

# Modern & Contemporary Literature

## Unit Four



When you get home you will take your  
and after you have killed them by force or fraud  
you must take a well-made net and carry it to a certain  
to a country where the people have never heard of the sea  
even mix salt with their food, nor do they know anything about  
and oars that are as the wings of a ship. I will give you this certain  
token which cannot escape your notice. I will give you this certain  
will say it must be a winnowing shovel that you carry over your  
shoulder, on this you must fix the ear in the ground and sacrifice a  
ram, a bull, and a boar to Neptune. Then go home and offer  
hecatombs to an the gods in heaven one after the other. As for your  
self, death shall come to you from the sea, and your life shall fly  
away very gently when you are full of years and peace of mind.

# In History

- 1914: WWI
- 1920: Influences of Mass Media
- 1924: Harlem Renaissance
- 1929: Great Depression
- 1941: WWII
- 1950: Segregation declared unconstitutional
- 1965: US lands in Vietnam
- 2003: Desert Storm



# In Literature

Classicism

Age of Faith

Age of Reason

Romanticism

American Gothic

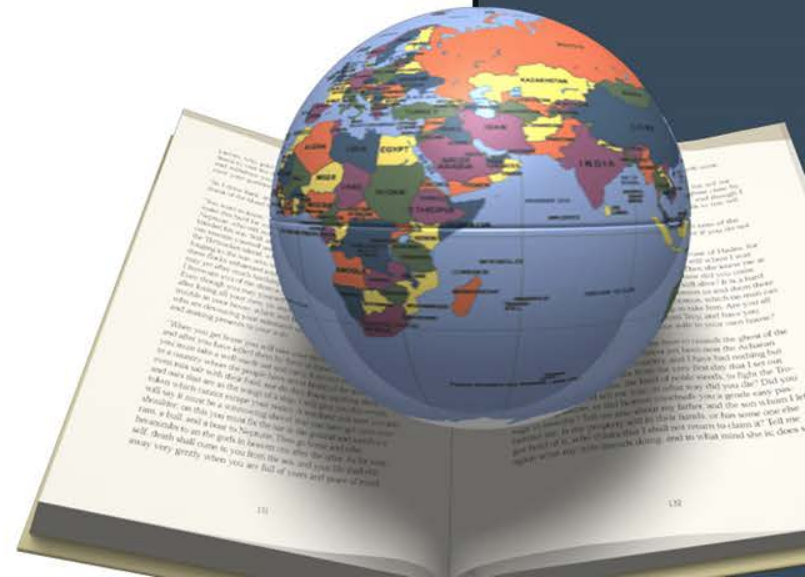
Transcendentalism

Realism

Regionalism

Modernism

Contemporary



# Modernism

1890 – 1930: “The Age of the Short Story”

Stories popularity due to American temperament and growth of magazines

“lost generation” alienated by WWI

Wrote fragmentary stories without traditional beginning or endings



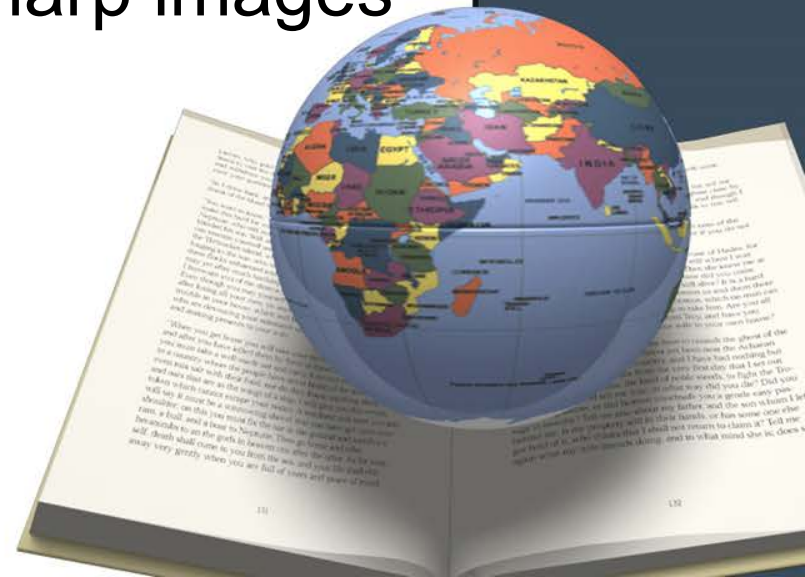
# Contemporary

- 1945 – Present
- Media saturated culture
  - people observe life as media presents it rather than experiencing life directly
- Insistence that values are not permanent but only "local" or "historical"
- Increased social protest



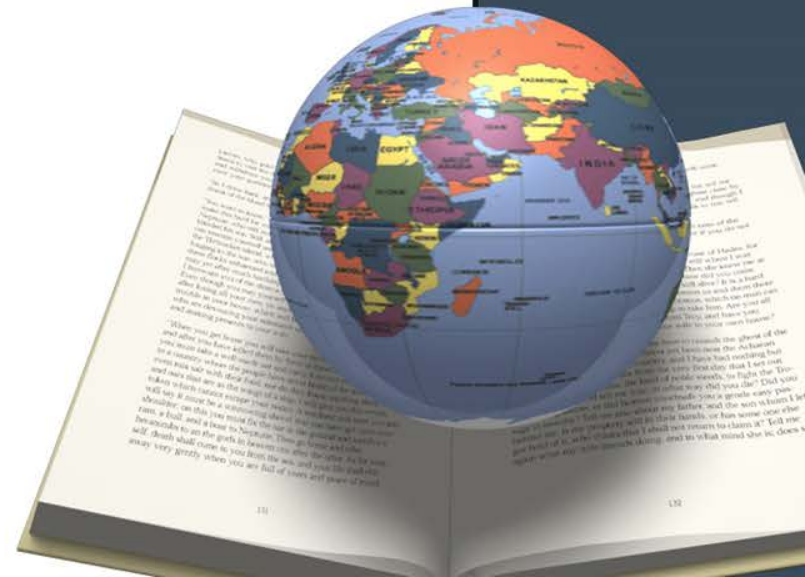
# Ernest Hemingway

- Writer, photographer, war correspondent, world traveler
- Known for his style in which he chose to tell a story: short sentences, objective tone, few adverbs/adjectives, sharp images
- Modernism



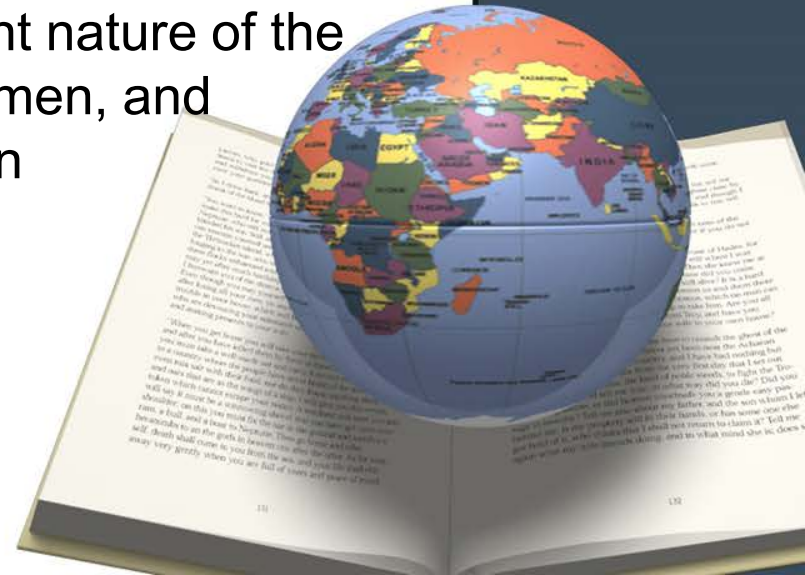
# William Faulkner

- Nobel Prize in Literature 1949
- Theme: decay of the old South and the emergence of ruthless and brash newcomers, the distortion of time through the use of the inner monologue
- Highly experimental
- Modernism



# F. Scott Fitzgerald

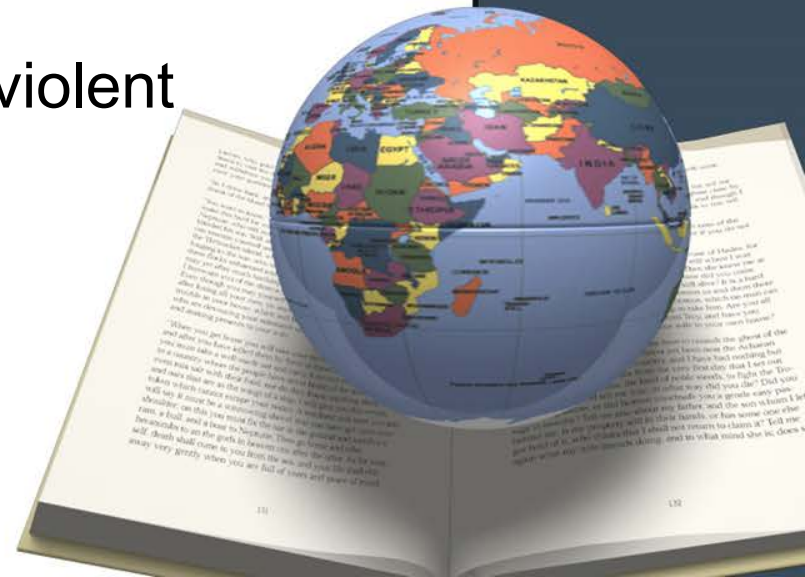
- Considered a member of the “lost generation”
- Wrote “The Great Gatsby,” “The Beautiful and Damned,” “Tender is the Night”
- A friend of Hemingway
- Theme: Focused on the self-indulgent nature of the “lost generation,” newly liberated women, and questionable morals of his generation
- Modernism





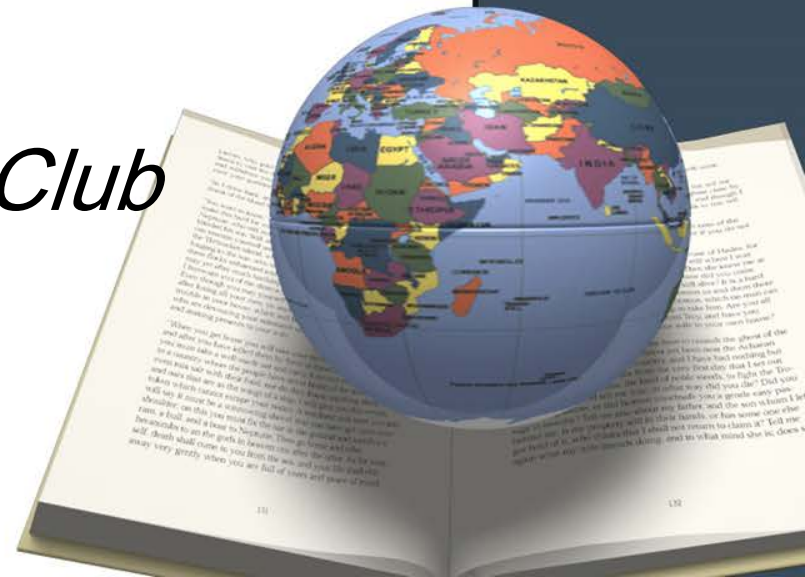
# Malcolm X

- 1964 fame: shocking violence against civil rights workers (clubbed, tear-gassed, beaten, torched, bombed)
- Grew impatient with the crimes that frequently went unpublished and unpunished against African American.
- Also impatient with MLK's nonviolent tactics
- Contemporary



# Chuck Palahniuk

- Relies on the craft of minimalism
- Focuses on questioning the values of social expectations
  - No specific antagonist
- Bio: University of Oregon, Journalist, Teacher,
- Most famous for *Fight Club*
- Contemporary



## Questions of the times:

- What is modern?
- Can morals survive catastrophe?
- What drives human behavior?
- What makes an American?

