

## Harold Bloom

1. The Anxiety of Influence (1973)
2. A Map of Misreading (1975)

### Summary into nine (9) main elements

1. "Reading, as my title indicates, is a belated and all-but-impossible act, and if strong is always a misreading. ... Influence, as I conceive it, means that there are no texts, but only relationships between texts. ...The influence-relation governs writing, and reading is therefore a miswriting just as writing is a misreading. As literary history lengthens, all poetry necessarily becomes verse-criticism, just as all criticism, becomes prose-poetry. (Bloom H., *ibid*, p.3)
2. "Poetic strength comes only from a triumphant wrestling with the greatest of the dead" (Bloom H., *ibid*, p.9)
3. "Poets tend to think of themselves as stars because their deepest desire is to be an influence, rather than to be influenced, but even in the strongest, whose desire is accomplished, the anxiety of having been formed by influence still persists." (Bloom H., *ibid*, p.12-13)
4. "A poet, I argue in consequence, is not so much a man speaking to men as a man rebelling against being spoken to by a dead man (the precursor) outrageously more alive than himself. A poet dare not regard himself as being late, ..." (Bloom H., 1975, p.19)
5. "...but the poet-in-a-poet is as desperately obsessed with poetic origins, generally despite himself, as the person-in-a-person at last becomes obsessed with personal origins." (Bloom H., *ibid*, p.17-18)

6. "Poems, I am saying, are neither about 'subjects' nor about themselves.' They are necessarily about other poems; a poem is a response to a poem, as a poet is a response to a poet, or a person to his parent. Trying to write a poem takes the poet back to the origins of what a poem first was for him, and so takes the poet back beyond the pleasure principle to the decisive initial encounter and response that began him." (Bloom H., *ibid*, p.18)

7. "To live, the poet must misinterpret the father, by the crucial act of misprision, which is the re-writing of the father."  
(Bloom H., *ibid*, p.19)

8. "Poets need not look like their fathers, and the anxiety of influence more frequently than not is quite distinct from the anxiety of style. Since poetic influence is necessarily misprision, a taking or doing amiss of one's burden, it is to be expected that such a process of malformation and misinterpretation will, at the very least, produce deviations in style between strong poets."  
(Bloom H., *ibid*, p.20)

9. "I take the resistance shown to the theory by many poets, in particular, to be likely evidence for its validity, for poets rightly idealize their activity; and all poets, weak and strong, agree in denying any share in the anxiety of influence."  
(Bloom H., *ibid*, p.10)