



## CHAPTER ONE

### (( LITERARY CRITICISM ))

#### Part 1 (Critical Approaches)

**Literary Criticism** is the overall term for studies concerned with defining, classifying, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating works of literature. **Theoretical criticism** proposes an explicit **theory** of literature, in the sense of general principles, together with a set of terms, distinctions, and categories, to be applied to identifying and analyzing works of literature, as well as the **criteria** (the standards, or norms) by which these works and their writers are to be evaluated. The earliest, and enduringly important, treatise of theoretical criticism was Aristotle's *Poetics* (fourth century B.C.).

Landmarks of theoretical criticism in the first half of the twentieth century are:

1. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924)
  2. Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941, rev. 1957)
  3. Eric Auerbach, *Mimesis* (1946)
  4. R. S. Crane, ed., *Critics and Criticism* (1952)
  5. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957).
1. **Practical criticism, or applied criticism** concerns itself with the discussion of particular works and writers. Among the more influential works of applied criticism are the literary essays of
1. Dryden in the *Restoration*
  2. Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the English Poets* (1779-81)
  3. Coleridge's chapters on the poetry of Wordsworth in *Biographia Literaria* (1817) and his lectures on Shakespeare
  4. William Hazlitt's lectures on Shakespeare and the English poets
  5. Matthew Arnold's *Essays in Criticism* (1865 and following)
  6. Richards' *Practical Criticism* (1930)
  7. T. S. Eliot's *Selected Essays* (1932)
  8. Critical essays by Virginia Woolf
  9. F. R. Leavis, and Lionel Trilling.
  10. Cleanth Brooks' *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947)

 **Example 1: The phrase 'text and text alone' is the familiar motto of .....**

- 1) New Criticism                      2) Postcolonialism                      3) New-Historicism                      4) Marxism

**Answer:** [1].



Practical criticism is sometimes distinguished into **impressionistic** and **judicial** criticism:

1.1. **Impressionistic criticism** attempts to represent in words the felt qualities of a particular passage or work, and to express the responses (the "impression") that the work directly evokes from the critic.

**Quotes:**

- William Hazlitt in "On Genius and Common Sense" (1824): "You decide from feeling, and not from reason; that is, from the impression of a number of things on the mind . . . though you may not be able to analyze or account for it in the several particulars."
- Walter Pater in the preface to *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873): "the first step toward seeing one's object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly".
- For Anatole France's phrase, this mode of criticism is "the adventures of a sensitive soul among masterpieces."

 **Example 2: The systematic study of literature in Europe begins with .....**

1) Aristotle

2) Plato

3) Longinus

4) Horace

**Answer:** [2].



1.2. **Judicial criticism**, on the other hand, attempts not merely to communicate, but to analyze and explain the effects of a work by reference to its subject, organization, techniques, and style, and to base the critic's individual judgments on specified criteria of literary excellence.

Types of traditional critical theories and of applied criticism can be usefully distinguished according to whether, in explaining and judging a work of literature, they refer the work primarily to

- the outer world (**Mimetic criticism**) → Plato, Aristotle → Realism
- the reader (**Pragmatic criticism**) → Roman Horace → Rhetorical criticism, structuralism
- to the author (**Expressive criticism**) → George Poulet → Psychological and Psychoanalytic critics, Critics of consciousness, Geneva School
- the work as an entity in itself (**Objective criticism**) → Kant → New Critics, Chicago School, Formalism

1. **Mimetic criticism** views the literary work as an imitation, or reflection, or representation of the world and human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is the "truth" of its representation to the subject matter that it represents, or should represent. This mode of criticism, which first appeared in Plato and in Aristotle, remains characteristic of modern theories of literary realism.

2. **Pragmatic criticism** views the work as something which is constructed in order to achieve certain effects on the audience (effects such as aesthetic pleasure, instruction, or kinds of emotion), and it tends to judge the value of the work according to its success in achieving that aim. This approach, which largely dominated literary discussion from the versified *Art of Poetry* by the Roman Horace (first century B.C.) through the eighteenth century, has been revived in recent *rhetorical criticism*, which emphasizes the artistic strategies by which an author engages and influences the responses of readers to the matters represented in a literary work. The pragmatic approach has also been adopted by some *structuralists* who analyze a literary text as a systematic play of codes which effect the interpretative responses of the reader.



3. **Expressive criticism** treats a literary work primarily in relation to its author. It defines poetry as an expression, or overflow, or utterance of feelings, or as the product of the poet's imagination operating on his or her perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. Such views were developed mainly by romantic critics in the early nineteenth century and remain current in our own time, especially in the writings of *psychological and psychoanalytic critics* and in *critics of consciousness* as George Poulet and the Geneva School.
4. **Objective criticism** deals with a work of literature as something which stands free from what is often called "extrinsic" relations to the poet, or to the audience, or to the environing world. Instead it describes the literary product as a self-sufficient and autonomous object, or else as a world-in-itself, which is to be contemplated as its own end, and to be analyzed and judged solely by "intrinsic" criteria such as its complexity, coherence, equilibrium, integrity, and the interrelations of its component elements. The general viewpoint of the self-sufficiency of an aesthetic object was proposed in Kant's *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (1790) and was up by proponents of *art for art's sake* in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and has been elaborated in detailed modes of applied criticism by a number of important critics since the 1920s, including the *New Critics*, the *Chicago School*, and proponents of European *formalism*.

✎ **Example 3:** Sidney wrote "The Defence of Poesy" in response to the Puritan-style attacks of ..... on poetry.

- 1) Edmund Spenser      2) Stephen Gosson      3) William Webbe      4) Roger Ascham

**Answer:** [2].



### Types of Criticism after World War I

Since World War I, and especially since the 1960s, there have appeared a large number of innovative literary theories and methods of critical analysis such as

Russian Formalism	1920s and 1930s
Archetypal criticism	1930s and 1940s
New Criticism; phenomenological criticism	1940s and 1950s
Structuralist criticism; modern forms of feminist criticism; stylistics	1960s
Theory of the anxiety of influence; deconstruction; discourse analysis; various forms of reader-response criticism; reception theory; semiotics; speech-act theory	1970s
Dialogic criticism; new historicism; cultural studies	1980s
Postcolonial studies; queer theory	1990s

✎ **Example 4:** "The secret of all good writing is sound judgment." This is a quotation from .....

- 1) Puttenham      2) Longinus      3) Aristotle      4) Horace

**Answer:** [4].



✎ **Example 5:** The sugar-coated-pill theory of poetry was formulated by .....

- 1) Longinus      2) Aristotle      3) Horace      4) Plato

**Answer:** [3].



### The Most Common Theories of Criticism in Detail

**Archetypal Criticism** In literary criticism the term archetype denotes recurrent narrative designs, patterns of action, character-types, themes, and images which are identifiable in a wide variety of works of literature, as well as in myths, dreams, and even social rituals. Such recurrent items are held to be the result of elemental and universal forms or patterns in the human psyche, whose effective embodiment in a literary work evokes a profound response from the attentive reader, because he or she shares the archetypes expressed by the author. An important antecedent of the literary theory of the archetype was the treatment of myth by a group of comparative anthropologists at Cambridge University, especially James G. Frazer, whose *The Golden Bough* (1890-1915) identified elemental patterns of myth and ritual that, he claimed, recur in the legends and ceremonials of diverse and far-flung cultures and religions. An even more important antecedent was the depth psychology of Carl G. Jung (1875-1961), who applied the term "archetype" to what he called "primordial images," the "psychic residue" of repeated patterns of common human experience in the lives of our very ancient ancestors which, he maintained, survive in the "collective unconscious" of the human race and are expressed in myths, religion, dreams, and private fantasies, as well as in works of literature.

Archetypal literary criticism was given impetus by Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934) and flourished especially during the 1950s and 1960s. Some archetypal critics have dropped Jung's theory of the collective unconscious as the deep source of these patterns; in the words of Northrop Frye, this theory is "an unnecessary hypothesis," and the recurrent archetypes are simply there, "however they got there."

Among the prominent practitioners of various modes of archetypal criticism, in addition to Maud Bodkin, are G. Wilson Knight, Robert Graves, Philip Wheelwright, Richard Chase, Leslie Fiedler, and Joseph Campbell. These critics tend to emphasize the occurrence of mythical patterns in literature, on the assumption that myths are closer to the elemental archetype than the artful manipulations of sophisticated writers. The death-rebirth theme is often said to be the archetype of archetypes, and is held to be grounded in the cycle of the seasons and the organic cycle of human life; this archetype, it has been claimed, occurs in primitive rituals of the king who is annually sacrificed, widespread myths of gods who die to be reborn, and a multitude of diverse texts, including the Bible, Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the early fourteenth century, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" in 1798. Among the other archetypal themes, images, and characters that have been frequently traced in literature are the journey underground, the heavenly ascent, the search for the father, the Paradise-Hades image, the Promethean rebel-hero, the scapegoat, the earth goddess, and the fatal woman.

In his remarkable and influential book *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Northrop Frye developed the archetypal approach—which he combined with the *typological interpretation* of the Bible and the conception of the imagination in the writings of the poet and painter William Blake (1757-1827)—into a radical and comprehensive revision of traditional grounds both of the theory of literature and the practice of literary criticism. Frye proposes that the totality of literary works constitute a "self-contained literary universe" which has been created over the ages by the human imagination so as to incorporate the alien and indifferent world of nature into archetypal forms that serve to satisfy enduring human desires and needs. In this literary universe, four radical mythoi (that is, plot forms, or organizing structural principles), correspondent to the four seasons in the cycle of the natural world, are incorporated in the four major *genres* of comedy (spring), romance (summer), tragedy (autumn), and satire (winter).

**Example 6:** The most influential of critics throughout the Renaissance and Neoclassical period was .....

1) Dante

2) Sidney

3) Horace

4) Milton

**Answer:** [3].

**Cultural Materialism** is a term used by the British neo-Marxist critic Raymond Williams, which has been adopted by a number of other British scholars, especially those concerned with the literature of the Renaissance, to indicate the Marxist orientation of their mode of new historicism—Marxist in that they retain a version of Marx's view of cultural phenomena as a "superstructure" which in the last analysis is determined by the economic "base." They insist that, whatever the "textuality" of history, a culture and its literary products are always to an important degree conditioned by the real material forces and relations of production in their historical era. They are particularly interested in the political significance, and especially the subversive aspects and effects, of a literary text, not only in its own time, but also in later versions that have been revised for the theater and the cinema, and in the changing interpretations of the text by later literary critics. Cultural materialists stress that their criticism is itself oriented toward political "intervention" in their own era, in an express "commitment," as Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield have put it, "to the transformation of a social order which exploits people on grounds of race, gender, and class."



Example 7: For ....., the highest truth is austere, mathematical, and intellectual.

1) Longinus

2) Horace

3) Aristotle

4) Plato

Answer: [4].

**Cultural Studies** designates a cross-disciplinary enterprise for analyzing the conditions that effect the production, reception, and cultural significance of all types of institutions, practices, and products; among these, literature is accounted as merely one of many forms of cultural "signifying practices." A chief concern is to specify the functioning of the social, economic, and political forces and power-structures that produce all forms of cultural phenomena and endow them with their social "meanings," their "truth," the modes of discourse in which they are discussed, and their relative value and status.

1. One precursor of modern cultural studies was Roland Barthes, who in *Mythologies* (1957) analyzed the social conventions and "codes" that confer meanings in such social practices as women's fashions and professional wrestling.
2. Another was the British school of neo-Marxist studies of literature and art—especially in their popular and working-class modes—as an integral part of the general culture. This movement was inaugurated by Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society* (1958) and by Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1958), and it became institutionalized in the influential Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, founded by Hoggart in 1964.
3. In the United States, the vogue for cultural studies had its roots mainly in the mode of literary and cultural criticism known as "the new historicism," with its antecedents both in poststructural theorists such as Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault and in the treatment of culture as a set of signifying systems by Clifford Geertz and other cultural anthropologists.

A prominent endeavor in cultural studies is to subvert the distinctions in traditional criticism between "high literature" and "high art" and what were considered the lower forms that appeal to a much larger body of consumers. Typically, cultural studies pay less attention to works in the established literary *canon* than to popular fiction, best-selling romances (that is, love stories), journalism, and advertising, together with other arts that have mass appeal such as cartoon comics, film, television "soap operas," and rock and rap music.

As in new historicist criticism, politically radical exponents of cultural studies orient their writings and teaching toward the explicit end of reforming existing power-structures and relations, which they view as dominated by a privileged gender, race, or class.

A conspicuous activity in cultural studies is the analysis and interpretation of objects and social practices outside the realm of literature and the other arts. In theory, there is no limit to the kinds of things and patterns of behavior to which such an analysis of cultural "texts" may be applied; current studies deal with a spectrum ranging from the vogue of body-building through urban street fashions, and from cross-dressing to the social gesture of smoking a cigarette.

**Cultural Materialism** an approach to the analysis of literature, drama, and other cultural forms, adopted by some critics, mainly in Britain, since the early 1980s. Its principles, derived from western Marxist traditions, were outlined most influentially by Raymond Williams in his later writings, notably *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (1980) and *Culture* (1981). Here the orthodox Marxist model of an economic 'base' determining a cultural (and political, religious etc.) 'superstructure' is challenged and replaced by a more flexible model in which cultural activities themselves are regarded as 'material' and productive processes. Cultural materialist approaches to literature emphasize the social and economic contexts (publishing, theatre, education) in which it is produced and consumed. They are also interested in the ways in which the meanings of literary and dramatic works are remade in new social and institutional contexts, especially in re-stagings of Shakespeare. Critics who have identified their work as cultural materialist include Alan Sinfield, Catherine Belsey, and Jonathan Dollimore. Their approach has been distinguished from the somewhat similar school of new historicism in that they hold a less pessimistic view of the prospects of cultural dissidence and resistance to established powers.



Example 8: For ....., a poet's greatest reward is the adulation of the public.

1) Horace

2) Aristotle

3) Longinus

4) None of them

Answer: [1].



Example 9: "Correctness escapes censure; greatness earns admiration as well." This is a quotation from .....

1) Longinus

2) Bacon

3) Dante

4) Horace

Answer: [1].



**Deconstruction** designates a theory and practice of reading which questions and claims to "subvert" or "undermine" the assumption that the system of language provides grounds that are adequate to establish the boundaries, the coherence or unity, and the determinate meanings of a literary text. Typically, a deconstructive reading sets out to show that conflicting forces within the text itself serve to dissipate the seeming definiteness of its structure and meanings into an indefinite array of incompatible and undecidable possibilities.

The originator and namer of deconstruction is the French thinker Jacques Derrida, among whose precursors were Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)—German philosophers who put to radical question fundamental philosophical concepts such as "knowledge," "truth," and "identity"—as well as Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), whose *psychoanalysis* violated traditional concepts of a coherent individual consciousness and a unitary self.

Derrida's point of vantage is what, in *Of Grammatology*, he calls "the axial proposition that there is no outside-the text" ("il n'y a rien hors du texte," or alternatively "il n'y a pas de hors-texte"). Like all Derrida's key terms and statements, this has multiple significations, but a primary one is that a reader cannot get beyond verbal signs to any things-in-themselves which, because they are independent of the system of language, might serve to anchor a determinable meaning. Derrida's reiterated claim is that not only all Western philosophies and theories of language, but all Western uses of language, hence all Western culture, are **logocentric**; that is, they are centered or grounded on a "logos" (which in Greek signified both "word" and "rationality") or, as stated in a phrase he adopts from Heidegger, they rely on "the metaphysics of presence." They are logocentric, according to Derrida, in part because they are **phonocentric**; that is, they grant, implicitly or explicitly, logical "priority," or "privilege," to speech over writing as the model for analyzing all discourse. By logos, or **presence**, Derrida signifies what he also calls an "ultimate referent"—a self-certifying and self-sufficient ground, or foundation, available to us totally outside the play of language itself, that is directly present to our awareness and serves to "center" (that is, to anchor, organize, and guarantee) the structure of the linguistic system, and as a result suffices to fix the bounds, coherence, and determinate meanings of any spoken or written utterance within that system. Historical instances of claimed foundations for language are God as the guarantor of its validity, or a Platonic form of the true reference of a general term, or a Hegelian "telos" or goal toward which all process strives, or an intention to signify something determinate that is directly present to the awareness of the person who initiates an utterance. Derrida undertakes to show that these and all other attempts by Western philosophy to establish an absolute ground in presence, and all implicit reliance on such a ground in using language, are bound to fail. Especially, he directs his skeptical exposition against the phonocentric assumption—which he regards as central in Western theories of language—that at the instant of speaking, the "intention" of a speaker to mean something determinate by an utterance is immediately and fully present in the speaker's consciousness, and is also communicable to an auditor. In Derrida's view, we must always say more, and other, than we intend to say.

Derrida expresses his alternative conception that the play of linguistic meanings is "undecidable" in terms derived from Saussure's view that in a sign system, both the *signifiers* (the material elements of a language, whether



spoken or written) and the *signifieds* (their conceptual meanings) owe their seeming identities, not to their own "positive" or inherent features, but to their "differences" from other speech-sounds, written marks, or conceptual significations. From this view Derrida evolves his radical claim that the features that, in any particular utterance, would serve to establish the signified meaning of a word, are never "present" to us in their own positive identity, since both these features and their significations are nothing other than a network of differences. On the other hand, neither can these identifying features be said to be strictly "absent"; instead, in any spoken or written utterance, the seeming meaning is the result only of a "self-effacing" **trace**—self-effacing in that one is not aware of it— which consists of all the nonpresent differences from other elements in the language system that invest the utterance with its "effect" of having a meaning in its own right. The consequence, in Derrida's view, is that we can never, in any instance of speech or writing, have a demonstrably fixed and decidable present meaning. He says that the differential play (*jeu*) of language may produce the "effects" of decidable meanings in an utterance or text, but asserts that these are merely effects and lack a ground that would justify certainty in interpretation.

**Example 10:** ..... demanded the poet to “inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and to allay the perturbations of the mind.”

1) Sidney

2) Jonson

3) Dryden

4) Milton

**Answer:** [4].

In a characteristic move, Derrida coins the *portmanteau* term *différance*, in which, he says, he uses the spelling "-ance" instead of "-enee" to indicate a fusion of two senses of the French verb "différer": to be different, and to defer. This double sense points to the phenomenon that, on the one hand, a text proffers the "effect" of having a significance that is the product of its difference, but that on the other hand, since this proffered significance can never come to rest in an actual "presence"—or in a language-independent reality Derrida calls a **transcendental signified**—its determinate specification is deferred from one linguistic interpretation to another in a movement or "play," as Derrida puts it, *en abîme*—that is, in an endless regress. To Derrida's view, then, it is difference that makes possible the meaning whose possibility (as a decidable meaning) it necessarily baffles. As Derrida says in another of his coinages, the meaning of any spoken or written utterance, by the action of opposing internal linguistic forces, is ineluctably **disseminated**—a term which includes, among its deliberately contradictory significations, that of having an effect of meaning (a "semantic" effect), of dispersing meanings among innumerable alternatives, and of negating any specific meaning. There is thus no ground, in the incessant play of difference that constitutes any language, for attributing a decidable meaning, or even a finite set of determinately multiple meanings (which he calls "polysemism"), to any utterance that we speak or write. As Derrida puts it in *Writing and Difference*: "The absence of a transcendental signified extends the domain and the play of signification infinitely".

**Example 11:** Mark Schorer believed that only when we speak of the achieved content or the ....., we speak as critics.

1) Myth

2) Paradox

3) Form

4) None of them

**Answer:** [3].

Several of Derrida's skeptical procedures have been especially influential in deconstructive literary criticism.

1. One is to subvert the innumerable binary oppositions—such as speech/writing, nature/culture, truth/error, male/female— which are essential structural elements in logocentric language. Derrida shows that such oppositions constitute a tacit hierarchy, in which the first term functions as privileged and superior and the second term as derivative and inferior. Derrida's procedure is to invert the hierarchy, by showing that the secondary term can be made out to be derivative from, or a special case of, the primary term; but instead of stopping at this reversal, he goes on to destabilize both hierarchies, leaving them in a condition of undecidability.



2. A second operation influential in literary criticism is Derrida's deconstruction of any attempt to establish a securely determinate bound, or limit, or margin, to a textual work so as to differentiate what is "inside" from what is "outside" the work.
3. A third operation is his analysis of the inherent nonlogicality, or "rhetoricity"—that is, the inescapable reliance on *rhetorical figures* and *figurative language*—in all uses of language, including in what philosophers have traditionally claimed to be the strictly literal and logical arguments of philosophy. Derrida, for example, emphasizes the indispensable reliance in all modes of discourse on metaphors that are assumed to be merely convenient substitutes for *literal*, or "proper" meanings; then he undertakes to show, on the one hand, that metaphors cannot be reduced to literal meanings but, on the other hand, that supposedly literal terms are themselves metaphors whose metaphoric nature has been forgotten.

Initially, that is, he interprets a text as, in the standard fashion, "lisible" (readable or intelligible), since it engenders "effects" of having determinate meanings. But this reading, Derrida says, is only "provisional," as a stage toward a second, or deconstructive "critical reading," which disseminates the provisional meaning into an indefinite range of significations that, he claims, always involve (in a term taken from logic) an **aporia**—an insuperable deadlock, or "double bind," of incompatible or contradictory meanings which are "undecidable," in that we lack any sufficient ground for choosing among them. The result, in Derrida's rendering, is that each text deconstructs itself, by undermining its own supposed grounds and dispersing itself into incoherent meanings in a way, he claims, that the deconstructive reader neither initiates nor produces; deconstruction is something that simply "happens" in a critical reading. Derrida asserts, furthermore, that he has no option except to attempt to communicate his deconstructive readings in the prevailing logocentric language, hence that his own interpretive texts deconstruct themselves in the very act of deconstructing the texts to which they are applied. He insists, however, that "deconstruction has nothing to do with destruction," and that all the standard uses of language will inevitably go on; what he undertakes, he says, is merely to "situate" or "reinscribe" any text in a system of difference which shows the instability of the effects to which the text owes its seeming intelligibility.

Paul de Man was the most innovative and influential of the critics who applied deconstruction to the reading of literary texts. In de Man's later writings, he represented the basic conflicting forces within a text under the headings of "grammar" (the code or rules of language) and "rhetoric" (the unruly play of figures and tropes), and aligned these with other opposed forces, such as the "constative" and "performative" linguistic functions that had been distinguished by John Austin. In its grammatical aspect, language persistently aspires to determinate, referential, and logically ordered assertions, which are persistently dispersed by its rhetorical aspect into an open set of non-referential and illogical possibilities. The inevitable result, for a critical reading, is an aporia of "vertiginous possibilities." Barbara Johnson, once a student of de Man's, has applied deconstructive readings not only to literary texts, but to the writings of other critics, including Derrida himself. Her succinct statement of the aim and methods of a deconstructive reading is often cited: *Deconstruction* is not synonymous with *destruction*. The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself. If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading, it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another.

J. Hillis Miller, once the leading American representative of the *Geneva School* of consciousness-criticism, is now one of the most prominent of deconstructors, known especially for his application of this type of critical reading to prose fiction. Miller's conclusion is that any literary text, as a ceaseless play of "irreconcilable" and "contradictory" meanings, is "indeterminable" and "undecidable"; hence, that "all reading is necessarily misreading."

**Example 12:** T. S. Eliot asserted that ..... wrote "the first serious literary criticism in English by an English poet."

1) Johnson

2) Milton

3) Sidney

4) Dryden

**Answer:** [4].





**Dialogic Criticism** is modeled on the theory and critical procedures of the Soviet critic Mikhail Bakhtin. To Bakhtin a literary work is not a text whose meanings are produced by the play of impersonal linguistic or economic or cultural forces, but a site for the dialogic interaction of multiple voices, or modes of discourse, each of which is not merely a verbal but a social phenomenon, and as such is the product of manifold determinants that are specific to a class, social group, and speech community.

Bakhtin's prime interest was in the novel, and especially in the ways that the voices that constitute the text of any novel disrupt the authority of the author's single voice. In *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929), he contrasts the **monologic** novels of writers such as Leo Tolstoy—which undertake to subordinate the voices of all the characters to the authoritative discourse and controlling purposes of the author—to the **dialogic form** ("polyphonic form") of Fyodor Dostoevsky's novels, in which the characters are liberated to speak "a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices." In Bakhtin's view, however, a novel can never be totally monologic, since the narrator's reports of the utterances of another character are inescapably "double-voiced" (in that we can distinguish therein the author's own accent and inflection), and also dialogic (in that the author's discourse continually reinforces, alters, or contests with the types of speech that it reports).


In *Rabelais and His World* (1984), Bakhtin proposed his widely cited concept of the **carnavalesque** in certain literary works. This literary mode parallels the flouting of authority and inversion of social hierarchies that, in many cultures, are permitted in a season of carnival. It does so by introducing a mingling of voices from diverse social levels that are free to mock and subvert authority, to flout social norms by ribaldry, and to exhibit various ways of profaning what is ordinarily regarded as sacrosanct. Bakhtin traces the occurrence of the carnivalesque in ancient, medieval, and Renaissance writers (especially in Rabelais); he also asserts that the mode recurs later, especially in the play of irreverent, parodie, and subversive voices in the novels of Dostoevsky, which are both dialogic and carnivalesque.

In an essay on "Discourse in the Novel" (1934-35), Bakhtin develops his view that the novel is constituted by a multiplicity of divergent and contending social voices that achieve their full significance only in the process of their dialogic interaction both with each other and with the voice of the narrator. Bakhtin explicitly sets his theory against Aristotle's *Poetics*, which proposed that the primary component in narrative forms is a plot that evolves coherently from its beginning to an end in which all complications are resolved. Instead, Bakhtin elevates *discourse* (equivalent to Aristotle's subordinate element of *diction*) into the primary component of a narrative work; and he describes discourse as a medley of voices, social attitudes, and values that are not only opposed, but irreconcilable, with the result that the work remains unresolved and open-ended.

 **Example 13: An overactive ..... creates an unconscious sense of guilt.**

- 1) Ego                                  2) Superego                                  3) Libido                                  4) Thanatos

**Answer:** [2].

 **Example 14: A recurrent plot pattern, image, or motif that evokes from the reader strong but illogical responses is called .....**

- 1) Mata-narrative                                  2) Allegory                                  3) Myth                                  4) Archetype

**Answer:** [4].

**Discourse Analysis** traditional linguists and philosophers of language, as well as literary students of *style* and *stylistics*, have typically focused their analyses on isolated units of language—the sentence, or even single words, phrases, and figures—in abstraction from the specific circumstances of an utterance.

Discourse analysis, on the other hand, as inaugurated in the 1970s, concerns itself with the use of language in a running discourse, continued over a sequence of sentences, and involving the interaction of speaker (or writer) and auditor (or reader) in a specific situational context, and within a framework of social and cultural conventions.



Emphasis on discourse as occurring within specific cultural conditions and under particular circumstances derives from a number of investigators and areas of research, including the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer in hermeneutics, the concern of Michel Foucault with the institutional conditions and powerstructures that serve to make given statements accepted as authoritative or true, and the work of Clifford Geertz and other cultural anthropologists on the rootedness of linguistic and other meanings in the social forms and practices specific to a cultural community.

The current use of discourse analysis in literary studies was given special impetus by the speech-act philosopher H. P. Grice, who in 1975 coined the term **implicature** to account for indirection in discourse; for example, to explain how we are able to identify the illocutionary force of an utterance that lacks an explicit indicator of its illocutionary intention.

Thus, how can we account for the fact that the utterance, "Can you pass the salt?" although it is in the syntactical form of a question, can be used by the speaker, and correctly understood by the hearer, as a polite form of request? Grice proposed that users of a language share a set of implicit expectations which he calls the "communicative presumption"—for example, that an utterance is intended by a speaker to be true, clear, and above all relevant. If an utterance seems purposely to violate these expectations, we seek to make sense of it by transferring it to a context in which it is clearly appropriate. Other language theorists have continued Grice's analysis of the collective assumptions that help to make utterances meaningful and intelligible, and serve also to make a sustained discourse a coherent development of signification instead of a mere collocation of independent sentences. One such assumption is that the hearer shares with the speaker (or the reader shares with the writer) a large body of nonlinguistic knowledge and experience; another is that the speaker is using language in a way that is intentional, purposive, and in accordance with linguistic and cultural conventions; a third is that there is a shared knowledge of the complex ways in which the meaning of a locution varies with the particular situation, as well as with the type of discourse, in which it is uttered.

Some proponents of stylistics include discourse analysis within their area of investigation. And since the late 1970s, a number of critics have increasingly adapted discourse analysis to the examination of the *dialogue* in novels and dramas. A chief aim is to explain how the characters represented in a literary work, and also the readers of that work, are constantly able to infer meanings that are not asserted or specified in a conversational interchange. The claim is that such inferences are "rule-governed," in that they depend on sets of assumptions, shared by users and interpreters of discourse that come into play to establish meanings, and furthermore, that these meanings vary systematically, in accordance with whether the rule-guided expectations are fulfilled or intentionally violated. Such explorations of conversational discourse in literature often extend to the re-analysis of *point of view* and other traditional topics in the criticism of literary narratives.

**Feminist Criticism** was not inaugurated until late in the 1960s. Behind it, however, lie two centuries of struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements, and for women's social and political rights, marked by such books as Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), and the American Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845). Much of feminist literary criticism continues in our time to be interrelated with the movement by political feminists for social, legal, and cultural freedom and equality.

1. An important precursor in feminist criticism was Virginia Woolf, who, in addition to her fiction, wrote *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and numerous other essays on women authors and on the cultural, economic, and educational disabilities within what she called a "patriarchal" society that have hindered or prevented women from realizing their productive and creative possibilities.
2. A much more radical critical mode was launched in France by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), a wide-ranging critique of the cultural identification of women as merely the negative object, or "Other," to man as the dominating "Subject" who is assumed to represent humanity in general; the book dealt also with "the great collective myths" of women in the works of many male writers.



3. In America, modern feminist criticism was inaugurated by Mary Ellman's deft and witty discussion, in *Thinking about Women* (1968), about the derogatory stereotypes of women in literature written by men, and also about alternative and subversive points of view in some writings by women.

4. Even more influential was Kate Millett's hard-hitting *Sexual Politics*, published the following year. By "politics" Millett signifies the mechanisms that express and enforce the relations of power in society; she analyzes Western social arrangements and institutions as covert ways of manipulating power so as to establish and perpetuate the dominance of men and the subordination of women. In her book she attacks the male bias in Freud's psychoanalytic theory and also analyzes selected passages by D. H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, and Jean Genet as revealing the ways in which the authors, in their fictional fantasies, aggrandize their aggressive phallic selves and degrade women as submissive sexual objects.

The various feminisms, however, share certain assumptions and concepts that underlie the diverse ways that individual critics explore the factor of sexual difference and privilege in the production, the form and content, the reception, and the critical analysis and evaluation of works of literature:

1. The basic view is that Western civilization is pervasively **patriarchal** (ruled by the father)—that is, it is male-centered and controlled, and is organized and conducted in such a way as to subordinate women to men in all cultural domains: familial, religious, political, economic, social, legal, and artistic. From the Hebrew Bible and Greek philosophic writings to the present, the female tends to be defined by negative reference to the male as the human norm, hence as an Other, or kind of non-man, by her lack of the identifying male organ, of male powers, and of the male character traits that are presumed, in the patriarchal view, to have achieved the most important scientific and technical inventions and the major works of civilization and culture. Women themselves are taught, in the process of being socialized, to internalize the reigning patriarchal *ideology* (that is, the conscious and unconscious presuppositions about male superiority), and so are conditioned to derogate their own sex and to cooperate in their own subordination.

2. It is widely held that while one's sex is determined by anatomy, the prevailing concepts of **gender**—of the traits that are conceived to constitute what is masculine and what is feminine in identity and behavior—are largely, if not entirely, cultural constructs that were generated by the pervasive patriarchal biases of our civilization. As Simone de Beauvoir put it, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. . . . It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature . . . which is described as feminine." By this cultural process, the masculine in our culture has come to be widely identified as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, creative; the feminine, by systematic opposition to such traits, has come to be identified as passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional, and conventional.

3. The further claim is that this patriarchal (or "masculinist," or "androcentric") ideology pervades those writings which have been traditionally considered great literature, and which until recently have been written mainly by men for men. Typically, the most highly regarded literary works focus on male protagonists—Oedipus, Ulysses, Hamlet, Tom Jones, Faust, the Three Musketeers, Captain Ahab, Huck Finn, Leopold Bloom—who embody masculine traits and ways of feeling and pursue masculine interests in masculine fields of action. To these males, the female characters, when they play a role, are marginal and subordinate, and are represented either as complementary to or in opposition to masculine desires and enterprises. Such works, lacking autonomous female role models, and implicitly addressed to male readers, either leave the woman reader an alien outsider or else solicit her to identify against herself by taking up the position of the male subject and so assuming male values and ways of perceiving, feeling, and acting. The traditional aesthetic categories and criteria for analyzing and appraising literary works, although represented in standard critical theory as objective, disinterested, and universal, are in fact infused with masculine assumptions, interests, and ways of reasoning, so that the standard selection and rankings, and also the critical treatments, of literary works have in fact been tacitly but thoroughly gender-biased.



A major interest of feminist critics in English-speaking countries has been:

1. to reconstitute the ways we deal with literature in order to do justice to female points of view, concerns, and values.
2. One emphasis has been to alter the way a woman reads the literature of the past so as to make her not an acquiescent, but (in the title of Judith Fetterley's book published in 1978) *The Resisting Reader*; that is, one who resists the author's intentions and design in order, by a "revisionary rereading," to bring to light and to counter the covert sexual biases written into a literary work.
3. Another prominent procedure has been to identify recurrent and distorting "images of women," especially in novels and poems written by men. These images are often represented as tending to fall into two antithetic patterns. On the one side we find idealized projections of men's desires (the Madonna, the Muses of the arts, Dante's Beatrice, the pure and innocent virgin, the "Angel in the House" that was represented in the writings of the Victorian poet Coventry Patmore). On the other side are demonic projections of men's sexual resentments and terrors (Eve and Pandora as the sources of all evil, destructive sensual temptresses such as Delilah and Circe, the malign witch, the castrating mother).
4. While many feminist critics have decried the literature written by men for its depiction of women as marginal, docile, and subservient to men's interests and emotional needs and fears, some of them have also identified male writers who, in their view, have managed to rise above the sexual prejudices of their time sufficiently to understand and represent the cultural pressures that have shaped the characters of women and forced upon them their negative or subsidiary social roles; the latter class is said to include, in selected works, such authors as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Samuel Richardson, Henrik Ibsen, and George Bernard Shaw.
5. A number of feminists have concentrated, not on the woman as reader, but on what Elaine Showalter calls gynocriticism—that is, a criticism which concerns itself with developing a specifically female framework for dealing with works written by women, in all aspects of their production, motivation, analysis, and interpretation, and in all literary forms, including journals and letters. Notable books in this mode include Patricia Meyer Spacks' *The Female Imagination* (1975), on English and American novels of the past three hundred years; Ellen Moers' *Literary Women* (1976), on major women novelists and poets in England, America, and France; Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (1977); and Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar' *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979). This last book stresses especially the psychodynamics of women writers in the nineteenth century. Its authors propose that the "anxiety of authorship," resulting from the stereotype that literary creativity is an exclusively male prerogative, effected in women writers a psychological duplicity that projected a monstrous counterfigure to the idealized heroine, typified by Bertha Rochester, the madwoman in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*; such a figure is "usually in some sense the *author's* double, an image of her own anxiety and rage."

🦋 **Example 15:** "When one says picture one says of character, when one says novel one says of incident."

This is a quotation by .....

- 1) W. D. Howells                      2) H. James                      3) A. E. Housman                      4) N. Hawthorne

**Answer:** [2].



🦋 **Example 16:** The id is governed by the .....principle. Its function is to gratify our instinctual desires.

- 1) Reality                      2) Pleasure                      3) Morality                      4) None of them

**Answer:** [2].



🦋 **Example 17:** The rational governing agent of the psyche is the ..... which protects the individual.

- 1) Id                      2) Libido                      3) Ego                      4) Superego

**Answer:** [3].



One concern of gynocritics is:

1. to identify what are taken to be the distinctively feminine subject matters in literature written by women—the world of domesticity, for example, or the special experiences of gestation, giving birth, and nurturing, or mother-daughter and woman-woman relations—in which personal and affectional issues, and not external activism, are the primary interest.
2. Another concern is to uncover in literary history a female tradition, incorporated in subcommunities of women writers who were aware of, emulated, and found support in earlier women writers, and who in turn provide models and emotional support to their own readers and successors.
3. A third undertaking is to show that there is a distinctive feminine mode of experience, or "subjectivity," in thinking, feeling, valuing, and perceiving oneself and the outer world. Related to this is the attempt (thus far, without much agreement about details) to specify the traits of a "woman's language," or distinctively feminine *style* of speech and writing, in sentence structure, types of relations between the elements of a discourse, and characteristic figures and imagery. Some feminists have turned their critical attention to the great number of women's domestic and "sentimental" novels, which are noted perfunctorily and in derogatory fashion in standard literary histories, yet which dominated the market for fiction in the nineteenth century and produced most of the best-sellers of the time; instances of this last critical enterprise are Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* (1977) on British writers, and Nina Baym's *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-1870* (1978). Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have described the later history of women's writings in *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century* (2 vols.; 1988-89).

The often-asserted goal of feminist critics has been to enlarge and reorder, or in radical instances entirely to displace, the literary *canon*—that is, the set of works which, by a cumulative consensus, have come to be considered "major" and to serve as the chief subjects of literary history, criticism, scholarship, and teaching. Feminist studies have served to raise the status of many female authors hitherto more or less scanted by scholars and critics (including Anne Finch, George Sand, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Elizabeth Gaskell, Christina Rossetti, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette) and to bring into purview other authors who have been largely or entirely overlooked as subjects for serious consideration (among them Margaret Cavendish, Aphra Behn, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Joanna Baillie, Kate Chopin, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and a number of African-American writers such as Zora Neale Hurston).

American and English critics have for the most part engaged in empirical and thematic studies of writings by and about women. The most prominent feminist critics in France, however, have been occupied with the "theory" of the role of gender in writing, conceptualized within various *poststructural* frames of reference, and above all Jacques Lacan's reworkings of Freudian *psychoanalysis* in terms of Saussure's linguistic theory. English-speaking feminists, for example, have drawn attention to demonstrable and specific evidences that a male bias is encoded in our linguistic conventions; instances include the use of "man" or "mankind" for human beings in general, of "chairman" and "spokesman" for people of either sex, and of the pronouns "he" and "his" to refer back to ostensibly gender-neutral nouns such as "God," "human being," "child," "inventor," "author," "poet". The radical claim of some French theorists, on the other hand, whatever their differences, is that all Western languages, in all their features, are utterly and irredeemably male-engendered, male-constituted, and male-dominated. Discourse, it is asserted, in a term proposed by Lacan, is **phallogocentric**; that is, it is centered and organized throughout by implicit recourse to the phallus (used in a symbolic rather than a literal sense) both as its supposed "logos," or ground, and as its prime signifier and power source. Phallogocentrism, it is claimed, manifests itself in Western discourse not only in its vocabulary and syntax, but also in its rigorous rules of logic, its proclivity for fixed classifications and oppositions, and its criteria for what is traditionally considered to be valid evidence and objective knowledge. A basic problem for the French theorists is to establish the very possibility of a woman's language that will not, when a woman writes, automatically be appropriated into this phallogocentric language, since such appropriation is said to force her into complicity with linguistic features that impose on females a condition of marginality and subservience, or even of linguistic nonentity.



To evade this dilemma,

1. Hélène Cixous posits the existence of an incipient "feminine writing" (*écriture féminine*) which has its source in the mother, in the stage of the mother-child relation before the child acquires the male-centered verbal language. Thereafter, in her view, this prelinguistic and unconscious potentiality manifests itself in those written texts which, abolishing all repressions, undermine and subvert the fixed signification, the logic, and the "closure" of our phallogentric language, and open out into a joyous freeplay of meanings.

2. Alternatively, Luce Irigaray posits a "woman's writing" which evades the male monopoly and the risk of appropriation into the existing system by establishing as its generative principle, in place of the monolithic phallus, the diversity, fluidity, and multiple possibilities inherent in the structure and erotic functioning of the female sexual organs and in the distinctive nature of female sexual experiences. Julia Kristeva posits a "chora," or prelinguistic, pre-Oedipal, and unsystematized signifying process, centered on the mother, that she labels "semiotic." This process is repressed as we acquire the father-controlled, syntactically ordered, and logical language that she calls "symbolic." The semiotic process, however, can break out in a revolutionary way—her prime example is avant-garde poetry, whether written by women or by men—as a "heterogeneous destructive causality" that disrupts and disperses the authoritarian "subject" and strikes free of the oppressive order and rationality of our standard discourse which, as the product of the "law of the Father," consigns women to a negative and marginal status.

**Formalism** a type of literary theory and analysis which originated in Moscow and St. Petersburg in the second decade of this century. Among the leading representatives of the movement were Boris Eichenbaum, Victor Shklovsky, and Roman Jakobson. When this critical mode was suppressed by the Soviets in the early 1930s, the center of the formalist study of literature moved to Czechoslovakia, where it was continued especially by members of the **Prague Linguistic Circle**, which included Roman Jakobson (who had emigrated from Russia), Jan Mukarovsky, and René Wellek.

Formalism views literature primarily as a specialized mode of language, and proposes a fundamental opposition between the literary (or poetical) use of language and the ordinary, "practical" use of language. It conceives that the central function of ordinary language is to communicate to auditors a message, or information, by references to the world existing outside of language. In contrast, it conceives literary language to be self-focused, in that its function is not to convey information by making extrinsic references, but to offer the reader a special mode of experience by drawing attention to its own "formal" features—that is, to the qualities and internal relations of the linguistic signs themselves. The linguistics of literature differs from the linguistics of practical discourse, because its laws are oriented toward producing the distinctive features that formalists call **literariness**. As Roman Jakobson wrote in 1921: "The object of study in literary science is not literature but 'literariness/ that is, what makes a given work a literary work."

The literariness of a work, as Jan Mukarovsky, a member of the Prague Circle, described it in the 1920s, consists "in the maximum of **foregrounding** of the utterance," that is, the foregrounding of "the act of expression, the act of speech itself." (To "foreground" is to bring something into the highest prominence, to make it dominant in perception.) By "backgrounding" the referential aspect and the logical connections in language, poetry makes the words themselves "palpable" as phonic signs. The primary aim of literature in thus foregrounding its linguistic medium, as Victor Shklovsky put it in an influential formulation, is to **estrangle** or **defamiliarize**; that is, by disrupting the modes of ordinary linguistic discourse, literature "makes strange" the world of everyday perception and renews the reader's lost capacity for fresh sensation. (In the *Biographia Literaria*, 1817, Samuel Taylor Coleridge had long before described the "prime merit" of a literary genius to be the representation of "familiar objects" so as to evoke "freshness of sensation"; but whereas the Romantic critic had stressed the author's ability to express a fresh mode of experiencing the world, the formalist stresses the function of purely literary devices to produce the effect of freshness in the reader's experience of a literary work.) The foregrounded properties, or "artistic devices," which estrange poetic language are often described as "deviations" from ordinary language. Such deviations, which are analyzed most fully in the writings of Roman Jakobson, consist primarily in setting up and also violating patterns in the sound and syntax of poetic language—including patterns in speech sounds, grammatical constructions, rhythm, rhyme, and stanza forms—and also in setting up prominent recurrences of key words or images.



Some of the most fruitful work of Jakobson and others, valid outside the formalist perspective, has been in the analysis of *meter* and of the repetitions of sounds in *alliteration* and *rhyme*. These features of poetry they regard not as supplementary adornments of the meaning, but as effecting a reorganization of language on the semantic as well as the phonic and syntactic levels. Formalists have also made influential contributions to the theory of prose fiction. With respect to this genre, the central formalist distinction is that between the "story" (the simple enumeration of a chronological sequence of events) and a plot. An author is said to transform the raw material of a story into a literary plot by the use of a variety of devices that violate sequence and deform and defamiliarize the story elements; the effect is to foreground the narrative medium and devices themselves, and in this way to disrupt what had been our standard responses to the subject matter.

American *New Criticism*, although it developed independently, is sometimes called "formalist" because, like European formalism, it stresses the analysis of the literary work as a self-sufficient verbal entity, constituted by internal relations and independent of reference either to the state of mind of the author or to the "external" world. It also, like European formalism, conceives poetry as a special mode of language whose distinctive features are defined in terms of their systematic opposition to practical or scientific language. Unlike the European formalists, however, the New Critics did not apply the science of linguistics to poetry, and their emphasis was not on a work as constituted by linguistic devices for achieving specifically literary effects, but on the complex interplay within a work of ironic, paradoxical, and metaphoric meanings around a humanly important "theme."

Roman Jakobson and Tzvetan Todorov have been influential in introducing formalist concepts and methods into French *structuralism*.

**Gynocritics** the branch of modern feminist literary studies that focuses on women as writers, as distinct from the feminist critique of male authors. The term was coined by Elaine Showalter in her article *Toward a Feminist Poetics* (1979), in which she explains that gynocritics is concerned 'with woman as the producer of textual meaning, with the history, themes, genres, and structures of literature by women'. It thus includes critical works like Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), and several other such studies published since the mid-1970s.

**Influence and the Anxiety of Influence** critics and historians of literature have for many centuries dealt with what has been called the influence of one author or literary tradition upon a later author who is said to adopt, and at the same time to alter, aspects of the subject matter, form, or style of the earlier writer or writers. The anxiety of influence is a phrase used by the influential contemporary critic Harold Bloom to identify his radical revision of this standard theory that influence consists in a direct "borrowing," or assimilation, of the materials and features found in earlier writers. Bloom's own view is that in the composition of any poem, influence is inescapable, but that it evokes in the author an anxiety that compels a drastic distortion of the work of a predecessor. He applies this concept of anxiety to the reading as well as the writing of poetry.

In Bloom's theory a poet (especially since the time of Milton) is motivated to compose when his imagination is seized upon by a poem or poems of a "precursor." The "belated" poet's attitudes to his precursor, like those in Freud's analysis of the Oedipal relation of son to father, are ambivalent; that is, they are compounded not only of admiration but also (since a strong poet feels a compelling need to be autonomous and original) of hate, envy, and fear of the precursor's preemption of the descendant's imaginative space. The belated poet safeguards his sense of his own freedom and priority by reading a parent-poem "defensively," in such a way as to distort it beyond his own conscious recognition. Nonetheless, he cannot avoid embodying the distorted parent-poem into his own hopeless attempt to write an unprecedentedly original poem; the most that even the best belated poet can achieve is to write a poem so "strong" that it effects an illusion of "priority"—that is, an illusion that it has escaped the precursor-poem's precedence in time and that it exceeds it in greatness.

Bloom identifies six distortive processes which operate in reading a precursor; he calls these processes "revisionary ratios" and defines them mainly on the model of Freud's defense mechanisms. He also equates these mechanisms with the devices by which the medieval Kabbalists reinterpreted the Hebrew Bible, as well as with various types of rhetorical *tropes*.



Since in Bloom's view the revisionary ratios are the categories through which all of us, whether or not we are ourselves poets, necessarily read our precursors, his conclusion is that we can never know "the poem-in-itself"; all interpretation is "a necessary misprision," and all "reading is therefore misprision—or misreading." A "weak misreading" is an attempt (doomed to fail) to get at what a text really means, while a "strong misreading" is one in which an individual reader's defenses are unconsciously licensed to recast in an innovative fashion the text that the reader undertakes to interpret. Since Bloom conceives that "every poem is a misinterpretation of a parent poem," he recommends that literary critics boldly practice what he calls **antithetical criticism**—that is, that they learn "to read any poem as its poet's deliberate misinterpretation, *as a poet*, of a precursor poem or of poetry in general." The results of such strong readings will be antithetical both to what the poet himself thought he meant and to what standard weak misreadings have made out the poem to mean.

**Example 18:** "Poetry feeds and waters the passions that ought to be dried up." This is a famous quotation from .....

1) Plato

2) Aristotle

3) Horace

4) Longinus

**Answer:** [1].

**Marxist Criticism** in its diverse forms, grounds its theory and practice on the economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx (1818-83) and his fellow thinker Friedrich Engels, and especially on the following claims:

1. In the last analysis, the evolving history of humanity, of its social groupings and relations, of its institutions, and of its ways of thinking are largely determined by the changing mode of its "material production"—that is, of its overall economic organization for producing and distributing material goods.
2. Historical changes in the fundamental mode of material production effect changes in the class structure of a society, establishing in each era dominant and subordinate classes that engage in a struggle for economic, political, and social advantage.
3. Human consciousness is constituted by an **ideology**—that is, the beliefs, values, and ways of thinking and feeling through which human beings perceive, and by recourse to which they explain, what they take to be reality. An ideology is, in complex ways, the product of the position and interests of a particular class. In any historical era, the dominant ideology embodies, and serves to legitimize and perpetuate, the interests of the dominant economic and social class.

In a famed architectural metaphor, Marx represented ideology as a "superstructure" of which the concurrent socioeconomic system is the "base." Friedrich Engels described ideology as "a false consciousness," and many later Marxists consider it to be constituted largely by unconscious prepossessions that are illusory, in contrast to the "scientific" (that is, Marxist) knowledge of the economic determinants, historical evolution, and present constitution of the social world. A further claim is that, in the present era of capitalist economic organization that emerged during the eighteenth century, the reigning ideology incorporates the interests of the dominant and exploitative class, the "bourgeoisie," who are the owners of the means of production and distribution, as opposed to the "proletariat," or wage-earning working class. This ideology, to those who live in and with it, it is claimed, seems a natural and inevitable way of seeing, explaining, and dealing with the environing world, but in fact has the hidden function of legitimizing and maintaining the position, power, and economic interests of the ruling class. Bourgeois ideology is regarded as both producing and permeating the social and cultural institutions and practices of the present era—including religion, morality, philosophy, politics, and the legal system, as well as (though in a less direct way) literature and the other arts.

What some Marxist critics themselves decry as "vulgar Marxism" analyzes a "bourgeois" literary work as in direct correlation with the present stage of the class struggle and demands that such works be replaced by a "social realism" that will represent the true reality and progressive forces of our time; in practice, this has usually turned out to be the demand that literature conform to an official party line. More flexible Marxists, on the other hand, building upon scattered comments on literature in Marx and Engels themselves, grant that traditional literary works possess a degree of autonomy that enables some of them to transcend the prevailing bourgeois ideology sufficiently to represent (or in the frequent Marxist equivalent, to **reflect**) aspects of the "objective" reality of their time.