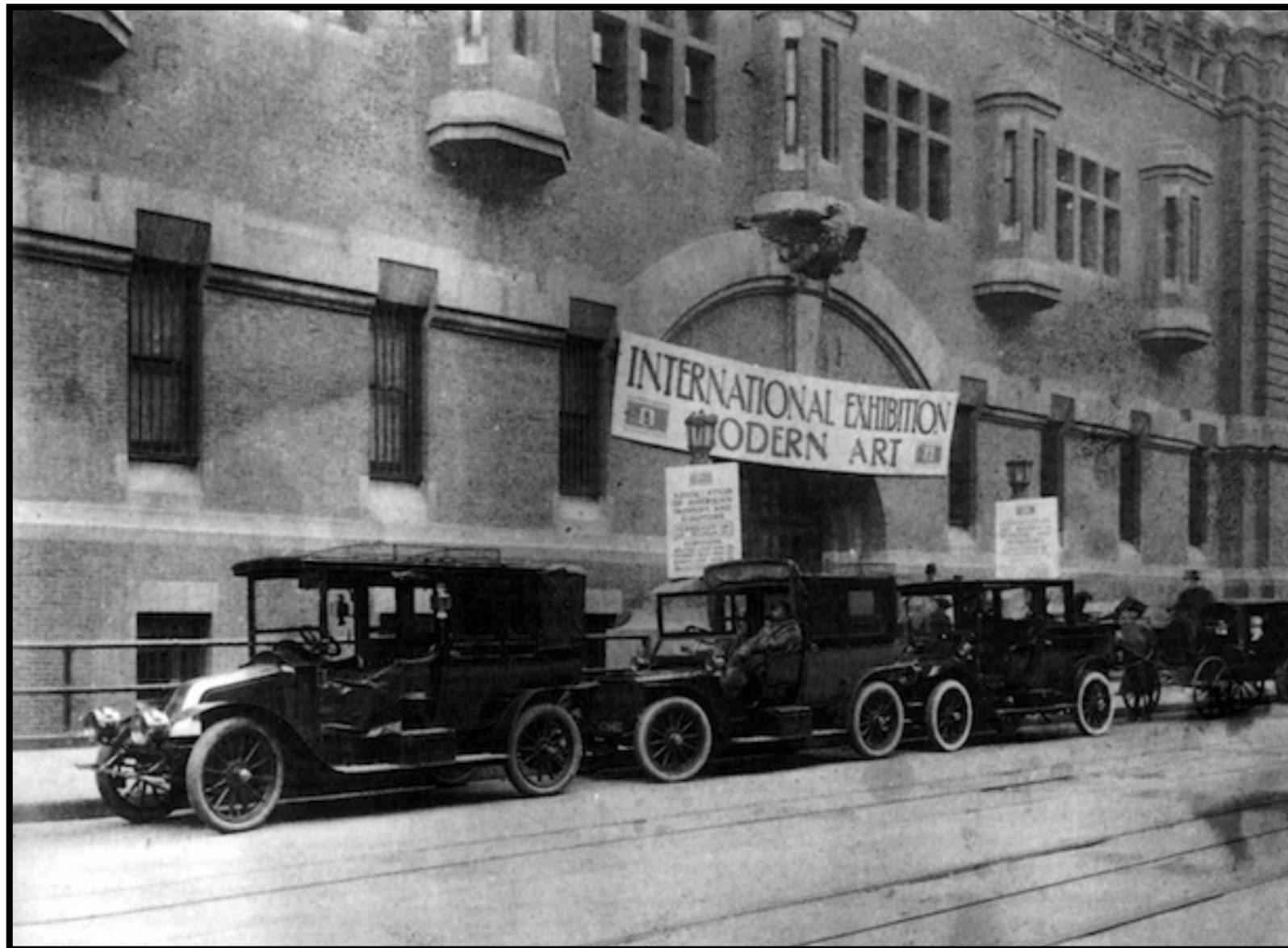


# The Modern Age

## 1890-1930



Valentina Miorin  
class 5BLS - Liceo Scientifico "A. Einstein"  
anno scolastico 2014/2015

# Before the First World War...

- By 1890 modernization in country such as **France, Germany, Japan and the United States**
- **International competition:** England lost the supremacy
- Atmosphere of tension
- The European nations made **defensive alliances**

# The First World War (1914-1918)

- A turning point in the history of the world
- It shocked a whole generation
- Science and industry had not produced a better world
- The war seemed to destroy European self-confidence



# After the First World War...

- The war marked the end of European domination of the world
- **Russia** and the **USA**: bilateral power
- **Economic depression**: unemployment among the working class
- Fall of Values



# Economic depression

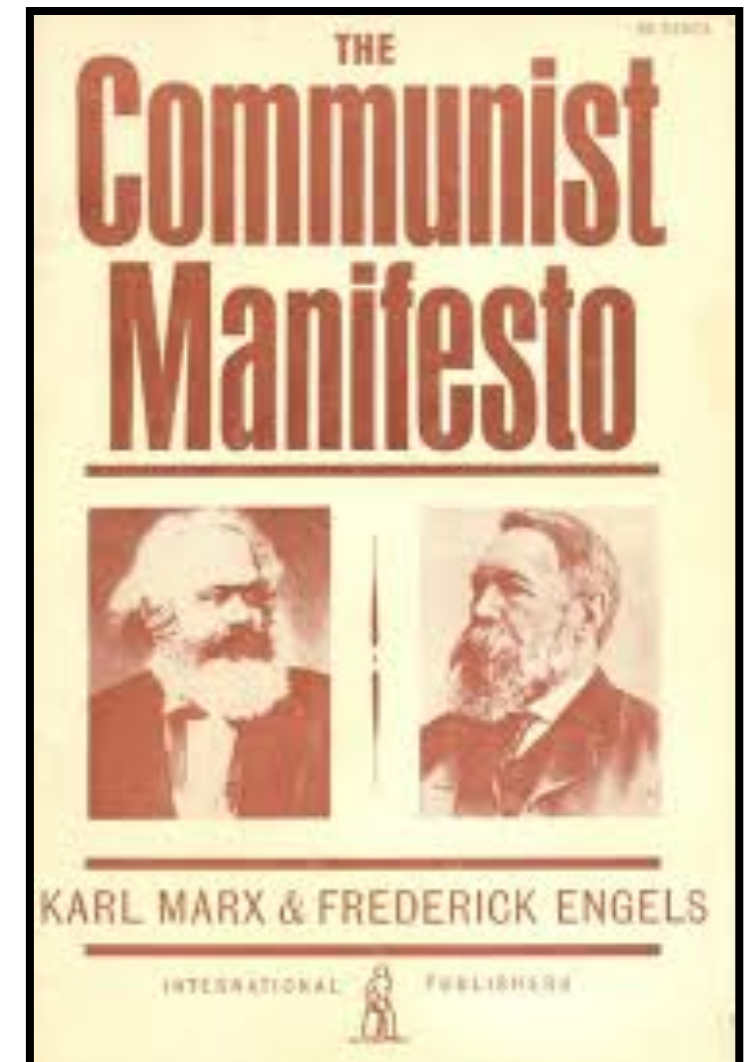
- Serious unemployment among the working class
- The “**laissez-fair**” does not necessarily produce benefits
- Pressure for changes of the working class
- State must exercise some control of the economy
- Basis of the modern **Welfare State**





# Socialism and Communism

- 1848: the **Communist Manifesto** by Marx
- The working class wants to take power
- 1917: the **Bolshevik party**
- **Lenin** took control of the Russian state in the name of the Russian working class
- Bolshevik influence in Germany and in France



# **Marxism offered an optimistic secure view of the future nevertheless...**

- Life without a meaning and without God
- Sense of man's isolation
- Spiritual vulnerability in a world which did not seem to be a part of any divine plan
- Fall of values
- Doubt and insecurity

# The literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

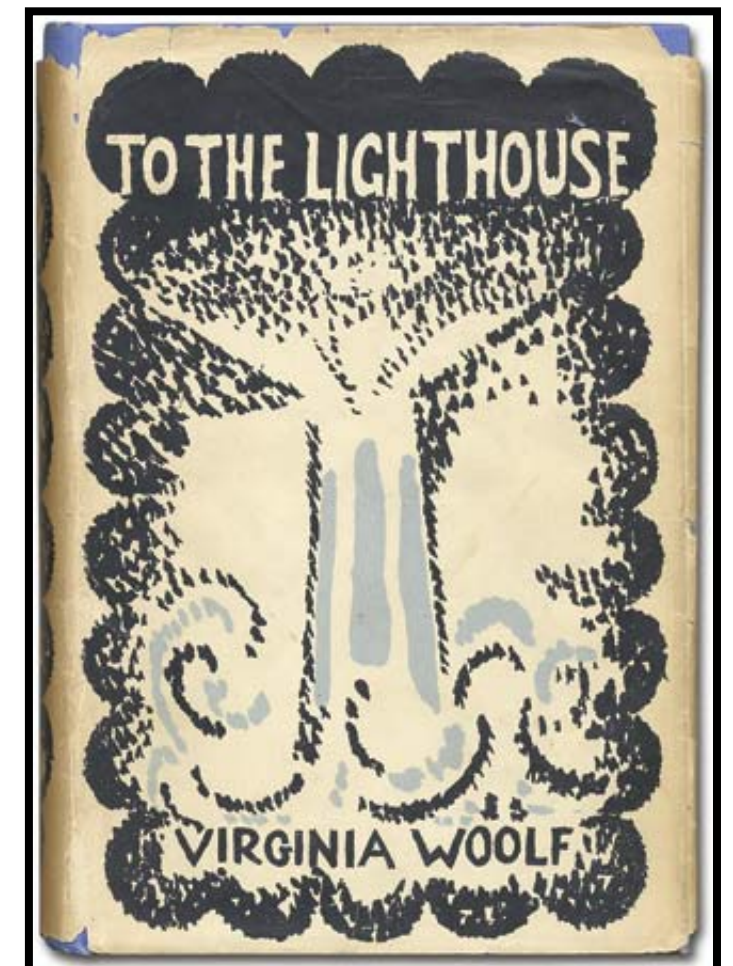
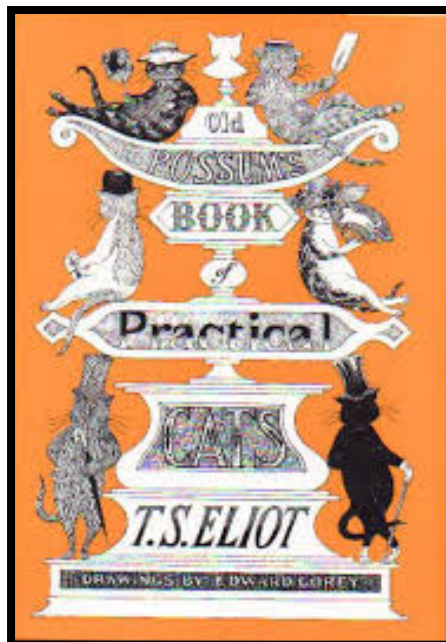
Different responses in different cases:

- **T. Hardy** and J. Conrad were pessimist
- **V. Woolf**, D.H. Lawrence and E.M. Forster found in personal relationship a substitute for the divine love
- Hilaire Belloc, G.K. Chesterton and **T.S. Eliot** ignored their rational doubts and became Christians
- G.B. Shaw and H.G. Wells dedicated themselves to social reform



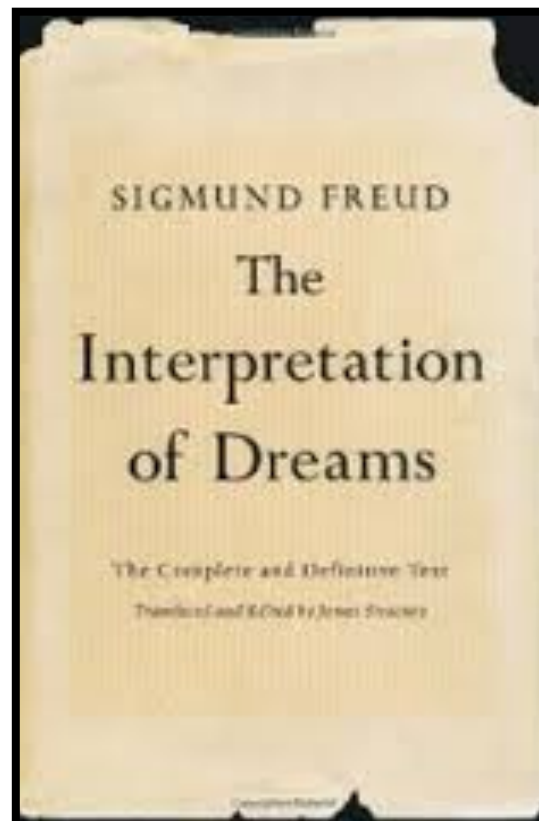
# Features of the writers

- They don't present their own version of reality
- They don't offer the reader an alternative point of view
- The novelist disappears from his own work
- Moral criticism and humorous observation are absent in the novels



# New theories

- 1906: Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity
- Henri Bergson and W.James rejected conventional ideas of time
- 1900: The Interpretation of Dreams by Sigmund Freud



# Literature before the war

- English poetry at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was sentimental, pastoral (as the poems of T.Hardy)
- The Georgian Period after George V
- Regret for a world which would not return
- The Symbolist poets influenced the writers of the Aesthetic Movement
- Ezra Pound and T.S.Eliot produced poetry which broke with the Victorian tradition

**THANK YOU  
FOR  
LISTENING**