



Unlike other literary forms that we can fix to specific texts and periods - It's almost a challenge to pinpoint the origin of poetry or the first work of poetry. When most of us think about poetry, we tend to think of Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth, but that was much later in literature. Poetry is the beginning of everything, some epics are long poems. And, poetry kept on changing with time, from Elizabethan sonnets to poems that often did not rhyme, with world war poems, it kept evolving with time with the poets and their words. So, in this article, we will read about the ***origin and History of poetry*** and try to figure out the aspects of it such as sonnets and more.

*The Epic of Gilgamesh* is often referred to as the earliest work of epic poetry which go back to the 18th century BCE. It was found during archaeological excavations - it is a text that was discovered via several different Babylonian tablet versions, consisting of Sumerian poems. One other example of the earliest works might include the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* of Hindu Mythology. The two most popular works of epic poetry at eat in the Western World are *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, both of them are of Greek Mythology written by Homer.



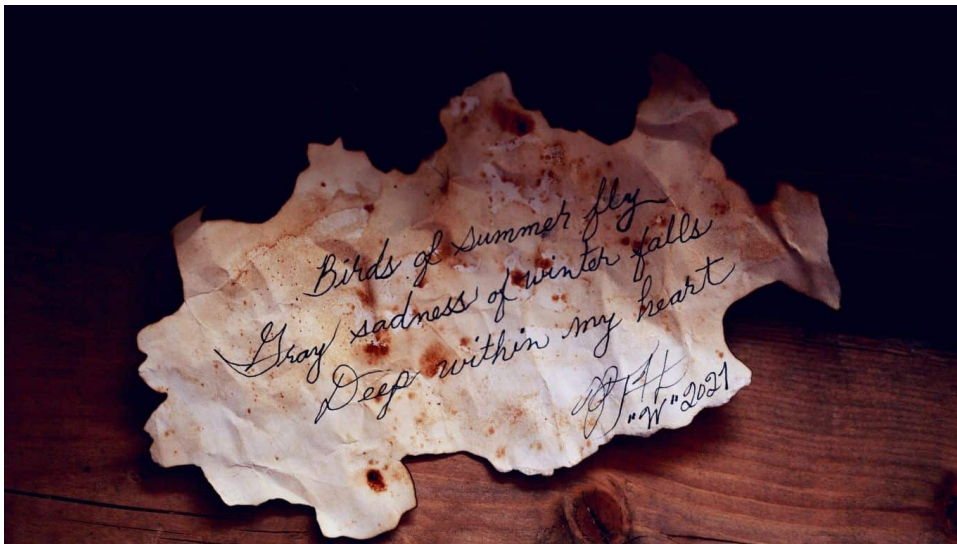
### ***Origin and History of Poetry***

We cannot talk about poetry and skip sonnets. So, the most we know about sonnets is



perhaps the differentiation between *Petrarchan* and *Shakespearean sonnets* that we learned in school or college. But it is important to know that sonnets are essential to the history of verse. Traditionally, sonnets are composed in iambic pentameter and the rhyme scheme differs depending on whether you are dealing with an English or Italian poem. Petrarcha is perhaps one of the most popular early poets of the sonnet. Following his writings in the 13th century, other poets followed his footsteps and created variations of sonnets, one of the most popular among them is the Shakespearean sonnets of the 16th century.

But how did poetry transform from the epic poetry of Homer to the modern poetry of T.S. Eliot, Seamus Heaney, and Derek Walcott? The experiment with poetic forms didn't begin in the 20th century it started many years prior.



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Following the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, the English Restoration Period (1660-1689) of the literary era saw the rise of popular writers such as *John Dryden*. Maybe one of the best popular names in the English translation, literary criticism, poetry, and drama, Dryden made his name popular as a poet of *mock-heroic and mock-epic poems*. The form of a mock-heroic poem and use of satire did not end with Dryden, *Alexander Pope* who is famous for



*The Rape of the Lock*, carried on Dryden's tradition of utilizing poetry for comical endings.

If we talk about the 19th century we need to have a separate article, because the 19th century gave a whole new meaning to poetry. The Romantic period stopped following the convention and with *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) *William Wordsworth* and *Samuel Taylor Coleridge* started a new form of poetry. Other known Romantic poets are *John Keats*, *William Blake*, *Percy Bysshe Shelley*, and *Lord Byron*.



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If you are familiar with American poetry, then you must be familiar with names such as *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, *William Cullen Bryant*, and *Oliver Wendell Holmes*, they are some of the famous fireside poets of this period. In another circle, *Walt Whitman* gave a new spirit to poetry with *Leaves of Grass* (1855) and *Emily Dickinson* offered a new form of poetry with the posthumously published poems with the help of *em-dashes*, *hyphens*, and *language fragments*.

The modernist language of *Gertrude Stein* magnificently overwhelmed American and expatriate readers who bought *Tender Buttons*. Those same readers were started by the works of *T.S. Eliot*, his *stream-of-consciousness*, and his use of ancient languages and spell of former poetical works in his popular poem *The Waste Land* (1927). The 20th-century



literary world witnessed writers of not only America but also witnessed Nobel Prize Winner of 1913 *Rabindranath Tagore*, followed by Irish poet *W.B. Yeats* in 1923 and *Seamus Heaney* in 1995. Other known writers of the 20th century are *Sylvia Plath*, *Maya Angelou*, *Langston Hughes*, *Robert Frost*, *Rainer Maria Rilke*, *Ezra Pound*, *Pablo Neruda*, *Wilfred Owen*, and more.

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