



الكلية: الآداب

القسم او الفرع: اللغة الانكليزية

المرحلة: الرابع

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اسم المادة باللغة العربية: النقد الادبي

اسم المادة باللغة الإنكليزية: **Literary Criticism**

اسم المحاضرة العاشرة باللغة العربية:

-النقد الأمريكي الأفريقي + المدرسة التاريخية الجديدة

اسم المحاضرة العاشرة باللغة الإنكليزية:

-New Historicism + African American Criticism

African American Criticism

African American criticism is a critical framework that seeks to explore the experiences and cultural expressions of African Americans. It emerged as a response to the marginalization and oppression of African Americans within dominant cultural and political structures, and aims to highlight the unique perspectives and contributions of African American culture.

Some of the key themes and approaches of African American criticism include:

1. **Racial identity:** African American criticism places a strong emphasis on exploring the construction and representation of racial identity within cultural texts. This involves examining the ways in which African American identity is represented, negotiated, and contested within a variety of cultural forms, including literature, film, music, and visual art.
2. **Resistance and resilience:** African American criticism often highlights the ways in which African Americans have resisted and persevered in the face of systemic racism and oppression. This involves examining the strategies and tactics of resistance that African Americans have employed throughout history, and highlighting the resilience and strength of African American communities.
3. **Black feminism:** African American criticism frequently engages with black feminist thought, which seeks to highlight the unique experiences and perspectives of Black women. This involves examining the ways in which race, gender, and other intersecting identities intersect to shape the experiences of Black women, and exploring the contributions of Black women to various fields of cultural production.
4. **Language and performance:** African American criticism often explores the ways in which language and performance are used to construct and communicate African American identity. This involves examining the unique linguistic and cultural expressions of African Americans, as well as the ways in which these expressions have been appropriated and commodified within dominant cultural forms.

Overall, African American criticism seeks to challenge and deconstruct the dominant cultural narratives that have historically marginalized and oppressed African Americans. It emphasizes the unique perspectives and contributions of African American culture, and seeks to promote greater understanding and appreciation of the experiences of African Americans.

Assumptions of African American Criticism

The assumptions of African American criticism are rooted in the experiences and cultural expressions of African Americans, and are shaped by the historical and ongoing struggles of African Americans against racism and oppression. Some of the key assumptions of African American criticism include:

1. African American cultural expressions are unique and valuable: African American criticism assumes that the cultural expressions of African Americans are unique and valuable contributions to the larger cultural landscape. It seeks to highlight the ways in which African American culture has been shaped by the experiences of African Americans, and to promote greater understanding and appreciation of African American cultural production.
2. Racism and oppression are pervasive and have a profound impact on African American culture: African American criticism assumes that racism and oppression are pervasive and have a profound impact on African American culture. It seeks to explore the ways in which racism and oppression have shaped the experiences and cultural expressions of African Americans, and to challenge the dominant narratives that have historically marginalized and oppressed African Americans.
3. African American culture is multifaceted and diverse: African American criticism assumes that African American culture is multifaceted and diverse, and that it cannot be reduced to a single monolithic identity. It recognizes the diversity of experiences and perspectives within African American communities, and seeks to highlight the unique contributions of different groups and individuals.
4. African American cultural expressions are political: African American criticism assumes that African American cultural expressions are political in nature, and that they have the potential to challenge and transform dominant power structures. It recognizes the ways in which African American cultural production has historically been used as a form of resistance and empowerment, and seeks to promote greater awareness of the political dimensions of African American culture.

Overall, African American criticism assumes that African American culture is a unique and valuable contribution to the larger cultural landscape, and seeks to explore the ways in which African American experiences and cultural expressions are shaped by historical and ongoing struggles against racism and

oppression. It emphasizes the multifaceted and diverse nature of African American culture, and recognizes the political dimensions of African American cultural production.

Methodology of African American Criticism

The methodology of African American criticism is shaped by its assumptions and goals, which are rooted in the experiences and cultural expressions of African Americans. Some of the key approaches and methods used in African American criticism include:

1. **Historical analysis:** African American criticism often employs historical analysis to explore the ways in which the experiences and cultural expressions of African Americans have been shaped by historical events and structures of power. This involves examining the ways in which slavery, segregation, and other forms of racism and oppression have impacted African American culture, as well as the ways in which African Americans have resisted and persevered in the face of these challenges.
2. **Literary analysis:** African American criticism frequently engages in close readings of literary texts to explore the ways in which African American experiences and perspectives are represented and negotiated within cultural texts. This involves examining the themes, motifs, and narrative strategies used by African American writers to explore issues such as race, identity, and social justice.
3. **Cultural studies:** African American criticism often employs cultural studies methodologies to explore the ways in which African American culture is produced, circulated, and consumed within larger cultural contexts. This involves examining the ways in which African American cultural production is shaped by issues such as capitalism, globalization, and the mass media, as well as the ways in which African Americans engage with and resist dominant cultural forms.
4. **Intersectional analysis:** African American criticism frequently engages in intersectional analysis to explore the ways in which race intersects with other identities and experiences, such as gender, sexuality, and class. This involves examining the ways in which these intersecting identities shape the experiences and cultural expressions of African Americans, as well as the ways in which African Americans navigate and resist these intersecting forms of oppression.

Overall, the methodology of African American criticism is diverse and interdisciplinary, drawing on a range of approaches and methods to explore the experiences and cultural expressions of African Americans. It is grounded in the assumptions and goals of African American criticism, which seek to promote greater understanding and appreciation of African American culture, and to challenge the dominant narratives that have historically marginalized and oppressed African Americans.

A Postcolonial Reading of Conrad's Heart of Darkness

A postcolonial reading of Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" focuses on the ways in which the novel reflects and perpetuates the colonial attitudes and assumptions of the European powers that colonized Africa. The novel follows the journey of a European trader named Marlow as he travels up the Congo River in search of a mysterious figure named Kurtz, who has become a powerful and feared figure among the local tribes.

One of the key themes of the novel is the idea of the "Other," which refers to the way in which Europeans saw and treated Africans as fundamentally different and inferior to themselves. Throughout the novel, Africans are depicted as primitive and savage, and are often described using dehumanizing language. This reflects the colonial attitudes of the time, which saw Africans as "other" and in need of European "civilization."

Another key theme of the novel is the idea of imperialism, or the notion that European powers had the right to colonize and exploit the resources of Africa for their own benefit. The character of Kurtz embodies this idea, as he becomes increasingly consumed by his own power and greed, and uses the resources and people of the Congo for his own gain.

A postcolonial reading of the novel also focuses on the ways in which Conrad uses language to reinforce colonial power structures. For example, the fact that the novel is written from the perspective of a European narrator (Marlow) reinforces the idea that European perspectives are authoritative. Additionally, the use of dehumanizing language to describe Africans reinforces the idea that Africans are not fully human and are subject to European domination.

Overall, a postcolonial reading of "Heart of Darkness" highlights the ways in which the novel reflects and perpetuates the colonial attitudes and assumptions of the time. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing the ways in which literature can reinforce power structures and shape cultural attitudes, and encourages readers to question and challenge dominant narratives about colonialism and its effects on African people and cultures.

New Historicism

Historical Development of New Historicism

New Historicism is a critical approach to literary analysis and cultural studies that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s in the United States. It was developed in response to the limitations of traditional literary criticism, which tended to focus exclusively on the text and ignored the historical and social contexts in which it was produced.

The origins of New Historicism can be traced to the work of the French philosopher Michel Foucault, who argued that power is not something that is possessed by individuals or groups, but rather a pervasive and diffuse force that is exerted through discourses and institutions. New Historicism builds on this idea by examining the ways in which power relations are embedded in cultural artifacts and practices, including literature.

One of the earliest proponents of New Historicism was Stephen Greenblatt, whose 1980 book "Renaissance Self-Fashioning" examined the ways in which Renaissance writers and artists constructed their identities in relation to the social and political contexts of their time. Greenblatt argued that literary texts are not autonomous entities, but rather are shaped by the historical and cultural forces that surround them.

Other scholars who contributed to the development of New Historicism include Louis Montrose, who emphasized the role of cultural practices and institutions in the production and reception of literary texts, and Catherine Gallagher, who explored the relationship between literary genres and the social and political contexts in which they emerged.

New Historicism has been influential not only in literary studies but also in other fields such as history, anthropology, and sociology. It has challenged traditional approaches to the study of literature and has opened up new avenues for understanding the complex relationship between culture, power, and representation.

Assumptions of New Historicism

New Historicism is a critical approach to literary analysis and cultural studies that makes several key assumptions about the nature of culture and the role of literature within it. Here are some of the main assumptions of New Historicism:

1. Culture is a site of power relations: New Historicism assumes that culture is not a neutral or passive reflection of society, but rather an active site of power relations. Culture reflects and reinforces the dominant ideologies and social structures of a particular time and place.
2. Literature is embedded in historical and social contexts: New Historicism argues that literature cannot be understood in isolation from the historical and social contexts in which it was produced. Literary texts are not autonomous entities, but rather are shaped by the cultural and historical forces that surround them.
3. Texts are unstable and open to multiple interpretations: New Historicism challenges the idea that literary texts have a fixed or objective meaning. Instead, it argues that texts are open to multiple interpretations and that these interpretations are shaped by the historical and cultural contexts in which they are read.
4. Literary texts reflect the tensions and contradictions of their time: New Historicism sees literary texts as reflecting the tensions and contradictions of their historical and social context. Literature can provide insight into the power struggles, cultural conflicts, and social anxieties of a particular time and place.
5. History is constructed through representation: New Historicism emphasizes the role of representation in constructing historical knowledge. History is not a straightforward record of past events, but rather a complex web of narratives and discourses that shape our understanding of the past.

Overall, New Historicism is a critical approach that emphasizes the importance of context, power, and representation in the study of literature and culture. It challenges traditional approaches that treat literature as a self-contained object of study and instead emphasizes the ways in which literature reflects and shapes the world around it.

Methodology of New Historicism

The methodology of New Historicism involves a set of critical practices and analytical strategies that are used to interpret literary texts in their historical and cultural contexts. Here are some of the main methods used in New Historicism:

1. **Close reading:** New Historicism begins with close reading of the text, paying attention to the language, form, and structure of the literary work. Close reading helps to identify the ways in which the text reflects and responds to its historical and cultural context.
2. **Historicizing:** New Historicism seeks to contextualize literary texts by situating them within their historical and cultural context. This involves research into the social, political, economic, and intellectual forces that shaped the period in which the text was produced.
3. **Attention to marginalized voices:** New Historicism is attentive to the voices and perspectives that have been marginalized or excluded from traditional literary criticism. This includes voices of women, people of color, and other groups that have been historically underrepresented in literary studies.
4. **Interdisciplinary approach:** New Historicism draws on insights from other disciplines, such as history, anthropology, and sociology, to understand the cultural and historical context in which the text was produced.
5. **Analysis of power relations:** New Historicism is concerned with power relations and how they shape cultural production and interpretation. This involves analyzing the ways in which literary texts reflect and challenge dominant ideologies and power structures.
6. **Attention to literary form:** New Historicism pays attention to the literary form and structure of the text, recognizing that form can be a site of ideological struggle and resistance.

Overall, the methodology of New Historicism is characterized by a commitment to understanding literary texts in their historical and cultural contexts, and to exploring the complex interplay between literature and the social and political forces that shape it.

Michel Foucault

Michel Foucault (1926-1984) was a French philosopher, historian, and social theorist whose work has had a profound influence on a wide range of fields,

including philosophy, history, sociology, cultural studies, and literary theory. Foucault is best known for his critical analyses of power, knowledge, and discourse, and his work has been characterized as a form of genealogy that seeks to expose the historically contingent nature of social practices and institutions.

Foucault's early work focused on the ways in which power operates in society, and he argued that power is not something that is possessed by individuals or groups, but rather a pervasive and diffuse force that is exerted through discourses and institutions. He analyzed the ways in which power relations are embedded in social practices, norms, and values, and he argued that power operates not only through repression and coercion, but also through the creation and dissemination of knowledge and discourse.

In his later work, Foucault focused on the ways in which individuals are subjected to various forms of disciplinary power, including the power of the state, the power of institutions such as the prison or the hospital, and the power of norms and values that shape individual behavior and identity. He also analyzed the ways in which individuals resist and subvert dominant forms of power, and he argued that resistance is an inherent feature of power relations.

Foucault's work has had a profound influence on literary and cultural studies, and his ideas have been used to develop a range of critical approaches, including New Historicism, cultural materialism, and poststructuralism. His emphasis on the historical and contingent nature of social practices has also had a significant impact on the fields of history and sociology. Foucault's major works include "Madness and Civilization," "The Birth of the Clinic," "Discipline and Punish," and "The History of Sexuality."

Clifford Geertz

Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) was an American cultural anthropologist and one of the most influential figures in the field of anthropology in the 20th century. Geertz is known for his emphasis on the importance of culture in shaping human behavior and his method of thick description, which involves detailed analysis of the meaning and significance of cultural practices.

Geertz argued that culture is a system of symbols that gives meaning to the world and shapes individual and collective behavior. He emphasized the importance of interpreting the meaning of cultural practices and symbols, and he developed a method of thick description that involves analyzing the context in which cultural

practices occur and interpreting the meaning of those practices from the perspective of the participants.

Geertz's work also focused on the relationship between culture and power, and he analyzed the ways in which cultural practices can be used to legitimize and reinforce social hierarchies and power relations. He argued that cultural symbols and practices can be used to create a sense of belonging and identity among individuals and groups, but that they can also be used to exclude and marginalize certain individuals and groups.

One of Geertz's most influential works is "The Interpretation of Cultures," in which he outlines his approach to the study of culture and provides a number of case studies illustrating the application of his method of thick description. He also wrote extensively on religion, including his famous essay "Religion as a Cultural System," in which he argues that religion provides a framework for interpreting the world and shaping individual and collective behavior.

Geertz's work has had a significant impact on a wide range of fields, including anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and literary studies. His emphasis on the importance of interpretation and the meaning of cultural symbols has been particularly influential in literary studies and cultural criticism.

Texts, History and Interpretation

Texts, history, and interpretation are central concepts in literary and cultural studies. The relationship between these concepts is complex and dynamic, and different critical approaches offer different ways of understanding how they intersect and interact with each other.

Texts are the written or spoken words that are the primary focus of literary and cultural analysis. Texts can take many forms, including novels, poems, plays, films, and other cultural artifacts. The interpretation of texts involves analyzing their form, structure, language, and themes in order to understand their meaning and significance.

History refers to the social, cultural, and political context in which texts are produced and consumed. Historical context includes the events, ideologies, and cultural practices that shaped the production and reception of a particular text. Understanding the historical context of a text is important for understanding its meaning and significance, as well as for understanding the ways in which it reflects or challenges the dominant cultural norms and values of its time.

Interpretation refers to the process of making sense of a text, and it is shaped by both the text itself and the historical context in which it was produced. Different interpretive approaches offer different ways of understanding the meaning and significance of a text, and these approaches are often shaped by the theoretical and methodological frameworks that underpin them.

Some interpretive approaches prioritize the historical context of a text, seeking to understand its meaning and significance by situating it within its historical and cultural moment. This approach is often associated with New Historicism and cultural materialism.

Other approaches prioritize the formal and linguistic elements of a text, seeking to understand its meaning and significance through close analysis of its form, language, and structure. This approach is often associated with formalism and structuralism.

Still, other approaches prioritize the subjective experience of the reader, arguing that the meaning and significance of a text are shaped by the individual interpretation of the reader. This approach is often associated with reader-response criticism and poststructuralism.

Overall, the relationship between texts, history, and interpretation is complex and dynamic, and different critical approaches offer different ways of understanding how they intersect and interact with each other.

A New Historicist Reading of Wilfred's Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est"

"Dulce et Decorum Est" is a powerful anti-war poem by Wilfred Owen, written during World War I. A New Historicist reading of this poem would focus on the historical context in which it was written and the ways in which it reflects and challenges the dominant cultural norms and values of its time.

One of the key features of New Historicism is its emphasis on the ways in which cultural texts are shaped by the historical and social context in which they are produced. In the case of "Dulce et Decorum Est," the historical context is the brutality and horror of World War I, which Owen experienced firsthand as a soldier. This context is reflected in the vivid and harrowing imagery that Owen uses to describe the experience of being a soldier in the trenches, such as the "gas-shells dropping softly behind" and the "blood come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs."

A New Historicist reading of "Dulce et Decorum Est" would also focus on the ways in which the poem challenges the dominant cultural norms and values of its

time, particularly the glorification of war and the idea that it is honorable and noble to die for one's country. The title of the poem, which comes from a line by the Roman poet Horace, translates to "It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country." This sentiment is challenged throughout the poem, as Owen describes the reality of war as a horrific and dehumanizing experience.

Through its graphic and powerful imagery, "Dulce et Decorum Est" offers a critique of the romanticized and idealized portrayal of war that was common in the literature and propaganda of the time. It also highlights the ways in which the rhetoric of patriotism and honor was used to justify the brutal and senseless violence of the war. By doing so, the poem challenges the dominant cultural narratives of its time and offers a powerful indictment of the human cost of war.

Overall, a New Historicist reading of "Dulce et Decorum Est" would emphasize the ways in which the poem reflects and challenges the dominant cultural norms and values of its time, particularly the glorification of war and the idealization of the sacrifice of soldiers. It would also highlight the ways in which the historical context of World War I shaped the poem's imagery and themes, and how it reflects Owen's personal experiences as a soldier.