for a True Self** (Ralph Ellison),

- ✓ **Ethics of Love** (Carson McCuller),
- ✓ **The conception of Freedom** (Saul Bellow),
- ✓ **New Definition of Morality** (John Gardner),
- ✓ **Idea of Justice** (E. L. Doctorow),
- ✓ **Renewal of the Human Spirit** (Bernard Malamud) (*Contemporary American literature & Media*).
- ✓ Besides **African Americans** and **Jewish Americans**, other ethnicities in the USA established their literary traditions in the late-20th-century American literature.
- ✓ This impetus **ushered in by the Civil Rights movements** and its corollary, **the Ethnic Pride movement** made possible the creation of Ethnic Studies programmes in the American universities. This made the new ethnic literature a worthy academic study.
- ✓ Asian American literature: Maxine Hong Kingston's fictional memoir, *The Woman Warrior* (1976), and her novels **China Men** (1980) and **Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book**; and the Chinese-American author Ha Jin's award winning novels, **Waiting** (1999), and **War Trash** (2005).
- ✓ Other significant Asian-American novelists include **Amy Tan**, *The Joy Luck Club* (1989), and Korean American novelist **Chang-Rae Lee** (*Native Speaker*, *A Gesture Life*, and *Aloft*)
- ✓ Some important Asian American poets are **Marilyn Chin**, **Li-Young Lee**, **Kimiko Hahn** and **Janice Mirikitani**.
- ✓ **Indian-American literature** - author Jhumpa Lahiri won the Pulitzer Prize for her collection of short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). Her well-received novel, *The Namesake* (2003) was made into a film in 2007. Her second collection of stories, *Unaccustomed Earth*)
- ✓ **Latina/o literature** became prominent thanks to the acclaimed novels by **Tomás Rivera** and **Rudolfo Anaya** (*Bless Me, Ultima*), and the emergence of **Chicano theater** with Luis Valdez and TeatroCampesino. Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* (1984) Dominican-American writer Junot Díaz's novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007) received the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. It deals with the story of a Dominican boy made into a social outcast in New Jersey. Puerto Rican novelists include Giannina Braschi (*Yo-Yo Boing!*) and Rosario Ferré (*Eccentric Neighborhoods*), René Marqués, Luis Rafael Sánchez, José Rivera, Julia deBurgos, Giannina Braschi and Pedro Pietri.
- ✓ **Native American literature** came of age on the success of N. Scott Momaday's Pulitzer Prize-winning **House Made of Dawn**. The novelists, **Leslie Marmon Silko** (*Ceremony*), **Gerald Vizenor** (*Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*), **Louise Erdrich** (*Love Medicine*), **James Welch** (*Winter in the Blood*), Sherman Alexie (*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*), and poets Simon Ortiz and Joy Harjo ushered in the Native American Renaissance.
- ✓ **Arab American literature** has become conspicuous through the novels of **Diana Abu-Jaber** (*Arabian Jazz* and *Crescent* and the memoir *The Language of Baklava*), writings of **Etel Adnan**, **Rabih Alameddine** and poet **Naomi Shihab Nye**.

In Contemporary American literature, the modernists' components like **temporal distortion, unreliable narrators, and internal monologue** are mixed up with postmodernists' techniques (**metafiction, ideogrammatic characterization, unrealistic names, absurdist plot elements and hyperbolic humour, deliberate use of anachronisms and archaisms, a strong focus on postcolonial themes, and a subversive mix of high and low culture**).

Contemporary American literature, as considered by Americans themselves, is **subversive, containing surrealism, bizarre names, plots and biting commentary**. It is postmodernist and distrustful. It not only questions the cultural inconsistencies but also allows such inconsistencies to bloom within the narrative. Notably, most of the acclaimed contemporary literature **is adapted for other media – cinema and the theatre**.

The Key Features of Contemporary Literary Fiction:

- ✓ It contains characters **that behave the way most readers would**.
- ✓ The characters are **believable**.
- ✓ The story is set **in the present**.
- ✓ The setting, happenings and events are **real**.
- ✓ Dialogue is **informal and conversational**.
- ✓ focus on the most critical issues of the individual and society in **an era of vast technological change and social turmoil**.

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<https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/salman-rushdie-contemporary-critical-perspectives/salman-rushdie>

<https://mookseandgripes.com/reviews/2020/11/18/salman-rushdie-the-old-man-in-the-piazza/>

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2017/prize-announcement/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRWMIHhcew>

<https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/kazuo-ishiguro-contemporary-critical-perspectives/introduction-your-words-open-windows-for-me>

[<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ian-McEwan>]

<https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/ifr/article/view/7789/8846>

LECTURE 7

Contemporary American Writers

Jonathan Franzen (born August 17, 1959)

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- ✓ American novelist and essayist whose sprawling **multilayered** novels about **contemporary America**.
- ✓ Franzen has been named one of the best postmodern contemporary writers.
- ✓ His novels are known for postmodern scepticism

- ✓ **“The reader is a friend, not an adversary, not a spectator.”**
- ✓ It's doubtful that anyone with an Internet connection at his workplace is writing good fiction.
- ✓ To write a novel that mattered in the fast-approaching 21st century, he concluded, a **novelist would have to “connect the personal and the social” by rooting social critique in psychologically compelling characters** (<https://www.theguardian.com/global/2015/aug/21/jonathan-franzen-purity-interview>)

The Twenty-Seventh City, 1988

- ✓ the storyline about a charismatic, Marxist-indoctrinated woman's attempt to seize control of an American city by using terrorist tactics and a manipulative alliance with inner-city blacks
- ✓ The 27th city is named **St. Louis**, a mythical place, **a supercharged symbol of all-American dreams, values and problems** - a 1980's, urbanized version of such fictional Midwestern towns as Zenith or Gopher Prairie <https://www.nytimes.com/1988/08/17/books/books-of-the-times-politics-and-social-conflict-in-a-mythical-st-louis.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>.
- ✓ It provides the **backdrop** for Mr. Franzen's **spawling epic about political conspiracy and social conflict** in America today.
- ✓ full-bodied prose that shifts gears effortlessly between **naturalism and a more heightened, satiric style**. the narrative roams about the entire city, giving us somewhat parodic, portraits of a cross section of St. Louis society

Strong Motion, 1992

Louis Holland arrives in Boston in a spring of strange happenings - earthquakes strike the city, and the first one kills his grandmother. During a bitter feud over the inheritance Louis falls in love with Renee Seitchek, a passionate and brilliant seismologist, whose discoveries about the origin of the earthquakes start to complicate everything. The novel offers **impassioned social criticism, its treatment of controversial themes such as abortion, feminism, corporate malfeasance, exploitative capitalism.**

The Corrections, 2001

- ✓ The 3rd novel, an immersive, highly readable family saga, awarded the **National Book Award** in 2001 and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize in 2002.
- ✓ With *The Corrections*, Franzen moved away from the **postmodernism** of his earlier novels towards **literary realism**
- ✓ novel of the family Lambert: Enid and Alfred, the warring old couple, and their three dysfunctional adult children (Gary, Chip, and Denise). The fictional family bore strong similarities to Franzen's own, his father a railway engineer, his mother a housewife, although, he says, as “writing becomes more autobiographical, the less it hews to actual lived experience.
- ✓ **Themes:**
- ✓ the decline of the technology-driven economic boom of the late nineties
- ✓ transition from an industrial economy to an economy based largely on the financial, high-tech and service sectors (descriptions of Denise's workplace, an abandoned Philadelphia coal plant converted into a trendy, expensive restaurant)

- ✓ conflicts and issues within a family that arise from the presence of a progressive debilitating disease of an elder

Freedom, 2009

- ✓ **A novel of four parts: Good neighbors** – the 1st part about an ideal liberal and middle-class family; **Mistakes Were Made** - the second section of the novel is a story-within-a-story, presented as an autobiography written by the female protagonist at her therapist's suggestion; The third section of the novel jumps to the early 2000s, and alternates in viewpoint among three characters; **Mistakes Were Made (Conclusion); Canterbridge Estates Lake** – rekindling of the relationship between the main characters.

David Foster Wallace

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- ✓ American novelist, short-story writer, and essayist whose **dense works provide a dark, often satirical analysis of American culture.**
- ✓ Wallace was the son of a philosophy professor and an English teacher.
- ✓ He was completing a master's degree in creative writing at the University of Arizona when his highly regarded debut novel, *The Broom of the System* (1987), was published.
- ✓ The emergence of a **post-Wallace novel** (*Jonathan Franzen's "Corrections" and "Freedom", Jonathan Lethem's "Chronic City", Jeffree Eugenide's "The Extreme Solitude", "The Marriage Plot"*): a series of **running parallels and allusions** to Wallace's novels: "*current centrality in American letters is contingent upon extra-literary factors. Wallace's name is an index for a tortured artist*" (Stephen J. Burn)
- ✓ In the minds of his contemporaries, Wallace is connected to an **examination of freedom**
- ✓ Wallace's America is **where freedom was to pursue pleasure that had become a teleological value per se** (Stephen J. Burn)

Infinite Jest (1996)

- **Plot:** *Set in the near future O.N.A.N - North American Nations*
- *the maverick avant-garde filmmaker James O. Incandenza, which is so funny that the viewer ultimately expires in a state of uncontrollable hilarity. When both film and filmmaker disappear, all manner of sinister individuals, government agencies, and foreign governments attempt to track them down, and the ensuing chaos incorporates the recovering addicts of Ennet House (a Boston dependency clinic) as well as the Enfield Tennis Academy.*
- **Title:** taken from Scene 4 of *Hamlet* (...*Poor Yorik was a fellow of Infinite Jest*)
- These last two locations provide two opposing points of focus for the text. One allows Wallace **to explore the centrality of addiction to consumer culture** and **the place of narcotics** within that culture.
- The other is an extraordinary vision of a hothouse sporting school, which produces children for an industry that will disregard most of them.

Tony Morrison

(**Chloe Anthony Wofford**, February 18, 1931—August 5, 2019)

- ✓ noted for her examination of Black experience (particularly Black female experience) within the Black community.

- ✓ She received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993. The Nobel Prize in Literature 1993 went to the woman “**who, in novels characterized by visionary force and poetic import, gives life to an essential aspect of American reality**”
- ✓ Possessed an intense love of and appreciation for Black culture, storytelling, songs, and folktales
- ✓ Morrison’s first book, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), is a novel of initiation concerning a victimized adolescent Black girl who is obsessed by white standards of beauty and longs to have blue eyes. In 1973 a second novel, *Sula*, about the dynamics of friendship and **the expectations for conformity within the community**.
- ✓ *Song of Solomon* (1977) is told by a male narrator in search of his identity; **its publication brought Morrison to national attention**.
- ✓ *Tar Baby* (1981), set on a Caribbean island, **explores conflicts of race, class, and sex**.

Beloved, 1987

- It examines the destructive legacy of slavery as it chronicles the life of Sethe, from her pre-Civil War days as a slave in Kentucky to her time in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1873. Although Sethe lives there as a free woman, she is haunted by her life as a slave.
- The novel is based on the true story of a Black slave woman, Margaret Garner, who in 1856 escaped from a Kentucky plantation with her husband, Robert, and their children. Margaret killed her young daughter to keep her from slavery.
- Sethe is a passionately devoted mother, who flees with her children from an abusive owner known as “schoolteacher.” They are caught, and, in an act of supreme love and sacrifice, she too tries to kill her children to keep them from slavery.
- Sethe later has “**Beloved**” inscribed on her daughter’s tombstone. Although she had intended for it to read “**Dearly Beloved**,” she did not have the energy to “pay” for two words (each word cost her 10 minutes of sex with the engraver).

Marilynne Robinson (Marilynne Summers, November 26, 1943)

- ✓ **American author** known for her graceful language and studied observations on humankind and religion in works of fiction and nonfiction.
- ✓ Her best-known works included her debut novel, *Housekeeping* (1980), and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Gilead* (2004).

***Housekeeping* (1980)**

- ✓ While working on her Ph.D. dissertation, Robinson began an experiment with metaphors, which figured prominently in her debut novel, *Housekeeping* (1980)
- ✓ The novel was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and awarded the PEN/Hemingway Award for best first novel. In 2003, the *Guardian Unlimited* named *Housekeeping* one of the 100 greatest novels of all time
- ✓ The story follows two adolescent **sisters—Ruth, the narrator, and Lucille**—who are passed between relatives after their mother commits suicide and who eventually come to the care of their transient (homeless) aunt Sylvie in the fictional town of Fingerbone.

- ✓ The novel treats **the subject of housekeeping, not only in the domestic sense of cleaning, but in the larger sense of keeping a spiritual home for one's self and family in the face of loss**, for the girls experience a series of abandonments as they come of age.
- ✓ The novel is narrated by Ruth, from the perspective of the transparent eyeball (a philosophical metaphor originated by Ralph Waldo Emerson. It is a representation of an eye that is absorbent rather than reflective, and therefore takes in all that nature has to offer. The individual become one with nature, and the transparent eyeball is a tool to do that. This narration style was used by the transcendentalist authors that influenced Robinson.

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 [https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1993/press-release/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oP_-m7V58_I
<https://www.nypl.org/blog/2017/07/20/where-start-cormac-mccarthy>

LECTURE 8 CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN LITERATURE

Canadian literature is haunted by the overriding question “Where is here?”; thus, metaphoric mappings of peoples and places became central to the evolution of the Canadian literary imagination.
Northrop Frye

Canadian literature presupposes **the body of written works produced by Canadians**. Reflecting the country's dual origin and its official bilingualism, **the literature of Canada can be split into two major divisions: English and French (Literature of Quebec)**.

The first writers of English in Canada were **visitors—explorers, travelers, and British officers and their wives**—who recorded their impressions of **British North America in charts, diaries, journals, and letters**. These foundational documents of journeys and settlements presage the documentary tradition in Canadian literature in which **geography, history, and arduous voyages of exploration and discovery represent the quest for a myth of origins and for a personal and national identity**.

After 1960s, Canadian society received a high development in the field of literature. Because of the impression of many countries due to **immigration policies, cultural hybridity** that completely changed the conventional definitions of ethnic purity and fixed identity. Bilingual texts and triptychs in fiction and drama and unconnected narratives in fiction and poetry intervened greatly in literary techniques and resultantly, many disintegrated collections of short fiction called sequences, cycles, or composite narratives appeared there (**Alice Munro, Mavis Gallant, Alistair Macleod, Clark Blaise**)

Due to cultural and political changes around the late 1950s, and especially due to the search for a **Canadian cultural identity**, Canadian literature underwent a change. The search for a cultural identity particularly influenced **Canadian women writers** who were looking for possibilities to show new ways **to a self-confident and emancipated female identity**. While for centuries the Canadian North had only been a place for men, more and **more women writers began to send their female protagonists into the wilderness which provided a place of refuge and rehabilitation** (*Margaret Atwood's Surfacing (1972)*, *Marian Engel's Bear (1976)*, *Joan Barfoot's Abra and The Tent Peg (1981)* by Aritha van Herk) (C.Thomen,2008).

- ✓ The changes in Canadian literature during the 21st century are as follows: **hyperreality, unreliable narrative, numerous protagonists, and other post-modern features.**

Dominant Themes in Canadian Literature

- ✓ Canada has always been associated **with its landscape, a vast and inviolate nature**. With an area of almost 10 million square kilometers, Canada is the second largest country in the world, but with only 31 million people living there and a population density of 3,2 inhabitants per square kilometer, it is also the less populated.
- ✓ **The theme of nature and wilderness** has also been reflected throughout Canadian literary tradition. As Canadian author Aritha van Herk notes, "[*the impact of landscape on artist and artist on landscape is unavoidable*" (1992, 139).
- ✓ Canadians have articulated their feelings **about nature** through literary expression, and to thereby gain insight into **their empathy for natural ecosystems and** nature is a theme in cultural expression, including overarching ones in Canadian literature, the influential literary views of Northrop Frye, Margaret Atwood, etc. [K.Turner, B.Freedman. **Nature as a theme in Canadian literature, 2005**].
- ✓ A community walls itself off from the wilderness.
- ✓ A man leaves the homeland, adjusts in the new world and then finds his "homeland" to be "alien".
- ✓ A man born in Canada feels like a permanent alien in his or her own home country.
- ✓ A man reaches the new home and finds himself excluded from power.
- ✓ A man tries to recover from the suppressed life of past.
- ✓ A woman struggles to attain her creativity and the inhibitions of her cultural rearing.
- ✓ A passive observer tells often ironically both his or her own and their story encircled by articulate tricksters and raconteurs.
- ✓ An adventurer gracefully turns out to be a failure.
- ✓ A child grows up to inherit sometimes a world of promise, sometimes a world of loss or both at once frequently
- ✓ A subjective historian meditates on place and reminiscence.
- ✓ The characters struggle here and learn at their best the principle that wilderness provides spiritual therapy only on its own terms and so they celebrate space and wilderness.

- ✓ Characters are wrapped here in a fog of ambiguity and anonymity and shape “acceptable fictions” into a workable life [https://www.english-literature.com/2021/06/history-of-canadian-literature-in-english.html].

Famous Canadian Authors

Margaret Atwood – the most outstanding of all contemporary Canadian authors. She writes creative nonfiction and memoir, as well as historical, speculative, science, and dystopian fiction. Her writing has a **feminist perspective**, and her typical heroine is the modern urban woman (*The Cat's Eye*, an interesting take on identity, written as a series of flashbacks, which focuses on the socio-cultural elements of feminism and modern art in 1980s Canada).

Kathleen Margaret ("Kit") Pearson - a Canadian children's novelist. She looks to her own childhood when developing ideas about characters, settings, and storylines. Her novels are set in British Columbia, where she lived as a child. (***Guests of War Trilogy***, a story about the adventures of two English children sent to Canada for safety during the Blitz).

Yann Martel - A fiction writer with a paradoxical style of writing. Although his writing is playful, his approach to his craft is methodical and planned, not spontaneous (***Life of Pi***, the fantasy-adventure novel about an Indian boy who explores his spirituality while stranded at sea in a lifeboat with wild animals. The novel's main themes include **the relativity of truth and the ideas that life is a story and that growth comes through adversity**).

Alice Munro - a famous short story writer. Her narratives feel private and intimate, and her characters tend to be in search of a revelation. The stories are **social critiques**. Her **central themes** are love and work and the balance between the two; her characters are unsophisticated yet relatable (***Dear Life***, a rich collection of short stories about social mores and gender roles).

Joseph Boyden - pens historical fiction. His writing is contemporary, **portraying the strengths of marginalized groups within Canada**. He is candid about his opinions on the environment and First Nations issues, and he has a strong interest in Canadian-oriented activist concerns (***Three Day Road***, a story about the journey of two young Cree men who volunteer for the First World War and end up becoming snipers)

Emma Donoghue - a novelist, a writer of literary history and drama for stage, radio, and screen. She shows **humanity at its best and worst while also evoking empathy for outsiders**. The stories are based on **actual events, underscoring the anxiety and drama of real life**. Her work exudes emotional intelligence, and she conducts extensive research before writing her novels (***Room***, told from the perspective of a five-year-old boy being held captive in a small room with his mother).

Postcolonial literature is a broad term that encompasses **literatures by people from the erstwhile colonial world, as well as from the various minority diasporas that live in the west**. Postcolonialism has also been a term **used to reinterpret western canonical literature from a variety of fresh and diverse perspectives**. Postcolonial literature represents all these conditions and comes from various sources and inspiration. It includes works such as Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart", Tayeb Salih's "Season of Migration to the North", J.M. Coetzee's "Waiting for the Barbarians", Michael Ondaatje's "The English Patient", Arundhati Roy's "The God of Small Things", NoViolet Bulawayo's "We Need".

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<https://www.britannica.com/art/Canadian-literature/Modern-period-1900-60>

https://www.scribendi.com/academy/articles/canadian_authors_you_have_to_read.en.html

<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/blog/what-is-postcolonial-literature/>

<https://somethingcurated.com/2020/10/19/5-compelling-writers-reflecting-on-postcolonial-literature-from-south-asia-its-diaspora/>

READING LIST

Julian Barnes

A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters

The Sense of an Ending.

The Only Story.

Ian McEwan.

Amsterdam (the 1998 Booker Prize)

Atonement.

Saturday.

Black Dogs.

David Mitchell

Cloud Atlas (the British Book Awards Literary Fiction award).

Kazuo Ishiguro (the 2017 Nobel Prize in Literature).

A Pale View of Hills.

The Remains of the Day (the Booker Prize for Fiction in 1989).

Never Let Me Go.

Salman Rushdie.

Midnight's Children (won the Booker Prize in 1981)

The Satanic Verses (1988)

Kate Atkinson.

A God in Ruins

Zadie Smith.

White Teeth.

Intimations: Six Essays.

Toni Morrison (the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993)

The Beloved Trilogy (Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1988)

Jonathan Franzen.

The Corrections (a National Book Award, a Pulitzer Prize for Fiction finalist)

Khaled Hosseini.

The Kite Runner

Cormac McCarthy.

No Country for Old Men

The Road

Marilynne Robinson

Gilead (the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Critics Circle Award)

David Foster Wallace.

Infinite Jest (the Times: one of the 100 best English-language novels published between 1923 and 2005)

Donna Tartt.

The Goldfinch (the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction).

Secret History

Emma Donoghue

Room (in 2010 was a finalist for the Man Booker Prize).

David Lodge

The Campus trilogy

The British Museum Is Falling Down

Deaf Sentence

Terry Pratchett

The Discworld series: The Colour of Magic, Pyramids, The Shepherd's Crown

Neil Gayman.

The Ocean at the End of the Lane (Book of the Year in the British National Book Awards)

American Gods

Margaret Atwood.

The Blind Assassin (the Booker Prize in 2000 and the Hammett Prize in 2001)

The Handmaid's Tale

Yann Martel

Life of Pi

Arundati Roi.

The God of Small Things (1997 Booker Prize for Fiction)

J.K.Rowling

Recommended Reading

Wojciech Drag, "The Search is All?: The Pursuit of Meaning in Julian Barnes's

Flaubert's Parrot, Staring at the Sun and A History of the World in 10½ Chapters, University of Glamorgan, 2007

Guignery, Vanessa. *The Fiction of Julian Barnes*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. (2006).

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Hutcheon, Linda. *The Politics of Postmodernism*. New York: Routledge, 1989

Interview with Julian Barnes: <http://www.julianbarnes.com/>

David Foster Wallace's unedited interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGLzWdT7vGc>

Wallace, David Foster (August 2004). "Consider the Lobster". *Gourmet*. pp. 50–64. "Celebrating the Life and Work of David Foster Wallace". *Five Dials*. *Hamish Hamilton*.

M.Albay, M.Serbes. Intertextuality in the Literature. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies* 3(4):208-214. June 2017

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Beth Driscoll, *Sydney Review*, 2015: <https://sydneyreviewofbooks.com/review/could-not-put-it-down/>

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Davies, , Beadle, R., & and Others. *English Literature*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., Retrieved June 1, 2017, from <https://www.britannica.com/art/English-literature>. (8) (PDF) Intertextuality in the Literature. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317911080_Intertextuality_in_the_Literature.

Yegane Abdullayeva. *Intertextual Dialogue in the British Postmodern Novels: On the basis of Peter Ackroyd's Novels*.

Seminar 1. Discussion

- 1) **Highlight the difference between Modern and Contemporary Anglophone Literature.**
- 2) **What is the value of literature in the 21st century? What are the key 21st-century genres discussed and the peculiarities of the present literary environment in English-speaking countries?**
- 3) **Modern, post-modern, post-postmodern? Key features, similarities and differences. What is post-modern? Do you agree that post-modern has gone out of fashion?** (substantiate your answer with examples from the critical reading and fiction you have considered).

Seminar 2. Discussion

- 1) How would you define 21st-century British literature? What is your understanding of British 21st-century literature? (substantiate your answer with examples from the books you have read). Present a brief timeline of the British literature.

- 2) Outline the postmodern tendencies in major late 20th – early 21st-century British works (on the example of the books you read).

Illustrate the post-modern tendencies in the present British literary environment by the cases of the books you have read. What were the key factors you considered when selecting books?

- 3) We have considered numerous literature-prize winners. Are the literature prizes an indicator of good literary quality? What are the criteria for:
 - entries for the Booker Prize? What is the difference between Booker and Man Booker Prize? Who are well-known recipients of the prize? How is the longlist compiled and how are the entries shortlisted?
 - entries for the Nobel Prize for literature? What are the procedure and the criteria for literary laureates to be nominated and selected? The main winners in the category of 21st-century literature? Why do you think they were shortlisted and won? What have been the Nobel guidelines and interpretations throughout the 20th-21st century?
- 4) Best representatives of 21st-century literature from your perspective. In groups, consider the major British writers and their writing legacy.
 - The authors to consider - Julian Barnes, Ian McEwan, David Mitchell, Kazuo Ishiguro, Salman Rushdie, Kate Atkinson, Terry Pratchett, Zadie Smith, Sarah Waters, Neil Gaiman, Hilary Mantel, John Le Carre, V. S. Naipaul, J.K.Rowling

Recommended Reading

Wojciech Drag, "The Search is All?: The Pursuit of Meaning in Julian Barnes's *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Staring at the Sun* and *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*, University of Glamorgan, 2007

Guignery, Vanessa. *The Fiction of Julian Barnes*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.(2006).

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Hutcheon, Linda. *The Politics of Postmodernism*. New York: Routledge, 1989

Interview with Julian Barnes: <http://www.julianbarnes.com/>

Seminar 3. Discussion

1. Present a brief timeline of American literature from pre-colonial to contemporary as well as the historical and cultural contexts underlying each time period to better understand events that have shaped it. Draw the literary timeline.
2. Explore and synthesize your understanding of how race, ethnicity, gender, and class characterize multi-ethnic writers' experiences in America (substantiate it by the book you have read). Complete the table by writing the ethnic multitude and characteristics of American fiction.
3. Describe the peculiarities of late 20th -early 21st-century American literature, the dominant themes and genres. What is the philosophical background of late 20th -early 21st-century American literature? (substantiate it by the book you have read). Write and think critically about how literary works characterize the writing experiences in American literature.

Compare and contrast the various 21st-century genres and the ones from the earlier periods, citing their elements, structures and traditions. Design a diagram that compares 21st-century literary genres.

4. Identify the major literary devices and tropes that contemporary American authors utilise and prepare a table with their definitions and characteristics.

Seminar 4. Discussion

- 1) What are the characteristic features of late 20th -early 21st-century Canadian literature? Identify geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Canadian literary history and representative texts. Articulate notable aspects within the history of Canadian fiction. Point out whether you see any differences with American literature.
- 2) Describe the key features of contemporary postcolonial literatures, explain your understanding of the term, its theoretical, geographical and national explications.
- 3) Identify the major literary devices and tropes that contemporary Canadian and postcolonial authors utilise and prepare a table with their definitions and characteristics.
- 4) Select a contemporary American/Canadian writer to research and become an expert on. This can be a writer we have discussed in classes or another American writer you would like to focus on. You will read at least one piece of their works, learn about their biography, and see what scholars have to say about their pieces of writing.

***Authors to consider:** *Marilynne Robinson, Rick Moody, William T. Vollmann, Matt Betts, Cherie Priest, David Foster Wallace, Jonathan Franzen, Donna Tartt, Stephen King, Toni Morrison, China Miéville, Junot Díaz, Jeff Vander Meer, K. J. Bishop, Saul Bellow, Khaled Hosseini, Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Mavis Gallant, Marian Engels, Aritha van Herk, Yann Martel, Emma Donoghue.*

Seminar 5. Literary Analysis Essay

Prepare and **write a 2000-word essay in English** on an aspect related to the contents of the course **Contemporary Anglophone literature** using correct English (at a C1 level).

Writing Your Literary Analysis

Step one: Read the work for its literal meaning. Make sure you understand the plot of the play or novel and who the characters are.

Step two: Annotate the play or novel--underline descriptions that seem significant to you. Write down your reactions, questions, and comments.

Step three: Draw a picture of the story or draw a character map that notes how you feel about each main character in the beginning of the work and how you feel about the main characters at the end of the work.

Step four: Review your notes about what you read.

Step five: Decide what question you want to answer about the works you are analyzing. Your thesis is the answer to your question. Try to develop an interesting thesis and interpretation. Choose the quotes and evidence in the story that support your thesis.

When writing your literary analysis:

- ✓ focus on specific attributes of the text
- ✓ discussing those attributes, make sure you use specific arguable theses to substantiate them

- ✓ defend your point with reasons and evidence drawn from the text
- ✓ use critical reading on the selected author and the piece of writing you are considering to substantiate your arguments
- ✓ analyse the selected literary texts from the perspective of the critical approaches and methods presented in the theory sessions

Suggested Structure of Your Literary Analysis Essay

I. Introduction

Summarize what each work is about in one sentence. Don't forget to mention the title of the each work you are analyzing and who the author is.

State the main point or thesis of your essay. Your thesis should answer a question about an important element in the piece of literature works. For instance, you might answer the question: What do you think was the main point the author was trying to make about his/her subject (theme) or what was the author trying to show through one of the characters?

II. Body

Explain your first point connected to your thesis and support it with quotations from the book (*consider the type of narrative, the structure, plot, conflict, setting, figurative language and tropes and supported by quotations*).

Explain your second point connected to your thesis and support it with quotations from the book.

Explain the most important idea connected to your thesis. Discuss your interpretation and support it with quotations from the book.

(Nota bene: Be careful not to re-tell the story without giving your interpretations. A better analysis would focus on your interpretation, not on synopsising the story.)

III. Conclusion: You can summarize your main points, and connect them to your thesis. You can connect your interpretation to a larger theme in the novel or you can explain what you learned about human nature or the complexity of human experience through the novel.

***On the basis of your essay, prepare a class presentation**

***Assessment:**

- Independence, originality and critical examination = 40%.
- Information structure and organization of the essay. Text layout. Correct use of English language and style appropriateness = 30%.
- Reasoning capacity to exemplify, illustrate, propose textual evidence and defend the student's own point of view critically = 30%.

USEFUL LINKS:

<https://www.scribbr.com/academic-essay/literary-analysis/>

<https://www.coursehero.com/study-guides/introliterature/how-to-analyze-a-novel/>

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/teacher_and_tutor_resources/teaching_resources/writing_a_literary_analysis_presentation.html

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