

## The Rise of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Novel in the Inter-War Phase

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### Abstract

One cannot talk about the twentieth century American literature without referring back to some of the important issues that took place formerly in the second half of the nineteenth century. Consequently, most of the scholars and critics of American literature agree that the twentieth century American literature – “twentieth-century renaissance” originated in the previous century (Sculley, 1999, p. 12). Invocations of a great American novel began in the early nineteenth century during the period of “literary nationalism” between the middle of the century, and the turn of the nineteenth century into the twentieth (Thompson, 2012, p. 17). Basically, one can consider the period from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century up till the end of the Second World War (WWII) as the time when the American literature reached its peak (Sculley, p. 906). The First World War (WWI) that constituted a broadcasting experience for many writers engendered the war novel. Moreover, the world depression in 1929 and its consequences in the 1930s grouped young American writers to express their malaise and feeling of their anxiety of the currents, by exploring the spiritual nature of man and the value of the American society and institutions. This paper investigates the circumstances that developed the American novel from being a mere reproduction of world works to become a novel reflecting the American authors’ maturity and enriching the world literatures with works of an American touch.

**Keywords:** American expatriate writers, inter-war period, moral standards, social novel, war novel