

THEORIES OF LITERARY REPRESENTATION TO c.1900

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THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

PLATO (c.427 - c.347 BCE) accepts that art is a mirror held up to 'nature,' not least *human* nature, which is precisely why he find it unsatisfactory. At the root of this is his ontological idealism, that is, his belief in the existence ultimately of a non-material or ideal basis to the known universe (the so-called 'world of ideal forms'). This belief informs the view of literary representation which he offers in Chapter 35 of his The Republic where he declares his intention to banish poets altogether from his ideal 'state.' His reasons for so doing are two-fold. One of his grounds is *epistemological*: poetry is a representation at a third remove from the true reality – the world of Ideal Forms – and, thus, at best only an approximation and at worst a sheer distortion of the essences or ideal forms found there and of which objects in the here and now are a far from perfect replica.

Art, Plato argues, imitates things in the physical world which are, in turn, imitations of the essences comprising the world of ideal forms. That is, art is an imitation of an imitation (the physical object in question) of an ideal form or essence. This is precisely why he is so distrustful of art in general and poetry in particular: as an imitation of an imitation, art is 'at a third remove' from the 'true' reality. For example, ethically speaking, a given literary work of art may depict an example of justice in the everyday world but this is, in turn, at best an approximation of the ideal form or essence of justice to which the depiction cannot 'do justice,' as it were, and at worst a total distortion thereof. Hence, the following chart:

Essence	World of Ideal Forms	True Reality	Bedness	Ideal virtues and actions
Existence	Material manifestation	Physical universe	A bed	Human virtues and actions
Artistic Representation	Human imitation	Images (in shapes, and/or colours [visual art] or words [poetry]) of physical universe	Picture or verbal rendition of a bed	Visual or verbal representation of human actions

ARISTOTLE (c.384 - c.322 BCE), by contrast to Plato, is an ontological materialist. The world of ideal forms of which Plato speaks may or may not exist, he seems to suggest, for which reason he is quite content to focus his attention on this world, to be precise, the world of human affairs which literature depicts. The bulk of his attention in the Poetics is devoted to exploring the 'formal cause' of at least one kind of literature, drama, that is, various aspects of its form, not least the plot. However, in discussing the difference between what he sees as the main two genres of drama, tragedy and comedy, he does touch on the issue of literary representation. He is of the

view that the distinction between the two centres on their differing objects of representation. The object of both epic (narrative) and dramatic poetry is "men in action" (33), in other words, both depict human beings and the actions they perform. However, tragic plays represent actions that lead to unhappiness and suffering while comic ones represents actions that produce the opposite effect. Men being necessarily "either of good or bad character" (33), they must therefore be represented "either as better than we are, or worse, or as the same kind of people as we are" (33).

Comedy "represents the worse types of men" (37). It deals, however, not with the worse types of badness (out and out evil) but with protagonists guilty of "ridiculous" (37) or trivial faults, i.e. "some form of error or ugliness that is not painful or injurious" (37). By contrast, tragedy represents the "noble actions and the doings of noble persons" (35), that is, they portray the 'better' class of men. However, these meet an unhappy ending by making a mistake of some kind. Aristotle defines character (*ethos*) as "that which enables us to define the nature of the participants" (39). It is that "which reveals personal choice" (41) as a result of which "there is no revelation of character in speeches in which the speaker shows no preferences or aversions whatsoever" (41). He maintains that characters should be good (*spoudaios*), that is, they should always reveal a preference for the good, appropriate (e.g. men should be manly), lifelike, and consistent.

Interestingly, Aristotle stresses that plot is more important than character because art is a "representation, not of men, but of action and life, of happiness and unhappiness" (39) which are necessarily "bound up with action" (39). It is "chiefly on account of the action" (40) that tragedy is "also a representation of persons" (41). In other words, the main function of a play is not to reveal character and thus to enter the realm of moral debate. A play is first and foremost a representation of the actions performed by men and the consequences which these entail: good or bad fortune. The study of what the choices made by men reveal about their character derives from the representation of action but it is not the primary purpose of the representation of action. Aristotle argues that the reason for this is that the

purpose of living is an end which is a kind of activity, not a quality; it is their characters . . . that make men what they are, but it is by reason of their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Tragedies are not performed, therefore, in order to represent character, although character is involved for the sake of the action. Thus the incidents and the plot are the end aimed at in tragedy. (40)

Aristotle speculates that there "could not be a tragedy without action, but there could be without character" (40), without explaining how this might be achieved.

Aristotle also stresses that literary form is subsidiary to content, that is, to the demands of literary realism. To put this another way, the form of literature is dictated by the subject matter depicted. Tragedies characteristically inspire pity and fear by representing not simply realistic people (characters) but their actions which, revolving around bad choices, follow patterns that are typical of real life. Hence, the close attention which Aristotle pays to plot-structure in particular. He offers this famous definition of tragedy: it is the "representation of an action that is worth serious attention, complete in itself, and of some amplitude; in language enriched by a variety of artistic devices" (39) and "presented in the form of action not narration; by means of *pity* and *fear* bringing about the *catharsis* [purgation/purification/clarification] of such emotions" (my emphases; 39). Fear (which is inspired by the spectacle of someone's undeserved suffering) and pity (we feel this because we too could find ourselves in that position of suffering) arise, Aristotle maintains, "from the very structure of the action" (49). The plot "should so be ordered that even without seeing it performed anyone merely hearing what is afoot will shudder with pity and fear as a result of what is happening" (49). Effects of pity and fear may also be produced by diction, as opposed to plot, i.e. "by means of language coming from the lips of a speaker" (58), but a specifically realistic

plot-structure is by far the most effective means, in Aristotle's view.

Aristotle argues that the following plot-elements are the most conducive to the emotional effect proper to tragedy. First, pity and fear are especially heightened when events develop almost logically, that is, one event leading inexorably to the next, rather than merely unexpectedly, for "then they will be more remarkable than if they seem merely mechanical or accidental. . . . Even chance occurrences seem most remarkable when they have the appearance of having been brought about by design" (45). Hence, the events of the plot must be connected by *probability* or *necessity*. Plots must not be constructed in a haphazard way but must be "properly ordered" (42). Tragedy, he writes, is the "representation of an action that is complete and whole and of a certain amplitude" (41). A whole is "that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end" (41), that is, the incidents portrayed must be seen to have a causal connection and not to follow a merely chronological order. When the plot is arranged in such a way that any incident is "differently placed or taken away" (42), then the "effect of wholeness will be seriously disrupted" (42). As a result, he argues, *episodic* plots, in which the "sequence of the episodes is neither probable or necessary" (45), are the worst kind of plot.

Aristotle gives us some useful terms for conceptualising the various stages of the development of the plot. The *complication* is that "part of the story from the beginning to the point immediately preceding the change to good or bad fortune" (56). This is that part of the play where events become increasingly more confused and entangled. The *denouement* (literally, the 'unravelling' of a knot) is that part "from the onset of this change to the end" (56). It is here, some have argued, that the catharsis takes place, that is, where the pity and fear built up by the preceding events are dispelled before the audience leaves but this claim is open to dispute. The plot, Aristotle stresses in this regard, must be of a certain *length*: plots must also be of "an appropriate size, for beauty is bound up with size and order" (42). Plots that are too long cannot be properly held in memory by the audience. The proper length is that which "as a matter either of probability or necessity, allows of a change from misery to happiness or from happiness to misery" (42).

Moreover, if a plot should develop in a probable or necessary way, it should also be *unified*. A plot does not possess unity, Aristotle argues, because all the events portrayed centre on one man. Unity is, rather, a function of the fact that all the incidents must form part of the main action depicted (in the case of tragedy, the movement from happiness to misery). An "epic structure" (57) (i.e. one where a "multiplicity of stories" [57] or plot-lines coexist with each other) is not appropriate for a play where compression, directness and a single focus are essential.

Second, the most fearful and pitiable incidents are those inflicted by those who are near and dear to each other, either with or without knowledge of what they have done. Less acceptable, he says, is when someone in possession of the facts is "on the point of acting but fails to do so, for this merely shocks us, and, since no suffering is involved, it is not tragic" (50). Even less acceptable is when the deed is actually done by someone in possession of the facts.

Third, three of the most important plot devices by means of which tragedy inspires feelings of pity and fear are sudden "reversals" (40) of fortune (*peripeteia*), "recognitions" (40) or discoveries (*anagnorisis*), and *calamity* or suffering. A reversal of fortune is a sudden and unexpected "change from one state of affairs to its opposite" (46), for example from happiness to misery. Recognition or discovery is a "change from ignorance to knowledge" (46), a realization (as, for example, in the case of Oedipus) on the part of the protagonist of what exactly he did in his ignorance. Discovery may take several forms: "by means of visible signs and tokens" (53), "those which are manufactured by the poet" (53), those "due to memory, when the sight of something leads to the required understanding" (53), and those that are the "result of reasoning" (53). The best form of discovery is that which is "brought about by the incidents themselves, when the startling disclosure results from events that are probable" (54).

The representation of calamity or suffering on stage (or, preferably, its description in the speech of a character) also inspires pity and fear.

Aristotle draws a distinction in this regard between *simple* and *complex* plots. In *simple* plots, the "change of fortune comes about without a reversal or discovery" (45). *Complex* plots, on the other hand, are accompanied by either or both of these. Aristotle stresses that the most effective form of discovery occurs in conjunction with a reversal. Together, they produce the tragic emotions of pity and fear. He warns that utterly good men should not be shown passing from good fortune to misery (this does not provoke pity and fear, he claims, as it merely disgusts us), nor should evil men be portrayed moving from misery to happiness. Rather, the "sort of man who is not conspicuous for virtue and justice, and whose fall into misery is not due to vice and depravity, but rather to some error (*hamartia*), a man who enjoys prosperity and a high reputation" (48) ought to be shown moving from prosperity to misery, rather than the other way around. This is the most effective way, he argues, to ensure the creation of the "pleasure that is proper to tragedy" (49) (i.e. pity and fear) for "not every kind of pleasure should be demanded of tragedy, but only that which is proper to it" (49). Tragedies, in short, depict certain typical choices made as well as the equally typical actions that result therefrom and which lead inevitably, as they would in real life, to ruin. This is what the audience reacts to: they experience pity for the sufferings of the chief protagonist and shudder with fear at the prospect that this is the sort of thing which could happen to them too.

The idea that literature is a mirror of 'nature' remains a staple of classical literary theory and criticism as it does, indeed, for centuries thereafter. In ancient Rome, for example, **HORACE (65 BCE - 8 BCE)** accepts unquestioningly, in his *Ars Poetica* (c.20CE), that the fundamental principle of all art is that it must be a 'mirror held up to nature.' Horace advocates that art should avoid all "idle imaginings shaped like the dreams of a sick man" (68) as a result of which, for example, the neck of a horse might be ludicrously attached to the head of a man. As he points out, "one who has learned the art of imitation" (72) should "turn to life and real manners as his model, and draw from there a living language" (72).

THE MIDDLE AGES

During the Middle ages, a neo-Platonic ontological idealism arguably prevails as a result of which an allegorical model of representation is applied to objects found in the natural world, to the Bible and other spiritual writings and, eventually, to literary works.

ST. AUGUSTINE (354 - 430) advances a Neo-Platonic conception of Christianity in *On Christian Doctrine* (c.395). He contends that what would later come to be called the 'Book of Nature' consists of physical objects, some of which are, when rightly viewed, signs of another, non-physical spiritual reality analogous to Plato's world of ideal forms and synonymous, in the Christian context, with heaven. Arguing that "things are learned by signs" (108) (i.e. words denote things), he begins by distinguishing between 'things' and 'signs.' He argues that though all signs are things, not all things are signs. Things are mostly "that which is not used to signify something else" (108) (although some things are "also signs of other things" [108] of which he provides several examples drawn from the Bible). On the other hand, the "whole use" (108) of signs is "in signifying, like words. For no one uses words except for the purpose of signifying something" (108). Signs are thus "things used to signify something else" (108) as a result of which while "every sign is also a thing" (108), "not every thing is a sign" (108). In short, all signs (e.g. words) perform a symbolic function (in that they always represent or mean something), while some things (e.g. a cross) also perform a symbolic function (in this case, Christ's death and resurrection).

Augustine goes into greater details concerning the symbolic nature of objects. The most important *things* in this world are those which point beyond themselves to or

signify the world beyond this:

we should use this world and not enjoy it, so that the 'invisible things' of God 'being understood by the things that are made' may be seen, that is, so that by means of corporal and temporal things we may comprehend the eternal and spiritual. (109)

In other words, some objects are signs that signify or, to use a term popularised by the Romantics later, *symbolise* the world beyond this. Some 'corporal and temporal' (or physical) objects, that is, reflect 'eternal or spiritual' (or non-physical) objects. Such symbols remind us that the "whole temporal dispensation was made by divine Providence for our salvation" (109).

Augustine goes into greater details concerning the symbolic nature of signs. Any *sign* per se is a thing "which causes us to think of something beyond the impression the thing itself makes upon the senses" (111). Some signs are "natural" (111) while others are "conventional" (111). The former are those which, "without any desire or intention of signifying, make us aware of something beyond themselves, like smoke which signifies fire" (111). Such signs have "no will to signify" (111). Conventional signs, on the other hand, are

those which living creatures show to one another for the purpose of conveying . . . the motion of their spirits or something which they have sensed or understood. Nor is there any other reason for signifying, or for giving signs, except for bringing forth and transferring to another mind the action of the mind in the person who makes the sign. (111)

Even "signs given by God and contained in the Holy Scriptures are of this type also, since they were presented to us by the men who wrote them" (111). Given his faith in the holiness of the men who wrote the scriptures and who viewed themselves as merely a medium through which the "will of God" (112) is passed, St. Augustine never questions that even these signs are also open to interpretation.

Augustine argues that there are two kinds of signs: some are visual in nature and appeal to the sense of sight (e.g. a nod of the head) as a result of which "all of these things are like so many visible words" (111). Others are auditory in that they appeal to the hearing: "most of these consist of words" (111) which have "come to be predominant among men for signifying whatever the mind conceives if they wish to communicate it to anyone" (111). To ensure their preservation, oral signs are also written down "by means of letters" (111). This is because "vibrations in the air soon pass away and remain no longer than they sound" (111). It should be noted in all this that, for Augustine, thought can occur without language. In other words, we do not need words in order to think. Ideas pre-exist language. As a result, written signs are representations of sounds which are in turn representations or reflections of ideas which men have in their minds prior to language. Whether oral or written, signs are merely tools for communication by which men convey ideas to each other.

St. Augustine acknowledges that both visual and auditory signs take two forms: literal and figurative. Literal signs are "used to designate those things on account of which they are instituted" (113), for example, the word 'rose' is used to designate or name a particular kind of flower. Figurative signs "occur when that thing which we designate by a literal thing is used to signify something else" (113), for example, when we use the sign 'rose' to refer to a particular kind of flower which may in turn be thought to signify or symbolise God's love. It is figurative language which is largely responsible for the "many and varied obscurities and ambiguities" (112) which cloud communication, Augustine warns.

Though deeply influenced by the work of Aristotle, rather than Plato, **ST. THOMAS AQUINAS (1225 - 1274)**, in *Summa Theologica* (written between 1256 and 1272) builds in many ways on Augustine's work. Here, Aquinas is concerned specifically with how to interpret the Bible. He is anxious, firstly, to investigate in particular whether figurative language (what he calls "various similitudes and figures" [117]) ought to be

present in a work such as the Bible which is "intended to make truth clear" (117), that is, a work ostensibly concerned with revealing the unvarnished truth about the meaning of life. As he points out, many critics claim that "by such similitudes truth is obscured" (117). Figurative language is more properly found in the realm of the "poetic, the least of all the sciences" (117) which by its very nature perforce "makes use of metaphors to produce a representation" (117). Moreover, the argument has been advanced, he points out, that "to put forward divine truths under the likeness of corporeal things does not befit this doctrine" (117) and that the representation of God ought "chiefly to be taken from the higher creatures, and not from the lower" (117).

Aquinas is also concerned, secondly, with the possibility that the Bible is open to more than one interpretation (i.e. whether it may be "expounded in different senses" [117]). Many have argued, he points out, that a word in the Bible should not have "several senses" (118) because "many different senses in one text produce confusion and deception and destroy all force of argument. Hence no argument, but only fallacies, can be deduced from a multiplicity of propositions" (118)

Aquinas contends in opposition to these claims that, firstly, it is entirely "befitting Holy Scripture to put forward divine and spiritual truths by means of comparison with material things" (117) and that it is "natural to man to attain to intellectual truths through sensible things, because all our knowledge originates from sense" (117). Consequently, "spiritual truths are fittingly taught under the likeness of material things" (117), that is, it is necessary that "spiritual truths be expounded by means of figures taken from corporeal things in order that even the simple who are unable by themselves to grasp intellectual things may be able to understand it" (117). He explains:

The ray of divine revelation is not extinguished by the sensible imagery wherewith it is veiled [in that] it does not allow the minds of those to whom the revelation has been made, to rest in the likenesses, but raises them to the knowledge of intelligible truths; and through those to whom the revelation has been made others also may receive instruction in these matters. (117)

Moreover, he points out, the "very exercise of truth in figures is useful for the exercise of thoughtful minds" (118). Secondly, Aquinas agrees that many words found in the Bible may in fact have more than one meaning. This is not because "one word signifies several things, but because the things signified by the words can be themselves signs of other things" (118). However, he stresses that the "multiplicity of these senses" (118) produced in this way does not "produce equivocation or any other kind of multiplicity" (118).

Aquinas offers a theory of interpretation which, although expressly limited to the interpretation of the Bible, has been enormously influential upon successors like the Italian poet and theorist Dante Alighieri and, later, the Romantics who sought to apply his methodology to the interpretation of secular as well as sacred texts. Aquinas argues that the Bible has two levels of meaning, the "historical or literal" (118) and the "spiritual" (118). At the first level of signification, the literal, "words signify things" (118). This literal level of meaning of the Bible is further divisible into four subcategories:

- "history" (119) which embraces "whenever anything is simply related" (119),
- "etiology" (119) which is concerned with "when its cause is assigned" (119),
- "analogy" (119) which draws comparisons (or which occurs, as Aquinas puts it, "whenever the truth of one text of Scripture is shown not to contradict the truth of another" [119]), and
- the "parabola" (119) which is equivalent to the use of what we would normally call figurative language (i.e. metaphor or metonymy) or even circumlocution--"for by words things are signified properly and figuratively" (119), he points out. He gives as an example of the last category the instance when the Bible speaks of God's arm in order really to denote his power.

The second level of signification found in the Bible, the spiritual as opposed to the historical or literal, is based on the fact, Aquinas argues, that the "author of Holy Scripture is God, in whose power it is to signify his meaning, not by words only (as man can also do) but also by things themselves" (118). As a result, "whereas in every other science things are signified by words, this science has the property that the things signified by words have themselves also a signification" (118). That "signification whereby things signified by words have themselves also a signification is called the spiritual sense" (118) of the text. He proceeds to argue that this 'spiritual sense' itself has three sub-categories:

- sometimes the spiritual meaning of the passage in question in the Bible can be "allegorical" (118) whereby, for example, the "Old Law is a figure of the New Law" (118);
- sometimes the spiritual meaning can be "moral" whereby, for example, the "things done in Christ, or so far as the things which signify Christ, are signs of what we ought to do" (118); and, last but not least,
- sometimes the meaning can be "anagogical" (118) in so far as the words in question "signify what relates to eternal glory" (118).

DANTE ALIGHIERI (1265 - 1321) continues from where Aquinas leaves off.

In *The Banquet* (1304-1308), he borrows Aquinas's interpretive categories in order to argue that all "writings" (120), including literature, can be "understood and ought to be expounded chiefly in four senses" (120) or levels of meaning:

- the literal meaning is "that sense which does not go beyond the strict limits of the letter" (120);
- the allegorical meaning is the "truth hidden under a beautiful fiction" (120) (e.g. when Ovid writes of Orpheus who used his lyre to tame wild beasts, the allegorical meaning of this is that wise man "by the instrument of his voice makes cruel hearts grow mild and humble" [120]);
- the moral meaning is "that for which teachers ought as they go through writings intently to watch for their own profit and that of their hearers" (121);
- the anagogic or symbolic meaning is "above the senses" (121) and "occurs when a writing is spiritually expounded" (121) and "gives intimation of higher matters belonging to the eternal glory" (121). To illustrate the last level of meaning, Dante refers to the Biblical story "when the people of Israel went up out of Egypt, Judea was made holy and free" (121). The symbolic meaning of this concerns "when the soul issues forth from sin she is made holy and free" (121).

In his "Letter to Can Grande Della Scala" (1318), Dante illustrates the schema outlined above with reference to a section of his own celebrated masterpiece, the *Inferno*. He argues that it is a "polysemous" (121), i.e. it consists "of more senses than one" (121), for "it is one sense which we get through the letter, and another which we get through the thing that the letter signifies" (121). The first level of signification he accordingly terms the literal, the second "allegorical or mystic" (121). He then proceeds to subdivide the allegorical or the mystic into several "denominations" (i.e. the moral and anagogic levels of meaning) but these may all be broadly termed allegorical, he argues, "since they differ from the literal and historical" (121) meanings of the text.

THE RENAISSANCE

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554 - 1586) is also, arguably, a defender of ontological idealism although the argument which he offers on its behalf takes a significantly different tack from that of the literary theorists of the Middle Ages. In "An Apology for Poetry" (1595), responding generally to Plato's invitation at the end of *The Republic* to proffer reasons why poets should be allowed to return to his utopia and, in particular, to the claim that poetry is the "mother of lies" (154), Sidney contends famously that one thing poetry can never be accused of is lying:

the poet . . . nothing affirms, and therefore never lieth. For, . . . to lie is to affirm that to be true which is false; so as the other artists, and especially the historian, affirming many things, can, in the cloudy knowledge of mankind, hardly escape from many lies. But the poet (as I said before) never affirmeth. The poet never maketh any circles about your imagination, to conjure you to believe for true what he writes. . . . [I]n truth, not labouring to tell you what is, or is not, but what should and should not be. And therefore, though he recounts things not true, yet because he telleth them not for true, he lieth not. (155)

Gesturing towards Aristotle's distinction between the probable truths conveyed by fiction and the historian's attempt to depict what actually transpired, Sidney argues cleverly that poetry never claims, as history does, to be telling the truth about the particulars of what actually happened. It never conceals the fact that it is only fiction. Hence, he argues, "of all writers under the sun the poet is the least liar" (155).

Sidney acknowledges that, at least to some degree, poetry is a mode of representation: he defines poetry as an "art of imitation" (146), that is, as a "representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth – to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture" (146). He points out that the English word 'poet' is derived from the Greek verb 'poiein' which means 'to make.' Every knowledge "art delivered to mankind" (145) has "nature for its principal object, without which they could not consist" (145). However, he argues that the poet is more than merely a 'maker' or replicator of things, that is, someone who holds a mirror up to nature and is something akin to a prophet, a point of view that anticipates the views of the Romantics in the nineteenth century. He argues that it is not accidental that the ancient Romans gave the poet "so heavenly a title" (144) as prophet (the Latin term for which is 'vates'). This title was bestowed by the Romans, he contends, due to the "heart-ravishing knowledge" (144) which poetry furnishes the reader. Rather than merely mirroring nature, the poet, "lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature" (145). Nature, he contends, "never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done" (145): her "world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden one" (145). In short, where the other arts "receive, as it were, their being" (153) from nature, he claims, the poet "only bringeth his own stuff, and doth not learn a conceit out of matter, but maketh matter for a conceit" (153). From this perspective, the poet qua demi-god, in an act of microcosmic creation analogous to God's creativity on a macrocosmic scale, offers for our consumption an improved version of the imperfect world which he finds around him. Sidney contends that to make these claims on behalf of the poet is not to blaspheme because God

having made man to his own likeness, set him beyond and over all the works of that second nature: which in nothing he showeth so much as in poetry, when with the force of divine breath he bringeth things forth far surpassing her doings. (145)

This is, he points out, no mean accomplishment given the fact that even though "our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keepeth us from reaching unto it" (145).

SIR FRANCIS BACON (1561 - 1626), the founder of British Empiricism, laid the foundation in his The New Organon (1620) for the application of what we know today as the scientific method in the natural or empirical sciences. In his The Advancement of Learning (1605), however, Bacon touches on matters of interest to students of literature. Although to all intents and appearances an ontological materialist at least in his purely philosophical works, he drops hints here of a combination of epistemological perspectivism and literary relativism when he contends that poets are free to use their imagination to rearrange reality as they see fit and most often in ways better than reality itself. Although "poesy" (183) is "feigned history" (183), he writes,

"being not tied to the laws of matter" (183), it "may at pleasure join that which nature has severed, and sever that which nature hath joined, and so make unlawful matches and divorces of things" (183). He sounds a Sidney-esque note in the distinction which he draws between poetry and history: the

use of this feigned history hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world being in proportion inferior to the soul; by reason whereof there is, agreeable to the spirit of man, a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things. Therefore, because the acts or events of true history have not that magnitude which satisfieth the mind of man, poesy feigneth acts and events greater and more heroical. Because true history propoundeth the successes and issues of actions not so agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, therefore poesy feigns them more just in retribution, and more according to revealed Providence. Because true history representeth actions and events more ordinary and less interchanged, therefore poesy endueth them with more rareness and more unexpected and alternative variations. So as it appeareth that poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality and to delectation. And therefore, it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind. . . . (183-184)

In short, poetry has the power of "submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind" (184), whereas in natural philosophy (the fore-runner of the natural sciences) "reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things" (184).

THE NEO-CLASSICAL PERIOD (17th AND 18th CENTURIES)

Literary and, by extension, artistic realism is the name of the game in literary criticism of the Neo-Classical period. As we have seen, where many in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance embraced Plato's ontological idealism, albeit adapted to suit a Christian paradigm, the prevailing spirit during the early modern period is that of ontological materialism. Though few theorists of the time would arguably have rejected Christianity and with it a belief in a world beyond this one (or at least done so openly), there is a wide-spread assumption that the mission of literary works is to reflect physical and social reality and that there is a form appropriate to so doing.

PIERRE CORNEILLE (1606 - 1684) is famous for stressing the necessity of the three unities of time, place and action, all allegedly inherited from Aristotle, if drama is to be realistic. Informing the views expressed in his "Of the Three Unities of Action, Time, and Place" (1660) is an assumption not only that art's relationship to reality is unquestioningly mimetic in nature but also that form is necessarily determined by content. Corneille is famous, whether deservedly or not, for turning Aristotle's mere descriptions of certain features found in the plays which he witnessed into *prescriptions* that would come in the Neo-Classical era to be rigidly enforced. Corneille was a huge influence on the views expressed by **JOHN DRYDEN (1631 - 1700)** in his "An Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1668). This is a fictional dialogue between four gentlemen, Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius and Neander (Dryden's mouthpiece), where a major component of the 'Ancients versus Moderns' debate, so popular at the time and in which they engage here, is devoted to a discussion of the idea that the foundation of drama and, by extension, all literature lies in the imitation of real life. Hence, the importance of the three unities discussed by Corneille.

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672 - 1719), in many of his contributions to The Spectator (1711-1712), attempts to provide insights into the workings of the author's mind and the implications thereof for literary realism. As with Bacon, notwithstanding his empiricist leanings, there is more than a whiff of sympathy expressed here for

epistemological perspectivism and literary relativism.

Addison distinguishes between the mental faculties of wit, judgement and imagination. *Wit* is synonymous with "prompt memories" (134) and consists in the "assemblage of ideas, and putting them together with quickness and variety" (134). Wit is that faculty of mind made possible by the "fancy" (134) which seeks out "any resemblance or congruity, thereby to make up pleasant pictures, and agreeable visions" (134). The "entertainment and pleasantries" (134) of wit, which "strikes so lively on" (134) or appeals to people's fancy, proceeds by way of the use of "metaphor and allusion" (134). Later, Addison provides a long list of the key devices and techniques made use of by wit: "metaphors, similitudes, allegories, enigmas, mottos, parables, fables, dreams, visions, dramatic writings, burlesque, and all the methods of allusion" (134). Addison points out that "every resemblance of ideas is not that which we call wit, unless it be such that it gives delight and surprise to the reader" (134). For this reason, "it is necessary that the ideas should not lie too near one another in the nature of things; for where the likeness is obvious, it gives no surprise" (134). Addison has in mind such familiar clichés as comparing a white woman's bosom to that of snow or the tiresome similes to be found in epics. There are three kinds of wit: true, false, and mixt. The first "consists in the resemblance of ideas" (135), the second in the mere "resemblance of words" (135), while the third "partly in the resemblance of ideas, and partly in the resemblance of words" (135). The *judgement* is, Addison tells us, synonymous with "deepest reason" (134) and consists in the opposing ability to make distinctions, rather than comparisons: it consists in "separating carefully one from another, ideas wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another" (134). Wit is much less effective if it is not counterbalanced by judgement.

In Addison's schema, wit (the capacity to compare things) and judgment (the ability to both compare and contrast) both form part of the *imagination*, that faculty of the mind which is responsible for colouring the physical impressions of objects received by the senses. "Things" (135), he writes, "would make but a poor appearance to the eye, if we saw them only in their proper figures and motions" (135). It is the imagination which excites within our minds ideas "which are different from any thing that exists in the objects themselves" (135):

we are everywhere entertained with pleasing shows and apparitions; we discover imaginary glories in the heavens, and in the earth, and see some of this visionary beauty poured out on the whole creation: but what a rough unsightly sketch of nature should we be entertained with, did all her colouring disappear, and the several distinctions of light and shade vanish? (135)

It is the "soul" (135) which adds colouring to the "images" (135) which it receives "from matter" (135), the "light and colours . . . apprehended by the imagination" (135) being only "ideas in the mind, and not qualities that have any existence in matter" (136).

The key instrument of the imagination is the *words* by which the objects perceived by the senses is embellished: a "description often gives us more lively ideas than the sight of the things themselves" (136):

the images which flow from the object themselves appear weak and faint, in comparison with those that come from the expressions. The reason, probably, may be, because, in the survey of any object, we have only so much of it painted on the imagination as comes in at the eye; but in its description, the poet gives us as free a view of it as he pleases, and discovers to us several parts, that either we did not attend to, or that lay out of our sight when we first beheld it. As we look on any object, our idea of it is, perhaps, made up of two or three simple ideas; but when the poet represents it, he may either give us a more complex idea of it, or only raise in us such ideas as are most apt to affect the imagination. (136-

137)

Addison theorises that different readers are differently affected by the same words (using culinary metaphors, he argues that various readers "have a different *relish* of the same description" [my emphasis; 137] or a "different *taste*" [my emphasis; 137]). The reason for this is that the "perfection of imagination in one more than in another or from the different ideas that several readers affix to the same words" (137).

Addison also argues that it is possible for one to develop a "true relish" (137) and "right judgment" (137). However, although nurture is as important as nature, the former is useless if there is nothing innate there in the first place to be cultivated:

a man should be born with a good imagination, and must have well weighed the force and energy that lie in the several words of a language, so as to be able to distinguish which are most significant and expressive of their proper ideas, and what additional strength and beauty they are capable fo receiving from conjunction with others. The fancy must be warm to retain the print of those images it hath received from outward objects, and the *judgment* discerning, to know what expressions are most proper to clothe and adorn them to the best advantage. (my emphasis; 137)

ALEXANDER POPE (1688 - 1744) accepts unhesitatingly, in his poem entitled "An Essay on Criticism" (1711), that the meaning of a work is a function of the reality which it reflects. He accordingly advises critics to use nature as the standard by which to judge art:

First follow nature, and your judgement frame
By her just standard, which is still the same. (68-69)

Humans may differ from each other in various places and over time. However, nature is eternal and universal: it is the "clear, unchang'd, and universal light" (71) that is "[a]t once the source, and end, and test of art" (85). For Pope, what the great writers know is that fidelity to nature is the cornerstone of all art, hence, the importance of respecting those time-tested rules laid down by the 'Ancients.'

Pope advises critics that there are certain time-honoured methods by which literature holds a mirror up to nature, hence the importance of a veneration for Tradition, that is, for the formal rules laid down since time immemorial by the Ancients in their works of theory (e.g Aristotle's *Poetics*) and put into practice in their poetry. Pope accordingly advises the would-be critic to "Learn . . . for ancient rules a just esteem" (139).

Those rules of old discovered, not devised,
Are nature still, but nature methodized:
Nature, like liberty, is but restrained
By the same laws which first herself ordained . . .
Just rules from great examples giv'n,
We drew from them what they derived from heav'n:
The gen'rous critic fanned the poet's fire,
And taught the world with reason to admire.
Then criticism the Muse's handmaid proved,
To dress her charms, and make her more beloved. . . .
You then whose judgment the right course would steer, . . .
Be Homer's works your study and delight,
Read them by day and meditate by night;

Thence form your judgement, thence your maxims bring,
And trace the Muses upward to their spring; (88-127)

What poets such as Virgil discovered is that "Nature and Homer" (135) are "the same" (135). Hence, "To copy nature is to copy them" (140).

There are rules, in short, established by the Ancients and confirmed by countless theorists and practitioners since then which must be followed if nature is to be accurately

rendered. Literary form follows nature and not the other way around. Acknowledging that some esteemed Modern writers such as Shakespeare have not followed the rules laid down by the Ancients, Pope contends that there are

Some beauties yet, no precepts can declare
For there's a happiness as well as care. (141)

In other words, there are certain "nameless graces which no methods can teach" (144) which a "master-hand alone can reach" (158). However, his point is that such exceptions justify the rules. In some case, they were sometimes necessitated, at least at first, in the case of Ancient writers blazing a new path where there were no rules to guide them and who had no choice, accordingly, but to rely solely on "lucky licence" (148):

If, where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end)
Some lucky license answer to the full
Th'intent proposed, that license is a rule.
Thus Pegasus a nearer way to take,
May boldly deviate from the common track,
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend
Which without passing through the judgment, gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains. (150-157).

In such cases, Pope argues, what matters is the goal (realism) ultimately reached, even though by unconventional means. This is why he warns:

Moderns, beware! or if you must offend
Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end;
Let it be seldom, and compelled by need;
And have, at least, their precedent to plead. . . (163-166)

Pope compares such artistic deviations to nature where, he points out, "in prospects . . . some objects please our eyes, / Which out of nature's common order rise, / The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice" (158-160). It is precisely such innovative exceptions to the rules, whether in the natural world or the world of art, which the Romantics (1785-1830) would later admire so.

Of particular importance to realism, in Pope's view, is the use of appropriate diction grounded in the reality depicted. Some critics pay attention solely or primarily to style: "for language all their care express, / And value books, as women men, for dress: . . . 'the style is excellent' / The sense, they humbly take upon content" (305-308).

Privileging form over substance, they
to conceit alone their taste confine
And glitt'ring thoughts struck out at ev'ry line;
Pleased with a work where nothing's just or fit;
One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit. (289-292).

They as a result favour lesser poets who, "unskill'd to trace / The naked nature and living grace" (293-294), often "With gold and jewels cover every part, / And hide with ornaments their want of art" (295-296). Pope warns against what he calls 'false eloquence' which deceives those critics who focus more on form than content:

Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place;
The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay; (309-314)

Arguing that "works may have more wit than does them good" (303), Pope's point is that the poet should use his wit sparingly and selectively because "As shades more sweetly recommend the light, / So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit" (301-302). He

concludes famously:

True wit is nature to advantage dressed,
 What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed
 Something whose truth convinced at sight we find,
 That gives us back the image of our mind. (297-300)

He continues:

. . . true expression, like th' unchanging sun,
 Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon;
 It gilds all objects but it alters none.
 Expression is the dress of thought, and still
 Appears more decent, as more suitable. (315-319)

In other words, implicitly alluding critically to the work of John Donne and the Metaphysicals, Pope is of the view that true wit involves the occasional use of the most fitting, rather than outlandish, comparisons in order to express a truism that the reader is able almost instinctively to recognise and to assent to.

Form, in short, is subsidiary to content. In Neo-Classical terms, 'decorum,' or stylistic appropriateness, is crucial in this regard: "diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort, / As several garbs with country, town, and court" (322-323). Even the metre, or "numbers" (344), should be determined, Pope argues, by the subject-matter depicted rather than other considerations. He criticises the tendency on the part of some critics to simplistically divide metre into either "smooth or rough" (338), "right or wrong" (338). He warns against liking rhythm merely for the sake of rhythm:

Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;
 Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
 Not mend their minds; as some to church repair
 Not for the doctrine, but the music there. (340-343)

Such critics study poetry only for the 'dulce' and not for the 'utile.' His point is also that regularity of rhythm (what Pope calls "equal syllables" [344]) is not the end all and be all of poetry because it can sometimes be used as a vehicle for bad poetry, examples of which Pope provides. Turning his attention to the related question of 'rhyme,' Pope excoriates the predictable ones inherited from traditional usage (e.g 'breeze' with 'trees' or 'creep' and 'sleep'). Sound must, rather, convey sense:

'Tis not enough no harshness give offense;
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense. (364-365)

Pope offers numerous examples to illustrate the correct coupling of sound with sense (see ll. 366-383).

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709-1784) stresses in at least three works, "On Fiction," which appeared in no. 4 of *The Rambler* (1750), Chapter X of *The History of Rasselas* (1759) and Preface to *Shakespeare* (1765), the virtues of verisimilitude. In Chapter X of his novel *The History of Rasselas*, Johnson's characters turn their attention to the nature of literature. Here, one character named Imlac, Johnson's mouthpiece, argues, firstly, "in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the very best" (319). He advances a number of possibilities why this might be the case, the most important being the view that the "first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcriptions of the same events, new combinations of the same images" (319). Imlac contends that it is widely acknowledged that the earliest writers are "in possession of nature, and their followers of art" (319), the former "excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement" (319).

After this intervention in the so-called 'Ancients versus Moderns' debate, Imlac advances the view that the modern writer must emulate the desire of the Ancients to hold a mirror up to Nature rather than the art itself of the Ancients. Given his own desire to become a writer, he came to the realisation no man was ever great by imitation [i.e. emulation]. My desire of excellence

impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors: I could never describe what I had not seen: I could not hope to move those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand. (319)

For this reason, he realised that his "sphere of attention was suddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and picture upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley" (319-320), etc. It is for this reason that, to a poet,

nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination: he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and the meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety. (320)

The goal in so doing is ultimately moral: "every idea is useful for the enforcement of moral or religious truth" (320). He "who knows most, will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction" (320).

Rasselas interrupts him at this point to say that no matter how much one tries, there will always be some things, even in one's vicinity, which one will not be able to acquaint oneself. Imlac contends that the goal of artistic imitation is not to ferret out the finer details of nature but to paint in the broadest of strokes, to capture not particulars but *universals*: the "business of a poet" (89), he writes, is

to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances: he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features, as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations. (320)

Nature per se is only part of the picture: the other part to be depicted is *human* nature. To this end, he argues, the poet must

be acquainted . . . with all the modes of life . . . the happiness and misery of every condition; . . . the power of all the passions in all their combinations; and . . . the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the spriteliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. (320)

In order to capture human nature in general, the poet must

divest himself of the prejudices of his age and country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same. (89)

The poet must not seek fame but "commit his claims to the justice of posterity" (320).

The poet is, for all these reasons, not only the "interpreter of nature" (320) but also, more importantly, the "legislator of mankind" (320). This is because he must realise that he presides "over the thoughts and manners of future generations" (320) and is, as such, a "being superior to time and place" (320).

In the famous preface to Johnson's collected works of Shakespeare, he praises Shakespeare above all for his realism. He argues that Shakespeare's perhaps most important skill concerns accurate characterisation: he offers "representations of general nature" (321) rather than of "particular manners" (321) peculiar to individuals or particular places and times. In a view of Shakespeare that has come to be constantly regurgitated, he praises the Bard's characterisation in particular for its fidelity to human nature in general:

Shakespeare is above all writers . . . the poet of nature; the poet that

holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world; by the peculiarities of studies and professions . . . ; or by the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions: they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated. . . . In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species. (321)

Where other dramatists offer "hyperbolic or aggravated characters" (322), Shakespeare's "scenes are occupied only by men, who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion" (322).

Characterisation "ample and general" (322) in this way, that is, his "adherence to general nature" (322), is supplemented by appropriate strokes of individuality: "no poet ever kept his personages more distinct from each other. . . . [T]hough some may be equally adapted to every person, it will be difficult to find any that can be properly transferred from the present possessor to another claimant" (322). However, Johnson hastens to add, Shakespeare "always makes nature predominate over accident; and if he preserves the essential character, is not very carefully of distinctions superinduced and adventitious" (322).

Even when dealing with supernatural matters, Johnson stresses, Shakespeare "approximates the remote, and familiarises the wonderful; the event which he represents will not happen, but if it were possible, its effects would probably be such as he has assigned" (322). All in all, Shakespeare "has not only shewn human nature as it acts in real exigencies, but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be exposed" (322).

Whatever his subject matter, as Shakespeare's

personages act upon principles arising from genuine passion, very little modified by particular forms, their pleasures and vexations are communicable to all times and to all places; they are natural, and therefore durable; the adventitious peculiarities of personal habits, are only superficial dies, bright and pleasing for a little while, yet soon fading to a dim tinct, without any remains of former lustre; but the discriminations of true passion are the colours of nature; they pervade the whole mass, and can only perish with the body that exhibits them. (323-324)

In short, painting in broad strokes, Shakespeare holds a mirror up to human nature as it is everywhere and at all times. Humans may differ from each other in subtle ways but what they share in common outweighs these petty differences. And Shakespeare is a, perhaps *the* master of capturing this universal human nature. As such, his "drama is the mirror of life" (322) from which other writers can learn much simply "by reading human sentiments in human language, by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions" (322).

Moreover, if Shakespeare's characterisation is realistic, so too are his dialogues.

Johnson, the editor of the first dictionary of the English language, argues that Shakespeare has captured the enduring spirit of the English language: there is in every nation, a style which never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language as to remain settled and unaltered; this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modish innovations, and the learned depart from established forms of speech, in hope of finding or making better; those who wish for distinction forsake the vulgar. . . . [B]ut there is a

conversation above grossness and below refinement, where propriety resides, and where this poet seems to have gathered his comic dialogue. (324)

The speech of each of Shakespeare's characters is "so evidently determined by the incident which produces it, and is pursued with so much ease and simplicity, that it seems scarcely to claim the merit of fiction, but to have been gleaned by diligent selection out of common conversation, and common occurrences" (321).

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The Romantic poet **WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770 - 1850)**, in his "Preface to Lyrical Ballads" (1800), makes some general observations, some seemingly in a Neoclassical vein, about the object of representation of poetry. He is of the view, basically, that art should hold a mirror up to nature. He argues that poetry is the "most philosophic of all writing" (441) because its "object" (441) is "truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative" (442). The poet, "singing a song in which all humans join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion" (442). In a manner that is very much in keeping with the emotiveness synonymous with the Age of Sensibility which occurred in the second half of the eighteenth century, he argues that this truth is "carried alive into the heart by passion" (442).

The poet, Wordsworth argues, holds a mirror in particular up to human nature: he is the "rock of defense for human nature" (442): in spite of "differences of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs" (442), the poet "binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the *eyes* and *senses* of man are . . . his favourite guides" (my emphasis; 442). The influence of Locke on the last sentence ought to be obvious.

Wordsworth stresses that he has above all sought "to look steadily at my subject" (439) as a result of which there is, he hopes, "little falsehood of description" (439). However, he admits that the language of the poet perforce often, "in liveliness and truth" (441), falls "short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions" (441), only "shadows of which the Poet . . . feels to be produced, in himself" (441). Although it is the "wish of the poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes" (441) and even though he may for brief periods of time "let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his feelings with theirs" (441), this is at best only an approximation of the "freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering" (441). Wordsworth acknowledges that "no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of truth and reality" (441): the poet is at best a "translator" (441) who can only "substitute excellencies of another kind for those which are unattainable by him" (441).

Wordsworth draws a contrast between poetry and other forms of knowledge. Poetry offers the "image of man and nature" (442) but is not impeded by the "obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the biographer and historian" (442). Sounding a similar note to Sidney, Wordsworth argues that there is "no object standing between the poet and the image of things" (442), whereas a "thousand" (442) obstacles stand between the things themselves and the biographer and historian. By the same token, where the man of science is concerned with the "particular facts of nature" (442) which are the object of his studies, the poet imitates, "whether in prose or verse" (443), the "great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature" (443). Moreover, he admits that the "necessity of producing immediate pleasure" (442) distinguishes the function of the poet from that of a historian or biographer: the production of pleasure is an "acknowledgment

of the beauty of the universe" (442) and a "homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man" (442). This goal is missing from both history and science.

Although Wordsworth at times sounds a very Neoclassical note, the Preface is today seen as one of the founding documents of English Romantic poetry. It was, as such, designed to serve as a defence of the radically different subject-matter and style of the *Lyrical Ballads* and functioned, consequently, as a poetic manifesto of sorts. He advances what was for the time and place a revolutionary perspective on poetry that has had a huge impact on subsequent poetry to the point where his assumptions have largely become common place. He argues that his "principal object" (438) of description (or subject matter) (and, by extension, about which all poets should write) was to represent "incidents and situations from common life" (438). Such an intention represented something of a radical departure from the predominant forms of poetry which preceded it and which sought to depict not average or even low-class people and situations via language that was anything but ordinary. Compare, in this regard, the views of theorists like Pope on both the subject-matter and style of poetry.

A philosophical goal informs Wordsworth's intentions in this regard. His purpose in depicting commonplace incidents and situations is to trace the "primary laws of our nature" (438), in particular, the "manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement" (438). Wordsworth has in mind here the views of Locke on the nature of the mind as well as the so-called 'associationism' of David Hartley whose views were inspired by Locke. Wordsworth is particularly interested in capturing how the human mind responds through the senses when it is excited or aroused by its encounter with the physical world and how the 'simple' ideas which come to be formed thereby are later associated or combined with others to produce 'complex' ideas. How is the depiction of humble folk conducive to these ends? Wordsworth reveals that he chose to represent what he calls "[h]umble and rustic life" (438) in his poetry (i.e. poor country-folk, the disenfranchised and the downtrodden) precisely because

in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and, subsequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated. (438)

In other words, drawing upon an agricultural metaphor, Wordsworth argues that the 'essential passions of the heart' grow better and in a less restrained fashion in simple country folk untainted by the false trappings and sophistries of city life. This is because 'our elementary feelings' exist in such people in a much less complex and much more visible form. He contends that the

manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. (438)

To put this another way, Wordsworth is of the view that the 'elementary feelings' inspired in this way gives rise to certain patterns of behaviour characteristic of persons who live in the country and which are easier to grasp from the study of the characteristic pursuits in which they are engaged. Moreover, peasants and other common folk are regularly exposed to the beauties of nature found in their purest form in the countryside (as opposed to city folk who are confined to ugly cities). If Locke is right that the mind is something of a 'tabula rasa' until it is formed via intercourse with the external world through the medium of the physical senses, one's interaction with such a physical environment must necessarily form better human minds and by extension, characters. What he terms "repeated experience" (438) of this kind necessarily produces "regular feelings" (438) which, in turn, modifies character for the better, providing that one is

exposed to sublime natural scenery.

Because of the mundane nature of his subject matter, Wordsworth confesses that at times in his poetry, rather than merely holding a mirror up to nature, he has sought to "throw over" (438) commonplace "incidents and situations" (438) a "certain colouring of the imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect" (438). Moreover, though there is "no necessity to trick out or elevate nature" (441), Wordsworth warns that one ought to remove anything that would "otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion" (441) by applying the "principle of selection" (441). To accomplish this necessitates holding a selective mirror up to nature resulting in a contradiction not dissimilar to the one that can be glimpsed in Samuel Johnson's view of art: literature must hold a mirror up to reality only to a limited extent and must offer, in its stead, an ideal of human conduct to which it must encourage its readers to aspire.

Wordsworth's intention to depict this subject-matter leads him to consider questions of "style" (439) or form in general and diction in particular. To the ends listed above, Wordsworth argues, he sought to utilise in his ballads the "language really used by men" (438). His goal is, he stresses, to "imitate . . . the very language of men" (439). As a result, his "ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance" (439). The language of the humble country-folk which he strives to depict is especially suited to such objectives in that it is "purified" (438), he feels, from "all real defects" (438). This is because it reflects the fact that "such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived" (438). In other words, if words are mimetic in that they derive their meaning from the reality which they reflect, then the language spoken by rural folk, given the 'beautiful and permanent forms of nature' with which they interact, must provide a glimpse of language in its purest form.

There is another advantage, in Wordsworth's view, to imitating the language really spoken by humble rustic folk: "because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions" (438). In other words, unexposed to the sophisticated vanities of the higher classes, they speak a simple and unadorned language which is a "more permanent, and a far more philosophical language than that frequently substituted for it by poets" (438). By utilising 'poetic diction,' he argues, poets "separate themselves from the sympathies of men" (438) by indulging in "arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes . . . of their own creation" (438). This is why Wordsworth avoids "personifications of abstract ideas" (439) and "poetic diction" (439) in general, that is, the "large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of poets" (439). This is why Wordsworth abstains from using poetic clichés, that is, "many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad poets" (440) ad nauseam. His aim is to avoid the "incongruity" (441) that arises from introducing "foreign splendours" (441) of the poet's own making that are out of synch "with that which the passion naturally suggests" (441). For, he argues, "if the poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally . . . lead him to passions the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with [appropriate] metaphors and figures" (440-441). However, he stresses in all this that the poet must make a "selection of the language really spoken by men" (my emphasis; 440), in other words, it must be pruned of all the "vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life" (440) to which persons of that status are, in his view, prone. This fidelity to the language spoken by real men applies to both poetry written in the third person, where the poet speaks through the "mouths of his characters" (443) (e.g. ballads, epics, and narrative poetry in general), and poetry written in the first person (so-called lyric poetry) where the poet "speaks to us in his own person and character" (443). In both cases, the goal being to hold a mirror up to human actions and behaviour, the language used must be

reflective of that actually likely to be spoken. Given that the poet himself "thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions" (443), how then can his "language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly" (443), he asks. In order to "excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves" (443). This is why he advocates that the poet should avoid both idiosyncratic uses of language peculiar to the poet himself and what he terms 'poetic diction.' This is why it does not matter whether the person speaking is another character or the poet himself.

Wordsworth finds it necessary as a result of the foregoing claims to spend some time defending his poetry against the accusation that it contains "prosaisms" (440), that is, that at times what he has written resembles less poetry than prose. It was up to this point widely thought that poets should use a certain kind of diction proper to poetry, so-called 'poetic diction,' whereas prose fiction writers could use more ordinary language. Wordsworth argues that "there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition [i.e. verse]" (440) because a "large portion of every good poem . . . must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose" (440). Moreover, whether poetry or prose fiction, literature originates in and affects the same human beings and thus cannot be that different from each other: both poetry and prose "speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing even in degree" (440). Poetry, in short, is not differentiated from prose by some Platonic ideal form or essence: it "can boast of no celestial anchor that distinguished her vital juices from those of prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both" (440).

Wordsworth also has much to say about "metre" (440) which, he argues, must vary according to the passions represented. This is something, he contends, that has been borne out by the "concurring testimony of ages" (443). He argues that he chose to write in verse, rather than prose, because, firstly, "words metrically arranged" (444) give more pleasure than mere prose. Where morally sound prose is only 'utile,' morally sound poetry is also 'dulce.' Secondly, given that the "end of poetry is to produce excitement in coexistence with an *overbalance* of pleasure" (my emphasis; 444), the regularity provided by a particular rhythm functions to temper the feelings generated in the reader's heart by the depiction of certain passions and to restrain the concomitant irregular association of ideas produced thereby in the mind:

excitement is an unusual and irregular state of mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue portion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the correspondence of something regular, something to which the minds has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling . . . not strictly connected with the passion. (444)

Thirdly, Wordsworth praises the "tendency of meter to divest language . . . of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition" (444), that is, the "indistinct perception . . . of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely" (445). This is what produces a certain "complex feeling of delight" (445) that functions to mitigate the "more pathetic situations and sentiments" (444) which he has chosen to depict as well as the "painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions" (445). Fourthly, metre can also accomplish the opposite effect: if the poet's words be "incommensurate with the passion, and

inadequate to raise the reader to a height of desirable excitement" (444), the poet's choice of metre can "contribute to impart passion to the words" (444) because of the "feelings of pleasure which the reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general" (444) and the specific "feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy" (444), connected to a "particular movement of meter" (444).

Highly indebted to Wordsworth whose poetry, together with that of the other Romantics, helped him overcome a severe depression as a young man, **John Stuart Mill (1806 - 1873)**, in "What is Poetry?" (1833), draws a distinction between poetry and prose. The former looks within, the latter without. Whether poetry or prose, any literature that attempts to depict reality is inevitably filtered through the prism of the writer's consciousness. Mill contends that poetry "is truth" (552). He admits that "fiction, if it is good for anything, is truth" (552) too but these are "different truths" (552): the "truth of poetry is to paint the human soul truly: the truth of fiction is to give a true picture of life" (552). One genre looks within, the other without. The "two kinds of knowledge are different" (552), "come by different ways" (552), and "come mostly to different persons" (552):

Great poets are often proverbially ignorant of life. What they know has come by observation of themselves; they have found there one highly delicate, and sensitive, and refined specimen of human nature, on which the laws of human emotion are written in large characters, such as can be read off without much study: and other knowledge of mankind, such as comes to men of the world by outward experience, is not indispensable to them as poets. (552)

By contrast, "to the novelist such knowledge is all in all; he has to describe outward things, not the inward man; actions and events, not feelings; and it will not do for him to be numbered among those who . . . know man but not men" (552).

Mill points out that "[a]ll this is no bar to the possibility of combining both elements, poetry and narrative or incident, in the same work, and calling it either a novel or a poem" (552). However, "so may red and white combine on the same human features or on the same canvas; and so may oil and vinegar, though opposite natures, blend together in the same composite taste. There is one order of composition which requires the union of poetry and incident, each in its highest kind – the dramatic" (552). However, he insists, even there the "two elements are perfectly distinguishable, and may exist of unequal quality, and in the most various proportion" (552). In some plays, the "incidents of a dramatic poem may be scanty and ineffective, though the delineation of passion and character may be of the highest order; as in Goethe's glorious Torquato Tasso" (552) while in others, the "story as a mere story may be well got up for effect, as is the case with some of the most trashy productions of the Minerva press" (552). The latter kind of plays may consist in a "coherent and probable series of events" (552) but there is "scarcely a feeling exhibited which is not exhibited falsely, or in a manner absolutely common-place" (552). It is precisely the adequate "combination of the two excellencies" (552) which "renders Shakspeare so generally acceptable, each sort of readers finding in him what is suitable to their faculties. To the many he is great as a story-teller, to the few as a poet" (552).

Mill admits that "[i]n limiting poetry to the delineation of states of feeling" (552) and conversely maintaining that in prose fiction "nothing is delineated but outward objects" (552), we may be "thought to have done what we promised to avoid – to have not found, but made a definition, in opposition to the usage of the English language, since it is established by common consent that there is a poetry called descriptive" (552). However Mill denies that this is the case: "[d]escription is not poetry because there is descriptive poetry, no more than science is poetry because there is such a thing as a didactic poem; no more, we might almost say, than Greek or Latin is poetry because there are Greek and Latin poems" (552). However, an "object which admits of being described, or a truth which may fill a place in a scientific treatise, may also

furnish an occasion for the generation of poetry, which we thereupon choose to call descriptive or didactic" (552). This is because the "poetry is not in the object itself, nor in the scientific truth itself, but in the state of mind in which the one and the other may be contemplated" (552). The "mere delineation of the dimensions and colours of external objects is not poetry, no more than a geometrical ground-plan of St. Peter's or Westminster Abbey is painting" (552). Descriptive poetry "consists, no doubt, in description, but in description of things as they appear, not as they are" (553). It "paints them not in their bare and natural lineaments, but arranged in the colours and seen through the medium of the imagination set in action by the feelings" (553). For example, if a poet is to "describe a lion, he will not set about describing him as a naturalist would, nor even as a traveller would, who was intent upon stating the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" (553). Rather, s/he will "describe him by imagery, that is, by suggesting the most striking likenesses and contrasts which might occur to a mind contemplating the lion, in the state of awe, wonder, or terror, which the spectacle naturally excites, or is, on the occasion, supposed to excite" (553). This appears to be "describing the lion professedly" (553) but it describes the "state of excitement of the spectator really" (553). The lion may be "described falsely or in exaggerated colours, and the poetry be all the better" (553). However, if the "human emotion be not painted with the most scrupulous truth, the poetry is bad poetry, i.e. is not poetry at all, but a failure" (553).

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1821 - 1867), in *The Salon of 1859* (1859), expresses his fervent opposition to the very idea of literary realism. He is an unabashed literary relativist. In Part III, Baudelaire rejects the "doctrine, so inimical to art" (622) that the goal of all art is to produce "an excellent copy of nature" (622). Baudelaire exclaims: "I consider it useless and tiresome to portray things as they are, because nothing that exists satisfies me. Nature is ugly and I prefer the monsters of my imagination to the trueness of actuality" (622). Arguing that one cannot be "really certain of the existence of external nature" (622) or, at least, "of knowing *all nature*, all that is contained in nature" (622), Baudelaire insists that the true artist, the true poet, should paint only in accordance with what he sees and what he feels. He should be *really* true to his own nature. He should avoid, like death itself, borrowing the eyes and emotions of another man, however great that man may be; for in that case his productions would be lies, so far as he is concerned, and not realities. (622)

The Imagination, he contends, is the "queen of faculties" (622). All the others are subordinate to it. It engages in both "analysis and synthesis" (622) and yet is more than these. It is synonymous with sensitivity but exceeds sensitivity. It has taught man the moral meaning of colour, of outline, of sound, and of perfume. In the beginning of the world it created analogy and metaphor. It decomposes all creation, and from the materials, accumulated and arranged according to rules whose origin is found only in the depths of the soul, it creates a new world, it produces the sensation of the new. Since it has created the world, . . . it is only right that it should govern it. (622)

The Imagination is the "queen of truth, and the possible is one of the provinces of truth" (622): it "often guesses, boldly and simply, what the secondary faculties seek and find only after successive trials of several methods unadapted to the nature of things" (622).

In Part IV, Baudelaire begins by quoting the view of a Catherine Crowe that the Imagination is not what most would call the "Fancy" (623) but that "higher function" (622) which she, in deference to Wordsworth's colleague S. T. Coleridge, terms the "*constructive* imagination" (622) which "inasmuch as man is made in the likeness of God, bears a distant relation to that sublime power by which the Creator projects,

creates, and upholds his universe" (623). Baudelaire contends, with this in mind, that nature is "only a dictionary" (623) which the Imagination makes use of. From a dictionary, one "extracts . . . all the elements that compose a sentence and a narrative" (623). Similarly,

[p]ainters who obey their imagination seek in their dictionary [of nature] the elements which suit their conception; yet, in adapting these elements with a certain art, they give them an altogether new physiognomy. Those who lack imagination copy the dictionary. The result is a very great fault, the fault of banality. (623)

This is especially true of landscape painters "who generally think it a triumph not to show their personality. Through too much looking they forget to feel and to think" (623). The same is true of literature: "systems of rhetoric prosody" (623) are not "arbitrarily invented tyrannies, but rather a collection of rules required by the very nature of the spiritual being" (623). Such systems, he insists, "have never kept originality from showing itself clearly" (623). In fact, he says, "they have aided the development of originality" (623).

Baudelaire proceeds to offer the following formulation of what he calls the "true aesthetic" (623): the

whole visible universe is but a storehouse of images and signs to which imagination will give a relative place and value; it is a sort of food which the imagination must transform and digest. All the powers of the human soul must be subordinated to the imagination which commandeers them all at one and the same time. (623)

"[K]nowing the dictionary well does not necessarily imply a knowledge of the art of composition" (623) but the Imagination "includes the understanding of all means of expression and the desire to master them" (623).

ÉMILE ZOLA (1840 -1902), by contrast to Baudelaire, is a fervent realist. He begins his The Experimental Novel (1880) by arguing that the "return to nature, the naturalistic evolution" (645) is driving "all human intelligence" (644) along the "same scientific path" (645). Drawing in particular upon Claude Bernard's Introduction à l'étude de la médecine expérimentale, Zola proclaims that he intends to provide a theory of the novel with the "rigidity of a scientific truth" (645). Zola argues that the novelist is "equally an observer and an experimentalist" (647). The "observer in him gives the facts as he has observed them, suggests the point of departure" (647) whereupon the "experimentalist appears and introduces an experiment, that is to say, sets his characters going in a certain story so as to show that the succession of facts will be such as the requirements of the determinism of the phenomena under examination call for" (647). Referring to Balzac's Cousine Bettine, Zola argues that the "whole operation consists in taking facts in nature, then in studying the mechanism of these facts, acting upon them, by the modification of circumstances and surroundings, without deviating from the facts of nature" (647). It is in this way that one acquires "knowledge of man, scientific knowledge of him, in both his individual and social relations" (647).

Warning that we do not know the "reagents which decompose the passions, rendering them susceptible of analysis" (647), Zola defines the "naturalistic novel" (647) as a "real experiment that a novelist makes on man by the help of observation" (647). Zola responds to the criticism that "naturalistic writers . . . desire to be solely photographers" (647) and that it is impossible to be "strictly true" (647) by arguing that the

idea of experiment carries with it the idea of modification. We start, indeed, from the true facts, which are our indestructible basis; but to show the mechanism of these facts, it is necessary for us to produce and direct the phenomena; this is our share of invention; here is the genius in the book. (647)

Zola's point is that "we must modify nature, without departing from nature" (647) because "observation indicates and experiment teaches" (647). In short, the work of the naturalist novelist is the "offspring of the doubt which seizes them in the presence of truths little known and phenomena unexplained" (647).

Zola then turns to the object on which the experimental method in literature is applied: human nature. He advances the view that in the nineteenth century the great discovery, "thanks to analysis" (647), has been that "there are fixed laws" (647) by which all aspects of physical nature are governed. "Living beings . . . are in their turn brought under and reduced to the general mechanism of matter" (647), the "existing conditions" (647) of which are the same for animate and inanimate objects alike. Physiology has assumed the matter of factness of science in that the "body of a man is a machine, whose machinery can be taken apart and put together again at the will of the experimenter" (648). Man's "passionate and intellectual acts" (648) have long been the domain of philosophy and literature, the "hypotheses" (648) of which will be decisively conquered by the rise of science. "All things hang together" (648), Zola argues, as a result of which it is but a natural evolution from the "determinism of inanimate bodies" (648) to the "determinism of living beings" (648) and the realisation that in the same way that "fixed laws govern the human body" (648), so too can the "laws of thought and passion" (648) also be determined: a "like determination will govern the stones of the roadway and the brain of man" (648).

Novelists, Zola argues, are the "analysers of man, in his individual and social relations" (648). To this end, they will come to make increasing use of "scientific psychology" (648) as a complement to "scientific physiology" (648). To "finish the series we have only to bring into our studies of nature and man the experimental method" (648) outlined in Part I. In other words, "we should operate on the characters, the passions, on the human and social data, in the same way that the chemist and the physicist operate on inanimate beings" (648). It is "scientific investigation, it is experimental reasoning, which combats one by one the hypotheses of the idealists, and which replaces purely imaginary novels by novels of observation and experiment" (648). Zola backs away from delineating the precise laws by which human nature is determined, saying only that it is difficult to render the complexity of the "highest manifestations of man as an individual and as a social member" (648), the "truths of the science of man" (648) being "restricted and precarious" (648). He does say, however, that "heredity has a great influence in the intellectual and passionate manifestations of man" (648) as do his "surroundings" (648). He alludes briefly to the importance of "Darwin's theories" (648) with regard to the former, but has most to say about the latter, arguing that it is the "interorganic conditions" (648), the "social conditions" (648), which must be taken into account if we wish to find the determinism of phenomena in living beings" (648):

[s]omeday the physiologist will explain to us the mechanism of the thoughts and passions; we shall know how the individual machinery of each man works; how he thinks, how he loves, how he goes from reason to passion to folly; but these phenomena, resulting as they do from the mechanism of the organs, acting under the influence of an interior condition, are not produced in isolation or in the bare void. Man is not alone; he lives in society, in a social condition; and consequently, for us novelists, the social condition unceasingly modifies the phenomena. Indeed, our great study is just there, in the reciprocal effect of society on the individual and the individual on society. . . . And this is what constitutes the experimental novel: to possess a knowledge of the mechanism of the phenomena inherent in man, to show the machinery of his intellectual and sensory manifestations, under the influences of heredity and environment, such as physiology shall give them to us, and then finally to exhibit man living in social conditions produced by himself,

which he modifies daily, and in the heart of which he himself experiences a continual transformation. (648-649)

The goal of the naturalistic novelist is to "solve scientifically the question of how man behaves when . . . in society" (649). The "experimental novel" (649) is, accordingly, the "consequence of the scientific evolution of the century" (649) because it is devoted to the "study of the natural man, governed by physical and chemical laws, and modified by the influences of his surroundings" (649). This is why the novel is the "literature of our scientific age" (649) in much the same way that Romantic poetry was the product of an earlier "theological age" (649).

There is, Zola maintains, a moral "purpose" (649) to the experimental method in literature: "to make oneself master of life in order to be able to direct it" (649), that is, to change it for the better. Our goal as intelligent beings, he argues, is "to penetrate to the wherefore of things, to become superior to those things, and to reduce them to a condition of subservient machinery" (649). The naturalistic novelist also "employs the experimental method in his study of man as a simple individual and as a social animal" (649) in order to "master certain phenomena of an intellectual and personal order, to be able to direct them" (649). We are, he says, "experimental moralists, showing by experiment in what way a passion acts in a certain social condition" (649) in order to "gain control of this passion . . . and reduce it, or at least make it as inoffensive as possible" (649). In this "consists the practical utility and high morality of our naturalistic works, which experiment on man, and which dissect piece by piece this human machinery in order to set it going through the influence of the environment" (649). The naturalistic novelist engages in a "practical sociology" (649): to be the "master of good and evil, to regulate life, to regulate society, to solve in time all the problems of socialism, above all, to give justice a solid foundation by solving through experiment the questions of criminality – is not this being the most useful and the most moral workers in the human workshop?" (649).

Zola turns his attention at this point to the "role that the personality of the novelist should play" (651) in all this. Zola argues that it is the impersonal "genius of the experimentalist" (651), and not the subjectivism that is the hallmark of the poet, which should predominate in the novelist. He argues that the experimental "method is but the tool; it is the workman, it is the idea, which he brings, which makes the chef-d'oeuvre" (652). He quotes Bernard yet again to this end: "It is a particular feeling, a *quid proprium*, which constitutes the originality, the invention, or the genius of each one" (qtd. in Zola, 652). Bernard utilises the organic metaphor so beloved of nineteenth century thinkers: the "idea is the seed; the method is the soil which furnishes the conditions for developing and prospering it, and bringing forth its best fruits, according to nature" (qtd. in Zola, 652). Zola stresses that method without the originality produced by the insight of genius is worth little. However, if "you are content to remain in the a priori idea, and enjoy your own feelings without finding any basis for it in reason or any verification in experiment, you are a poet: you venture upon hypotheses which you cannot prove; you are struggling vainly in a painful indeterminism" (652). The poet (whom he equates with the "metaphysician" [652] or idealist) "believes that the idealistic creation of his brain which coincides with his feelings, represents the reality" (qtd. in Zola, 652). Sooner or later, however, one must recognise that "in order to arrive at the truth he must . . . study the natural laws and submit his ideas, if not his reason, to experiment, that is to say, to the criterion of facts" (652). The "genius, the idea a priori" (652) of the experimental or naturalistic novelist "remains, only it is controlled by experiment" (652) which "cannot destroy his genius; on the contrary, it confirms it" (652). Indeed, it will "be so much the greater when experiment has proved the truth of his personal idea" (652).

Naturalistic novelists seek ways to "reduce the ideal, to conquer truth from the unknown" (652), and to "submit each fact to the test of observation and experiment" (652). Unlike the vain undertakings of the idealist, the observer and the

experimentalist

work for the strength and happiness of man, making him more and more the master of nature. There is neither nobility, nor dignity, nor beauty, nor morality in not knowing, in lying, in pretending that you are greater according as you advance in error and confusion. The only great and moral works are those of truth. (652)

Zola stresses that the "great unknown which surrounds us ought to inspire us with the desire to pierce it, to explain it by means of scientific methods" (652).

To "know the essence of things" (653), Zola argues, it is necessary to adopt a "strictly scientific point of view" (653). "All theories are admitted, and the theory which carries the most weight is the one which explains the most" (653). There is "no authority other than that of facts proved by experiment" (653). The best "philosophical system" (653) is that "which adapts itself the best to the actual condition of the sciences" (653). He agrees with Bernard's view that "behind a manifestation of any kind of the human intelligence, there always lies more or less clearly . . . a philosophical system" (653) to which one should not "attach oneself devotedly" (653). Rather, one should "hold tenaciously to the facts" (653) and be "free to modify the system if the facts call for it" (653). Philosophy in general, Zola cites Bernard, "represents the eternal desire of the human reason after knowledge of the unknown" (653). Philosophers always "confine themselves to questions that are in dispute, and to those lofty regions that lie beyond the boundaries of science" (653). They, however, do not solve a single problem, and "keep up a cult of the unknown" (653).

Zola finally turns his attention to the "question of form in the naturalistic novel" (653) because "it is precisely there that individuality shows in literature" (653). He ends up saying relatively little about form which, in the end, should be subsidiary to the object of representation: human nature. He argues that a writer's genius is found not only in the "feeling and in the idea a priori but also in the form and style" (653). He stresses, however, that the "question of the method and the question of rhetoric are distinct from each other" (653). By Naturalism, he intends the 'experimental method,' the "introduction of observation and experiment into literature" (654), something in which rhetoric plays no part, he claims. The various "styles in letters" (654) (or rhetorics) employed by writers, corresponding to "expressions of the literary temperament of the writers" (654), are superficial additions placed on top of the underlying experimental method in the naturalistic novel. There is a danger in too much attention being paid to form, Zola argues, precisely because the "form of expression depends upon the method" (654):

language is only one kind of logic, and its construction natural and scientific. He who writes the best will not be the one who gallops madly among hypotheses, but the one who walks straight ahead in the midst of truths. We are actually rotten with lyricism; we are very much mistaken when we think that the characteristic of a good style is a sublime confusion with just a dash of madness added; in reality, the excellence of a style depends upon its logic and clearness. (654)

This view of diction contrasts powerfully with the view that style is the "spectacle of a powerful individuality, reproducing nature in superb language" (654).

Just about a decade later, **OSCAR WILDE (1854 - 1900)**, following in Baudelaire's footsteps, takes a directly opposing view to Zola's. He mounts, in "The Decay of Lying" (1889), a ferocious attack on the idea that art imitates life. His mouthpiece in this fictional Platonic-style dialogue which Wilde devotes to the subject of artistic representation in general is Vivian. He explains to his interlocutor Cyril that in an article entitled he is working on, also called "The Decay of Lying," "what I am pleading for is Lying in art" (659). He then proceeds to read large chunks from his essay:

One of the chief causes that can be assigned for the curiously

commonplace character of most of the literature of our age is undoubtedly the decay of Lying as an art, a science, and a social pleasure. The ancient historians gave us delightful fiction in the form of fact; the modern novelist presents us with dull facts under the guise of fiction. The Blue-Book is rapidly becoming his ideal both for method and manner. He has his tedious *document humain*, his miserable little *coin de la création*, into which he peers with his microscope. He is to be found at the Librairie Nationale, or at the British Museum, shamelessly reading up his subject. He has not even the courage of other people's ideas, but insists on going directly to life for everything, and ultimately, between encyclopedias and personal experience, he comes to the ground, having drawn his types from the family circle or from the weekly washerwoman, and having acquired an amount of useful information from which never, even in his most meditative moments, can be thoroughly free himself. (659)

The "loss" (659) that results to art in general and literature in particular from this "false ideal of our time" (659) can hardly be overestimated, Vivian/Wilde asserts. Both lying and poetry are

arts — arts, as Plato saw, not unconnected with each other and they require the most careful study, the most disinterested devotion. Indeed, they have their technique, just as the more material arts of painting and sculpture have, their subtle secrets of form and colour, their craft-mysteries, their deliberate artistic methods. As one knows the poet by his fine music, so one can recognise the liar by his rich rhythmic utterance, and in neither case will the casual inspiration of the moment suffice. (659)

Acknowledging that "practice must precede perfection" (659), Vivian claims that "in modern days . . . the fashion of writing poetry has become far too common, and should, if possible, be discouraged" (659), whereas the "fashion of lying has almost fallen into disrepute. Many a young man starts in life with a natural gift for exaggeration which, if nurtured in congenial and sympathetic surroundings, or by the imitation of the best models, might grow into something really great and wonderful. But, as a rule, he comes to nothing" (659) not least because he "falls into careless habits of accuracy" (659). In a short while, he develops a "morbid and unhealthy faculty of truth-telling, begins to verify all statements made in his presence, has no hesitation in contradicting people who are much younger than himself, and often ends by writing novels which are so lifelike that no one can possibly believe in their probability" (659).

Vivian considers several contemporary realists writing in the so-called 'golden age of realism,' including Zola. What the latter writes, Vivian argues, is "perfectly truthful, and describes things exactly as they happen. What more can any moralist desire?" (660), he asks. However, "from the standpoint of art, what can be said in favour" (660) of Zola? "Nothing" (660): his

characters . . . have their dreary vices, and their drearier virtues. The record of their lives is absolutely without interest. Who cares what happens to them? In literature we require distinction, charm, beauty and imaginative power. We don't want to be harrowed and disgusted with an account of the doings of the lower orders. (660)

It is not a virtue that his

characters were taken directly from life. To us they seem to have suddenly lost all their vitality, all the few qualities they ever possessed. The only real people are the people who never existed, and if a novelist is base enough to go to life for his personages he should at least pretend that they are creations, and not boast of them as copies. The justification of a character in a novel is not that other persons are what they are, but that the author is what he is. Otherwise the novel is not a work of art.

(660)

He continues: "what is interesting about people in good society . . . is the mask that each one of them wears, not the reality that lies behind the Mask. It is a humiliating confession, but we are all of us made out of the same stuff" (661). Moreover, where we differ from each other is purely in accidentals: in dress, manner, tone of voice, religious opinions, personal appearance, tricks of habit and the like. The more one analyses people, the more all reasons for analysis disappear. Sooner or later one comes to that dreadful universal thing called human nature. Indeed, as any one who has ever worked among the poor knows only too well, the brotherhood of man is no mere poet's dream, it is a most depressing and humiliating reality. (661)

Vivian stresses that the "popular cry of our time is 'Let us return to Life and Nature; they will recreate Art for us, and send the red blood coursing through her veins'" (662). The reality is, however, that "Nature is always behind the age" (662). And as for "Life" (662), she is "'the solvent that breaks up Art, the enemy that lays waste her house'" (662). If we take Nature to mean "natural simple instinct as opposed to self-conscious culture, the work produced under this influence is always old-fashioned, antiquated, and out of date. One touch of Nature may make the whole world kin, but two touches of Nature will destroy any work of Art" (662). If, on the other hand, we regard Nature as the

collection of phenomena external to man, people only discover in her what they bring to her. She has no suggestions of her own. Wordsworth went to the lakes, but he was never a lake poet. He found in stones the sermons he had already hidden there. He went moralising about the district, but his good work was produced when he returned, not to Nature but to poetry. (662)

Art, by contrast, "begins with abstract decoration, with purely imaginative and pleasurable work dealing with what is unreal and non-existent" (662). Then Life becomes fascinated with this new wonder, and asks to be admitted into the charmed circle. Art takes life as part of her rough material, recreates it, and refashions it in fresh forms, is absolutely indifferent to fact, invents, imagines, dreams, and keeps between herself and reality the impenetrable barrier of beautiful style, of decorative or ideal treatment. (662)

The "third stage is when Life gets the upper hand, and drives Art out into the wilderness" (662). That is the "true decadence, and it is from this that we are now suffering" (662).

Vivian is confident, however, that truthfulness in general and realism in art will not remain the status quo forever:

Bored by the tedious and improving conversation of those who have neither the wit to exaggerate nor the genius to romance, tired of the intelligent person whose reminiscences are always based upon memory, whose statements are invariably limited by probability, and who is at any time liable to be corroborated by the merest Philistine who happens to be present, Society sooner or later must return to its lost leader, the cultured and fascinating liar. (664)

We may not know who the earliest cave man-liar was but, whatever his "name or race, he certainly was the true founder of social intercourse" (664) for the "aim of the liar is simply to charm, to delight, to give pleasure. He is the very basis of civilised society, and without him a dinner party, even at the mansions of the great, is as dull as a lecture at the Royal Society" (664). Art,

breaking from the prison-house of realism, will run to greet him, and will kiss his false, beautiful lips, knowing that he alone is in possession of the great secret of all her manifestations, the secret that Truth is entirely and absolutely a matter of style; while Life — poor, probable, uninteresting

human life — tired of repeating herself for the benefit of Mr. Herbert Spencer, scientific historians, and the compilers of statistics in general, will follow meekly after him, and try to reproduce, in her own simple and untutored way, some of the marvels of which he talks. (664)

Vivian admits that there will always be critics who . . . will gravely censure the teller of fairy tales for his defective knowledge of natural history, who will measure imaginative work by their own lack of any imaginative faculty, and will hold up their ink-stained hands in horror if some honest gentleman, who has never been farther than the yew-trees of his own garden, pens a fascinating book of travels like Sir John Mandeville, or, like great Raleigh, writes a whole history of the world, without knowing anything whatsoever about the past. (664)

They will cite Shakespeare as their authority and, in particular, his "unfortunate aphorism about Art holding the mirror up to Nature" (664) which, it should be noted, however, is "deliberately said by Hamlet in order to convince the bystanders of his absolute insanity in all art-matters" (664).

However, in Vivian's view, Hamlet's famous statement "no more represents Shakespeare's real views upon art than the speeches of Iago represent his real views upon morals" (664). Vivian argues that, by contrast,

Art finds her own perfection within, and not outside of, herself. She is not to be judged by any external standard of resemblance. She is a veil, rather than a mirror. She has flowers that no forests know of, birds that no woodland possesses. She makes and unmakes many worlds, and can draw the moon from heaven with a scarlet thread. Hers are the 'forms more real than living man,' and hers the great archetypes of which things that have existence are but unfinished copies. Nature has, in her eyes, no laws, no uniformity. She can work miracles at her will, and when she calls monsters from the deep they come. She can bid the almond tree blossom in winter, and send the snow upon the ripe cornfield. (664)

Cyril at this point wants to know if Vivian sincerely believes that "Life imitates Art, that Life in fact is the mirror, and Art the reality?" (664-665). Vivian replies that it is a "paradox" (665) but "none the less true" (665) that "Life imitates art far more than Art imitates life" (665). We have

all seen in our own day in England how certain curious and fascinating type of beauty, invented and emphasised by two imaginative painters, has so influenced Life that, whenever one goes to a private view or to an artistic salon one sees, here the mystic eyes of Rossetti's dream, the long ivory throat, the strange square-cut jaw, the loosened shadowy hair that he so ardently loved, there the sweet maidenhood of 'The Golden Stair.' (665).

It has always been so, he maintains: a "great artist invents a type, and Life tries to copy it, to reproduce it in a popular form" (665). "Neither Holbein nor Vandyck found in England what they have given us. They brought their types with them, and Life with her keen imitative faculty set herself to supply the master with models" (665). We may "try to improve the conditions of the race by means of good air, free sunlight, wholesome water, and hideous bare buildings for the better housing of the lower orders. But these things merely produce health, they do not produce beauty" (665). For this, "Art is required, and the true disciples of the great artist are not his studio imitators, but those who become like his works of art, be they plastic as in Greek days, or pictorial as in modern times; in a word, Life is Art's best, Art's only pupil" (665).

The same is true of literature. Wilde contends that the "most obvious and the vulgarest form" (665) in which life imitates art occurs when "silly boys who, after reading the adventures of . . . Dick Turpin, pillage the stalls of unfortunate apple-women, break into sweet-shops at night, and alarm old gentlemen who are returning home from the

city by leaping out on them in suburban lanes, with black masks and unloaded revolvers" (665). This phenomenon is usually attributed to the influence of literature on the imagination. But this is a mistake. The imagination is essentially creative, and always seeks for a new form. The boy-burglar is simply the inevitable result of life's imitative instinct. He is Fact, occupied as Fact usually is, with trying to reproduce Fiction, and what we see in him is repeated on an extended scale throughout the whole of life. (665)

After a long account of particular persons whose lives reflected stories, Vivian intones once more that "[l]ife holds the mirror up to Art" (666) and either "reproduces some strange type imagined by painter or sculptor" (666) or "realises in fact what has been dreamed in fiction" (666). "Scientifically speaking, the basis of life . . . is simply the desire for expression, and Art is always presenting various forms through which this expression can be attained. Life seizes on them and uses them, even if they be to her own hurt" (666).

Cyril at this point wonders whether "Nature, no less than Life, is an imitation of Art" (666) and whether "Nature follows the landscape painter, then, and takes her effects from him" (666). Vivian replies by asking where,

if not from the Impressionists, do we get those wonderful brown fogs that come creeping down our streets, blurring the gas-lamps and changing the houses into monstrous shadows? To whom, if not to them and their master, do we owe the lovely silver mists that brood over our river, and turn to faint forms of fading grace curved bridge and swaying barge? The extraordinary change that has taken place in the climate of London during the last ten years is entirely due to a particular school of Art. (666-667).

From a "scientific or a metaphysical point of view" (667), Vivian argues, Nature is no great mother who has borne us. She is our creation. It is in our brain that she quickens to life. Things are because we see them, and what we see, and how we see it, depends on the Arts that have influenced us. To look at a thing is very different from seeing a thing. One does not see anything until one sees its beauty. Then, and then only, does it come into existence. At present, people see fogs, not because there are fogs, but because poets and painters have taught them the mysterious loveliness of such effects. There may have been fogs for centuries in London. I dare say there were. But no one saw them, and so we do not know anything about them. They did not exist till Art had invented them. (667)

There can be, he admits, too much of a good thing. Today, for example, "fogs are carried to excess" (667) having become the "mere mannerism of a clique" (667). The exaggerated realism of their method gives dull people bronchitis. Where the cultured catch an effect, the uncultured catch cold" (667). "Art creates an incomparable and unique effect, and, having done so, passes on to other things" (667). Nature, by contrast, "forgetting that imitation can be made the sincerest form of insult, keeps on repeating this effect until we all become absolutely wearied of it" (667).

Cyril then tries to get Vivian to acknowledge that "Art expresses the temper of its age, the spirit of its time, the moral and social conditions that surround it, and under whose influence it is produced" (667). However, Vivian denies that this is in fact the case. "Art never expresses anything but itself" (667). This is the "principle" (667) of what he calls the "new æsthetics" (667). Of course, "nations and individuals, with that healthy natural vanity which is the secret of existence, are always under the impression that it is of them that the Muses are talking, always trying to find in the calm dignity of imaginative art some mirror of their own turbid passions" (667). However, in Vivian's view, the "highest art rejects the burden of the human spirit, and gains more from a new medium or a fresh material than she does from any enthusiasm for art, or from any lofty

passion, or from any great awakening of the human consciousness. She develops purely on her own lines. She is not symbolic of any age. It is the ages that are her symbols" (667). Even those who hold that "Art is representative of time and place and people cannot help admitting that the more imitative an art is, the less it represents to us the spirit of its age" (667). The "more abstract, the more ideal an art is, the more it reveals to us the temper of its age. If we wish to understand a nation by means of its art, let us look at its architecture or its music" (668). What the

imitative arts really give us are merely the various styles of particular artists, or of certain schools of artists. Surely you don't imagine that the people of the Middle Ages bore any resemblance at all to the figures on mediaeval stained glass, or in mediaeval stone and wood carving, or on mediaeval metal-work, or tapestries, or illuminated MSS. They were probably very ordinary-looking people, with nothing grotesque, or remarkable, or fantastic in their appearance. The Middle Ages, as we know them in art, are simply a definite form of style. (668)

This is because "[n]o great artist ever sees things as they really are. If he did, he would cease to be an artist" (668). He offers, in this regard, the example of the "Japanese people, as they are presented to us in art" (668). If you "set a picture by Hokusai, or Hokkei, or any of the great native painters, beside a real Japanese gentleman or lady, you will see that there is not the slightest resemblance between them" (668). The "whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people" (668). The Japanese people are "simply a mode of style, an exquisite fancy of art" (668). By the same token, Greek art never "tells us what the Greek people were like" (668): Athenian women were not "like the stately dignified figures of the Parthenon frieze, or like the marvellous goddesses who sat in the triangular pediments of the same building" (668). The "fact is that we look back on the ages entirely through the medium of art, and art, very fortunately, has never once told us the truth" (668).

One day, Vivian prophesies, when "solid stolid British intellect" (669) realises the advantages to and necessity of lying, "how joyous we shall all be! Facts will be regarded as discreditable, Truth will be found mourning over her fetters, and Romance, with her temper of wonder, will return to the land. The very aspect of the world will change to our startled eyes" (669). But, "before this comes to pass we must cultivate the lost art of Lying" (670). Cyril, persuaded by Vivian, exclaims that "we must certainly cultivate it at once" (670) and, to this end, presses Vivian to tell him "briefly the doctrines of the new æsthetics" (670), which Vivian swiftly obliges. Firstly,

Art never expresses anything but itself. It has an independent life, just as Thought has, and develops purely on its own lines. It is not necessarily realistic in an age of realism, nor spiritual in an age of faith. So far from being the creation of its time, it is usually in direct opposition to it, and the only history that it preserves for us is the history of its own progress. Sometimes it returns upon its footsteps, and revives some antique form, as happened in the archaistic movement of late Greek Art, and in the pre-Raphaelite movement of our own day. At other times it entirely anticipates its age, and produces in one century work that it takes another century to understand, to appreciate and to enjoy. In no case does it reproduce its age. To pass from the art of a time to the time itself is the great mistake that all historians commit.

Secondly,

All bad art comes from returning to Life and Nature, and elevating them into ideals. Life and Nature may sometimes be used as part of Art's rough material, but before they are of any real service to art they must be translated into artistic conventions. The moment Art surrenders its imaginative medium it surrenders everything. As a method Realism is a complete failure, and the two things that every artist should avoid are

modernity of form and modernity of subject-matter. To us, who live in the nineteenth century, any century is a suitable subject for art except our own. The only beautiful things are the things that do not concern us. It is . . . because Hecuba is nothing to us that her sorrows are so suitable a motive for a tragedy. (670)

Though "M. Zola sits down to give us a picture of the Second Empire" (670), Vivian points out, "[w]ho cares for the Second Empire now? It is out of date. Life goes faster than Realism, but Romanticism is always in front of Life" (670). Thirdly,

Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life. This results not merely from Life's imitative instinct, but from the fact that the self-conscious aim of Life is to find expression, and that Art offers it certain beautiful forms through which it may realise that energy. (670)

This novel "theory . . . has never been put forward before" (670) and, he exclaims, "throws an entirely new light upon the history of Art" (670). Moreover, it is a fact that "external Nature also imitates Art. The only effects that she can show us are effects that we have already seen through poetry, or in paintings. This is the secret of Nature's charm, as well as the explanation of Nature's weakness" (670). Last but not least, he adds, the "final revelation is that Lying, the telling of beautiful untrue things, is the proper aim of Art" (670). At this point, Vivian feels that he has "spoken at sufficient length" (670) of all this and urges Cyril to join him on the terrace to take in the natural scenery offered by the evening, stressing even here that although at "twilight nature becomes a wonderfully suggestive effect, and is not without loveliness" (670), its "chief use is to illustrate quotations from the poets" (670).

KEY THEORISTS AND WORKS ON LITERARY REPRESENTATION

The Classical Period
Plato (c.427 - c.347 BCE): • <u>The Republic</u>
Aristotle (c.384 - c.322 BCE): • <u>Poetics</u>
Horace (65 BCE - 8 BCE): • <u>Ars Poetica</u> [Art of Poetry] (c.20 BCE)
The Middle Ages
St. Augustine (354 - 430): • <u>On Christian Doctrine</u> (c.395)
St. Thomas Aquinas (1225 - 1274): • <u>Summa Theologica</u> (1256-1272)
Dante Alighieri (1265 - 1321): • <u>The Banquet</u> (1304-1308) • "Letter to Can Grande Della Scala" (1318)
The Renaissance
Sir Philip Sidney (1554 - 1586): • "An Apology for Poetry" (1595)
Sir Francis Bacon (1561 - 1626): • <u>The Advancement of Learning</u> (1605)
Ben Jonson (1572 - 1637): • <u>Timber, or, Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter</u> (1640)
The Early Modern Period (Neo-Classicism)
Pierre Corneille (1606 - 1684): • "Of the Three Unities of Action, Time, and Place" (1660)
John Dryden (1631 - 1700): • "An Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1668)
Joseph Addison (1672 - 1719): • <u>The Spectator</u> (1711-1712)
Edward Young (1683 - 1765): • "Conjectures on Original Composition" (1759)
Alexander Pope (1688 - 1744): • "An Essay on Criticism" (1711)
Samuel Johnson (1709-1784): • "On Fiction" (1750) • <u>The History of Rasselas: Chapter X</u> (1759) • <u>Preface to Shakespeare</u> (1765)

<p>Joshua Reynolds (1723 - 1792):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Discourses on Art</u> (1769-1790)
<p>William Blake (1757 - 1827):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Annotations to Reynolds' <u>Discourses</u>" (1808)
<p>The Nineteenth Century</p>
<p>William Wordsworth (1770 - 1850):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Preface to <u>Lyrical Ballads</u>" (1800)
<p>John Stuart Mill (1806 - 1873):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "What is Poetry?" (1833)
<p>Charles Baudelaire (1821 - 1867)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Salon of 1859</u> (1859)
<p>Gustave Flaubert (1821 - 1880)</p>
<p>Edmond de Goncourt (1822 - 1896)</p>
<p>Fernand Des Noyers (1828 - 1889)</p>
<p>Jules de Goncourt (1830 - 1870)</p>
<p>William Dean Howells (1837 - 1920)</p>
<p>Émile Zola (1840 -1902):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Experimental Novel</u> (1880)
<p>Henry James (1843 - 1916):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Art of Fiction" (1884) • the many prefaces to his various novels
<p>E. M. De Vogué (1848 - 1910)</p>
<p>Guy de Maupassant (1850 - 1893)</p>
<p>Oscar Wilde (1854 - 1900):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Decay of Lying" (1889)
<p>Arthur McDowall (1877 - 1933):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Realism: a Study in Art and Thought</u> (1918)

First Published: October 2011.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

For a general overview of the topic of literary representation, see also **LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM: THE FOUR 'POLES.'**

For a discussion of the philosophical concepts and frameworks which inform literary theory and criticism, see also **THE PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORKS OF LITERARY THEORY: RELEVANT BRANCHES OF PHILOSOPHY AND THEIR ADJACENT DISCIPLINES.**

This article mainly addresses developments in the history of literary theory and criticism up to about 1900. For information on more recent developments since then in the field, see the entries on the following schools of criticism:

- **AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **ANGLO-AMERICAN FORMALIST LITERARY THEORY**
- **DECONSTRUCTIVE LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **DIALOGICAL LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **FEMINIST LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **FOUCAULDIAN DISCURSIVE LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **MARXIST LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **PHENOMENOLOGICAL, EXISTENTIALIST AND HERMENEUTICAL LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **POST-COLONIAL LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM:**
 - **AFRICAN LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
 - **EAST ASIAN LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
 - **SOUTH ASIAN LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
 - **CARIBBEAN LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **PSYCHOANALYTIC LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **STRUCTURALIST LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **STRUCTURALIST MARXIST LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**
- **STRUCTURALIST PSYCHOANALYTIC LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM**

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- **THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED PRIMARY SOURCES IN LITERARY THEORY**