

Albert Guerard, Professor of General and Comparative Literature at Stanford University said in 1940(Preface to World Literature)

It is not denied that literature uses the same stuff as folklore; but it is claimed that folklore is turned into literature only through an individual act of conscious organization. A book is a piece of work, not an accident. (74)

To dissolve Homer into a myth or a committee, much stronger acid would be needed than the Wolfian school has been able to supply.(72)

Professor R. W. Chambers of the University of London wrote in 1939(Man's Unconquerable Mind)

Fortunately, twenty years ago, that great teacher of English, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, gave his answer to the problem: Gentlemen I would I could persuade you to remember that you are English, and go always for the thing, casting out of your vocabulary all such words as 'tendencies', 'influences', 'revivals', 'revolts'. 'Tendencies' did not write The Canterbury Tales; Geoffrey Chaucer wrote them. 'Influences' did not make The Faerie Queene; Edmund Spenser made it: . . .

(Chambers continues). . . I hope to satisfy the reader that Tendencies did not write Piers Plowman; that a man called William Langland wrote it. (85)

H. J. Rose, Professor Emeritus of Greek in the University of St. Andrews says in his book A Handbook of Greek Literature(1951)

Nothing remotely like an epic has ever taken shape without a poet to shape it. (44)

An amusing parallel to the rise and fall of the separatist theories may be given from Middle English philology. In 1902, a theory was put forward and rapidly gained ground to the effect that Piers Plowman was the work of a plurality of authors; see Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit., vol.ii,p.3 sqq. To-day, as my late colleague A. Blyth Webster informed me, scarcely a philologist of any eminence takes it seriously. In the case of Homer, the paradox has had a longer run.(77)

R. W. Chambers(see above, op.cit.)

Half a dozen motor-bikes cannot be combined to make a Rolls-Royce car. (63-4)

Rene Wellek, Professor of Slavic and Comparative Literature, Sterling Professor of Comparative Literature, Yale University in his book Concepts of Criticism(1963):

Fifty and sixty years ago the concept of evolution dominated literary history; today, at least in the West, it seems to have disappeared almost completely. (37)

Darwinian or Spencerian evolutionism is false when applied to literature because there are no fixed genres comparable to biological species which can serve as substrate of evolution.