

Footnote 2, p. 330-31

The fundamental principles by which I have been guided in explaining what literary forms are, and how they originate, have come to me slowly in the course of much thinking about the matter directly. I am not aware of having been influenced by recent literature on the theory of literary forms, except for the writings of Croce, G. Lukacs (Die Theorie des Romans, Berlin, 1920), and R. K. Hack (below, note 11) especially. Now that I have begun to read more in the field of general literary theory, I am pleased to discover, on looking into an excellent and comprehensive book on the subject (R. Wellek and A. Warren, Theory of Literature<sup>2</sup> (New York, 1948)), that my positive views are shared to some extent by literary critics of recent times, and that many of these critics have rejected, as I do, the old concepts of literary history which were shaped on the analogy of biological evolution. ||

p.11 They concentrate on the process of creation and the materials used, while ignoring or taking for granted (as though it were something unimportant that could be assumed for any time or place) the idea that motivates it. All they ask is how the thing was made, not why, nor what for, nor whether it was wanted or not at the time, or how much it was wanted. Human will by their way of thinking is not worth reckoning with, because it is immaterial, a word to which our age has given the meaning of inconsequential. Nothing spiritual or teleological matters; only the techniques and the materials by which things are made are felt to be worthy of the scientist's attention. In this atmosphere of thought one is led to infer that men living in the time of Deucalion would gladly have written tragedies and novels if they had only known how, and that, owing to their presumable want of inventive ability and their ignorance of technique, only an accident comparable to that by which roast pig was discovered (according to Lamb) could have taught them how, and so started them on the road to production. These critics - not to dismiss them just yet - think of a literary species as having come into being in much the same way as a biological species, namely, through a long series of/evolutionary accidents. Mistakenly, they look for "connecting links," "forerunners," and "intermediate stages of development." They try to see how the parts or "elements" of which a literary form is composed were put together one at a time naturally (which is to say aimlessly) in such a way as to produce in the end the form as they know it or choose to conceive it.