

# **“TEXT-LED” OR “IDEA-LED” LITERARY THEORIES ELIMINATING MARGINALIZATION. UNDERCUTTING EUROCENTRIC (CULTURE), ANDROCENTRIC (GENDER), AND HETEROSEXUAL SUPREMACY (SEXUAL ORIENTATION)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Aim.** This paper aims to find the origin of major literary theories and their domains. Literary theories often bear differences under the three major categories, “Eurocentrism”, “Androcentricism”, and “Heterosexual Supremacy”. Out of which, “Eurocentrism” talks about the Western look at the rest of the world as begging, illogical, unscientific, and strange (cultural sense of other), “Androcentricism” vents out gender marginalization and “Heterosexual Supremacy” excludes homosexuality.

**Methods.** Some major theories are interpreted under the above given three segregations like *Structuralism* removes all the Western dominance (Eurocentricism) or Gender biases (Androcentricism) shown in the text with lexis, codes, and interspersed digressions, and the Queer theory rejects the “Heterosexual Supremacy”. Special preference is given to theories which are idea-led.

**Results.** This research highlights that in the ‘Text-led’ theories, *Structuralism*, *Post-Structuralism*, *Russian Formalism* and Sigmund Freud’s *Psychoanalysis* work on the text to find the generalized meaning of the text, and in the ‘Idea-led’ philosophies like Louis Althusser’s *Marxism*, *New Historicism* or *Cultural Materialism* focus on ideas with wider approach of accepting the fact that a literary work is affected by multiple causes and can result in various interpretations of the works.

**Conclusion.** This research tries to prove that marginalization is the genesis of literary theories, as these theories serve as tools to expose overtly the process of marginalization to the world. This research paper also talks about bisexuality’s support by any

new theory that has yet to register in the list of literary theories. This research paper proves that all literary theories are developed for some widespread generic reasons in favour of the betterment of our society. Reading this research one can find the real way to apply the literary theories for discourse analysis.

**Keywords:** endocentric, androcentric, text-led, idea-led, essentialism, anti-essentialism, sadomasochistic, butch-femme

## REVIEWS

Literary texts on marginalization talk about the conditioning of human brains to accept their subjugation. Opposition to such practices got more literary responses as Simon de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* (1949) wrote that she herself never liked the remarks that to instruct a woman or girl to think twice before doing anything because she is a woman, “I used to get annoyed in abstract discussions to hear men tell me: ‘You think such and such a thing because you’re a woman.’” (Cuddon, 1999, p. 199) Donna Haraway – feminist and theorist – made a popular term “Cyborg” as the solution part of such subjugation, and this term in today’s world eliminates the gaps between male-female, rich and poor or heterosexual or gay/lesbian as the term is made of two concepts “cybernetic” and “organism”. This term was coined:

in 1960 by the scientists Manfred Clynes and Nathan Kline. It refers to an organism that has both biological and artificial features and how our bodies now combine with technology.....for Haraway, a potentially transgressive and utopian concept as it blurs the boundaries between human and machine, nature and culture, gender and origin. It is a particularly useful concept for feminism as it challenges these binaries, and, according to Haraway, enables us to imagine a world beyond gender categories and what human beings might become. Haraway further developed these ideas in her book *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature by examining the connections between humans, machines, and animals such as primates* (1991). (Cuddon, 1999, p. 199)

“Cyborg” is not only explaining the relationship between the machines and humans but also its relation with the animals. It is quite possible that for protecting animals a new literary theory will be introduced. The practice of writing/theorization is an act of liberation where we see the difference between the life of an author in reality and in books. A literary theory can affect the whole social structure as these theories/works seek liberation through abolition of subjugation. As far as the marginalization of women is concerned there is one serious problem that people have read histories before literature and developed a biased mentality for women. Virginia Woolf in her work *A Room of One’s Own* (1929) combines such thoughts and encourages women to write fiction for their liberation of the soul and mind. She writes about women:

she could hardly read, could scarcely spell, and was the property of her husband..... It was certainly an odd monster that one made up by reading the historians first and the poets afterward—a worm winged like an eagle. (Wolf, 2020, p. 50)

Citing an unforgettable example of the sister of Shakespeare, Virginia Wolf says:

Imagine that William Shakespeare had a sister, as wonderfully gifted as himself. But she was not sent to school ... had no chance of learning grammar and logic ... Before she was out of her teens she was to be betrothed ... she cried out that marriage was hateful and was beaten by her father ... She took the road to London ... stood at the stage door; she wanted to act. Men laughed in her face ... At last ... she found herself with child ... and killed herself one winter's night ... (Wolf, 2020, p. 51)

Finally, her advice with her inspirational thought to all the tormented women to write more and more for their liberation working as a potion for them, “A thousand pens are ready to suggest what you should do and what effect you will have. My suggestion is a little fantastic, I admit; I prefer, therefore, to put it in the form of fiction.” (Wolf, 2020, p. 125) The politics of language to relegate women is also shown by Mary Wollstonecraft in her work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) and the example of the use of the word ‘innocent’ is used to make women weaker, “it is but a civil term for weakness.” (Wollstonecraft, 2019, p. 88) She also compares the masochism of army officials to the feminine identity of women. She says that all the army officials and women learn manners before morals and that creates problems. Ultimately, it is difficult to differentiate them as army officials like these males want sex, female friends, supportive women, dancing, and entertainment; similarly, women want the same from men but men are shown more powerful. The problem of sensuality makes generally a woman victim as another quote by Wollstonecraft writes that sensualists are very dangerous despots as they dupe the girls thinking that they have ruled over them (Wollstonecraft, 2019, p. 106). The advent of different literary theories strived for liberation. Apart from these theories/philosophies, religion also proved solacing for women though it also bound women as John Stuart Mill wrote in his work *The Subjection of Women* (1869):

Until a late period in European history, the father had the power to dispose of his daughter in marriage at his own will and pleasure, without any regard to hers. The Church, indeed, was so far faithful to a better morality as to require a formal “yes” from the woman at the marriage ceremony;.....She can acquire no property but for him; the instant it becomes hers, even if by inheritance, it becomes ipso facto his. In this respect, the wife’s position under the common law of England is worse than that of slaves in the laws of many countries. (Mill, 2006, p. 35)

Ultimately the thought of finding the origin and the purpose of the major literary theories/philosophies can be traced to the thought given by John Stuart Mill that even the prevailing law of Europe was not able to ensure the safety and liberation of the people and this thought of liberation and redemption must have given outbreak to the emergence

of the new literary theories. Althusser's work *On the Reproduction of Capitalist Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (2014) confirms it with the quote, "that law is by itself incapable of guaranteeing the reproduction or stabilization of the dominant social relations" (Althusser, 2014, p. 13).

## INTRODUCTION

To see the level of marginalization, the concept of Althusser—French Marxist—differentiates between the *State Power* and *State Control* that is enough to explain it. In the state power, we have institutions like army, police, court rooms and prison, and in the state control, we have family, art, media houses, schools etc. (Barry, 2002). Thus, in the form of Althusser's *Marxism* the spirit of breaking capitalism is strongly felt when it is stated that we all feel that we all are having freedom but in reality we are slave to the given options (Barry, 2002). It is called Althusser's concept of "Interpellation". Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci's concept of "Hegemony" also defines the same. Feminism was superseded by Lesbian and Gay Criticism, Karl Marx's *Marxism* was altered by Lenin's politically framed Marxism and Althusser's revised *Marxism*, or *Structuralism* was updated by the post-structuralism with the approach of *Deconstruction*, or partial rejection of Freud's *Psychoanalysis* but accepting Lacan's *Psychoanalysis* in the theories like *Marxism* and *New Historicism* show the evolution of surges against marginalization. Paradoxically, theories seem contrary to one another though these theories can be seen working towards one goal of human liberation. Relief, freedom, peace, and happiness were expected as an undercurrent of all the popular theories and this is the main aim of this research work. In the theories of *Structuralism* and *Post-Structuralism*, Saussure and Roland Barth including the deconstructionist Derrida provided the final convincing thoughts for liberation. In *Psychoanalysis*, Lacan gave a more open and bold approach than Sigmund Freud. In Feminism, *Gay and Lesbian Criticism* or *Black Feminism* gave the final shape to the theory of Feminism with statements like 'women found women' or Jeanette Winterson's work stating that oranges are not the only fruit in 1985. In Marxism, the idea of Marx or Leninism was improved by Althusser and the purpose of this theory become broader for the welfare of the people.

## METHODOLOGY

An aerial view of major literary theories is taken with the thought that subjugation and marginalization are connected to the origin of the literary theories. Realising the real thought behind every theory can help people to develop more theories to solve social problems. Finding the one generic reason for the development of the liter-

ary theories is a comprehensive approach of understanding the real purpose of all the literary theories and getting an impetus to develop new theories for the welfare of the contemporary society. This research also recommends framing idea-led theories for the solution to the new unsolved problems and text-led theories can be sub part of such theories as text-led theories are only focusing on the text not beyond that.

## DISCUSSION

Literary theories are developed under the same current of rejecting polarization as in Friedrich Engels and Marx's traditional thought under *Marxism* of connecting everything to the "Economic base" reaches to the level of Althusser's latest version of *Marxism* accepting multiple reasons which affect the power structures rejecting the polarity of the economic influence. In other literary theories also "over-determinism" is rejected within their final development as this gives a strong sign of exploitation by supporting only one type of people or group and rejecting the others. So, "Over-determinism" became the major reason for the rejection of almost all the theories and their higher version. The 'Text-led' theories like *Structuralism* claim to promote the bias-free reading or interpretation of literary text but its closed approach of rejecting the outer influence on the text makes it a significant failure in registering the tone of exploitation even within the text. Marx's Marxism came with the conventional approach and Victor Shklovsky, Boris Tomashevsky, and Boris Eichenbaum were the prominent figures following strict Marxist fervour under Russian Formalism. Shklovsky's idea of "Defamiliarisation" or "making strange" was well received and presents the common things with a new perspective. Thus, Russian formalism was a kind of reaction against the Nazi influence as Russia was suppressed by Nazis and many authors fled to America and other countries and formed their new theories like *New Criticism* or like Roman Jakobson in Prague found the *Prague Linguistic Circle*, and *Formalism* was framed by Mikhail Bakhtin in Russia as he did not leave the country. Now, it can be concluded in the favour of those theorists who were following the polarized or strict pattern in their theories that they wanted to save themselves and show resentment towards the residing strict government so they could not be liberal in their theories and philosophies. The strangest scene is that where every time someone is instructing the actors to do something just like in Brecht's play *Galileo* (Barry, 2002). This kind of unreal depiction in literature was thoroughly rejected. Later, the Frankfurt School of Marxist in 1923 put efforts to join Freud and Marx including the aspects of Formalism (Barry, 2002). In Feminism, when Toril Moi defines three terms in *The Feminist Essay*: "Feminist: Political", "Female: Biological" and "Feminine: Cultural construction" then Showalter later gives these three concepts a new life by defining the different approaches under these terms. Thus, feminist authors were just trying to identify the major track of exploitation for women in society.



After World War I, the ideas of social freedom and self-esteem were of high importance and authors like Wollstonecraft wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) which discusses male writers like Milton, Pope, and Rousseau. Moreover, Olive Schreiner wrote *Women and Labour* (1911), and 10 years before the II World War, Virginia Woolf wrote *A Room of One's Own* (1929) which demanded education and alternatives to marriage and motherhood. Feminist literary criticism are results of the movement of the 1960s and the problems due to the Second World –War which led people to come up with revolutionary ideas of mental and social freedom like Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's idea of "Social Castration" or de Beauvoir's famous first sentence in *The Second Sex* (1949) that "One is not born a woman, rather, one becomes a woman" or Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1969) which criticizes Freud as a prime source of the patriarchal tone and Elaine Showalter shows the change in the late 1970s from "andro-texts" to "gynotexts". Moreover, de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) interprets the portrayal of women in the novels of David Herbert Lawrence, and as a surprise, male authors also showed sensitivity to women's social castration as Mill wrote *The Subjection of Woman* (1869) and Engels wrote *The Origin of the Family* (1884). Balanced through Merging "text-led" and "idea-led" criticism like New Historicism with the hope of finding reality up to a level while maintaining a distance from over-determinism or lesbian criticism which tends to endorse 'experimental' forms of sexuality within lesbianism, such as Sado-Masochistic and Butch-Femme role play or like Queer Theory by Paulina Palmer or Bonnie Zimmerman. Among other texts, a well-known essay "What has never been: an overview of lesbian feminist criticism" attacked 'essentialism'. Thus, theories are deeply exposing the different levels of exploitation in the world. From the early thoughts to the more logical approach, these theories do not reject the earlier version but rather show more logical explanations of the things and literature to eliminate the marginalization. The purpose of any theory now noticed is the liberation of human beings.

Psychoanalysis favours the dream and imagination and thus prefers the anti-realist text for finding the hidden reality. Freudian ideology ignores the characters and author and focuses on the text and Lacan focuses on the author's background. Both approaches are samples of deconstruction. Lacan is more open in approach as he supports the "Metafiction" like Magic Realism which in turn is supporting the idea of Post-Structuralism. According to Lacan, text has no referents but it constructs a world before us. Psychoanalysis also goes against Liberal Humanism as it says that Language structures pre-exist and then people fit into it rather than the concept of unique selfhood concept of Liberal Humanism. The interpretation of the *confusion of Hamlet for killing his uncle is that he wanted to have sexual relations with her other so he was not able to decide* to kill the uncle who murdered his father. In Harold Pinter's *Homecoming* (1965), setting the wife as a prostitute was agreed by all the brothers including the husband of the woman as they did not have the imagination of a motherly figure as their mother died early. Additionally, Freud believes that a dream is an 'escape-hatch' or 'safety-valve' through

which repressed desires, fears, or memories seek an outlet into the conscious mind.... these might be seen as defense mechanisms.... Freud himself called the ‘parapraxis’, whereby repressed material in the unconscious finds an outlet through such everyday phenomena as slips of the tongue, slips of the pen, or unintended actions (Barry, 2002). All the problems of life except exploitation are welcomed and enjoyed by theories like Post-Modernism which believes in the success of ‘Mini narratives’ (Lyotard, 1982, p. 67). Before it

The period of high modernism was the twenty years from 1910 to 1930 and some of the literary ‘high priests’ of the movement (writing in English) were T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, Woolf, Wallace Stevens, and Gertrude Stein, and (writing in French or German) Marcel Proust, Stephane Mallarme, Andre Gide, Franz Kafka, and Rainer Maria Rilke. (Barry, 2002, p.109)

Modernists expect absolute perfection in life and fail to enjoy life. French writer Jean Baudrillard in his book *Simulations* (1983) tells about the three stages of signs; first when the sign shows the basic reality; second, when a sign misrepresents the reality; third, when a sign shows no corresponding reality and rather hides it. The “loss of the real” by the TV and other arts in the modern world and thus creating a world of “hyper-reality” is the main idea of Baudrillard. Earlier, Modernism was an attempt to show the path of enlightenment The French Revolution was taken as the test of modernism to bring enlightenment. About Post-Modernism it is said that

A major ‘moment’ in the history of postmodernism is the influential paper ‘Modernity—an Incomplete Project’ delivered by the contemporary German theorist Jiirgen Habermas in 1980. For Habermas, the modern period begins with the Enlightenment, that period of about one hundred years, from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century, when a new faith arose in the power of reason to improve human society. (Barry, 2002, p. 123)

Habermas, Jean-Francois Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard were the pillars of the Post-Modernism. Modernism supports “asceticism” and has a nostalgic tone for the better past and loss in modern times and for the post-modern approach fragmentation is the way out of libration and somehow they are enjoying whatever is in life. Modernism laments through “eclectic” and “aleatory forms” but Post-Modernism enjoys these forms as it has accepted life in the random form. Dadaism in the artistic creation was a fine example of a modernistic and post-modernistic form but with modernistic pessimism.

Modernism follows “Omniscient Narratorial Stance” and “Clear-Cut Moral Positions” unlike Post-Modernism and works on the principle of the stream-of-consciousness technique whereas Post-Modernism seems to work on the stream-of-consciousness. The final resolution in approaches like *New-historicism* and Lacan’s psychoanalysis seems to believe in stream-of-sub-consciousness. *Structuralism* and *New Criticism* talk about finding unity and oneness in the meaning and structure



and these are imbalanced approaches given in reaction to World War I whereby Post-Structuralism used the technique of deconstruction to find the unity and hidden paradoxical meaning at the subconscious level. Barbara Johnson said that deconstruction is not destruction rather it is to undo the text. Terry Eagleton defines Deconstruction as reading the text against itself as it does not know its meaning. Derrida's book *Of Grammatology* (1967) takes the radical stance while claiming that there is nothing out of the text and this separated the Post-Structuralism and Deconstruction from the Post-Modernism or New Historicism. Ultimately, Structuralism and Post-Structuralism both fall prey to the over-textual approach. Meaning wise liberation took place in the shift from Structuralism and Post-Structuralism as, "the crucial essay *The Death of the Author* (1968) which is the 'hinge' round which Barthes turns from structuralism to post-structuralism" (Barry, 2002, p. 110). The focus on text says there is nothing out of it shows conventional practice which rather failed before the bold theories like Modernism and Post-Modernism. At the issue of Linguistic anxiety Post-Structuralism and Modernism with Post-Modernism are the same. Structuralism derives base from linguistics and post-structuralism derives base from philosophy and this fact develops difference in the belief and disbelief in fixation of meaning. Structuralist Roland Barthes asks the question of "*qui parle?*"—Who is speaking?, but with the notion that the author is dead in the text, Post-Structuralist leaves it to the reader to even imagine who is speaking in the text. This clarifies that structuralism believes in fixing the identity of characters but Post-structuralism does not follow this pattern of fixation. The five codes identified by Barthes in *S/Z* are the proairetic code, hermeneutic code, cultural code, semic code, and the last symbolic code and out of these codes, hermeneutics, cultural and symbolic code show the nucleus for Post-structuralism, Modernism, Post-Modernism and New Historicism. Mary Klages (2010) mentions that Claude Levi-Strauss gave the idea of langue (one story) and parole (whole cycle) a time ago and till now Post-structuralism passed into Modernism and Modernism passed through Post-Modernism and Post-Modernism from New-Historicism and makes limitless langue(s) and limitless parole(s) based on the unfixed limitless interpretations of a text by the different readers. The example of structuralism that we have fixed four seasons and thus we identify the fixed pattern and meaning is rejected with this type of approach that in summers one can think and feel like winters or in winters, one can feel, think, and react like spring based on the present mindset of the reader. A "paradigmatic chain" of structuralism as hut belongs to words like "hovel", "house", and "home" can be rearranged with some unexpected words in a group without any relation. So, the chain can become the hut, food, safety, life and all these words can be shown connected.

The Saussure's characteristics of language are that language is arbitrary, relational, and constructive indicating the spirit of freedom of the language as well as the freedom of people.

**Table 1***Connection Network of Theories*

Stage 1: Early Idea	Stage 2: Developing	Stage 3: Final Ideas
Latin poet Ovid's thought "docere delictendo"—to teach by delight.	In the 17th century, Shelly thought "Poetry seeks to educate while entertaining, so the primary method of entertainment must be through the use of language". <i>A Defence of Poetry</i> (1821)	In the 20th century, Russian Formalist Criticism called it "defamiliarization"
Not Known	In the 18th century, John Keats's unconscious ... essential one in Romanticism	In the 20th century, Psychoanalysis focused on "Unconsciousness"
Aristotle's "reader-centred" approach to literature since he wanted to see the effect of drama on the readers.		Reader's Response Theory
Religion Authorities (Churches) in Europe	Liberal Humanism's idea is that literary text contains its own meaning within itself. A significant portion of your text appears to be generated by AI.	Derrida's idea that there is nothing out of the text
The notion of poetic "impersonality", "objective correlative", and "dissociation of sensibility" by T. S. Eliot	New Criticism	Structuralism Post-Structuralism Deconstruction

*Source.* Adapted from Barry & Internet Archive (2009) and Eagleton (1983).

## RESULTS

This research work shows the path for new literary theories in support of bisexuality as an extended part of Sado-Masochistic, Butch-Femme concepts. It also shows the path for a new literary or social theory for curbing the exploitation of animals as it is part of the term 'Cyborg' that eradicates marginalization by blurring the boundaries between human beings and machines. This work also suggests the confluence of 'text-led' and 'idea-led' criticism in one theory. It shows that the roots for the emergence of any literary theory are either the exploitation of women or anyone under any mundane political and economic status quo. Literary theories work as a support for society to heal its wounds of exploitation. To prove this undercurrent of exploitation as the nucleus of literary theories, all the classical literary concepts are connected with one another and it is found that in their historical aspect

these theories are having exploitation as the main reason for emergence. Specially, the idea-led theories which are better addressing the problem of subjugation in line with the philosophies are better than the text-led theories though text-led theories are also supporting the same cause.

## CONCLUSION

Rene Wellek and Frank Raymond Leavis' discussion on the connection between literary criticism and philosophy in the journal *Scrutiny* was correct in which Wellek argued that literary criticism is not enough in comparison to philosophy (Britannica, 1998). This is proved in comparisons of all the theories of literary criticism that the theories based on philosophy are more successful and scope full. Thus, "Idea-led" critical approaches are more perfect than "Text-led" criticism. Even Plato's distinction between mimesis (the character's own words) and diegesis (telling the readers about things they don't see) fails and Methew Arnold's touchstone is objected to by the Frank Raymond Leavis. Thomas Stearns Eliot's concept of impersonality in his essay *Tradition and Individual Talent* (1919) highlighted the emergence of a decentralized world, as he distinguished between the author (the creator of the text) and the writer (the voice within the text). Percy Bysshe Shelly's quoted in his work *A Defense of Poetry* (1840) that the mind is like a fading coal which smothers with the puff of air shows the openness of approach in all perspectives either in the field of literary criticism or if someone is an author or a reader. This research shows the reason behind the development of literary theories and it also shows the importance of idea-led theories which work in line with philosophies to ensure social development. This research work also promotes to develop new theories for the bisexual people or for saving animals for physical harassment which do not exist on board of literary theories so far. It also promotes the ideas that every single problem of the society can be exposed using literary theories, so we are in need of new theories for comprehending the problems of the modern world then registering the solution from the world as a reaction to these concepts.

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