

What is it?

- The term modernism refers to the radical shift in aesthetic and cultural sensibilities evident in the art and literature of the post-World War One period.
- Modernism thus marks a distinctive break with Victorian bourgeois morality; rejecting nineteenth-century optimism, they presented a profoundly **pessimistic picture of a culture in disarray**. This despair often results in an **apparent apathy and moral relativism**.

The Authors

- In literature, the movement is associated with the works of (among others)
 - Eliot,
 - James Joyce,
 - Virginia Woolf,
 - W.B. Yeats, in Great Britain;
 - Ezra Pound,
 - Gertrude Stein, in America;
 - the Czech Franz Kafka and
 - the Norwegian Knut Hamsun.
- Modernism had to wait until **AFTER the SECOND WORLD WAR** before it had its great impact on the English theatre.
- The most influential figure in the field of drama was the Irishman **SAMUEL BECKETT**.

Literary Devices



- In their attempt to throw off the aesthetic burden of the realist novel, these writers introduced a variety of literary tactics and devices:
 - the radical disruption of linear flow of narrative
 - the frustration of conventional expectations concerning unity and coherence of plot and character
 - the opposition of inward consciousness to rational, public, objective discourse

Traditional literature

- In Dickens it was complex (plots and sub-plots);
- in Lawrence it was autobiographical.


Modernism

- It's meaningless;
- It has little importance;
- There isn't real plot.


Modernism

- Physical descriptions are absent;
- People are represented only by their thoughts.




Traditional literature

- Realistic characters: they are described both in their physical and psychological features.
- We may have flat characters or round characters.






Modernism

- There is only a general idea of setting; Little importance is given to it;
- Sometimes it has only a symbolic function.




Traditional literature

- Real setting, well described;
- in Dickens it is consistent with the subsequent action.




Modernism

- Depending on the subject's mind;
- Fading and dissolving;
- Both "Ulysses" and "The Waste Land" deal with a single day.




Traditional literature

- The events are generally related in a chronological order or with the use of flash backs.


Modernism

- New language to describe the thinking process; association of ideas;
- use of the STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS expressed through the INTERIOR MONOLOGUE technique.




Traditional literature

- Traditional language and traditional punctuation; sometimes used in a highly poetical way (Lawrence)





Modernism

- The reader has an active role and has to give his own subjective interpretation.




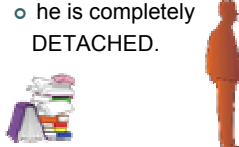
Traditional literature

- His role is passive: he is taught, entertained, emotionally involved.

Modernism

- The author stands apart from his work,
- he is completely DETACHED.

Traditional literature

- We have omniscient narrators (Dickens) and non-omniscient ones; we also have intruding and non-intruding narrators.

