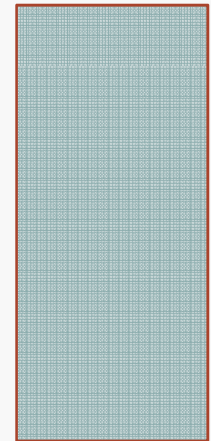




MODERNISM IN LITERATURE

SEM III, PAPER CC6



DEFINITION

- Modernism is a literary and cultural international movement which flourished in the first four decades of the 20th century. It reflects a sense of cultural crisis which was both exciting and disquieting, in that it opened up a whole new vista of human possibilities at the same time as putting into question any previously accepted means of grounding and evaluating new ideas. Modernism is marked by experimentation, particularly manipulation of form, and by the realization that knowledge is not absolute.

DEFINITION

- **Modernism**
 - a term typically associated with the twentieth-century reaction against realism and romanticism within the arts. More generally, it is often used to refer to a twentieth century belief in the virtues of science, technology and the planned management of social change.
- **Modernity**
 - refers to a period extending from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (in the case of Europe) to the mid to late twentieth century characterized by the growth and strengthening of a specific set of social practices and ways of doing things. It is often associated with capitalism and notions such as progress.

MODERNISM AS A MOVEMENT

- Modernism was built on a sense of lost community and civilization and was made up of a series of contradictions , embraced multiple features of modern sensibility
 - Revolution and conservatism
 - Loss of a sense of tradition
 - Increasing dominance of technology



THEMATIC FEATURES

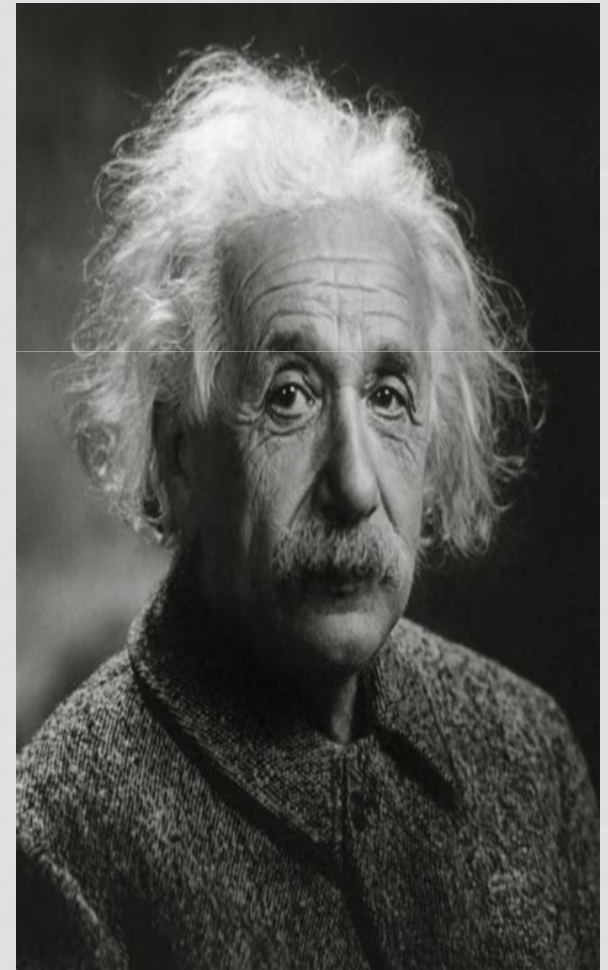
- Intentional distortion of shapes
- Focus on form rather than meaning
- Breakdown of social norms and cultural values
- Dislocation of meaning and sense from its normal context
- Disillusionment
- Rejection of history and the substitution of a mythical past
- Need to reflect the complexity of modern urban life □
Importance of the unconscious mind
- Interest in the primitive and non-western cultures
- Impossibility of an absolute interpretation of reality
- Overwhelming technological changes

MODERNISTS

- challenged the idea that God played an active role in the world, which led them to challenge the Victorian assumption that there was meaning and purpose behind world events.
- instead, Modernists argued that no thing or person was born for a specific use; instead, they found or made their own meaning in the world.
- Challenging the Victorian dichotomy between "civilized" and "savage," Modernists reversed the values associated with each kind of culture.

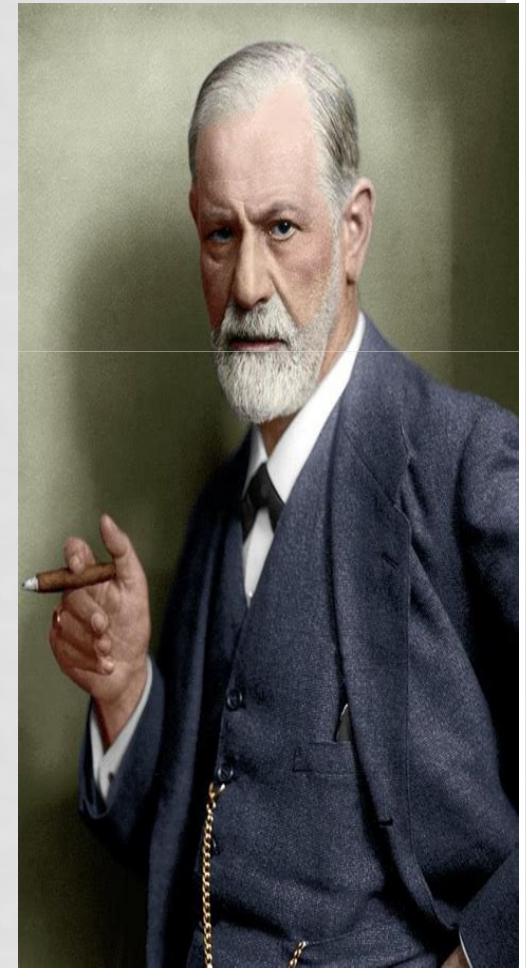
ALBERT EINSTEIN (1879-1955)

- The Theory of General Relativity
 1. A metric theory of gravitation
 2. Einstein's equations link the geometry of a four-dimensional space-time with the energy-momentum contained in that space-time
 3. Phenomena ascribed to the action of the force of gravity in classical mechanics, correspond to inertial motion within a curved geometry of space-time
 4. The curvature is caused by the energy-momentum of matter Space-time tells matter how to move
 5. Matter tells space-time how to curve.



SIGMUND FREUD (1856-1938)

- Austrian psychologist and psychotherapist
- Discovered a new method to investigate the mind through analysis of dreams and free associations
- Known for his theories of the unconscious mind and the defense mechanism of repression
- Renowned for his redefinition of sexual desire as the primary motivational energy of human life directed toward a wide variety of objects
- Famous for his therapeutic techniques, including theory of transference in the therapeutic relationship, value of dreams as sources of insight into unconscious desires



FORMAL FEATURES OF POETRY

- Open form
- Use of free verse
- Juxtaposition of ideas rather than consequential exposition
- Inter-textuality
- Use of allusions and multiple association of words
- Borrowings from other cultures and languages
- unconventional use of metaphor
- Importance given to sound to convey “the music of ideas”

FREE VERSE

- Use of poetic line
- Flexibility of line length
- Massive use of alliteration and assonance
- No use of traditional metre
- No regular rhyme scheme
- Use of visual images in distinct lines

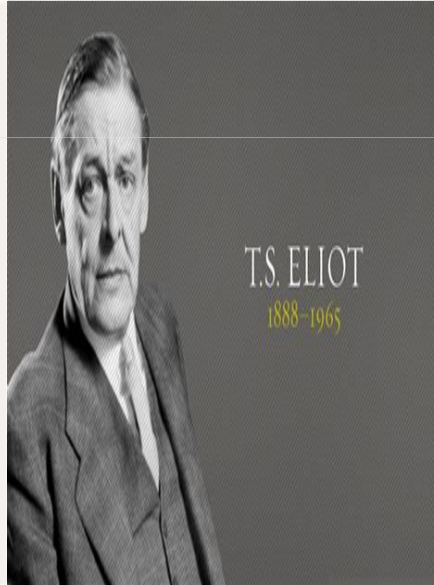
MODERNIST POETS

1. W.B. Yeats
2. Ezra Pound
3. T.S. Eliot
4. Emily Dickinson

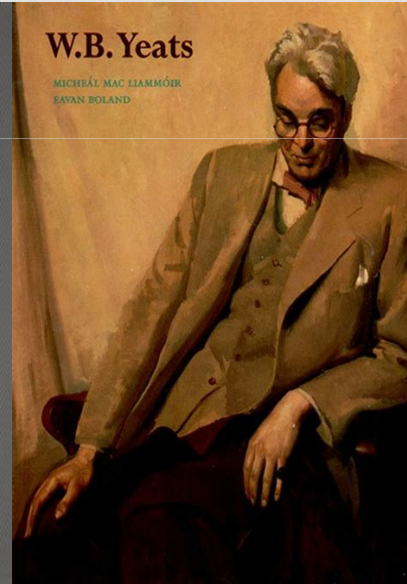


"Music begins to atrophy when it departs too far from the dance... poetry begins to atrophy when it gets too far from music."

Ezra Pound

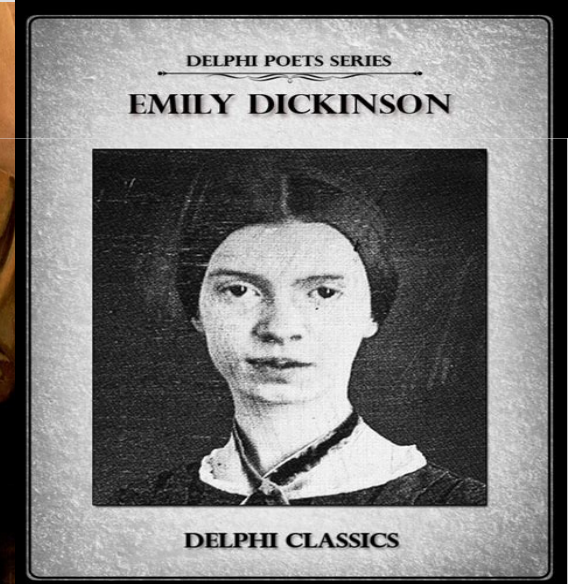


T.S. ELIOT
1888-1965



W.B. Yeats

MICHAEL MAC LAMMOIR
EAVAN BOLAND

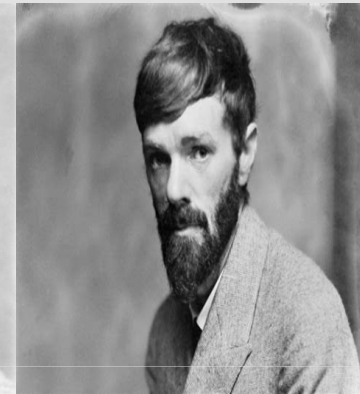


DELPHI POETS SERIES
EMILY DICKINSON

DELPHI CLASSICS

MODERNIST NOVELISTS

- J. Joyce
- V. Woolf
- D.H. Lawrence
- J. Conrad
- E.M. Forster
- E. Hemingway
- W. Faulkner
- K. Mansfield
- F. Scott Fitzgerald



LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

- "a general term applied retrospectively to the wide range of experimental & avant-garde trends in the literature (and other arts) of the early 20th century....
- characterized chiefly by a rejection of 19th century traditions and of their consensus between author and reader: realism ... or traditional meter.
- Modernist writers tended to see themselves as an avant-garde, disengaged from bourgeois values, and disturbed their readers by adopting complex and difficult new forms and styles.
- Modernist writing is predominantly cosmopolitan, and often expresses a sense of urban cultural dislocation, along with an awareness of new anthropological and psychological theories. Its favored techniques of juxtaposition and multiple point of view challenge the reader to reestablish a coherence of meaning from fragmentary forms."

FORMAL FEATURES OF NARRATIVE

- Experimental nature
- Lack of traditional chronological narrative (discontinuous narrative)
- Moving from one level of narrative to another
- A number of different narrators (multiple narrative points of view)
- Self-reflexive about the act of writing and the nature of literature (meta-narrative)
- Use of interior monologue technique
- Use of the stream of consciousness technique
- Focus on a character's consciousness and subconscious

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

- Aims to provide a textual equivalent to the stream of a fictional character's consciousness
- Creates the impression that the reader is eavesdropping on the flow of conscious experience in the character's mind
- Comes in a variety of stylistic forms
- Narrated stream of consciousness often composed of different sentence types including free indirect style
- characterized by associative (and at times dissociative) leaps in syntax and punctuation

INTERIOR MONOLOGUE

- A particular kind of stream of consciousness writing
- Also called quoted stream of consciousness, presents characters' thought streams exclusively in the form of silent inner speech, as a stream of verbalised thoughts
- Represents characters speaking silently to themselves and quotes their inner speech, often without speech marks
- Is presented in the first person and in the present tense and employs deictic words
- also attempts to mimic the unstructured free flow of thought
- can be found in the context of third-person narration and dialogue

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