

## Comparing Hayden White and Stephen Greenblatt in Reading Political Texts

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Understanding the mutual relationship between history and literature has always been significant for men of letters. This relationship can be traced back to the writings of Plato and Aristotle. With the emergence of New Historicism in the 1980s, the duality between history and literature, which was the dominant mode of thought since Aristotle, collapsed and with the theories of Hayden White and Greenblatt, who viewed history and literature in a new light, the reciprocal relation of the two was proposed. Hayden White looks at history through the lens of language and believes that historical facts are made through narratives constructed by historians. To Greenblatt, literary texts are tools of power and this gives them the capacity to display the acts of imposing power and resisting it. Connecting history and literature, New Historicism holds power relations as the most important background to a text and regards the literary text as a space for the manifestation of power and the interaction of different discourses. Thus, modern literary criticism puts political texts in a new perspective which allows for political power to be analyzed by means of the tools of literary criticism such as metaphor, metonymy, irony and narrative techniques.

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