

# MAA OMWATI DEGREE COLLEGE HASSNPUR (PALWAL)

PAPER – LITERARY CRITICISM KEY CONCEPTS (MC)  
MA (ENGLISH) 1<sup>ST</sup> SEM.

## UNIT -1

### Plato's Theory of Forms

1. The Ethical Problem: How can humans live a fulfilling, happy life in a contingent, changing world where every thing they attach themselves to can be taken away?

2. The Problem of Permanence and Change: How can the world appear to be both permanent and changing? The world we perceive through the senses seems to be always changing. The world that we perceive through the mind, using our concepts, seems to be permanent and unchanging. Which is most real and why does it appear both ways? The general structure of the solution: Plato splits up existence into two realms: the material realm and the transcendent realm of forms. Humans have access to the realm of forms through the mind, through reason, given Plato's theory of the subdivisions of the human soul. This gives them access to an unchanging world, invulnerable to the pains and changes of the material world. By detaching ourselves from the material world and our bodies and developing our ability to concern ourselves with the forms, we find a value which is not open to change or disintegration. This solves the first, ethical, problem. Splitting existence up into two realms also solves the problem of permanence and change. We perceive a different world, with different objects, through our mind than we do through the senses. It is the material world, perceived through the senses, that is changing. It is the realm of forms, perceived through the mind, that is permanent and immutable. It is this world that is more real; the world of change is merely an imperfect image of this world.

### 2 THE FORMS:

A form is an abstract property or quality. Take any property of an object; separate it from that object and consider it by itself, and you are contemplating a form. For example, if you separate the roundness of a basketball from its color, its weight, etc. and consider just roundness by itself, you are thinking of the form of roundness. Plato held that this property existed apart from the basketball, in a different mode of existence than the basketball. The form is not just the idea of roundness you have in your mind. It exists independently of the basketball and independently of whether someone thinks of it. All round objects, not just this basketball, participate or copy this same form of roundness. In order to see exactly what a form is and how it differs from a material

object, we need to look at the first two of the properties that characterize the forms. The forms are transcendent. This means that they do not exist in space and time. A material object, a basketball, exists at a particular place at a particular time. A form, roundness, does not exist at any place or time. The forms exist, or subsist, in a different way. This is especially important because it explains why the forms are unchanging. A form such as roundness will never change; it does not even exist in time. It is the same at all times or places in which it might be instantiated. A form does not exist in space in that it can be instantiated in many places at once and need not be instantiated anywhere in order for the form to exist. The form of roundness can be found in many particular spatial locations, and even if all round objects were destroyed, the property of roundness would still exist. The forms are also pure. This means that they are pure properties separated from all other properties. A material object, such as a basketball, has many properties: roundness, ballness, orangeness, elasticity, etc. These are all put together to make up this individual basketball. A form is just one of these properties, existing by itself apart from space and time. Roundness is just pure roundness, without any other properties mixed in. The forms differ from material objects, then, in that they are transcendent and pure, while material objects are complex conglomerations of properties located in space and time. To see how forms are related to material objects, we need to look at the other four properties that characterized the forms. The forms are the archetypes or perfect models for all of the properties that are present in material objects. The forms are the perfect examples of the properties they instantiate. The material world is really similar to the more real world of forms. The form of roundness, for example, is the perfect model of roundness. All round material objects are merely copies or imitations of this most real form. Thus it is the forms that are ultimately real. Material objects are images or copies of these more real objects. The cave metaphor illustrates these properties of the forms well. The shadows on the wall represent material objects, while the real objects passing before the fire are the forms. In virtue of the fact that all objects in this world are copies of the forms, the forms are the causes of all that exists in this world. general, whenever you want to explain why something is the way that it is, you point to some properties that the object has. That is, you explain what forms the object is a copy of. The forms are causes in two closely related ways: (1) The forms are the causes of all our knowledge of all objects. The forms contribute all order and intelligibility to objects. Since we can only know something insofar as it has some order or form, the forms are the source of the intelligibility of all material objects. (2) The forms are also the cause of the existence of all objects. Things are only said to exist insofar as they have order or structure or form. Hence, the forms are the causes of the existence of all objects as well as of their intelligibility. Plato uses the sun metaphor to explain how the forms in general, and the form of the Good in particular, are causes in these two ways. Just as the sun gives light which allows us to see objects, the form of the Good provides order and intelligibility to allow us to know objects. Just as the sun provides the energy for the nourishment and growth of all living things, so the form of the Good provides the order and structure which is the source of the existence of all things. The forms are also systematically interconnected. They are connected to each other and to material objects in an intricate system that reflects both the way they flow

down from the form of the good and the process that we must go through in working our way up to knowledge of the forms. The forms fit together with each other and material objects in a hierarchical system, whose structure is reflected in the dialectic process one goes through to gain knowledge of the forms. Dialectic involves putting together two subjective points of view to form a more objective concept. So the forms flow down from the Good going from most general, abstract, and objective (the Good) to most particular and subjective. All particular forms are subsumed under more general forms, and all forms are finally subsumed under the form of the Good. In dialectic, we work in the opposite direction and start from subjective concepts of the more particular things and work our way towards more objective concepts of the general, abstract forms. The divided line represents the systematic interconnectedness of the forms and how the advance of our knowledge reflects this system. The structure of the relationships between forms and material objects might be represented in a diagram such as this, which is merely an expanded version of the divided line set on its end.

### **3 PROPERTIES OF THE FORMS**

The forms are:

1. Transcendent - the forms are not located in space and time. For example, there is no particular place or time at which redness exists.
2. Pure - the forms only exemplify one property. Material objects are impure; they combine a number of properties such as blackness, circularity, and hardness into one object. A form, such as circularity, only exemplifies one property.
3. Archetypes - The forms are archetypes; that is, they are perfect examples of the property that they exemplify. The forms are the perfect models upon which all material objects are based. The form of redness, for example, is red, and all red objects are simply imperfect, impure copies of this perfect form of redness.
4. Ultimately Real - The forms are the ultimately real entities, not material objects. All material objects are copies or images of some collection of forms; their reality comes only from the forms.

The general structure of Plato's argument is as follows: 1. We already believe that the more objective a concept is, the more real the thing it represents. We show that we believe this by the way we use objectivity to distinguish appearance and reality. This is a version of what we will call Plato's principle: The more objective you get, the more real you get.) 2. The forms are more objective than material objects. ----- Therefore, the forms are more real than material objects. Plato's argument for premise 1: The world that we perceive with the senses often deceives us. This would not be so if the world and objects that we perceive with the senses were the real objects. It seems that all the objects we perceive with the senses are simply images or experiences in our mind. They are only subjective points of views

on the real objects. For example, the world appears radically differently to a color blind person than it does to us. The objects that we perceive as colored, then, must not be the real objects, but just our experience of these objects that is determined by my particular subjective point of view and perceptual apparatus. Once one sees that the world that we perceive through the senses is not the real world but just an image of it, it becomes difficult to determine at what level of description we get in touch with the real objects that make up the world. In general, we assume that the more objective the concept or description, the more real the object it describes is. For example, when we see a person far away, we automatically follow our objective concept of humans as being about 6 feet tall and see the person as normal sized, even though the subjective image we have is of a very tiny person. In general, we form a more objective concept by combining different points of view into a more objective description that takes into account what all the other views had in common. This process is called dialectic: the back and forth discourse between different points of view that leads to their combination or synthesis into a more objective conception that takes into account both points of view. Plato's argument for the second premise: What then are the real objects? They cannot be the subjective images we perceive. These often deceive us. What about the everyday material objects, like chairs, tables, rocks, and trees, that we think our subjective perceptions of things refer to? The concepts we form of these are slightly more objective than subjective images. They combine and take into account all of the subjective images we can form of a single object, such as this particular asterisk \* . Yet, there are reasons to avoid taking this as the real object as well:

### **Aristotle ( Aspects on Tragedy)**

In the Poetics, Aristotle's famous study of Greek dramatic art, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) compares tragedy to such other metrical forms as comedy and epic. He determines that tragedy, like all poetry, is a kind of imitation (mimesis), but adds that it has a serious purpose and uses direct action rather than narrative to achieve its ends. He says that poetic mimesis is imitation of things as they could be, not as they are — for example, of universals and ideals — thus poetry is a more philosophical and exalted medium than history, which merely records what has actually happened.

The aim of tragedy, Aristotle writes, is to bring about a "catharsis" of the spectators — to arouse in them sensations of pity and fear, and to purge them of these emotions so that they leave the theater feeling cleansed and uplifted, with a heightened understanding of the ways of gods and men. This catharsis is brought about by witnessing some disastrous and moving change in the fortunes of the drama's protagonist (Aristotle recognized that the change might not be disastrous, but felt this was the kind shown in the best tragedies — Oedipus at Colonus , for example, was considered a tragedy by the Greeks but does not have an unhappy ending).

According to Aristotle, tragedy has six main elements: plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle (scenic effect), and song (music), of which the first two are primary. Most of the Poetics is devoted to analysis of the scope and proper use of these elements, with illustrative examples

selected from many tragic dramas, especially those of Sophocles, although Aeschylus, Euripides, and some playwrights whose works no longer survive are also cited.

Several of Aristotle's main points are of great value for an understanding of Greek tragic drama. Particularly significant is his statement that the plot is the most important element of tragedy:

Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of action and life, of happiness and misery. And life consists of action, and its end is a mode of activity, not a quality. Now character determines men's qualities, but it is their action that makes them happy or wretched. The purpose of action in the tragedy, therefore, is not the representation of character: character comes in as contributing to the action. Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of the tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. Without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be one without character. . . . The plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: character holds the second place.

Aristotle goes on to discuss the structure of the ideal tragic plot and spends several chapters on its requirements. He says that the plot must be a complete whole — with a definite beginning, middle, and end — and its length should be such that the spectators can comprehend without difficulty both its separate parts and its overall unity. Moreover, the plot requires a single central theme in which all the elements are logically related to demonstrate the change in the protagonist's fortunes, with emphasis on the dramatic causation and probability of the events.

Aristotle has relatively less to say about the tragic hero because the incidents of tragedy are often beyond the hero's control or not closely related to his personality. The plot is intended to illustrate matters of cosmic rather than individual significance, and the protagonist is viewed primarily as the character who experiences the changes that take place. This stress placed by the Greek tragedians on the development of plot and action at the expense of character, and their general lack of interest in exploring psychological motivation, is one of the major differences between ancient and modern drama.

Since the aim of a tragedy is to arouse pity and fear through an alteration in the status of the central character, he must be a figure with whom the audience can identify and whose fate can trigger these emotions. Aristotle says that "pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves." He surveys various possible types of characters on the basis of these premises, then defines the ideal protagonist as

. . . a man who is highly renowned and prosperous, but one who is not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice or depravity but by some error of judgment or frailty; a personage like Oedipus.

In addition, the hero should not offend the moral sensibilities of the spectators, and as a character he must be true to type, true to life, and consistent.

The hero's error or frailty (*harmartia*) is often misleadingly explained as his "tragic flaw," in the sense of that personal quality which inevitably causes his downfall or subjects him to retribution. However, overemphasis on a search for the decisive flaw in the protagonist as the key factor for

understanding the tragedy can lead to superficial or false interpretations. It gives more attention to personality than the dramatists intended and ignores the broader philosophical implications of the typical plot's denouement. It is true that the hero frequently takes a step that initiates the events of the tragedy and, owing to his own ignorance or poor judgment, acts in such a way as to bring about his own downfall. In a more sophisticated philosophical sense though, the hero's fate, despite its immediate cause in his finite act, comes about because of the nature of the cosmic moral order and the role played by chance or destiny in human affairs. Unless the conclusions of most tragedies are interpreted on this level, the reader is forced to credit the Greeks with the most primitive of moral systems.

It is worth noting that some scholars believe the "flaw" was intended by Aristotle as a necessary corollary of his requirement that the hero should not be a completely admirable man. *Harmartia* would thus be the factor that delimits the protagonist's imperfection and keeps him on a human plane, making it possible for the audience to sympathize with him. This view tends to give the "flaw" an ethical definition but relates it only to the spectators' reactions to the hero and does not increase its importance for interpreting the tragedies.

The remainder of the *Poetics* is given over to examination of the other elements of tragedy and to discussion of various techniques, devices, and stylistic principles. Aristotle mentions two features of the plot, both of which are related to the concept of *harmartia*, as crucial components of any well-made tragedy. These are "reversal" (*peripeteia*), where the opposite of what was planned or hoped for by the protagonist takes place, as when Oedipus' investigation of the murder of Laius leads to a catastrophic and unexpected conclusion; and "recognition" (*anagnorisis*), the point when the protagonist recognizes the truth of a situation, discovers another character's identity, or comes to a realization about himself. This sudden acquisition of knowledge or insight by the hero arouses the desired intense emotional reaction in the spectators, as when Oedipus finds out his true parentage and realizes what crimes he has been responsible for.

Aristotle wrote the *Poetics* nearly a century after the greatest Greek tragedians had already died, in a period when there had been radical transformations in nearly all aspects of Athenian society and culture. The tragic drama of his day was not the same as that of the fifth century, and to a certain extent his work must be construed as a historical study of a genre that no longer existed rather than as a description of a living art form.

In the *Poetics*, Aristotle used the same analytical methods that he had successfully applied in studies of politics, ethics, and the natural sciences in order to determine tragedy's fundamental principles of composition and content. This approach is not completely suited to a literary study and is sometimes too artificial or formula-prone in its conclusions.

Nonetheless, the *Poetics* is the only critical study of Greek drama to have been made by a near-contemporary. It contains much valuable information about the origins, methods, and purposes of tragedy, and to a degree shows us how the Greeks themselves reacted to their theater. In addition, Aristotle's work had an overwhelming influence on the development of drama long after it was compiled. The ideas and principles of the *Poetics* are reflected in the drama of the

Roman Empire and dominated the composition of tragedy in western Europe during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

## UNIT -2

### **William Wordsworth (Preface to Lyrical Ballads (1802))**

The first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published, as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain, how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation. that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted ,which a Poet may rationally endeavor to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: and, on the other band, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that I have pleased a greater number, than I ventured to hope I should please. xxx For the sake of variety, and from a consciousness of my own weakness, I was induced to request the assistance of a Friend, who furnished me with the Poems of the ANCIENT MARINER, the FOSTER-MOTHER'S TALE:, the NIGHTINGALE, and the Poem entitled LOVE.I should not, however, have requested this assistance, had I not believed that the Poems of my Friend would in a great measure have the same tendency as my own, and that ,though there would be found a difference, there would be found no discordance in the colours of our style; as our opinions on the subject of poetry do almost entirely coincide

.Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems from a belief, that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not important in the multiplicity, and in the quality of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory, upon which the poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, because I knew that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of reasoning him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because, adequately to display my opinions, and fully to enforce my arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to the nature of a preface. For to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence, of which I believe it susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to

determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved ; which, again, could not be determined, without pointing out, in whatmanner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other and with out retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have the reforce altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence ; yet I am sensible, few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those, upon which

that there would be some impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed, that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprizes the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book. but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different areas of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius and that of Statius or Claudian and in our own country, in the age of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which by the act of writing in verse an Author, in the present day, makes to his Reader; but I am certain, it will appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phrasology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion. will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope therefore the Reader will not censure me, if I attempt to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also, (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from the most dishonorable accusation which can be brought against an Author, namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavouring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it .The principal object, then, which I proposed to myself in these Poems was to incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, through out ,as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men; and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colour in of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way; and, further, and above al, to

make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Low and rustic life was generally and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings chosen, 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 co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately 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 contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and 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. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation .

I cannot, however, be insensible of the present outcry against the triviality and meanness both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I ad knowledge , that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonorable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy purpose. Not that I mean to say, that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but I believe that my habits of meditation have so formed my feelings, as that my descriptions of

such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with the ma purpose. If in this opinion I am mistaken, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: but though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached, were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man, who being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and, as by contemplating the relation of the general representatives to each other we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility. such habits of mind will be produced, that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the being to whom we address ourselves, if he be in a healthful state of association, must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections ameliorated.

I have said that each of these poems has a purpose. I have also informed my Reader what this purpose will be found principally to be: namely to illustrate the manner in which our feelings and

ideas are associated in a state of excitement. But, speaking in language somewhat more appropriate, it is to follow the fluxes and refluxes of the mind when agitated by the great and simple affections of our nature. This object I have endeavoured in these short essays to attain by various means; by tracing the maternal passion through many of its more subtle windings, as in the poems of the IDIOT BOY and the MAD MOTHER; by accompanying the last struggles of a human being, at the approach of death, cleaving in solitude to life and society, as in the Poem of the FORSAKEN INDIAN; by shewing, as in the Stanzas entitled WE ARE SEVEN, the perplexity and obscurity which in childhood attend our notion of death, or rather our utter inability to admit that notion; or by displaying the strength of fraternal, or to speak more philosophically, of moral attachment when early associated with the great and beautiful objects of nature, as in THE BROTHERS; or as in the Incident of SIMON LEE, by placing my Reader in the way of receiving from ordinary moral sensations another and more salutary impression than we are accustomed to receive from them. It has also been part of my general purpose to the TWO APRIL MORNINGS, THE FOUNTAIN, THE OLD MAN TRAVELLING,

attempt to sketch characters under the influence of less impassioned feelings, as in THE TWO THIEVES, &c. characters of which the elements are simple, belonging rather to nature than to manners, such as exist now, and will probably always exist, and which from their constitution may be distinctly and profitably contemplated. I will not abuse the indulgence of my Reader by dwelling longer upon this subject; but it is proper that I should mention one other circumstance which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling. My meaning will be rendered perfectly intelligible by referring my Reader to the Poems entitled POOR SUSAN and the CHILDLESS FATHER, particularly to the last Stanza of the latter Poem.

I will not suffer a sense of false modesty to prevent me from asserting, that I point my Reader's attention to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular

### **Samuel Johnson ( Preface to Shakespeare)**

Samuel Johnson in his —Preface to Shakespeare<sup>1</sup> highlights several qualities and defects in Shakespeare's

plays whether they are comedies or tragedies. Samuel Johnson's preface got enough fame due to the points that he raised in his writing. However, while highlighting the defects and qualities of Shakespeare's work, Johnson, sometimes contradicts his own views. Samuel Johnson, a well-known figure of late Augustan age is considered superb for his critical preface, Preface to Shakespeare by most critics. Harold Bloom defines —Johnson's vitality as acritical<sup>2</sup> as —always sufficiently inside Shakespeare's plays to judge them as he judges human life, without ever forgetting that Shakespeare's function is to bring life to mind<sup>3</sup>. In his preface, Johnson identifies several strengths and imperfections in Shakespeare's capabilities of writing.

Shakespeare develops his argument in considering Shakespeare and his works as antique. He used the word —antiquel as referential. He argues that something written a long time ago, must have been discussed a lot and if it is still admired, it contains some established qualities because it has gone through a phase of testing, checking and comparing

Strengths of Shakespeare's Plays According to Johnson

Shakespeare was an established authority by the time of Johnson. According to Johnson, —Nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of general naturel. By nature, Johnson means the observation of reality. Johnson says that Shakespeare had the ability to provide a \_just representation of general nature'. Here, Johnson presents the idea of universality. David Daiches reports that Dr. Johnson appreciates Shakespeare because he, according to Dryden's requirement of a just and lively image of human nature, fulfils it. He further explains that Shakespeare as a dramatist is praised because he does what is expected from a dramatist. Shakespeare's writings have a main theme of good and evil, these are universal problems, and everyone agrees to these problems. All humanity faces good as well as evil so the author who uses these problems will be related to people's lives.

Read more in Classics« People Never Really Understand a Person and Their Actions Until They Consider Things From the Person's Point of View by Climbing Into His Skin and Walk Around in It. Gabriel Better edgeand The —Otherl in Victorian Literature »

According to Johnson, art should be exact representation (imitation) of general nature as Plato says that art is the imitation of nature. Also, dealing with the theme of universality, Johnson seems to believe in modern thoughts that truth has to be universal, accepted by all and common for all. Nature is represented by classicists so copying them also means copying nature. Hamlet says, —Hold up a mirror to naturel, which means imitation of nature according to Platonic theory.

Shakespeare is also categorized by Johnson as poet of nature.

Johnson, further describes about Shakespeare's characters, —His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated. Shakespeare's characters are individuals but represent universality. Johnson elaborates about Shakespeare's characters, —Shakespeare has no heroes; his scenes are occupied by menl. It means that Shakespeare's characters are of general kind and are not restricted by customs and

conventions of any one society. David Daiches describes that by having no heroes does not mean that his characters are not heroic or impressive but that they are not supernatural beings but —men, whom we recognize as fellow human beingsl acting according to the general laws of nature. Also, if Shakespeare uses ghosts, he gives them humanly characteristics as they speak like human beings such as Hamlet's father's ghost

Johnson describes language of Shakespeare as comprehensible. He also describes that Shakespeare's characters differ from one another because of the usage of language.

Johnson praises Shakespeare and comments, —His drama is the mirror of lifel. According to Johnson, his plays are so realistic that we get practical knowledge from them. Johnson says, —Shakespeare's plays are

not in the rigorous and critical sense either tragedies or comedies, but compositions of a distinct kind..l. According to Johnson, divisions of Shakespeare's plays into tragedies and comedies is wrong. Eliot shares Johnson's idea of incorrect labelling of Shakespeare's dramas as tragic, comic and historic.

Johnson judges Shakespeare's tragedy as —a skill and his comedy as an \_instinct'. He thinks that

the natural medium for Shakespeare is comedy not tragedy. According to him, Shakespeare had to struggle for his tragedies but still they did not reach perfection. He presents a mingled drama

—  
a tragi-comedy, which provides instructions in both the ways, as tragedy as well as a comedy. He reinforces if tragedy and comedy are mingled, the effect one wants to create on the audience is impaired. Mingling of tragedy and comedy means to represent the reality of the world as it is  
Weaknesses in Shakespeare's Plays According to Johnson

Johnson identifies, —The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing.

Dr. Johnson, like utilitarian, seems to believe in the usefulness of art. He is one of them who want to prove that art is profitable for society. He also agrees to Sidney's idea of poet as a moral teacher. According to Johnson, poetry should make us better and it should be didactic. David Daiches criticizes Johnson for his two contradictory remarks

—  
just representation of human nature and poetry as a medium of moral instruction. David Daiches emphasizes that human nature not only deals with good side of life but also the evil aspects are there but for instruction morally, evil should be omitted, which means that the writer is not depicting true human nature. Humanity contains moral as well as immoral aspects so poetry cannot be moral teacher or true human nature representation both.

Johnson comments on Shakespeare's style, —He sacrifices virtue to convenience.. Johnson's argument is prejudice of the age. According to his opinion, rational thinking leads to moral thinking. Anthony H

house depicts, —Johnson exhibits emphatic distaste for Shakespeare's lack of moral purpose. Johnson reinforces on a writer's duty —to make the world better, which means, he emphasizes on moral role of literature, which is again contradictory to neo-classical ideas.

### UNIT - 3

## Matthew Arnold ( The Study of Poetry )

Matthew Arnold wrote "The Study of Poetry" as an introduction to an 1880 anthology called The English Poets, and in it he refines his answers to what he considered the most important questions facing literary critics and readers: what function does poetry serve in modern society? What kind of poetry is best suited to serve these functions? What distinguishes truly excellent poetry from merely good poetry, and how can readers learn to recognize classic poetry when they see it? Behind Arnold's questions and the answers he gives to them, readers can discern the central principle that defines his views on culture and society: transcendent excellence does exist,

poetry is where it can be found, and people should strive to honor it. In a nutshell, Arnold argues that poetry is a uniquely excellent art form and that, due to its virtues, it has a “high destiny” in human affairs; since this destiny touches on the highest aspirations of human beings, nothing but the highest standards will do, and readers must train themselves to uphold these standards. It is this task that Arnold offers to train readers to develop.

Arnold begins explaining this vital task—learning to discern the excellent qualities in poetry—by distinguishing the true estimate of a poem’s worth (Arnold’s argument assumes that a given poem has a single true worth that can be accurately discerned). The way to find this true estimate is from first identifying two false estimates. The true estimate is called the real estimate, and the false estimates are called the historic estimate and the personal estimate. According to Arnold, the real estimate is the only true determination of a poem’s value; he also insists that the real estimate determines whether or not a poem belongs to the highest echelon of poetry, believing that the only reason to read poetry in the first place is to engage with the greatest works humanity can possibly offer. The historic estimate of a poem, on the other hand, comes from its importance as a historical object: for example, this estimate is tied to the poem’s place in the development of a language, a poetic movement, or various historical events. Arnold makes it clear that, whatever virtues attach to this historic estimate, it must be distinguished from the real estimate, which is timeless. Likewise, the personal estimate comes from individual tastes and preferences: this estimate is tied to the reader’s likes and dislikes—considerations that Arnold thinks must, like the historic estimate, be divorced from the kind of considerations that go into arriving at the real estimate of a poem. Arnold gives the example of the Scottish poet Robert Burns, whose work tends to be dear to the Scottish but falls short of the highest echelon of greatness in a broader sense.

What, then, decides the real estimate of a poem’s value, and how can a reader arrive at this estimate? In addition to typical poetic virtues such as beauty, rhythm, and inventiveness, Arnold describes an important element that characterizes poems of the highest worth and that readers must learn to recognize. He calls this element high seriousness. Arnold traces his concept of high seriousness to Aristotle, who valued poetry over history for its “higher truth and a higher

seriousness.” Arnold is somewhat vague about what this high seriousness consists of, but it is clear from an example he gives from Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy* that it involves treating the most important matters—such as fate and free will—with the gravity of a poet who really appreciates the significance of such themes.

Arnold’s term for the way a poet approaches such things is criticism of life. The criticism of life in the work of a humorous poet like Chaucer or a prosaic poet like Dryden, Arnold argues, does not have the high seriousness that the work of Dante, Homer, Shakespeare, or Milton has. Indeed, the way to arrive at the real estimate of a poem, Arnold clarifies, is to constantly compare a given poem to the works of these poets, a procedure that Arnold demonstrates in his essay. If it matches the artistic greatness and high seriousness of poetry by Dante, Homer, Shakespeare, and Milton, then it is poetry of the first rank—if not, then it is probably not worth spending much time on, in Arnold’s view.

Arnold closes his essay by returning to the prediction he made in the beginning: poetry’s “high destiny” in human affairs will ensure that it never fades or perishes, and if it seems at times that society turns away from poetry, this is only temporary, since human beings will always return to poetry in times of great need.

## **T.S.ELIOT ( THE FUNCTION OF CRITICISM )**

Thomas Stearns Eliot is a poet- critic like Dryden, Dr. Johnson, Coleridge, etc. He has an important place in the New criticism. In 1928 Eliot declared himself to be “ a classicist in literature, a royalist in politics, and an Anglo-Catholic in religion”. He was strong supporter of order and discipline, of authority and tradition and of organization and pattern. His chief critical works are *The Sacred Wood* (1921), *Homage to John Dryden* (1924), *For Lancelot Andrews* (1928), *Selected Essays* (1932), *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (1933), *Elizabethan Essays* (1934), *Essays Ancient and Modern*(1936)

The essay *Function of Criticism* 1923, arose out of a controversy. Eliot’s essay *Tradition and Individual Talent* was published in 1919. Murry challenged the opinions of Eliot in his essay *Romanticism and the Tradition*. In the present essay Eliot replies to Murry. This essay has been divided into four parts.

i) The first part of the essay deals with Eliot’s views on critic and the critical work of art

- ii) The second part of the essay deals with Murry ' s views on Romanticism and Classicism and Eliot's contradiction with it/
- iii) The third part of the essay deals with Eliot's criticism of Murry.
- iv) The fourth part of the essay deals with the relation of criticism with creative work of art.

#### Part I

Eliot condemns subjective, impressionistic critics as imperfect critics. According to Eliot, a good critic has well-developed sense of fact. This does not mean that the critic should equip himself with biographical and historical facts relating to a writer. What Eliot expects of the critic is a fairly workable knowledge of technical details about a poem such as its genesis, structure, language etc. He says that the best critic is one who is also a poet. Only a poet- critic understands the poetic process and can communicate his understanding to his readers. Eliot says that comparison and analysis are the main tools of a critic. A perfect critic must know how to compare and what to compare, besides knowing how to analyse. The critic can compare writers of the present with those of the past or writers of one language with those of another. The function of a good critic is to teach readers what they ought to read. Hence, besides interpreting a literary work, the critic has also a moral role to play.

#### Part II

Eliot disagrees with Murry's views on Romanticism and Classicism, because Murry believes that Classicism and Romanticism cannot go side by side. He also says that classicism is the feature of French and romanticism is the feature of England and as he is from England, romanticism is more important for him than the other. Eliot criticizes the orthodoxy of Murry as he does not give significance to classicism. According Murry, a critic should hear and follow a natural instinct that he feels, as it is correct for him. He suggests that rules are made to be broken. Such free play can lead to doing what one likes which means the emergence of violence. Thus Eliot attacks Murry's attitude for rejecting the dignity of the others.

#### Part III

In this section Eliot tell us the reason why he took up for consideration Murry's comparison of Outside Authority with the Inner voice. Those persons who obey the inner voice will not any meaning in Eliot's view of criticism and its function. They will not be interested in finding out any common principles for the pursuit of criticism. They depend not on principles but on the dictates of the inner voice, and if they like a thing, that is all they want.

#### Part IV

In the fourth section of the essay Eliot says that some intellectually weak people like Arnold and Murry consider criticism better than the creative art. Eliot's opinion on the relation of criticism in the work of creation is – probably, indeed, the larger part of labour of an author in composing his work is critical labour: the labour of shifting, combining, constructing this frightful toil is as much critical as creative. There are persons who decry this critical toil of the artist, and believe that the great artist is an unconscious artist. But Eliot does not agree with his view and thinks that in more fortunate men the critical discrimination flashes in the very heart of creation.

Critical Truths, according T.S. Eliot are not permanent and universal. The truths of one age may not be convincing or even profitable to people of another age. But even then the now invalidated truths of the previous ages have a great value because in their absence the critics of the new generation would not have been able to discover some other and profitable truths for themselves. Every age, therefore, needs new great critics to find out truths for that age, and tradition helps him greatly in his search

## UNIT - 4

### I. A. Richards (Four kinds of meaning)

Richards was born in Sandbach. He was educated at Clifton College and Magdalene College, Cambridge, where his intellectual talents were developed by the scholar Charles Hickson 'Cabby' Spence. He began his career without formal training in literature; he studied philosophy (the "moral sciences") at Cambridge University, from which derived his assertions that, in the 20th century, literary study cannot and should not be undertaken as a specialization, in and of itself, but studied alongside a cognate field, such as philosophy, psychology or rhetoric. His early teaching appointments were as adjunct faculty: at Cambridge, Magdalene College would not pay a salary for Richards to teach the new, and untested, academic field of English literature. Instead, like an old style instructor, he collected weekly tuition directly from the students, as they entered the classroom. In 1926, Richards married Dorothy Pilley whom he had met on a mountain climbing holiday in Wales. In the 1929–30 biennium, as a visiting professor, Richards taught Basic English and Poetry at Tsinghua University, Beijing. In the 1936–38 triennium, Richards was the director of the Orthological Institute of China. He died in Cambridge.

#### Contributions

Collaborations with C. K. Ogden The life and intellectual influence of I. A. Richards approximately corresponds to his intellectual interests; many endeavours were in collaboration with the linguist, philosopher, and writer Charles Kay Ogden (C. K. Ogden), notably in four books: I. *Foundations of Aesthetics* (1922) presents the principles of aesthetic reception, the bases of the literary theory of "harmony"; aesthetic understanding derives from the balance of competing psychological impulses. The structure of the *Foundations of Aesthetics*—a survey of the competing definitions of the term *aesthetic*—prefigures the multiple-definitions work in the books *Basic Rules of Reason* (1933), *Mencius on the Mind: Experiments in Multiple Definition* (1932), and *Coleridge on Imagination* (1934) II. *The Meaning of Meaning: A Study of the Influence of Language upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism* (1923) presents the triadic theory of semiotics that depends upon psychological theory, and so anticipates the importance of psychology in the exercise of literary criticism. Semioticians, such as Umberto Eco, acknowledged that the methodology of the triadic theory of semiotics improved upon the methodology of the dyadic theory of semiotics presented by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913). III. *Basic English: A General Introduction with Rules and Grammar* (1930) describes a simplified English based upon a vocabulary of 850 words, IV. *The Times of India Guide to Basic English* (1938) sought to develop Basic English as an international auxiliary language, an interlanguage. Richards' travels, especially in China, effectively situated him as the advocate for an international program, such as Basic English. Moreover, at Harvard University, to his

international pedagogy, the instructor I. A. Richards began to integrate the available new media for mass communications, especially television.

## Aesthetics and literary criticism

### Theory

The poet and literary critic William Empson (1906–84), developed the methodology of New Criticism with the practice of close reading of literary works, prose and poetry; his best-known work is *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930). Richards elaborated an approach to literary criticism in *The Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929) which embodied aspects of the scientific approach from his study of psychology, particularly that of Charles Scott Sherrington.[6] In *The Principles of Literary Criticism*, Richards discusses the subjects of form, value, rhythm, coenesthesia (an awareness of inhabiting one's body, caused by stimuli from various organs), literary infectiousness, allusiveness, divergent readings, and belief. He starts from the premise that "A book is a machine to think with, but it need not, therefore, usurp the functions either of the bellows or the locomotive." *Practical Criticism* (1929), is an empirical study of inferior response to a literary text. As an instructor in English literature at Cambridge University, Richards tested the critical-thinking abilities of his pupils; he removed authorial and contextual information from thirteen poems and asked undergraduates to write interpretations, in order to ascertain the likely impediments to an adequate response to a literary text. That experiment in pedagogical approach – critical reading without contexts – demonstrated the variety and the depth of the possible textual misreadings that might be committed, by university student and layman alike. The critical method derived from that pedagogical approach did not propose a new hermeneutics, a new methodology of interpretation, but questioned the purposes and efficacy of the critical process of literary interpretation, by analysing the self-reported critical interpretations of university students. To that end, effective critical work required a closer aesthetic interpretation of the literary text as an object.

### New rhetoric

As a rhetorician, Richards said that the old form of studying rhetoric (the art of discourse) was too concerned with the mechanics of formulating arguments and with conflict; instead, he proposed the New Rhetoric to study of the meaning of the parts of discourse, as "a study of misunderstanding and its remedies" to determine how language works. That ambiguity is expected, and that meanings (denotation and connotation) are not inherent to words, but are inherent to the perception of the reader, the listener, and the viewer. By their usages, compiled

from experience, people decide and determine meaning by "how words are used in a sentence", in spoken and written language.

Richards and Ogden created the semantic triangle to deliver improved understanding to how words come to mean. The semantic triangle has three parts, the symbol or word, the referent, and the thought or reference. In the bottom, right corner is the Referent, the thing, in reality. Placed at the left corner is the symbol or word. At the top point, the convergence of the literal word and the object in reality; it is our intangible idea about the object. Ultimately, the English meaning of the words is determined by an individual's unique experience.

### Feed forward

When the Saturday Review asked Richards to write a piece for their "What I Have Learned" series, Richards (then aged 75) took the opportunity to expound upon his cybernetic concept of "feed forward". The Oxford English Dictionary records that Richards coined the term feed forward in 1951 at the Eighth Macy Conferences on cybernetics. In the event, the term extended the intellectual and critical influence of Richards to cybernetics which applied the term in a variety of contexts. Moreover, among Richards' students was Marshall McLuhan, who also applied and developed the term and the concept of feed forward. According to Richards, feed forward is the concept of anticipating the effect of one's words by acting as our own critic. It is thought to work in the opposite direction of feedback, though it works essentially towards the same goal: to clarify unclear concepts. Existing in all forms of communication, feed forward acts as a pretest that any writer can use to anticipate the impact of their words on their audience. According to Richards, feed forward allows the writer to then engage with their text to make necessary changes to create a better effect. He believes that communicators who do not use feed forward will seem dogmatic. Richards wrote more in depth about the idea and importance of feed forward in communication in his book *Speculative Instruments* and has said that feed forward was his most important learned concept.

### Influence

Richards served as mentor and teacher to other prominent critics, most notably William Empson and F. R. Leavis, although Leavis was contemporary with Richards, and Empson much younger. Other critics primarily influenced by his writings also included Cleanth Brooks and Allen Tate. Later critics who refined the formalist approach to New Criticism by actively rejecting his psychological emphasis included, besides Brooks and Tate, John Crowe Ransom, W. K. Wimsatt, R. P. Blackmur, and Murray Krieger. R. S. Crane of the Chicago school was both indebted to Richards's theory and critical of its psychological assumptions. They all admitted the value of his seminal ideas but sought to salvage what they considered his most useful assumptions from the theoretical excesses they felt he brought to bear in his criticism. Like Empson, Richards proved a difficult model for the New Critics, but his model of close reading provided the basis for their interpretive methodology.

## **1. Sense**

Plain literal meaning from the point of view of the speaker, listener

Speaker wants attention of the listeners to something

(e.g. Meaning of a poem or a word)

Speaker wants to give some thoughts to the listeners

(Sense -idea conceived from speaker)

## **2. Feeling**

Refers to emotions, emotional attitudes, will, desire, pleasure, displeasure and so on.

When we say something, we have feeling about it, "an attitude towards it; some special direction, bias or

accentuation of interest in it, some personal flavour or colouring."We use words to express these feelings and these nuance of interest. (it may happen consciously or unconsciously)—(eg. Anger ,excitement, sympathy etc.,)exceptional cases-Mathematics- no feelings

## **3. Tone**

Basically the speaker has an attitude to his listener

Choice and arrangement of the words according to the kind of audience

Tone of utterance adopted according to the relationship of the listener-exceptional-pretentious tone gets exposed at times

(e.g- hypocritical speech or egoistical speech)

## **4. Intention**

Sense-what one says, Feeling-what one talks about-

Tone -one's attitude to the listener

Intention-conscious or unconscious

He speaks for a purpose-purpose modifies his speech• To understand the meaning-understand the intention also

His success can be measured if only we understand his intentions (e.g. Sales promotion)

## **Cleanth Brooks (The Language of Paradox)**

### Introduction

The “Language of Paradox” is one of the well-known essays, written by a great American critic ‘Cleanth Brooks’. This is the first chapter of Cleanth Brooks’s Book ‘Well-Wrought Urn’. Through this essay, Brooks has shown how the poet conveys his thoughts and ideas by using literary devices like Paradox without employing a direct statement in poetry. According to Cleanth Brooks, Paradox covers all shocking deviations and digressions from common opinions and perceptions. It is not merely a literary device. So he states that.

Cleanth Brooks, one of the foremost American Literary critics of the 20th century, spent fifteen years as a professor in the English Department. He was a central architect of the ‘New Criticism’ a critical movement that transformed the teaching of literature in the United States. He profoundly influenced American literary studies and shaped successive generations of students and teachers of literature with his work. Brooks taught at ‘Yale University from 1947 to 1975. Brook’s works included – ‘Literary Criticism: A Short History’ ( Cowritten with William K. Wimsatt ), ‘A shaping joy: Studies in the Writer’s Craft’, and several books on ‘William Faulkner’. Cleanth Brooks was influenced by modern critics like, ‘T. S. Eliot’, ‘I. A. Richard’, and ‘William Empson ’

### Paradoxes in Wordsworth’s Poetry

Brooks states that the language of William Wordsworth is the language of Paradox. As a romantic poet, William Wordsworth emphasized simplicity of thought and lucidity of expression in poetry. But Cleanth Brooks thinks that Wordsworth’s poem. “It is a Beauteous Evening, calm and free” is pregnant with a Paradoxical statement. The poem begins with the line:

“It is a beauteous evening, calm and free

The holy time is quiet as a Nun

Breathless with adoration.”

### Paradoxes in Neoclassical Poets

Neo classic writer like Alexander Pope has also made fine use of Paradoxes along with irony. In his famous work, "Essay on Man" Pope uses Paradoxes. According to Cleanth Brooks Paradoxes and irony are cradled in the poet's language in which both connotation and denotation play a vital role. There is a fine blending of irony and Paradoxes in some of William Wordsworth's poems also the works of William Blake and Thomas Gray are also no exception. Samuel Taylor, Coleridge in his "The Rime of Ancient Mariner" has dexterously used this poetic device.

In the poem, "Canonization" the speaker addresses a silent listener who may be deemed as a sign of the Practical world which considers love as a useless and meaningless affair. The two lovers escape from the convention, rules, and bindings of the secular world. The poet says:

#### Difference between the language of poetry and Science

Cleanth Brooks further differentiates between science and poetry. He thinks that it is the tendency of science to make terms lifeless and direct with the help of denotations. In poetry, the poet brings novelty to terms by deviating from the denotative meaning of terms and their dictionary meaning. Science makes use of direct expressions which are quite rigid whereas poets hide the message and meaning of their work by employing poetical devices like Paradoxes and irony, the language of poetry cannot be direct. Brooks states that the directness of language is of no use in poetry.

#### Conclusion

Cleanth Brooks developed a method of analyzing a literary work by embracing T. S. Eliot and I. A. Richards's method in New Criticism. His work "Understanding Poetry" produced in collaboration with Robert Penn Warren established the Vogue of New Criticism which emphasized close reading of the text. In brief, Cleanth Brooks regarded Paradox as a virtue of poetry, he has shown how literary devices like Paradox, irony, etc. play a vital role in the meaning of the literary text by examining the works of William Wordsworth and John Donne.