People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Mohammed Kheidher University of Biskra
Faculty of letters & Foreign Languages
Department of English Language and Literature

Course Handout on

Approaches and Theories in Literary Criticism

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Subject: Literary Theory and Criticism

Master 2
Option: Literature and Civilization

by

Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK Abdelnacer

MCB

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Approaches and Theories in Literary Criticism

Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK Abdelnacer, MCB

Introductory Note

This course is designed to increase your awareness of literary criticism, to introduce you to literary criticism approaches from different perspective and in various periods. It provides students with the strategies, technique and standards for analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting literary works.

Literary works provide a significant deal of aesthetic, intellectual, and emotional loads. Writers frequently use them to express their vision of human experience in a creative, inventive, and passionate way. As a result, reacting to these texts, looking for novel uses of language, and enjoying literary works can only be done by intimate interaction with them.

To explore meanings in literary texts, one engages in a task to make formulate ideas, inferences, and closely analyze literary materials. All of these activities help to develop one's critical faculties. The primary reason that forces us to criticize is to untie problems, argue on controversies, forward new views on human values included in literary materials and contribute to better understanding of our relationships with others.

To critically assessing literary works has numerous implications, students of literature and advanced readers need employ literary theories to provide critiques to various types of oral and written works of arts. This course is designed to help them achieve that goal. I will look at the prominent contemporary literary theories with practical examples in this course. As a result, I will witness author-oriented, text-oriented, context-oriented, and reader-oriented approaches to literary criticism.

Mohammed Kheidher University of Biskra　　　**Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK Abdelnacer**

Faculty of letters & Foreign Languages　　　**Date/Time: Monday/ 2 hours**

Room: BC 08　　　**e-mail: a.benabderrazek@univ-biskra.dz**

Department of English

Course Description

The present course is an overview of literary theory and criticism, with a focus on the most important theorists, texts, schools, and concepts. It is a course in the history of ideas. The course begins with a close examination to key concepts and major figures of a critical theory and literature such as: Franz Fanon, Eduard Said, Hommi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. The emphasis will be on close study of primary theoretical writings related mainly to women writings, postcolonial theory and literature, as well as historical and social circumstances.

This review gives a basic framework for understanding and assessing the modern theoretical and critical works. The course's second half focuses on twentieth-century topics such as feminism, gender, sex, sexuality and queer theory and agency.

Course General Goals

At the end of course, students are expected to be able to do the following:

• Demonstrate greater familiarity with the history of literary theories as well as the prominent theorists and movements and the historical and cultural contextualisation of these theories.

• Master the key concepts used in literary theory and criticism.

• Develop a critical reading to literary texts and apply literary theoretical notions properly

• Analyze specific literary ideas and differentiate them from others in order to discover logic of their arguments.

• Think critically about a debates and discussions on controversial issues based on the theories studied in this course.

• Develop insightful and informed essays on specific literary works.

This course also attempts to improve students' abilities to reason, think critically, communicate effectively, and appreciate outstanding writing and thinking.

Course Requirements

Because one of our course aims is to learn how to critically discuss these works, attendance and class involvement are essential to this course. In addition, students will participate in several in-class activities and writing tasks. Attendance, class participation, and in-class writing will be factored into students' final grade.

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Lecture One: Women Writing

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. *Learn about the formal features of women's writing.*
2. *Explore the ways women adopt, adapt, and challenge broader literary traditions.*
3. *Familiar with the prominent women writers*

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about women writings here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions.

1. What women issues/ writings do you know in your previous grades?

2. How do the women writings influence the prevalent literary criticisms?

3. On what aspects may we possibly differentiate women writings from men writings?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: women writers, consciousness,

Women's writing is seen as a literature that is written by women, about women, and for women. Women writers have started questioning the stereotypical image constructed by men. They also work on redefining the concepts of freedom and creativity from the female point of view. Women have to write about their conscious knowledge and desires: Woman must write about women and bring women back to writing, which they have been driven away from as brutally as they have been forced away from their bodies. By her own movement, a woman must insert herself into the text as well as the world and history. (Cixous)

Women's writings put much emphasis on queries of changing nature of the social and political life. The new position of woman in society is empowered in by the process of deconstructing attitudes created by patriarchy. Women writers have had to work to change the male's habit of thought toward women. They try to abandoning the transgressing fixed lines drawn by men's oppression that serve to fuel their anger against the politics of othering women.

During the colonial era, colonial educational policies supported gender inequality that was already in society. They privileged the schooling of men to carry out their administrative policies. As a result, women were deprived from attaining the same education as men, and therefore could not produce any literary works. After independence, the rapid turn of social change required society to re-define the position of women in the herarchical order of society and castes.

As they provide a basis of a literary discussion, an upward gaze in women writing has emerged. Women writers have unveiled the political, social and cultural crises. They also tackle the psychological and emotional dilemma experienced by both men and women. Their efforts raised awareness towards the conventional themes of elaborated in literature written in English.

With the second half of twentieth century the range of women writers encompassed wide range of creative writings. They have created new site for their experiences as both women and writer. Their writings move onward from the literary tradition. They investigate the psychological depth and project a careful examination of characters' psyche and aspiration.

Women writers develop a wide range of themes and trends related to the social evils (i.e. caste, gender inequality, poverty, education and corruption). Women novelists provide education, entertainment and enlightenment to its readers and reflect certain historical references to be studied or evaluated in new perspectives. Their writings also attempt to prove

the point of feministic approaches. They reflect the inner dimension of individuals by combining the external and internal life.

Review Questions: At the end of the lesson, students are required to write an essay in which they respond to the following questions:

1. What are the dominant issues that help the development and emergence of women writings?
2. What main differences (from men writings) have you seen in women literary works?
3. Who were the main prominent figures of women writings? What were their basic arguments regarding women issues? Whom do you support?

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Lecture Two: Diaspora Women Literature

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. **To enable the student to understand the historical background of Diaspora writing**
2. **To understand the linkage between migration and diaspora**
3. **To establish the connections between diaspora women literature differentiates and feminist writing**

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about Diaspora women writings here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions.

1. What is meant by Diaspora?

2. How do the Diaspora women writings affect our perception of women writings?

3. On what aspects may Diaspora women writings be different from women writings?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: Diaspora, Diaspora women writings and globalisation, feminism

Diaspora has become a fancy word in many fields including literature. Writers of diasporic literatures usually put across their ambivalence which questions their identity. In her book, Kezia Page (2011) writes:"The concept of diaspora as used in postcolonial discourse has garnered a recognizable set of discourses intended to mark a distinct shift in the way issues of belonging and citizenship are understood." (2). The term has historically been associated with the Ancient Greeks who have moved away from their land for the purpose of trade and business. Writers who spread across the world are authors of the process of writing

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back to the centre. The sense of belonging to their native culture has greatly affected the output of their writing.

Diaspora women literature is born of expansion of the postcolonial feminist thoughts. The common area of struggle between postcolonial writers and diasporic writers can be found in the revitalization of the indigenous culture in the face of colonial hegemony. The colonial past still lingers as a historical load on the formerly colonised people. Much of the diasporic writings have therefore independent beliefs. They find it vital to reconstruct an alternative identity to experience a complete autonomy in mirroring realities. The need to increase indigenous people's autonomy is also felt by women diaspora writers.

Being influenced by Western writers, diaspora women writers of contributed to the pole of English literature. Their quest for the emancipation of women gradually gained them worldwide recognition and improved their long-term outlook. As Pathak (2008), et al point out: "Female writers of the Diaspora too have carved a niche for themselves."(Preface) woman, whose roles have drawn from patriarchy, is getting more powerful to face oppressions. But, at the same time, she fails to reject totally her social and cultural background. For women writers of diaspora, the main ground has been set to study the self in the modern conditions. They seek modernity and in the same time feel bound to their roots. As a result, they find themselves in a jarring position.

Women diasporic literature raises a number of issues such as: tensions between the host country and the motherland. It foregrounds the cultural struggles that are associated with migration and exile. But "More importantly perhaps, diasporic writing, in its crossing of borders, opens up the horizon of place" (Ashcroft et al,). Yet, a scrupulous attention has been made to the emergence of new modes of novelistic use of time and space in women diasporic writing. Women writers have nostalgic connection with their motherland. They add new values to the indigenous culture. To such an extent, they reconcile themselves to the rigidity

of traditions and carve out their own identity as new women living within the ambit of tradition. Indeed, they try to maintain their ethnic, religious and cultural identities, but sustain the desire to return to their homelands.

Diaspora Women writers are upon the experience of both women and men. But the vividity in portraying gender covers the various shades of women's life abroad. They portray mostly the issue of identity of migrants in the host land. As they view gender from a woman's point of view, women writers widen the human experiences from different dimensions.

Review Questions: At the end of the lesson, students are required to write an essay in which they respond to the following questions:

1. How you may distinctly define Diaspora Women writers are? What were its basic features?
2. Compare and contrast Diaspora Women writings and Women writings. How do you see these writings in relation to the existing conditions of women?

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Lecture Three: Postcolonial Theory

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. **To explore postcolonial studies and the impact of colonialism**
2. **To place postcolonial theory in a specific historical, socio-cultural and linguistic contexts.**
3. **To explore the scope of postcolonial theory (orientalism, the third space, etc.)**

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about women writings here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions.

1. What are the salient purposes of postcolonial theory?
2. Which of the approaches dominantly used in postcolonial theory?
3. What are the basic criteria that characterised postcolonial theory?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: postcolonial theory, colonisation, postcolonial theorists

By foregrounding a strong reaction to colonisation, postcolonial theory has radically changed attention toward the lasting effects of colonisation. It has paved ways for engaging new perspectives to literary production of the colonised.

Postcolonial theory is one of the widely debated theories of late. It is a platform of thoughts adopted by numerous theorists from the previously colonized nations to "explore the ways that representations and modes of perception are used as fundamental weapons of colonial power to keep colonized peoples subservient to colonial rule" (McLeod).

The term postcolonial refers to the "various cultural effects of colonization" (Ashcroft et al) on societies that previously colonised. These effects continue to be felt because "the

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inequities of colonial rule have not been erased" (Loomba). As "it has extended its concern into debates concerning multiculturalism, diaspora, racism and ethnicity as the mass migrations in the postwar period by formerly colonized peoples" (Childs and Fowler) the theory was, and still is, at the core of many academic and degree courses. It is also "used to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day." (Bill Ashcroft et al) It, therefore, "recognizes both historical continuity and change"(McLeod) in the attitudes about colonised nations.

Postcolonial studies have raised a number of political questions. It draws upon scholars to explore new ideas. Unsurprisingly, the literature produced during the colonial era was provoked by intellectuals of postcolonial countries such as: Fanon, Spivak, Edward Said, and Bhabha to record the distortion of reality drawn by the colonial writers. Postcolonial Studies enjoy an extraordinary fame in the 1970's after the publication of Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1978). It is the book" which constituted the Orient in the consciousness of the west offers an influential analysis of how the world was constructed in the European mind." (Ashcroft et al) In this regard, Said demonstrated that the Western image of the East was painted from the colonialist subjective point of view.

In this thorough reconsideration of Said's perspective, Boehmer (2005) argues that "Orientalism in Said's interpretation is the body of knowledge on the basis of which Europe developed an image of the East to accompany and justify its territorial accumulations."(48). Hence, there is much to say about postcolonial theorist's legacy and of their advocacy. They questioned patterns of misrepresentation of the non-western world and explore the ongoing relationships between east and west, colonizer and colonized, white and black, and indigenous and colonial societies. They "examined the ways in which colonial discourse operated as an instrument of power, initiated what came to be known as colonial discourse theory, that theory which, in the 1980's, saw colonial discourse as its field of study."(Ashcroft et al).

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Review Questions: At the end of the lesson, students are required to write an essay in which they respond to the following:

"The term post-colonialism […]is frequently misunderstood as a temporal concept, meaning the time after colonialism has ceased, or the time following the politically determined Independence Day on which a country breaks away from its governance by another state. [P]ost-colonialism is, rather, an engagement with, and contestation of, colonialism's discourses, power structures, and social hierarchies…A theory of post-colonialism must, then, respond to more than the merely chronological construction of postindependence, and to more than just the discursive experience of imperialism." — *Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins, Post-Colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics (1996)*

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Lesson Four: Postcolonial Theorists

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. **Identify and discuss key postcolonial theorist and texts in their historical and cultural contexts**
2. **Read, comprehend, and engage with postcolonial literary criticism**
3. **Deploy and define basic concepts in postcolonial studies**

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about women writings here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions.

1. What are the major theorists/ works who/which pave the ways to the emergence of postcolonial theory?
2. How did they contribute in the emergence of postcolonial theory?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: Orientalism, decolonization, third space and subaltern

Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayathri Spivak are the names that are often mentioned in postcolonial studies. They contribute enormously to postcolonial theory and their works form the basis on which the theory has emerged.

1   Frantz Fanon (1925-1961)

Frantz Fanon is the postcolonial writer whose name is often associated with the process of decolonisation. Albert Memmi considers him as "A prophet of the Third World, a romantic hero of decolonization" (quoted in Loomba, 2005: 123). Fanon was the student of Aime Cesaire; the great poet and Marxist politician. He studied medicine and psychiatry in France where Lacan was one of his teachers. Fanon's works: Black Skin, White Masks (1952) and

The Wretched of the Earth (1965) are a remarkable analysis of the effect of Europeans imperial power.

Fanon believed that black people had accepted to be inferior. He questions white men who consider themselves superior to black men and blames black men of proving the superiority of Western culture.

Fanon shared the move of educated Africans and encouraged the validation of the African culture and civilization. He believed that such restoration of the past would allow the Africans to live free from European rule. He negated the Western stereotypical image that legitimates the incapability of the Africans.

2 Edward Said (1935- 2003)

The literary and cultural critic Edward Said focused on the portrayals of Orient. *Orientalism* (1978) is Said's most influential and much controversial work. Ashcroft et al argue that Said's works are considered as a canonical event. He has crossed the apparent divide between academic scholarship and public recognition. This accolade reflects his impact on the contemporary cultural terrain, but it also demonstrates how relevant the concept of worldliness has become to our consideration of creative and intellectual work. (137)

Said has pointed out that "language and literature together implicated in constructing the binary of a European self and non-European Other, which is a part of the creation of colonial authority." (Quoted in Looma, 2005: 66) He also offers a number of insights into Europe's special ways of representing the non-west lands.

Orientlists' views challenged the false belief on that the contemporary oriental societies could be civilized only when they adopted the European mode of life. Said's Orientalism unveils Western control. He views Orientalism as a set of procedures shaped Orient. This

discourse was systematically utilized by the Europeans during and after the colonisation of the Orient.

3 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1942-)

Gayatri Spivak is a leading theorist in postcolonial theory. She was born in Calcutta (India) and got her B.A. from the Calcutta University. She went to the United States and got her M.A. and Ph.D in English literature at Cornell University, where Paul De Man was one of her teachers. She taught at various American universities, including the University of Texas, the university of Pittsburgh, and Columbia University.

Spivak is feminist and Marxist writer. She links postcolonialism and feminism by highlighting the double burden of women. Spivak's critical views "encompass a range of theoretical interests, including Marxism, feminism, deconstruction, postcolonial theory and cutting-edge work on globalisation." (Morton).

The publication of her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" creates a history for her. Spivak concerns herself with the process of othering people. This process is seen by her as the cause of the subalterns' tragedy. As postcolonial theorists, Spivak views Postcolonial theory as a site for colonised people to negotiate their rights. She looks at the postcolonial history as new era that could hold positive change for postcolonial countries.

4 Homi Bhabha (1949 -)

David Huddart, in his book titled *Homi K. Bhabha* (2006), states:" Although many of his most influential writings were originally published during the 1980s, Bhabha is very much a thinker for the twenty-first century."(2) Bhabha's contribution is acknowledged by modern critics all over the world. He investigated the dilemma of postcolonial people whose culture is affected by the colonial discourses.

He is influenced by Derrida's works that examine the binary structure created by Western thoughts. Bhabha tries to deconstruct dichotomies such as: West and the Orient, the colonizer and the colonized, the oppressor and the oppressed, and the self and the other. Bhabha also employs Mikhail Bakhtin literary theory in his examination to the relationship between theses dichotomies. Bhabha, like other theorists, shows strong support to way used by postcolonial writers to deconstruct the colonial habit of thought.

Review Questions: At the end of the lesson, students are required to write an essay in which they respond to the main theme of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's Can the Subaltern Speak?

Can the Subaltern Speak?

GAYATRI CHAKRAVORTY SPIVAK*

SOME OF THE most radical criticism coming out of the West today is the result of an interested desire to conserve the subject of the West, or the West as Subject. The theory of pluralized 'subject-effects' gives an illusion of undermining subjective sovereignty while often providing a cover for this subject of knowledge. Although the history of Europe as Subject is narrativized by the law, political economy, and ideology of the West, this concealed Subject pretends it has 'no geo-political determinations.' The much publicized critique of the sovereign subject thus actually inaugurates a Subject. . . .

This S/subject, curiously sewn together into a transparency by denegations, belongs to the exploiters' side of the international division of labor. It is impossible for contemporary French intellectuals to imagine the kind of Power and Desire that would inhabit the unnamed subject of the Other of Europe. It is not only that everything they read, critical or uncritical, is caught within the debate of the production of that Other, supporting or critiquing the constitution of the Subject as Europe. It is also that, in the constitution of that Other of Europe, great care was taken to obliterate the textual ingredients with which such a subject could cathect, could occupy (invest?) its itinerary - not only by ideological and scientific production, but also by the institution of the law. ... In the face of the possibility that the intellectual is complicit in the persistent constitution of Other as the Self's shadow, a possibility of political practice for the intellectual would be to put the economic 'under erasure,' to see the economic factor as irreducible as it reinscribes the social text, even as it is erased, however imperfectly, when it claims to be the final determinant or the transcendental signified.

The clearest available example of such epistemic violence is the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial

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subject as Other. This project is also the asymetrical obliteration of the trace of that Other in its precarious Subjectivity. It is well known that Foucault locates epistemic violence, a complete overhaul of the episteme, in the redefinition of sanity at the end of the European eighteenth century. But what if that particular redefinition was only a part of the narrative of history in Europe as well as in the colonies? What if the two projects of epistemic overhaul worked as dislocated and unacknowledged parts of a vast two-handed engine? Perhaps it is no more than to ask that the subtext of the palimpsestic narrative of imperialism be recognized as 'subjugated knowledge,' 'a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity' (Foucault 1980: 82).

This is not to describe 'the way things really were' or to privilege the narrative of history as imperialism as the best version of history. It is, rather, to offer an account of how an explanation and narrative of reality was established as the normative one. . . .

Let us now move to consider the margins (one can just as well say the silent, silenced center) of the circuit marked out by this epistemic violence, men and women among the illiterate peasantry, the tribals, the lowest strata of the urban subproletariat. According to Foucault and Deleuze (in the First World, under the standardization and regimentation of socialized capital, though they do not seem to recognize this) the oppressed, if given the chance (the problem of representation cannot be bypassed here), and on the way to solidarity through alliance politics (a Marxist thematic is at work here) *can speak and know their conditions.* We must now confront the following question: On the other side of the international division of labor from socialized capital, inside *and* outside the circuit of the epistemic violence of imperialist law and education supplementing an earlier economic text, *can the subaltern speak?* . . .

The first part of my proposition - that the phased development of the subaltern is complicated by the imperialist project - is confronted by a collective of intellectuals who may be called the 'Subaltern Studies' group. They *must* ask, Can the subaltern speak? Here we are within Foucault's own discipline of history and with people who acknowledge his influence. Their project is to rethink Indian colonial historiography from the perspective of the discontinuous chain of peasant insurgencies during the colonial occupation. This is indeed the problem of 'the permission to narrate' discussed by Said (1984). As Ranajit Guha argues,

> The historiography of Indian nationalism has for a long time been dominated by elitism - colonialist elitism and bourgeois-nationalist elitism . . . shar[ing] the prejudice that the making of the Indian nation and the development of the consciousness-nationalism which confirmed this process were exclusively or predominantly elite achievements. In the colonialist and neo-colonialist historiographies these achievements are credited to British colonial rulers, administrators,

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policies, institutions, and culture; in the nationalist and neo-nationalist
writings - to Indian elite personalities, institutions, activities and ideas.

(Guha 1982: 1)

Certain varieties of the Indian elite are at best native informants for first-
world intellectuals interested in the voice of the Other. But one must
nevertheless insist that the colonized subaltern *subject* is irretrievably
heterogeneous.

Against the indigenous elite we may set what Guha calls 'the *politics*
of the people,' both outside ('this was an *autonomous* domain, for it
neither originated from elite politics nor did its existence depend on
the latter') and inside ('it continued to operate vigorously in spite of
[colonialism], adjusting itself to the conditions prevailing under the Raj and
in many respects developing entirely new strains in both form and content')
the circuit of colonial production (Guha 1982: 4). I cannot entirely endorse
this insistence on determinate vigor and full autonomy, for practical
historiographic exigencies will not allow such endorsements to privilege
subaltern consciousness. Against the possible charge that his approach is
essentialist, Guha constructs a definition of the people (the place of that
essence) that can be only an identity-in-differential. He proposes a dynamic
stratification grid describing colonial social production at large. Even the
third group on the list, the buffer group, as it were, between the people and
the great macrostructural dominant groups, is itself defined as a place of
in-betweenness, what Derrida has described as an '*antre*' (1981):

elite $\begin{cases} \\ \\ \end{cases}$ 1. Dominant foreign groups.
2. Dominant indigenous groups on the all-India level.

3. Dominant indigenous groups at the regional and local levels.
4. The terms 'people' and 'subaltern classes' [are] used as synony-
mous throughout [Guha's definition]. The social groups and
elements included in this category represent *the demographic
difference between the total Indian population and all those
whom we have described as the 'elite.'*

Consider the third item on this list - the *antre* of situational indeter-
minacy these careful historians presuppose as they grapple with the question,
Can the subaltern speak?

Taken as a whole and in the abstract this . . . category . . . was
heterogeneous in its composition and thanks to the uneven character of
regional economic and social developments, *different from area to area.*
The same class or element which was dominant in one area . . . could
be among the dominated in another. This could and did create many
ambiguities and contradictions in attitudes and alliances, especially
among the lowest strata of the rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich
peasants and upper middle class peasants all of whom belonged, *ideally
speaking*, to the category of people or subaltern classes.

(Guha 1982: 8)

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'The task of research' projected here is 'to investigate, identify and measure the *specific* nature and degree of the *deviation* of [the] elements [constituting item 3] from the ideal and situate it historically.' 'Investigate, identify, and measure the specific': a program could hardly be more essentialist and taxonomic. Yet a curious methodological imperative is at work. I have argued that, in the Foucault-Deleuze conversation, a postrepresentationalist vocabulary hides an essentialist agenda. In subaltern studies, because of the violence of imperialist epistemic, social, and disciplinary inscription, a project understood in essentialist terms must traffic in a radical textual practice of differences. The object of the group's investigation, in the case not even of the people as such but of the floating buffer zone of the regional elite-subaltern, is a *deviation* from an *ideal* - the people or subaltern - which is itself defined as a difference from the elite. It is toward this structure that the research is oriented, a predicament rather different from the self-diagnosed transparency of the first-world radical intellectual. What taxonomy can fix such a space? Whether or not they themselves perceive it - in fact Guha sees his definition of 'the people' within the master-slave dialectic - their text articulates the difficult task of rewriting its own conditions of impossibility as the conditions of its possibility.

'At the regional and local levels [the dominant indigenous groups] . . . if belonging to social strata hierarchically inferior to those of the dominant all-Indian groups *acted in the interests of the latter and not in conformity to interests corresponding truly to their own social being.'* When these writers speak, in their essentializing language, of a gap between interest and action in the intermediate group, their conclusions are closer to Marx than to the self-conscious naiveté of Deleuze's pronouncement on the issue. Guha, like Marx, speaks of interest in terms of the social rather than the libidinal being. The Name-of-the-Father imagery in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* can help to emphasize that, on the level of class or group action, 'true correspondence to own being' is as artificial or social as the patronymic.

So much for the intermediate group marked in item 3. For the 'true' subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself; the intellectual's solution is not to abstain from representation. The problem is that the subject's itinerary has not been traced so as to offer an object of seduction to the representing intellectual. In the slightly dated language of the Indian group, the question becomes, How can we touch the consciousness of the people, even as we investigate their politics? With what voice-consciousness can the subaltern speak? Their project, after all, is to rewrite the development of the consciousness of the Indian nation. The planned discontinuity of imperialism rigorously distinguishes this project, however old-fashioned its articulation, from 'rendering visible the medical and juridical mechanisms that surrounded the story [of Pierre Riviere].' Foucault is correct in suggesting that 'to make visible the unseen can also mean a change of level,

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addressing oneself to a layer of material which had hitherto had no perti-
nence for history and which had not been recognized as having any moral,
aesthetic or historical value.' It is the slippage from rendering visible the
mechanism to rendering the individual, both avoiding 'any kind of analysis
of [the subject] whether psychological, psychoanalytical or linguistic,' that
is consistently troublesome (Foucault 1980: 49-50). . . .

When we come to the concomitant question of the consciousness of
the subaltern, the notion of what the work *cannot* say becomes important.
In the semioses of the social text, elaborations of insurgency stand in the
place of 'the utterance.' The sender - 'the peasant' - is marked only as a
pointer to an irretrievable consciousness. As for the receiver, we must ask
who is 'the real receiver' of an 'insurgency?' The historian, transforming
'insurgency' into 'text for knowledge,' is only one 'receiver' of any collec-
tively intended social act. With no possibility of nostalgia for that lost
origin, the historian must suspend (as far as possible) the clamor of his or
her own consciousness (or consciousness-effect, as operated by disciplinary
training), so that the elaboration of the insurgency, packaged with an
insurgent-consciousness, does not freeze into an 'object of investigation,'
or, worse yet, a model for imitation. 'The subject' implied by the texts of
insurgency can only serve as a counterpossibility for the narrative sanctions
granted to the colonial subject in the dominant groups. The postcolonial
intellectuals learn that their privilege is their loss. In this they are a para-
digm of the intellectuals.

It is well known that the notion of the feminine (rather than the
subaltern of imperialism) has been used in a similar way within decon-
structive criticism and within certain varieties of feminist criticism. In
the former case, a figure of 'woman' is at issue, one whose minimal predi-
cation as indeterminate is already available to the phallocentric tradition.
Subaltern historiography raises questions of method that would prevent it
from using such a ruse. For the 'figure' of woman, the relationship between
woman and silence can be plotted by women themselves; race and class
differences are subsumed under that charge. Subaltern historiography must
confront the impossibility of such gestures. The narrow epistemic violence
of imperialism gives us an imperfect allegory of the general violence that is
the possibility of an episteme.

Within the effaced itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of
sexual difference is doubly effected. The question is not of female partici-
pation in insurgency, or the ground rules of the sexual division of labor, for
both of which there is 'evidence.' It is, rather, that, both as object of
colonialist historiography and as subject of insurgency, the ideological
construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of
colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the
subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. . . .

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Mohammed Kheidher University of Biskra

Faculty of letters & Foreign Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

(Major) Literature and Civilization　　　**(Module) Literary Theory& Criticisms**

(Class) Master two students　　　　　**(Instructor) Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK A.**

Lesson Five: Postcolonial Literature

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. Examine the unique cultural, political, economic, intellectual, and/or religious images of postcolonial societies depicted in postcolonial literary works.
2. Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, think critically, or write persuasively about postcolonial literary works.
3. Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, language that shaped postcolonial literary works.

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about women writings here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions.

1. What are the major postcolonial literary works that draw attention worldwide?
2. How did postcolonial authors contribute to the recognition of the postcolonial literary works?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: postcolonial literature, colonialism, native culture

Communities of the formerly colonized countries have responded to the sense of cultural alienation to colonial domination. Such reaction is manifested in the form of literature that "was both a consequence of and reaction to the European imperial process"(Tiffin). Postcolonial literature has therefore an anti-colonial and anti-imperialist tendency. These writings reflect the breadth of fierce resistance to the colonial discourse and "undercut thematically and formally the discourses which supported colonization - the myths of power, the race classifications and the imagery of subordination" (Boehemer 3). Postcolonial literature is then the body of writing that encourages rethinking the question of power in the

colonial history and explores the possibility of subaltern others to transform themselves into subjects of their own. It also calls to examine the relationship between the West and Orient is viewed.

With reference to Ashcroft el al (1995), post-colonial literature includes all literatures "affected by the colonial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (2). This is because we still admit the constant effects of colonial practices, as well as the changing forms of representation embedded during and after colonial era. In response to such representation, "many authors had made explicit their concern to correct the misrepresentations of their culture and history which were produced by, and in turn helped to produce, colonial attitudes. (Chew and Richards) It is no wonder that a striking task of postcolonial writers is to know how to negotiate the colonial power and rework them for their own purposes. In this regard, Postcolonial writers offer interpretation and alternative construction of the previously constructed self and other. They reconstitute their culture and history with the spirit of assertion, independence, leadership and intellectual strength.

The commitment of postcolonial writers to their inborn culture involves a conscious choice to place enough tactical pressure to persuade their reader to re-examine social realities. In doing so, postcolonial writers describe a wide array of experiences and preoccupied themselves with themes and issues that are basically central to their existence such as: the conflicts between tradition and modernity, migration, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place and responses to colonialism. Hence, people's quest for cultural identity is clearly seen in the work of those postcolonial writers who" focused on reconstituting from the position of their historical, racial, or metaphysical difference a cultural identity which had been damaged by the colonial experience".(Boehmer 177)

Postcolonial novel contains "a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized"(Bakhtin, 1981: 262). These voices represent different ideological positions of

postcolonial writers whose attempt is to interrogate the misrepresentations of colonial ideology. Modern postcolonial writers' interpretation of the colonial history has been seen by many critics as a process of writing back. They are involved in bringing the lost history back in which the subjugated assert themselves and move towards a new direction that supports their new cultural, social and literary agenda.

Postcolonial literature set its own form, structure, syntax and style to give a deep analysis of the psychological effects on the colonized. Postcolonial writers therefore have an outlook that is always constructive and purposeful in tracing a psychological development of their characters within the postcolonial context. They experienced a renewed sense of freedom in purposing their writings to challenge the states of consciousness encouraged by the colonial experience which had modified not only physical realities of life, but also internal modes of the psyche of the marginalised.

Writing assignment:

At the end of the lesson, students are required to write an essay in which they discuss the major theme(s) in **one** of the below readings for the Postcolonial Literature:

1. Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart
2. Jean Rhys's Wide Sargasso Sea
3. Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children

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(Class) Master two students **(Instructor) Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK A.**

Lesson Six: Postcolonial Literature's Key Concepts

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. **To recognize the generic concepts in postcolonial literature**
2. **Familiarize students with the common themes postcolonial literature**

Terminology Used in postcolonial literature

When viewed within the scope of the postcolonial literature, the concepts I will be looking at are those which demonstrate their relevance in studying postcolonial texts. Many of these concepts overlap and interweave in one another and therefore treated as separate entities.

1. Colonialism

Colonialism is defined as a process of establishing power and hegemony. However, the problem in defining colonialism arises when compared to imperialism. It is relevant to point out the difference between colonialism and imperialism, two concepts commonly mixed up. As stated by Childs and Williams (1997), a clear distinction must be drawn between imperialism and colonialism as they represent two different methods of exercising power. They describe imperialism as follows; "The extension and expansion of trade and commerce under the protection of political, legal, and military controls"(227), while colonialism they refer to as the process of "the settling of communities from one country in another, usually in a conquered territory". (Ibid) Colonialism is a common feature in history. It created a violent

reaction from the colonized who charged with the rhetoric of independence and the self assertion.

2. Identity

One's identity is term that is commonly used in postcolonial literary as well as theory. The word identity "reflects the notion that one can know who someone really is. In the second view, identity is seen as acquired through socialisation or the internalisation of imposed social roles. (Code) It is associated with the sense of belonging which is shared by social group's members. However, the formation of one's identity is always controversial because not all individuals share the same degree of commitment to same characteristics, values and beliefs.

Within the context of postcolonial literature, identity requires a special examination. The identity of a person shapes during his life and is influenced by the life circumstances.

The influential post-colonial theorist Homi Bhabha's target is mainly how ambivalence, mimicry and hybridity relate to what he refers to as the colonial identity. Bhabha shows a strong opposition to the acclaimed post-colonial theorists and author of *Orientalism,* Said, whose focus is on the disparities between the colonizer and the colonized. Rather, Bhabha explores the points of similarity between the two. He argues that the white is constructed as being the oppressor and the non white as the subjugated. The crash of cultures affects both parties. According to Bhabha the identity both the colonizers and the colonized has become ambivalent. He argues that the identity of the coloniser "provoke a feeling of disturbance, synonymous to a "nervous condition" and the uncanny state of ambivalence; a state of mind that he argues to be the place in where the hybrid identity comes into existence." (Childs and Williams).

3. Hybridity

The word has become a cultural subject closely associated with Homi Bhabha. It is more commonly used to describe the in-betweeness of two different cultures. The influence of

colonizing culture during the colonial period had a great impact on both the colonized and the colonizing cultures. In the work *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (2000), Ashcroft et al. distinguish various types of hybridity when they write: "Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial, etc." (118) The term of hybridity coined in its modern meaning by Homi K. (1980). It has become fundamental part foundational in the development of Postcolonial Studies but opens up to stringent critiques.

Hybridity refers to the experience that is shared by colonized and the colonizers. People who live between two cultures find it difficult to belong to either culture. This is what Bhabha refers to as "a Third Space". The term hybridity is a controversial term in postcolonial criticism. Homi Bhabha is the leading critic who has tried to emphasize the hybrid identity of the colonized.

4. Language

Language has become a central concept in post-colonial theory. Simon During argues that " language to be an extremely important feature of a person`s identity, revealing much information about a person. If the language embodied in a person`s identity evaporates, a conflicting sense of identity will reveal itself." (quoted in Childs and Williams, 1997:193) By adapting to a foreign language, issues of identity will automatically arise: "In both literature and politics the post-colonial drive towards identity centers around language … For the postcolonial to speak or write in the imperial tongues is to call forth a problem of identity, to be thrown into mimicry and ambivalence."(Ibid)

In the colonial era, colonizers deprived the natives from their right to speak their language and imposed their language on them. Many writers, who are forced to study under colonization, felt humiliated for speaking their native language. In response to this situation, postcolonial including Ngugi wa Thiong'o invited people to promote their original languages.

Other writers like Chinua Achebe see the colonial language as a more practical choice to enhance inter-nation communication adapted it in innovative literary works.

5. Ambivalence

The postcolonial conditions force society to adopt new way of life. People need to find a way to adapt their values. It is easy, then, for a person to become emotionally confused as they adjust to the new cultural conditions. The term "Ambivalence" is pivotal in Bhabha's theory. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2000), ambivalence "disrupts the clear-cut authority of colonial domination because it disturbs the simple relationship between colonizer and colonized. Ambivalence is therefore an unwelcome aspect of colonial discourse for the colonizer."(10) It explains the problem caused in the different cultures where Western culture's values are considered superior to native one. It is in this disturbed bond between Western and the indigenous cultures where the ambivalence is emerged.

6. Place/Displacement

The concern with identity continues to claim space in studying of place and displacement. The crisis of identity is caused by the sense of being displaced which is the result of the contact with unfamiliar place. It is "the special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place." (Ashcroft et al) In post-colonial theory, the word 'place' refers to the in-between-place where the individual feels that his/herself caught between two places. It also describes the void between place and language.

The lack of contact with the unfamiliar surroundings leads to a serious sense of alienation. The feeling of alienation shapes the way in which the colonized behaves in the meeting with the coloniser could be "compared to the feeling of displacement which characterizes the colonizer`s encounter with the wilderness of the 'uncivilized' world." (Ibid, 23-24) The imposition of the language of a coloniser enslaves displaced individuals. Their language has

been rendered unprivileged in the alien land. This situation created a gap between both cultures.

7. The Other

The 'other' responds to the need of creating a space between the self and the other that doesn't fit the norms. As stated by Ashcroft et al.: "The existence of others is crucial in defining what is "normal" and in locating one`s own place in the world." (Ashcroft et al. 2000: 154) The Empire established a systematic segregation between the colonizer and the colonized and sticks all what is uncivilized to the other. Othering is a system of creating identities by subjecting others. The other always adopts self negation politics that leads to the destruction of the self. The racial, geographic, ethnic, economic or ideological differences contribute to the denial of the other.

Writing assignment:

At the end of the lesson, students are required to write an essay in which they discuss the following:

Which among the above listed concepts is at the center of the westerner's view about the orient? Why?

Mohammed Kheidher University of Biskra

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(Class) Master two students   **(Instructor) Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK A.**

Lecture Seven : Feminism

Outcomes of the Tutorial: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. **Engage in major topics and debates in feminist theory, both historical and contemporary.**
2. **Aware of the diversity within feminist theories**
3. **interpret the world from a variety of feminist perspectives**

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about feminism here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions:

1. What is/are the main difference(s) the one can draw between women writing and feminist writing?
2. How did feminist writers articulate and critically respond to women issues?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: feminism, gender, sex, waves of feminism, patriarchy

Feminism has been articulated differently in different parts of the world by different people especially women depending upon their level education, background and consciousness. It seems that the term was first coined in France in 1880's as feminism prior to forging its path through Europe and North America in 1890s and 1910 respectively. Denoting "a social movement or political ideology" (Freedman), the term initially stands for a amalgamation between the word femme and the suffix isme. In this sense, it was coined to describe epiphanic episode in women's struggle; that marked the realization of her

marginalized rights compare to men. It is an attempt to understand woman from the woman's point of view and redefine the sexual politics based on gender. Thus, feminism burst to arouse interest in understanding woman's experience from woman's point of view. By this , precluding for a hard and long lasting debate that still casts its shadows till nowadays, as the social status of woman become the center of feminist writings (Hadjipavlou).

At the beginning, Feminism had been received with derogatory connotation and mistaken assumptions. Rather than a claim for equal rights movement, which questions the politics of power between man and woman, feminism is regarded as an anti-male movement. Hooks, however, emphasizes that Feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression that is ingrained in patriarchal societies. Patriarchal societies hold an institutionalized system for sexism, which injects sexist thoughts and habit since birth (1). In this regard, patriarchy appears to be a social mindset system that provokes hegemonic binary of man's domination and woman's subordination.

In the midst of women's dystopian reality, feminist activists and writers seek liberating woman from the oppressions of patriarchy. Feminism is an attempt to claim regard to women needs, yet impede man bias. Consequently, feminism, in the course of its history, encountered critical turning points, which stripped it off its pejorative connotations.

Feminism movement is evolved as an academic field of research. The feminist movement that first appears in the United States exposes what Friedan refers in her book *Feminine Mystique* (1963) as "the problem that has no name". She concludes that women have psychologically been tormented by the social reality, which restricted their core existence solely and fundamentally to serve man's needs: housing and mothering, especially in a time they were eager for more in life and wanted career (11). Consequently, woman

anguished an identity crisis out of their traumatic reality and domestic role. In addition, social conventions tension the situation between both sexes. Therefore, the need for a reexamination of the ways of exercising social power over gender roles introduces another way of viewing women based on the abolition of social distinction related to any coding of gender differences.

The evolvement of feminism is divided into three major phases or Three Waves as termed by scholars. The first wave is located in the second half of the nineteenth century, which embodies the establishment of Woman's Movement or The Suffrage Movement. Women of that time did not try for equally treated as man. Rather, they sought to achieve respect for their existence. They concerned themselves in different issues referred to as woman's issues such as: child labor laws and abolition, which emphacized the need for their voices to be heard. Thus, they called for the right to vote, and in 1920, the American woman achieved that goal, yet after, the movement witnessed a long period of stagnancy until the 1960s (Helgeson 54).

The second wave of feminism stands as a marker that washed over the American culture with the 1960s sexual revolution. The main focus of second wave feminism was directed more towards the reproduction of women's experience and sexuality. Moreover, different issues like: biology, experience, discourse, the unconscious, and social and economic conditions consumed the bulk concentration of second wave feminists who were acting upon changing women's reality. Woman's Liberation Movement showed signs of change. Evidently, contemporary women writings mainly focused on woman's subjugation. Their movement struggled for establishing economic and political equality between man and woman, also their difference in terms of reproduction and sexuality areas (Freedman 4, 5).

It appears that the economic and political events of that time served as catalytic arenas for emerging the feminist movement. In this concern, Hooks argues that women bodies are considered personal properties. In this regard, it was their free choice to be sexual with whomever they would like, and whenever they want. Furthermore, issuing free sex encounters women to find safe ways to avoid undesirable pregnancy. Thus, they believed in the legitimacy of woman's free right and choice as well. They regarded resolutions in contraceptive pills and in access to abortion clinics (25). Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) were the pioneering oeuvres that triggered woman's consciousness in fighting for their rights. In this regard, Friedan states "to take action to bring woman into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exerting all the privileges and responsibilities thereof, in truly partnership with men"(370).

Feminism movement became more controversial and continued establishing its discourse in different part of the world. Like its predecessors, the third wave of feminism; upheld its political agendas, but now it becomes more inclusive racially and sexually. Activists from different cultures and backgrounds adjusted the concept feminism compatibly with their perspectives.

Thus, the term feminism has become feminisms, and has continued redefining itself to become a "diverse movement that emphasizes female empowerment rather than male oppression"(Freedman 6). Consequently, similar patterns of feminism from different cultures came into existence. In this sense, the third wave feminism forges a diverse feminist movement. It has become a global cultural platform to eradicate all forms of discrimination against women all over the world. In this subject, Helgeson states that the modern woman's recognition of gender is melted with race and class does not only pertain the white western middle class woman, but rather globalized woman's movement to

recognize the struggle commonality shared by woman worldly. Most importantly that "traditional gender roles are grounded in culture"(57).

Third-wave feminism still concerns with a probably the same problems as their previous ones. Third wave feminists are now working to creating political and legal establishments. Although, the early proponents of feminist theories were from the West and feminism is irrelevant for third world contexts, women of other races have grouped alternative feminisms. Feminism is an endeavor to understand the world from woman's perspective. It is also a socio-cultural reformation that seeks securing, empowering, and claiming equal right (with men) to woman. To fully put in a nutshell the progressive contribution of feminist theory, gender cannot be separated from its context. It comes at the core of process of deconstructing the politics of power imbalance between man and woman (Bomarito and Hunter).

Feminism theory seeks to challenge the social biased attitudes toward women to change woman's reality. It s molded through three main progressive waves. In the midst of feminists' journey, gender finds its place as a central motif for feminist discourse. Gender becomes the basis in creating the social hierarchies. Unlike gender, sex is determined by one's biology, but rather seems to be displayed through particular social roles, which are constructed at the basis of the dominant social cultural norms to maintain social conformity. In this sense, the female is expected to demonstrate femininity trait while masculinity is expected to be displayed by male.

Writing assignment:

Examine the below extract taken from Jane Austen 'Emma' from a Feminist point of view:

She [Emma] was the youngest of the two daughters of a most affectionate, indulgent father, and had, in consequence of her sister's marriage, been mistress of his house from a very early period. Her mother had died too long ago for her to have more than an indistinct remembrance of her caresses, and her place had been supplied by an excellent woman as governess, who had fallen little short of a mother in affection.

Sixteen years had Miss Taylor been in Mr Woodhouse's family less as a governess than a friend, very fond of both daughters, but particularly of Emma. Between them it was more the intimacy of sisters. Even before Miss Taylor had ceased to hold the nominal office of governess, the mildness of her temper had hardly allowed her to impose any restraint; and the shadow of authority being now long passed away, they had been living together as friend and friend very mutually attached, and Emma doing just what she liked; highly esteeming Miss Taylor's judgment, but directed chiefly by her own.

Sorrow came -- a gentle sorrow -- but not at all in the shape of any disagreeable consciousness -- Miss Taylor married. It was Miss Taylor's loss which first brought grief. It was on the wedding-day of this beloved friend that Emma first sat in mournful thought of any continuance. The wedding over and the bride-people gone, her father and herself were left to dine together, with no prospect of a third to cheer a long evening. Her father composed himself to sleep after dinner, as usual, and she had then only to sit and think of what she had lost.

The event had every promise of happiness for her friend. Mr Weston was a man of unexceptionable character, easy fortune, suitable age and pleasant manners; and there was some satisfaction in considering with what self-denying, generous friendship she had always wished and promoted the match; but it was a black morning's work for her. The want of Miss Taylor would be felt every hour of every day. She recalled her past kindness -- the kindness, the affection of sixteen years -- how she had taught and how she had played with her from five years old -- how she had devoted all her powers to attach and amuse her in health -- and how nursed her through the various illnesses of childhood. A large debt of gratitude was owing here; but the intercourse of the last seven years, the equal footing and perfect unreserve which had soon followed Isabella's marriage on their being left to each other, was yet a dearer, tenderer recollection. It had been a friend and companion such as few possessed, intelligent, well-informed, useful, gentle, knowing all the ways of the family, interested in all its concerns, and peculiarly interested in herself, in every pleasure, every scheme of her's; - one to whom she could speak every thought as it arose, and who had such an affection for her as could never find fault.

How was she to bear the change? - It was true that her friend was going only half a mile from them; but Emma was aware that great must be the difference between a Mrs Weston only half a mile from them, and a Miss Taylor in the house; and with all her advantages, natural and domestic, she was now in great danger of suffering from intellectual solitude. She dearly loved her father, but he was no companion for her. He could not meet her in conversation, rational or playful. (Jane Austen, *Emma* 37-38)

Mohammed Kheidher University of Biskra
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(Class) Master two students   **(Instructor) Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK A.**

Lecture Eight : Gender

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. **Understand theories, concepts, approaches and themes related to gender**
2. **Apply knowledge to gender issues explored in discussions and readings.**
3. **Integrate and synthesize knowledge on gender in writing essays.**

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about gender here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions:

1. In your view, who first introduce the notion of Gender in the literary studies?
2. How did they critically respond to gender issues?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: gender, sex, feminist writers, gender as social construct and gender performativity, femininity and masculinity

The concern about gender identity is rooted in early feminist works. The term gender came into the academic use in late 20$^{\text{th}}$ century. Feminist writers of this period have made a strong opposition to patriarchy. Before the extension its meaning, gender has been used to describe the state of being a male or female. Scholars argue that women are biological beings, but subjugating them is socially constructed. Further, they argue that sex is manifested to be either male or female. According to them, gender describes the fact of being masculine and feminine. These theorists turn the attention to the fact that gender is constructed by some institutions like: religion, society, and education (Mboho and Atairet 27).

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To understand the term gender, one needs to look at sex as fixed reality and gender as something that can be changed constantly over time and space. The idea of the instability nature of gender has been elaborated by a number of works notably in two related approaches:

Social Construction Approach

As a major component of social structure as a whole, gender has become a subject of controversy nowadays. The gendered practices which are usually justified by religion, culture and law paint views of how men and women act. Today, scholars are making progressively a sharp distinction between what sex as biological and gender social contract. It would, therefore, be appropriate to look at the various theoretical approaches on the construction of gender. The social background determines the ways in which various gender roles are enacted and recreated. In this regard, gender is seen as a "social construction of sex and to the categorizations and classifications into femininity and masculinity" (Oakley) rather than as facts of biology. It is, therefore, important to appreciate the wider impact and implications gender on shaping the self.

From infancy to adulthood, one develops a number of gender roles. However, interactions with the same or different gender take a gender orientation. Society shapes the relationship between men and women according to the conventional gendered norms which associate them to a number of patterns of expectations.

As a social institution, gender distributes rights and responsibilities for both men and women. Social structures are thus built in accordance with gender roles that individuals identify with. Both of them develop patterns of interaction based on their gender. Consequently, these individuals construct a gendered order, writes Butler:

> The very injunction to be a given gender takes place through discursive
>
> routes; to be a good mother, to be a heterosexually desirable object, to be a

fit worker, in sum to signify a multiplicity of guarantees in response to a

variety of different demands all at once (145).

In modern parlance, the term gender is defined as the social construction of masculinity and femininity i.e. what is socially acceptable or unacceptable for feminine and masculine roles. Behaviours can therefore be categorized into masculine and feminine. These two notions vary between cultures and social groups. Through the construction of gender "one becomes aware that one is a boy or a girl and develops an understanding that one's maleness or femaleness is a permanent trait. This recognition is fateful for the development of gender roles." (Davidson et al)

The social construction approach helps understanding how female and male status is constructed within the society. The approach analyses different factors that constitute social groups. Social construct approach studies gender as an integral part of any social group's structure. Gender shapes also the one's appropriation for education, work, family and authority.

The social construction approach emphasizes on the fact that men and women are actors whose roles are dictated by the society. They are engaged in different social interactions and consequently exposed to changes. Individuals appropriate the rebel against all sorts of behaviours molded by gender norms. Social interactions can shape unusual expectations for men and women by institutionalizing change in their gender identity (J.W. Scott). The central features of social construction are grounded in time and space. The different constructions of gender are therefore made up of a variety of codes, patterns, systems, norms, values, beliefs that are specific for a given community in a given period of time.

Gender Performativity

In Gender Trouble, Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990), Judith Butler advocates the theory of performativity. She claims that gender can also be seen as a set of "periodic practices based on performative theory of gender acts that disrupts the categories of the body, sex, gender, and sexuality and occasion their subversive resignification and proliferation beyond the binary frame" (xxi). Gender and sex are elaborated as social performances. Indeed, woman and man are performing gender roles which are either reinforced or controlled in everyday life.

Butler also argues that gender is socially constructed and fluid. It is something that is performed, something we become, not something we inherently are. She also adds: "Gender proves to be performance— that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed." (33) Butler does not indicate that gender identity is a performance, but instead she argues that the performance pre-exists the doer. Butler's insight helps to understand not only how different gender roles which are performed in different social situations, but how masculine and feminine practices are established, perpetuated, and changed. Therefore, it cannot be assumed a one type of femininity or masculinity.

Regarding that gender is involved in an endless process of becoming, Butler develops De Beauvior's belief that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (De Beauvior). She suggests that woman is something we do rather than something she is. In other words, the body can be male or female, but it is not necessarily to display masculine or feminine roles. To a certain extent, a person can choose his/her gender just as gender presents itself in a doing. Gender functions a collection of social and cultural codes that serve creating conventions on what man and woman are assigned to do.

Butler suggests that gender is a performative process which is based upon a set of sustained, regular and repetitive gendered acts, which operates outside the self and affects it. In this sense, gender is not an internal feature that one is born with, but rather a feature that is performed and acquired. She adds that" performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual, which accomplishes its effect through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration "(xiv, xv). Thus, as aforesaid, gender is said to be a continuous, dynamic process that is socially constructed and reinforced. Most importantly, it "proves to be performative —that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed "(33). As a result, gender becomes an act that categorizes one into masculinity or femininity.

In addition, the notion of performativity suggests that gender is not fixed, but fluid, or as Butler describes" free-floating"; it is changeable social fabrication that varies between cultures and through time. In her work, Butler claims that " Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being", which puts forth that "gender ought not to be constructed as a stable identity […] gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts (44, 179). Therefore, it is argued that gender appears as a social manifestation, which ensues from physical sex differences by a range of repeated acts. In this regard, Freedman observes that this operates structural discrimination in individuals' daily life practices, and then constructs their attitudes to create gender hierarchy. Thus, a sort of inequality between the sexes has come to the fore; especially that every culture views man and woman through what psychologist Sandra Bem terms the lenses of gender (167, 168).

Butler states that" identity is assured through the stabilizing concepts of sex, gender,

and sexuality" where individuals turn comprehensible in as much as they confirm and suit to the expected rules and norms of "gender intelligibility"(22, 23). Butler goes further with her performativity conceptualization. On the other hand, she attempts to draw a link between gender and sexuality deconstructing the binary of gender/sex. It seems vital here to dispel certain misconceptions about gender identity and sexual orientation. The later indicates one's sexuality which marks individuals' sexual preferences with partners of same or different sex. Heterosexuality refers to sexual attraction to the other sex whereas homosexuality is the sexual attraction to same sex. Yet, this does not abrogate the fact that sexual orientation stands as a major criterion in defining one's identity (Butler).

In *Bodies That Matter*, Butler emphasizes that sex is biological, and that the female/ male categorization is constructed. She states that "'sex' is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time" (1) and associated to the norms and practices that differentiate bodies. Sex is not a simple bodily descriptive condition, but apparently a performative process, "whereby regulatory norms materialize 'sex' and achieves this materialization through a forcible reiteration of those norms"(2), She explains. This assumes bodily form to sex and creates sexual differences. According to her, performativity serves to centralize heterosexual imperative as a hegemonic force. This puts forth that sexuality is constructed, also constitute identity fixation and stabilization.

Furthermore, Butler argues that sexual practice can affect the perception of gender. According to her, gender serves, in a way, as a mechanism of organizing and securing heterosexual relations and hegemony. This seems not only oppressing woman, but also homosexuals who seem worried about the impacts of revealing their truth, hence the crisis to lose their gender identity and belonging (xi). In other words, it can be argued that the construction of gender leads to appropriate the notion of naturalizing the fact that heterosexuality is the normative setting for sexuality, since it impacts, shapes and organizes

social relations and interactions. Likely, Butler attempts to stimulate the attention that the source of oppression of deviant sexualities is rooted within heterosexual hegemony.

Butler's performativity theory has revolutionized the path of gender theoretical framework. She stresses to consider that gender is not an inborn characteristic, but rather a doing which is based on continuous repeated acts. These acts define one's gender into femininity or masculinity. Butler goes beyond this assumption as she considers gender as tool to maintain hetenormativity. She believes that gender perpetuates heterosexuality as the normal parameter in maintain social conformity. According to Butler's performativity theory, gender is an outcome of repeated performances that are not instable, and can articulated differently through time and space (33).

As a conclusion, gender theorists (mainly Butler) stress the need to emphasize on the notion that gender is regarded as performative social construct. They argue that gender is not an inherited construction it is shaped by performance which is not a stable. Gender can be exposed to negotiation and change in which individual negotiate a range of masculinity and femininity dictated by their roles in society. Apparently, Butler's epistemological matrix has revolutionized feminist theory. It eliminates the idea that gender is fixed, but it also serves creating a point of reference for queer theory to forge its place in the field of gender and sexuality studies. In this subject, Butler's work is regarded a ground-breaking reference for queer theory.

Writing assignment

In well structured essay, explain the following:

"Gender is seen as major axis of difference and inequity throughout cultures and ages".

Mohammed Kheidher University of Biskra

Faculty of letters & Foreign Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

(Major) Literature and Civilization   (Module) Literary Theory& Criticisms

(Class) Master two students   (Instructor) Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK A.

Lecture Nine: Conceptualizing Sex

Outcomes of the Tutorial: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. **Familiar with sex related concepts and theories**
2. **Analyze and evaluate sources of information regarding human sexuality and intimacy**
3. **Actively Participate in debates on human sexuality**

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about the concept of sex here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions:

In your view,

1. What possible outcomes could be identified in the study of gender and sex?
2. How did authors critically respond to human sex issues?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: gender, sex, feminist theory and biology

Freedman investigates the binary gender/ sex that revolutionize feminist theory. She mainly examines whether man and woman can be dealt with as biological or social phenomena. Thus, she goes beyond studying possible similarities and differences existed in the categorization of individuals into man and woman, which was exposed the social hierarchical mindset and practice. Sex and gender are being used interchangeably and inconsistently (5). However, Helgeson differentiates between them by stating that sex is a biological category specific to female/male identity. Sex is displayed by genital, chromosomal and hormonal features. For example, since the Y chromosome is a male sex

given feature, it is a fixed reality determined by natural biological characteristics. This would justify the fact that culture has no impact on the sex of individuals (135).

Gender is a social categorization for the biological female and male. In this sense, gender is a social perpetuation of being feminine or masculine in terms of psychology, personality, behavior, appearance, interests that varies between cultures. In United States, for instance, emotionality and dependency is a psychological trait attributed to woman while competitiveness, stoicism, and leadership for man (Helgeson 30). Therefore, nurture is expected to be a female gender feature whereas sports and work were expected to be a male gender feature. In this way, gender appears as a social prescription of features and patterns for woman and man to appropriate or inappropriate. It is not a biological fact but a social construction; rather likely to be changed through time by society's background, culture, religion, which makes it instable. Hence, this suggests that there could not be one unified form of masculine and feminine conceptualization in the world (Helgeson 31).

Gender role represents the social influence exercised on sex. It spots the localization of female and male's social position. It presents a set of social expectancies and rules for man and woman to act accordingly. Typically, gender roles reflect what expected from man and woman to do; man as being strong, confident, and aggressive; while woman as being sensitive, emotional, caring. In other words, it is argued that it advocates for a sort of strict social roles for man and woman to adjust. Seemingly, gender roles organize social relations, as they establish a kind of a social control or conformity by emphasizing these gender norms and expectations in every gender interactions. Likely, the simplest representation of this role gendering comes to be in ascribing pink color to baby girl and blue color to baby boy, even before they are born. Thus, it is a process which starts since birth onwards as the sex category appears to be children's first notice. Then, it likely goes to include a structure of norms indicating acceptances, limitations and prohibitions (Helgeson 27, 28, 30).

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Feminists start to accuse social institutions for granting men privileges dominance, power. In this subject, De Beauvoir states that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman"(281). This reflects her belief that being a woman is not a biological fact that a woman is born with, but it is something made. It seems important to look to the concept of woman as an abstract man and woman's physical biological sex (male or female) can not involve masculine or feminine social traits. In other words, sex can not display feminine and masculine trait.

Butler developed this belief and revolutionized the discourse of feminism. She seems to swap the focus fundamentally to gender and sex to give them the primacy with her conceptualization of Gender Performativity that explains how the construction of gender works, or how gender identity is shaped with referring to its fluid nature. Butler asks very pertinent questions about the construction of gender.

The social dimension of the dichotomy of male / female is said to be Butler main focus, from which she constructs the meaning of sex through the articulation of gender in order to fit the dominant social norms and expectancies. This process is referred to as socialization. It operates on the embodiment of male and female traits, henceforth displayed through gender identity / role. It aims at maintaining social control over the conformity of gender roles. Thus, child's sex is characterized by vulnerable biological trait. It serves constructing one's gender identity and agency. Parents, school, and society are perceived to be the basic agents in the development process of child's socialization.

In this consideration, the conceptualization of sex becomes one of the most controversial concerns of feminism that fundamentally shapes the perception one's sexuality. The conceptualization of the binary of gender / sex helps probing the role of social attitudes on the construction of the categorization of gender identity which is socially produced and instable. A number of feminists use it as being the fundamental pattern for social structure,

which demarcates both social incompatibility and compatibility of gender roles.

Writing assignment

In well structured essay, explain the following:

Sex is the Biological demarcation (including genetics, anatomy and physiology) that generally defines humans as female or male while gender is the socially constructed set of roles and associated with being women.

(Major) Literature and Civilization   **(Module) Literary Theory& Criticisms**

(Class) Master two students   **(Instructor) Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK**

Lecture Ten: sexuality

Outcomes of the Tutorial: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

1. **Equip students with the basic knowledge and skills necessary to examine sexuality related issues in literary works**
2. **Recognize the sensitivity of sexuality in literary studies**
3. **Help clarify personal values, and dispel myths regarding sexuality and relationships**

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about the concept of sexuality here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions:

In your view,

1. What is sex and sexuality?
2. How did authors critically respond to sexuality?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: sex, sexuality, homosexuality and heterosexuality.

The debate on sexuality has dominated research in the recent years. For instance, the academic community of psychology has extensively explored sexuality as an influential social construct. It has thoroughly investigated both gender roles attributed to man/woman, and sexuality in stabilizing social conformity and order. Most importantly, the representations of sexual orientation have captivated academic attention. However, sexuality had covered that much to explore its effects on the representation of individuals in literature; especially that novel appears to be a primary medium to articulate normative and deviant sexualities.

Normative and deviant sexualities are targeted to reflect certain aspects on social conformity and order.

Sexuality refers to the biology of human beings in which human beings can be classified according to their sexual preferences. Sexuality has become an important factor in determining one's identity. Lorraine Code highlights the importance of the study of sexuality to understand the human identity, when he says:

> Sexuality is a complex and contested domain. It became central to western understandings of human identity with the birth of scientific sexology just over a hundred years ago, as doctors and policy makers began to usurp the role of the Church in the social regulation of bodily pleasures and reproductive practices. (364)

Individuals' self identification brings their sexual orientation and gender identity into debate. Sexual identity represents the image of the self when is identified sexually. It also reflects one's actual and absolute sexual state. Sexuality is limited to the assignment of amount of heterosexual and/or homosexual practices these individuals are engaging in. They came to realize that the sexual identification dictates an individualistic tendency that allows a variety of ways of sexually identifying one's self within a given social context. The term sexuality is used to refer the state of being sexually attracted. It is a biological force that drives individuals to be erotically attracted to the same or different sex.

People can be classified according to their sexual orientation into heterosexuals, homosexuals. Heterosexuality is defined as a sexual pattern of attractions to opposite sex. It is also defined as a set of beliefs that legitimize the right to dominate others because of their deviant sexual preferences. Heterosexuality sets societal standards and norms in which heteronormative individuals are sexually attracted to different sex. Therefore, it has an

important role in shaping one's identity, behaviors, and belongings. However, homosexuality refers to the state of being attracted to persons of the same sex. It has taken a variety of forms over time and cultures. Hence, Homosexuality does not have an affecting social existence because homosexuals are excluded from society, and they deprived can lead to social changes. However, implementing deviant conceptions and ideologies regarding sexuality doesn't only seek challenging the natural heteronormative system, but also change attitudes towards homosexuals by preparing communities to normalize and accept their visibility (Seo; Schreler).

Discussions over sexuality reflect attitudes constructed over time. In other word, people's attitudes towards what is sexually correct or wrong are changing over time. In this, they mirror the positions of religious and political institutions in society. Increasingly today, feminists seem to regard sexuality as both a social construct and a biological phenomenon. Sexuality is perceived from different dimensions.

To understand sexuality, one needs to consider different perspectives from both biology and feminist theories. Different works attempt to explain sexuality and give an explanation to logical connections between sexual expressions and gender identity. Sexuality can be seen as the factor that contributes to construction of practices, customs, and social institutions of a particular human society. It can be argued that sexuality is one of the conflicting concepts which one can encounter. It encompasses physical and psychological changes. Sexuality has, thus, crucial role in mapping the self (individual) and selves (society).

Writing assignment

In well structured essay, comment on the following:

The study of sexuality was once dominantly based on individual, biological or psychological approaches. Drawing on sociological approaches to sexuality and gender, explain the various dimensions through which sexuality can be understood as social rather than individual.

Mohammed Kheidher University of Biskra
Faculty of letters & Foreign Languages
Department of English Language and Literature

(Major) Literature and Civilization   **(Module) Literary Theory& Criticisms**

(Class) Master two students   **(Instructor) Dr. BEN ABDERREZAK**

Lesson Eleven: The Cultural and Social Dimensions of Queer Theory

Outcomes of the Tutorial : *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. Identify the key concepts and themes of Queer Theory.
2. Understand the relationship of Queer Theory and LGBT Studies to feminist theory.
3. differentiate between sex, gender, and sexual orientation

Prerequisites:

Dear students: before you have information about The Cultural and Social Dimensions of Queer Theory here you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions:

In your view,

1. What is queer theory?
2. Why is there a need to study queer identities?

Terminology Used in This Tutorial: queer theory, LGBT, agency

2.1 The Cultural and Social Dimensions of Queer Theory

Women seem not to be the only social class whom struggled to resist oppression. Feminism is established as a theory or academic discipline in order to claim for women's rights in many fields including: political, economic, and social arenas. As previously discussed, woman is categorized as being: variant and ranked secondly and dependent to men under the categorical binary. Noticeably, other minorities of unusual or deviant sexual orientations and gender roles, and who do not comply with the conventional gender rules are also the target of marginalization and oppression. Therefore, they take an analogous path

with feminism to challenge and resist the binaries and norms that banish them; their struggle is lately manifested in establishing queer theory.

Feminist theories argue that gender is a social construct designed by social structures rather determined by biology. They separated the social from the biological (i.e., the constructed and the innate). They distinctively arrange sex into male and female, gender into masculine and feminine, and sexuality into heterosexual and homosexual. But, sexuality becomes open to change as its expressions are not fixed. These changes stress the need for queer identiy as observed in the words of Marinucci (2010):

> Within queer theory, what is sometimes described as a rejection of binary contrasts is perhaps better described as social constructionism with respect to those contrasts. Recall that essentialism is the belief that various identity categories, such as female and male, feminine and masculine, homosexual and heterosexual, reflect innate characteristics that comprise the fundamental nature of the members of those categories, whereas social constructionism is the belief that such identity categories are historical and cultural developments (34).

Queer theory gives an explanation to the notion of normative and abnormal sexual behaviour. It foregrounds gay/lesbian authors of the sexuality that has historically been covered. By looking at their texts, one discovers particular literary themes, techniques and perspectives which show the state of being victimised in a heterosexual world. These authors portray homosexuality and heterosexuality by focusing on sexuality as a constructed concept.

In *Bodies That Matter* (1990)*,* Butler argues that the term queer has historically been associated to shame, insult, accusation, and pathology, hence as pejorative signification. The word queer is emerged as an ongoing movement that interrogates force and opposition, of

stability and variability, within performativity. In this way, queer theory opposes the homophobic stigmatization of both shame and taboo exercised by the heterosexual hegemony to describe those who resist and rebel against social rules (233). Thus, the term queer individuals start to struggle to turn into their silenced social demands heard, visible, and viable through questioning the authorization, and categorization of what is normal, and what is deviant. Their struggle mirrors the effort to reverse the shameful stigmatization into self awareness of their action. Queer individuals attempt to redefine people's articulation of their marginalized group. In this sense, Queer theory becomes an endeavor to challenge the sexual hierarchy's categorization which puts homosexuality as a deviant from the naturalised heterosexuality.

As an academic field, queer theory studies how notions of hetero/homosexuality have historically being defined. It studies sexuality from the point that is sexuality is as normal and immoral in society. Queer theory is defined by D. Halperin as follows: Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. 'Queer' then, demarcates not a positivity but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative… [Queer] describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogeneous scope cannot in principle be delimited in advance. (62)

Moreover, the academic conceptualization and framing of queer theory was first coined by Teresa De Lauretis to challenge the discourse that impose heterosexuality as being the prevailing parameter of sexuality. In this regard, queer theory opens a number of possibilities of considerations in the field of sexuality. De Lauretis considers that queer theory "conveys a double-emphasis—on the conceptual and speculative work involved in discourse' production, and on the necessary critical work of deconstructing our own discourses and their constructed silence"(qtd. in Barnett and Johnson).

Butler's theory of gender performativity shows a spark of interest in consolidating the perspective that destabilizes and subverts dominant heteronormative identity fixation. Accordingly, gender is manifested as a performative process; that is based on a set of repeated acts. This restrains one's agency and grants limited autonomy to individuals because they cannot do about their gender. Yet, gender constitutes a component of what shapes and defines one's identity and determines its manifestation. It can be said that Butler's suggestion highlights discourse of binary opposition of sexuality (heterosexuality and homosexuality). In this regard, Butler aims at naturalizing homosexuality as being another pattern for sexuality. She has, thus, declares that to make gender trouble, this requires deconstructing and subverting the constitutive categories that aim at keeping gender in its place by posturing it as the foundational illusions of identity, especially that the unity of gender is the effect of a regulatory practice that seeks to render gender identity uniform through a compulsory heterosexuality (42, 44).

In this sense, uncovering gender illusive reality can convey positive change at the social, political and cultural spheres. Hence, identities are constructed differently and freely, as new possibilities for human existence. Butler adds:If identities were no longer fixed as the premises of a political syllogism, and politics no longer understood as a set of practices derived from the alleged interests that belong to a set of ready-made subjects, a new configuration of politics would surely emerge from the ruins of the old (189).

In an endeavour to understand the mechanism of gender, Butler attempts to break the shell of gender, which relegated both woman and homosexuals to an inferior status. Her approach of gender performativity and the fluidity of gender identity reveal the gap, which serve as resisting strategy to dismantle gender. Through bringing out what is outside the binaries, she intends to cause this trouble suggesting:A set of parodic practices based in performative theory of gender acts that disrupt the categories of the body, sex, gender, and

sexuality and occasion their subversive resignification and proliferation beyond the binary frame. (xxxi) Butler discusses the emergence of new butch and femme identities, drag, and lesbian and gay parenting. These problematic constructions present queer or deviant gender role attributes. However, the tendency of viewing masculinity from a male perspective develops critical men's studies. In the same area, queer theory elaborates the idea of multiple masculinities.

It is important to specify that in the notion of butch and femme lesbianism. Butch is defined as being a man or having masculine gender roles. Someone identifies as a woman, and is sexually attracted by a woman (that is the lesbian part), and who dresses, acts, or speaks in ways that many people in society consider masculine (that is the butch). A butch lesbian is feel more comfortable manish appearance (urbandictionary.com). On the other hand, lesbians clarifies that being a butch seeks for accessing the status granted for man, so a kind of the public privilege given to him (Butler xi). Therefore, queer theory is rooted in feminist framework. In general, it perceived as the reverse of heteronormativity that rejects sex and gender binaries and confuses essentialist identities (Barnett and Johnson). In this way, queer body is said to challenge the main stream of the existing thoughts that institutionalizes heterosexuality as the identical setting for identity. Thus, it is likely for queer body to represent those who refuse to be locked within narrow cultural identifications, and reject to be controlled. Individuals of queer orientation create a kind of opposite social construction within their own societies. In this way, queer theory is emerged as a reformation for socio-cultural sphere. It is a new account for defiant stream of thought.

Queer theorists aim at destabilizing the fixed parameters that regulate heteronormative hegemony. They coin identical slogan that groups queer or deviant sexual orientations to declare their sexual identity openly. Sedgwick explains Coming out of the Closet as a kind of definition of gay oppression and homosexuals. Through her lenses, she depicts the closet as

an organism which serves othering homosexuals, and forces them to conceal their sexual attraction (71). Queer theory is emerges to challenge the socially constructed classical, fixed gender binary. It suggests seeing gender as a set of spectrum of multiple identities. In this way, homosexuality cannot be seen as deviant form of sexuality. It is seen as normal variation, which assures the visibility of homosexual individuals.

In broader sense, both feminist and queer theories concentrate on the core interrogation and the defying of the restrictions on individuals' agency. These restrictions constrain their ability to decide freely in the cultural and social dominant norms. The socio-cultural system's scheme imposes its weight on individuals' thoughts and behaviors; it operates as social mechanism to maintain social conformity. Thus, it can be said that queer theory contributes to ongoing process to free agency from restrictions in order to gain their rights. Queer activists claim that man heterosexuality hegemony does not only oppress woman but also those individuals of deviant sexual identities. This assumption is seen as a reference for queer theory to emerge taking the template of feminism.

Assessments:
Exams and Tests

Mohamed khidherUniversity-Biskra
Faculty of letters and languages
Department of letters and foreign languages
Division of English

Module: Literary theory and criticism
Level: M2 (civ-lit)
Date: 22-01-2022

Student's Full Name: ……
Group Number: …………
Allocated Time: 1 hour

Direction: In the light of what has been studied, comment on the following: (**20pts**)

- *"If we examine closely this system of compartments…its ordering and its geographical layout will allow us to mark out the lines on which a decolonised society will be reorganised". Franz Fanon-The Wretched of the Earth*

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- *"We act as if that being of a man or that being of a woman is actually an internal reality or something that is simply true about us, a fact about us, but actually its a phenomenon that is being produced all the time and reproduced all the time [...]".*

Judith Butler – Gender Trouble

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Best of luck

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

English Language Division

Module: Literary Theory and Criticism   **University Year**: 2019/2020
Teacher: Ben Abderrezak Abdelnacer   **Level:** Master 2 (Civ/Lit)

The first term examination

Direction: Choose one of the following questions.

1. "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman." **Simone de Beauvoir**, *The Second Sex* (1949). Discuss critically, using you own arguments.

2. "Nothing mattered much. Nothing much mattered. And the less it mattered the less it mattered. It was never important enough. Because worse things had happened. In the country that she came from poised forever between the terror of war and the horror of peace worse things kept happening."
   − **Arundhati Roy,** *The God of Small Things* (1997). Discuss referring to theorists you have been studying in this regard.

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