

Literary criticism (or literary studies) is the study, evaluation, and interpretation of literature. Literary criticism is often influenced by literary theory, which is the philosophical discussion of literature's goals and methods.

Criticism in English emerged early in the seventeenth century, apparently based on the analogy of such sixteenth-century terms as Platonism, Stoicism, skepticism, etc. This nonliterary use penetrated then into French, Italian, and Spanish. In these languages *criticisme* or *criticismo* means today only Kantianism. Philo, who came to Alexandria in B. Galen, in the second century A. But the distinction seems to have become blurred in antiquity. The term is rare in classical Latin: Hieron in the *Epistolae* speaks of Longinus as *criticus*. *Criticus* was a higher term than *grammaticus* but *criticus* was also concerned with the interpretation of texts and words. What today would be called literary criticism was, in antiquity, discussed by philosophers like Aristotle and by rhetoricians like Quintilian. In the Middle Ages the word seems to occur only as a term in medicine: In the Renaissance the word was revived in its ancient meaning. Angelo Poliziano, in exalted the critic and grammarian against the schoolman. Grammarian, critic, philologist became almost interchangeable terms for the men engaged in the great revival of classical learning. The penetration of the term into the vernacular was, however, very slow. In Italy the term *critica* seems to have occurred first as late as in the *Prognostici Poetici* of Benedetto Floretti published under the pseudonym Udeno Nisiely, while it was in France that the term caught on and spread rapidly early in the seventeenth century probably under the influence of Scaliger and his Dutch disciples, Heinsius and Vossius. Chapelain called Scaliger *le grand critique* in This movement is connected with the growth and spread of the critical spirit in general, in the sense of increased skepticism, distrust of authority and rules, and later with the appeal to taste, sentiment, feeling, *je ne sais quoi*. The few writers who expressly reflected on the concept of criticism or the role of the critic, Father Bouhours in France and Alexander Pope in England, defended their ideal against pedants, censors, and mere verbal quibblers, and described and exalted the true critic as a man of taste, a wit, a *bel esprit*. During the eighteenth century, a term which had become confined to the verbal criticism of classical writers was slowly widened to include the whole problem of understanding and judging and even the theory of knowledge and knowing. Lord Kames, a Scottish judge, attempted in his *Elements of Criticism* to give criticism an elaborate groundwork in association psychology, and proudly claimed that he was founding a new science: He is already touched by the new revolutionary force in the history of criticism: It was in Germany that the most radical consequences of the historical approach affected criticism. Johann Gottfried Herder was the first critic who completely broke with the ideal of the fundamentally Aristotelian tradition aiming at a rational theory of literature and permanent standards of judgment. He conceived of criticism as a process of empathy, of identification, of something intuitive and even subrational. He constantly rejected theories, systems, fault-finding. The most humble genius hates ranking and comparison. Lichen, moss, fern, and the richest scented flower: Each work of art is seen as part and parcel of its milieu, fulfilling its function and thus needs no criticism. Literary study became a kind of botany. Criticism should be only criticism of beauties. He distinguishes between destructive and productive criticism. The first is easy as it is simply the application of a yardstick. Productive criticism is much harder. What did the author set out to do? Was his plan reasonable and sensible, and how far did he succeed in carrying it out? Goethe hopes that such criticism may be of assistance to an author and admits that his own criticism describes largely the influence which books have had on himself. Herder and Goethe with all their historical relativism and subjectivism have not yet broken their ties to the classical tradition: Kant rejects any view of criticism by a priori principles, by laws or rules. Taste is subjective, yet aesthetic judgments differ from a taste, say, for olives or oysters by claiming universality. Aesthetic judgment, while subjective, appeals to a general judgment, to a common sense of mankind, to an ideal totality of judges. It is thus neither relative nor absolute, neither completely individual, which would mean anarchy and the end of criticism, nor absolute in the sense of an application of eternal norms. While Kant stresses the role of personal feeling he recognizes something like an aesthetic duty. We should respond to great art if we are to be fully human. It is a contemplative, problematical imperative—not

a categorical imperative as in ethics. Criticism is always by examples, from the concrete. Kant had, however, little interest in concrete works of art. Still, the speculative movement inaugurated by him gave rise to a flowering of aesthetics in the philosophies of Schelling and Hegel and to the elaborate literary theories of Schiller, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and many others. The two brothers Schlegel closely connected with Fichte and Schelling formulated the most complex and coherent theory of criticism at that time. The younger, Friedrich, was the more original mind but August Wilhelm, the elder, found the most influential formulas for the romantic-classical contrast, for the organic-mechanical dichotomy which through Coleridge became part of the history of English criticism. It can be done by close attention to the text which must begin with an intuition of the whole. This whole is not only the individual work of art but the whole of art history. Every artist illuminates every other artist: But Schlegel also recognizes another function of criticism; polemics, incitory, anticipatory criticism, a criticism which would be not merely explanatory and conservative but productive, by guidance and instigation stimulating an emergent literature. Criticism, in relation to theory and history, is the mediating middle link. Disagreement does not necessarily result in general skepticism. Friedrich Schlegel is criticized for not seeing the complete continuity of literary tradition and for exalting one kind of art: This reconciling, mediating criticism does not, however, imply a complete abdication of judgment; every work of art is to be judged by its place and weight in the whole of literature. Each work contributes to the whole and in so doing modifies the whole. Its goal is to achieve the reconciliation of judgment and history. Compared to the attention given to the theory of criticism in Germany, England and France contributed little at that time. Coleridge, who was the one Englishman thoroughly familiar with German critical thought, said surprisingly little about his concept of criticism. Shawcross, I, 14, The theory of criticism implied is a psychological one: But Coleridge never developed this as a theory of criticism. I think what I feel. The task of criticism is the communication of feelings. He uses the new methods; elaborate evocative metaphors, personal reminiscences, a feeling of intimacy like an enthusiastic guide in a gallery or a host in a library. Hazlitt faces a new middle-class audience; he wants to win it over, to cajole it to the enjoyment of literature. The critic becomes neither a judge nor a theorist, but a middleman between author and public. Thomas Carlyle, in his early essays, adopted the idea of sympathetic criticism drawing apparently on Herder and the Schlegels. Criticism in the United States echoes these views. Edgar Allan Poe exalted the function of criticism and hesitated whether to consider criticism a science or an art. Criticism requires art in the sense that each essay should be a work of art, but it is also a science based on principles. Emerson like Carlyle knows only a criticism of empathy and identification. Surprisingly, among Americans Margaret Fuller reflected most concretely on the nature and office of criticism. She distinguishes three kinds of critics: In France, prescriptive criticism survived longer than elsewhere. He would call in the police to punish bad authors. The complete negation of criticism as judgment is proclaimed complacently. We must take or leave a mountain. Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, however, was the French critic of the nineteenth century who most consistently reflected on the concept of criticism. These two trends are often at cross-purposes in Sainte-Beuve. His early romantic historicism goes with tolerance and relativism, but it is often contradicted by his partisanship in the literary battles of the time. The late Sainte-Beuve aimed at a theory of psychological types of men see the essay on Chateaubriand, Still, his return to classical taste brought about a reassertion of the judicial function of criticism, a tone of authority and even of dogmatic certainty. In the later nineteenth century, the divergence between concepts of criticism aiming at scientific objectivity and views that considered criticism an act of personal appreciation became more accentuated. The concept of criticism as judicial, as an upholder of the tradition, receded into the background though in England it found an influential spokesman in Matthew Arnold. At times he believes in a purely descriptive criticism, informative, liberating, preparatory to creation. In Italy, the greatest critic and historian of the nineteenth century, Francesco De Sanctis, came to similar conclusions independently. He distinguishes three stages in the critical act: Bonora, Bari [], p. The historicism of this conception seems as in Herder to lead to universal tolerance and hence to complete relativism. But actually Taine does not consider all works of art to be of equal value. He tries to overcome relativism by the criterion of representativeness. He asks whether a work represents a transient fashion, or a historical moment, or the spirit of a nation, or humanity in general, and ranks works according to such a

scale. The work of art is always considered a sign or symbol of humanity, nation, or age. It is a mistake to consider Taine as a sociologist who thinks of works of art as social documents. They are rather in his scheme the essence or summary of history, in terms which are ultimately Hegelian.

Literary criticism, the reasoned consideration of literary works and issues. It applies, as a term, to any argumentation about literature, whether or not specific works are analyzed. It applies, as a term, to any argumentation about literature, whether or not specific works are analyzed.

Post-structuralism Post Structuralism By the mid 20th century there were a number of structural theories of human existence. In the study of language, the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure suggested that meaning was to be found within the structure of a whole language rather than in the analysis of individual words. For Marxists, the truth of human existence could be understood by an analysis of economic structures. Psychoanalysts attempted to describe the structure of the psyche in terms of an unconscious. Originally labelled a structuralist, the French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault came to be seen as the most important representative of the post-structuralist movement. He agreed that language and society were shaped by rule governed systems, but he disagreed with the structuralists on two counts. Firstly, he did not think that there were definite underlying structures that could explain the human condition and secondly he thought that it was impossible to step outside of discourse and survey the situation objectively. Jacques Derrida developed deconstruction as a technique for uncovering the multiple interpretation of texts. Influenced by Heidegger and Nietzsche, Derrida suggests that all text has ambiguity and because of this the possibility of a final and complete interpretation is impossible. Text structures our interpretation of the world. Following Heidegger, Derrida thinks that language shapes us: Derrida sees the history of western thought as based on opposition: These oppositions are defined hierarchically: Derrida thought that all text contained a legacy of these assumptions, and as a result of this, these texts could be re-interpreted with an awareness of the hierarchies implicit in language. Derrida does not think that we can reach an end point of interpretation, a truth. Meaning is diffuse, not settled. Textuality always gives us a surplus of possibilities, yet we cannot stand outside of textuality in an attempt to find objectivity. One consequence of deconstruction is that certainty in textual analyses becomes impossible. There may be competing interpretations, but there is no uninterpreted way one could assess the validity of these competing interpretations. Rather than basing our philosophical understanding on undeniable truths, the deconstructionist turns the settled bedrock of rationalism into the shifting sands of a multiplicity of interpretations. Post-structuralism is not a school, but a group of approaches motivated by some common understandings, not all of which will necessarily be shared by every practitioner. Post-structuralism is not a theory but a set of theoretical positions, which have at their core a self-reflexive discourse which is aware of the tentativeness, the slipperiness, the ambiguity and the complex interrelations of texts and meanings. Post-structuralism is, as the name suggests, consequent upon Structuralism, with which movement one should have some familiarity in order to understand post-structuralism. There follow some of assumptions of post-structural thought. I Post-structuralism is marked by a rejection of totalizing, essentialist, foundationalist concepts. Subjects are material beings, embodied and present in the physical world, entrenched in the material practices and structures of their society -- working, playing, procreating, living as parts of the material systems of society. Subjects are social in their very origin: To be anti-humanist is not to be anti-humane, however, but to have a different philosophical and ideological understanding of the nature of the person. IV Post-structuralism derives in part from a sense that we live in a linguistic universe. To put this briefly, we live in a world of language, discourse and ideology, none of which are transparent, all of which structure our sense of being and meaning. V All meaning is textual and intertextual: Everything we can know is constructed through signs, governed by the rules of discourse for that area of knowledge, and related to other texts through filiation, allusion and repetition. Every text exists only in relation to other texts; meaning circulates in economies of discourse. This understanding does not mean that all reality is textual, only that what we can know of it, and how we can know, is textual, constructed through discourse, with all its rules; through symbols, linguistic and otherwise; through grammar s. VI Discourse is a material practice; the human is rooted in historicity and lives through the body. Discourse is regulated by rules of exclusion, by internal systems of control and delineation, by conditions under which discourses can be employed, and by

philosophical themes which elide the reality of discourse -- the themes of the founding subject, originating experience, and universal mediation. Discourses are multiple, discontinuous, originating and disappearing through chance; they do not hide the truth but constitute its temporary face. Foucault is post-structuralist in his insistence that there is no great causal flow or plan or evolution of history, that what happens is mainly by chance. IX Texts are marked by a surplus of meaning; the result of this is that differing readings are inevitable, indeed a condition of meaning at all. This surplus is located in the polysemous nature of both language and of rhetoric. It must be kept in mind that language is what is for us as cognizant beings, that our sense of reality is linguistically constructed. Post-structuralism is deeply aware of such hermeneutic reading and also suspicious of it, certain that meaning is historical, uncertain that it is recoverable as what it may have meant. XII Post-structuralism is consequent on and a reaction to structuralism; it would not exist without structuralism. But this coherence is a coherence that precedes the text, or it could not form the text. This notion negates the reality of the material conditions of production or reception, it makes the meaning itself unitary, it makes criticism commentary, a pointing out of the essential truth which is embodied not in but through the work.

3: Category:French literary critics - Wikipedia

Introduction. A product of the revival of classical Greek and Roman culture known as humanism, Renaissance literary criticism took root in defenses of poetry and dialogues on language and literary imitation in Italy in the 14th and 15th centuries.

You can help by adding to it. August In the Enlightenment period s to s , literary criticism became more popular. During this time period literacy rates started to rise in the public, no longer was reading exclusive for the wealthy or scholarly. With the rise of the literate public and swiftness of printing, criticism arose too. Reading was no longer viewed solely as educational or as a sacred source of religion; it was a form of entertainment. German Romanticism , which followed closely after the late development of German classicism , emphasized an aesthetic of fragmentation that can appear startlingly modern to the reader of English literature, and valued Witz – that is, "wit" or "humor" of a certain sort – more highly than the serious Anglophone Romanticism. The late nineteenth century brought renown to authors known more for their literary criticism than for their own literary work, such as Matthew Arnold. The New Criticism[edit] However important all of these aesthetic movements were as antecedents, current ideas about literary criticism derive almost entirely from the new direction taken in the early twentieth century. Early in the century the school of criticism known as Russian Formalism , and slightly later the New Criticism in Britain and in the United States, came to dominate the study and discussion of literature, in the English-speaking world. This emphasis on form and precise attention to "the words themselves" has persisted, after the decline of these critical doctrines themselves. In his works Frye noted that some critics tend to embrace an ideology , and to judge literary pieces on the basis of their adherence to such ideology. This has been a highly influential viewpoint among modern conservative thinkers. Michael Jones , for example, argues in his *Degenerate Moderns* that Stanley Fish was influenced by his adulterous affairs to reject classic literature that condemned adultery. In the British and American literary establishment, the New Criticism was more or less dominant until the late s. Around that time Anglo-American university literature departments began to witness a rise of a more explicitly philosophical literary theory , influenced by structuralism , then post-structuralism , and other kinds of Continental philosophy. It continued until the mids, when interest in "theory" peaked. Many later critics, though undoubtedly still influenced by theoretical work, have been comfortable simply interpreting literature rather than writing explicitly about methodology and philosophical presumptions. History of the book[edit] Related to other forms of literary criticism, the history of the book is a field of interdisciplinary inquiry drawing on the methods of bibliography , cultural history , history of literature , and media theory. Principally concerned with the production, circulation, and reception of texts and their material forms, book history seeks to connect forms of textuality with their material aspects. Among the issues within the history of literature with which book history can be seen to intersect are: Current state[edit] Today, interest in literary theory and continental philosophy coexists in university literature departments with a more conservative literary criticism of which the New Critics would probably have approved. Disagreements over the goals and methods of literary criticism, which characterized both sides taken by critics during the "rise" of theory, have declined. Many critics feel that they now have a great plurality of methods and approaches from which to choose. Ecocritics have drawn connections between literature and the natural sciences. Darwinian literary studies studies literature in the context of evolutionary influences on human nature. Many literary critics also work in film criticism or media studies. Some write intellectual history ; others bring the results and methods of social history to bear on reading literature. Value of academic criticism[edit] The value of extensive literary analysis has been questioned by several prominent artists. Vladimir Nabokov once wrote that good readers do not read books, and particularly those which are considered to be literary masterpieces, "for the academic purpose of indulging in generalizations". *Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* can be picked up, read, and enjoyed by virtually anybody without scholarly guides, theories, and intricate explanations, as can *Ulysses*, if you forget about all the hue and cry.

4: Literary Criticism - Renaissance and Reformation - Oxford Bibliographies

Wikimedia Commons has media related to Literary critics from France.: Pages in category "French literary critics" The following pages are in this category, out of approximately total.

Gaul was overrun by Germanic tribes, in the north principally by the Franks who gave France its name and by the Visigoths and Merovingians in the south. But the Latin speech survived: While it retained relatively few Celtic words, the developing language had its vocabulary greatly enriched by Germanic borrowings, and its phonetic development was influenced by Germanic speech habits. The 9th-century Norse incursions and settlement of Normandy, by contrast, left few traces in the language. The Romans had introduced written literature, and until the 12th century almost all documents and other texts were in Latin. A German version also survives. Only a few other texts, all religious in content, survive from before about 500. Early texts show a broad division between the speech of northern Gaul, which had suffered most from the invasions, and that in the more stable, cultured south, where the Latin spoken was less subject to change. From the last one stemmed Anglo-Norman, the French used alongside English in Britain, especially among the upper classes, from even before the Norman Conquest until well into the 14th century. Each dialect had its own literature. But, for various reasons, the status of Francien increased until it achieved dominance in the Middle French period after 1400, and from it Modern French developed. Old French was a fine literary medium, enlarging its vocabulary from other languages such as Arabic, Occitan, and Low Latin. It had a wide phonetic range and, until the decay of the two-case system it had inherited from Latin, syntactic flexibility. The context and nature of French medieval literature Whatever Classical literature survived the upheavals of the early Middle Ages was preserved, along with pious Latin works, in monastic libraries. By encouraging scholars and writers, Charlemagne had increased the Latin heritage available to educated vernacular authors of later centuries. He also left his image as a great warrior-emperor to stimulate the legend-making process that generated the Old French epic. There one finds exemplified the feudal ideal, evolved by the Franks, that was the means of establishing a hierarchy of dependency and, thereby, a cohesiveness that would lead to a national identity. As stability increased under the Capetians, windows opened onto other cultures and elements: The Roman Catholic church grew in wealth and power, and by the 12th century its schools were flourishing, training generations of clerks in the liberal arts. Society itself became less embattled, and the nobility became more leisured and sophisticated. The machismo of the epics was tempered by the social graces of *courtoisie*: By the 13th century an additional source of patronage for writers and performers was the bourgeoisie of the developing towns. New genres emerged, and, as literacy increased, prose found favour alongside verse. Much of the literature of the time is enlivened by a rather irreverent spirit and a sometimes cynical realism, yet it also possesses a countercurrent of deep spirituality. In the 14th and 15th centuries France was ravaged by war, plague, and famine. Along with a preoccupation in literature with death and damnation, there appeared a contrasting refinement of expression and sentiment bred of nostalgia for the courtly, chivalric ideal. At the same time a new humanistic learning anticipated the coming Renaissance. The jongleurs, professional minstrels, traveled and performed their extensive repertoires, which ranged from epics to the lives of saints the lengthy romances were not designed for memorization, sometimes using mime and musical accompaniment. Seeking an immediate impact, most poets made their poems strikingly visual in character, more dramatic than reflective, and revealed psychology and motives through action and gesture. Such oral techniques left their mark throughout the period. Most are anonymous and are composed in lines of 10 or 12 syllables, grouped into *laissez strophes* based on assonance and, later, rhyme. Their length varies from about 1, to more than 18, lines. The genre prospered from the late 11th to the early 14th century, offering exemplary stories of warfare, often pitting Franks against Saracens, that fire the emotions with their insistent rhythms. Under the influence of the genre known as romance, however see below The romance, the *chansons de geste* lost some of their early vigour. Their story lines became looser, their adventures more exotic, and their tone often amatory or even humorous. Many were eventually turned into prose. Cycles formed as new songs were composed featuring heroes, families, or themes already familiar. The epics in the *Geste de Doon de Mayence*

deal with rebellious vassals, among them Raoul de Cambrai, in a gripping story of injustice and strained loyalties. The First Crusade is handled, with legendary embellishment, in a minor cycle. Controversy surrounds the origins of the genre and its development and transmission. It is not known how most of the poems came to contain elements, somewhat garbled, from Carolingian history some years before their composition. Some scholars believe in a continuous process of oral transmission and elaboration. Others suppose the historical facts were retrieved much later by poets wishing to celebrate certain heroes, many of whom were associated with pilgrim routes that the jongleurs could then ply with profit. In fact, very few texts belong to the period before the romance, which came into being in the middle of the 12th century in France and flourished throughout the Middle Ages, was a creation of formally educated poets. The earliest romances took their subjects from antiquity: Alexander the Great, Thebes, Aeneas, and Troy were all treated at length, and shorter contes were derived from Ovid. The standard metre of verse romance is octosyllabic rhyming couplets. It differs from the *chanson de geste* in concentrating on individual rather than communal exploits and presenting them in a more detached fashion. It offers fuller descriptions, freer dialogue, and more authorial intervention. There is more interest in psychology, especially in the love situations. The universally popular legend of Tristan and Isolde had evolved by the mid-12th century, apparently from a fusion of Scottish, Irish, Cornish, and Breton elements, beginning in Scotland and moving south. The main French versions both fragmentary are by the Anglo-Norman poet Thomas c. His first known romance, *Erec et Enide*, is a serious study of marital and social responsibilities and contains elements of Celtic enchantment. *Yvain ; ou, le chevalier au lion* The Knight with the Lion treats the converse of the situation depicted in *Erec et Enide*. The grail, first introduced here, was to become, as the Holy Grail, a remarkably potent symbol. The unique *Aucassin et Nicolette*, a charmingly comic idyll told in alternating sections of verse to be sung and prose to be recited, pokes sly fun at the conventions of epic and romance alike. Its first exponents were the Occitan troubadours, poet-musicians of the 12th and 13th centuries, writing in medieval Occitan, of whom some are known by name. Among them are clerics and both male and female nobles. The troubadours no longer considered women to be the disposable assets of men. The *canso*, made of five or six stanzas with a summary envoi, was the favourite vehicle for their love poetry; but they used various other forms, from dawn songs to satiric, political, or debating poems, all usually highly crafted. Guilhelm IX, duke of Aquitaine see William IX, the first known poet in the Occitan language, mixed obscenity with his courtly sentiments. Among the finest troubadours are the graceful Bernard de Ventadour; Jaufre Rudel, who expressed an almost mystical longing for a distant love; the soldier and poet Bertran de Born; and the master of the hermetic tradition, Arnaut Daniel. Rutebeuf wrote verse in personal, even autobiographical mode though the personal details are probably fictional on a variety of subjects: It appears in pious and didactic literature and, as authorial comment, in other genres but more usually in general terms than as particular, corrective satire. Human vice and folly also serve purely comic ends, as in the *fabliaux*. These fairly short verse tales composed between the late 12th and the 14th centuries—most of which are anonymous, though some are by leading poets—generate laughter from situations extending from the obscene to the mock-religious, built sometimes around simple wordplay and frequently elaborate deceptions and counterdeceptions. They are played out in all classes of society but predominantly among the bourgeoisie. Many *fabliaux* carry mock morals, inviting comparison with the didactic fables. Realistic in tone, they paint instructive pictures of everyday life in medieval France. They ultimately yielded in importance to the farces, bequeathing a fund of anecdotes to later writers such as Geoffrey Chaucer and Giovanni Boccaccio. Inspired partly by the popular animal fable, partly by the Latin satire of monastic life *Ysengrimus*; Eng. *Ysengrimus*, the collection of ribald comic tales known as the *Roman de Renart* Renard the Fox began to circulate in the late 12th century, chronicling the rivalry of Renart the Fox and the wolf Isengrin, and the lively and largely scandalous goings-on in the animal kingdom ruled by Noble the Lion. By the 14th century about 30 branches existed, forming a veritable beast epic. Full of close social observation, they exude the earthy humour of the *fabliaux*; but, particularly in some of the later branches, this is sharpened into true satire directed against abuses in church and state, with the friars and rapacious nobility as prime targets. Allegory, popular from early times, was employed in Latin literature by such authorities as Augustine,

Prudentius, Martianus Capella, and, in the late 12th century, Alain de Lille. But the most influential allegorical work in French was the *Roman de la rose* The Romance of the Rose, where courtly love is first celebrated, then undermined. Guillaume, however, left the poem unfinished, with the dreamer frustrated and his chief ally imprisoned. Courtly idealism is shunned for a practical, often critical or cynical view of the world. Love, only one of many topics treated in the completed version, is synonymous with procreation; and a misogynistic tone pervades the writing. The *Treasure of the City of Ladies* sets out in detail the important social roles of women of all classes. Lyric poetry in the 14th century Allegory and similar conceits abound in much late medieval poetry, as with Guillaume de Machaut, the outstanding musician of his day, who composed for noble patronage a number of narrative *dits amoureux* short pieces on the subject of love and a quantity of lyric verse. A talented technician, Machaut did much to popularize and develop the relatively new fixed forms: A prolific writer, he dealt with public and private affairs, sometimes satirically; but he composed little love poetry, and his work was not set to music. Jean Froissart, the chronicler, also wrote pleasantly in a variety of lyric forms, as did Christine de Pisan, whose poetry had a greater individuality. There is an elegiac tone to much of his graceful courtly verse. At the University of Paris, where he became Master of Arts in 1367, he acquired some learning but also became involved in rioting, robbery, and manslaughter. *The Testament and Other Poems*. It uses the octets of the *Lais* interspersed with ballades and *rondeaux* and is similarly packed with personal gossip, often tongue-in-cheek but leaving a bitter aftertaste. Following more brushes with justice, Villon disappeared for good, narrowly escaping hanging. Commonly considered to have been the first modern French poet, he brings a personal note to the familiar lyric themes of age, death, and loss and mixes elegy with irony, satire, and burlesque humour. His verse shows great technical skill, a keen command of rhythmic effects, and an economy of expression that not only enhances his lively wit but produces moments of intensely focused vision and, in individual poems, moving statements of human experience. None of his contemporaries or immediate successors was able to match the vigour of his verse. Often obsessed by metrical ingenuity, extravagant rhymes, and other conceits, they favoured Italian as well as Classical models, thus heralding the Renaissance. It is unfair, however, to judge them by their words alone, since music was, for most, a vital ingredient of their art. Prose literature Prose flourished as a literary medium from roughly 1300. Other Arthurian romances adopted it, notably the great Vulgate cycle written between 1170 and 1235, with its five branches by various hands. The Tristan legend was reworked and extended in prose. As well as traditional material, new fictions appeared in prose, taking a very different view of love, and often in the form of short comic tales.

5: Literary criticism - Wikipedia

Psychoanalytic criticism may focus on the writer's psyche, the study of the creative process, the study of psychological types and principles present within works of literature, or the effects of literature upon its readers (Wellek and Warren, p. 81).

Those to whom action comes as easily as breathing rarely feel the need to break loose from the real, to rise above, and describe it. I do not mean that it is enough to be maladjusted to become a great writer, but writing is, for some, a method of resolving a conflict, provided they have the necessary talent. Both Marxism and Freudianism have left a deep imprint on literature, as on all the arts. Two world wars have tried France sorely, while the technological revolution confronts the current generation with an altogether new world. The result of such profound socioeconomic and political change has been a continuous questioning of all moral, intellectual, and artistic traditions. In poetry, symbolism continued to serve as an inspiration without stifling new departures. Paul Claudel, notable as both dramatist and poet, injected a mystical Catholicism into his masterpiece, *Five Great Odes* ; Eng. Guillaume Apollinaire deliberately aimed for modernity in his poetry, which was full of whimsical surprises. He not only coined the term surrealist but in *The Breasts of Tiresias* ; Eng. A rejuvenator of poetic imagination, surrealism launched, among others, the poet and novelist Louis Aragon, although Aragon after found inspiration in his Marxist beliefs. The novel thrived especially during the first half of the century. Anatole France kept the tradition of political satire alive with his allegorical spoof, *Penguin Island* ; Eng. Romain Rolland, with his volume *Jean-Christophe* ; Eng. In the multivolume, multilevel *Remembrance of Things Past* ; Eng. Although these authors have no common doctrine, all reject plot and verisimilitude as traditionally understood. Samuel Beckett best exemplified both the strengths and limits of this theater in *Waiting for Godot* ; Eng. In these two plays the sets, the characters, and language itself disintegrate into an awesome void. Yet however baffling and depressing these productions are, there can be no doubt that they powerfully illuminate the underlying somber concerns of the present era. Above all, they testify to the ever-present originality and vitality of French literature and confirm its enviable avant-garde role. Atkinson, Geoffrey, and Keller, Abraham C. *French Writers of* ; Balakian, Anna, *Surrealism: The Road to the Absolute* rev. An Interpretation, 2 vols.

6: Introduction to Literary Theory // Purdue Writing Lab

A literary criticism of the lay "Bisclavret" by Marie de France is presented. It explores the subject of torture in several instances, citing baron Bisclavret's loss of humanity, his revenge on his wife, and the king's orders to subject the baron's wife to torture to get her to confess her.

Literary criticism endeavours to establish the literary genres types or categories of the various biblical documents and to reach conclusions about their structure, date, and authorship. These conclusions are based as far as possible on internal evidence, but external evidence is also very important. Functions The functions of literary criticism vary widely, ranging from the reviewing of books as they are published to systematic theoretical discussion. The minimal condition for such a new appraisal is, of course, that the original text survive. The literary critic is sometimes cast in the role of scholarly detective, unearthing, authenticating, and editing unknown manuscripts. Weekly and biweekly magazines serve to introduce new books but are often more discriminating in their judgments, and some of these magazines, such as The London Times Literary Supplement and The New York Review of Books, are far from indulgent toward popular works. Misguided or malicious critics can discourage an author who has been feeling his way toward a new mode that offends received taste. Pedantic critics can obstruct a serious engagement with literature by deflecting attention toward inessential matters. As the French philosopher-critic Jean-Paul Sartre observed, the critic may announce that French thought is a perpetual colloquy between Pascal and Montaigne not in order to make those thinkers more alive but to make thinkers of his own time more dead. Criticism can antagonize authors even when it performs its function well. Authors who regard literature as needing no advocates or investigators are less than grateful when told that their works possess unintended meaning or are imitative or incomplete. What such authors may tend to forget is that their works, once published, belong to them only in a legal sense. The true owner of their works is the public, which will appropriate them for its own concerns regardless of the critic. Justification for his role rests on the premise that literary works are not in fact self-explanatory. A critic is socially useful to the extent that society wants, and receives, a fuller understanding of literature than it could have achieved without him. In filling this appetite, the critic whets it further, helping to create a public that cares about artistic quality. Without sensing the presence of such a public, an author may either prostitute his talent or squander it in sterile acts of defiance. In this sense, the critic is not a parasite but, potentially, someone who is responsible in part for the existence of good writing in his own time and afterward. Although some critics believe that literature should be discussed in isolation from other matters, criticism usually seems to be openly or covertly involved with social and political debate. Since literature itself is often partisan, is always rooted to some degree in local circumstances, and has a way of calling forth affirmations of ultimate values, it is not surprising that the finest critics have never paid much attention to the alleged boundaries between criticism and other types of discourse. Especially in modern Europe, literary criticism has occupied a central place in debate about cultural and political issues. Similarly, some prominent American critics, including Alfred Kazin, Lionel Trilling, Kenneth Burke, Philip Rahv, and Irving Howe, began as political radicals in the 1930s and sharpened their concern for literature on the dilemmas and disillusionments of that era. Such a reconciliation is bound to be tentative and problematic if the critic believes, as Trilling does, that literature possesses an independent value and a deeper faithfulness to reality than is contained in any political formula. In Marxist states, however, literature has usually been considered a means to social ends and, therefore, criticism has been cast in forthrightly partisan terms. Where this utilitarian view prevails, the function of criticism is taken to be continuous with that of the state itself, namely, furtherance of the social revolution. In periods of severe orthodoxy, the practice of literary criticism has not always been distinguishable from that of censorship. Historical development Antiquity Although almost all of the criticism ever written dates from the 20th century, questions first posed by Plato and Aristotle are still of prime concern, and every critic who has attempted to justify the social value of literature has had to come to terms with the opposing argument made by Plato in The Republic. The poet as a man and poetry as a form of statement both seemed untrustworthy to Plato, who depicted the physical world as an imperfect copy of transcendent ideas

and poetry as a mere copy of the copy. Thus, literature could only mislead the seeker of truth. Plato credited the poet with divine inspiration, but this, too, was cause for worry; a man possessed by such madness would subvert the interests of a rational polity. Poets were therefore to be banished from the hypothetical republic. Such imitation presumably has a civilizing value for those who empathize with it. Tragedy does arouse emotions of pity and terror in its audience, but these emotions are purged in the process katharsis. In this fashion Aristotle succeeded in portraying literature as satisfying and regulating human passions instead of inflaming them. Although Plato and Aristotle are regarded as antagonists, the narrowness of their disagreement is noteworthy. Both maintain that poetry is mimetic, both treat the arousing of emotion in the perceiver, and both feel that poetry takes its justification, if any, from its service to the state. It was obvious to both men that poets wielded great power over others. Unlike many modern critics who have tried to show that poetry is more than a pastime, Aristotle had to offer reassurance that it was not socially explosive. Poetic modes are identified according to their means of imitation, the actions they imitate, the manner of imitation, and its effects. These distinctions assist the critic in judging each mode according to its proper ends instead of regarding beauty as a fixed entity. The ends of tragedy, as Aristotle conceived them, are best served by the harmonious disposition of six elements: Much ancient criticism, such as that of Cicero, Horace, and Quintilian in Rome, was absorbed in technical rules of exegesis and advice to aspiring rhetoricians. This work was later to be prized by Neoclassicists of the 17th century not only for its rules but also for its humour, common sense, and appeal to educated taste. Medieval period In the Christian Middle Ages criticism suffered from the loss of nearly all the ancient critical texts and from an antipagan distrust of the literary imagination. Such Church Fathers as Tertullian, Augustine, and Jerome renewed, in churchly guise, the Platonic argument against poetry. But both the ancient gods and the surviving classics reasserted their fascination, entering medieval culture in theologically allegorized form. Encyclopaedists and textual commentators explained the supposed Christian content of pre-Christian works and the Old Testament. Although there was no lack of rhetoricians to dictate the correct use of literary figures, no attempt was made to derive critical principles from emergent genres such as the fabliau and the chivalric romance. Criticism was in fact inhibited by the very coherence of the theologically explained universe. When nature is conceived as endlessly and purposefully symbolic of revealed truth, specifically literary problems of form and meaning are bound to be neglected. Even such an original vernacular poet of the 14th century as Dante appears to have expected his Divine Comedy to be interpreted according to the rules of scriptural exegesis. By the Poetics had been rendered into Italian as well. From this period until the later part of the 18th century Aristotle was once again the most imposing presence behind literary theory. Critics looked to ancient poems and plays for insight into the permanent laws of art. Classicism, individualism, and national pride joined forces against literary asceticism. Neoclassicism and its decline The Renaissance in general could be regarded as a neoclassical period, in that ancient works were considered the surest models for modern greatness. Neoclassicism, however, usually connotes narrower attitudes that are at once literary and social: Criticism of the 17th and 18th centuries, particularly in France, was dominated by these Horatian norms. French critics such as Pierre Corneille and Nicolas Boileau urged a strict orthodoxy regarding the dramatic unities and the requirements of each distinct genre, as if to disregard them were to lapse into barbarity. The poet was not to imagine that his genius exempted him from the established laws of craftsmanship. Neoclassicism had a lesser impact in England, partly because English Puritanism had kept alive some of the original Christian hostility to secular art, partly because English authors were on the whole closer to plebeian taste than were the court-oriented French, and partly because of the difficult example of Shakespeare, who magnificently broke all of the rules. The science of Newton and the psychology of Locke also worked subtle changes on neoclassical themes. His preference for forthright sincerity left him impatient with such intricate conventions as those of the pastoral elegy. The decline of Neoclassicism is hardly surprising; literary theory had developed very little during two centuries of artistic, political, and scientific ferment. Emphasis shifted from concern for meeting fixed criteria to the subjective state of the reader and then of the author himself. The new recognition of strangeness and strong feeling as literary virtues yielded various fashions of taste for misty sublimity, graveyard sentiments, medievalism, Norse epics and forgeries, Oriental tales, and the verse of plowboys. Romantics tended to

regard the writing of poetry as a transcendently important activity, closely related to the creative perception of meaning in the world. In England, however, only Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria* embraced the whole complex of Romantic doctrines emanating from Germany; the British empiricist tradition was too firmly rooted to be totally washed aside by the new metaphysics. Most of those who were later called Romantics did share an emphasis on individual passion and inspiration, a taste for symbolism and historical awareness, and a conception of art works as internally whole structures in which feelings are dialectically merged with their contraries. Romantic criticism coincided with the emergence of aesthetics as a separate branch of philosophy, and both signalled a weakening in ethical demands upon literature. The lasting achievement of Romantic theory is its recognition that artistic creations are justified, not by their promotion of virtue, but by their own coherence and intensity. Courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, London The late 19th century The Romantic movement had been spurred not only by German philosophy but also by the universalistic and utopian hopes that accompanied the French Revolution. Some of those hopes were thwarted by political reaction, while others were blunted by industrial capitalism and the accession to power of the class that had demanded general liberty. Advocates of the literary imagination now began to think of themselves as enemies or gadflies of the newly entrenched bourgeoisie. Post-Romantic disillusion was epitomized in Britain in the criticism of Matthew Arnold, who thought of critical taste as a substitute for religion and for the unsatisfactory values embodied in every social class. Several intellectual currents joined to make possible the writing of systematic and ambitious literary histories. For other critics of comparable stature, such as Charles Sainte-Beuve in France, Benedetto Croce in Italy, and George Saintsbury in England, historical learning only threw into relief the expressive uniqueness of each artistic temperament. Page 1 of 2.

7: Roland Barthes Critical Essays - www.enganchecubano.com

THE 20TH CENTURY. The 20th century in France has been characterized by a tremendous expansion in literary output and the ever-faster pace of experimentation with new means of expression.

8: LITERARY CRITICISM:FREE NOTES: Matthew Arnold on the Early Poetry of France

Literary Theory and Criticism English Literature, Literary Theory, Linguistics, Film Theory, Media Theory, UGC NET JRF Exam Preparation, Novel Analysis, Poetry Analysis, Research Papers ©Nasrullah Mambrol.

9: Education, Learning and Research Resources Online - Gale

French literature: French literature, the body of written works in the French language produced within the geographic and political boundaries of France. The French language was one of the five major Romance languages to develop from Vulgar Latin as a result of the Roman occupation of western Europe.

Join Us for English 2 Language Portfolio If the Shoe Fits (Twice Upon a Time) Sir William Blackstone and the Common Law Singapore tourist map guide 1970 Census of Agriculture Books of Wisdom Set #4 Old France in the New World Film, fashion, and the future. Applicable law under the second and third-life assurance directives American music handbook. Deponency and morphological mismatches The Israelite slave girl : a model of faith in deepest obscurity Canon ixus 230 hs user manual Chapter 3: 1922 Brooklyn Handicap 22 The short victorious war The U.B.D. map of Millicent The Quintessential Elf II Advanced Tactics William Boone. Message from the President of the United States, returning House bill no. 473, with his ob Adobe GoLive CS tips and tricks Universals encyclopaedia of important central acts rules Lesson plan raised bed garden Building Countryside Paths and Tracks Afghanistan (Contemporary Middle East) Charles Dickens: the later novels: Bleak House . Edwin Drood Studies in the international exchange of publications Mary, Bloody Mary Milk Producers Prompt Payment Act of 1984 Marriage and Virginity in the Light of the Virgin Motherhood Identifying your apps unique value Ancient and Medieval Modelling (Modelling Masterclass) Part I The group supervision alliance model 5 Simulated annealing optimization in blind equalization An Evening with Joe Pass (Reh Videos) Genetic testing: scientific background for policymakers Amanda K. Sarata The true and the good Blood and Honor/Inside the Scarfo Mob-The Mafias Most Violent Family 18. Twinkle, twinkle On opening the closing of the American mind Dorsrv1.fau.edu gcef support mypos_student_instruction_manual. _blank Ch. 1. Northern Medieval traditions 8