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THE SOUTHERN LITERATURE AND ITS BASIC FEATURES IN LITERATURE

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Abstract: During the Southern Renaissance, many significant changes and unprecedented works were created in American literature. Budavr literary samples are distinguished by several features. This article analyzes the emergence of the southern renaissance and some of its similarities and differences. Bright manifestations of the southern renaissance and their bright works are mentioned in the article.

Key words: literature, southern renaissance, World War I, William Faulkner, Mark Twain.

Southern Renaissance" explores some of the ways writers who lived in, wrote about, or were otherwise associated with the South between 1920 and 1950 responded to the many changes during the period. Those changes included new developments in science, rapid industrialization, increasing urbanization, and large-scale immigration—primarily from the sagging South to the more robust North. Historians sometimes refer to these massive social and cultural transformations of the early twentieth century as distinctively "modern."

After the Civil War, Southern literature had been mostly of the Local Color variety, as Thomas Nelson Page became one of the most prolific Southern writers in post bellum America with his plantation myth stories. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, a number of Southern writers, educated, well-traveled, and well-read, began to break from the "moonlight and magnolias" tradition of Page that evinced nostalgia for the Old South. James Lane Allen from Kentucky, Kate Chopin and Grace King from Louisiana, Ellen Glasgow, Amélie Rives, and Mary Johnston from Virginia took on a wide variety of edgy topics in their works, including a critique of traditional social roles for women and an exploration of sexual desire repressed by rigid cultural norms. Ellen Glasgow, in particular, led the way toward a new Southern literature in her call for more "blood and irony" in Southern fiction. She calls for an invigorated literature that rejects the false veneer of Southern culture and probes the reality of life that is limited or repressed by rigid social norms and develops characters who exhibit fortitude and endurance in spite of such limitations. She is the first voice of the Southern Renaissance, which bloomed fully in the 1920s and 30s within the Modernist temperament of the early twentieth century. Another seminal "call" for a new Southern literature came in 1917 when cultural critic H. L. Mencken published his famous essay, "The Sahara of the Bozart," in the New York Evening Mail. Mencken's acerbic wit was biting, as he likened

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Southern culture to the sterility of the Sahara Desert. After World War I, writers such as William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Eudora Welty, Katherine Anne Porter, John Crowe Ransom, and Robert Penn Warren responded to this call by producing a body of literary work that won national and international acclaim as part of a revival of Southern letters and culture. William Faulkner, in particular, who went on to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1949, created a body of work against which future Southern writers would be measured. William Faulkner is usually seen as the most significant Southern Renaissance writer. His complicated and vivid image of the southern past is at once a critique and celebration of the region's culture and historic legacies.

The Southern Renaissance's writers adopted a new critical spirit, critiquing the past and present of southern society in ways few previous authors had. In many ways, the Southern Renaissance writers were building off the earlier legacy of writers such as Mark Twain and some African American writers like Charles W. Chest nutt, bringing this critical spirit into mainstream southern literature.

The first wave of writers in the Southern Renaissance probed a number of themes, but for the most part the writers had to come to terms with the South's past, particularly slavery. Racial tensions, racial inequality, white guilt associated with slavery, and the haunting specter of slavery became themes and motifs throughout the literature. Writers also attempted to define the South as a distinct and unique place rather than as simply a region of the United States, especially within the context of social and economic changes that were beginning to erase the distinctive features of the South. Narrative techniques in the literature from this time period are often borrowed from oral storytelling or from other oral traditions in Southern culture, traditions such as preaching, conversing, and memorializing. First Wave writers, like their Local Color predecessors, attempted to capture in print the distinctive features of Southern dialects that were beginning to disappear. Religion and religious images infused much of Southern writing during this time. A particular sub-genre of Southern writing emerged: the Southern gothic story or novel. Southern gothic writing borrowed from elements of eighteenth-century British works written in the style of Gothic, or "Dark Romanticism." In these stories the fantastic and the macabre were central. In the Southern gothic, writers focused less on supernatural events and more on ways in which the seemingly pretty, orderly surface veneer of the Southern social order hid deep, dark, disturbing secrets or distorted the dark nature of reality behind the curtain of respectability and gentility. Most Southern gothic works also contain some aspect of the grotesque as well. This sub-genre of Southern literature, often termed the Southern grotesque, features images of physical disfigurement, physical decay, mental disability, incest, deviance, extreme violence, illness, suffering, and death. The grotesque motif features prominently in most Southern gothic stories and comment, usually, on some aspects of a disintegrating people and culture.

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In conclusion, the following comment about Southern Renaissance is very vital for learners who want to learn this period. All the writers in this time are very remarkable. Following Carol S. Manning's argument that "the real beginning" of the Southern Renaissance anticipates by a generation or more the standard dating of the phenomenon to the post-World War I decade, this chapter links the achievements of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century women writers who were instrumental in guiding the region's literature and art into intellectual modernity, to a distinguished interwar cohort of women authors who inherited and extended their predecessors' critique of the American South. It situates figures like Kate Chopin, Pauline Hopkins, Frances Harper, Ida B. Wells, Mary Noialles Murfree, Anna Julia Cooper, Helen Keller, and Ellen Glasgow as inaugurators of a "long Renascence" that reaches from the 1880s to the 1950s to include now-canonical authors like Katherine Anne Porter, Nella Larsen, Caroline Gordon, Zora Neale Hurston, Eudora Welty, Lillian Hellman, Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, and Lillian Smith, alongside lesser-studied writers like Julia Peterkin, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Evelyn Scott, Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald, Frances Newman, Grace Lumpkin, and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings.

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