

Literary Theory and Criticism- Classical

Criticism- Greek verb “Kritein”- means
Judge-art of analysing

Critic-Kriticos- one who is skilled in judging-
distinguish the faults and beauties of art

Literary Theory- Criticism-separate fields

- Some Critics- same. Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism draws no distinction between literary theory and literary criticism, and almost always uses the terms together to describe the same concept.
- Literary criticism is the study, evaluation, and interpretation of literature.
- Some critics consider literary criticism a practical application of literary theory, because criticism always deals directly with particular literary works, while theory may be more general or abstract.

Literary Theory

- Theory is the process of understanding what the nature of literature is, what functions it has, what the relation of text is to author, to reader, to language, to society, to history. • It is not judgment but understanding of the frames of judgment.

Theories-Criticisms-Eg

- Theory-How should a period/Historical movie be?
- How should be an epic movie?
- How should be these movies (based on time)
- Olden time-songs, sword fight, dialogue
- Contemporary- animation, speed,etc.
- Criticism-interpreting the movie and judging

Bahubali

- Master-Slave relationship
- Analysing the women character-
Devasena and Sivagami devi-
feministic perspective
- Aristocracy and Democracy in
Magilmathi
- Amarendranath Bahubali as a tragic
hero

Literary Criticism

- Literary criticism is fundamentally the estimation of the value of a particular work or body of work on such grounds as: the personal and/or cultural significance of the themes and the uses of language of a text; the insights and impact of a text; and the aesthetic production (or, performance) of the text; particularly as these areas are seen to be mutually dependent, supportive or inflective.

Greek literature

- **Greek literature** dates from [ancient Greek literature](#), beginning in 800 BC
- written in an Ancient Greek dialect.
- divided into the Preclassical, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman periods and modern
- Preclassical Greek literature primarily revolved around myths and include the works of [Homer](#); the [Iliad](#) and the [Odyssey](#).
- The [Classical](#) period saw the dawn of drama and history. Three philosophers are especially notable: [Socrates](#), [Plato](#), and [Aristotle](#).

Classical- Starts with History of Greek Literature in Ancient Greece.

- Theories based on Greek epics and tragedies of Homer, Sophocles
- The Greeks were the first major European civilization to create complex literature.
- Literary styles like epic poems, tragedies were first developed by the Greeks.
- The oldest surviving works of the great Greek epic poetry are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, written by Homer around 800 BC.

Greek civilization reached its height in the fifth and fourth century, an era called the **Classical Period**

- In the fifth century BC, a man named **Herodotus** wrote a book that was the foundation of historical writing
- For philosophy, the works of **Socrates**, **Plato(dialogue)**, and **Aristotle** (treatises)
- serve as the foundation for Western ethics.

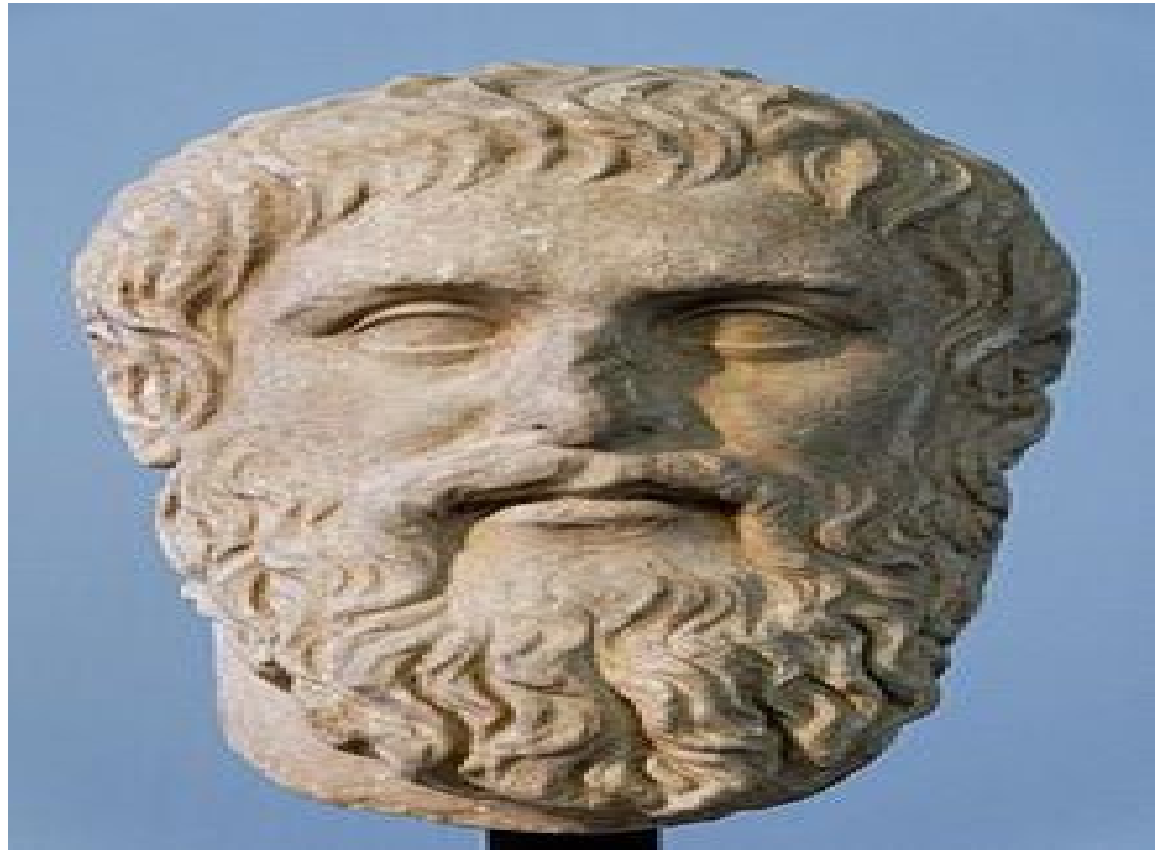
Socrates-a classical Greek philosopher.

- responsible for founding Western philosophy.
- a critic of democracy
- **He was found guilty of both corrupting the minds of the youth of Athens and of "not believing in the gods of the state"**, and subsequently sentenced to death by drinking a mixture containing poison hemlock, a toxic herb that paralyzes the nervous system.
- His follower Plato carried out the philosophical thoughts-questions

Plato-Born 427 or BC

Athens, Greece Died 348 BC (age c. 80)

Athens, Greece



Along with his teacher, Socrates, and his most famous student, Aristotle, Plato laid the very foundations of Western philosophy and science

- Plato's entire work is believed to have survived intact for over 2,400 years
- This makes it difficult to know exactly what Plato wrote
- Plato was the innovator of the written dialogue and dialectic forms in philosophy.

- Notable works –The Dialogues-problems discussed in the form of qns and ans. (Chief interlocuter-Socrates)
- [Apology](#)
[Phaedo](#)
[Symposium](#)
[Republic](#)
- *Ion, Cartylus, Protagorus, Gorgias, Phaedrus(Describes the death of Socrates), Philebus and Laws*

- Socrates says that poetry is inspired by the [muses](#), and is not rational
- **Plato approves**-other forms of divine madness (drunkenness, eroticism, and dreaming)
- suggests that [Homer](#)'s [Iliad](#) functioned in the ancient Greek world as the Bible does today in the modern Christian world: as divinely inspired literature that can provide moral guidance

Plato's Philosophy

- Concentrates on topics- Ethics, metaphysics, politics than art
- Divides art into two kinds-
- Fine arts-literature, painting, sculpture, music- mere pleasure
- Useful arts-medicine, agriculture
- Fine arts related to his theory of ideas
- Art-an imitation of life or nature

The Republic

- Things are conceived as ideas before they take practical shape
- Eg – a chair- twice removed from reality
- Ideal world- practical world

Theory of Forms

The theory of Forms (or theory of Ideas) typically refers to the belief that the material world as it seems to us is not the real world, but only an "image" or "copy" of the real world. In some of Plato's dialogues- through Socrates the dialogue progresses

Socrates was able to recognize two worlds: the apparent world, which constantly changes, and an unchanging and unseen world of forms, which may be the cause of what is apparent.

