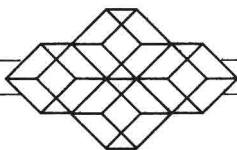


THE
NORTON
ANTHOLOGY OF

THEORY & CRITICISM

SECOND EDITION



The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism

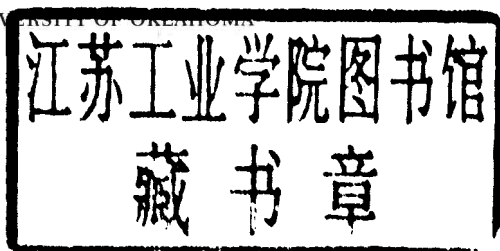
SECOND EDITION

Vincent B. Leitch, *General Editor*

GEORGE LYNN CROSS RESEARCH PROFESSOR

PAUL AND CAROL DAUBE SUTTON CHAIR IN ENGLISH

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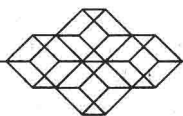
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Preface

A wide-ranging and comprehensive collection, *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* offers one or more selections from 150 figures, representing major developments from ancient to recent times, from Gorgias and Plato to bell hooks, Judith Butler, and Franco Moretti. It provides selections from previously underrepresented fields, such as rhetoric, historicism, criticism by women and people of color, and global theory, along with a full complement of works from canonical figures such as Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, Cleanth Brooks, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Michel Foucault. From canonical authors, it includes classic texts as well as selections newly revalued. The standard works of Western theory and criticism from the ancient Greeks to the present are represented, as are texts from “forgotten” figures such as Moses Maimonides and Friedrich Schleiermacher. The anthology is particularly rich in modern and contemporary theory, providing materials from a hundred writers and covering all the main schools and movements, ranging from Marxism, psychoanalysis, and formalism to post-structuralism, cultural studies, race and ethnicity studies, and many more. We have also drawn from today’s most vital currents, including body studies, narrative theory, theories of national literature and modernity, plus globalization studies. This anthology consolidates the many gains won through the expansion of theory in recent decades.

For the second edition, late-twentieth-century selections from Adūnis (Arabic), Karatani Kōjin (Japanese), Zehou Li (Chinese), and C. D. Narasimhaiah (Indian) represent illuminating intersections of non-European and Western theoretical and literary traditions. These new pieces join non-European materials included in the previous edition from Chinua Achebe, Frantz Fanon, and Ngugi wā Thiong’o, along with a dozen selections of postcolonial and ethnic theory responding critically to European modernity and tradition.

In view of current changes, it is worth pausing for a moment to consider the configuration and meaning of “theory.” Today the term encompasses significant works not only of poetics, theory of criticism, and aesthetics as of old, but also of rhetoric, media and discourse theory, semiotics, race and ethnicity theory, gender theory, and theories of popular culture as well as globalization. But theory in its newer sense means still more than this broadly expanded body of topics and texts. It entails a mode of questioning and analysis that goes beyond earlier formalist research into the “literariness” of literature. Because of the effects of poststructuralism, cultural studies, and the social movements that emerged in the 1960s and have developed in profound ways since then, especially the women’s and civil rights movements, contemporary theory entails skepticism toward systems; institutions, and norms; a readiness to take critical stands and to engage in resistance; an

interest in blind spots, contradictions, and distortions (often discovered to be ineradicable); and a habit of linking local and personal practices and responses to the larger economic, political, historical, and ethical forces of culture. This theory—or “cultural critique,” as it is more descriptively termed—is less concerned with elaborating conditions of possibility, as is Kantian critique, than with investigating and criticizing values, practices, representations, and affects embedded in cultural texts and surrounding institutions. To an earlier generation, such theory looks like advocacy rather than disinterested objective inquiry into poetics and the history of literature. This revealing fault line that divides traditionalist literary critics from large numbers of contemporary theorists and critics is perhaps today’s version of the Renaissance and neo-classical battles between the ancients and the moderns.

The Table of Contents list figures and texts in chronological order. An Alternative Table of Contents recasts the chronological order, providing lists of figures in four categories commonly used in studying theory: schools and movements; major genres; historical periods; and key issues and topics. Additional ways of organizing the history and subject matter of theory and criticism are possible, to be sure. Other figures in the anthology could be included in the existing categories. We decided against combining proponents and opponents in the popular schools and movements categories, as is sometimes done. Thus, for example, neither Leon Trotsky nor Mikhail Bakhtin appears under “Formalism” as its most celebrated critics. To list together antagonists and advocates would have created confusion and unduly multiplied the number of figures in our categories. Within each school and movement, of course, readers will encounter differences and disputes. One of the risks of the categories we employ in the Alternative Table of Contents is that their groupings of figures and topics from different periods and moments unavoidably de-emphasize historical conflicts, evolution, and differences. That noted, the editors believe our readers will find the Alternative Table of Contents suggestive and useful.

The Introduction to Theory and Criticism that follows the two Tables of Contents consists of seventeen brief, semiautonomous sections that introduce students to the field of theory through its main historical periods, its major modern and contemporary schools and movements, its perennial issues and problems, and its key terms. Here we provide a quick and wide-ranging overview of the history and nature of the field. Sections have been subtitled for easy reference in making assignments and in following the trajectory of the discussion.

Each selection in the anthology is annotated so that students may focus on the texts and not have to consult reference sources for basic information. Headnotes to each figure cover a range of topics. To begin with, they provide biographical information and historical background. They discuss sources and critical reception as well as the relevance of the selections for theoretical questions. They highlight each selection’s main arguments, where necessary defining key terms and concepts and pointing out related perennial problems in the field. They refer to other works by the authors and note problems identified by later critics. They position the authors in relation to other figures in the anthology, picturing the history of theory not as a string of isolated pearls but as a mosaic in which each work fits into larger frames of ongoing discussions and arguments. Finally, an annotated selected bibli-

ography is given for each figure, covering main texts and editions, biographical sources (when available), useful secondary sources and criticism, and bibliographies related to the author's works (when available).

In choosing the selections the editors have been guided by a range of criteria. We have looked for readable and teachable texts that reflect the scope of the history of theory. This does not mean, however, that challenging and difficult texts are missing. We have favored complete works and self-contained excerpts; snippets are the exception. Yet in a number of cases we have edited texts to focus on topics germane to the field and to save space for other selections. We have sought out the best editions and translations; for Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, du Bellay, Vico, Kant, and Benjamin, we introduce new, highly regarded translations. From the outset we have followed the practice that no figure or selection could make it into the anthology without the agreement of at least half the editors. We consulted with colleagues, including several hundred past users who completed a survey. We have made quite a few selections with an eye to pairing or triangulating—for example, we chose the famous closing section on writing from Plato's *Phaedrus*, having in mind Derrida's landmark critique of that text in his *Dissemination*. When they occur, such fruitful counterpoints are indicated in the headnotes and in the Alternative Table of Contents. Of course, innumerable combinations and permutations are possible, and our accounts cannot be exhaustive. But we have noted typographically all cross-references in the headnotes and footnotes by putting in small capitals the names of theorists and critics appearing in the anthology. While we have privileged standard works and contemporary classics of theory, we have also sought to resurrect overlooked as well as forgotten texts.

The Selected Bibliography of Theory and Criticism at the end of the anthology is comprehensive. It lists English-language sources in six main categories: Theory and Criticism Bibliographies; Anthologies of Theory and Criticism; Histories of Criticism and Theory; specialized Dictionaries, Glossaries, and Handbooks; Introductions and Guides; and Modern and Contemporary Critical Schools and Movements. We have divided the three longest of these parts into convenient subcategories: into historical period in the lists both of anthologies and of histories of criticism and into sixteen autonomous profiles in the schools and movements section. To make the bibliography of schools and movements most useful to students, we have organized and briefly annotated the sources in short essays rather than lists, presenting each of the sixteen profiles in a five-paragraph format: (1) groundbreaking texts; (2) introductions, overviews, and histories; (3) anthologies and readers; (4) school- or movement-specific reference works (handbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.); and (5) "crossover texts." This last category attests to the frequency with which contemporary works of theory are not limited to one or two domains of influence. In recent decades many of the most innovative writings have been hybrid, crossover texts, mixing and matching strands from numerous schools and movements, and we have sought to illustrate this trend.

In putting this anthology together, we have faced a number of challenges. One difficulty was coping with the impossibility of including every significant theorist. Our original lists of several hundred figures had to be shortened to 150: even a very long book such as this one imposes limits. Some of

the lengthiest selections—by Longinus, Philip Sidney, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Adrienne Rich, and Jacques Derrida, for instance—had to be trimmed, and each editor had favorite figures dropped. The enclosure of post-World War II theory in the university and its increased professionalization have meant that contemporary nonacademic critics, literary journalists, and writers have been largely excluded from the theory canon. While theory remains Eurocentric, our selections from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East begin the opening to wider horizons.

Our Selected Bibliography posed its nagging challenges of inclusion and exclusion. To cite just one case, we had to be rigorously selective in the category of guides and introductions to theory, since there are many available. We trust we have not missed any major resources. Our Subject Index errs on the side of fullness; we calculated that this would help more than hinder the reader seeking assistance.



Acknowledgments to the Second Edition

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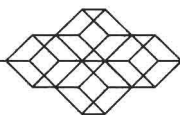
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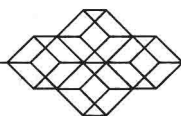
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